



This was our first online service at Magdalen Road Church as we joined Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane as he prayed and was arrested by Judas, as well as Peter in the Courtyard when he disowned Jesus.

We saw that this was an example of 2 different ways to engage with the cross, as well as 2 different ways for us to deal with a crisis.

In
(1) v39-54 : we saw Jesus - fearful but faithful and (2) v55-62 : we saw Peter - fearful and faithless

(1) v39-54 : Jesus - fearful but faithful

The context so far is that Judas has agreed to betray Jesus and Peter has been told he will disown Jesus. Here we see both of those things work out.

As he reaches Gethsemane Jesus' concern for the disciples is for them to pray not to fall into temptation. He knows what's coming and perhaps he knows the very human reaction when faced with pain, shame or discomfort for us to run rather than have courage.

We also see the reality of Jesus' incarnational humanity as he wrestles with what is to come. Praying for himself and the Lord granting him help and relief.

We noted that in our context there can be danger too of prayerlessness in the midst of all the activity and planning. It would also be a helpful line of thought to consider how temptation might come to us in the crisis. Where are we weak? Where might we be tempted?

Judas arrives and betrays Jesus but we noted that even though from a human perspective this looks like it's out of control, in reality Jesus is in charge. We noted that first because he's in a Garden (note that gardens are important in the bible story from the time it all went wrong in a Garden in Gen 3 to when it will all be right in a Garden (city) at the end of the story (Rev 21). To get from the first Garden to the second, we must come through this Garden.

We also noted the control of Jesus as we see what kind of king he'll be as he healed the high priests servant - not a king to bring violence but rather peace and healing. He's not come to wear a crown of gold but rather a crown of thorns.

Jesus' faithfulness is set in a clear juxtaposition with Peter as we move to the Courtyard

(2) v55-62 : Peter - fearful and faithless

3 questions or comments for Peter and he is completely undone, essentially ending the gospel at this point. We know from Acts that his story is not yet finished (as well as John's gospel) but it's a sad way for him to basically finish in Luke. We noted that this encounter illustrates Luke 9v23-26 as Peter seems to want to save his life, he's not denying himself and following Jesus. We asked who are the proverbial servant girls in our life? The times when we don't stand up for Jesus as we perhaps ought to?

Perhaps this current Covid 19 crisis is an opportunity for us to not be ashamed and, in a time of more openness, open our mouths a bit more. Giving people a reason for the hope that we have.

When we feel like we've let Jesus down, it's vital that we reflect again on his faithfulness towards us. Where we are too like Peter in the Courtyard in our disobedience and faithlessness, we have one who, in the Garden, was obedient and faithful for us

Here are a few questions to help your group get to grips with the passage

Why do you think Jesus called his disciples to pray whilst in the Garden? How does this apply to us?

What do we see of Jesus' plans and control over the situation?

Why does Jesus need to go through the Garden of Gethsemane?

Why does Peter deny Jesus? How does this apply to us?

Have a look at 1 Peter 4v12-16. How does our passage in the courtyard shape our reading and understanding of this paragraph from Peter's first letter?

What's the answer to when we deny Jesus?