

Vantage Point

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 22 October 2023

Preacher: Brother Stephenson

[0:00] this morning. Now, I want to talk about Jesus Christ. He's a good topic to talk about. And the title of my message is Vantage Point. Vantage Point. We're going to look at Calvary.

Take your Bible and go over to John chapter 10. Two places, John 10 and John 18. John 10 and John 18. Now we're going to look at the crucifixion. We're going to look at it from three different angles or from three different vantage points. But what is real important, and I feel it's very important to know about the resurrection, about the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, is found in John chapter 10 and verse 17. He says, therefore, doth my father love me because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my father. Now, I'm sure you've heard the crucifixion preached on many times. And so I'm not going to tell you anything that you have not heard before. We talk about the crucifixion. Sometimes if we're not careful, we kind of know it and we get going through it. And yeah, we know about that. And yeah, we've heard about it before. But one of the things that this verse shows us here, and that's I feel is real important, is to note that nobody took Jesus Christ's life from him. He laid down his life. And he laid down his life willingly. And that's nice to know. I'm glad to know he laid down his life willingly. He didn't have to, but he did it. And the Bible says that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. And that passage over in Hebrews says, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus Christ knew what he was going to go through. He prayed in the garden and he said, Father, he said, if it be possible, let this cup pass for me. Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.

[2:13] And he yielded to the father's will. And when he went to the cross, he laid down his life and he laid down his life willingly. No one took his life from him. He laid his life down. So today, as we look into this passage about Calvary, I want to show you Calvary from three different vantage points. The first viewpoint that we're going to look at is the viewpoint of a lost man. And that'll be pilot. That'll be pilot.

Now he tries to get rid of Jesus Christ. That's very evident. As you read through the text, he tries to get rid of them. He tries to find many different ways to get rid of Jesus Christ. And so I would like to point out some similarities between pilot and a lost man. There are some things that pilot tries to do to avoid dealing with Jesus Christ. And those are some of the same reasons and same techniques and same issues that you're going to find a lost man does to try to get rid of avoiding with Jesus Christ.

So if you're lost in here today, I would like to point these things out to you. If you could search your heart and see if you're one of these. And I want to show you that pilot is, even though he tries so many different ways to get rid of Jesus Christ, he still has to come back and deal with Jesus Christ over and over again. Now, the second vantage point we're going to look at is that of a saved man. So first is pilot. The second one will be Peter. And what Peter tries to do is he tries to handle things in the flesh. Now, I know none of us in here have ever tried to handle anything spiritual in the flesh. We have always done it from the right heart's motive. So we will look at Peter and just kind of see him as somebody else that has done it like that. Now, the third vantage point that I want to look at is from the vantage point of the devil. So we have Peter, we have pilot or pilot, then we have Peter and then we have principalities and powers. Now, this is a very public and very open challenge against Jesus Christ. And Jesus Christ went into that thing. And with both hands pinned and both feet pinned, he came out the victor. And so I would like to talk about this message. And my title is

vantage point. Father, thank you for the opportunity to preach your word. Your word is a good book. We find nothing wrong with it. We find no fault in your word. Father, we thank you that we can hold it in our laps. We can read it. We can see it for ourselves. Lord, we find no fault with Jesus Christ. [4:41] Father, if there's any fault in the room, it lies in us. So, Lord, I pray that as I preach this morning, Father, that you would wash away my sins with the blood of Jesus Christ, that you would fill me with the Holy Spirit of God. Father, as the man prayed last night, that you would do what only you can do between me and the hearer. Lord, that the seed of the word of God would fall on good ground.

Lord, if there's conviction that needs to be had, may it deal with the sinner tonight or this afternoon morning, wherever we are. Father, I ask you, please deal with them where they are. Lord, as all three vantage points are talked about, I pray if there's a lost man or woman in here, that today be the day they'd quit avoiding dealing with Jesus Christ. And Lord, that they would get saved. Lord, if they don't deal with you now, they're going to deal with you one day. Lord, if there's a saved man or woman in here hearing this, and maybe they've been doing some things in the flesh, may they take some lessons from Peter. And the Father, may everybody be edified when they see how Jesus Christ triumphed gloriously over the devil and over principalities and powers and made a show of them openly.

