

GOD AND THE DARK TIMES

September 16, 2018 John 18:1-10 by Bob Branch
Experiencing The Passion of Jesus part 1

BIG IDEA: God is working powerfully in crises, trials and suffering—in Jesus and in us.

¹ When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was a garden, and he and his disciples went into it. ² Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. ³ So Judas came to the garden, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and the Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons.

1. God goes back to the PLACE WHERE THINGS WERE BROKEN to fix them.

⁴ Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, “Who is it you want?” ⁵ “Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied.

“I am he,” Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) ⁶ When Jesus said, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground.

⁷ Again he asked them, “Who is it you want?” “Jesus of Nazareth,” they said.

⁸ Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he. If you are looking for me, then let these men go.” ⁹ This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: “I have not lost one of those you gave me.”

2. Jesus knows WHO HE IS, what will happen and how it will turn out—nothing catches him by surprise.

Acts 2:23-24

John 10:18

John 1:11 CSB

“Tell them “I am” sent you.” **Exodus 3:14**

“I am” (John 6:35; 8:12; 10:9; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1; 8:58)

“When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though a dead man.”

Revelation 1:17

¹⁰ Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.) ¹¹ Jesus commanded Peter, “Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?” (Lk. 22:51)

3. Jesus knows that victory comes THROUGH THE CROSS.

“He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.” **Is. 53:5**

- **We all have “garden-experiences”—intersections where God takes us by the hand and walks us through pain, sorrow and suffering.** (2 Cor. 1:8-9; 12:7-10; James 1:2f).
- **We need to acknowledge that God is working in our hardships.** (2 Cor 1:9-10).
- **We mustn’t take matters into our own hands to escape these trials. Instead, we should “inquire of the Lord” to see what instructions he gives us.** (Judg. 20:24; 1 Sam. 14:36; 2 Sam 2:1; Ex. 2:11ff).