

## John Ch 18:1-14

“Receiving The Father’s Will”

Ch 18 takes us into the Garden of Gethsemane whereby Jesus is betrayed, arrested, taken out of the garden and placed on trial both before the High Priest, and before Pilate.

Though it’s not mentioned in John’s gospel it’s at this point that Jesus makes the ultimate resolve to not *resist* the Father’s will, but rather to *receive* the Father’s will for His life. He’s known all throughout the time He’s been ministering (and no doubt before) that He came not to be served but to serve and to give His life away, and lay His life down for the sins of the world. Even in John Ch 3 in speaking to Nicodemus He mentioned that even as Moses lifted up the bronze serpent in the wilderness in order to save the people alive even so He was to be lifted up on the cross so that people might not perish but receive *everlasting* life. That they might be saved alive from the penalty of death that’s due to all who sin, which is all of us. and He said that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that whosoever would believe upon Him would never perish, but have everlasting life.

Over and over again He’s made mention of His destiny. That He had to go to Jerusalem, be mistreated and abused at the hands of the chief priests, be crucified and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day rise again. In Ch 17 He gave His final *report*, and in Ch 18 He makes His final *resolve*. Now on the side of His deity, it was resolved from before the foundations of the earth, that’s why Jesus said in Ch 17 that He’d finished the work that the Father had given Him to do even before He went to the cross. and That’s most likely why John doesn’t record His anguish in the garden, because the focus of John’s gospel is on the deity of Christ, not the humanity of Christ. But Jesus was just as human as you and me, and the idea of being scourged, beaten beyond recognition, a crown of thorns beaten down on His head and nailed to a cross didn’t appeal to Him any more that it appeals to you or me.

So when He came into the garden on this His final few hours before the cross, it’s here that He began to pray “*Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.*” Luke 22:42 and We’ll explore that a little farther in a minute, but He didn’t *resist* the Father’s will, He *received* it. When it was apparent there was no other way, and that the cross was the Father’s will for Him, He willfully made the resolve (humanly speaking) to finish the work. Isaiah tells us, “*For the Lord GOD will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.*” Isa 50:7 There was a determination to be faithful to the Father’s will for His life, even if it consisted of hardship and difficulty, personal pain and anguish of soul.

It's not that the Father is up there seeking to see just how miserable He can make your life. We sometimes get this idea that we're not in God's will unless we're somehow suffering, or doing something we don't like to do. That's an absolutely anti-biblical view of who God is, God loves you, He is for you not against you, desires to bless your life, it doesn't give Him any weird sense of pleasure to see you suffer or endure difficulties. But God thinks way beyond the here and now, He has your *eternal* best interests in mind, not your *temporal* best interests in mind. and He has carved out for you a path that will make for the ultimate eternal experience in His presence that you could possibly attain. and It's His will for you and for me that we wouldn't resist that path, but that we would receive that path and walk down that path even though at times it'll make for temporary deficit (physically, or emotionally or whatever) but it'll reap radical eternal dividends if we don't lose heart.

Paul said, "*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*" Rom 8:18 That's not to say that God's will *always* involves suffering, but at times it might, but I think that Jesus serves as a prime example to us in that even in our suffering God is working something far more glorious eternally speaking, than anything we suffer, or are set back by, temporally speaking. (Well, in regards to ch 17 we read in vs 1 of ch 18)

Vs1-2

So the stage is being set for the betrayal and arrest, Jesus didn't seek to hide Himself in *obscurity*, but He made Himself accessible *openly*. Vs 1 tells us that when Jesus had finished praying (more than likely at the temple since during Passover it was open 24hrs) that He went out w/His disciples over the Brook Kidron. The Brook Kidron was a little earthen channel that was set between the Temple Mt and the Mt of Olives that flowed ultimately into the Dead Sea. and What makes the mention of this significant is that during the time of Passover (which is the time that this text finds us in) there would literally be some 250-260,000 lambs being slain on behalf of the 2 ½ million or so Jews that would be there in Jerusalem. Now w/out getting too graphic lets just say that draining the blood of over a quarter of a million lambs is a lot of blood. and That blood would drain down a gully off the Temple Mt; mingle w/the water in the Brook Kidron turning it blood red. and As Jesus and His disciples crossed this Brook, Jesus was no doubt moved in a very profoundly unique way as He thought of another Lamb, that was about to have His blood shed, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Something else that comes to mind as we consider this scene is when David made this same trek there in 2<sup>nd</sup> Sam Ch 15 as he was being rejected by the nation as their king having been betrayed by his own friend Ahithophel who'd joined ranks w/Absalom his son to take over the nation. and Here is the Son of David, the greater than David, Jesus Himself being rejected by the nation as their King, having been betrayed by His friend, retracing the steps that David himself took as *he* was being rejected.

