

## The Lord's Powerful Sermon In Gethsemane.

Text: Luke 22:49-53

Suggested Hymns:

149, 85, 202, 51, 205

- 1) A brief overview of the text
- 2) The Preacher
- 3) The Audience
- 4) The Message

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Luke 22:49–53, <sup>49</sup> *When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?”* <sup>50</sup> *And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.*

<sup>51</sup> *But Jesus answered and said, “Permit even this.” And He touched his ear and healed him.* <sup>52</sup> *Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs?”* <sup>53</sup> *When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.”* (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Jesus had been betrayed by His disciple Judas. As soon as the traitor's kiss had been given, the mob sprang forward to lay hands on Him.

The disciples who had been willing to die with and for their Master, now thoroughly aroused from their sleepiness, were ready to redeem their pledge and asked: *“Lord, shall we strike with the sword?”* Before the Lord could reply, the tempestuous Peter drew his sword and cut off the ear of the high priest's servant.

After rebuking Peter for his rashness and attempted murder in no mistakable terms, and thus teaching him that the battles of the Lord are not to be fought with weapons of steel, but with the Sword of the Spirit, the Lord embraces this opportunity of once more manifesting His divine majesty by touching the ear of the servant and healing it.

Immediately Jesus addressed the multitude, and thus we find in our text *The Lord's Powerful Sermon in Gethsemane*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

### 1. A Brief Overview Of The Text

Seeing the band of armed men, the disciples are ready to put up a fight. There may have been as many as a hundred men in the mob that came out to arrest Jesus.

So it was a courageous but foolhardy gesture on Peter's part to take them on with his short sword. Just before this, he had been sleeping when he should have been praying. So now he was trying to make up for it.

But he was a fisherman, not a swordsman. When he took a swing at the man who happened to be nearest to him, he almost missed. Instead of inflicting a more serious wound, all Peter managed to do was slice off his ear.

The Gospel of John tells us that the man's name was Malchus. Since John was familiar in the court of the high priest,<sup>1</sup> he would have known Malchus.

Luke, the physician, is the one who tells us that Jesus performed a miracle of healing and reattached Malchus' ear. It is remarkable that Jesus would do that under such circumstances, isn't it?

Although Malchus was one of the men who had come out to arrest him, Jesus healed him. This miracle anticipates His prayer from the cross, "***Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.***"<sup>2</sup>

And so for the rest of his life, every time Malchus touched his ear, he was reminded of that fateful Thursday night in the Garden of Gethsemane, when the Man he had been told to hate, showed kindness to him. Could it be that after Easter he became a believer?

Jesus says, "***all who take the sword will perish by the sword.***"<sup>3</sup> This is not pacifism. The point is that we do not advance the kingdom of God by the use of the sword. The numerous religious wars that have been fought down through the centuries testify to the deep emotions that are stirred up in people by spiritual things.

But all wars waged in the name of Christ are a disgrace to the name of Christ. To attempt to convert people to Christianity by the threat of the sword is no more effective than using the sword to try to compel Christians to give up

their faith. The only weapon Christ has given to His church is His Word, which is *“sharper than any two-edged sword”*<sup>4</sup> the Scriptures tell us.

The real issue between Jesus and the Jewish leaders was His doctrine. *“I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple,”*<sup>5</sup> Jesus reminds them, *“and you did not try to seize me.”*

The fact that they had determined to seize Jesus by treachery, outside of the city, and in the middle of the night, was an admission on their part that Jesus was innocent. They could not refute His doctrine. They were not interested in the truth.

## **2. The Lord’s Powerful Sermon In Gethsemane**

### **The Preacher**

The preacher is Jesus, for we read, *“<sup>52</sup> Then Jesus said.”*

Jesus is the Son of God. He had just proved His divinity by healing the ear of the servant. Jesus also previously showed that He is the Son of God by His omnipotent *“I am He.”*

Jesus is the Prophet sent by God to reveal God’s will to man. Prophecies such as Deuteronomy 18:15, <sup>15</sup> *“The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.*

Jesus was acknowledged as the Son of God by the Father at His Transfiguration. We read in Matthew 17:5, <sup>5</sup> *While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!”*

The final point to note is that Jesus speaks with divine authority. We read in Matthew 7:28–29, <sup>28</sup> *And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, <sup>29</sup> for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.*

## **3. The Lord’s Powerful Sermon In Gethsemane**

### **The Audience**

Firstly, the audience included the representatives of the Church.

There were the chief priests, whose duty it was to bring sacrifices for the people and thus reconcile God.

There were the Captains of the Temple. They were not captains in a military sense, but rather they supervised the guard of priests and Levites, who kept watch by night in the Temple. This was an institution of that went back to the early times of the Old Testament.

We read in 2 Kings 12:9, <sup>9</sup> *Then Jehoiada the priest took a chest, bored a hole in its lid, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one comes into the house of the LORD; and the priests who kept the door put there all the money brought into the house of the LORD.;*

And in 2 Kings 25:18, <sup>18</sup> *And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the second priest, and the three doorkeepers.*

There were also the Elders. These were members of the Sanhedrin, which was the highest church court of the time.

Secondly, the audience included the representatives of the state. This included the soldiers of the Roman government, the Gentiles, and the unbelievers who are the representatives of the children of this world.

