

Luke Chapter 22 – John Karmelich

1. Let me start with my lesson title, "Having the strength to do what needs to be done". We're now at one of the most famous parts of the bible. Most of us have known since childhood, the stories of Jesus having His last meal with the disciples, the betrayal by Judas, Jesus being arrested in the garden at night and Jesus' various trials after being arrested. So how do we take familiar text and apply it to our lives? My goal in these studies is not to have us learn history, but to learn how we are supposed to apply the bible to our lives. As I studied this text, that title hit me over and over again. Let me explain it from a positive and negative point of history here, and that will lead me to explain how we should apply this to our own lives.
2. Let me start with the negative: Of Jesus' 12 disciples, Judas has been known throughout history as the one who betrayed Jesus. Consider that for about 2,000 years now, nobody alive is named Judas because of this event. That name is forever associated with being a traitor. Judas saw Jesus do many miracles. He saw Jesus bring eyesight to the blind, deaf people hear and dead brought back to life. There is lots of speculation as to why Judas did this. Some think he wanted Jesus to "get the show on the road" and by having Him arrested, it would force Him to either overthrow the government or bring His life to the end. More likely Judas just did what he did as he wanted to have money and power now, and didn't want to follow someone who said He's going to die for the sins of the world. My point is after seeing all of those miracles it still took a lot of courage for Judas to do what he did knowing he'd have to betray someone he'd been with for three years.
3. Then think about Jesus Himself. He dreaded the thought of what He had to go through so much that He sweated blood in fear of what was necessary. I'll explain in this lesson how He or any of us could sweat that way, but my point here is just that Jesus needed the courage to do something difficult. The disciples themselves watched Jesus being arrested in the same spot they've been at for days, now had to run for their lives as they watched Jesus being arrested just for being Him. My point is no matter which story we focus on within this lesson, we read of someone or some people dealing with doing something difficult to do. My main question for us how do we have the strength to do a difficult thing we know we have to face coming up?
 - a) As any adult will tell you, the fear of a thing is always far worse than going through that thing itself. Often we will replay in our mind over and over again how we're going to go through with what we have to do and what the consequences could be. I suspect most of us have had our nightmares of the worst possible scenarios based on fears of what could happen based on what we must face in our future. The question in front of us is how do we get the strength to do what we must do? That's what I see the main characters in this lesson facing and that's what all of us face at times: How to confront what we fear when it's going to happen to us? How do we get past our fears? The standard answer for most of people is "guts". For them It's just about having the guts to do what we must do.
 - b) With that said, what we Christians too easily forget is that there is a God who's in control of every aspect of the world, including our own life. God gave permission for Satan to go through Judas to do what He did. God allowed Peter to betray Jesus even though Peter is famous for saying he'd never deny Jesus. God provided Jesus with the power to do what needed to be done, despite the pain that Jesus was inflicted upon at that time. My point is simply that whatever it is we have to face in life, God is always there to provide for us the strength we need to face whatever it is we have to face.
 - c) OK John, that's easy for you to say, but you don't know what I have to go face. Consider what it is Jesus was about to face and ask yourself if you have it any harder? Realize Jesus relied upon God the Father to work through Him through the arrest, torture and death as we realize that same God wants to give us the strength to do what we have to face.

- d) My point is as we go through some of the most famous stories in world history, don't read them and think, I've heard these stories a million times, why should I waste my time here by reading them again now? Instead I want you to read them with the aspect of how do I get the strength to face what I know I must face? I want us to look at the power the people have in this story, both the hero's and the villains, and ask, how did they do what they did and what can I learn from these stories? In summary, I don't want you to follow with me as I go through these famous stories to learn them again, but to see how God works in the lives of the good and the bad ultimately for His own glory.
 - e) So does this mean God's "pulling the strings" of whatever decision I make in life? No, it's more about realizing God knows all things and we don't. Therefore whatever decision we do make in dealing with our fears, God already knows the outcome. The question we all have to ask is do we want to use our lives for His glory or to fight His will? No matter our answer, God knows what we'll choose to do. What's more so, no matter what the tragedy or what good we choose, ultimately can be used to glorify God if we choose to do so. As we make those tough decisions or face our fears, realize that God wants to share some of His power for us to do what we realize we have to do and give us the strength to do so.
 - f) Therefore, as we go through these stories, consider how God is working behind the scenes of each of these details ultimately for His own glory. What's more so, is God cares for our lives equally as much as wants to guide us for His glory if we're willing to let Him. With that stated, it's now time for the details of this lesson and hopefully learn how He'll help us with our own fears of what we must face in our own lives:
4. Verse 1: Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was approaching, ² and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people.
- a) We left off in the last chapter with Jesus giving a question and answer session about the future of the disciples and the Israelites probably a day or two before the crucifixion. We are less than a day from the key event itself. To explain what the text means by the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Passover, time for a little history:
 - i) Every spring in Israel there's an eight-day holiday festival known as the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It was also called the Passover as that event started this week long feast. It's a little like when we celebrate Christmas and New Year's we may ask family if they're coming home for the holidays. At that time in Israel, it was required for all Jewish people living in Israel to come to Jerusalem for this holiday. In the last lesson, I mentioned a writer who lived at that time named Josephus. He said at one of these holiday festivals over 260,000 lambs were slaughtered. Among their rules, is that one lamb is to be for no less than 10 people and may be up to 20 people. That means there were at least 2,600,000 in Jerusalem at this gathering.
