

Main Idea: In today’s text, we see The Betrayal. Our Lord endured three painful encounters, as recorded in Mark 14:43-52.

- I. Jesus is betrayed by a follower (43-46).
 - A. Judas hurt Jesus with destructive deeds (43-44).
 - 1. He led the mob to Jesus (43).
 - 2. He initiated the plot against Jesus (44).
 - B. Judas hurt Jesus with deceptive words (45-46).
 - 1. He used a word to betray.
 - 2. He used a kiss to kill.
- II. Jesus is defended by a fighter (47-49).
 - A. Peter meant well (47).
 - B. Peter misrepresented Jesus (48-49).
 - 1. Jesus clarified the truth about Himself.
 - 2. Jesus emphasized His commitment to fulfill Scripture.
- III. Jesus is deserted by friends (50-52).
 - A. Everyone ran in fear (50).
 - B. A young man followed for awhile, then fled (51-52).
 - C. Jesus headed to the cross alone.

Implications: We learn three valuable lessons from our Savior’s betrayal.

- 1. God is in control even when it seems He is not.
- 2. When life is hard, God is giving us the opportunity to become more like His Son.
- 3. No matter what others may do to us, God invites us to trust Him.

The title of today’s message is “*The Betrayal*.” Betrayal is one of the most painful human experiences, and sadly, many of you have felt it. Perhaps by a spouse, or a child, or parent, or friend. There was a trust, and that trust was violated.

Perhaps you know betrayal from another vantage point. You’ve caused it. You betrayed someone, and you can’t escape that haunting reality.

Is there hope for the betrayed, and the betrayer? Yes, there is. And the hope comes from the One who experienced *The Betrayal*. *The* betrayal is the one we’re about to see in today’s text in Mark 14. Today, as we continue our series in the Gospel of Mark, we’re going to look at a text we’d rather not see. We’re about to behold something unthinkable, something inexcusable, something incredibly dark and sinister. And yet we must see it, and think about it, for the dark deed provides the backdrop for the most amazing portrait of love the world has ever seen.

Scripture Reading: Mark 14:43-52

In 1962, missionaries Don and Carol Richardson risked their lives to share the gospel with the Sawi people of New Guinea (the other end of the same island where our missionary Bob Litteral served for so many years, in PNG). They told their story in the book, *Peace Child*.²

This book begins with the story of Yae, a native Sawi, who enters what he believes to be a peace treaty with a neighboring village. However, he finds that his new friends are only practicing the Sawi tradition of tuwi asonai man. In this practice, warriors persuade

**Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

¹ For a previous look at this passage, see the Mark series in 2006.

² To tell the story, I’ve used two sources. The first, a children’s story as told by Rebecca Davis: <https://heresthejoy.com/2014/04/the-peace-child-story-for-a-new-generation/>. The other is: [https://www.bookrags.com/studyguide-peace-child/#gsc.tab=0](https://www.bookrags.com/studyguide-peace-child/#gsc.tab=0;);

a man to become their friend, with the intention of killing and eating him later. The more complicated the plan, the more honorable the warrior becomes among his own village. Consequently, the men of the victim's village begin to plan their revenge. Such murders exist in a cycle of violence within the Sawi culture.

It was into this world that the Richardson's moved, built a home and began learning the previously undocumented language of the Sawi. They soon began to share the gospel with the Sawi. They told them about Jesus, and his love, but the people seemed disinterested.

Yet when they told the story of what Judas did, the people became quite attentive. When Don said, "One night Judas kissed Jesus and said 'Hail Master.' He explained that this was the signal for bad men to come and take Jesus away and kill him. At this point the Sawi men began laughing so hard that they held their stomachs. "Oh, Tuan!" they said. "That was doing with the caught pig!"

What did that mean, Don wondered. Why were the people laughing? He left the man hut and asked a teenage boy. "I'll tell you, Tuan," the boy said. "We treat a man the way we treat a pig. We feed him and talk nice to him. Then we kill him and eat him."

Don left and wondered, "How will we ever reach a people who hear the story of the Bible and consider Judas to be the hero?" Don and his wife began to pray and ask God to show them what to do.

All the while, the Sawi kept fighting and killing each other. Finally, Don told the Sawi they were leaving. But the Sawi said, "No Tuan, don't go. We like the steel axes and the cowrie shells you give us."