All right, bless your word now. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Now, John 18 will be where we'll start now. John 18. And in verse 29, it says, Pilate then went out unto them and said, what accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, if he were not a male factor, we would not have delivered him unto thee. It's almost as if how, who are you to question us for bringing you this guy? We would not bring you anyone who wasn't guilty. So because we say he's guilty, he's guilty. So what Pilate tries to do is he now begins to take some steps to figure out the guilt of Jesus Christ. And then he's going through, he can't find anything wrong with them. And so he just, he tries to get rid of him. He tries to get him off of his hands and he tries to avoid dealing with Jesus Christ. Now I want to liken this to a lost man when the Holy Spirit taps on their shoulder and says, Hey, you're a sinner. You're on your way to hell. You need to trust Jesus Christ. And I want to show you what lost people do with deep with Jesus Christ. They try to get rid of him. Just like Pilate tries to get rid of Jesus. Let's look at a few of the things. The first way they try to do it is found in verse 31. Then Pilate said unto them, this is the first way he tries to get rid of him. Then said Pilate unto them, take ye him and judge him according to your law.

[7:15] The Jews therefore said unto him, it is not lawful for us to put a man to death. Notice the first thing he does is he says, you take him and you judge him. That's Jesus by your law.

The first way he tries to avoid dealing with Jesus Christ is he tries to avoid them through religion, judge him by your law. He tries to use religion to avoid dealing with Jesus Christ.

If they say in the text, we have a law and it's not lawful for us to put any man to death. Now they lied. They flat out lied because if you're, if you're in John, if you look at chapter 19 in verse seven, after telling him it's not lawful, verse seven of 19 of John, it says the Jews answered him. We have a law and by our law, he ought to die. Wait a second. I thought you just told, uh, Pilate that it's not lawful for us to put a man to death. They're just a bunch of liars.

But you know what Pilate tries to do? Pilate tries to avoid dealing with Jesus Christ through religion. Now, of course, you know, if you read the law, you know that they accused Jesus Christ of blasphemy. And I'm not sure if you remember what the, what the, uh, the, the, the way that they would kill somebody in the old Testament blasphemy, but it was with stoning to death. But the Bible says that not a bone of him shall be broken. And so that's why Jesus Christ was not stoned to death. Because if you're in John 18, you notice in verse 32, that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which it spake signifying what death he should die. He wouldn't die by stoning. He'd be, he would die on a cross, not a bone of him would be broken. Now they tried to get, he tried to get rid of Jesus Christ through religion. People try to do that all the time. You have your religion. I have mine. You know, that what are the two things that people don't talk about politics and religion is the two things people don't talk about. Uh, and that's what they're going to do immediately. They try to avoid dealing with Jesus Christ through religion. And so they say that Jesus Christ is guilty. They call him a male factor. So they call him in verse 30, a male factor. But I want to tell you that though he was numbered with transgressors, he was not a transgressor. You know what religion did religion past

Jesus Christ right back to pilot because religion cannot tangle with the Lord Jesus Christ.

[9:33] So the next thing he does, he tries to get rid of Jesus Christ and avoid dealing with them. He tries to use reason. So notice the avoidance through reason in the next few verses, verse 33 down to verse 38, pilot is about ready to ask Jesus Christ five different questions quickly. Let's look at those questions. Then pilot entered into the judgment hall again and called Jesus unto him and said, art thou the King of the Jews? So now he's trying to figure out exactly who Jesus Christ is. Now, based on the inscription that he put over the, over the cross, he knew who Jesus Christ was. This is Jesus, the King of the Jews. He knew who Jesus Christ was. And I would venture to say that his first guess, his first guess, his first guess, are you the King of the Jews? His first guess, I venture to say, my theory is that he knew exactly who Jesus Christ was. His gut told him that this was the King of the Jews. So my theory is if you're lost in here, your gut tells you exactly who Jesus Christ is.

You know exactly who he is, but you're going to try to reason your way out of it. So notice what the next question that happens. So in verse 34, Jesus answered to him saying, sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? I don't know if you read it the same way, but I find that insulting.

For example, if somebody were to come to you and tell you something and you responded by saying, did you figure that on your own? Or does somebody else tell you that? Do you take that as an insult?

I do. I feel insulted. What do you mean? I'm pretty smart. How dare you? How dare you talk to me that way? So you know what he says? Am I a Jew? That was the next question, right? Am I? I hope that's the next question. Am I a Jew? That's the next question, right? Verse 35. Pilate answered, am I a Jew?