 - ii) What gets a little more complicated in calculating this holiday is that those people who lived in the Lake Galilee area calculated a day from sunrise to sunrise. Those who lived in Jerusalem and southern Israel calculated a day from sunset to sunset. Jesus and His disciples celebrated the Passover based on sunrise to sunrise as most of the disciples were from the Lake Galilee area. My point is they ate that meal in the same 24-hour period, but it was before all those lambs were killed. A point of the prophesy of Jesus is that he'd die at the same time the other lambs were being killed. The idea is Jesus became our own sacrificial lamb as the priests were killing all the other sacrificial lambs for this offering.
 - iii) The purpose of Passover was to remember the time the Israelites left Egypt. The ritual involved things like eating salty food to remember their tears of being slaves in Egypt and sacrificing a lamb to remember how blood was shed to protect them from the curse of God killing the first born sons of everyone who lived in Egypt.

- b) All of that does lead me back to the verses. Remember that the Jewish religious leaders hated Jesus as He was more popular than them and He stopped those leaders from their profit scheme of taking advantage of all the tourists in town. The problem is the religious leaders at that time were more interested in making money than in serving God humbly. The reason Jesus criticized them so roughly is they lacked humility in their service to God. In other words, they were more interested in how they looked in front of others than how they actually acted as far as God was concerned. The point in these verses is that they had such a hatred for what Jesus taught at this point, they wanted Him dead, but because He's so popular, they didn't want to kill Jesus when the crowds were there for this holiday.
 - i) Remember how I said the lesson is about having the strength to do what needs to be done? Well the religious leaders were wondering that themselves as they were literally contemplating murder here in order to keep the status quo going.
- 5. Verse 3: Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. ⁴ And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. ⁵ They were delighted and agreed to give him money. ⁶ He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.
 - a) Time for a quick discussion on who are Satan and Judas. Satan is a real entity. He cannot be everywhere at once but however he travels, apparently he can do it fast. It's important to remember that he can only do what God allows him to do. For example, in the Book of Job, God wanted to test Job to see if he would still honor God even if he lost everything he had. Therefore God allowed Satan to "do his worst" except kill him. The key point of the book isn't that God allows evil or why did Job suffer. It is to show that God is in charge of both good and evil and we must accept His will through both aspects of our lives.
 - b) Judas was one of the 12 disciples. He saw all of Jesus miracles and was even at one point given power to do miracles. However Judas wanted power and wanted Jesus to rule now so Judas can be a part of that power. When Judas figured out that Jesus is going to die for our sins, he figured he won't get rich following Jesus. We read of Satan entering Judas as at this moment both of them wanted to prevent God's will from occurring. It was Satan's idea to use Judas to betray Jesus. In Matthew's account of this story we learn the amount paid for the betrayal was 30 pieces of silver (Matthew 26:15). That fee equals about three month's salary or the price of a slave. It's like Judas was thinking I want some amount of money to make up for the three years I wasted following Jesus. My point is Judas is now actively looking for an opportunity when he could tell the religious leaders where Jesus at a time when there were no crowds around. That way the religious leaders could go arrest Jesus and not have a revolt of the people there for that festival.
 - c) Coming back to my theme of having the strength to do what needs to be done, both God and Satan can provide us with that strength. The key is to discern what is God's will for our lives and try to live accordingly. The bible is there to guide as accordingly. Realize that Judas is still accountable for what he did as he desired to betray Jesus. Think of Satan as guiding Judas as they both wanted the same thing at this moment in history.
- 6. Verse 7: Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. ⁸ Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover." ⁹ "Where do you want us to prepare for it?" they asked.
 - a) Keep in mind that Jesus was very aware that Judas was going to betray him. Now realize that Judas didn't know where they would celebrate the Passover holiday. Jesus secretly sent Peter and John to make arrangements. Because this was a big holiday, a lot of those who lived in Jerusalem year round had rooms for-rent for gatherings like this the same way lots of banquet halls exist today. Speculation is either that Jesus did prearrange this meeting or Jesus as God made it possible for this meeting to take place between two of the disciples and whoever it was they were meeting.

- b) Before I move on, I should mention that not all the events we read of in Luke's account of this part of Jesus' life are in the actual order. Luke was a historian who wrote this about 30 years after it occurred. Luke arranged the order by topic instead of a perfect time line. As we read these events in the other three gospels, the events order isn't exactly the same as it is in Luke. Remember that Matthew and John were two of the disciples. Mark got his information from Peter. To give you an idea of the time line, Luke wrote this account ten years after Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. For example, Luke is brief in describing the last supper, because other gospels and Paul's reference to the issue of communion (1st Corinthians Chapter 11) already covered that in more detail. Luke wanted to emphasize different points than the other gospels and he arranged all of the events of this last day by topic. Know that the timeline of Luke's account is not perfectly lined up with the accounts in the other Gospels even though all the events as described here did happen as such.
