

March 2017

From the Pastor



Beware the Ides of March

In Act 1, Scene 2 of William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, a soothsayer tells Julius Caesar, "Beware the Ides of March." Later we find out why Caesar was being warned. On the Ides of March Caesar is stabbed by many in the senate, including his friend, Brutus. As he dies Caesar says, "Et tu, Brute?" Which means, "And you Brutus?" Julius Caesar, at least according to Shakespeare, was surprised to have been betrayed by a friend, which would end up in his death.

Jesus knew full well that a friend of his would betray Him. In fact, He told his friend to do what he had planned. Look at what Jesus says to his friend Judas Iscariot that is recorded in the gospel of Matthew.

²⁰ When it was evening, he reclined at table with the twelve. ²¹ And as they were eating, he said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me." ²² And they were very sorrowful and began to say to him one after another, "Is it I, Lord?" ²³ He answered, "He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me. ²⁴ 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." ²⁵ Judas, who would betray him, answered, "Is it I, Rabbi?" He said to him, "You have said so." (Matthew 26:20-25 ESV)

The story continues in the gospel of John.

²⁶ Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it." So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. ²⁷ Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "What you are going to do, do quickly." (John 13:26-27 ESV)

Later in the gospel of Luke we read,

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, there came a crowd, and the man called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He drew near to Jesus to kiss him, ⁴⁸ but Jesus said to him, "Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:47-48 ESV)

According to Shakespeare, when Caesar died, Marc Antony gave his eulogy, which was filled with irony. Within it came these very famous words,

*Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears!
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him. ¹*

Within the same eulogy, Marc Antony ends with these words,

*O judgement, thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason. Bear with me;
My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
And I must pause till it come back to me. ²*

As Marc Antony finishes, the body of Julius Caesar lies lifeless in the Forum of Rome.

The story is different for Jesus. About two months after Jesus died on the cross, his dear friend Peter says this, which is recorded in the book Acts.

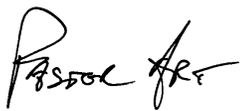
Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." (Acts 2:36 ESV)

Jesus Christ, unlike Julius Caesar, is alive.

Caesar thought he was a god, but he was proved wrong on the Ides of March. He was murdered and his body was placed in a coffin, never to return.

Jesus proved He was God three days after He died when He walked out of the grave. He had no fear because He, being God, conquered death.

In Him and for His glory,



¹ Shakespeare, William. *The Actually Complete Works of William Shakespeare* (Kindle Location 18496). Kindle Edition.

² Ibid. (Kindle Locations 18505-18506).