

(Through the Bible) John 18-19

by Chuck Smith

This sermon explores the events leading to Jesus' crucifixion, emphasizing His control over the situation and the significance of His sacrifice.

Duration: 1:28:49

Scripture: Matthew 5:7, Matthew 23:23, Matthew 23:27, Matthew 23:37, John 18:1, Galatians 6:1

Topics: "Redemption Through Christ", "Gods Love"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the significance of Jesus' statement 'it is finished' on the cross. He explains that this declaration signifies the completion of God's work of redemption for humanity through Jesus' sacrifice. The speaker emphasizes that there is nothing we can add to this finished work through our own good deeds, and that our acceptance by God comes solely through receiving Jesus' finished work. The sermon also touches on the importance of knowing and studying God's Word, and concludes with a reminder of God's love and the need for believers to show mercy and forgiveness to others.

Transcript

Shall we turn to John's Gospel, chapter 18. Jesus has finished his prayer, which we mentioned last week, should properly be entitled, The Lord's Prayer. And now, from wherever this prayer was offered, maybe it was on the temple precincts itself, as the temple gates were open all night, during the time of Passover, so people could come at any time and worship God.

But having finished his prayer, he now crosses the Brook Kidron with his disciples, that he might go over to a place on the Mount of Olives, where Jesus went often with his disciples into a garden known as Gethsemane. In those days, the wealthy people of Jerusalem had private gardens on the Mount of Olives. It could be that one of these persons who liked Jesus, had given him the key to the gate of his garden, and that Jesus had access to this particular garden there on the Mount of Olives.

And he went there often with his disciples. But when Jesus, chapter 18, verse 1, when Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, into which he entered with his disciples. So, the wording and the phraseology here would indicate that it was one of these private gardens within a gated area that Jesus entered.

The interesting thing, as he crossed the Brook Kidron at this point, during Passover season, there on the Temple Mount, for the Passover, there would be slain thousands of lambs. In fact, some 30 years later

than this, the Roman government sought to take a census. They could not count the people because the Jews were opposed to a census of the people ever since the time that David took the census and the nation was judged for David's sin.

So, from that time on, they would never count people. In fact, the Orthodox today, if you're at a party and you have to count off for a game or something, they won't count people. They'll say not one, not two, not three, not four, not five.

But, in the taking of the census, what they did was count the number of sheep that were killed for the Passover because they were curious to find out how many people were gathering in Jerusalem for these Passovers. Now, the Passover lamb had to be eaten by no fewer than ten people. And so, at the particular census made mention by Josephus, there were 256,000 sheep killed for that one Passover feast, indicating the number of people in Jerusalem at somewhere around 2.5 million people gathered for the Passover.

So, when they would kill the lambs, the blood would go in a little rivulet that was created on down to the brook of Kidron. And there it would mingle with the water of the brook Kidron, and it would be a bloody-looking water flowing down the stream. And as Jesus crossed it with His disciples, filled with the blood, mingled with the water of the stream, which of course washed it on down, thinking of all of those lambs that were sacrificed for Passover, Jesus no doubt was thinking of the lamb that was to be sacrificed this Passover.

The Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world. And so, to Him it was probably a very touching moment as He crossed that stream with His disciples, seeing it flowing red with the blood of the Passover lambs. Judas also, who betrayed Him, was familiar with this garden where Jesus often went.

And so, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, they came out with their torches and lanterns and weapons. The band, that word in the Greek, indicates a Roman contingent of either what was known as a cohort, 650 men, or they also had an enlarged cohort, which was 1,000 men comprised of 270 cavalymen plus the footmen, or at the least 200 men. Now, it is interesting that they would bring such a large number of Roman soldiers along with the officers of the temple to arrest Jesus with His twelve.

Why they thought they needed that many is interesting. And Jesus therefore, knowing that all things should come upon Him, went forth. He came on out of the garden.

They came with their torches. Now, it was full moon. They really didn't need torches during the full moon over there.

But perhaps they thought that He would be lurking somewhere in the bushes or hiding, and so they came with their torches and weapons. But Jesus came right on out to meet them. And He said unto them, Who are you looking for? And they answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth.

And He said unto them, I Am. You'll notice the word He is in italics, which means that it was added by the translators. Jesus just said, I Am.

That divine name of the eternal God. When Jesus said, I Am, there met forth, no doubt, a blast of power, divine power. And as He said unto them, I Am, they fell backward to the ground.

Now at that point, Jesus could have just walked off and left them lying there. It is interesting that Jesus is in control of the whole situation. He is the Master.

And though they have come to arrest Him, He is the one that is giving the orders. Notice, He asked them again, Who are you looking for? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. He said, I told you that I Am.

If therefore you are seeking Me, then let these others go. And He ordered them to let the disciples go. Which they did.

He was in control. He was calling the orders at this point. Perfect command of the entire situation.

Now at this point, well, that the scripture might be fulfilled, which said, Of them which you gave Me, I have lost none. Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it. And he smote the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear.

The servant's name was Malchus. Simon had been in a deep sleep. He had tried to stay awake and pray with the Lord, but he just couldn't do it.

He was tired. And so when Jesus said, Sleep on now. Take your rest.

And then He said, Arise. The hour has come. When Peter arose out of the deep sleep, he was probably still pretty groggy.

He looked around, saw the crowd, pulled out his sword and began to swing. And Malchus can be glad that he was sleepy. He only caught his ear.