 - c) Now that I got that speech out of my system, back to John and Peter traveling through the city to arrange a place for Jesus to eat this meal with the disciples. The question that these two men must have thought is, "Where do we specifically go to arrange this meal?"
- 7. Verse 10: He replied, "As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters,"¹¹ and say to the owner of the house, "The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"¹² He will show you a large upper room, all furnished. Make preparations there."
 - a) Remember how I said Jesus either pre-arranged this meeting or Jesus as God just knew it would occur. Either way it occurred. In that culture it'd be very unusual for a man to be carrying a jar of water as whether you liked it or not, that was considered woman's work back then. Therefore Jesus said, go look for this unusual sight of a man carrying a large jar of water, and follow him to his house. That'll be the place where all the disciples and their families could eat the Passover meal together.
 - b) At this point I need everyone to not think about Leonardo Da Vinci's famous painting of the Last Supper. In that painting everyone sat on one side of the table. In reality, there's probably one or many low tables as everyone sat around them as they ate this meal. The arrangements the disciples had to make were to get all the food and drink requirements. Since all of Israel was in that town for the holiday, I'm guessing it was pretty easy to go to the marketplace to buy what they needed to celebrate that event.
- 8. Verse 13: They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.
 - a) The reason this verse is here is so that we know Peter and John did what they were told to do, and prepared for this meal as per Jesus' instructions.
- 9. Verse 14: When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table.¹⁵ And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."¹⁶ For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God."
 - a) Let's pause to keep in mind that Judas and the other disciples didn't know where they're going to eat this meal until Jesus said, "Come one everyone, follow me as I've prepared a place for us to eat the Passover meal." I mention this as Judas is at this point looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus, and Judas didn't know where this room was until he was told in effect, "walk this way and follow me".
 - b) Now keep in mind both Jesus and all the disciples for that matter having been performing this ritual annually since they were children. Since all but one disciple (Judas) grew up in the Lake Galilee region, they celebrated it "northern style" which was to eat it in the night prior to all of the lambs being slaughtered. What was common was for most people to eat it again the second night with the slaughtered lambs. However, we read in these verses of Jesus is trying to get it across to his followers, "This is it, I'm not going to participate in the 2nd night and this is the last Passover meal I'm going to celebrate before I'm killed." Keep in mind that Jesus was the sacrificial lamb for our sins while the other lambs were killed.

- c) Also keep in mind that Jesus knew this would be difficult. It's like realizing we are about to be martyred. Yes we may sincerely believe in heaven, but we still know we are about to go through a lot of pain before we get there. My point here is simply that Jesus needed to rely upon God the Father's strength to have the courage and the power to do what had to be done here this at event. In the meantime, time for the last supper itself:
10. Verse 17: After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you.¹⁸ For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."
- a) At almost any wedding there are usually a couple of times where a host or another key person gives a toast and everyone drinks to what was said. In a Passover meal, there are four such toasts and Jesus is giving one here. As I said earlier the other gospels give more details about how communion is to be celebrated along with First Corinthians. My point is that Luke decided to keep it brief here to focus on the fact that after Jesus gave thanks for the food and wine, He passed to the disciples the same cup He was drinking out of, for everyone to drink that wine.
 - b) I should also mention here the classic debate of whether this was fresh grape juice or wine at this point. I personally argue for wine and here's why: Grapes are usually harvested in the late summer months. Passover is in the spring. They didn't have refrigerators then so grapes would naturally ferment during that time. Just as grapes were crushed in order to make wine, Jesus is implying He's about to be crushed for the sake of the world's sins. It is another way Jesus is implying He came into the world He created in order to rescue us from the incurable damage done by sin.
 - c) This leads me to another famous question: Several times in the New Testament it says in heaven, life begins there with a big banquet meal. Besides the question of how do we eat and digest food in heaven, why would an eternal relationship with Jesus begin with a big banquet? Part of the idea is to think of a marriage ceremony. It usually begins with a big meal in order to celebrate that wedding. I mention that here, as Jesus is saying that the next time He drinks grape juice/wine will be at that meal with us.
 - d) So does this mean that the banquet in heaven will be like a Passover meal? Do we have to learn all the rituals of that meal to prepare? Yes I do think that meal will be a lot like it's a traditional Passover meal, but I also believe God will make it obvious to us then time how to participate in that meal. Therefore, I wouldn't worry about those details. I always like to recommend that if you ever get a chance to join a Jewish Passover meal, go do so.
 - e) Meanwhile, back to this one Passover celebration 2,000 years ago.
11. Verse 19: And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."
- a) Here we have the famous last supper moment of Jesus taking bread and passing it around to everyone there and telling them "this is my body". For those who don't know, this is a famous controversy over the last 2,000 years. Roman Catholics teach that when we eat of communion we literally eat of Jesus body and the "wafers" become His body. At the time of the Reformation, Martin Luther taught it was "like" His body was being transformed in the bread pieces. Most Protestant's today hold the view that just as Jesus said things like, "I am the door and I am the true vine" at different points, Jesus isn't being that literal, but was being figurative as He was describing taking the communion. What we do all agree upon is the idea of taking communion seriously, and realizing to take it is to be part of the Christian community and fellowship. All that means is when we take it, we think about what Jesus did for us by taking away our sins as we eat that bread together.
