



## Betrayed With a Kiss

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Mark 14:43-52

Clint Pressley

*<sup>43</sup> 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. <sup>44</sup> 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." <sup>45</sup> And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" And he kissed him. <sup>46</sup> And they laid hands on him and seized him. <sup>47</sup> But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. <sup>48</sup> And Jesus said to them, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? <sup>49</sup> Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled." <sup>50</sup> And they all left him and fled. <sup>51</sup> And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, <sup>52</sup> but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked.*

*(Pastor Prays)*

It's past midnight on Thursday. The men were in the garden of Gethsemane, which means *to be pressed*. They were in the garden that night, and as Jesus prayed, they saw him, witnessed him, and heard him in ways they had never heard before. Probably around midnight, the praying is done, and now it's around 3:00 AM; Friday is here. It's pitch black and dark. That's when this would happen in the Bible. That's when Judas does what he does. It's one of the most wicked acts in all of history that took place not in the light of day but in the dark. This is the kiss of

death. This is the betrayal of Jesus through the kiss of Judas. Now listen, for every victim of abuse, for every person hurt from a church, from everyone cheated on or lied to, for every one of you that has been tragically disappointed in someone, or for the adulterer, the drug addict, the violent-tempered, I've come this morning to take this passage and try to convince you that...

### **Put Your Faith in Jesus, He Will Never Leave You**

It's a simple message from a tragic passage. I mean, even the way Mark writes this passage, even the way this section ends, Mark has a way of making sure everybody else is pushed away, and all of our eyes are on Jesus. So, I want you to do that today: put your faith not in a person, not in a man, not in a family; put your faith in Jesus. He will never leave you. Let's just walk through the passage and see the storyline. What's important here? Join me there in verse 43, and let's walk through this scene in the garden. I'll point out a couple of things there, and then I'll come back to today's passage. Verse 43 says that <sup>43</sup> *And immediately, while he was still speaking*. Well, what was he saying when he was speaking? Go up the page; there in verse 42, Jesus said to his disciples, <sup>42</sup> *Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.*" So here in verse 43, while he was still speaking, Judas came.

Look how Mark frames Judas. Judas, one of the 12. As if to say, how could he do this? Judas comes with a crowd from the three different groups that make up the Sanhedrin. Now you have a crowd, and they have swords, they have clubs, they mean business. They come from the chief priest. They come from the scribes and the elders. Those three groups make up the ruling class in Jerusalem. That's the Sanhedrin. This is a sanctioned event. The government is behind it. They've come with weapons to take Jesus, but they don't know Jesus. Now today, if you get somebody's name, you can Google that name, find a picture pretty quickly, and know what they look like. That's not what they had back then. They had to have a signal. So Judas, who now feels like he's the leader of this mob, tells them he's the one that I kiss. It's dark out there. It's 3:00 in the morning. They have a torch, but even that doesn't light it well enough. It's in this garden, and trees are everywhere. You can't tell who is who. Judas says, the one that I kiss, that's the one. Get him. Judas is now an enemy. Verse 45 is just disturbing. <sup>45</sup> *And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" And he kissed him.* Rabbi is a friendly

greeting. And the way it's written, this is not just some sort of informal peck on the cheek. This is what Peter and Paul say: greet one another with a holy kiss. It's a sign of affection.

When that happens, the mob, maybe there were 300 to 400 people there, this is not just a couple of guys. This is the temple police. They are there. The mob of people take Jesus, bind his hands, and take him away. I heard one preacher say to think of Samson. When Samson has his hands bound, he easily breaks the cord. Just think about Jesus, the very son of God, God himself, and what he could do at this very moment. But this is all part of the plan. Look at the way Mark writes this. <sup>47</sup> *But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear.* Now pause there. Remember, John Mark was not one of the apostles. He got his information from Peter. We think Peter is the one who told Mark, as an eyewitness, what happened there. And Peter is the one who cut off the guy's ear. Peter is telling Mark this story, and you can see him saying, hey look, you don't have to mention my name here. Well, when you go over the Gospel of John, John writes it in such a way that says, no, I'm telling everything. He tells us it was Peter who cut the guy's ear. This guy, who is the servant of the high priest, got his ear cut off. Luke tells us that Jesus picked it up and healed the man, and then he put it back on. Mark doesn't tell us any of that. He just tells us that there is a machete swung in there. Then, in verses 48-49, Jesus addresses the mob. <sup>48</sup> *And Jesus said to them, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me?"* <sup>49</sup> *Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled."* That's why they didn't do it. Then, there would have been a crowd who would have revolted if they had taken Jesus, so they waited until the dark. Jesus says, you saw me teach, and that's what they hate: his teaching.