He was trying for his head, no doubt. It is interesting, the last healing miracle that Jesus performed, He performed to cover the bungling act of one of His disciples. For Jesus healed the ear of Malchus, the servant of the high priest.

Now, Peter is one that we are prone to fault. Because in just a moment, he will be denying his Lord. In spite of his strong protestations earlier that he would never deny Him, that he would die for Him, soon he will be denying Him.

And we're prone to fault Peter for his cowardice. But wait a minute. Here are at least 200 Roman soldiers plus the officers of the temple.

And I'll tell you, Peter is ready to stand them all off to defend Jesus Christ. That's not cowardice. That takes some kind of a man.

And so don't be too harsh on Peter. He was a man's man. He was ready to stand off the whole band.

Then said Jesus to Peter, Put up your sword into the sheath. The cup which the Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it? Now, just a little earlier in the evening, as Jesus was in the garden and praying, Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless, not what I will, Your will be done.

At that point, Jesus was facing the cup. Reluctantly. It was at that point He was submitting His will to the Father.

It wasn't something He wanted to do. Desired to do. This was an act of submission to the Father.

But that commitment was made. Once it was made, there was no turning back. Jesus said to His disciples, Don't you realize that at this moment I could call ten legions of angels to deliver Me? I don't need your help, Peter.

If I wanted out of this, I could get out of it very easily. But the cup that the Father has given Me to drink, shall I not drink it? He had made His commitment. There is no turning back.

Then the band and the captain and the officers took Jesus and they bound Him. How ridiculous that they should bind Him. But let me tell you, whatever they used, the ropes or whatever to bind Jesus did not bind Jesus.

Jesus was bound by something else much more powerful than the ropes. He was bound by His love for you and for me. That's what caused Him to submit to this.

Not that they tied Him up and were taking Him as a captive. He was not their captive. He was a captive of love.

His love for you. His love for me. That's what bound Jesus to go ahead to face the cross.

And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Annas had been the high priest from the year 5 to the year 16. Annas was probably one of the most influential, powerful, wealthy men in the city of Jerusalem.

At this particular time, the high priesthood was a political kind of an appointment by the Roman government. And it was secured by a bidding kind of a process. They paid and bribed for the privilege of being the high priest.

It was extremely corrupted at this point. Annas was the high priest. And being the patriarch of that family was recognized still as the power behind the office of the high priest.

Five of his sons at various times and for various periods held the position of high priest. At this particular time, his son-in-law, Caiaphas, had the official Roman sanction as high priest. But Annas was still considered by the people the high priest, and he was the power behind the throne.

And that is why they brought him to Annas first. Annas was the man who had so corrupted the priesthood. But he was the one who owned the booths in the temple courtyard where they sold the animals for sacrifices, where the money changer tables were.

For he was the one extorting from the people the high prices for the sacrificial animals. You could buy a dove out on the street for about twenty cents to offer as a sacrifice. But the sacrifices had to be without spot or blemish.

So if you bought a dove out on the streets and brought it for a sacrifice, the priest would examine it carefully and he'd find some little blemish. He'd say, I can't offer this to God. Look, it's got a blemish here.

You better go over to the table over there and buy a dove from them. And of course, this was a concession owned by Annas. And they were charging ten, fifteen dollars for a dove.

But if you wanted to offer a sacrifice, you had to have one the priest would accept. And these were already accepted. There was no question about these that Annas was selling in his concessionaires there.

And that was the thing that Jesus saw that upset him so much that he drove, he made a whip and he drove them out of the temple. And he overturned the money changers' tables and he said that my father's house is to be called the house of prayer and you've made it a den of thieves. Merchandising the things of God and how God gets angry at that.

And I think that that would be wise for a lot of these evangelists and healers and all around the country today to realize how angry God gets when people try to merchandise the Gospel or to put in the way of men barriers to their coming to God. People who try to enrich themselves off of the Gospel would do well to study the anger of Jesus when he found this going on within the temple courts. Annas had it in for Jesus ever since he had overturned his little business.

Naturally, they put things right back together again. But it galled him that Jesus would have the nerve to upset his extortion racket. And so he was first brought to this man, an extortioner, a wealthy man, a Sadducee.

And there he was first tried before Annas, then to Caiaphas, and then to Pilate. And so they brought him to Annas, who was the high priest, the father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was the high priest that same year. So that's why there were two high priests.

Annas, the patriarch, the old man, recognized by the people, but the Roman government had appointed politically Caiaphas as the high priest. Now this Caiaphas was the one who said, look, it's necessary that one be killed for the whole nation. And Simon Peter followed Jesus.

Now, again, this is admirable. The rest of the disciples, with the exception of John, had fled. Simon got into trouble because he wasn't going to leave Jesus.

He continued to follow him. And the disciple which was known unto the high priest and went with Jesus into the palace of the high priest, but Peter stood at the door. Now this disciple, this other disciple, is no doubt John referring to himself.

And he was known to the high priest. Now how do you suppose it was that John was known to the high priest? According to the stories, John's father Zebedee was a very wealthy fish merchant. He had his fleet of ships up on the... Actually, that was an Israeli slip.

When you're there in Israel, they'll say, look at all of these sheeps. And they'll be talking about the sheep on the hillside. And they call them ships.

And so, see all the ships over there. So, Zebedee had his fleet of fishing boats up on the Sea of Galilee. Only a fool falls in the same ditch twice.

And watch me fall in that one in just a minute to prove it. And it was impossible to get fresh fish to the market in Jerusalem. So, they would salt the fish.