12. Verse 20: In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."
- a) Here we get "Part 2" where Jesus is trying to get across to them that just as He'll be killed for everyone's sins, so one must drink the wine or grape juice to remember what He did.

- b) Again, we can get into the classic debate about whether or not the drink literally becomes the blood of Christ, but I'll argue that just as the disciples did not literally drink the blood of Jesus, He was being figurative here and not literal. What is important is that Jesus is trying to get the idea across that He is about to die. If nothing else, it shows that He's well aware of His future fate, and it counters the false idea that Jesus was a good man whose plan went "horribly wrong" and has to suffer what wasn't planned. More proof of that is in the next few verses.
13. Verse 21: But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table.²² The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed, but woe to that man who betrays him."²³ They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.
- a) Remember that Judas snuck off probably the day before to meet with the Jewish religious leaders to figure out how to betray Jesus. My point here is, "The jig is up". Judas is now aware that Jesus knew of his plan. In other words, Judas really feared for his life here, as he knew Jesus was aware of Judas' betrayal plans. My point is Judas wanted to wait until after the holiday is over, to betray Jesus so the religious leaders could arrest him when the crowds weren't around. Now that Jesus in effect exposed Judas, he realized he had to do it quickly to prevent being killed for being a traitor. It shows how Jesus was in control of all things including the time frame of all the events of this story.
- b) Next we get Jesus making a short one-verse speech about what will happen to Judas for betraying Jesus. This text brings up the issue of our personal responsibility compared to whatever demonic forces do work in conjunction with one's will. It's like the old joke of "You can't blame me, the devil made me do it". Yes Jesus knew Judas would betray him, but when we are in front of God, we can't say, "Yes, but it turned out for God's glory the evil things we have done". Just as we can't go to a courtroom and ask for forgiveness if a good thing results from a crime we commit.
- c) The final verse effectively says, "Jesus knew what's going on, but the disciples themselves didn't know who is the traitor." That's why they begin to ask who would do such a thing? We don't read of Judas fleeing the room in Luke's account but we do in John's account. In John 13:27, we read of Jesus telling Judas to "do what you plan to do quickly". Then Judas left the room to plan the betrayal. The point is the other disciples didn't realize why Judas left the room and didn't figure it out until later in the story.
14. Verse 24: Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest.²⁵ Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors.²⁶ But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.²⁷ For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.
- a) It's almost comical how the disciples battle over who's the most important if it wasn't so sad. What is logical is they thought about who would betray Jesus and it turned into an argument over who is greatest apostle. One can just see any one of these men thinking, I could never betray Jesus as I'm the most loyal of all of us. It's a little like realizing that the hardest thing to kill is our ego's as we always want to do things our way.
- b) Everyone know the expression, a teachable moment? That's what we have here. In other gospels, this is the moment where Jesus washes the disciples feet in order to show them to be great as a Christian means to be the lowest of servants. If you stop to realize when we are most likely to sin, it is usually when we insist on doing things our way. To truly be a follower of Jesus is always about putting the needs of others above our own needs. That is essentially Jesus point here. I admit, that is hard, as we usually want to do things our way. This too, leads me back to my lesson title. It's not a matter of toughing it out and saying, "I'll force myself to do it your way", but trusting in His power, to serve others.

- c) Christianity to me is about looking for opportunities to be of service to others. It doesn't mean for example that it is always our turn to do the dishes and let other people walk all over us. The point is we lead by example and the greatest example we can be is when we are in service to others. It doesn't mean we have to demand compliments for our service or expect rewards for every little thing we do for someone else. It means that we always should be looking at situations and thinking, "how can I be of service to others here? One of my favorite little prayers before I go to church is for God to give me opportunities to be of service to others there. I've been taught the 10 most important minutes at church is the 10 minutes before and after the service when we can lead by example and be of service to others at such occasions. It may be as simple as saying hello to a stranger or holding the door for someone. Having a servant attitude carries through the day. Truthfully, once we learn the idea of service, it's enjoyable. We can smile knowing that we helped someone in their lives a little.
 - d) The interesting thing about service is we get rewarded with more service. The concept of Jesus as the king over our lives will continue in the next life. God set up the husband to be the leader over the wife (not my idea, but God's), so if we Christians are all the "Bride of Christ" (See Revelation 21:2,9) that's another clue that we are His servants. I believe in heaven we don't just sit there all day. That would be boring. I suspect whatever it is we do in heaven, it will involve service as there is joy in serving others. If heaven is full of joy than we can expect being of service there. Jesus said in these verses to be great in heaven is all about learning to be a servant of all. I don't know exactly what that means eternally, but if Jesus says "greatness" means being a lowly servant and He's in charge of my life, then a lowly servant it is.
 - e) Speaking of heavenly rewards and service, let's look at the next three verses:
15. Verse 28: You are those who have stood by me in my trials. ²⁹ And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, ³⁰ so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
- a) I can just see the disciples thinking, "OK, now you're talking!" Instead of all of this talk of being a lowly servant, we each get to sit on throne chairs while everyone in the history of the nation of Israel is to suffer or get rewarded based on what we say". My ego would go up a bunch of notches if Jesus said that to me.
