

# Matthew 26:47-68

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Preacher: David Moser

[0:00] I invite you to turn to Matthew chapter 26. It's going to be great. I'm going to switch to Matthew chapter 26 with you as well.

We are going to continue our series in the book of Matthew. As I scroll there. We're going to start today in verse 47.

We're going to read through verse 68. We're going to see two scenes. They're going to tell one story together.

The two scenes are first the arrest of Jesus. And then the sham trial at the high priest's palace. The one story that we're going to see between the two of them.

The big idea that we're going to draw out today is this. God's ways are not our ways. He does not meet might with might.

[1:39] He doesn't fight fire with fire. Because he doesn't need to. And so there is a different kind of life. That he calls his people.

Us. To live as we follow after our Lord Jesus Christ. So. I'm going to pray again. I'm going to turn this headphone thing off now.

We're just all over the place. Today. All right. There we go. I'm going to pray. And then we're going to dig into God's word. Lord.

May the words of my mouth. And the meditations of all our hearts. As we look to your word. Lord may they be acceptable in your sight.

Will you change us? Will you change me? By. Your word and by your spirit. Today. We pray this in Christ's name.

[2:41] Amen. Coming into today's passage. What we have seen. Most recently in Matthew's gospel. Is that Jesus has celebrated the Passover feast.

With his disciples. And he has instituted the new covenant. And given us the covenant sign. The Lord's supper. And then he has crossed the Kidron Valley.

To the Mount of Olives. To pray. For us. And then. And actually I'm going to back up. Into verse 46. Into that last passage.

The last thing he says. To his disciples. He said rise. Let us be going. See. My betrayer is at hand. While he was still speaking. Judas. Came.

One of the twelve. And with him. A great crowd. With swords and clubs. From the chief priests. And the elders of the people. Now the betrayer. That is Judas. Had given them a sign.

[3:40] Saying. The one I will kiss. Is the man. Seize him. And he came up to Jesus. At once. And said. Greetings rabbi. And he kissed him. Jesus said to him.

Friend. Do what you came to do. And they came. Laid hands on Jesus. And seized him. And behold. One of those. Who are with Jesus.

Stretched out his hand. And drew his sword. And struck the servant. Of the high priest. And cut off his ear. He wasn't aiming at his ear. Then Jesus said to him.

Put your sword. Back into its place. For all who take the sword. Will perish. By the sword. Do you think that. I cannot appeal. To my father. And he will at once.

Send me more than. Twelve legions. Of angels. But how then. Should the scriptures. Be fulfilled. That it must be so. At that hour. Jesus said to the crowds.

[4:35] Have you come out. As against a robber. With swords and clubs. To capture me. Day after day. I sat in the temple. Teaching. And you did not seize me. But all this.

Has taken place. That the scriptures. Of the prophets. It might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples. Left him. And fled. One of Jesus.

Own disciples. Who walked with him. For three years. Shared meals with him. Heard every sermon. He ever preached. Witnessed. All of his miracles. Soldiers. To arrest him. For no crime. And he identifies.

Jesus. To the soldiers. With a kiss. Now that kiss. Would have been. A customary greeting. For friends. In the ancient Near East. As common. As our handshakes.

[5:34] Were before COVID. But also. A more intimate gesture. Than a handshake. Is in the western world. Which is why. Luke.

In his gospel. Records. An additional detail. Jesus. Said to Judas. His companion. Judas. Would you. Betray. The son of man.

With a kiss. Now. It's difficult. To know. With how many. Soldiers. He came. To betray.

Jesus. How many. Soldiers. Judas. Was guiding. Between the four. Gospel writers. We understand. That there were some. Of the Jewish temple guard. As well. As some. Roman soldiers.

There. And. As we go through. The next week. Just a quick side note. As we go through. The next several weeks. As we're looking. At the. The passion. Of our Lord. There are going to be.

[6:27] A number of times. Where we see the Jewish leaders. Acting. Terribly. And. There has been. A regrettable. And lamentable. History. Of some Christians. Being anti-Semites.

Because of this. That's not. Jesus. Heart. Right. He's just said. Just a couple. Days. Prior to this. Right. Oh. Jerusalem. Jerusalem. How I would have gathered you.

To myself. Like a mother bird. Gathers her young. Right. That his heart is. For the Jewish people. The apostle Paul. It talks in. The book of Romans. About how he.