And salted fish was one of the great delicacies. And according to the stories, and in fact today there's a little coffee shop still in the old city of Jerusalem. And under this coffee shop there are arches.

And they declared to you that these arches were actually the fish market of Zebedee. And that he sold the salted fish to the high priest. Now, if this were so, as John was growing up, he probably was the delivery boy and had been there in the high priest's home many times delivering the salted fish.

And this is how it is believed that John knew the high priest. At any rate, he knew him. And so, he went on in, but Peter was outside.

And then the other disciple who was known to the high priest spoke to the girl that was keeping the door and he brought Peter on in. Then the damsel said to Peter, the one keeping the door, are you not one of this man's disciples? And Peter said, nope, I'm not. And the servants and the officers stood there who had made a fire of coals, for it was cold.

And they were warming themselves and Peter stood with them and warmed himself. I might at this point just say, be careful whenever you seek warmth at the enemy's fires. You're in dangerous territory.

The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples and of his doctrine. Now, this was a violation of Jewish law. They had a fifth amendment kind of a thing where no man could testify against himself.

You were not required to testify against yourself. There was the fifth amendment. And it was illegal to ask a man to witness against himself.

So when the high priest was asking him the question, Annas asked him about his disciples and about his doctrine. And Jesus is actually answering saying, look, I spoke openly to the world. I was always teaching in the synagogues and in the temple where the Jews always resort.

And I have said nothing in secret. So why do you ask me? That's illegal. Ask them which heard me.

Bring forth your witnesses. That's the legal thing to do. Those which heard me.

And let them tell you what I have said unto them. Behold, they know what I have said. So it was a technical legal point that Jesus was calling the high priest on.

But when he said that, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand and he said, do you answer the high priest so? And Jesus said to him, if I have spoken evil, then you bear witness of the evil. But if well, why are you smiting me? Now evidently, this guy standing by the high priest liked to hit the prisoners. Paul had the same kind of experience later on when the high priest asked Paul a question and Paul challenged it and the guy hit Paul and Paul turned and said, God will smite you, you whited sepulcher.

He was a little more gentle than Jesus. I think of this though in the context of the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus said, and if a man smites thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. We've got to understand that particular scripture in its context.

For Jesus did not really turn the other cheek. He just said, look, if I've said evil, then bear witness of the evil and if I brought forth an honest point of the law, then why did you strike me? And he challenged the man for striking him illegally. Now Annas bound him again and sent him to his son-in-law Caiaphas and John does not tell us about his trial before Caiaphas, but the other Gospels, Matthew and Mark, tell us about the trial before Caiaphas.

And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself and they said therefore unto him, are you not also one of his disciples? And he denied it and said, I am not. And one of the servants of the high priest being a relative to Malchus, the guy who's here was cut off by Peter, said, did I not see you in the garden with him? And Peter again denied and immediately the cock crew. One of the other Gospels tells us that at this point

Jesus turned over and looked at Peter and Peter remembered the words of the Lord and he went out and wept bitterly.

It was a very hard experience for Peter. The stories tell us that in years to come, people to bug Peter, those enemies of the Gospel, would make the sound of a rooster crowing whenever they would see him. Constantly reminded of his failure.

It's terrible how the people will take advantage of a weakness or the failure of the man and try and hold him down rather than to lift him again. Such should not be the case within the family of God. If a man be overtaken in a fault, then ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of meekness as we consider ourselves, lest we also be tempted and we also fall.

As you would that men should do unto you, then do ye likewise also unto them. If I make a mistake, I want people to be patient and tolerant and considerate, thus I should be patient and tolerant and considerate. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

I used to tell that to my seminary professors every test time. Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Hall of Judgment. Now he is being brought before Pilate.

And it was early. But they themselves would not go into the Judgment Hall. You see, it was the area of the Gentiles.

And if they went into there, they would be defiled and they couldn't celebrate the Passover. So Pilate went out unto them. Interesting how corrupt and evil they were and yet meticulously religious.

It's a terrible thing how meticulous a person can be within the rituals of a religious system and yet so totally immorally corrupt. Oh, but oh, you know, can't do that because that's against my religious principles, you know, to eat meat on Friday or something. Of course, that's been dropped now.

But it's amazing how that we get into these little traditional things. And as Jesus said, you strain at a gnat, but you swallow a camel. And this is so true of people that get all bound up in the traditions of religion.

They begin to strain at the littlest things, but they overlook. He said, you pay tithe from your spice gardens. As you're counting out your little Ni seeds, you say, nine for me, one for the Lord.

Nine for me, one for the Lord. Counting out these little black seeds. Make sure the Lord gets His tenth.

And you pay tithe of your mint, your cumin, your spices. But you have omitted the more important things of righteousness and of judgment and of mercy. Now, we've got to guard ourselves against traditions and meticulous adherence to traditions, but yet overlooking some of the more important things that God is interested in.

And so, here they were. They wouldn't come in because they didn't want to defile themselves. And yet, they were engineering the crucifixion of God's Son.

What a whole paradox here. So, Pilate went out to them. And he said, what accusation do you bring against this man? Now, Pilate was appointed by the Roman government as a procurator of Judea.

When Herod the Great had died, he divided his kingdom to his three sons. But Herod Archilias, who was over the area of Judea, began to extort such heavy taxes from the people that they complained to the

Roman government and were granted by the Roman government to become a province of Rome under a procurator. And Pilate became the procurator over Judea.