Who do you think I am? I'm not a Jew. He gets offended. You know what? He gets upset. He gets upset by the way Jesus talked to him. Jesus Christ doesn't talk the way religious leaders talk. That's not the way Jesus Christ talks. Jesus Christ is very pointed. He stood up in front of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, put a finger right in their face, and he called them a bunch of whited-walled sepulchres full of dead men's bones. How's that for sweet baby Jesus, meek and mild? Religion thinks that Jesus Christ talks a certain way. People think Jesus Christ is supposed to talk a certain way, and then when all of a sudden you find out that the scripture says all have sinned, including you, and come short of the glory of God, and you get offended and say, well, I never killed anybody. You don't realize who I am.

[12:19] I'm not like everybody. Am I a Jew? I'm not one of them. I'm above them. I'm above. So we know what he tries to do. Now he tries to turn the tables on Jesus Christ. So he says in verse 35, Pilate said, am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priest had delivered thee unto me. What hast thou done?

He's getting indignant. He's talking to Jesus. I'm not I'm not like you. Your name, the people that you were raised with, your own people, they're the ones that turned you in. They told me you were a malefactor. What did you do? Tell me he's turning the tables on Jesus Christ. Just, you know, pricked him like that. Like Paul, like I remember when Paul was on the road to Damascus, his name was Saul before that. And the Lord Jesus Christ told him, it's hard for thee to kick against the pricks. You know what conviction does? It goes in and just it's and it, ow, that hurts. That hurts.

Conviction is a good thing. It's a good thing because you know what conviction does? It deals with a specific issue that you can get right on. That's that's conviction. That's different than condemnation. Condemnation just makes you find this weird, eerie feeling. You just feel bad, although you're not exactly sure why. Kind of a tool the devil kind of to use. But conviction is what the Holy Spirit uses to get in there and just go. So all of a sudden he just pokes a finger right in old pilot. Now pilot gets upset. And so he tries to turn the table. He says, what hast thou done?

You know what he's trying to do? He was trying to find out if Jesus Christ did anything wrong. Aren't people still trying to find out what Jesus Christ did wrong? Aren't you talk to them and they say, no, why did God allow this to happen? Why did God allow that to happen? And they're trying to find something wrong with the Lord. I'm telling you, you cannot find anything wrong with the Lord.

[14:07] They'll ask this question. Why did Adam and Eve eat of the tree? Why did why did the Lord even put that tree in the garden in the first place? Are they trying to do? They're trying to find something wrong. Hopefully if they find something wrong with him, it'll justify themselves. So notice the next thing, the next question that is asked. Verse 36, Jesus answered, 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 hence. Pilot therefore saith unto him, art thou a king then? Now did you just notice the words that he chose? Let's look carefully at what his question is. Art thou a king then? He calls him a king and the king is lowercase. Look back at the end of verse 33.

Art thou the king, capital K, the king. You know what he tries to do? He tries to bring Jesus Christ lower, tries to bring Jesus Christ down. You know what people try to do? They try to bring Jesus Christ down to their level. They've been trying to do that for years. Figure if they can just knock them and bring them down. Jesus Christ is not on the same level as you and I. In Psalm 50 verse 1, it says, these things hast thou done? God talking and I kept silent. Thou, talking to man, thoughtest that I, God, was altogether such a one as thyself, but I will reprove thee and set them in order before thine eyes. God's not like you and I. He's a holy God. He's so holy he cannot let one sin into his heaven.

You know how I know that? Because when Adam and Eve sin in the garden, they only committed one sin, God kicked them out of the garden. He is so holy he will not let one sin in his presence.

[15:54] If you're anything like me, you've done a whole lot more than one sin. I can claim it with Paul. I'm a chief of sinners. I mean, I preach on the streets all the time. I say, if the Lord could save somebody like me, he could save somebody like you. Now you know what he's trying to do? He's trying to bring the Lord Jesus Christ down. Trying to bring him down. Bring him down lower.

So notice his last question. So we're in verse 37. Pilate therefore said unto him, art thou a king then? Jesus answered, thou sayest that I'm a king. To this then was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice. He says the word truth two times. Pilate saith unto him, what is truth? That's the famous question. You guys have heard that before. You ever wonder why Jesus didn't answer the question? It's found in the rest of the verse. Pilate saith unto him, what is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews. You know why the question didn't get answered? Because he didn't want the answer. He just turned around and walked out.