 - b) It's time to speculate a little about what heaven is like based on these verses and others in the bible. Revelation Chapter 4 talks of 24 thrones in God's temple and those who sat in those chairs throw down their crowns to God. That act is a sign of submission to realize that all we have is due to God. My question here is, why are there 24 chairs in Revelation and here we have Jesus saying the disciples sit judging the 12 tribes of Israel? While I'm at it, what about the idea of say multitudes of people all dining with Jesus? How is that going to work anyway? That's why I'm obsessed with the idea that in heaven, we must exist in more than three dimensions so that many can sit in 24 chairs judging those who want to be in heaven forever and we judge with God whether or not they truly want to serve God for all of eternity or not. That's why being a servant is all about putting other's needs in front of our own, so we can learn to judge people by those standards.
 - i) The short version is I believe the church occupies the 24 chairs and part of what we do in heaven is judge people based on what they did with their time for God.
 - c) Let me try to explain this another way: To be a servant of God does not mean that after we die, we get to kick back and think, "I'm tired of serving others, now I just want people to serve me for all of eternity." Wrong attitude. Being of service is a reward all to itself as we feel the joy of making a difference in other's lives. I'm convinced that some people are going to enjoy heaven far more than others. If we enjoy being of service to others that joy will continue in the next life.

- d) So what about those throne chairs? Do all Christians sit there or just the 11 apostles, plus say Paul? Why does Revelation describe 24 chairs and not 12? In the book of Chronicles, a lot of things are divided up into 24 divisions for service (See 1st Chronicles 23-28) for examples of this. My point is just as we all get opportunities to serve on earth so we get opportunities to serve in heaven. I'm not sure how it's going to work in heaven. While Jesus does give us clues as to what heaven is like, the bible is mainly designed as a guide as to how to live our lives here on earth. My point is there are rewards in heaven based on being a good servant for Jesus. What we do know is that we can have joy in our lives now, by serving others and we get rewards in heaven for serving others, so with a double set of rewards for that service, we serve and be grateful for the joy we get to do so.
 - e) As to how that works practically in heaven, we'll let God worry about that as we've got enough to worry about now just focusing on humbling ourselves and constantly getting our ego's out of the way so we can be of service to others.
 - f) In the meantime, it's time for Jesus to focus on Peter for a moment:
16. Verse 31: "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."
- a) It's interesting to consider that since Jesus renamed Simon to Peter, we never read of Jesus referring to Peter by his old name of Simon, except for right here. Why is that? Peter did not lose his salvation here. I don't think it's possible to lose one's salvation. What Jesus is saying here in effect is, "Haven't you learned by now? Your new name that I want you to live up to is Peter, meaning rock as in stability. Your old name Simon means shifting sand as you are torn between doing your will versus doing God's will for your life.
 - b) So what does it mean when it says, "Satan asked to sift you like wheat?" First of all, it tells us Jesus is aware of all things and He knew Satan wants to turn Peter away from God. It also means Satan wanted to turn Peter and all the disciples away from following Jesus.
 - i) Let me put it this way: If Satan could get the disciples to think, "This has been a big waste of three years, as Jesus is going to die and despite the miracles, He can't rescue us from our sins", then in effect Satan wins. That's because the church can't grow if there are no disciples to spread the word about Jesus. That's why Satan's goal is always to make us ineffective witnesses for Jesus. He can't take away our salvation, but He can and does always work to drive us away from God by having us do our will and not God's will at any moment in time.
 - ii) Therefore, Satan wanted to make the disciples ineffective witnesses for Jesus and He is aware of that fact here. Notice that Jesus says at the end of Verse 32 "when" (not if, but when) Peter turns back to God, strengthen (encourage) the believers.
 - iii) If you read Peter's two epistles, it's all about encouraging us through the trials we have to face as believers. If you read about Peter in the early chapters of the Book of Acts, he's encouraging church growth and standing strong for Jesus. My point is Peter lived up to the "rock" nickname Jesus gave him. Why? Verse 32:
 - c) In Verse 32 it says that Jesus prayed for Peter. This is Jesus in His role as our High Priest as He intercedes for us in front of God. Let me explain this another way: Jesus knows we will sin and mess up. Satan who has access to God's throne says in effect, "You and I are not worth saving." Jesus responds that He's praying for us and encouraging us when we fail and life isn't going well. That's why I argue Christians can't lose their salvation.
17. Verse 33: But he replied, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death."
- a) Like I said earlier, our ego is the last thing to die. The only way we can have the strength to do the right thing is by relying upon His power and not our willpower to stand up and make a difference for Him.
 - b) To state the obvious, Peter is still going to deny Jesus three times as the next verse tells us and most of us know our bible basics. Speaking of which:

18. Verse 34: Jesus answered, "I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me."
- a) There is an old Christian view that people are more likely to stumble in our "strong suits" than our weak suits. Let me explain it this way: Peter was known as the kind of person who would "shoot (speak) first and ask questions later". In other words, he was known for his boldness. Yet Jesus will say that when it comes to boldness, Peter will fail three times before the next day begins at sunrise.