Now, the Roman headquarters in that area was in Caesarea, not Jerusalem. But the procurator had to visit every major city at least once a year. And they would usually come up for the feast days to Jerusalem because they knew that that's when all of the people would be gathered.

And if there was to be any civil movement against Rome, it often occurred during these feast times. Now, the first time that Pilate came from Caesarea with the Roman legion into the city of Jerusalem, on the tops of the flags of the Roman legions, they had these little busts of the Caesar who was a god to the people. The Caesars took the position of gods.

And so the Jews objected to the Romans coming in with these flags with a little golden bust of the Caesars on the top. And the other procurators had acquiesced to the Jews and had not had these little busts on the top of their gods. But Pilate was not ready to give in to their superstitions.

And so the Roman soldiers under Pilate marched right into Jerusalem with these little standards on the top of their flags. And it so incensed the Jews that they started just bugging him for this action, not to do it again. And they followed him back to Caesarea and continued to bug him.

And so he commanded that they all gather into the arena there in Caesarea. And he had them lock the gates. And then he said, alright, now you quit bugging me or I'm going to kill you.

I'll have the soldiers kill you. I don't want you to bug me on this issue anymore. And the Jews all leaned over and they pulled their collars off of their necks and they said, go ahead and kill us.

You know, we don't want you doing that again. Well, even as cold as Pilate was, he couldn't just have these fellows slain like that defenseless. And so he capitulated.

And he gave in on this issue. But then again, Pilate just didn't have patience with their traditions. And again, he violated some of their traditions and they appealed to the emperor and the emperor went along with the people and overruled Pilate.

According to the Roman Senate, they wanted the procurators to keep the provinces as peaceful as possible, but Pilate wasn't that kind of a personality to just bow or acquiesce. And so he was having problems and one more report to the emperor would not be good for his record. So Pilate went out and he said, what accusation do you bring against this man? And they said unto him, if he weren't a criminal, we would not have delivered him up to you.

Pilate said unto them, then take him and judge him by your own laws. I mean, Pilate didn't want to be bothered with this. They don't want to make actual charges.

Now, their charge against him was blasphemy. You remember the priest said, art thou then the son of God? And he said, thou sayest it. And he said, what need we have any further witnesses? We've heard him say it with his own mouth.

Blasphemy! What do you say? He's guilty of death. But they couldn't bring this charge of blasphemy before Pilate. And he said, go away.

So before Pilate, they had to bring other charges. He is inciting people to rebel against Rome. That's a lie.

Lying charges. But Pilate really didn't have any love for these people. They had burned him already.

And he didn't have any patience for their religious feelings. And so when they said, if he weren't a malfactor, we wouldn't have brought him. Pilate then said, then you go ahead and try him according to your own laws.

He's not going to be, you know, playing games with these guys. The Jews therefore said unto him, it isn't lawful for us to put any man to death. Now, this right, R-I-G-H-T, of capital punishment had been taken away from the Jews just a couple of years previous.

According to the Talmud, the Roman government took away the right of capital punishment 40 years before the destruction of Jerusalem, which was destroyed in 70 A.D., which means that in 30 A.D., the right of capital punishment was taken away from the Jews by the Roman government. When, and this is just two years before the crucifixion of Jesus, when the capital, the right of capital punishment was taken away from the Jews, many of the leaders put on sackcloth, ashes on their head, and they went mourning through the streets of Jerusalem, and they said, God has failed His promise and His Word. And they had mourning over the failure of God to keep His Word.

For, God had promised through the prophecy of Jacob that the scepter shall not depart from Judah until the Messiah comes. And when in 30 A.D., the Roman government took away the right of capital punishment, that was equivalent to removing the scepter from the people. And they mourned, and they said, God failed His promise.

What they didn't realize, God had kept His promise. He was living among them at that very moment. The Messiah had come.

They just didn't recognize Him. There was no need for their mourning processions. God had kept His Word.

But, the right of capital punishment was taken away in 30 A.D. by the Roman government. And so, they said, we don't have the right, it isn't lawful for us to condemn a man to die. Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and he called Jesus.

And he said unto Him, are you the King of the Jews? And Jesus said, do you want to know this for yourself? Or did others tell you about me? Is this really something you want to know, or is this just something that you've heard? You know, there are a lot of questions that people ask. But they really don't want an answer. They only want an argument.

There are honest questions, and there are dishonest questions. I'll take all day to answer an honest question. I have no time for dishonest questions.

And there are those who come up with dishonest questions all the time. And I have no patience with dishonest questions. People don't really want an answer to their question.

They just want an argument. And there are certain questions that I have asked of me that I know that are only designed to bring an argument. And I know exactly where they're coming from.

After they've asked the second or third question, I know exactly where they're coming from. And I can become very much like Romaine very quickly when I get a dishonest questioner. Jesus was asking Pilate,

Do you really want to know, or do you want an argument? Did someone else tell you this of me, or are you really asking? Pilate said, Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priest have delivered you unto me.

What have you done? Jesus answered him, My kingdom is not of this world. Do you ask me if I'm a king? Yes. But my kingdom is not of this world.

If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews. But now is my kingdom not from here. Pilate therefore said unto him, Are you then a king? And Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king.

Or more literally, you said it. I am a king. To this end was I born.

And for this cause I came into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth. And everyone that is of the truth hears my voice. Pilate said unto him, What is truth? I'm sure at this point Pilate was very cynical after his encounters with the Jews and the problems that he had faced as the procurator of this area.

