

# Explore the Bible: April 30

*Betrayed • John 18:1-11*

*By Clay Anthony*



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Consider also what this man had heard. At some point he heard the same call from Jesus to follow Him as had Matthew and Peter. That following included Judas hearing the Sermon on the Mount, the call for wind and waves to obey, and even for Lazarus to come back from the dead.

With all to which he had been witness, how could Judas do what he did to Jesus?

A greater question for believers today is, what exactly did Judas expect to happen? Was his end game to force Jesus' hand against the religious and political leaders of the day? Was he desiring for what Jesus had been promising to come to fruition?

We know from earlier in John's story that Judas was not the one behind the moves he was making (13:27). Whatever the reasoning and motives, the actions Judas took on the night of the betrayal were setting into motion the greatest act of love that God could show humanity.

Each act in this scene is so informative for the modern reader.

Did you notice the massive show of force that accompanied Judas? Picture a large band of soldiers made up of a mixture of Romans and Temple guards fully armed, with a single mission of finding and bringing back this one Man. They were armed as for war with weapons and torches.

Obviously, they were expecting a fight once they located this

Preacher and His friends. It's telling that Judas knew the place well (v. 2). No doubt he often sat at Jesus' feet and listened to His teachings in the garden. We could wonder as well if Judas had listened as Jesus prayed in the quietness of this area.

Could it have been that Jesus even mentioned Judas by name in prayer?

Believers today need to recognize that our enemy can attack from any side. When facing a spiritual battle, know that Satan will never fight fair. Attacks will come from people you've helped and perhaps even prayed for.

Hell understands all too well that when it comes attacking God's people, too much is never enough. Judas could have easily taken a couple of soldiers or Jewish leaders and identified Jesus from a distance. However, that is not how our enemy attacks.

Could it be that our enemy knew this would be the beginning of the end of the fight? When that occurs, it is not odd that all resources be spent and maximum effort given to the fight, even if it's a fight that will be lost.

Also, we should be wondering why all the fuss. Again, this could have been handled in a less aggressive manner. The show of force by the enemy no doubt was an attempt for all at the scene to understand who was in charge.

The soldiers had the weapons and Judas had the location. Jesus was trapped and no escape was possible. Upon the identification of Jesus by Judas, the hardened soldiers stepped back. Were they shocked? Were they embarrassed? Was it the power of Jesus' presence? Probably yes to all three questions.

Simply put, these soldiers were expecting a meek country preacher to offer no resistance. Physically they were correct.

As you read verses four through nine, place an emphasis on Jesus' words in the conversation.

This group had come to arrest an accused criminal, yet the supposed criminal is the One asking all the questions and directing the action. Recall such emphasis the next time you feel under spiritual attack. You can face whatever test is cast upon you with confidence, knowing Who is really in control of the situation.

The soldiers were expecting a fight and they found one, but it did not involve swords. Jesus says as much to Peter (vv. 10-11). Why was Jesus giving up so easily? Why would He not defend Himself?

Think of what Jesus was ordained to do within God's plan of salvation. Was He sent to fight off His attackers? Overthrow the Romans? Bring back the proper role of Mosaic law from the Old Testament?

No, Jesus was sent to die for sinful people. Not counting Himself, there was no other person in this scene who could escape that label. John, the author of this Gospel book, needed a Savior as much as the Roman soldiers and Judas.

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