Longs. For his countrymen. Right. His kinsmen. According to the flesh. As he puts it. Right. So. There is a. Heart. God's heart. Is set. Towards.

Abraham's descendants. And. What we see. Here. Is that the people. Are being. Well. First off. This is all. Of God's confrontation.

[7:23] Against. Wicked shepherds. Among his flock. Which is something. That has been. Throughout the prophets. Something that God has said. That he hates. Bad. Shepherds. And so.

He is. Confronting.! Them. And so. What we're seeing here. Are not. An evil people. A terrible people. To be despised. But terrible leaders.

Who are. Going. Again. Who are. Being. Terrible shepherds. Against the people. So. We'll probably. Mention that again. In the next. Couple weeks. As well. But. Yeah. That's. Anti-semitism. Completely. Off the table. In case you were wondering. And so. We see here. Judas. Has joined up with them. And. Even though.

Judas. Is the traitor. Betraying him. And even though. There's a great crowd. Of soldiers. Arrayed. Against him. Jesus.

[8:21] Main. Conflict. In this passage. Isn't with Judas. And it isn't with the soldiers. Where is his attention given? It's with Peter.

We. Matthew doesn't name a Peter here. But John does. We know that it's Peter. The apostle. Who. Is the one who grabs the sword. The confrontation.

At the center of this passage. Is with. Peter. His own disciple. Jesus said to him. Put your sword. Verse 52. Back into it. It's place. Right.

Because. He's not actually. Like there's no conflict. Really. With the soldiers. Right. He says in himself. The armies of heaven. Are his to command. On the last day.

We read. In Revelation. Chapter 19. He will end. His enemies. Much like he created the world. With a word. There is no contest here.

[9:22] A dust might. Has. Has a better chance. Against you. Than these soldiers. Had against Jesus. If he. Was determined. To fight.

But in fact. In fact. He was determined. Instead. Not to fight. But to serve. And to give his. Life as a ransom. For many. So it was actually.

Peter. Who stood against him. Most. In that moment. Instead. He tells. Peter. That he's here. To fulfill.

The scriptures. Which are. In fact. His own word. He. He doesn't fight back. He doesn't. He doesn't need to. And he doesn't intend to. And he instructs.

Peter. Not. To advance. His cause. The cause. Of the kingdom. The cause. Of the gospel. The cause. Of Christ. by force. I love what J.C. Ryle once said about that sentiment there. He said the sword, we learn from this passage, that the sword is not to be used in the propagation and the maintenance of the gospel. Christianity is not to be enforced by bloodshed and belief in it extorted by force.

[10:39] Happy would it have been for the church if this sentence, the sentence that Jesus spoke here, had been more frequently of attempting to change men's religious opinions by compulsion, penalties, imprisonment, and death. And with what effect? The pages of history supply the answer.

Friends, we cannot compel saving faith. I hope that sounds obvious. You can't hold a knife to someone and you can't force someone into that. It has to be borne up out of their hearts.

Right? It might even, first it might sound obvious, but it also might sound irrelevant to us. Right? After all, who goes around here, you know, with a weapon telling people to worship Jesus?

If you do, please stop. But we might be a little bit more like Peter than we might like to admit.

See, Jesus says that the way of force, the way of compulsion, is not the way of his kingdom. We can't compel saving faith. Just think with me.

[11:54] What is saving faith? Saving faith, the Bible says, is repentant faith. The command over and over is repent and believe.

That repentant part, it means that we recognize, that I recognize my sin as sin. And I recognize that it is against God. And therefore, it's awful. And I reject my sin. I hold in my heart an attitude that is against my own sin.

And the faith part of that, right, begins with a knowledge of who Jesus is and a belief in what he's done. And it turns to trusting him. Putting our faith in him. Placing our faith on him. Entrusting ourselves to him as Savior and as Lord.

Now, tell me, what part of that can happen by force? None of it. And I'm not just talking about physical force.

Any kind of force. Can psychological manipulation or shaming someone or can any other kind of coercion bring forth love for the Savior?

[13:24] Can I cause any element of saving faith by coercion in an unbeliever's heart?

Or in my child's heart? Parents take notice, right? We may feel, parents, pressure to have, you know, perfect little Christian children, right?

For all the nice church people to see. What do we do when we feel pressure? We apply pressure, right?

And there is absolutely a legitimate pleading to our children, right? I love you. I want what's best for you.