And I think that it was a question of cynicism. What is truth? And when he said this, he went out again to the Jews and he said unto them, I find no fault in him. But you have a custom.

That I should release unto you one at the Passover. Will you therefore that I release unto you the king of the Jews? Then cried they all again saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

So here is Pilate's first attempt to release Jesus. Because of the custom of the Passover for the Roman government to show favor unto the people, he was to release a prisoner. And so he tried to release Jesus as the Passover prisoner.

But they cried for Barabbas. So Pilate sought the second time for releasing Jesus by having him scourged, hoping that the horrible, brutal punishment of the scourging would suffice the thirst for blood that these people had. Then Pilate therefore took Jesus and scourged him.

The scourging was a whipping that was done to examine the prisoners. It was a third degree technique of the Roman Empire. They did not have amnesty in those days or human rights.

They had a third degree that was totally unmerciful. They would tie a prisoner to a post so that the back was stretched out and then with a cat of nine tails whip, a leather whip with little bits of glass and lead embedded in it designed to rip the flesh, they would lay the whip across the back of the prisoner 39 times. Forty is the number of judgment.

Thirty-nine the number of mercy. So judgment must be tempered by mercy. So they would lay 39 stripes.

Now as they would lay the stripe across his back, the prisoner would cry out a crime that he had committed. And every time he would cry out a crime, the lash would be a little less severe until by the time the 39th stripe came, they would just sort of lay the whip across his back. But if the prisoner would not confess a crime, then every stripe would be harder and harder and harder until he would be forced to scream out in sheer agony the crimes that he had committed.

Imagine Jesus in this plight, nothing to confess. And so as the sheep before her shears is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. And they laid upon him the full force of the 39 stripes and they scourged him.

It's just not much said about that, but we cannot imagine the agony. Many times prisoners died as the result of these scourgings. Before the 39th stripe was laid upon them, they were already dead from the loss of blood and just from the extreme pain.

But Jesus bore that suffering. Now, the question, inasmuch as all of this is a part of God's plan, these stripes being laid upon him were a part of God's predetermined plan. It was prophesied in the book of Isaiah, so God knew it in advance.

If he knew it in advance, he planned it in advance. As Peter was talking to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, he said, you according to the predetermined counsel and foreknowledge of God with your wicked hands have crucified and slain him. According to the predetermined counsel and foreknowledge.

Now, why would God in his predetermined counsel determine that Jesus should not only die that horrible death of the cross, but also be scourged, receive the stripes? Going back to the prophecy of Isaiah. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him.

And with his stripes, you are healed. Jesus was there definitely making provision for healing. For his people.

I believe that that healing goes beyond the spiritual healing. I do not believe that you can deny that also there is physical healing involved through the suffering of Jesus. Matthew's gospel chapter eight.

And they brought to him many who were sick and afflicted with diverse, various kinds of diseases. And he healed them all that the scripture might be fulfilled, which declared he bore our suffering in his own body. So that when Paul was writing to the church concerning their taking of the Lord's Supper, he said unto them, there are many of you who are weak and sick because you do not understand the Lord's body.

Jesus took the bread and he broke it and said, this is my body broken for you. Those in Corinth, many of them were sick because they did not understand the provision that God had made for them through the scourging of Jesus. And he scourged him.

And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns and they put it on his head and they put on him a purple robe and they said, Hail, King of the Jews. And they smote him with their hands. Now, Jesus had already experienced a tremendous buffeting in the house of Caiaphas.

There they put a covering over his head and with this bag over his head, they began to hit him. Now, that's vicious. We are fearfully and wonderfully designed and we are designed to have automatic reflex actions.

And when we see a blow coming, we automatically reflex to protect ourselves from that blow by fainting and going with the blow, thus cushioning it. And as long as you see the blow coming, it's amazing what you can absorb as long as your body is able to see it coming and you can then compensate and cushion and relax and flow with it. You see these quarterbacks, you know, these big old tackles come in and just massacre them.

And you think, Oh, man, he'll never get up. And he jumps back up to his feet and runs to the huddle. He saw the guy coming.

Where they really get hurt is when they get blindsided. They're not able to prepare themselves and that's where your ribs get broken. That's where your backbone gets broken.

That's where you really get hurt is when you get blindsided because there your body is not responding. You don't have this opportunity of reflex action. You can step off of a curb and break your leg if you don't know the curb is there because you haven't set your body to react for that height.

And just the height of a step, you can break your leg by just going down hard, not knowing that the step is there. So by covering Jesus' eyes, by covering his head and then buffeting him, no chance to faint or to respond and you take the full force of the blow. You don't know it's coming.

Wham! And that hurts. He'd already had taken that kind of abuse. It's amazing how that animals will pick on one that is already down.

You've heard of hen pecking. If there is one that is sick or small or scrawny, they'll all peck it until they kill it. It's just a part of animal nature.

And man without God is no more than an animal. Man recognizes that. And those men who are without God talk about the highly evolved form of animal life.

And they look at the monkey and tip their hat to their ancestor because they naturally relate to the animal kingdom because they live like animals apart from Jesus Christ. Until that spiritual dimension of your life is open through Jesus Christ, you are no more than an animal. And these men as animals, seeing Jesus already battered, were not satisfied, but continued this ungodly persecution of a righteous man.

His face already bruised, swollen, bloodied by the blows from Caiaphas. They continued the abuse by smiting him, putting on the crown of thorns, mocking him. There is a horrible mob psychology where people lose all of their natural inhibitions and restraints and act as a mob and like an animal.

