

Jesus seemed a little more subdued that passover. To anyone paying attention, he was saying some quite puzzling things, but everyone assumed he was just tired or something. In any rate, this was a passover to be remembered. For generations, they had celebrated their liberation from Egypt, God delivering their people out of slavery. They had told and retold the stories, but a new chapter of that story was about to arrive. They could feel it! It had only been a couple of days since they had entered the city triumphantly with him, and they expected that any day now he was going to rise up. That's a lot of pressure, anyone could be forgiven for saying some pretty confusing and incomprehensible things.

John 1

In the beginning the Word already existed.

The Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.

2

He existed in the beginning with God.

3

God created everything through him,  
and nothing was created except through him.

4

The Word gave life to everything that was created,<sup>[a]</sup>  
and his life brought light to everyone.

5

The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness can never extinguish it.<sup>[b]</sup>

10 He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. 11 He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. 12 But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.

14 So the Word became human<sup>[d]</sup> and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness.<sup>[e]</sup> And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

John 17

Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son so he can give glory back to you. 2 For you have given him authority over everyone. He gives eternal life to each one you have given him. 3 And this is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth. 4 I brought glory to you here on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. 5 Now, Father, bring me into the glory we shared before the world began.

They were reclining around the table, relaxed, hopeful, getting into quite a lively debate about who among them was the greatest, no doubt vying for positions in his coming kingdom. To be perfectly honest, Judas was only half paying attention. He was not a man of talk, he was a man of action. He didn't understand why Jesus was holding back, but he had a plan that would hopefully hurry things along a little. And if not..he hesitated, a little ashamed of the thought.. If not, it didn't hurt to have a backup plan. He felt the coins in his pocket. He felt a little guilty about it, but he reasoned that he was just helping Jesus along a little in getting his kingdom set up. If he could earn a little money doing so, well that was just good business sense. He would of course make a sizable donation to a good cause and all would be well. Everybody wins. Well, except the Romans, and the Jewish leadership installed by the Romans, and no one would mourn that takeover. They had been sitting there a few minutes before Jesus got up, grabbed a towel and started washing his disciples feet. The conversation about who was the greatest hushed for a moment as everyone tried to work out what was going on. That was servant's work. No one wanted to sit washing dirty smelly feet, especially ones that did as much walking as the disciples did. Jesus showed no hesitation, just gently went on down the line, gently washing the disciples feet in silence. Peter couldn't hold it in any longer and protested. This is not what conquering kings do. Judas felt uneasy also. When Jesus got to him, he knelt down in front of him and Judas stared. Jesus looked up into his eyes, and there was a sadness Judas hadn't noticed there before. Jesus finished and moved to the next disciple. Judas remained wary, but relaxed a little. When Jesus finished, he returned to the table. Judas half tuned out again, there was much on his mind.

They'd come a long way. He still remembered the crisp morning after Jesus had spent the night in prayer when he had returned to them early and called them together. He had been following Jesus for a while by then, but that morning Jesus had chosen 12 of his followers to be apostles and messengers for him. Judas was a little surprised to be chosen, but secretly quite pleased. He wondered what Jesus had seen in him. The others were all from Galilee, and he was from further south in Judea. He was fascinated with Jesus. Charismatic, engaging, popular with the people, a little too generous at times, but the world needed people who were innocent and idealistic, he didn't see it as a fault. He was a little confused with Jesus' predisposition towards the poor and outcast and powerless. It wasn't a particularly strategic power move, and Judas could see Jesus really going somewhere.

He remembered back to his first mission. Jesus had given each of them authority to drive out spirits, and to heal disease and sickness. He had learned a lot that mission. It felt pretty good having the power to make a difference, and being kind of special. But it also had been hard work. He'd come back a little discouraged, at how small the effect was verses how much effort they had put in. Jesus had talked with him a little about being patient with people and people needing time. He'd been gentle with his weary disciple, and Judas had really come to value his leadership. He had good moral teaching and was a man of honour. Being the strategist of the group, and good with numbers, Judas had been put in charge of the moneybag. And well, yes, occasionally he'd taken a little, but he justified it that he was good at getting a good price, and if he kept the difference, they wouldn't know. And there was a little investment tucked away, should it become necessary. That was just good stewardship.

