

GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN

18



CHRYSOSTOM

Read St. John Chrysostom's homilies on John chapter 18.



PRACTICE QUIZ

Take a quiz to test your knowledge of John chapter 18.



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Chapter eighteen contains the account of Jesus' betrayal, arrest and trial. It begins with Judas Iscariot's betrayal of Christ (predicted in 13:18-30)—Judas knew that Jesus would take His disciples to the garden of Gethsemane (the garden's name is given in Matthew 26:36 and Mark 14:32), and therefore led a group of soldiers and Temple police to the area (John 18:2-3). Jesus twice told the group that He was the man they sought to capture (18:4-5, 7-8), but notice what happened the first time He said this: they fell to the ground when He used the divine Name, "I am He," to identify Himself (18:6). Blessed Theophylact says this demonstrates that "fallen indeed are all those who oppose the word of God."

needed to drink the cup given by His Father (18:11), meaning, St. Dionysius of Alexandria says, He needed "to discharge the ministry and the whole divine plan of trial with fortitude."

Throughout the night following Christ's arrest (18:12-14), St. Peter was identified by three people as being a follower of Jesus. Each time he denied this (18:17, 25, 26)—St. Matthew even points out that St. Peter cursed and swore at the people (Matthew 26:74)—fulfilling the prophecy that he would deny Christ three times before a rooster crowed at sunrise (18:27; see 13:38). The other Gospel writers add that St. Peter wept when he remembered this prophecy (Matthew 26:75; Mark 14:72; Luke 22:62).

Rather, it truly extended throughout the whole world like light shining as the moon established forever, enlightening understanding souls through His divine and heavenly teaching."

Pilate was unable to understand the concept of following truth—much like modern people, about whom St. Cyril of Alexandria says "To people whose minds have become warped, truth seems a foul and ugly thing even as it instills a spiritual and divine brilliance into the minds of those who behold it"—and simply said that he found no fault in Christ (18:38). St. Cyril adds that, when offering to release Christ, Pilate referred to Him as "King of the Jews" in an attempt to use sarcasm to quench the rage of the crowd. Instead, however, the people demanded the release of the violent thief Barabbas instead of the Savior of the World (18:40).

Despite the fact that Jesus had earlier said He would willingly give Himself up to be sacrificed (see 10:11), and that He guaranteed that none of His followers would be killed at that time (18:8-9), St. Peter nonetheless hacked off the ear of Malchus, Caiaphas' servant, with his sword (18:10; St. Luke tells us that Christ then healed the slave's ear (Luke 22:51)). In response, Christ simply repeated that He

Annas and Caiphas attempted to prove that Jesus was a blasphemer, and therefore deserving of death (18:19). In response, Christ simply told them to ask those people who had seen Him act and teach openly (18:20-21); one of the guards angrily slapped Jesus for His response (18:22).

Legally unable to execute Jesus, the Temple court sent Him to Pilate to be convicted and executed (18:28-32). The only question Pilate asked Jesus was political: did Jesus claim to be the king of the Jews (and therefore deserving of punishment for rebellion) (18:33, 37)? Jesus responded that He did not head up an earthly government, but that He is a king Who came into the world to bear witness to the truth (18:36, 37). Blessed Eusebius summarizes Jesus' meaning like this: "The throne of the kingdom conferred on Jesus is nothing mortal or temporal.



LIFE TIP

In contrast to Pilate, St. John of Kronstadt tells us our lives should be formed by truth: "Truth is the foundation of everything that has been created. Let truth be also the foundation of all your works (both inward and outward), and especially the foundation of your prayers. Let all your life, all your works, all your thoughts, and all your desires be founded upon truth."