And it's always shocking the things that people can do in the anonymity of a mob. The true vicious nature of man, sinful nature of man is revealed. Pilate therefore went forth again and he said unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you that you may know that I find no fault in him.

And Jesus came forth wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said unto them, Behold, the man. I think that Pilate was saying this in awe of Jesus.

He had just seen him take 39 stripes without a word. He had heard other men in that condition screaming out in agony. He had heard others as they cried out their crimes.

He had heard others shriek the curses. And yet here he takes it all without a word, without a whimper. And I'm sure that at this point Pilate was so totally impressed.

The kingly nature of Jesus. How he stood up to the buffeting. To this whole horrible scene.

And I'm sure that Pilate's heart was filled with awe and reverence. And he said, Behold, the man. I think that Pilate thought, I have never seen a man like that in all my life.

Behold, the man. Every bit the man. The epitome of manhood was found in Jesus Christ our Lord.

He is one that every man can look up to as a model. And seek to follow that role model. Every inch a man.

And when the chief priests, therefore, and officers saw him, they cried out saying, Crucify him! Crucify him! And Pilate said unto them, Do you want to take him and crucify him? I find no fault in him. And the Jews answered him, We have a law. And by our law he ought to die.

Because he made himself the Son of God. And when Pilate heard that saying, he was all the more afraid. And he went again into the judgment hall and he said to Jesus, Where did you come from? But Jesus did not answer him.

Then Pilate said unto him, Don't you answer me? Don't you know that I have the power to crucify thee and I have the power to release thee? Jesus then answered, you could have no power at all against me. Unless it was given to you from above. Therefore, he that delivered me unto you has the greater sin.

Pilate, you have a sin, but they have a greater sin. And from that time, Pilate sought to release him. But the Jews cried out saying, If you let this man go, you are not Caesar's friend.

For whosoever makes himself a king is speaking against Caesar. Uh oh, he's already lost one bout to Caesar. The next bout will cost him his kingdom.

Pilate's past is catching up with him. And so, when Pilate heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth. Sat down at the judgment seat in a place that is called the pavement.

In the Hebrew, it's called the Gabbatha. And it was preparation for the Passover. It was about the sixth hour.

That is, about nine o'clock in the morning. And he said to the Jews, that is in the Roman calendar, Behold your king. But they cried out, away with him, away with him.

Crucify him. And Pilate said unto them, Shall I crucify your king? And the chief priest answered, We have no king but Caesar. I'm sure that that took Pilate back.

He knew what rebels they were against Rome. But to hear the chief priest say, We have no king but Caesar. It was that subtle intimation.

If you let this man go, a report is going directly to Caesar. And it's your job, buddy. Here is a man claiming to be a king.

He can't be a friend of Caesar's. And so Pilate delivered him to be crucified. And they led Jesus away.

Pilate had a very difficult decision to make. He knew in his heart what was right. But he was being pressured by the crowd into a decision he knew was wrong.

That's always a hard position to be in. When in your heart you know what you ought to do. In your heart you know what is the right thing.

But there is the pressures pushing you to do the wrong thing. And what a tragedy when a person succumbs to those evil pressures and does that which is a violation of his own conscience, his own knowledge of what is right. Sad, always, to violate your own conscience.

And do that which in your heart you know is wrong. Pilate had the power to crucify Jesus or to release Him. Pilate knew that the right thing to do was to release Him.

There was no fault. If he would take the scourging without crying out any crimes, he had to be innocent. Pilate asked them the question, What shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ? They cried, Crucify Him.

Why? What evil has he done? They just cried louder, Crucify Him. No argument. There's no real reason.

Just the loud cries of the crowd. And Pilate succumbed to those. And he delivered Him to be crucified.

That question that Pilate faced is a question that each of us must face. What am I going to do with Jesus who is called the Christ? You see, every one of us are in Pilate's position. This is just not a recorded fact of history.

This is relevant to you tonight. Each one of you must make the same decision that Pilate had to make. What will I do with Jesus who is called the Christ? And you can either believe in Him or not believe in Him.

But as many as believed on Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God. Even to those who believed upon His name. Or you cannot believe.

You can confess Him. Or you can deny Him. And if you will confess Me before men, Jesus said, I will confess you before My Father which is in Heaven.

But if you deny Me before men, I'll also deny you before the Father in the presence of the holy angels. You can receive Him or reject Him. What will you do with Jesus who is called Christ? Now there's an interesting paradox here.

As I told you, Jesus was the one that was in control of the whole scene. Pilate was supposedly the judge. Jesus was the plaintiff.

In reality, Pilate was the plaintiff. His decision was not to affect Jesus at all because what God had preordained was going to take place. Pilate's decision did not affect Jesus.

What Jesus had to do, He had to do. What He did, He did. Pilate's decision affected His destiny.

His own destiny was determined by the decision He made. And even so with you. Though in a sense you must make your judgment, what am I going to do with Christ? Your decision does not at all alter the destiny of Jesus Christ.

What He is, He is. Where He is, He is. That cannot and will not change no matter what you believe.

You may go on saying, I don't believe that two and two is four. That doesn't change the fact. It only makes you a fool.

What you do with Jesus Christ doesn't alter Him, but it does determine your own destiny. And thus, you are the judge of your own fate. As you face the question, what will I do with Jesus who is called Christ? The destiny of your own eternal future is in your hands.