What is truth? Off he went. Off he went like that. You know what people do? They ask that question, what is truth? They think that all truth is relative. They say you cannot know anything for sure.

I was walking along one day after soul winning, and I don't know if you kind of know this, but I'm a really quiet guy. I'm really subdued, real quiet, and I'm not very loud. And so I'm, that was a joke. And I'm walking along, and I'm talking with one of my soul winners, and I'm getting excited. I do that every once in a while. Just every once in a while. When I have three cups of coffee, I get really excited. And so I was getting excited, and we were talking, and we were talking about knowing for sure where you're going when you die. And I said, I said, man, I said, we can know for sure where we're going when we die.

[17:37] And he was, he was learning eternal security. So he was all excited. He was pumped. And, uh, and if you know, his name is Joey. And if you know Joey, everything is exciting to him. He's like, wow. Oh, wow. I mean, you read the brother, you read the scripture. And he goes, oh, wow. I'll just read it.

And he's like, oh, wow. That's just the kind of guy he is, you know. He's fun. He's a lot of fun. And so I'm like, yeah, brother, we can know for sure. But like I said, I'm a little loud. And so walking, I don't know, about 15 paces in front of me, there's this guy, and he was getting irritated by, I said, we can know for sure. And he turned around, and he goes, that's arrogant.

Now, I'm not really quick-witted. But in this moment, the Lord just happened to drop the right thing on me. And I went, no, it's not arrogant. It's confident. Being confident of this very thing. That he which hath begun a good work, and you will perform it in the day of Jesus Christ.

So you ever heard somebody say, you can't know? Well, yes, you can know. These things have been written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. You can know. Truth is not relative. Truth is absolute. So he says, what is truth? Now, here's the thing. Didn't Jesus Christ, when he speak about himself, didn't he call himself truth? He said, I am the way, the truth, and the life. So Sam, I'm just going to use you for example. So if he's standing this close to Jesus Christ, if he wanted to, he could have reached out and touched the personification of truth.

He could have done that. Truth was within his grasp. He could have put his hands on truth. Is that a true statement? Isn't there something else that's called truth? Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth. How many people could reach out and get a hold? They could literally put their hands on the truth. But I get the feeling that they don't really want it.

[19:27] And so he tries to reason his way out of avoiding, to avoid dealing with Jesus Christ. So we're back in John 18. So he walks out. John 18, verse 38, Pilate saith unto him, what is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all. But you have a custom that I should release unto you at the Passover.

I should release one. I release unto you one at the Passover. What 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. Notice the next thing he tries to do to avoid dealing with Jesus Christ is he tries to avoid him through replacement. So now he presents to them two guys. He presents Jesus and he presents Barabbas. And I imagine in his mind, he is thinking to himself, here's a guy whose only crime is to go about doing good. He's never really harmed anyone. He's taken and he's fed the 5,000. He's raised the dead. I've heard about this guy. I'll present a guy over here who's really good. And then I'll present a guy over here who's really bad. We find out, and I forget which one of the gospels we find out that not only he a robber here, but another one, I think he had killed somebody. So he was a murderer. This guy is not the kind of guy you want living next door. Not at all. You don't want that kind of guy living next door to you. You want to lock him up, man, keep him locked up. I don't want him to come kill me. I don't want that to happen, you know. So he presents him two options. Jesus, boy, this is a great option. This guy is a really, really good guy. His testimony was he went about doing good, or I'm going to give you this guy over here. He is a really, really bad guy. The choice is obvious. It's easy. They're obviously going to pick Jesus, but who do they pick? Barabbas. They pick this guy over Jesus Christ. You know what he tries to do? He tries to avoid dealing with Jesus Christ through replacement. I find that people will choose anything else over Jesus Christ. They'll choose things that'll do them harm. They'll go to alcohol. They'll go to drugs. They'll go to whatever, even if it's going to harm or hurt them. They don't want to deal with Jesus Christ, so they will try to avoid him through replacement, avoid him through replacement. Over there, I think it's really interesting. You ever seen that maniac of Gadara? Remember him? The guy was the nude dude in a rude mood? There he is. The Lord casts out all those devils from him, and when that crowd comes back, they find him sitting, clothed in his right mind, and they walk up to Jesus Christ, and they say to Jesus Christ, we really appreciate this. What you have done for us is amazing. This guy was a terrorist in the community. We are so thankful, and we appreciate what you have done, and we would love for you to stay here and establish a church here and just be with us and teach us and tell us more of the Word of God. If you could do that with him, imagine what you could do with us. That's what they said, right? Oh, no. Oh, that's not the account.