We read here that He was making His way to, and ultimately entered a garden (which Matt and Mark both identify as Gethsemane). It's interesting that human history began in a garden, the Garden of Eden. and The last time there was a battle that held w/in it the fate of mankind the 1<sup>st</sup> Adam failed and succumbed to *temptation*. But in this garden the last Adam Jesus Christ remained steadfast in His *dedication* to remain true to the Father and His will for His life. The 1<sup>st</sup> Adam disobeyed God and was cast *out* of the garden, but the last Adam (Jesus Christ) (1<sup>st</sup> Cor 15) was obedient as He went *into* the Garden of Gethsemane. The 1<sup>st</sup> Adam brought sin and death (in a garden) to mankind, but through the obedience of Jesus in this garden came righteousness and life to all who will trust in Him. So as to where Eden was a garden of disobedience and sin, Gethsemane became a garden of obedience and submission.

“Gethsemane” means, “oil press” as the olives would be plucked from the trees, thrown into the press and crushed by the pressure for the oil that was in them. and This is certainly where Jesus would sense the “pressure” bearing down on Him as He would sweat as it were great drops of blood (the bible tells us) under the weight of what was transpiring *in* His life, in His submission to the Father's will *for* His life. As we sited a moment ago, He entered the garden brought Peter, James and John a little farther than the others, told them to pray, that they might not enter into temptation. Which is a key for you and me as well, how does one avoid the snares of temptation?

Prayer has no small part to play in that, Jesus said, “*Pray that you may not enter into temptation.*’ *And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, saying, ‘Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.’ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*” Luke 22:40-44 Now Matthew adds, “*Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, ‘What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’ Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, ‘O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.’ And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy. So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then He came to His disciples and said to them, ‘Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.’” Matt 26:40-46*

The final resolve, Jesus knew that there was no other way, no other way that sinful man could have a relationship w/a Holy and Righteous God apart from His sacrifice upon the cross. If there had been another way then certainly the Father would've responded in a positive manner to His Son's request. “Yes, Son there is another way, people can count Rosaries, and pay penance. They can quit doing this and start doing that, they can simply obey the 10 commandments outwardly and don't need to worry about the position of their hearts before Me inwardly. But I just want you to be virtually filleted alive, be beaten beyond recognition and suffer excruciatingly at the hands of sinful men for really no reason at all!”

No, there was no other way, the just had to die for the unjust, the righteous for the unrighteous, the sinless for the sinful, life is in the blood, and apart from the blood of Christ being shed for us, we could never have life, not eternal life. He is our sin offering, not our good works, He's our peace offering before God, apart from His sacrifice we could never have peace w/God. and He knew that, so He set His face like flint to receive the Father's will.

All of this happened between vs 1-3, vs 2 is parenthetical, it's like vs 1 and vs 3 is a parenthesis that wraps around vs 2 that tells us that Judas knew where to find Him because He took His disciples there *often*. Draw attention to that word, "often." When the pressure was on, Judas knew where He would find Jesus, in the garden praying, because that's where He went often. Where would one find you when you're under stress, when the pressure is on, in the midst of troublesome times? Is the 1<sup>st</sup> place people would look would be to find you in prayer, in God's Word, catching a bible study seeking God's direction? Or would they think, every time so and so feels the pressure you can find them at the dead lion (Red Lion)? Or slamming down a 12 pack somewhere, escaping to the lake, or getting away somewhere other than to that place of prayer, seeking the Lord in the scripture?

Something else that caught my eye about vs 2 is the fact that Jesus and His boys were busy fellas. Consistently ministering to multitudes, being pulled this way, pressed on in that way, constantly demands on them from every side. Ever feel like that? Pulled in this direction, receiving pressure from the other direction, and being demanded of on every side? Yet we see here that Jesus took the time "often" to take His disciples aside to spend time w/them *alone*. You guys, it's *real* easy to get *real* busy, and all we'd do w/more time is pack in more things. Yet here the Word of God takes the time to emphasize and draw to our attention the need to consistently get alone w/Jesus. You see, how can I hope to effectively minister *for* Jesus if I never spend any personal alone time w/Jesus? Gleaning from His heart, gaining insights into who He is, being refocused and refreshed in His presence, Jesus me w/them there not occasionally, or once in while as it was convenient, but *often*, it's so important to be getting alone w/Jesus, spending private time w/Him alone, *often*.