Won't you turn to Christ? Absolutely. But there is also a misguided and ungodly parental rigidity that enforces Christendom on our children.

[14:28] That can outwardly look like a good Christian home, but inwardly resembles something from a dystopian novel, right? An enforcing groupthink.

Crushing out questions or confusions or doubts about faith. And that is a recipe not for a Christian child, but for a child who hates the things of Christ.

Our aggression can do the very opposite of leading our children or anyone to faith.

Whenever and whatever use of force that I could conceive to advance the gospel turns me into Peter in that moment.

It could mean threatening violence like Peter was actually doing. But compelling, right? Thinking by violence? That's not very much in vogue in our society, is it?

[15:28] What kinds of coercion, of force, of pressure does our culture use? And by that, I mean to ask, well, because we, you and me, we live in this culture, in this society, but by habit and by nature, we think and speak a lot like the society around us.

What kinds of force are we liable to use? This is not a culture that puts a knife to your throat and forces you to think its way.

It uses psychological pressure. We are shifting. I don't know if you've noticed this. We're shifting into an honor-shame culture. The American culture around us is.

We call it cancel culture in some facets of it. There are different ways of looking at it. But we're turning into sort of a Middle Eastern or Eastern kind of honor-shame culture.

You can call that. You can see it all sorts of ways. Canceling someone. Owning the libs.

[16:37] Right? There are all these different things you'll see. Those kinds of argumentation that we see in political discourse right now.

Or trolling someone. Or have you seen headlines that look like, Watch so-and-so destroy this other group. Right?

And you see it on the right and the left. You see Christians using that headline. You've seen it. I'm sure of it. Does that inculcate faith?

Does that draw people to love? Right? If you're debating with somebody about an issue. And they own you. Right?

As our culture enjoys right now. Even if you begrudgingly admit their point. Are you inclined towards trust? I'm not.

[17:37] So when we have conversations about our faith. Let's be careful not to have that mentality. And that might actually be really hard for us to do.

Thanks, brother. Right? Because it might not be us who's starting it.

If someone else comes to us aggressively. They're like, Oh, you're a Christian. You must be a bigot.

Or anti-science nut job. Or that kind of thing. Like, our natural reaction is to meet fire with fire.

It's to reply with a similar level of vitriol. Right? Jesus says, Put your sword back in its place.

Figuratively.

Right? Here's an example. That I think is actually. It's a. This is from a famous apologist. I think it's very unhelpful, actually. An apologist.

[18:34] So evangelism is. Is preaching the gospel. And saying, Won't you come to faith in Christ? Apologetics is. When someone says, Oh, there are contradictions in the Bible.

Or. Christians are evil. Or what about the problem of evil? In fact, this is about the problem of evil in a minute here. If God is good, Why is there evil in the world? Right? That question. Apologetics is.

Is answering. Criticisms of the faith. And this comes from. From a famous apologist. He was

answering that problem of evil. If God is good. Why is there evil in the world?

Here's his answer. Think about. Whether his sword is out. So to speak. As he says it. He says.

When you say there's too much evil in this world.

You assume there's good. When you assume there's good. You assume there's such a thing. As a moral law. On the basis of which. To differentiate between good and evil. But if you assume a moral law.

[19:34] You must posit a moral law giver. But that's who you're trying to disprove. And not prove. Because if there's no moral law giver. There's no moral law. If there's no moral law.

There's no good. If there's no good. There's no evil. What is your question? That is very powerful.

Rhetorically. It is a very logical.

Rhetorical. Like. Ah. It's gotcha. But is it effective. In the heart. Well.

Actually. Let me rephrase that. Right. From a question. Into a statement. It is effective. In the heart.

To make me think you're a jerk. Right. Do you ever feel loved.

When someone springs. A gotcha question on you. Do you feel loved. Do you feel loved. Or loving. In return.

[20:34] Right. Right. Right. Right. And it's interesting. Right. And it's interesting. I once heard that same apologist. Say something along the lines of. You can win the argument. And lose the person. Right.

It just goes to show. Like. We can be inconsistent. Like. Peter is inconsistent. Right. And. We need to be watchful. Of our own tongue. Right.

So. Our Lord. Is mighty. That's what we're seeing here. He says. I can call angels to my side. As I need to. But his conduct. Was gentle.

And lowly. And friends. He conquered. The world. With his love. And he tells us. You too. Put your sword.