[22:34] They said, we don't want you. Get out of here. What Jesus Christ did, and then people say, get out of here. What Jesus Christ did for you on the cross, and you don't want him and say, get out of here?

People want to avoid dealing with Jesus Christ, so no, they try to avoid him through replacement. Notice the next way he tries to avoid him. Now, you don't have to turn there, but I'll tell you, it's in Matthew 27 and verse 24, seeing that he cannot get rid of Jesus, get Jesus off his hands, he tells him to bring water. So he washed his hands in water. Remember it? He washed his hands with water. He says, I'm innocent of the blood of this just person. You know, people try to avoid Jesus Christ through rinsing. How many people have you talked to, and they say, you say, are you saved? And they say, oh, yes, I'm saved. How'd you get saved? I was baptized. You heard it. That's the

normal thing you hear. Does baptism save anybody? No. Can baptism wash away sins? No, not at all. The Bible says, the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, that cleanseth us from all sin. If you think you're going to avoid Jesus Christ by being baptized, that ain't going to do you any good. You know what Pilate has to do?

He gets them back on his hands again, and he has to deal with Jesus Christ. Notice the next thing he tries to do is found in John 19, found in verse 1 down through verse 6. Then Pilate therefore took Jesus and scourged him. And the soldiers plaited a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe and said, hail, king of the Jews. And they smote him with their hands. Pilate therefore went forth again and saith unto them, behold, I bring him forth to you that you may know that I find in him. I find no fault in him. And he had already told him, I find in him no fault at all back in the previous chapter, verse 38. Then came Jesus forth wearing the crown of thorns and a purple robe and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto him, behold, the man. When the chief priest, therefore, and his officers saw him, they cried out saying, crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, take ye him and crucify him, for I find no fault in him. This is the third time he says, I find no fault in him. Can't find any fault in Jesus Christ. So he figures if I'm going to satisfy the crowd, if I'm going to get Jesus Christ off my hands, I'm going to do it through retribution. So he takes Jesus Christ up. They stand him up and they take and they whip him.

The blood's flowing off his body as that Roman soldier who is just an expert and skilled in torturing people takes that cat of nine tails and wraps it around the body of Jesus Christ, sinks the hooks in and the, and the glass and the bones and all whatever else they put on there.

[25:10] And he yanks that thing back, ripping the flesh of Jesus Christ off him as the blood just begin to flow. My Bible says he was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our pieces upon him. And with his stripes, we're healed. You think about every sin you ever committed. And as that whip wrapped around his body, your sin of lying, that whip wrapped around his body, ripped off the skin, the blood began to flow and the blood flowed for your lying.

That whip wrapped around his body and sunk in or ripped off again. And his blood was began to flow for adultery, for fornication, for lasciviousness, for envy, for pride, for all that. The blood began to flow. And the Bible says the blood of Jesus Christ cleansed us from all sin. There is no sin that the blood of Jesus Christ cannot cover. That blood flowed that day. They brought out Jesus Christ. It says they plated a crown of thorns. So it talks about the plating of hair. So I'm guessing that's braiding it. They took that crown of thorns and they place it there on his head and they took and they smote him across the face, put a purple robe on him, dressed him up as a king, brought him out there.

Imagine what he looked like. Looked like hamburger meat, blood flowing everywhere, face swollen, eyes probably starting to swell shut, fat lip coming up here. And he stood there innocent. I deserve to be the one getting beat for my sins. You know, sometimes I don't think I see myself like that, but I deserve to be that guy. He was an innocent man. We have a hard time when someone innocent goes to jail.

We have, we have people in our towns that will spend their whole entire life trying to get innocent people out of jail. I think that's amazing when they can get somebody innocent off of death row, but sometimes they're trying to get guilty people off of death row. But here's an actually innocent man.

[27:07] And he stood there with blood flowing off of him with a fat lip, blood everywhere, crown of thorns on his head. And these people mocking him and he comes out and he says, behold, your king. I imagine in Pilate's mind, he's thinking to himself, this is it. I have just hurt an innocent man who I literally can find no fault in him.

