

Lenten Series: Sounds of the Passion—Lord of Life, Westfield, IN—Ash Wed.2/9/05

Text: Matthew 26: 47-56

Intro: *Ills.: Crocodile Dundee scene “now that’s a knife”*

Theme: When confronted by the temptation to take matters of my life into my own hands, remind myself that it has been redeemed and saved by the hand of God.

Sin always compels us to “seize each day of our life” from the Father’s saving hand

1. In Jesus’ final hours the temptation was great to revert to selfish, self preservation
 1. One of his own was betraying him and the rest deserting him
 2. An aggressive arrest posse had been sent with “deadly force” to apprehend him
 3. Peter foolishly took matters into his own hands precipitating a bloody massacre
2. Electing ourselves as God/Savior, we struggle to control an out-of-control life
 1. Because we are scared to death of death— a human emotion twisted by sin’s fear
 2. Because we don’t trust God to be able to handle a situation outside our control
 3. Foolishly, assuming that we can resume control of a crashing life
 1. **Ills.:** One trouble with earnestness is that those who are possessed by it so often take it as proof certain that they are on God's side.

Surrendering our lives to the Father’s plan for us in Jesus, we actually are delivered

3. Jesus could release the moment of the arrest because he knew . . .
 1. The Father love— which empowered him (*He would at once put at my disposal...*)
 2. The Plan— for man’s salvation and his life and death (*Scriptures...may be fulfilled*)
 3. The Joy — “*who for the joy set before him endured the cross.*” Heb. 12: 2
4. We too can release our redeemed lives into the Father’s hands because we know . . .
 1. *"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine! "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you. "For I am the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior." Is 43:1-3*
 2. The Father’s love — “*nothing can separate us from the love us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*” Rom 8: 39
 3. The Plan— *These whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. Rom 8: 30*
 4. The Joy — *You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever. Psalm 16:11*
5. **Ills.: The One Who Has Gone Before Us**

The One Who Has Gone Before Us

When I was in the marines, the training for commandos included cliff assaults. The theory was that a commando raid should be a surprise, done as quickly and as silently as possible on the area with the lightest defenses. The lightest defense is at the point where attack is least expected. More often than not, it was the cliffs. We would come close to the cliff in our small boats and fire one rocket up through the darkness. Attached to the rocket was a grapnel. Attached to the grapnel was a light rope. When the rocket landed on top of the cliff, the grapnel would lie on the grass. We would then pull it back gently until it caught on something. We hoped it caught on something secure. We had expert climbers. Those guys were like spiders. They would get out of the little boat onto the seaweed-strewn rocks, and scale those cliffs in the dark hanging onto this thin, little rope that was on the end of a grapnel they hoped was hanging onto something secure. A bigger rope trailed behind them. Below, we held onto the rope. When the climber got on the top, he would secure the rope he'd taken up and then give two little tugs on it. The minute the two little tugs came, we jumped out of our boats, cold and wet on the waves and rocks. We would scale the cliffs. It was a hairy experience, except we had utter confidence in the one who'd gone before us. We had utter confidence in the security of the rope he had fastened for us. You could imagine my delight when I discovered that Jesus is called "the one who has gone before," or in the Greek, the "**prodromos**." The **prodromos** was a person who headed a patrol in military maneuvers. He was the one who went ahead and made sure the way was open. I rejoice to tell you that many times we'd find ourselves totally secure on those cliffs because of the utter reliability of the skilled climber. *Citation: Stuart Briscoe, "Handling Your Insecurities," Preaching Today, Tape No. 119.*

Matthew 26:47-56

⁴⁷While He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a large crowd with swords and clubs, who came from the chief priests and elders of the people. ⁴⁸Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him." ⁴⁹Immediately Judas went to Jesus and said, "Hail, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. ⁵⁰And Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you have come for." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him. ⁵¹And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear. ⁵²Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. ⁵³"Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴"How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?" ⁵⁵At that time Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me as you would against a robber? Every day I used to sit in the temple teaching and you did not seize Me. ⁵⁶"But all this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures of the prophets." Then all the disciples left Him and fled.