Then He delivered Him to be crucified. And they took Jesus and led Him away. And He, bearing His cross, went forth to the place called the place of a skull.

In the Hebrew, it is Golgotha. In the Latin, it is Calvary. Where they crucified Him and two others with Him on either side and Jesus in the middle.

And Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. Now, when the sentence of crucifixion was given by the Roman judge, immediately the prisoner was surrounded by four Roman soldiers.

He was given His cross, and He was to bear His own cross. And they would take the longest route through the city. In front of the prisoner would march another Roman soldier with the accusation against the prisoner the crime for which he was being crucified.

And as they would go through the streets, it would be a warning to all of the people who would see this man on the way to his death. This is the crime that he committed against Rome and this is why he is being crucified. And it would put fear in the hearts of the people to rebel against Rome.

And so, the soldier going in front with that accusation, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, parading through the streets of Jerusalem, out the Damascus Gate, over and to the top of Mount Moriah, there above the area that looks like a skull to be crucified. Crucifixion was such a horrible, awful death that it was ruled by Rome that it could not ever be administered to a Roman citizen. It was too horrible a death.

And yet Jesus, the Son of God, condemned to crucifixion. This title read many of the Jews for the place where Jesus was crucified was near to the city and it was written in Hebrew and Greek and Latin. From the city wall above the Herod's Gate, you can look right across at Calvary, Golgotha.

It's within a stone's throw and the people there on the wall of the city looking over and seeing the three prisoners could hear the cries, could watch the agony in that horrible scene. Then the chief priest of the Jews came to Pilate and he said, Don't write the King of the Jews. But that he said I am the King of the Jews.

But Pilate had no patience with these fellows and he said, What I have written, I have written. Get lost. Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments and made four parts to every soldier apart.

One took his sandals, one took the girdle, one took the inner robe. But the outer robe, the coat that Jesus wore, was without seam, woven from the top throughout. And they said among themselves, Let's not tear it, but let's cast lots for it, whose it shall be.

Now in Psalm 22 it said, They parted my garments among them, but for my vesture they did cast lots. Actually what they would do is gamble. They had dice and they would throw the dice to see who would get the sandals, throw the dice to see who would get the inner coat and the various articles.

And when they got to the outer coat, they're gambling as Jesus was dying over who would get the robe. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother and his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. So the three Marys at the cross.

And when Jesus therefore saw his mother and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he said to his mother woman, Behold your son. No doubt indicating John. Then he said to the disciple, Behold your mother.

And from that hour that disciple took her into his own home. A beautiful bond between Jesus and his mother Mary. She had borne a secret for a long time.

The secret of the incarnation. She knew that the child was a special child. The angel of the Lord had told her that before she ever conceived him by the Holy Spirit.

He shall be great. He shall be called the son of the highest. And of the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end.

Mary buried that in her heart wondering, Oh my, what kind of a child is this going to be? And when Joseph and Mary brought him into the temple to be presented to the Lord, this ancient man Simeon, a godly man, and the Lord had said to him, Simeon, you're not going to die until you have seen the Messiah. And as Mary and Joseph came with the child, he took him up in his arms and he said, Oh God, now let your servant depart in peace for I have seen your salvation. But he turned to Mary and he said, there is going to be a sword that will pierce your soul.

And right now Mary was understanding what he was talking about as that sword of grief pierced her soul as she saw her son there on the cross. Mary standing there close by the cross to see the end. If I were hanged on the highest hill, oh mother of mine, oh mother of mine, I know whose love would follow me still.

Oh mother of mine, oh mother of mine. And there was Mary standing. And Jesus, though in this period of agony, great pain took care to take care of her.

Woman, behold your son. Indicating John. John, behold your mother.

And John took her into his home from that time on. No doubt Joseph was already dead and the brothers of Jesus at this point did not believe in him. There is a closer bond always created in the family of God than even in our natural families if they are not also in God.

Behold your mother, behold your son. Now after this, Jesus having taken care now of his mother, this is it, having done this, knowing that all things were now accomplished, as we told you this word, *taleo*, is accomplished or paid or finished, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, he said, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar and they filled a sponge with vinegar, put it upon his hip and put it to his mouth.

And when Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, it is finished, *taleo*. It is accomplished. It is paid.

God's work is complete. I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me. I have come to do the will of the Father and to finish His work.

It is finished. God's work of redemption for a lost man is a finished work wrought by Jesus Christ upon the cross and there's nothing you can add to it by your good works to be accepted by God. All you can do is receive that finished work of Jesus.

Any endeavor on your part to improve on the righteousness that God has already accounted to you is only going to mar things. It's not going to help. It's finished.

God's work of redemption is complete and you can receive the greatest benefits with the simplest act of faith, just believing. And he bowed his head and gave up the ghost or dismissed his spirit, delivered up his spirit. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation that the body should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, notice John says, for that Sabbath day was a high day.

Within the Passover feast, the first and the last day of the Passover feast were called high days. Extra Sabbath days. So this was not necessarily the Sabbath Saturday.

And there is where we get a confusion. How could Jesus be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth if He were crucified on Friday? So the Sabbath was probably, the high day Sabbath was probably the Thursday, so they had a double Sabbath day. And Jesus was probably crucified during the day on Thursday and then the Sabbath day on Friday actually and then the Sabbath day on Saturday, the double Sabbath on Friday and Saturday.

