32 And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” 33 And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. 34 And he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch.” 35 And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36 And he said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.” … 43 And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. 44 Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard.” 45 And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, “Rabbi!” And he kissed him. 46 And they laid hands on him and seized him. 47 But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. 48 And Jesus said to them, “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? 49 Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled.” … 53 And they led Jesus to the high priest. And all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes came together. … 60 And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, “Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?” 61 But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” 62 And Jesus said, “I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” 63 And the high priest tore his garments and said, “What further witnesses do we need? 64 You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?” And they all condemned him as deserving death.
Main Point:
Jesus was sent by the Father to face judgment for our sins.

Option 1

Around one hundred miles deep in the upper part of the earth’s mantel, extreme pressure and high temperatures forge carbon atoms together into crystals, which we call diamonds. Once a diamond is formed, it then might take a violent journey of riding waves of volcanic rock erupting toward the surface of the earth, where it can be mined for commercial use.

Truth is, much like diamonds, we can all face intense pressure situations. In fact, even Jesus faced intense spiritual pressures during His earthly ministry. But with the cross before Him, Jesus submitted to the Father’s will that He would be the Suffering Savior, the One who would bear the weight of our sin on the cross and suffer the wrath of God in our place.

- **What are some intense pressures you are facing in life right now (physical, spiritual, etc.)? What should be our attitude when facing such pressures?**

Option 2

Tabloid magazines and websites make a lot of money off of celebrity arrests. Hardly a month goes by when another movie or television star is not featured on the cover of a newspaper, website, or magazine with headlines about an arrest. Some are not so shocking, while others are rather surprising.

Perhaps no arrest has ever been so shocking as Jesus’ arrest. For years, His disciples assumed His approach to Jerusalem would be an ascent to the throne. Even Jesus’ multiple predictions of His own arrest and suffering did not curb the disciples’ hopes and expectations, though these predictions may have tempered the excitement a bit. Whether to purify the temple or overthrow the Romans, Jesus was there to lead the people to freedom and life, not to be led to captivity and death—or so they thought. Besides, He was the only innocent person to ever live.

- **Have you ever been falsely accused or punished for something you didn’t do? How did you respond?**
Throughout the Gospels, we read of Jesus’ many great works and miracles. He healed the crowds, raised the dead, fed thousands, preached with authority, and confronted the religious elites. He also showed abundant compassion and even wept for those who would reject Him. But here in the garden of Gethsemane, we see the weight Jesus was carrying in the hours leading to His crucifixion. The knowledge of what was to come caused Him such distress that He collapsed.

**What does this scene teach us about the humanity of Jesus? Why is it important to affirm Jesus’ humanity?**

“Gethsemane” means “olive press.” The name comes from the process where olives underwent intense pressure in order to extract an oily product into jars. On this particular night in Gethsemane, Jesus weathered His own emotional and physical pain.

“Abba” was an Aramaic term of endearment for a father. All His life, Jesus enjoyed an amazing relationship with God the Father. Yet in Gethsemane, Jesus experienced a unique suffering in His humanity because of what was to come. This shows us that Jesus was not immune to the emotions of humanity; but He never swayed in His love and devotion to the Father’s plan either.

**What does Jesus’ commitment to the Father’s plan teach us about Him?**

What was the cause of Jesus’ distress? Jesus was facing more than just physical suffering and death on the cross. He was about to drink a “cup” that He did not want to drink. This cup, different from the cup in the Lord’s Supper, was a metaphor for the wrath of God against all that is unholy and unrighteous—against all sin. Though He asked for the cup to pass from Him, no alternative existed, so Jesus, the God-man, submitted to His Father’s will and resolved to obey His Father so that He might secure the salvation of sinners like you and me.

Mark was careful to describe Judas, Jesus’ betrayer, as one of the twelve disciples. This magnifies the horror of his sin—one of Jesus’ handpicked followers chose to sell Him out to the religious leaders. Judas knew exactly where Jesus would be because he was one of the Twelve and Jesus retreated to this garden often (Luke 22:39).

To add insult to injury, Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss to His face, a sign of deep friendship and devotion. The soldiers with Judas would have had trouble seeing Jesus on the dark hillside during the evening hours, so a kiss from Judas would be the method of disclosure for the One they were to arrest. Both Peter and Paul encouraged the churches through their letters to greet each other with “a holy kiss” (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26; 1 Pet. 5:14).