"No, we're leaving," Don said. "You're fighting and killing each other even more since we came. Maybe if we leave you can live in peace."

Late that night, the Sawi men came to the Richardson's hut, and said, "Don't go. Tomorrow, we will sprinkle cool water!" The next morning Don and Carol looked out. They saw a man from the village running out of his hut with his baby. Then they saw a man from the other village running out of his hut with his baby. They both came to the clearing in front of the Richardson's hut, with the people following, and the mothers crying. Each man held up his baby and said, "I will give you my child, and you will take my name." And they exchanged babies. Then they held their babies high and said, "Cool water! The peace child brings cool water."

What was going on? Don found a teenage boy and asked him. "Tuan," the boy said, "haven't you ever seen a peace child before? Maybe where you come from you don't fight, and don't need a peace child."

Don said, "It's not part of our culture. Tell me, what will happen to those little boys?"

He said, "We'll take good care of the boys, Tuan. As long as those little boys are alive, we'll have peace between our villages. You know, Tuan, a man would be a fool to believe any other promise, but the peace child promise, that's a promise we can trust."

Soon Don talked again to the men and said, "It was hard to give your baby for peace. But you all knew it was the only way."

They nodded. They knew it was the only way.

Then Don told them the story. He said, "There was no peace between all the people on earth and the Greatest Spirit in heaven." And the men now understood.

"Tuan," they said, "that Jesus...he was the peace child from the Greatest Spirit?"

“Yes,” Don said. “Jesus Christ was the peace child from the Greatest Spirit!”

“Then, then, that means that Judas was killing a peace child! Killing a peace child is the worst thing anyone can do! That means war will never end!”

“But listen to my words. Jesus Christ rose again from the dead, and He lives forever to make peace between the Greatest Spirit and all the people of the earth. Your peace is weak, because your peace child will die. But the peace of God is strong, because His Peace Child will live forever!”

Over the next two years, hundreds of people from both villages received the Peace Child of God. And the Peace Child changed them. Instead of killing each other, they learned to help each other. They turned from hatred to love, from lies to truth, from war to peace.

This morning we’re going to see the Peace Child in Gethsemane. That’s where we left off in our last message in Mark, preached by Rex, with Jesus agonizing in the garden, crying out to His Father and asking Him to take away the cup of Calvary’s wrath, yet ultimately submitting to His Father, “Not my will, but Your will be done.”

It was a night to forget, humanly speaking that is. What depraved men did to Jesus starting in Gethsemane is inhumane and unthinkable. And it all centered around The Betrayal. All four gospel writers include this event. In Mark’s account (14:43-52), which contains three scenes, we see our Lord enduring three painful encounters.

I. Jesus is betrayed by a follower (43-46).

Verse 43 begins, “And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve.” We know Judas. We know the end of the story. But let’s read it as though we didn’t.

Apparently, Judas had slipped away during the last supper in the upper room. Judas, of course, had followed Jesus for three years. He enjoyed privileges unknown by the masses. He broke bread with Jesus, enjoying His priceless company. He learned from the Master. He even received power from Jesus enabling him to do miracles in Jesus’ name.

Beyond that, Judas had held a respected position as the treasurer of the disciples. No one suspected he would do what he had done, but he did. He joined hands with the enemies of Jesus for the love of the shekel and committed two crimes against Jesus.

A. Judas hurt Jesus with destructive deeds (43-44). Verse 43 says, “And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.”

Note the title Mark uses to identify Judas. *The betrayer*. We’ve seen that word several times already in this chapter. In verse 10, “Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order **to betray him** to them.” In verse 11, “And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. And he sought an opportunity **to betray him**.” In verse 18, “And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, ‘Truly, I say to you, **one of you will betray me**, one who is eating with me.’” In verse 21, “For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom **the Son of Man is betrayed**! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.” And then in verse 42, “Rise, let us be going; see, **my betrayer is at hand**.”

This is what Judas was, a turncoat, a traitor, a fraud, one who acted as if he was something he were not. Up until this point, he’s been planning. Now he takes action.

1. *He led the mob to Jesus (43).* The mob was made up of representatives from the chief priests, the scribes (teachers of the law), and the elders (the three sections of the Sanhedrin). Mark says there was a “crowd with swords and clubs”. These were not Roman soldiers, but a special police force under the jurisdiction of the Jewish high court. Their weapons indicate they thought they would meet resistance. Luke’s account states specifically that Judas was at the head of the pack (Luke 22:47).

