

In Control

When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. (1 Peter 2:23, NIV)

Mark 14:10 says that Judas "betrayed" Jesus. But in the original language, the word literally means that Judas "handed Jesus over." And in fact, this word occurs throughout the story of Jesus' arrest and trial: Judas handed Him over to the Jewish leaders (Mark 14:10); the Jewish leaders handed Him over to Pilate (Mark 15:1); Pilate handed Him over to the will of the crowd (Luke 23:25) and to the soldiers for execution (Mark 15:15).

All through the Gospel accounts, Jesus is the object of the actions of others. He is passive. Others hand Him over to death.

But other New Testament writers tell us what was happening on a deeper level. Using the same word for "handing over," Paul states that God the Father handed Jesus over for our salvation (Romans 4:25; 8:32). He says that Jesus handed himself over as a sacrifice for us (Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 5:1-2, 25).

Read again 1 Peter 2:23 above. Here the truth is even more poignant. As Jesus was accused, condemned, beaten, and killed, He handed himself over to His Father, trusting himself to the One who judges justly. In the truest sense, Jesus was not handing himself over to His enemies but to His Father and to His will.

Jesus' life wasn't taken from Him. He gave it up voluntarily, in submission to His Father.

Read the Gospel accounts of Jesus' arrest, trial, and execution. In these tense situations, notice who's really in control. Watch the Jewish leaders. Though pious to the extreme, they're caught up in pride, jealousy, fear, and murderous hatred. They plot to arrest Jesus when no crowds are around. They conduct an illegal middle-of-the-night trial to convict Jesus without the people knowing it. They arrange false witnesses against Him and are frustrated when that doesn't work. They twist Pilate's arm to execute Him, then stir up the crowd to demand Jesus' death. All the while they're scheming and scrambling, desperate to protect their place of privilege.

Now watch Jesus. At the arrest (John 18:1-11; Mark 14:43-50), an armed mob comes to take Him by force. He offers no resistance and refuses resistance from His followers. He speaks with calm authority. He takes time to heal one of those coming to take Him. He secures the release of His disciples but willingly hands himself over.

At His trial, He is grilled by the Jewish authorities. He is cross-examined by the Roman governor and taunted by King Herod for his own amusement. He was the focal point of incredible hostility. Yet He is unruffled by the injustice done to Him. He remains silent

and settled, offering no defense or rebuttal whatsoever (contrast that to defendants today!). He only speaks up when asked directly about His own identity.

The high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Mark 14:61-62, NIV)

In a way, Jesus confessed to the charge against Him!

As the situation progresses, actions and strong emotions swirl all around Jesus, threatening, accusing, attacking. He simply lets himself be swept along.

Yet on the Cross, Jesus even chooses the moment of His own death (John 19:30). And after His death, God quietly controls events. He provides a rich man's tomb, then arranges the seal and the Roman guard as unwitting proofs of the Resurrection.

Throughout His ministry, Jesus had exercised remarkable authority. He had control over demons, disease, nature, sin, and even death itself. Now at His own death, the pattern seems to change. Jesus is here remarkable not for what He does but for what He doesn't do. Yet that passiveness was perhaps His greatest act of control. He controlled himself and submitted His own life, accepting a horrible death. What complete trust He placed in His Father!

Jesus, I want to walk as You walked. I want to take up my cross and follow You. When injustice comes to me, when the powers of darkness seem to seize my life, help me to entrust myself completely to our Father who always does what is right.

Hymn: [The Trial](#)

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