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#2: Kiss and Tell
March 17-19, 2007

[39]Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. [40]On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." [41]He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, [42]"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." [43]An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. [44]And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. [45]When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. [46]"Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation." [47]While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, [48]but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" [49]When Jesus' followers saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, should we strike with our swords?" [50]And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear. [51]But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him. [52]Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders, who had come for him, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs? [53]Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour—when darkness reigns." *Luke 22:39-53 TNIV*

Introduction: The final 24 hours of Jesus' life changed everything. God's plan to redeem humanity was finally executed in that one day, and the deal was sealed at Gethsemane. There, Jesus faced one final temptation to save himself, and eternity was at stake.

I. Tempted With Survival
   A. Obviously, Jesus had prayed at Gethsemane many times; this was his "quiet place." (v.39)
   B. Jesus warned his closest followers about the temptation that would come at this fateful moment, but his own temptation may have been on his mind. (v.40)

II. Strengthened With a Prayer
   A. At each important moment in Jesus' ministry, he "withdrew" to pray. (v.41)
   B. At Gethsemane, Jesus prayed the critical prayer of all history: "Father, it's me or the mission; I choose the mission!" (v.42)
   C. Once Jesus submitted himself to the Father's plan, he received supernatural assistance. (v.43)
   D. But that did not make it any easier for Jesus to walk toward the cross. (v.44)
   E. Note the progression of Jesus's victory over temptation: (a) temptation, (b) prayer, (c) submission, (d) super-natural intervention, (e) victory.
   F. Jesus could not even depend on the support of his closest friends. (vv.45-46)

III. Betrayed With A Kiss
   A. Judas the Red, the double-agent servant of Satan, approached Jesus to betray him with a kiss. (v.47)
   B. But Jesus knew of Judas' betrayal, and he took command of the moment. (v.48)
   C. Jesus' agents sought to defend him, not understanding the plan to ambush Satan. (vv.49-50)
   D. But Jesus intervened to save the mission. (v.51)

IV. Bate for the Trap
   A. Jesus had become the bate for Satan's trap.
   B. He led no rebellion, and yet he was arrested as an insurgent.
   C. He came to redeem the temple, and yet the authorities were threatened.
   D. He was taken in the darkness in order to bring light to the world.

Conclusion: Satan believed that he had halted God's plan to release humanity from bondage once and for all. Jesus had been stopped! Or had he? In actuality, the trap had been bated, and Satan had already taken the bate. Jesus' victory over temptation to save himself and faithfulness to his Father's plan had taken the mission past the point of no return. God's plan to rescue us was nearly complete.