**What are some ways you have witnessed betrayal? How do people usually respond to betrayal?**
The “cup” metaphor for God’s wrath finds its meaning in the writings of the Old Testament prophets and the Psalms. Ezekiel 23:33 speaks of “a cup of devastation and desolation” for Judah (CSB). Isaiah 51:17 speaks of “the cup of his fury … that causes people to stagger” for Jerusalem (CSB). Jeremiah 25:15 speaks of “this cup of the wine of wrath from my hand” for the nations (CSB). And Psalm 75:8 speaks of “a cup in the Lord’s hand” that “all the wicked of the earth will drink” (CSB). This picture from the Bible illustrates that every time we sin, it’s a drop in the cup. Every time we fall short of God’s glory, it’s a drop in the cup of God’s wrath against sin being stored up for the day of judgment.

The idea communicated in this passage is that the cup of God’s wrath, which should be poured out for us to drink, is set in front of Jesus for Him to drink in our place. Faced with the staggering weight of God’s wrath against sin, Jesus had tears in His eyes and on His face as He pleaded with the Father for another solution for our salvation. But Jesus the Messiah is the only One who could atone for the sins of His people. He is the only One who is truly God and truly human. So this dreadful cup of wrath was taken from our hands according to the will of Father and placed into the hands of Jesus, the Holy One of God, the Father’s humble and obedient Son.

God is Unchanging

God’s being and attributes, along with the ethical commitments He has given, cannot change. This means, among other things, that God is committed to being God and that He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. God’s unchanging nature is good news for Christians, for it guarantees that God does not change His mind or go back on His promises. Christians can find assurance and peace of mind in knowing that the God who brought them out of darkness into His marvelous light is the God who will carry them through into eternity.
Although He intended to surrender to them, Jesus still verbally protested the unjust actions of the mob, which had been sent by the religious leaders. Jesus had been preaching in the temple courts each day, but the leaders chose not to arrest Him there because Jesus was not guilty of anything. Rather than a warranted arrest, this was the preamble to a treacherous murder, so they surrounded Him at night in a garden, when few witnesses were around.

This arrest was unjust and wrong, but Jesus said it had to happen this way—the Scriptures must be fulfilled. Jesus had previously quoted Zechariah 13:7 to His disciples, saying they would fall away (Mark 14:27), and immediately after His arrest, they all deserted Him (v. 50). Jesus may also have been thinking of Isaiah 53:12, which says the Lord's Suffering Servant would submit Himself to death and be counted among the rebels while bearing the sins of others. And as Jesus pointed out in the Supper just a few hours prior to these events, He would be betrayed by one who shared in eating His bread (Mark 14:17-21); the prophecy of Psalm 41:9 was fulfilled in Judas's actions.

Although Jesus was betrayed, arrested, and abandoned by the will of men, this was all a part of God’s sovereign plan for the salvation of sinners. Therefore, Jesus remained calm, in control, and confident in the Father as His world was turning against Him.

- Why do the promises of God in Scripture have the ability to ground us during times of emotional crisis?

Read Mark 14:53,60-64.

What followed Jesus’ unjust arrest was a travesty of a trial, including false accusations and false testimony (Mark 14:55-59). This was not a court looking for the truth but a charade searching for the means to justify their intention to murder Jesus. Yet Jesus remained silent; He refused to dignify the lies leveled against Him.

False accusations could not get a response out of Jesus, but a straightforward question about His identity did. If Jesus falsely denied He were the Messiah and Son of God or chose to remain silent once more, then He might have been allowed to go free. But Jesus answered affirmatively and clearly, effectively sealing His fate of crucifixion. Though He is the rightful Ruler and Judge over all the earth, Jesus allowed Himself to be judged by sinful, deceitful human beings because His time to die had come.

Up until this moment, Jesus often concealed His true identity. Even when the disciples confessed Him to be the Messiah, He charged them to keep that knowledge to themselves (Mark 8:29-30). So why publicly reveal His identity as the Messiah now? Because the hour had come. Jesus knew His response would secure His execution, through which He would drink the cup of God’s wrath in our place, according to the Father’s plan.