Vs3

Now this is a pretty dramatic scene unfolding here, where it speaks of a "detachment" the word speaks of a Roman Cohort which would be about 600 men, and they went out there w/torches, lanterns, and weapons expecting that Jesus would be seeking to flee, or hide out in the shadows. and There are millions of people in the city of Jerusalem and no small # of them consider Jesus to be a prophet, that's why they're doing their business at night outside of the city, so that the people wouldn't start a riot. Remember, that's why the chief priests didn't want to take Him during Passover, for fear of the people. But God is in control, so Passover is exactly when they'll take Him, because He's the Lamb of God to be slain for the sin of the world.

But it's sort of ironic that they come out w/all these weapons, as if? They're prepared for a fight, but it's futile to fight against the Lord, yet so often we try don't we? But there's no weapon of reasoning or rationale, no weapon of our will that's going to alter *His* plan or force Him into *ours*. (Now that premise is a little outside of the text, but we need to know that, we're not going to alter His course or inflect our desire upon His will, He's in control.)

Vs4

Again, "Knowing all things" more undercurrent regarding His deity, He's the One in control of the situation and He's the One who's going to be calling the shots. and Even being aware of what's ahead of Him did you notice that He, "went forward" I would've been shrinking away somewhere getting every last second of solace I could, Jesus embraced the Father's will, moved forward in it regardless of the cost. and He asks them a question, "Whom are you seeking?" Good question, key question really, "Whom are *you* seeking?" What are you looking for, what's your motive in bringing yourself to this place? Jesus asks the question, "Whom are you seeking?"

Vs5-6

Notice the contrast that's being drawn between Judas and Jesus. Judas went out w/hundreds of soldiers, Jesus was surrounded w/just a few disciples, Judas had malicious intent filled w/selfish intent and self centered motives. Jesus went forward as the Good Shepherd thinking only of others, Judas was looking out only for his own life, Jesus was looking out for everyone else's except His own. and Don't miss that sentence in vs 5, "And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood *w/them*." He's made his stand w/the enemy, they were looking to destroy Jesus, and Judas also stood *w/them*. Jesus draws a hard line, and we may try to straddle the fence for awhile but ultimately it can't be done, you have to make a decision, you're either for Him or against Him, you're either hot or your cold, there is no in between. Jesus said, "*He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.*" Matt 12:30 There's no middle ground there, Judas made his stand, where do you make yours? I pray that it be w/Him.

Now these words, "I am He" is literally as you may've assumed, "I am" the Divine title, "Ego Eimi." "Whom are you seeking?" "Jesus of Nazareth," "I am." Clank, clutter, clamor, they're all drawing back and falling down. Who's in control? Jesus is letting them know, "You aren't doing anything but that I don't allow it." 600 seasoned soldiers backing up and falling down, slain in the Spirit! You know there's no biblical foundation for that whole idea, anytime you find people falling backwards in the scripture like this, it's because they were coming *against* the Lord, not seeking *after* the Lord.

When you find those who were confronted by the Lord, or an angel or something other that, when they fell, it was always forward on their face, not backwards to knock themselves out. But be that as it may Jesus is the authority here, Ps 27:2 says, "*When the wicked came against me To eat up my flesh, My enemies and foes, They stumbled and fell.*" and Again, "*Let those be put to shame and brought to dishonor Who seek after my life; Let those be turned back and brought to confusion Who plot my hurt.*" Ps 35:4 One more, "*Let them be ashamed and brought to mutual confusion Who seek to destroy my life; Let them be driven backward and brought to dishonor Who wish me evil.*" Ps 40:14

#### Vs7-9

Now you can be certain that the 2<sup>nd</sup> time they responded it was in a much different tone than the 1<sup>st</sup> time they responded. But notice again that Jesus is telling them what to do, He says, I'm the One you're looking for, so let these go. and You know what? They did, they did exactly what He said, and why did He say this, why insist on taking their place? Because He had told them earlier "*I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.*" John 10:11 So even though they technically arrest Him, in reality He gave Himself to them, He could've simply kept saying, "I am" and walked away.

But instead He says, "Take Me, let these go" and it's this same self sacrificial love that took Jesus to the cross, this is the essence w/which He looked at God's justice and said, "Take Me let these go." and He laid down His life for us that we might be made free.

