

The Night the Lord Jesus was Betrayed

Matthew 26:1-30

As Paul is giving instructions to the Corinthian church about how to observe the Lord's Supper, he refers to the "night in which he was betrayed" (I Corinthians 11:23). There are many other ways that night could have been described, but the Spirit of God led Paul to focus on that as a night of betrayal. In Matthew 26:2 betrayal is the opening thought of the chapter. As the Lord began to eat the Passover meal with His disciples He mentioned it again. This caused all the disciples to ask, "*Lord, is it I?*" – literally, "*I'm not the one, Lord?*" (Matthew 26:20-22). They were grieving at the thought – All, except one. Judas had already begun the process of betrayal (Matthew 26:14-16; Luke 22:1-6). At this time, Peter was warned of Satan's attempts to destroy his life and ministry. The Lord revealed to Peter that he had a weakness, but Jesus had prayed for him and would convert him and use him greatly (Luke 22:31-34 cp. Romans 8:34).

It is no wonder, then, that Paul was awakening the Corinthian church about their careless use of the Lord's Supper. The origin and history of the Lord's Supper is marked with betrayal, hypocrisy, and failure of men. The observance of the Lord's Supper should be celebrated in a spirit of humility and careful self examination (I Corinthians 11:17-31).

What were people doing that night?

The Jewish leaders were plotting to kill Jesus (Matthew 26:3-5).

Judas was joining the conspiracy to kill Jesus.

- He made himself open to Satan (Luke 22:1-6; John 13:21-27 cp. Ephesians 4:25-27; James 4:6-10; I Peter 5:6-10).
- He used a sign of affection to betray Jesus (Matthew 26:46-50).

The disciples forsook Jesus.

- They said that they were willing to die for Him, but they couldn't even stay awake and pray for Him (Matthew 26:33-41).
- When Jesus refused their fleshly attempt to help Him they were confused and afraid. They fled (Matthew 26:51-56).

What was Jesus doing that night?

Preparing the disciples:

- To be humble servants (John 13:1-17)
- To remember Him and be faithful until His second coming.
The Passover looked back. The Lord's Table looks forward
(Matthew 26:26-29; I Corinthians 11:26)
- To sing and worship in all seasons of life (Matthew 26:30)
- To watch and pray (Matthew 26:36-41).

Praying for us:

See John 17 cp. Romans 8:34; Hebrews 2:16-18; 4:14-16; I John 2:1.

Preparing Himself to complete His mission with Joy:

See Matthew 26:36-54 cp. Hebrews 12:1-3; Philippians 4:4-13.