- What are some occasions in our own lives in which we can follow in Jesus’ example and show restraint even when we are persecuted or treated unfairly for our faith?
47. The Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—keep the identity of the swordsman a secret, perhaps because the culprit was still alive and didn’t need treason and attempted murder added to the charge of preaching the gospel. By the time John wrote his Gospel, Peter had probably already been martyred, so he felt free to share the name of the guilty party (John 18:10). It should be no surprise that the One who would soon die for His enemies (Rom. 5:8) would show compassion on this injured adversary, demonstrated when He touched the man and healed the severed ear (Luke 22:51).

48. No one could take Jesus’ life from Him. He had made that clear before (John 10:18). If He wanted to retreat, He could pass through the midst of a crowd (Luke 4:30). If He wanted to fight, He could call down 12 legions of angels (Matt. 26:53). Anyone who can calm a storm, walk on water, and cast out demons can control a little crowd. But rather than demonstrate control through lightning or fire, Jesus exercised the self-control of restraint.

62. By equating Himself with the Son of Man from Daniel 7:13-14 and referring to His descent from heaven, Jesus doubled down on the charge of blasphemy in the eyes of the Sanhedrin. At this point there was no mistake to be made. He was either blasphemous or blessed. He was the Christ or guilty of the charge of idolatry. To the leaders, the conclusion was obvious. With these words, Jesus sealed His fate and set the stage upon which He would lay down His own life. What had begun in the garden in darkness would soon be finished in the light of day on Golgotha.

**Main Point:**
Jesus was sent by the Father to face judgment for our sins.

**Christ Connection**

In the garden of Eden, Adam failed to resist the serpent and chose instead to follow His way over God’s. In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus, the second Adam, submitted fully to His Father’s purpose and plan and willingly submitted to death upon the cross. Jesus demonstrated His identity as the Son of God through both His words and actions when He was betrayed, arrested, and put on trial.
God’s Story has always been designed to connect with our story. It is because of His Story that our stories make sense, have meaning, and carry on into eternity. Use the questions below to help think through how His Story connects with your own. Suggested answers to these questions can be found on the right-hand side of the page for leaders.

### Head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Suggested Answer</th>
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<tr>
<td>What does this account teach us about the wrath of God against sin?</td>
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<td>What does this account teach us about the love of God for sinners?</td>
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### Heart

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<td>How does Jesus’ response in the face of suffering show us how to respond to our suffering?</td>
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<td>What should our response be to Jesus’ obedience to the Father’s plan?</td>
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### Hands

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<td>What are some Christian topics that the larger culture would prefer Christians not speak about?</td>
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<td>How does this passage challenge your mindset when dealing with opposition from the culture?</td>
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The “cup” was a familiar symbol of judgment and wrath in the Old Testament (Ps. 11:6; Isa. 51:17; Ezek. 23:33). Death itself would have been enough to upset even the bravest of men. The threat of torture and crucifixion was even more imposing. But Jesus faced something even worse. Before Him was a cup full of wrath of the holy God. By drinking it fully, Jesus would know abandonment, sin, desolation, and death. Jesus did that for you and me, so that we would not have to know the eternal torment of these realities.

Discussing the wrath of God isn’t a popular topic in many American churches. It is tough to accept. This is especially true when we consider that God’s wrath against sin will be justly poured out on people who haven’t found shelter under the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Jesus’ words and actions during the evening prior to His crucifixion confirm that He indeed is the Son of God and the Messiah sent to save the world. He endured agony as He prayed for the cup of God’s wrath to be taken from Him. He humbly received Judas’ shameful betrayal by a kiss. He didn’t defend Himself before the Sanhedrin. Rather than rebelling against the Father’s will and avoiding the brutality of the cross, Jesus submitted to it. In and through His perfect obedience to the Father, we find grace and power for our own obedience. We too can embrace suffering and trials willingly, knowing that Christ has traveled that road before us and has secured our salvation and hope for the other side of them.

Christians, as well as churches in general, face opposition from our culture today. In fact, as mentioned above, it is hard to talk about certain topics, like the wrath of God, without facing some form of push back from the surrounding culture. However, just because talking about certain topics makes some feel uncomfortable, it is still our responsibility to speak the truth in love, especially when these topics are a matter of life and death for people. If people are unaware of their sin and how their sin deserves God’s wrath, then they will never fully appreciate Jesus’ gift of bearing that wrath on the cross. Thus, take courage and walk the path that has been walked faithfully by centuries of Christians. Speak the truth in love, following Jesus’ example of how to respond when things get difficult.

Main Point:
Jesus was sent by the Father to face judgment for our sins.