

A summary of John 18:1-27

1. **Jesus is the I am (v.5)** In the New Testament, there are five verses that record the truth that Jesus is the I am. “I am” means that God is self-existing or ever-existing, eternal, depending on nothing apart from Himself.

John 8:28: “So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.”

John 13:19: “I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he.”

John 18:5,6,8: “They answered him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am he.” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground. Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he...”

In addition to these verses, there are 32 other verses in the New Testament related to “I am.” For example, Jesus says that He is the light of the world (John 8:12), and that He is the bread of life (John 6:48).

These verses convey the truth that Jesus is either the light of the world, the bread of life, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end etc., whereas the five verses in John show that He is. “I am” or “He is” is in contrast with who we are. Actually, we are not. This means that nothing in us is righteous or holy. Who are we? We are sinful. We are not righteous (Romans 3:10). Who is Jesus? He is the reality of everything positive in this universe. How much we need Him. We need to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Him as the I am, depending upon Him for everything in our existence (our education, our job, our family, and even our church life). He is the source of everything, and He is the goal. For example, He is the source (the origin) of any good grades that we may obtain. If we obtain good grades, or obtain a job, He is the One who gave us the grades and the job. We owe everything to Him. Yes, we need to study diligently, but we are not, that is, we do not deserve anything based on our merit. He (Jesus Christ) is everything, and gives us everything.

2. **Judas Iscariot’s betrayal of Jesus: vv.1-5.** We need to ask two questions:

a. Who was Judas? He was one of the twelve apostles chosen or appointed by Jesus. He followed Jesus for three and a half years, along with the other eleven apostles. He also was responsible for the finances (the financial grace offering). His was an important function. As an apostle, he was in the limelight. He was renowned, and probably the other disciples (in addition to the other eleven) looked up to him. This might give us some insight into answering the second question:

b. Why did Judas betray Jesus? Usually, in the world (secular society), those who are closest to someone are in a position to betray that person. The person betrayed has entrusted the betrayer with an important responsibility. The closer one is, the more one has access to the person who is betrayed. The further away one is, the less likely one is to betray, or even be in a position to betray. For example, most brothers and sisters (you and me), will not betray the Lord simply because we do not know the Lord that intimately! To betray the Lord, the Lord must first entrust us with His burden, His “possessions” (the church), His commitment (the building up of the church), the salvation of people (the preaching of the gospel). Does the Lord dare to entrust us with that? The more the Lord entrusts us with what is on His heart, and His burden, the more vulnerable we may become to violate that trust (betrayal). However, we must realize that Judas did not know the Lord, nor His heart. He outwardly occupied a renowned position, yet He did not hear the Lord speak His *rhema* words to him. We should also realize that most of us (“ordinary brothers and sisters) will not be in a position to betray the Lord. In addition, Judas’ betrayal of Jesus was not an involuntary or spur of the moment act, actuated by a momentary lack of faith or weakness, or even lust for money. It was, on the contrary, premeditated. Matthew 26:14 and Mark 14:11 record that Judas “sought opportunity” to betray Jesus. This was an unprovoked and well-thought out plot to deliver up Jesus. In John 13:27, Jesus charges Judas to do quickly what he was going to do (betray Jesus), indicating again that Judas knew what he was going to do,

and that even when Jesus told him that He knew what he was going to do, he (Judas) still went ahead with his plan. And yet Judas was not an evil person. After he betrayed Jesus, he returned to the chief priests and confessed that he had betrayed innocent blood (Matthew 27:3) and regretted, or changed his mind concerning what he had done, and returned the thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave (Exodus 21:32). That is how little he and the chief priests valued Jesus, considering Him to be as low as a slave. Judas showed remorse, but he did not repent. This may also indicate that he was probably not saved. If he had repented, he would have been saved. In Mark 14:21, Jesus says, "For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born." The latter part of this verse "better for that man if he had not been born" also gives us a hint that Judas may not have been saved. In John 13:10b-11, Jesus says, "And you are clean, but not every one of you. For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, 'Not all of you are clean.'" In contrast, Mary, in John 12, offered the equivalent of one year's salary to Jesus (her love offering), demonstrating how highly she valued Jesus. In our case, we do not seek opportunity to consciously betray Jesus. However, we may be like Peter and deny the Lord involuntarily (please see point 3). Can we find an example today, or in history, of someone who betrayed Jesus? Amongst Christian groups, we dare not draw any conclusions or point to anyone who may have betrayed the Lord. However, in history, perhaps we may point out a glaring example of an act perpetrated by some who occupied prominent religious positions (during the Middle Ages). In 1313, the Catholic Church began selling "indulgences" in Europe, by the injunction of Pope Leo X, whereby believers could purchase, for a fee, a kind of license that would "forgive" them of any sin they had committed, or would commit. Such an act, in a sense, "betrayed" the redeeming work of Christ on the cross, and make mockery of the truth that salvation is by grace, and not by works (Ephesians 2:8-9).

- 3. Peter's denial of Jesus (vv.15-18; 25-27).** Why did Peter deny Jesus? Peter loved the Lord very much, and was not afraid to die with the Lord (Luke 22:33). Jesus also loved Peter very much. Peter was often chosen, along with James and John, to accompany Jesus (Mark 14:33). Peter also received some revelations of the Lord (Matthew 16:16). Then why did Peter deny the Lord three times, even though he loved the Lord very much, and the Lord loved him (different from Judas)?
- Even though Peter received revelation from the Lord, some of his revelation was not that high, renewed, or accurate. For example, he had a not so accurate expectation that Jesus would restore the kingdom of Israel during His first coming (Acts 1:6) (actually this would happen during the Lord's 2nd coming).
 - Peter saw that the Lord was arrested and insulted and said nothing. Peter believed that Jesus would die (He did not know that the Lord would be resurrected) and that his following of the Lord was a mistake. Therefore, he was disappointed.
 - After Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to the disciples twice, the disciples, including Peter, were still weak. How about us? Since the Holy Spirit had not yet come to the disciples, they did not have the power, and they had not received the revelation that the Lord desired them to be His witnesses (Greek word: *martus*, martyrs) in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. The revelation that the Lord has given us, and the main direction of the church life, is also to be His witnesses everywhere and throughout the land.
 - In the church life, we should yearn for the Lord, come close to Him, and pursue and follow Him in order to receive a higher level of life that we can see and live out. Otherwise we are unconsciously weak, to walk away from and to deny the Lord in our living.
 - How does the Holy Spirit come to the disciples (us) effectively, as He did on the day of Pentecost? Example: the church corporate prayers: the gathering of prayers for the advancement of the church or the body of Christ.

For a more detailed study of Peter's denial of Jesus, please see attached presentation of brother CK with many supporting verses.