Chinese for crisis is a combination of two characters, one = danger, the other = opportunity.

This week is a crisis with danger and opportunities, for all sorts of people, especially Judas, Peter, Jesus.

But it is only Jesus who comes out well.

Let’s look at these three briefly.

[1] Judas

Everyone has an opinion about Judas – was he the Devil incarnate, duped by Satan, motivated by greed, misguided in trying to force Jesus’ hand, believing he was doing what Jesus wanted?

The word for ‘betray’ literally means ‘giving up’, or ‘handing over’, which is rather neutral.

However we understand Judas, he got it wrong and realised this.

At his time of crisis he faced danger, had opportunity, but he gave up and committed suicide.

[2] Peter

We discussed why Peter went to the courtyard. Was he delegated to see what was going on, as ‘leader’ did he volunteer, after Jesus prayed for him did he think he was up for the task, did he try to prove he was ready to go to prison or die with Jesus, was he looking out for his friend, was he trying to see if he could rescue him?

Again we do not know; all we know is that he got it wrong and realised this.

At his time of crisis he faced danger, had opportunity, but gave up and slunk away weeping bitterly.

[3] Jesus

How does Jesus fare? We were amazed that the authorities would give Jesus the time and opportunity to heal someone’s cut off ear (the last healing miracle!). Later we hear how Jesus did not try to defend himself, often saying nothing, especially to Herod who thus mocked him. He endured mockery from soldiers, priests, Romans, the crowd, even one of the criminals crucified with him.
He suffered the humiliation of a cross, a punishment reserved for the worst of criminals.

Danger was all about him, and he had many an opportunity to back down, to say sorry, to plead for his life.

But he could see other opportunities that could only be realised with his death – more of which on Friday.

At his time of crisis he faced danger, had opportunity and firmly grasped it at the cost of his life.

Amazing love – how can it be, that thou my God shouldst die for me!