

Series: The Gospel of John

Day 18: Jesus came forward and saved you, so come forward!

Prayer:

Let's pray together:

O Father, we are about to experience how Your Son was taken as prisoner in the Garden of Gethsemane, speak to us. We confess O Lord, that because we have heard about the events at the crucifixion so many times, we do not listen anymore. Let us not only hear, but also speak to our hands, feet and mouth today. Thank You for sharing the Gospel of John with us with Your mighty voice for the last 17 days. Be with us, as we go through the last section of the book. The chapters to which everything builds up to. Lord if there are still a few people who have watched these videos or some who have stopped watching let this chapter call them back, even more - let it call them forward.

Amen

Overview of this section:

In our 21 days through the Gospel of John we have so far completed 2 sections.

- Chapters 1-12 (Jesus public ministry)
- Chapters 13-17 (The disciple's preparation for their ministry)
- Chapters 18-21 (=The crucifixion events)

Chapters 1-12 covered Jesus public ministry. Chapters 13-17 prepared the disciples for their ministry. Now we come to the highlight of the book – The Crucifixion events.

Today's title we will call: come forward!

Day 18: Come forward

Do you still remember the part written about Judas in chapter 13?

*27 Then after he had taken the morsel, **Satan entered into him**. Jesus said to him, "What you are going to do, do quickly." (John 13:27).*

And then we read here in Chapter 18:

*3 So Judas,
having procured a band of soldiers
and some officers from the chief priests
and the Pharisees,
went there with
lanterns
and torches
and weapons.*

Satan entered Judas. And then it says:

4 Then Jesus,
knowing all that would happen to him...

He knew in advance that Judas was going to betray him, that's what He told him in Chapter 13, He knew what was going to happen to him.

He also knew the Old Testament prophecies about him for example Psalms 22:16

For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet (Psalm 22:16)

But He knew what would still happen to Him.

But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities... (Isaiah 53:5)

I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting. (Isaiah 50:6)

Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief; (Isaiah 53:10)

And so He knew everything that was going to happen to Him and that it would eventually lead Him to cry out:

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

But then this verse continues:

4 Then Jesus, knowing
all that would happen to him
came forward
and said to them, "Whom do you seek?"

He did not shrink away even though He knew. He came forward.

Do you still remember what we read in John 10? It said:

17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me,

Not the guards. Not the soldiers. Not the Pharisees. Not Judas.

but I lay it down of my own accord.

I come forward.

I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.” (John 10:17-18)

He came forward and asked: Whom do you seek?

*5 They answered him, “Jesus of Nazareth.”
Jesus said to them,
“I am he.”*

His mighty voice says: I am God

In Exodus 3:14 God said:

14 God said to Moses, “I am who I am.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I am has sent me to you.’”

We have seen twice in chapters 6 and 8 that Jesus refers to himself as the "I am". (John 6:20; 6:35; 8:24; 8:58)

Here it says “I am he”

Do you think I'm exaggerating here? Because it does not exactly say “I am”? No I get it from the following verse:

*Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.
6 When Jesus said to them,
“I am he,”
they drew back
and fell to the ground.*

On the one hand it is the mighty voice of Jesus that makes them fall to the ground, but when you see God you can not help but fall to the ground.

Just listen what happened when Ezekiel saw it:

Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard the voice of one speaking. (Ezekiel 1:28)

Paul...

3 Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. 4 And falling to the ground... 5 And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus... (Acts 9: 3-5)

John who wrote this gospel also had such an experience in Revelation 1.

13 and in the midst of the lampstands *one like a son of man...* 17 *When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead...* (Revelation 1: 13,17)

That is the same reaction we saw here, of those who came to capture Him. He could have just walked away, "I am".

7 So he asked them again, "Whom do you seek?"

And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

8 Jesus answered,

"I told you that *I am he.*

So, if you seek *me,*

let these men go."

We saw when we came to John 13 that John 13: 1 was a summary of his entire ministry of the first 12 chapters.

Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. (John 13:1).

He loves His disciples so much that He says, "Let them go." I'm on my way to the extreme, I'm on my way to the cross. If you seek me, let these men go. His love is rooted in the love of the Father.

16 "For God *so loved* the world, *that he gave his only Son*, that *whoever believes in him* should not perish but *have eternal life.* (John 3:16).

Then we read on:

9 This was to *fulfil* the word that he had spoken:

"Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one."

He knew in advance, we read at the beginning of the chapter now it says "to fulfil". He is in control of everything that happens here.

These are words He had prayed for His disciples moments before. We did this yesterday in chapter 17.

*While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and *not one of them has been lost* except *the son of destruction*, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.* (John 17:12)

Again, He knew this long beforehand and shared it with us in John 6:

39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. (John 6:39)

11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. John 10:28

Then we see:

10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it...

Matthew 26:53 describes Jesus' reaction to Peter taking out his sword.

53 Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? 54 But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?"

Again, God is in control His words are fulfilled. Look at the advice He gives Peter, He says "words or prayer are better than the sword". Peter, I prayed for you.

18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. (John 17:18)

Rather go and spread the gospel. So, this passage also calls for you this morning, come forward with your sword.

9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Peter 2:9)

He loved us so much. Therefore, we need to proclaim the excellencies of him who called us from the darkness into his marvelous light.

13 Therefore take up the whole armour of God... 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, 18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. (Eph 6)

You who listen here, come forward with your sword.

Let us summarise

So Judas ... went there with soldiers, officers, priests, Pharisees, lanterns, torches and weapons....

Then Jesus...knowing came forward

The he said: I am he and with that confirmed He is God himself.

and all fell to the ground

Out of love He instructed: let these men go

And so fulfilled His own prayer: Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one

Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it...

He stepped forward, but with the wrong Sword.

So you that is listening here, step forward with the readiness given by the gospel
with the sword of the Spirit, the Word

Reflection

As every day, this passage taught us a lot about the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Read the passage again and write down what you learned.

Thanksgiving

When you see that Jesus stepped forward for you, are you ready to step forward? Write down one very specific step you are going to take today.

Prayer

Let us pray:

O Father, thank You for loving us so much that You sent Your Son so that we may have life. Everything has been fulfilled according to Your plan and everything that is still going to happen will be fulfilled. We are now a chosen people a royal priesthood, a nation that is set apart for You, Yes, Your people, no one can snatch us out of Your hand

Let us put on that salvation as a helmet.

You have now equipped us with the Gospel of John for the past 17 days, make our feet ready to step forward with this sword of the word. We pray it in the name of Your Son Jesus Christ.

Amen.