#### Vs10

Of course this is the danger in flailing the sword w/zeal but not according to knowledge, it can bring about hurt instead of healing. and As we've stated before Malchus was no doubt thankful that Peter was just coming to out of a deep sleep, sort of short on senses and was a fisherman not a swordsman, because he was looking to split his skull in 1/2 but missed. I used to think Peter was just a stellar swordsman, but I've since come to realize that he was just out of his senses and out of control. and In reality he was resisting the Father's will, Jesus is prepared to go willingly as a lamb to the slaughter, but Peter is trying to hinder the whole thing. He means well, but he's not doing well, Luke tells us that Jesus picked the ear back up and healed Malchus, and it's a good thing He did or there would've been 4 crosses that day and not 3 and Peter would've been on one of them. But it's hard to make a case for having your ear cut off, when it's right there on your head. It's interesting to me that the last miracle that Jesus ever performed on the pre-side of the cross was to bring healing into the life of someone that one of His own disciples had wounded and hurt w/the sword.

Someone once said, “How often we’re like Peter. How busy we keep the Lord putting on ears that we cut off.” We’re zealous, but w/out proper knowledge and so we start flailing the sword around looking to take care of the situation and all we do is hurt someone instead of help them. H.A. Ironside said, “I am sure that Peter would have had great difficulty in leading Malchus to Christ after cutting off his ear! Don’t cut people’s ears off and then expect them to hear your message. Peter forgot that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. He was going to fight for His Lord but it was in a very carnal way.” The bible says, “*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God*” 2 Cor 10:3-5 We’ve spoken recently about the sword of the Spirit. and How it’s spoken of not as a big broad sword, but a short sword used for very specific up close and personal tasks. We might liken it to a scalpel today, yeah it can kill and inflict wounds easy enough. But that’s not the reason it was placed in the surgeons hand, its purpose is to administer healing. Now it may hurt, and it’s never fun to be placed under the knife. But ultimately its purpose is for our benefit, not our detriment. Now Jesus reconciled the situation and He’s able enough to give those whom we’ve wounded ears to hear once again, but how much better for us to simply be sensitive to what the Father wants to do and fall in line w/that the first time.

Vs11

It’s not about the sword Peter, it’s about the cup, it’s about drinking *in* and submitting *to* the Father’s will. Jesus didn’t need Peter’s help, could’ve called a legion of angels for each disciple, but God had a plan, and that plan was for Jesus to drink the cup that He had prepared for Him. The cup of the cross, the suffering and separation from the Father for the salvation and sanctification of man; and Take note of the fact that it was the *Father* that had given it to Him. It wasn’t what Jesus suffered at the hands of man that made atonement for our sin, it was what He suffered at the hands of God. Being made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Again quoting from Ironside, “It was God who put to His lips the cup of judgment. He received that cup from the Fathers hands and drained it to the dregs.” and Then he has a quote, “Death and the curse were in that cup, Oh Christ, `twas full for Thee; But Thou hast drained the last dark dregs, `Tis empty now for me.”

Vs12-14

So they arrest Him, bind Him up and lead Him off to Annas, but as you know it wasn’t those ropes, or those chains that bound Him. It was His love for you and for me, bound by love the inspection of the Lamb of God begins, but they’ll find no fault, He was perfect, w/out spot, w/out blemish, a worthy sacrifice. and Even though Rome had appointed Caiaphas as the high priest, Annas was still the power behind the throne, and so they took Him to him 1<sup>st</sup>. and John references back to the comment that Caiaphas had made earlier when he said in speaking to the council trying to figure out what to do w/Jesus and all the people following Him and all. “*You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.*” John 11:49-50

But we're told that he didn't even realize what he was saying, because though his motive was wrong, what he said was right. It was to everyone's advantage that one man, namely Jesus, die for the people. Rather than the whole nation, and more than that, the whole world in all of human history, perish. Because apart from His death, we could never know life, He was made sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him, and because He was willing to absorb God's wrath, we can have peace w/Him. As Paul said, "*For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, (the one Man) whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.*" Col 1:19-20

Today if you don't know the Lord, you can have peace w/God through the shed blood of the cross of Jesus Christ He was crucified for your transgression and was raised for your justification. and Your every sin can be washed away and you can be forgiven today being reconciled to God by Christ. The bible says that if any man be in Christ he's a new creation, old things pass away and all things are made brand new, clean slate, new take on life can be yours in Christ. The weight of sin can be lifted from your shoulders by simply opening the door of your heart and letting Jesus come in, He wants to do that for you today, all you have to do is ask.