 - b) What most people don't realize is that it wasn't like Peter just denied Jesus three times in a row. It's more like three times during a several-hour period while Jesus went through His three separate trials that I'll get to in a bit. Right now Jesus is telling Peter how the future will occur before it actually happens.
 - c) In the meantime Jesus wants to remind Peter how he got through the past simply by his trust in Jesus:
19. Verse 35: Then Jesus asked them, "When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?" "Nothing," they answered.
- a) If you recall back in Chapter 9, the disciples were sent on a short-term mission trip and didn't take any supplies with them. The purpose of that trip was to develop their trust that God would provide for them. Jesus brought that up here as Peter wants to prove to Jesus that he can be brave based on his own strength, and not by trusting God to guide our lives in the first place. Also notice the word "they" in this verse. Apparently all the disciples thought they were "good enough" based on their own strengths and abilities.
 - b) What is implied here is that when Jesus asked Peter to pray with him three times in the garden before this exchange, that "I don't feel like" three times ties to the fact that Peter will deny Jesus three times.
 - c) In the meantime, Jesus is still focusing on how the disciples should act once Jesus will not be around in the near future.
20. Verse 36: He said to them, "now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one."
- a) What's implied here is awhile the disciples had Jesus there with them, they didn't have to worry about everything from being arrested to being stoned for standing by Jesus. Now that Jesus is about to leave them, Jesus is simply saying "pack accordingly" as our job as Christians is to be a witness for Him and that may be living on the run as it soon maybe a death sentence for them to be a Christian. That in effect is what Verse 36 is all about.
21. Verse 37: It is written: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors'; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment."
- a) Jesus is quoting Isaiah 53:12 here and claiming that verse is written about Him. OK, so what does it mean? Some say it's because he was crucified between two other thieves. I disagree. More likely it refers to the fact that Jesus who had no sin became sin for us. It is to show for those who accept the idea that the Old Testament was written centuries before the New Testament was even conceived that much of it speaks of Jesus. If you've never studied Isaiah Chapter 53 along with Psalm 22, those are great places to study about Jesus dying for our sins written centuries before this event actually occurred.
 - b) Of course Jesus is well aware that this passage in Isaiah is written about Him. The reason Jesus is stating this is so the disciples and us can read those references as they tie to Jesus.
22. Verse 38: The disciples said, "See, Lord, here are two swords." "That is enough," he replied.
- a) The simple point is the disciples had two swords on them and Jesus didn't say to go buy a few more. He's either implying "that's enough" or "enough of that talk".
 - b) What's also being implied is that Jesus is not saying to make converts by force. He's just saying having a weapon for defensive purposes is ok, but not for offensive purposes.
 - c) With that said, it's now "prayer time":

23. Verse 39: Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him.⁴⁰ On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation."⁴¹ He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed,⁴² "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."⁴³ An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.⁴⁴ And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.
- a) My first question about this text is why did Jesus need to pray? If He is God, why does He need God the Father's help here? What I suspect is happening here is that Jesus as a human was limited in His power. In other words He could do miracles if it was God the Father's will. Still as a man, He was still limited to what He could do. The purpose of the prayer comes back to my lesson title of having the strength to do what needs to be done.
 - i) Remember what God is asking Jesus to do, not just physically die on the cross, but to literally become sin for us (see 2nd Corinthians 5:21). What's more is that for the first time in Jesus "history" as being God, He's going to be separated from God the Father. That fear of separation is what's driving Him to prayer here.
 - b) What Jesus is essentially praying is, "Is this really necessary?" Can any person be saved by being good enough for God? What we must remember is that God is perfect and for us to spend eternity with a perfect God, we have to be perfect ourselves. That is why all of this is necessary. Yes it is difficult for Jesus to do, but it's also necessary in order for us to live forever with God the Father. Verse 44 makes the point that Jesus prayed so hard that blood vessels burst mixing blood with sweat. (A doctor like Luke would know this.)
 - c) Now, a word about the angel appearing. Stop and realize we haven't read of any angels in the Gospels since the birth of Jesus. Having angels appear here is the disciples' proof that God the Father did answer Jesus prayer.
24. Verse 45: When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow.⁴⁶ "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation."
- a) All of this leads me back to Peter and the disciples needing to pray. I'm positive that if Peter had joined in those prayers he wouldn't have denied Jesus. Yes there is a connection between the fact Peter failed to pray three times and the famous triple denial.
 - b) Let me talk a little about prayer and temptation. Part of the Lord's prayer is that that God help us not to be tempted. To state the obvious, it is not enough as we as humans don't have the strength on our own to resist temptation. While prayer is essential to getting our focus off of temptation, it's also important to learn to walk away. The bible clearly teaches that when we face such situations God cares too much about us to leave us there and does provide a way to escape it if we're willing to take it. (See 1st Corinthians 10:13.)
25. Verse 47: While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him,⁴⁸ but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"
- a) One has to remember that this is the middle of the night. I don't think Jesus dressed or looked anything special. That's why one of Jesus' own disciples had to pick him out for the soldiers to arrest him. Remember that Judas was already planning to betray Jesus. He wanted to wait until after the holiday was over, but since the "jig was up" and Jesus knew what he was going to do. Judas did this know as he knew were Jesus stayed every night and figured, this is a good time to do this as the big crowds are not around.