Let that sink in. Judas isn’t merely following wicked men in this deadly deed. He is spearheading it.

2. *He initiated the plot against Jesus (44).* “Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, ‘The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard.’”

We’ll consider the plot itself more carefully in a moment, but for now please note who instigated it. Mark says, *The betrayer had given them a sign.* Judas came up with the signal. In the darkness of the garden, the soldiers would need some silent indicator as to which shadowy figure they were to apprehend. Judas picked it.

“I will kiss the Rabbi,” he told his accomplices. “That’s the man you want. Put him under guard and take him away.”

The mob. The plot. The sign. All destructive deeds, and all instigated by Judas. But there was more. Not just the destructive deeds, but also, deceptive words.

B. Judas hurt Jesus with deceptive words (45-46). “And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, ‘Rabbi!’ And he kissed him. ⁴⁶ And they laid hands on him and seized him.” Notice carefully. How did Judas do it?

1. *He used a word to betray.* What word? *Rabbi!* He called Jesus what he had always called him. He used a title of respect and honor.

But, of course, it wasn’t true. There was no respect and honor for Jesus in Judas’ heart, only self-seeking greed. It was a case of right word, wrong heart.

That’s the predicament we enter the world with too. Our hearts are self-focused and blind. Oh, we can say the right words about Jesus, and we can often fool the onlooking world. But until the Spirit of God does the miracle of regeneration which results in genuine repentance, we remain in the condition of *right word, wrong heart*. And when that’s the case, in time, the truth will come out, as it did for Judas. What we really think about Jesus will be seen. In the end here’s what Judas did to Jesus.

2. *He used a kiss to kill.* Mark says that Judas approached the Lord and *kissed* Him. William Barclay explains, “It was customary to greet a Rabbi with a kiss. It was a sign of respect and affection for a well-loved teacher. But there is a dreadful thing here. When Judas says, ‘Whom I shall kiss, that is he,’ he uses the word *philein* which is the ordinary word. But when it is said that he came forward and kissed Jesus the word is *kataphilein*. The *kata-* is intensive and *kataphilein* means to kiss as *a lover kisses his beloved*. The sign of the betrayal was not a mere formal kiss of respectful greeting. It was a lover’s kiss. That is the grimmest and most awful thing in all the gospel story.”³

Betrayed. Jesus was betrayed by a follower. Jesus is fulfilling the experience described in Psalm 55:12-14, “If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it; if a foe were raising himself against me, I could hide from him. But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my close friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship as we walked with the throng at the house of God.”

³ Barclay, pp. 345-6.

Let this sink in, brothers and sisters. This is what our Savior endured for us, *the pain of betrayal*.⁴ Yet He did not respond in hatred. According to Matthew's account, Jesus said this to Judas, "Friend, do what you came for (26:50)." To the end, Jesus loved Judas.

Perhaps you've experienced betrayal recently, and you're wondering how to get beyond it. I have good news for you. There's a verse in Hebrews that offers great encouragement. It's Hebrews 2:17-18, and it talks about Christ, and says this. "For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way." Stop there. Isn't that interesting? Christ had to be made like us in every way, that is, He really became a human being. And why? Here's why. "...in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God." So Jesus became a man so He could become a priest, one who represents us before God Almighty. But that's not all. The verse continues, "...and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people." So He became not only the priest, but the sacrifice as well. Now listen to these words, "Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."

It's that last statement that offers us great hope this morning. The Lord Jesus entered into the fullest experience of our human suffering. Including betrayal. And because He did, He is now able to help us, to identify with us as we suffer.

Friends, He knows. He understands. And He makes it clear that there's a way to honor God no matter how difficult the circumstances are that enter our lives, not in our strength, for sure, but in His.

Let these words minister to your aching soul this morning, my hurting friend. *Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.* So look to Him this morning. Call upon Him. Trust in Him. And then, by His grace and power, resolve to respond like Him, so all will see Him in you.

Scene one. Jesus is betrayed by a follower.

II. Jesus is defended by a fighter (47-49).

Verse 47 says, "But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear."