Notice the little phrase at the end of verse 49 that is so important. *But let the Scriptures be fulfilled."* He doesn't tell us what scripture is; he just tells us that this is according to the divine plan of God, written down hundreds of years ago. Maybe it's in Isaiah 53, *and was numbered with the transgressors.* Anyway, Jesus says to let the scripture be fulfilled. And then, in verse 50, Mark writes it in stark language. He doesn't offer up any judgment. He just says here are the facts; everybody left.

And after they all left, there is a strange passage, like maybe the strangest passage in the whole New Testament. <sup>51</sup> *And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, <sup>52</sup> but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked.*

When I was studying this, I started thinking, how do I preach this on Sunday? What does this mean? Why is this here? What is the writer saying? Well, opinions on this one are all over the place, but there is one theory that's really intriguing to me. It could be that the young man named Mark wrote himself into the story. There's some understanding that Mark's mother is named Mary. She was a wealthy woman, and the last Lord's Supper could have been in a room she owned. John Mark could have been there following along. That's a lot of conjecture to get here. Why would you write yourself in here? I don't know if it's him or not. What I know is there's this young man who's following, and he is wearing a very expensive tunic. They're on the outer edges, and he runs off naked. Mark has given us this story to tell us: put your faith in Jesus; he will never leave you.

So, with that in mind, let's go to the passage and let me make a couple of applications. Here's the first one, we'll start slow. #1

### **There will always be fake Christians**

I think one of the most astonishing things Mark is drawing attention to is that Judas was one of the 12. Mark writes that phrase, one of the 12, to remind us that he was on the inside. How could Judas spend 24 hours a day, seven days a week for three years with Jesus, be a trusted member of the disciples, so trusted he was the one that was in charge of the money? How could he be such a respected insider, hearing the teaching, seeing the miracles, witnessing the way Jesus lives, and then betraying him?

Over the years, some people have tried to soften up a view on Judas to give him a sort of the benefit of the doubt. Maybe he was following along and saw that Jesus was going in a different direction, so he decided to go out in his own way. I don't think that was it. I think he was just lost. I think it just was evil. And it's heartbreaking to think about the people at a church. I think about people at Hickory Grove. This is why we do church membership like we do. When people

join our church, we want them to know fully what the gospel says, and what it means. Have you trusted in Christ alone for salvation? Will you follow through with baptism? Will you make a covenant with the church to be accountable, faithful, and to give? That's why we do what we do with the church's role. We feel responsible. That's why it's so tragic when you know someone has gone under the waters of baptism after professing Jesus and is not at all living for him. It's hard when you have a child raised in a Christian home, a little boy who is born and comes up in a Christian home, who has been told every day by mom and dad that they love him and is not at all living for him. His parents pray with him, and they pray for him. He hears the gospel, goes to church, participates in Awana, and goes into the student ministry. He is loved dearly, and maybe he even followed through in baptism, and it feels like he's following, at least for a while, and then something happened, and it's heartbreaking. I feel like Mark has offered this up to us to say to any of you who have walked through this or have a friend like that, or maybe even an adult child, it's like Mark is saying to you, look, you are not alone. Mark gives us this picture. All the other disciples fled. Everybody will run away from Jesus. Judas runs away. But you know that everybody but Judas comes back. So keep praying; maybe yours will too.