And if any of them got into hardship, he'd be in a position to help. Maybe. Probably. It might depend if it was because they'd made poor choices.

He looked around at the rest of the 12. They were a bit of an odd lot, but he'd grown rather attached to them all. There had been lots of conversations along little back roads between villages, there had been a lot of meals shared, a lot of nights joking about who snored and yes, perhaps even a couple of pranks. But it was inspiring to watch them as they grew bolder, he looked forward to seeing how it all played out. He managed to suppress a giggle, thinking back to the look on Peter's half drowned face after Jesus had pulled him out of the water. Only Peter would leap out of the boat in the middle of the lake in faith like that.

	<p>John 17 6 "I have revealed you<sup>[a]</sup> to the ones you gave me from this world. They were always yours. You gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 11 Now I am departing from the world; they are staying in this world, but I am coming to you. Holy Father, you have given me your name;<sup>[b]</sup> now protect them by the power of your name so that they will be united just as we are. 12 During my time here, I protected them by the power of the name you gave me.<sup>[c]</sup> I guarded them so that not one was lost, except the one headed for destruction, as the Scriptures foretold.</p>
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He tried to focus, he was trying to be inconspicuous, but everyone was still talking and laughing and nibbling away, and he relaxed a little.. Then Jesus started talking about being betrayed and he was alert again. How much did Jesus know? He grabbed another piece of bread, trying to appear casual, as Peter, a little bewildered, nudged John to ask Jesus what on earth he was talking about. Judas' hand was already in motion as Jesus announced the one to betray him was dipping his hand in the bowl with him. Judas realised too late to back out. He felt flooded with shame for a moment. Eating like this with someone was basically the equivalent of saying I am your friend and I will not hurt you. If Jesus knew.... Judas tried to sound calm and casual. "Surely not I, Rabbi?"

Jesus waited a moment, almost composing himself. Then looked Judas in the eye and softly said "Yes, it is you".

The doubts began flooding back. It had always been there a little bit, but he'd been able to reason it away. Maybe this was a bad idea. Maybe he should have waited. And he didn't intend to \*hurt\* Jesus, just help him along, that was okay right? It wasn't his fault this was taking so long, the people had been ready and waiting, it was time to move. The other

disciples were still puzzling over what Jesus meant. Jesus leaned over quietly. “What you have to do, do quickly”.

He slipped out into the darkness. The streets were deserted by this time of night, everyone respectable was inside enjoying the Passover feast together. The cool night air helped him regain his composure. He stopped for a few deep breaths. Okay, so Jesus knew. How? He pushed that thought away, that wouldn't help. Did any of the other disciples know. He thought back to how little attention they were paying. Probably not, but hard to know. He hurried along towards the courtyard of the high priest, that seemed like the most logical place to find them. Their last meeting had been during the day and in secret, so it felt a little unfamiliar coming to find them at night.

Judas waited at the spot he had agreed to meet the soldiers, watching from a distance. The priests hadn't expected an opportunity so early, and needed a little time to prepare. He saw Jesus arrive, with the disciples milling around, still a little excited after the feast. He wondered if any of them had noticed his absence yet. He watched Jesus head off to pray and the disciples promptly fell asleep. He made a mental note that they were terrible guards. It suited his purposes now, but that might need to be addressed when more power was at stake. He allowed himself to daydream a little about all the changes they'd bring in, about how much better it was going to be putting Jesus' principles into law, not the old and unwieldy laws they lived with currently.

Jesus walked a little further in, far enough to be alone, but close enough that could still see the disciples. He sank to his knees, finally letting out the emotion that had been bubbling up inside him for weeks now.