Thus we find the entire human race represented in Gethsemane. “Saint” and sinner. Both the “church” and the world have bound Jesus and made Him prisoner.

Thus all human beings have contributed to the death of Jesus, all have sinned. Even the best Christians, even those holding a high office in the Church, are guilty. We read in Romans 3:22–23, *For there is no difference; <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

They Hymnist, Paul Gerhardt wrote,<sup>6</sup>

3.

Who is it that hath bruised Thee?  
Who hath so sore abused Thee  
And caused Thee all Thy woe?  
While we must make confession  
Of sin and dire transgression,  
Thou deeds of evil dost not know.

4.

I caused Thy grief and sighing

By evils multiplying  
As countless as the sands.  
I caused the woes unnumbered  
With which Thy soul is cumbered,  
Thy sorrows raised by wicked hands.

5.

‘Tis I who should be smitten  
My doom should here be written:  
Bound hand and foot in hell.  
The fetters and the scourging,  
The floods around Thee surging,  
‘Tis I who have deserved them well.

#### 4. The Lord’s Powerful Sermon In Gethsemane The Message.

Firstly, Jesus exposes the hostility of the mob which has come to take Him. Our text says, *“Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs?”*

This question was a reply, a protest and a challenge to their riotous and disorderly behaviour. Although this question is addressed to all people in general, the question is addressed to the instigators in particular, to the responsible leaders, the chief priests, and the Elders who had consulted with Judas and conspired to arrest Jesus.

Some of them, the impatient ones, the worst fanatics among them, who could not wait at Jerusalem until the captors returned, had accompanied the expedition. Previously they had kept themselves in the background, but now they come boldly to the front and feast their gloating eyes upon the Lord.

With His usual courage Jesus exposes the injustice of their deed and the exaggeration of their effort to take Him. The apprehension of a thief, robber, or desperate criminal might compel them to go forth with clubs, swords, torches, and justify their creeping through the stillness of the night; but how does He, Jesus, the Saviour, He who has only done good, deserve such treatment ?

Although the Lord knew and predicted that He was to be treated like a criminal, He, nevertheless, felt the disgrace and insult; therefore Jesus says: <sup>53</sup> *When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me.* Jesus had never given them any reason to treat Him as a robber or a thief.

For three years they searched for a flaw in His character and watched for an improper word, but the sharpest of them found nothing. Jesus could challenge them: <sup>46</sup> *Which of you convicts Me of sin?*<sup>7</sup> Even the heavenly Father pronounced Him sinless, saying: *This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*<sup>8</sup>

Whatever Jesus said and whatever He did, He did not say and do in secret, but publicly. Jesus always walked openly, under their very eyes in the Temple. We read in Luke 19:47, that Jesus *was teaching daily in the temple.* Jesus was not a robber, but a Teacher; not a conspirator stirring up the masses, but a Prophet proclaiming the will of God, bringing salvation. And never had they stretched forth hands against Him.

Thirdly, Jesus announces their future doom.

What glory the mob may have found in its cunning plans is dashed to pieces by Christ, for He says in our text, *But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.*

This is the “hour” given to them to have their will against Jesus. Now the *“power of darkness,”* Satan, *“the ruler of the darkness of this world,”*<sup>9</sup> is permitted to do his worst, permitted by a higher power and authority.

For all this had been decreed. So it was determined. The other evangelists inform us that *“all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.”*<sup>10</sup> The far-reaching counsel of God includes the Saviour’s surrender to the enemies. We read in Acts 2:23, <sup>23</sup> *[Jesus], being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death.*

But their success is only temporary. It is only the means of God to an end. It is but an “hour” that Jesus suffers. When God’s plan has been carried out, then the little while of sorrow produces its fruit of never-ending bliss. It is but an

“hour” during which the foe is triumphant, but then follows light and victory without end.

This victory is foretold in Matthew 26:32, <sup>32</sup> *But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.*” And in John 2:19, <sup>19</sup> *Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”*

Let us consider the application for us today. Jesus is still the Prophet sent by God. Through the preaching of the Gospel He reveals the will of the Father. When the Gospel is preached, Christ speaks. Jesus says in Luke 10:16, <sup>16</sup> *He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.*”

We are to listen to Him. As we heard before, Deuteronomy 18:15, <sup>15</sup> *“The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.*

If you are opposing the spreading of the Gospel, opposing the Church, then you are making Christ a prisoner. You may be successful in your effort; but remember that it is only for an “hour,” a little while. In the end it will be of no avail, for even the gates of hell shall not prevail against Christ’s Church.

Are you opposing the Gospel and the Church by not attending, by keeping others away, or by not supporting? Then you have bound Christ.

Repent and be warned by the chief priests, the captains, and the elders of our text! God will require Christ’s blood at your hands. Repent and with the centurion confess: *Certainly this was a righteous man.*<sup>11</sup> Confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and you shall be saved and partake of the fruit of the redemption wrought by Him. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> John 18:15

<sup>2</sup> Luke 23:34

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 26:52

<sup>4</sup> Hebrews 4:12

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 26:55

<sup>6</sup> “Upon the Cross Extended” by Paul Gerhardt, 1607-1676

<sup>7</sup> John 8:46

<sup>8</sup> 2 Peter 1:17

<sup>9</sup> Ephesians 6:12

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<sup>10</sup> Matthew 26:56

<sup>11</sup> Luke 23:47