

wentest thou not with thy friend?" An exiled Stuart prince was sure to be supported and protected by followers, whom misfortune only rendered more devoted. To be utterly deserted in the time of trouble and danger seems the very depth of misery.

Our study of the Gospel of Mark has hitherto shown us the Lord Jesus as the unwearied worker, "going about doing good." But we have now turned over a new leaf. We are to behold him as the sufferer, passive, patient, enduring. We have hitherto seen him, even when confronted and opposed by enemies, with a few loyal friends at his side, unto whom he is Master and Lord—the centre of their hopes, affections, and aspirations. To-day we are to see him deserted by all—going to meet death alone. The last lesson showed us Jesus alone. That for to-day shows us Jesus left alone.

The armed multitude who intruded upon the calm and quiet of Gethsemane were in search of one man only. The council of the Jews had agreed that "one man should die for the people." John 11. 50. They had no fear of adherents of Jesus, nor was their jealousy excited by any of his disciples. So the traitor hastened to point out (most unnecessarily, since Jesus himself came forward to meet his captors) the one whom they sought. And although the satellites of the chief-priests and Pharisees might not have been unwilling to vent their malice upon his followers, the display of his power (John 18. 8) was sufficient to restrain them from exceeding their instructions. Even the assault upon Malchus was not retaliated. And yet the disciples were overcome with fear. Not one of them was ready to "go with him to prison and to death." After the first flight, Peter indeed ventured to turn back and follow the Lord, but it was "afar-off." There was no man to stand by him in the hour of trouble. And there were two reasons why this must be so.

His work must be done alone. I remember reading how the inhabitants of a secluded spot in India were molested by a tiger in the neighbourhood, one of the kind known as "man-eaters." A brave English officer undertook to slay this terrible foe. He went forth alone to meet the tiger, and lay in wait at a place where the animal was known to resort. He came back victorious. The presence of another person would have hampered him and been a hindrance. So when the Lord Jesus went forth "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death," (Heb. 2. 14), he went forth alone. None could aid him. None might suffer with him. He must go through the contest unsupported by human help.

His suffering must be borne alone. The sinner is under the curse. He deserves to be cast away, as a vile, guilty thing. Suppose in a basket of fair fruit you find some that is all spoiled, rotten, worm-eaten—will it not be flung away out of sight as a corrupt, worthless, loathsome thing? That is what the sinner merits. But Jesus bore the curse for us—nay, was made a curse for us. And he bore the desertion we deserved.

Here is

1. A word of comfort. Jesus knows what it is to be left alone. There are many lonely people in the world, many who seem almost deserted. Their friends may be far away, estranged, dead. But they cannot be as lonely as Jesus was. He suffered far more than them. And to all who receive and trust in him, he says: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Heb. 13. 15.

2. A word of exhortation. The followers of Jesus may be called to stand alone for his sake. Christ's atoning work is finished, but the reproach of the cross has not ceased. And in this reproach they have to share. To the sons of Zebedee he promised that they should "drink of his cup." To Peter, full of boastful zeal, he said: "Thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterward." John 13. 16. And so it came to pass. Acts 5. 40, 41; 12. 2, 3; Rev. 1. 9. They who once "forsook him and fled," afterwards suffered persecution and death for his sake. And those who would follow Jesus now must—

"Dare to stand alone."

"When is man strong but when he is alone?"

asks the poet, Robert Browning. And to stand alone with Christ, as Luther stood at the Diet of Worms, and as many a young man has stood in the office and the counting-house, and many a young woman in an ungodly household, is to be strong indeed.

3. A word of warning. Christ is not now left alone. Many faithful ones are following "in his train." Let us see to it that we are not left behind. And let us remember that only those who follow him here can share his glory afterwards.

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Present the *facts* of the lesson. . . . Elements in Judas' character: 1. Worldliness; 2. Want of faith; 3. Covetousness; 4. Hypocrisy; 5. Falsehood. . . . Results of the betrayal to Judas, his fate, etc. . . . Teachings of the betrayal concerning personal charac-