Back in its place. We offer. The gospel. To people. With love. Not with. Smug retorts.

[21:28] Not with manipulation. Not with any kind of coercion. Or force. And actually. As we. As we transition. Into the trial.

Scene. Here. Let's consider. That Jesus. Actually. Does that here. It's. It's kind of incredible. Even in the midst of it.

He's meeting. The world's aggression. With his love. The man. That Peter struck. Cut off his ear. Matthew actually.

Doesn't tell us this. But if you look. Toward. To Luke chapter 22. One of them. That's Peter. Struck the. Servant of the high priest. And cut off his right ear.

But Jesus said. No more of this. And. He touched. His ear. And healed him. Our Lord's. Final.

[22:21] Miracle. Before he went. To his cross. Was to heal. His enemy. As his enemy. Was. Mounting an attack. On him. That is such a picture.

Of the gospel. Jesus came. To save. Sinners. Set against him. And here he is. Healing a sinner. Set against him. Right.

We're not told. What happens. To Malchus. And the gospel of John. Tells us that his name. Was Malchus. We're not told. What happens. To Malchus. After this. But. But I guarantee you. He watched the events. Of the next few days. Very differently. After being healed.

By the one he came. To condemn. He watched the trial. Of the one. Who didn't resist him.

[23:20] He watched. The crucifixion. And the death. And the burial. Of the man. Who healed him. His enemy. He heard the report.

Of the resurrection. Of that same. Man. He was the recipient. Of grace. And healing. In the moment. Where that he was playing. The role of enemy.

I wonder. How that. Changed his perception. Of everything. That followed. And if. Friends. Someone is aggressive. Towards us. Unkind.

And unloving. And if we. Following our Lord. Respond. With grace. And charity. And love. In the way that he has shown us. I wonder how that can change things. Let's go to the trial.

[24:20] Then those who had seized Jesus. Led him. This is verse 57. To Caiaphas. The high priest. Where the scribes. And the elders had gathered. And Peter was following him.

At a distance. As far as the courtyard. Of the high priest. And going inside. He sat with the guards. To see the end. Now the chief priests.

And the whole council. Were seeking. The many false witnesses. Came forward. At last. Two came forward. And said. This man. Said. I am able to destroy. The temple of God. And rebuild it. In three days. The high priest. Stood up and said. Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men. Testify against you? But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest.

Said to him. I adjure you. By the living God. Tell us. If you are the Christ. The son of God. Jesus said to him. You have said so. But I tell you.

[25:14] From now on. You will see the son of man. Seated at the right hand of power. And coming on the clouds of heaven. And the high priest. Tore his robes. And said. He has uttered blasphemy.

What further witnesses. Do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your judgment? They answered. He deserves death. Then they spit in his face.

And struck him. And slapped him. Saying. Prophecy to us. You Christ. Who is it that struck you? As we transition into this.

Trial scene. There are a number of places. Where we could rest our attention. Right. On the one hand. According to the Jewish law. Many elements of this trial. Were illegitimate. And we could attend to that. The arrest arose from a bribe. It happened at night. They solicited false witnesses. The very people examining him.

[26:14] The chief priests. Would have called this trial. Illegitimate. And illegal. We could look at the vitriol.

How much they reviled him. And despised him. And shamed him. We could look at. As Jesus quotes Daniel chapter 7.

Calling himself. Calling himself. The son of man. And saying. I will be worshipped. In all the earth. We spent quite a bit of time.

Last week. Talking about Christology. The person. And the work of Jesus Christ. So we're not going to spend. All our time. Considering that this week. We're going to place our focus. Instead. Well. Once Jesus had said. That he was going to be worshipped.

[27:11] In all the world. You'll see the son of man coming. Right? What is their reaction?

The high priest. Tosses robes. And said. He has uttered blasphemy. What further witness do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your judgment? They answered. He deserves death. Is the high priest. Upset right now? Is Caiaphas upset right now? Tearing your robes is a sign of shock.

And grief. And anger. And Caiaphas was angry. He wanted Jesus gone. But Caiaphas. Was also very.

Very happy. In his mind. Jesus. Who had trounced him. And his representatives.

[28:12] At every turn. Since. As early as Matthew chapter 8. I think. Right? He has been. Just. Shaming them.

In their words. And their teaching. And everything. He has finally. Slipped up. In Caiaphas' mind. This.

