

The Road to the Cross: Betrayal, Love, and Victory

The Plot to Kill Jesus (Luke 22:1–6)

As the Feast of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, approached, the religious leaders were scheming to find a way to kill Jesus. They were afraid of the people, though, because Jesus was still popular with the crowds.

Then Satan entered Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve. Judas went and conspired with the chief priests and temple guards about how to betray Jesus to them when no crowds were around. They were delighted and agreed to pay him. Judas promised to find the right moment to hand Jesus over.

Reflection:

The enemy often looks for a willing heart. Judas opened his heart to Satan through his greed and ambition.

Personal Application:

Guard your heart against little compromises. Betrayal doesn't start big — it begins small, when we let our love for Jesus be crowded out by selfish desires.

Preparing for the Last Supper (Luke 22:7–13)

On the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was to be sacrificed, Jesus sent Peter and John, saying,

"Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat." (Luke 22:8)

They asked where they should prepare it. Jesus told them,

"When you enter the city, you'll meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him to the house he enters. Tell the owner, 'The Teacher asks, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"' He will show you a large upper room, furnished. Prepare it there."

They found everything exactly as Jesus had said.

Reflection:

Jesus is never caught off guard. He's in complete control, even as He heads toward the cross.

Personal Application:

When you don't understand what's happening, trust that Jesus has gone before you to prepare the way.

The Last Supper (Luke 22:14–23)

When the hour came, Jesus sat down with His apostles. He said,

"With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." (Luke 22:15)

He took the cup, gave thanks, and said,

"Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

Then He took the bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them, saying,

"This is My body, given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." (Luke 22:19)

Likewise, He took the cup after supper, saying,
"This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."

Yet even then, Jesus said,
"But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table."

The disciples began to ask among themselves who would do such a thing.

Reflection:

Jesus redefined the Passover: no longer just a remembrance of deliverance from Egypt, but now the true deliverance through His body and blood.

Personal Application:

Every time you take Communion, remember: Jesus willingly gave His life for you. It's a table of love, not law. Approach it with deep gratitude and humility.

Who Is the Greatest? (Luke 22:24–30)

A dispute broke out among the disciples about which of them was considered the greatest.

Jesus told them,
"The kings of the Gentiles lord it over their people, but among you it shall not be so. Instead, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who leads, as he who serves."

Then He said,
"I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Reflection:

In God's kingdom, greatness isn't about power — it's about service. Leadership is not about privilege but about pouring yourself out for others.

Personal Application:

If you want to be great in God's eyes, choose the towel, not the throne. Serve in love, not ambition.

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial (Luke 22:31–38)

Jesus turned to Peter,
"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you like wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail. And when you return to Me, strengthen your brethren."

Peter insisted he was ready to go to prison or even die with Jesus. But Jesus said,
"I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you know Me."

Jesus then told all of them,
"When I sent you without money or bags, did you lack anything?"
They answered, "Nothing."

"But now," He said, *"take a moneybag, a knapsack, and if you don't have a sword, sell your garment and buy one."*

Reflection:

Jesus wasn't encouraging violence — He was preparing them for hard days ahead when following Him would mean danger and hardship.

Personal Application:

Faith doesn't mean life will always be easy. Expect trials — but remember, Jesus prays for you even when you fail.

The Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:39–46)

Jesus went out to the Mount of Olives, as was His custom. He told His disciples,
"Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

He withdrew about a stone's throw away and knelt down, praying,
"Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Yours, be done."

An angel appeared, strengthening Him. Jesus, in agony, prayed more earnestly, and His sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground.

When He rose from prayer, He found the disciples sleeping, exhausted from sorrow.

Reflection:

In Gethsemane, Jesus fought the battle for our souls. He embraced the cross with full surrender to the Father's will.

Personal Application:

When your soul is overwhelmed, fall to your knees like Jesus did. Prayer is the bridge between our weakness and God's strength.

Jesus Arrested (Luke 22:47–53)

While Jesus was still speaking, a crowd came. Judas led them, approaching Jesus to kiss Him.

Jesus said,
"Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

The disciples asked if they should fight. Peter struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear. But Jesus said,
"Permit even this," and He touched the man's ear and healed him.

Jesus turned to the chief priests and elders:
"Have you come out with swords and clubs as though I were a criminal? I was with you daily in the temple, and you did not seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

Reflection:

Even in betrayal, Jesus displayed mercy. He healed the one who came to arrest Him.

Personal Application:

Love even your enemies. Let your response to evil be mercy and truth, not hatred.

Peter Denies Jesus (Luke 22:54–62)

They led Jesus to the high priest's house. Peter followed at a distance. Around a fire in the courtyard, a servant girl saw him and said, "This man was with Him." Peter denied it. Two more times Peter was accused, and he denied Jesus each time.

As Peter spoke the third denial, the rooster crowed. Jesus turned and looked at Peter. Peter remembered the words of the Lord and went out and wept bitterly.

Reflection:

Failure is painful. But the look of Jesus is not condemnation — it is love that restores.

Personal Application:

If you have failed, don't run from Jesus. Run to Him. His look is full of mercy, not judgment.

Jesus Mocked and Tried (Luke 22:63–71)

The men who held Jesus mocked Him, blindfolded Him, and beat Him, saying,
"Prophecy! Who hit You?"

At daybreak, the council of elders, chief priests, and scribes gathered. They said,
"If You are the Christ, tell us."

Jesus replied,
"If I tell you, you will not believe. But from now on the Son of Man will sit at the right hand of the power of God."

They asked,
"Are You then the Son of God?"

He answered,
"You rightly say that I am."

They said,
"What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from His own mouth."

Reflection:

The most tragic blindness is spiritual blindness — seeing Jesus' miracles, hearing His teaching, yet refusing to believe.

Personal Application:

Don't just hear about Jesus — bow before Him. Confess Him now as the Son of God before you meet Him as Judge.

Summary:

- God is sovereign even when betrayal is near.
- True greatness in God's kingdom is serving others.
- Failure is not the end — it's often the start of deeper surrender.
- Jesus faces suffering so that we could receive salvation.
- Watch and pray — the battle is real, but His strength is greater.