

“Temptation and Betrayal in the Garden”

Matthew 26:30-56

Introduction: The Closing Hymn of Passover and the Retreat to the Mount of Olives (verse 30)

Big Idea: Though his disciples fell away, Jesus remained steadfast in the face of temptation and betrayal.

- I. Prologue to Temptation: Jesus prophesies the disciples’ failure and restoration. (verses 31–35)
 - A. Zechariah’s Prophecy of Stricken Shepherd and Scattered Sheep (verse 31)
 - B. Jesus’ Promise to Restore His Sheep after His Resurrection (verse 32)
 - C. Peter’s Proclamation of Steadfast Faith (verse 33)
 - D. Jesus’ Prediction of Peter’s Swift Denial (verse 34)
 - E. Peter’s Protest of Absolute Fidelity (verse 35)
- II. Preparation for Temptation: Jesus prays in agony while his disciples sleep. (verses 36–46)
 - A. Jesus’ Secluded Sorrow in Gethsemane (verses 36–38)
 - B. Jesus’ Distressed Submission to the Father in Prayer (verse 39)
 - C. Jesus’ Gentle Correction of His Sleeping Disciples (verses 40–41)
 - D. The Repetition of Jesus’ Prayer and the Disciples’ Sleeping (verses 42–43)
 - E. The Conclusion of Preparation and the Arrival of Betrayal (verses 44–46)
- III. Temptation by Betrayal: Jesus submits to capture while his disciples abandon him. (verses 47–56)
 - A. The Betrayal by Judas and the Arrest by the Authorities (verses 47–50)
 - B. A Misguided Strike and Jesus’ Rebuke (verses 51–54)
 - C. The Cowardly Mob and Their Fulfillment of the Prophets (verses 55–56a)
 - D. The Disciples’ Self-Preservation and Retreat (verse 56b)

Applications

- 1) Christ's disciples must admit their weakness in the face of temptation.
- 2) Such vulnerable disciples are protected by Christ's unchanging care.
- 3) Christ's cause will triumph through meek suffering rather than carnal weapons.
- 4) The Good Shepherd overcame temptation when his sheep did not, and he did so as their sacrificial lamb.