Was the moment. Where he thinks. He gets the upper hand. Right? And then they waste no time. Gloating over it. Right? Verse 67. They spit on his face. Struck him.

Some slapped him. Saying. Prophecy to us. You Christ. Who is it that struck. You can almost feel the glee. Right? With which they did this. This is the very first time.

They've done any violence. Against Jesus. They've been saying. They've wanted to kill him. For a long time. This is the first time. They do any violence. It's only after.

[29:10] They think. They have the upper hand. They think. That they can now. Bring a charge. Against him. Inciting a riot. Inciting an insurrection. Something that.

Caiaphas. Has something that he thinks. He can take to the Roman government. To have Jesus done away with. Now he is. In the place he wants to be.

This thinks. He's won. By every earthly respect. It looks like he has won. But you know. He's completely wrong. This is the first time. That they think they have won. An encounter with Jesus. They haven't. Right.

With respect. To the truth of the matter. Right. Are you the Christ? The son of God? Jesus was right. Just true. Right. They were wrong. With respect. To the outcome.

[30:10] They think this is their moment. Where the tide turns. And the battle is won. For them. Instead. They will be glorified. Instead. He will be glorified.

They will be undone. There are things. That this world. Thinks. Are success. Let me rephrase that. There are things. That you and I. Think are success. Just like Caiaphas. That are not. Things like. This very moment. Where he thinks. He has the victory. And it is in fact. Christ's. Things like. Popularity. And prominence. Right. That attitude of. Let us make a name. For ourselves. God says. I can unite you.

[31:09] To the one. Who is the name. That is above all names. We can't hope. To gain. For ourselves. Even a fraction. Of what has been.

Won for us. And given freely. To us. In Christ. There are so many things. That we. Think in this world. That are success. That aren't. So.

We thought. A little bit. About how we might. Be like Peter. In that first scene. Let's also consider. How we might be like. Caiaphas. In this second scene.

Thinking. That worldly success. Is what we're after. And finding in it. Only dust. Because we saw with Peter.

That this world's tactics. Don't work for the kingdom of God. Put your sword away. And we see with Caiaphas. This world's measures of success. Don't work. Either.

[32:09] In the kingdom of God. Caiaphas wants to eliminate. Jesus by force. Peter wants to vindicate.

Jesus. By force. Jesus. Wants to vindicate. Jesus. By the supreme. Act of love. Peter wants to meet.

Peter wants to meet. The power that this world. Marshals against Jesus. With that same kind of power. Jesus wants to meet this power.

The power of this world. With a power from a different world. Altogether. The world strikes. Its very worst blow. Not simply a death blow.

Right. The cross. Jesus was tortured to death. Publicly. And he didn't shirk from the blow. He didn't deflect it.

[33:08] That's what. Our worldly. Ways would do. He took the worst. That this world. Could offer. And he proved it. Utterly.

Powerless. They. Killed. The author of life. And God. Raised him from the dead. They shamed him. For the world. To see. And he is seated. In glory. They thought. To preserve. Their power. And influence. Today.

No one. Follows Caiaphas. But our brothers. And sisters. From every tongue. And tribe. And nation. Worship. Jesus.

This is why. The church. Does not. Rely on the world's methods. The cross. Is not advanced. By the sword. How can you compel. Faith. The cross.

[34:07] Is not advanced. By clever marketing. Right. How can you sell. Love. The cross. Does not prevail. By winning elections. The Christian church.

Advances. As we preach. The gospel. To the world. We say. God. Has come. And he died for us. He conquered death. And he offers. Life. And he.

By the same power. By which he created life. Gives. New life. To dead hearts. That is how the cross prevails.

When the church says. We have good news. To share. And acts accordingly. Death. Itself.

Is not. Conquered. With test tubes. And lab coats. Right. The world's powers. But by a cross. And a tomb.

[35:04] An empty tomb. Let's pray. O Lord.

Our God. Thank you. That you came. Not with. The power. Of this world. But with a power. Far greater. The power. Of your loving kindness. And your grace. And that you have offered it. To us all. Lord. Will you. Change us. Into a people of grace. Will you. Change us. Into a people. Who follow after Christ.

Though he was reviled. Did not return it. With evil. But with love. Lord. Will you change us.

[36:02] Into a people. Just like that. We pray this. In his name. Amen. Amen.

Amen. That's good. Well please stand. So we sing. One more song. And we're going to sing. A song. Christ is risen. Christ is risen.