Above all, you have Jesus presented in such a way that we are told to put our faith, hope, love, trust, and your dedication in Jesus. Put your faith in Jesus. When I say put your faith in Jesus, I don't just mean listen to his teaching. I mean for you to look at what he's done. Do you trust what Christ has done for you? The work of Jesus, his perfect life, his dying in your place on the cross, do you trust in God raising him from the dead and that that event is what saves you? Put your faith and trust in Jesus. He'll never leave you. But there will always be fake Christians. I'm will give you a second thing you might draw from the passage. #2

### **There will always be betrayal**

This point is similar to the first point that I made, but I want to take it a little further into the text. You see, in verse 43, Mark says, hey, he's one of the 12. This is not the passive drifting away. This is not what we used to call backsliding. You know how you meet some people that are at the church and will be coming for some time, and then something happens in life where they got really busy or traveling for a while or just we're away from the church and increasingly just sort of got out of the habit and drifted away. That happens a lot, and we might call that backsliding. We might call that getting out of the habit. That's not what's going on here. That

feels more passive than this. This is active. This is intentional. This is trickery. In verse 43, we see the Sanhedrin with the elders and the scribes. Judas has joined the enemy. He is not just drifting away from Jesus. Judas is actively working against him. We might call this deconstruction in our day and time. Judas finds himself on the side of the enemy. Some of you have felt this in your own home. Your children are not just backsliding as adults; they're actually antagonistic. They are rejecting the gospel, working against the gospel that they once professed, maybe even promoted. Look, this can be this can be bewildering. It can knock you off your equilibrium. So you start asking questions like, what did I do wrong? Was I too strict? Did we force church on them? Was it too much church? Or you'll hear the accusations that you are too judgmental. You are too narrow. Brothers and sisters, let me just say to you that feeling of guilt is a tool of Satan to harm and discourage you. And this passage is written in such a way as to get your eyes off Judas and onto Jesus. Look, when you read the Gospel of Mark, he's different from the other writers. When you read the Gospel of Mark and hear about Judas, Judas is mentioned here, but Judas is never mentioned again. Instead, Mark takes our attention and puts our attention on Jesus. He puts our attention on the one who knows your pain firsthand, on the one who can heal your wounded soul. This very day, if this is Friday morning, this very day, Jesus Christ is going to the cross to heal your wounded soul. So put your faith in Jesus. He will never leave you. They'll always be fake Christians. They'll always be betrayals. I'm going to give you a third thing. #3

### **There will always be hypocrisy**

Look, there will always be hypocrisy. Don't you just hate verse 45? Don't you just seethe at it? How could he do that? He came up, went to him at once, and he said, Rabbi, what a friendly greeting. It's what a student would say to the teacher. He gave this warm embrace and kissed him. When Luke tells us that Jesus, when Judas kissed him, says, Judas would you betray the son of man with the kiss? Matthew tells us that Jesus said, friend, do what you came to do.

It's funny to me all four gospels have this incident in them. When you read Matthew, Luke, and John, those three give all kinds of print to Judas. We find all kinds of stuff about Judas in those three, but not Mark. Mark tells us about Judas, and then he moves on. Let me pause and take a cue from Mark. For those of you that have been betrayed in some way, look at me now, and you are holding on to something that's sinful in your own heart. For those of you who have

been betrayed in some capacity, let's recognize it was tragic, but by God's grace, it is time to move on. Judas shows up and says to Jesus, Rabbi, it's friendly and respectful, and then he kisses Jesus. This is a warm, affectionate embrace.