Mark doesn't tell us who the sword-swinging man was. The apostle John does, and records that it was Peter (John 18:10). John also tells us the servant's name was Malchus.

You say, "Why wouldn't Mark tell his readers it was Peter?" It's possible the reason is because it wasn't safe to write it down. Peter was still living. To put Peter's name in print in connection with Jesus' arrest could have endangered Peter.

Why then did John record his name? Because John wrote his gospel nearly thirty years later and by that time Peter was already dead (he'd been crucified upside down).

So what are we to make of Peter's actions that night? For starters...

A. Peter meant well (47). It was his love for Jesus that drove him to action. It was the sight of seeing wicked men putting their hands harshly on Jesus that caused Peter's defense mechanism to kick in. *Somebody* has to do *something*! So he did. He took on the whole mob single-handedly, swung at a neck, missed, and lopped off an ear.

⁴ See Psalm 55:12-14 "If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it; if a foe were raising himself against me, I could hide from him. But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my close friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship as we walked with the throng at the house of God."

It's a good thing he missed the mark. Luke the physician records that Jesus healed the servant by touching his ear (Luke 22:51). Wiersbe comments, "Had Jesus not healed Malchus, Peter would have been arrested as well; and there might have been four crosses on Calvary."⁵

So Peter meant well. But good intentions aren't enough, not for us, nor for Peter. In fact, by his actions Peter did something he surely didn't intend to do.

B. Peter misrepresented Jesus (48-49). And Jesus said so. Notice verses 48-49, "And Jesus said to them, 'Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me?' ⁴⁹ Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled."

Notice what Jesus is saying. As He sees the swords and clubs and the severed ear, He determines to make two realities perfectly clear.

1. Jesus clarified the truth about Himself. Am I a criminal? A dangerous threat to society? No! If you think swords and clubs are necessary, you don't know who I am. As you well know, I have come to you as a Teacher, and I have taught you openly.

John's account tells us something the other three Gospel writers omit. In John 18, when the mob came to arrest Jesus, the Lord asked, "Whom do you seek (4)?" And they answered, "Jesus the Nazarene (5)." At that point, something quite unusual happened. Do you remember what it was? According to John 18:6, "When Jesus said, 'I am he,' they drew back and fell to the ground."

Such was the power of Jesus. All He has to do is speak a word and dangerous people fall before Him.

"Why then didn't He stop the cruel mob?" you ask. For this very simple reason. He didn't want to stop them. In fact, He didn't want to save Himself. Why not? He had come to earth, not to save Himself, but to save sinners.

To clarify this point, John records what Jesus told Peter at this very moment. In John 18:11, He says, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

This was the truth about Jesus. He hadn't come to be a political revolutionary. He came to save people from their sins. And to save them, He had to die for them, and then conquer the grave in their behalf.

Matthew's Gospel gives an even fuller account. In Matthew 26:52-54, we hear Jesus give these instructions to Peter, "Put your sword back in its place, for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"

How do you fight people who have swords? With a sword of your own? No, Peter. Your intention is good, but you're sending the wrong message about me. Put your sword away. There's another sword that's needed for this battle. And what is that sword? Listen again to Jesus in verse 49 (NIV), "But the Scriptures must be fulfilled."

Don't miss this. This is what's on the Savior's heart that night.

2. Jesus emphasized His commitment to fulfill Scripture. It had to happen, says Jesus. This violent arrest of the Messiah had to happen. Why? In order to fulfill Scripture. Which Scripture? Jesus doesn't say.

⁵ W. Wiersbe, p. 162.

Perhaps He has in mind Isaiah 53:12. Earlier that night Jesus said these words, as recorded in Luke 22:37, quoting Isaiah 53, “It is written: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors’; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment.”

Possibly He has in mind Zechariah 13:7, a prophecy He mentioned earlier in verse 27, “Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and I will turn my hand against the little ones.”

It has to happen. The Scriptures must be fulfilled. Every Old Testament prophecy regarding Me must take place. This is the Savior’s resolve.

Can you imagine the results if Peter had succeeded, and actually killed Malchus? Jesus and His followers would have been branded as political revolutionaries, as murderers, and the cross would have been overshadowed by controversy.