 - b) The kiss itself was a signal to the soldiers who in the dark couldn't tell who was who. It is amazing to think that a person who was loyal to Jesus for three years and saw Jesus do all sorts of miracles, would affectionately kiss Him to signal His betrayal. This is why God is going to judge us, as we can't read people's thoughts, we can only judge behavior.

26. Verse 49: When Jesus' followers saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, should we strike with our swords?"⁵⁰ And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear.⁵¹ But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him.
- a) Remember a few verses back when the disciples and Jesus were discussing the swords? Here we read of Peter taking action into his own hands as if Jesus was not God and Jesus needed Peter's help here. I'm sure Peter was aiming for the man's head. (We know from John's gospel this was Peter who did this). It's also interesting to consider that this is the last miracle we read of in the Gospels of Jesus curing His attacker here. It's never God's intent to make converts by force, but only by explaining the Gospel message to people.
27. Verse 52: Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders, who had come for him, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs?"⁵³ Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour-when darkness reigns."
- a) Picture Jesus in the middle of a garden on a hillside overlooking Jerusalem. I picture the disciples there with Jesus and maybe their wives and children. My point is that this is not an armed and dangerous group to confront. The reason Judas brought this contingency is that they didn't know what to expect. This group didn't know what weapons the disciples had among them. Besides that they'd seen Jesus do all sorts of miracles and didn't know if Jesus had any powers to stop them. Therefore, they figured a show of force was needed to arrest Jesus in the first place.
 - b) With that said notice Jesus didn't put up or fight or tell His followers to fight. Instead He just pointed out to them that He never acted violently when He was at the temple, so why would He act differently now? What Jesus is doing is preventing His disciples from also being arrested. It's like Jesus is saying, "I know why you're here as in effect I did arrange this by revealing to Judas I knew of the betrayal. He knew where I stay at nights, so "Do what you came to do, I won't resist as this is your time as I arranged it to be your time."
 - c) The point for you and me is when things are at their worst is when we need to recall that God is aware of all things, the horrible as well as the good. When I hear of bad news for someone I know, my favorite prayer is "Help them to learn what You want them to learn from that situation". I know that doesn't always bring a lot of comfort and as one who's had his own share of struggles in life. However, knowing that there is a God who's there through such times gives us the strength to deal with whatever we have to face in life.
 - d) The text doesn't mention what happened to the disciples when Jesus was arrested but the other Gospel accounts mention that the soldiers let them go as they only had orders to go arrest Jesus so they followed their own orders and Jesus' order to let the others go.
 - e) Meanwhile it's time to start Jesus' trials.
28. Verse 54: Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance.⁵⁵ But when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them.⁵⁶ A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, "This man was with him."
- a) I should start with a few words about Jesus' literal trials. I could give you a long list of ways that the trials were violations of Jewish laws and customs. Let's just say that the Jewish leadership wanted Jesus dead and didn't care about their laws as they wanted Jesus dead no matter what the law says. Remember it's still the middle of the night. The high priest was a very corrupt man whose father in law is the power behind the throne. With that said, it's time to focus on Peter for a bit.
 - b) The text mentions a servant girl here. Most likely she worked for the high priest and now is trying to get a reward for turning in the man who she recognized as being one of Jesus' disciples there by the fire a short distance from where Jesus is being tried.

29. Verse 57: But he denied it. "Woman, I don't know him," he said. ⁵⁸ A little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." "Man, I am not!" Peter replied. ⁵⁹ About an hour later another asserted, "Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean."
- a) Here we have the famous three denials by Peter. Remember my lesson title about having the strength to do what needs to be done? Peter lost that strength here. Here's Peter who is famous in the Gospels for his boldness, yet in front of a young girl and whoever else is in this crowd, is too afraid to say he was with Jesus. Again, I love to point out that Jesus asked Peter to pray with Him three times and we have the famous triple denial. My point is having the strength to do what is difficult to do does not come by willpower or natural ability, but by asking God to give us the boldness to do what needs to be done and doing what we have to do based on our trust in Him. That's why in Acts Chapter 4 the disciples prayed for boldness and we should pray for it when we need to do what's right.
 - b) To state the obvious, Peter feared being killed and it's our natural instinct to do what we have to do to preserve our life. Earlier Peter said he's willing to die if necessary for Jesus yet when "push came to shove" his fears got the best of him. Again, that's why we need to pray for God to give us the boldness to do what we need to do to overcome our fears.
 - c) For those interested in the technical details here, Peter was from the Lake Galilee area in the northern part of Israel and those who were from Jerusalem recognized his accent. As I said earlier, this was not three denials in a row, but all came during the night period when Jesus was facing His illegal trials in front of the Jewish religious leaders.
30. Verse 60: Peter replied, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹ The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." ⁶² And he went outside and wept bitterly.
- a) Notice that wherever Peter was, and wherever Jesus was, they could see each other. As Jesus was listening to the religious leaders make false accusations against Him, Jesus as God knowing all things, looked at Peter as if to say, "I know what you're doing. I'm God in case you forgot." Just to make all of us feel a little guilty, it's that reminder that what we do in secret, God is well aware of as we can't hide from Him.
