

## JOHN

Stories Related To The Last Days Of Christ

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### I. Introduction

A. There is an obvious difference between John's gospel and the first three gospels.

1. For example, Matthew, Mark, and Luke present Jesus' life and teachings in chronological order, while John sets chronology aside and selectively combines the activities and teachings of Christ in an order that supports the particular messages he wants to convey about Jesus.
2. A second example of the difference between the first three gospels and John's gospel is his commitment to verify that Jesus was both human and divine in contrast to simply telling the story of Jesus.
  - a. In fact, John states that this was his primary purpose in writing his gospel.
  - b. And we read this in **John 20:30-31**, "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; [31] but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."
3. A third example of the difference between John's gospel and the other three is his handling of the final days and hours of a Jesus's life.
  - a. John tells this part of the story in a way that further confirms the deity of Jesus by showing that it is Jesus who is in control of the situation rather than a victim of those who either wanted or went along with getting rid of Him.
  - b. And John makes this clear – beginning with Jesus' prayer in **John 17** and ending with **John 19:30**, where John writes, "Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, '**It is finished!**' And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit."
4. And as you may recall, John began setting this picture up of Jesus being in control of His own suffering, death, and resurrection back in **John 10:14-18a**, where he records Jesus as saying, "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, [15] even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep...[17] For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. [18] No one has taken

it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again.”

5. Now I want to be clear that John’s differences in no way diminish the importance and lessons from the first three gospels, for **all of** God’s Word has been written for our benefit – which means we can learn as much about faith in God and godly living from seeing the human side of Jesus as we can from seeing His divine side. Therefore, listen for His divine side as I read **John 18:1-18, 25-27**.

- B. **John 18:1-18, 25-27 . . .** When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the ravine of the Kidron, where there was a garden, in which He entered with His disciples. [2] Now Judas also, who was betraying Him, knew the place, for Jesus had often met there with His disciples. [3] Judas then, having received the Roman cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. [4] So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth and said to them, "Whom do you seek?" [5] They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He said to them, "I am He." And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them. [6] So when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground. [7] Therefore He again asked them, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus the Nazarene." [8] Jesus answered, "I told you that I am He; so if you seek Me, let these go their way," [9] to fulfill the word which He spoke, "Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one." [10] **Simon Peter then, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear;** and the slave's name was Malchus. [11] So Jesus said to Peter, "Put the sword into the sheath; **the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?**" [12] So the Roman cohort and the commander and the officers of the Jews, arrested Jesus and bound Him, [13] and led Him to Annas first; for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. [14] Now Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people. [15] Simon Peter was following Jesus, and so was another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and entered with Jesus into the court of the high priest, [16] but Peter was standing at the door outside. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought Peter in. [17] Then the slave-girl who kept the door said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" **He said, "I am not."** [18] Now the slaves and the officers were standing there,

having made a charcoal fire, for it was cold and they were warming themselves; and Peter was also with them, standing and warming himself. [25] Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, "You are not also one of His disciples, are you?" **He denied it, and said, "I am not."** [26] One of the slaves of the high priest, being a relative of the one whose ear Peter cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the garden with Him?" [27] **Peter then denied it again**, and immediately a rooster crowed.

C. I want to comment on just three parts of this story.

1. **First**, When threatened with a bad outcome, Peter's sword action is an example of how easily we resort to our own devised solutions rather than trusting God to work things out for good.
2. **Second**, only good comes from doing or accepting the will of God – even if doing so is presently costly.
3. **Third**, Peter's denial shows how easily the mouth speaks what is in the heart rather than what the mind knows it ought to speak.

D. Prayer

## II. Three lessons from **John 18:1-27**

A. **First**, When threatened with a bad outcome, Peter's sword action is an example of how easily we resort to our own devised solutions rather than trusting God to work things out for good.

1. You see, Peter was responding to a threat that to him looked absolutely and undeniably real. Yet Jesus, who was right there with Peter did not see it that way – as shown by their differing responses to the threat. So who was right? Peter or Jesus.
2. I suspect we know the answer is Jesus, and yet some of us may want to debate this. Why?
  - a. I believe it is because we see these kinds of situations as Peter saw it rather than as Jesus saw it.
  - b. For Peter, the threat was real, and yet, a perceived threat is not necessarily a real threat. Yet, if we treat a perceived threat as real when it isn't, we will act as if it is real – just like Peter did.
3. And why did Peter see it as real when Jesus didn't?
  - a. Peter's filter was his own eyes, his own way of thinking, his own beliefs about the use of human power – such as the sword – to right the wrongs in life.
  - b. In contrast to Peter, Jesus' filter was God's eyes, God's way of thinking, and the confidence that nothing could separate Him

from God's love and care and protection, because God's power exceeds all the powers of hell, evil, the sword, the religious leaders (*or big business*), and the government.

- c. Now I know you know this, but I want to say it again – when God and His truths **are not** the filter through which we see, or perceive, or interpret, or make sense of the people and situations in our life, we will take matters into our own hands and do what we believe best.
4. Many years ago, the prophet Habakkuk faced what was a horrible outcome – an outcome that had not yet arrived, but was certain to come. His was not a perceived threat, but an actual threat that could not and would be stopped.
  - a. And yet, out of a confident faith in the goodness and love of God, he wrote these words – “Though the fig tree should not blossom and there be no fruit on the vines, though the yield of the olive should fail and the fields produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold and there be no cattle in the stalls, [18] Yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. **(WHY? Because)** [19] The Lord GOD is my strength, and He has made my feet like hinds' feet, and makes me walk on my high places.”
  - b. Or in other words, God was his safe place and his security in the face of a very real threat.
5. Therefore, whether it is a real or perceived threat, may we choose as Jesus choose to trust God with the outcome rather than taking matters into our own hands and missing out on the good outcome that God has in store for us.