Kent Hughes tells the following story about two nineteenth century preachers, Newman Smith and Robert Hall. “A controversy arose between the two on some religious point, and Rev. Smith wrote a bitter pamphlet denouncing Hall and his doctrine. Having finished the pamphlet, Smith was having trouble coming up with what he thought was a proper title. So he sent the book to a good friend (everyone needs a friend like this!) for a suggestion. Some time earlier Rev. Smith had written a widely read and helpful pamphlet entitled, *Come to Jesus*. When his friend read the new pamphlet against Hall, he sent the pamphlet back with this suggestion, ‘The title which I suggest for your pamphlet is this, *Go to Hell* by the author of *Come to Jesus*.’”⁶

The point is this. It’s easy to chop off ears. That’s the world’s way, to fight fire with fire, to return evil for evil. But that’s not Jesus’ way. He commands us to do what He did, to turn the other cheek, to love our enemies, to overcome evil with good.

J. D. Jones observes, “Christ’s Kingdom is not to be advanced by the sword. In the affairs of the Kingdom force is no remedy. It is a lesson the Church of Christ has been slow to learn. Again and again the Church has invoked the help of the secular arm. She has again and again used pressure and compulsion to advance her interests...Again and again the Church has used fire and prison and scaffold. Often, no doubt, it was done honestly and sincerely. But it was all very pitiful and tragic. It was a repudiation of Christ’s own teaching. Religion is free, the response of the soul to God. A forced religion is a contradiction in terms.”⁷

This is scene two beloved. Having been betrayed by a follower, Jesus is now defended by a fighter. But He doesn’t want to be defended by a fighter, not this kind of fighter. It sends the wrong message about what He’s like to the onlooking world.

III. Jesus is deserted by friends (50-52).

Once again, Mark’s account is short and sweet, just like the rest of his Gospel story. With an economy of words, he communicates volumes about Jesus. In this case, he shows that the betrayal produced three effects.

A. Everyone ran in fear (50). “And they all left him and fled.” The NIV says, “Then everyone deserted him and fled.” *Everyone* high-tailed it away from Jesus. Peter did. John did. Andrew did. Thomas did. They *all* ran for cover. They may have said,

⁶ Kent Hughes, p. 176.

⁷ J. D. Jones, p. 574.

“Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you,” and they *all* said that according to verse 31, still they ran. To their shame and later regret, they all left Him in fear.

At this point Mark tells us something that no one else mentions. Matthew doesn’t, nor Luke, nor John.

B. A young man followed for awhile, then fled (51-52). “And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, ⁵² but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked.”

Who is this unnamed person? And why are we told about him? The Greek word for “young man” is *neaniskos* which denotes someone in late adolescence, in his teens.

Many feel the young man was the writer of this gospel, John Mark himself. That would explain why Mark alone of the four Gospel writers includes this episode. Mark wasn’t an apostle, but he did have significant connections. According to Acts 12:12, the early church met in the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark. It’s even possible that Jesus and the Twelve ate the Last Supper in the upper room of that very house.

Perhaps it happened this way. Perhaps Judas left that very house earlier in the evening, retrieved the soldiers, and brought them to the upper room. But of course, they didn’t find Jesus, for He wasn’t there. So Judas, leading the mob, headed next for Gethsemane. But not before alerting John Mark. Perhaps John Mark was in the house when Judas and mob arrived, and was awakened by the mob. And perhaps John Mark then grabbed his sheet⁸ and ran from the house to warn Jesus and the others.

Perhaps. Or perhaps it happened this way, as William Barclay conjectures: “It may be that Mark was actually present at the Last Supper. He was young, just a boy, and maybe no one really noticed him. But he was fascinated with Jesus and when the company went out into the dark, he slipped out after them when he ought to have been in bed, with only the linen sheet over his naked body. It may be that all the time Mark was there in the shadows listening and watching. That would explain where the Gethsemane narrative came from. If the disciples were all asleep how did anyone know about the struggle of soul that Jesus had there? It may be that the one witness was Mark as he stood silent in the shadows, watching with a boy’s reverence the greatest hero he had ever known.”⁹

Again, perhaps. Yet while John Mark’s presence is conjecture, this is not. Jesus is now *alone*. Judas has betrayed Him. The disciples have forsaken Him. And the young man (perhaps John Mark) who followed Him for a while, has now run for his life. And Jesus is now all alone, heading for the cross.