There is nothing wrong with this guy did. It's like when a child gets hurt. We don't like it when a child gets hurt. That's a terrible thing because they're innocent. They're innocent. Here he is. And he stands there and he says, I imagine that when they see this, when they see what I have done to this man, they're going to have a change of heart. And I'm going to say, okay, that's enough. That's enough.

You don't have to do any more. But they had such a blood lust. And when they looked at Jesus Christ, they said, crucify him. Crucify him.

Pilate looks at him and he says, why? What evil hath he done? I find no fault in him. You know what Pilate has? He finds Jesus Christ tossed right back into his lap.

You know, some people do. They think if they can do some type of retribution on themselves, if you can do some type of penance, if you can do something to try to pay for your sins, if you can hurt yourself in some kind of way, that somehow you will pay for your sins.

[28:32] Teenagers like to do this. It was a big thing a few years ago. It still is a thing. That's where they cut themselves. And they feel that if they cut themselves and they somehow relieve that pressure, you know what they're trying to do? You know what the problem is? The problem is that there's a guilt.

Angelina Jolie is the one that made this thing famous. There's a guilt that they have. And so they figure by cutting themselves, they get a temporary release of the pain and the pressure.

But I'm telling you, that is only temporary. It does not fix the issue. If you want to have forgiveness of sins, it is only the blood of Jesus Christ that can cleanse us from all sins.

You see over in the Philippines, these people will crucify themselves on a cross. And man, it's just horrific sights to see. You'll take some of the priests, we'll take and they'll, I forget what that word is when they do that, they'll flog themselves. That was it called?

And they'll do that, they'll whip themselves and they feel they can somehow do penance, pay for their sins. You ever seen the people that are down on their knees, that are walking on their knees, are bloodied?

[29:34] Why? They're trying to pay for their sins. But that doesn't work. So after retribution, he gets Jesus Christ tossed right back to him.

So notice the last way he tries to avoid dealing with Jesus Christ. Chapter 19, verse 12, and from thenceforward, Pilate sought to release him. But the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend.

Whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. The last way he avoids dealing with Jesus Christ is he avoids it through relationships. Through relationships.

Now, here is the people and they're telling me, You're not a friend of Caesar. If you let this man go, you're not a friend of Caesar. Did he let Jesus go?

No, he didn't let Jesus go. And he ends up having Jesus Christ crucified on the cross. You know why a lot of you won't get saved? Or if you're all saved in here, I don't know what the condition is. I don't know your salvation.

[30:34] But you know why a lot of people won't get saved? Because of friends. Because of family. They won't get saved. I was out in the street corner. I was witnessing to a young man one time. A young Navy man.

Downtown San Diego. We have a lot of Navy guys coming there. And he was out with his buddies. And I was witnessing to him and he was under conviction. You ever witness to somebody and you see they're under conviction? Man, he was under deep conviction.

And he just wouldn't get saved. And I was trying to figure out, Why wouldn't this guy get saved? I was trying to give him all my reasons why he should get saved. He just wouldn't do it. So finally, I looked over and his buddies were standing over there.

And I said, Are you not going to get saved because of them? And I got to hand it to him. He was honest. And he went, Yeah. And I said, Let me just tell you this.

They're not going to stand before God for you. You're going to stand before God. Don't let your friends be the reason that you go to hell. And you know what Pilate did? He tries to avoid dealing with Jesus Christ.

[31:30] Now, sinner, if you try to avoid dealing with Jesus Christ here, you will one day be put into a position where you can't avoid dealing with him. But by then, it will be too late. The first vantage point is the vantage point of Pilate.

Now, I realize I'm a lengthy preacher, but these next two points go pretty quickly. The next vantage point is the vantage point of Peter. Now, if you're in Matthew, go over to Matthew.

Sorry, go to Matthew chapter 26, Matthew 26. Vantage point of Peter. Now, when Peter comes up to the crucifixion, he sees it one way, and he sees that he's going to go through this one way, but he doesn't turn out the way he thought it was going to turn out.

You ever gone through something and you thought it was going to go one way? But it goes a completely different way. And when you come out the other side, you're like, I never thought it would turn out like that.

Peter never thought that he would act this way and that it would turn out like that. In Matthew chapter 26, verse 33, Matthew 26, 33. Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.

[32:44] Here is Peter. Peter looks at Jesus Christ and he says, You see all these guys around me? I'm not like these guys. I'm actually a cut above. Because if they all get offended, I won't get offended.