 - b) So why is this story included? Why embarrass Peter eternally with this story? I think it's here to remind us about our dependence upon God in order to do the right thing instead of trying to do things based on our willpower. I also think it's here to show that Peter did not lose his salvation, just an opportunity to be a witness for Jesus during these events. An underlying point of the whole lesson is we need God's power in order to do His will.
 - c) Meanwhile, it's time to focus on Jesus again as He's on trial in front of religious leaders.
31. Verse 63: The men who were guarding Jesus began mocking and beating him. ⁶⁴ They blindfolded him and demanded, "Prophecy! Who hit you?" ⁶⁵ And they said many other insulting things to him.
- a) One has to study all four gospels to get the full details of the various trials Jesus faced. A short version is during the night, Jesus was first brought to the "mafia boss", the father of the current high priest who ran the religious system that got his family rich. Then Jesus was taken to the current high priest's house who was one of the bosses' sons. There was a third Jewish trial at daybreak to "sort of make it legal" as to what charge to make against Jesus. Remember that this family wanted the Romans to kill Jesus so they wouldn't take the blame as Jesus is still popular at this time. (My thanks to John MacArthur. Who gives a wonderful detailed study of all the events of this trial, if you want further reading here.)
 - b) You have to understand the "mocking" here. This group understood that Jesus claimed to be God, so they blindfolded Him and asked "who hit you" hoping that Jesus would show them more proof that He is who claims to be. Jesus' silence here spoke of the illegality of this trial and that this group wasn't interested in the truth to begin with.

32. Verse 66: At daybreak the council of the elders of the people, both the chief priests and teachers of the law, met together, and Jesus was led before them. ⁶⁷ "If you are the Christ, " they said, "tell us." Jesus answered, "If I tell you, you will not believe me, ⁶⁸ and if I asked you, you would not answer. ⁶⁹ But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God."
- a) Luke moves us from the "pre-trials" of the chief priests to a group of judges known as the "Sanhedrin". Think of them as the top judges in the land. The pre-trials were to figure out what charges could be brought up in front of the Sanhedrin. Since Jesus wasn't guilty of anything other than claiming to be God, that is what He was put on trial for. The problem later will be, how do we get the Romans to execute Him, since claiming to be God is not a punishable offense all to itself to the Romans. However we'll get to that in the next lesson.
 - b) Also remember that this trial was illegal as Jesus wasn't allowed any witnesses to testify on His behalf. This is about "pronouncing Him guilty so we can figure out how to turn Him over to the Romans so He'll stop preaching against us religious leaders".
 - c) Jesus stated the obvious point that even if He did say who He was, they wouldn't believe Him in the first place. We learn from other Gospel accounts the only reason He answered them in the first place is in effect they invoked God's name to get Him to tell the truth.
 - d) All of this leads me to Verse 69. Jesus says He'll be seated at God's right hand. How can He prove that? I'm convinced everyone who rejects Jesus will be forced to see Him after they die for rejecting Him. Part of being sent to hell is to realize why. That's why we read in Philippians 2:10 that Paul says every knee will bend to Jesus. What's implied is we'll all do it either by free will or by force. Those who are forced to do so include this group who are condemning Jesus in this trial.
 - i) Let me also discuss the literalness of this. God is not an old man sitting in heaven next to Jesus. However, the resurrected Jesus will always be fully man as well as fully God, so somehow Jesus will literally have a throne in heaven and somehow we'll know God the Father is there just as Jesus is literally there as well.
 - e) I can just hear many of you thinking, "I know all of this. Why should I read further." Not to relearn the trials of Jesus, but so that when we are facing our own trials, we can have the boldness to do what is right because we ask God to give us that boldness to start with.
33. Verse 70: They all asked, "Are you then the Son of God?" He replied, "You are right in saying I am." ⁷¹ Then they said, "Why do we need any more testimony? We have heard it from his own lips."
- a) I have to admit, I want to ask Jewish people, "What would you do if you were part of that Sanhedrin group that condemned Jesus?" Today most would say, "He had a God-complex and should have been let go as He was a nut". The follow up question is what about the evidence of the resurrection? Why was a body never found? The reason we have all the gruesome details about the events around Jesus death is to prove the case that He really did rise from the dead. Assuming you and I already believe that, the point for us is about having the boldness to be a witness for Jesus based on all the evidence. It's about using the time and resources God has given us to make a difference for Him. Suppose you say, "I'm too scared to do anything for Jesus". That is why I wrote this lesson, so all of us can realize that boldness is not based on a gift we have or our courage, but about asking God to emboldened us so we can make a difference for Him in this world. With that said, let me close in prayer so I can pray for boldness:
34. Father, give us the boldness so that we can use the most valuable thing we own, our time to make a difference for You in the world around us. Thank You for teaching us the evidence that exists to prove who You are and why Jesus came into this world. Give us the boldness to use our time and what talents you've given us so that we can make that difference. Help us with whatever we have to deal with at the moment and guide our lives for Your glory. We ask this in Jesus name, Amen.