Friday, I was headed down to South Carolina. I spoke at a Men's Conference down there. I went down and back to Simpsonville SC, which is close to Spartanburg and Greenville. I played football at Wofford College in Spartanburg, and a friend of mine that I played football with, whom I have not seen in 30 years, contacted me. He knew I was going to be there, and he said, I want to see you. I said great, I look forward to seeing you too. I hadn't seen him in a long time. He's a great guy. Brian Tankers. I saw Brian in the lobby of that church, and he came up and put the biggest grizzly bear hug on me; man, I froze up like Rain Man. And there. But it's just that he's a warm, friendly, loving God guy. So I can just see Judas going up to Jesus and hugging him and kissing him. Judas puts on a show. And I judge Judas for that. It's a hypocrite. But sometimes we are Judas. Sometimes we put on the show. Sometimes, we pray when we're in need and not praise when we see his goodness. What did the apostle John say in 1 John 3:18? <sup>18</sup> *Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.* Look, maybe you feel like a hypocrite. Maybe you should feel like a hypocrite. Maybe you feel the pain of hypocrisy. Judas will feel that, and he's going to go kill himself. It doesn't have to be like that. Jesus died in the place of hypocrites. Fly to Jesus, run to Jesus, put your faith in Jesus. He will never leave you. They'll always be fake Christians. There will always be a betrayal. There will always be hypocrites. I'll get to the positive in a second, but let me give you one more negative. #4

### **We will always be hated**

If you actually follow Jesus, you believe what he teaches; the prevailing culture of the day, whatever the day is, will hate you. Look how badly they hated him. In verse 43, it's the whole Sanhedrin; they send the temple police after him, and Judas is leading the way. In verse 46, they bind him and arrest him. In verse 47, Peter offers up some quick defense and cuts off Malchus's ear. Look what Jesus says in verses 48-49. <sup>48</sup> *And Jesus said to them, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me?"* <sup>49</sup> *Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled."* They heard his teaching. They hated it then, and they will hate it now.

So let me speak to any of you here who may have a jaded view of the church, how God works, or what the Bible teaches. Let me just offer up the greatest teaching of God. I will tell you how good God is and how he created you with dignity because the image of God is in you. You're created like that. But now that image of God in you has been so marred and so affected by your own sin that it doesn't have you far away from God, and the Bible says you are spiritually dead. But it doesn't have to be like that. This story is the story of Jesus going to the cross. There's a reason behind that. Because sin is a crime against God, it must be punished, and the way God punishes it is he puts all of his wrath on those who don't believe. People say, do you preach a wrathful God? Yes, all of the wrath of God is poured out at the cross on Jesus so that in Jesus, all the sins of every sinner that will ever be saved are taken by Jesus. So that if you are here and you're hearing this and you're not in Jesus, you are lost and going to hell. But it doesn't have to be like that. Judas killed himself out of guilt. Listen to what I'm telling you, that the gospel is here to save you from that. You run to Jesus; you put your faith in Jesus. He will never leave you. Those are four bad things. Let me give you two good things. #5

### **We can always trust the Bible**

Let me show you where I get that. In verse 49, Jesus says, *<sup>49</sup>Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled.*" What does he say? Let the scripture be fulfilled. You think you're in control? This was written down hundreds of years ago. This is going on because this is God's good plan, and Jesus takes us and points us to the scriptures. Brothers and sisters, this is why we do what we do. This is why we spend so much time with the Bible open, talking about what it says. This is why we have AWANA. This is why our student ministry is not driven by entertainment but by the Bible. Look, I got a call, and I'm headed down to South Carolina; there's a church in our area that is divided. Some want to hold on to the faith once and for all delivered to the Saints. This is a Baptist Church. But there's a faction in the church that wants to be progressive and move away from the Bible. They're going to vote. They have asked me to come speak to them. They're going to vote on whether they trust that the Bible is God's word. And Jesus right here says it is. Here is God's plan. Here are God's principles, God's truth, that takes us to the Gospel of Jesus. We always can trust the Bible. I'll end with this last one. #6

### **We will always have Jesus**



Now, be careful because verses 51 and 52 are so odd that we can get hung up over there. If you get distracted, you will miss verse 50. In verse 50, Mark, in very plain language, says they all fled from him. Peter ran, Andrew, his brother ran, James, John, gone. And Jesus, the sin-bearer, is going to face Pilate. Jesus is going to face the judgment of God. And there, on the cross, he will take the punishment in our place. God will raise him from the dead. And I have come to plead with you to put your faith in Jesus. He will never leave you.

*(Pastor prays)*