And then early the first morning, early the morning of the first day of the week they came and found the empty tomb. But John, notice, tells us that this was a particular ceremonial Sabbath day in regards to the Passover. It was the high day.

But because it was coming and they were preparing for it and they could not do any work and all, when it started, they begged Pilate that the legs might be broken in order that they might hasten the death and get the prisoners down off the cross. Now, crucifixion was begun in Persia because the Persians considered the ground sacred. If a man was evil enough to be crucified, they felt that his body shouldn't be placed in the ground.

So they were hung on a cross and after they died, their bodies were then eaten by the vultures. And thus, their bodies did not spoil the ground. And most generally, they did not bury those who were crucified, but they left them to the vultures and to the dogs.

And the Jews, however, did bury those that were crucified. But the Romans generally did not. The Carthaginians did not, nor did the Persians who originated crucifixion, but left them just hanging there until they were consumed by the vultures and the dogs.

Now, they wanted to break the legs to hasten the death so that they could take them down before the Sabbath. And the soldiers came and they broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead and they broke not his legs.

Jesus had said earlier, no man takes my life from me, I'm giving my life. I have the power to give it and I have the power to take it up again. So he gave his life, he dismissed his spirit before the soldiers ever got there with a spear.

He was already dead. They marveled that he was already dead. And so they did not break his legs.

That was important from a prophetic standpoint for the Scriptures said, not a bone of him shall be broken. You see, he was dying as a sacrificial lamb of God. Now, they were not to offer a lamb that had any blemish or any spot or any broken bone.

God didn't want, you know, you get an old sick lamb, well, it got a broken leg and it's going to die. Let's make a sacrifice unto God with this thing because there's no way you don't give me your handoffs or your castoffs. And so under the law, they couldn't give a lamb that had a spot or a blemish.

They couldn't give a lamb that had broken bones. God knew the nature of man, how we're apt to just cast anything off on him, save the best for ourselves. And God says not so.

And so with Jesus, in order to fulfill the type of the sacrificial lamb, could not have a broken bone. And it was prophesied, not a bone of him shall be broken. Now, add one of those soldiers just, you know, swung the sledgehammer and broke his leg anyhow.

Then we would have to say, well, we better look for another Messiah. Jesus cannot be the Messiah. His bones were broken.

Oh, God was there to protect from such an accident. And instead of breaking his bone, he took his spear and put it into his side in order that the scripture might be fulfilled that spoke about his side being pierced. No broken bones, but they pierced his side.

And thus, the prophecy was fulfilled and we need look no further for a Messiah. Jesus indeed fulfilled all of the prophecies. It is accomplished, performed, paid, fulfilled.

Now, these things were done that the scriptures, well, let's see, one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side and there came forth blood and water. And he that saw it, that is John, I was standing there, I saw it. He bears record and his record is true.

And he knows what he is saying, that it is true. And I'm writing it, he said, that you might believe. John said, look, I was there, I saw it.

I know what I saw. I bear record of the truth of what I saw. And I'm writing it to you that you might believe.

For these things were done that the scriptures should be fulfilled. A bone of him shall not be broken. And again, another scripture says, and they shall look on him whom they pierced.

That particular prophecies, they shall look upon him whom they have pierced. It's a different Hebrew word than the word used, they pierced his hands and his feet. It's a piercing with a sword.

And they shall look upon him whom they have pierced. The fact that blood and water came forth indicates that if an odyssey were performed, they would have discovered that Jesus died of a ruptured heart. For when the heart ruptures, a water-type substance fills a sack around the heart.

And when they put the spear into his heart and pulled it out, the water and blood indicates death by a ruptured heart, or you might say, a broken heart. A heart that was broken over the sin of the world. And after this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews.

There's a lot of secret disciples today, I guess. For fear of the guys at work. Make fun of them and all.

But I always like it when the disciples come out of the closet. And they besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. And he came, therefore, and he took the body of Jesus.

And there came also Nicodemus, that one who came to Jesus by night. And he brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight. And they took the body of Jesus and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as is the manner of the Jews to bury.

Now, in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden. And in the garden, a new sepulcher, wherein was never a man yet laid. And there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' preparation day, for the sepulcher was near and handy, really.

It was right there close by. Now, if you will go today to Jerusalem and you see the skull on the side of the mountain at the top of Mount Moriah, just adjacent to it there is a lovely garden that is an ancient garden because you can see the cisterns that are still there from ancient days that were used for the watering of that garden. And there happens to be in that garden a very interesting tomb that has a little trough in front of it that shows that at one time there was a stone rolled along that trough to cover the door of that tomb.

I am of the personal deep conviction that that is the very tomb where Jesus' body lay. What happened to the stone probably was chipped off and sold for souvenirs through the years. But, thank God, this is not the end of the story.

Continue next week as we come into the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And we will finish the Gospel of John next week. And then we will enter into that exciting book of the Acts of the Apostles as we continue our journey through the Word of God, studying to show ourselves approved unto God.

Rightly dividing the Word of Truth. How important that we know God's Word. And so, continuing on through the Word, next week, finish the Gospel of John.

May the Lord be with you and watch over you this week. May you just have a beautiful encounter with God. Even as God's love was manifested to us through the death of Jesus Christ, may God manifest His love to you this week in special ways.

That you'll just get that beautiful warmth from the realization, hey, God loves me. He knows all about me. And that from that recognition there will come that automatic, natural response, oh God, I love you.

And may you come into a deep, loving relationship with God. As you walk with Him this week. In Jesus' name.

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