Youtube : <https://youtu.be/XvVCfAfWJ38>

Psalm 15	John 17
<p>Who may worship in your sanctuary, Lord?</p> <p>Who may enter your presence on your holy hill?</p> <p>Those who lead blameless lives and do what is right,</p> <p>speaking the truth from sincere hearts.</p> <p>Those who refuse to gossip</p>	<p>13 “Now I am coming to you. I told them many things while I was with them in this world so they would be filled with my joy. 14 I have given them your word. And the world hates them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15 I’m not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one. 16 They do not belong to this world any more than I do. 17 Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth. 18 Just as you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world. 19 And I give</p>

<p>or harm their neighbors</p> <p>or speak evil of their friends.</p> <p>Those who despise flagrant sinners,</p> <p>and honor the faithful followers of the Lord,</p> <p>and keep their promises even when it hurts.</p> <p>Those who lend money without charging interest,</p> <p>and who cannot be bribed to lie about the innocent.</p> <p>Such people will stand firm forever.</p>	<p>myself as a holy sacrifice for them so they can be made holy by your truth.</p>
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He could see lights bobbing up the trail towards him. It was time. In a moment, they were with him. Full of well practiced smiles and reassurances that he was doing the right thing. "Now remember, the one I kiss is the man". It would be terribly awkward if they got the wrong person, and it was night. He had been with Jesus for years, he knew that face anywhere, in the early morning mist, in the flickering shadows from the campfire. He'd even watched him in the moonlight praying a couple of times when he was struggling to sleep. Once again, the doubts surfaced for a moment, but he pushed them down. It was okay to use slightly unethical means so long as you achieved the result. And he did feel bad about how he was doing it, but there was no time left.

<p>1 Corinthians 13</p> <p>4 Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud 5 or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged.</p>	<p>John 17</p> <p>0 "I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message. 21 I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are</p>
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6 It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. 7 Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me.

22 “I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one. 23 I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me.

## Gethsemane - Keith & Kristyn Getty

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=igpuJDqeERI>

Lyrics: <https://store.gettymusic.com/uk/song/gethsemane/>

Jesus had returned to his disciples. Get up, it's time. They got up, unsteady, Peter mumbling incoherently in incomplete sentences and John was rubbing his eyes as Judas and the band of soldiers, vigilantes, and chief representatives of the law approached. Judas felt anxious, but kept reminding himself that he was doing the right thing. Well maybe the wrong thing, but for all the right reasons. He stepped forward to greet him, the same way he always had. Sounding more confident than he felt. “Greetings Rabbi”.

The other disciples were fully awake by now and not sure how to approach the situation. Peter had his hand on his sword, but Jesus came willingly. Wait, that wasn't..

The breath caught in his throat. No. No this wasn't.. Jesus was supposed to... With horror he sank to his knees as the soldiers led Jesus away and the priests nodded a grateful and slightly sinister smile.

He followed at a distance. Maybe it was still okay, Maybe Jesus was just waiting till he got to the Sanhedrin. But the night grew long. As the hours passed, he sagged, realising that Jesus was going to just let it happen. The dawn was approaching, a rooster was crowing somewhere. Peter ran past him. The coins felt like lead in his pocket. He went back to the priests. “I have sinned, I have betrayed innocent blood” They kind of shrugged, It's your responsibility. He tried to return the coins. He couldn't keep them now, no amount of money was worth this. They refused to take them still, so he threw them on the floor and fled, the sound of coins scattering all over the floor and bouncing in his wake. He ran past the procession where Jesus was being led to Pilate.

Jesus' heart ached. His body was racked with pain, and he was beyond exhausted, but he knew Judas would forever be defined by this single choice in his life. Not all the little choices leading up to it. Not the moments of growth and insight, of being in his inner circle, not as someone who Jesus had loved and chosen. The betrayal had hurt him deeply, but his people had been betraying him for years, and he still loved them. Judas had been a good man who had made some dumb choices and got drawn up in the wrong priorities. Listened to the wrong voices, fallen in love with the wrong things, given in to the temptations and justified his selfish ambition with moral and logical reasoning. He had listened, he had learned, he had witnessed the greatness of God, but it had not changed his heart. He had been on guard against everything, perhaps love most of all, and didn't understand how a new way of life, a new kingdom could be born out of love not power. He had been trying so hard to be someone important and admired that love had felt like a liability, not a strength. And then that moment to choose had come, well..

I repent

Youtube : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vHGQkka-SnY>

Lyrics: [https://www.lyricsmode.com/lyrics/s/steve\\_green/i\\_repent.html](https://www.lyricsmode.com/lyrics/s/steve_green/i_repent.html)

-Prayer-