B. **Second**, only good comes from doing or accepting the will of God – even if doing so is presently costly.

1. **(Vs 11)** Jesus said to Peter, "Put the sword into the sheath; **the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?**"
2. It is exceedingly inviting to do the will of God when the cost in comparison to the gain is so minimal that it seems there is no cost at all.
3. It appears Peter wanted the gain of a kingdom and the continued presence of Christ without the cost of having to drink the cup that God willed Jesus to drink – which included being betrayed, denied, abandoned, falsely accused, unjustly condemned, mistreated, tortured,

and hung on a cross. And yet, in spite of the cost, and it was costly, only good came from it.

4. Paul wrote these words in **Romans 12:2**, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is **good** and **acceptable** and **perfect**.”
  - a. By now, most of you realize the cost of transformation is a great cost – for there is a high price to be paid to die to self and self-rule and selfness in order to be transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ.
  - b. And yet, like with Jesus, so with us – **the cost is the path** to the good that comes from doing the will of God – which is why Paul says that in paying the price to be transformed we prove, that is, we validate by being transformed that God’s will is good and acceptable and perfect.
5. I suspect all of us who have come to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ are convinced that God’s will concerning the Lamb of God in relation to our redemption is good and acceptable and perfect – in spite of the cost Jesus paid to do God’s will.
6. Now if we believe this about God’s will in relation to Jesus and our redemption, shall we not also believe that only good comes from doing or accepting the will of God in spite of the price we have to pay to do so?
  - a. Let me remind you that the generation of Israelites who left Egypt with Moses were unwilling to pay that price to take the Promised Land – and look what happened to them.
  - b. May we choose God and godly wisdom over self and supposed safety so that we embrace the will of God and drink the cup – as Jesus said – and in so doing, gain the great good that God has for us, today, and tomorrow, and on into eternity.

C. **Third**, Peter’s denial shows how easily the mouth speaks what is in the heart rather than what the mind knows it ought to speak.

1. As you recall, Jesus addressed Peter’s denial back in **John 13:36-38**, where Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered, “Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you will follow later.” [37] Peter said to Him, “Lord, why can’t I follow You right now? I will lay down my life for You.” [38] Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, a rooster will not crow until you deny Me three times.”

2. I don't doubt that at the time of this conversation, Peter was certain he would lay down his life for Jesus. And we can say that Peter affirmed this commitment when he drew his sword to defend Jesus in the Garden.
  - a. But what we may not be taking into consideration are the following three things –
    - (1) Peter was brave when it was easy or reasonably safe to brave,
    - (2) Peter was brave when he had could use a weapon to support his bravery, and
    - (3) Peter saw himself as something more than he was. In other words, he thought more highly of himself than he ought.
  - b. Therefore, when Peter was asked by the young lady at the door, and the group around the fire, and one of the High Priest's slaves if he was one of Jesus' disciples, he perceived his only protection was to deny being a disciple of Jesus.
3. You see, Peter knew what he wanted to do in such a situation, and I assume he know why he should do what he wanted to do in such a situation.
4. However, when the situation came along, he ignored the part of his mind that knew the **“what and why”** of standing with Jesus and used the part of his mind that was gripped with fear and was focused on getting relief from the threat of something bad happening.
5. And sadly, we too often follow Peter's example. It isn't that we don't know that God is good and trustworthy, or that we don't know He always brings good out of every situation if we will continue to love Him and live according to His will.
  - a. In other words, the problem is not a lack of knowing, but a failure to fix our heart on reminding ourselves what we know and why we ought to do it when fear strikes and threats come our way.
  - b. And it is this failure that opens the door to ignoring what we know and living according to the fears or the threats or the sorrows or the trials or the tribulations or the sufferings that are stirring our mind and heart to abandon God and go our own way in seeking relief.
6. Every adult in this room knows at least some specific truths about God, His love, His faithfulness, and His goodness. Therefore, in those areas of knowledge, we have the ability to use our knowledge to override our fears and sorrows and hurts or any other thoughts and feelings and emotions that are pushing us to ignore what we know, and abandon God, and go our own way in seeking relief.

7. And it is because we have this ability to use our knowledge to override our fears and hurts and foolish thinking that Paul writes these words in **Philippians 4:6-8**, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. [7] And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. [8] Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.
8. The point here is that the power of God in you coupled with the power of the truth that you already know about God and His word are sufficient to override the power of evil, the power of temptation, the power of fear, and the power of self. Therefore, I encourage each of us to use this power to remain faithful to God and godly living, instead of ignoring it and giving in to the power of evil, temptation, fear, and self.

### III. Conclusion

- A. Communion: It is in eating the bread that we remember the beaten, tortured, and broken body of Jesus. It is in drinking the cup that we remember the blood that Jesus shed in dying on our behalf and in our place.
  1. But we don't do this with a heavy heart, for this is a celebration of what God has done in and through Jesus Christ to secure our redemption and reconcile us to Himself.
  2. And it is this redemption and reconciliation that we see as a great good – which came out of the great sufferings of Christ on our behalf.
- B. Therefore, today, I am encouraging you to consider what price you will pay to love your neighbor, co-worker, spouse, children, and fellow believer as yourself – for like Christ, so with us, **the cost is the path** to the good that comes from doing the will of God