

"Put your sword into its sheath, shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?" – John 17:26

I. The Decision to Leave and Pray

- a. After Jesus prayed, He and the disciples went to a familiar garden where they occasionally gathered. The synoptic Gospels provide additional details surrounding the "garden experience" and the arrest. (Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46).
- b. The location and timing were not a coincidence. Jesus left the upper room and walked approximately a mile to the garden.
- c. Jesus asked the disciples to pray as He agonized over what He was about to suffer.
- d. Jesus and the disciples intersected with Judas according to God's divine plan.
- e. It is intriguing that Jesus left a place of safety to be captured. He exposed Himself to danger.
- f. Prayer is our preparation for the right performance.

II. Jesus Stepped Forward

- a. *Jesus knowing all that would happen to Him came forward... (v.4)*
- b. Jesus stepped forward willingly. As the wolves growled, the *Good Shepherd* stood before the sheep. (John 10:11,18)
- c. He stepped forward with authority. Jesus said to them, "I am He." They drew back and fell to the ground. (John 18:5-6) Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.
 1. He stepped forward with authority because he stepped forward as God.
- d. He stepped forward in love. Jesus answered, "So, if you seek me, let these men go."
 1. Let these men go, who couldn't stay awake an hour to pray?
 2. *...having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.* (John 13:1; 3:16).
- e. Soon the disciples would be called to *step forward willingly, in His authority and in love*.
- f. We too must step forward into a world of Pilates who find no fault with Christ, but who see no glory in Him either.
 1. We live in a world of Judases who may kiss Him every Sunday but betray Him with their lives.
 2. We step forward in a world that gives more respect to Caesar than to the Savior.
- g. We must listen to the words of the Savior and *step forward*.
- h. Jesus stepped forward for you and me — willingly, with authority, and in love. He still intervenes between a sinful people and God's righteous wrath to secure His people's rescue.

III. Practical Application

- a. *Put your sword into its sheath*. These are powerful words that ring true and need application for us today.
- b. If the disciples engaged in close quarter combat with the temple guards, lives would have been endangered. Jesus planned for their safe escape.
 1. Vengeance, rescue, reconciliation is part of the Lord's mission plan for your life.
- c. I personally know how easy it is to become frustrated when things do not work out, but I hear the words, *Put your sword into its sheath*.
- d. Righteous anger should well up inside of every believer, when the poor are mistreated, *Put your sword into its sheath*.
- e. Sometimes we want to retaliate against personal hurt, *Put your sword into its sheath*.
- f. *Put your sword into its sheath* are like the words, "*Peace be still.*" Same impact, same purpose.