C. Jesus headed to the cross alone. This is where He has been heading since the Triune Godhead designed the plan of redemption eternity past. It’s why He left heaven, and came to earth as a man. It’s why He lived a perfect life for thirty-three years, and then allowed wicked men to arrest Him. He has an appointment to keep on a cruel Roman cross, and He will allow nothing to stop Him.

The cross wasn’t just man’s idea, but God’s. It was God’s eternal plan that His Son go to the cross, bear the sin and judgment of undeserving sinners, including those who deserted Him. He had come, as He had said, “to give His life as a ransom payment for many (10:45).”

⁸ Typically men wore an undergarment called a *chiton*. This unidentified person is wearing only a *sindon*, an outer garment.

⁹ Barclay, pp. 347-8.

What can we learn from all this? Surely, we learn to appreciate the Savior more fully, to grasp in greater ways the suffering He endured for us. The hymnwriter put it this way.

*What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered
was all for sinners' gain;
mine, mine was the transgression,
but Thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior!
'Tis I deserve Thy place;
look on me with Thy favor,
vouchsafe to me Thy grace.*

*What language shall I borrow
to thank Thee, dearest Friend,
for this, Thy dying sorrow,
Thy pity without end?
O make me Thine forever!
And should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never
outlive my love for Thee.*

But there's something else we learn from our Savior's betrayal and death. We also learn how to live, especially when we too face betrayal and hardship.

Implications: We learn three valuable lessons from our Savior's betrayal.

1. *God is in control even when it seems He is not.* No matter how chaotic things around us may seem, our Sovereign Lord is superintending, directing, working, leading, protecting, and fulfilling His eternal plan. He is in control.

You say, "But His ways don't make sense to me!"

And that may be true, often in fact. But this speaks to our perspective deficiency, not His apparent confusion. He knows what He is doing in your life and mine, just like He did in Gethsemane.

The Sovereign Lord was in control of His Son's betrayal, as He is ours. That may be a difficult statement to hear, but it's vital to affirm. And so hope-giving.

2. *When life is hard, God is giving us the opportunity to become more like His Son.* And that is His agenda for us, after all. As Ephesians 1:4 explains, "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight." God wants us to be holy and blameless, like His Son. He works all things together for that good, as Romans 8:28-29 declares, "to conform us to the likeness of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers."

No matter how difficult the situation, we can be sure of this. God is in control and desires to use our circumstances to mold us so that we resemble His Son more fully.

You say, "Okay, I know God is in control. After all, He is God! And I can see from His Word that He says He is using the events of my life (good and bad) to transform me into Christ's likeness. I know that. But how should I respond? You've talked about

what God is doing, and that's encouraging. But what is it God wants me to do?" And the answer is, trust Him.

3. *No matter what others may do to us, God invites us to trust Him.* This is how we enter His family, not by our merit or works, but by trusting fully in His Son's atoning work. God gives the gift of eternal life to any sinner who will simply repent and put his or her total trust in Jesus Christ.

But it's not just how He saves us. It's how He intends us to live. By trusting Him fully. Friends may forsake us, and foes certainly will, but God never abandons His own. As Psalm 9:10 makes clear, "Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you."

So let's trust the Peace Child today, my friend. Let's be assured that He who Himself experienced The Betrayal can help us no matter what we may face.

Closing Song: #178 "*O Sacred Head, Now Wounded*" (all three verses)

November Benediction: Zechariah 14:9

Community Group Discussion:

1. In this morning's message, we looked at the tragic account of The Betrayal. Take some time now to read the passage again, Mark 14:43-52. What stands out to you? What word best describes how this passage makes you feel?
2. In verse 43 we see Judas leading a mob to arrest Jesus. What kind of person was Judas? What kind of relationship had he had with Jesus up to this point?
3. Verse 44 identifies Judas as "the betrayer". We're told that he had prepared a sign to identify Jesus. What was the sign, and what is the significance of it?
4. All four gospel writers include the account of Jesus' betrayal. Take a look at the other three accounts (Matthew 26:47-56; Luke 22:47-53; John 18:2-12). What other details do we learn about that dreadful deed?
5. In verse 47 we're told about someone's response to the betrayal. What did he do? Why doesn't Mark include his name? How did Jesus respond to his actions?
6. In verse 51 we meet another unidentified individual. What did he do, and what's the significance of the absence of his name?