I'm not in the category that you said I was in. I'm not there. I am actually a cut above these guys. I'm not like all flesh. All flesh is grass except me. I am the exception to the rule.

And he tells that to the Lord Jesus Christ. But the problem with Peter is Peter didn't know the depth of depravity of his own heart. And I want to say, first of all, Christian, you and I don't know the depth of depravity of our own heart.

You know what he didn't understand? He didn't understand the prophecy that the Lord Jesus Christ put before him. The Lord told him, hey, all men are going to be offended because of me this night. He even went back in the scriptures and showed him all the things in the scriptures concerning himself.

And he didn't have a clue. He had no idea. You know what? That book is going to tell you things about yourself and you're going to be like, no, not me. Yeah, you.

[33:45] For example, do you ever read what comes out of the heart? There are some nasty things that are in my heart and yours. You know, I try to, I mean, look, I'm like everybody else.

And I pass judgment on people like, well, if I was in their shoes, I wouldn't do that. I mean, we've all done that, I think, from time to time. Or maybe I'm the only one. And you kind of get to, you know, sometimes. But then as you start growing along in life, you start to realize that maybe if I were under the same pressure, maybe if I was in the same condition, maybe if all the thing was right, maybe I would have buckled just like they did.

I don't know. Maybe I, I mean, I'm with the old men. I'd have denied Jesus Christ. I had somebody say one time, I wouldn't deny Jesus Christ. Jesus said, all men are going to deny him.

Now, notice Peter doesn't realize the depravity of his own heart. The next thing about Peter is he didn't like the plan.

He didn't like the plan. So, go back over to John 18. John 18. And if you look just quickly at verse 4 down through verse 10, you will notice that this is when they come to get Jesus Christ.

[35:01] Judas Iscariot comes and he has a whole bunch of men with him. They come to get Jesus. And Jesus Christ standing up there and he says, whom seek ye? They respond and they go, Jesus of Nazareth.

And he goes, I am he. And when he says, I am he, those words come out of his mouth, smack that group and boom, down they go. About 100 men falling back on the ground.

They step up. They dust themselves off. Jesus Christ said, whom seek ye? I don't know how you would have responded, but at that time I'm going to say, actually, I think we have the wrong garden. I am out of here. Not them. They said it again. Jesus of Nazareth. This time he didn't knock them down. And he goes, I told you that I am he.

If you seek me, let these go their way. Now, you see what just happened? The power of the word of God went out across those soldiers and knocked them flat on their behind.

[36:05] Peter saw that. And so what is the only thing to do when the Holy Spirit of God is moving, when the power of God is present, what is the only thing to do?

Let the flesh get in the way. And so he grabs that sword. He reaches that thing out and cuts off that guy's ear. Now, it cuts off that right ear.

I imagine if he's facing him, he cuts off the right ear. You know, that guy is like, whoa, ducking like that. And that sword trims that ear off. That ear falls on the ground. You know what Peter's thinking. Peter's saying, listen, you may take him, but I'm going to take a whole lot of you out before you take any of us.

And all of a sudden, Jesus Christ says, I'm out, Peter. Put up your sword. You know what I noticed? Right about the time the Holy Spirit of God is moving, that is when the flesh begins to raise its little head.

It's almost like the flesh says, hey, how come I ain't getting anything out of this? I ain't getting any glory. What's going on? You know what Peter didn't like? He didn't like the plan. I don't want to do it that way.

[37:09] What do you mean get led as a lamb to the slaughter? What are you talking about? But that was the prophecy. The prophecy wasn't that he was going to die as a warrior in battle. But that's what Peter was ready to do. I mean, the Lord already told him to get a sword.

He was ready for it. He didn't like the plan. And his flesh got in the way. Peter goes on and he's standing around the fire.

And as he's standing around that fire, you know it, he denies Jesus Christ three times. At the end of that thing, one of the passages of Scripture says that he turned and looked. And as they're bringing Jesus Christ off, the way it's worded, it looks like he meets the gaze of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And I often wonder what that must have felt like to meet his gaze. I wonder if he thought to himself, Jesus just heard me cuss and say, I don't know him. The words of Jesus flash in his mind after that rooster crowed the second time.

And he denied him three times. And he realized that Jesus Christ was right. The Bible says he went out and wept bitterly. I wonder if he went back to that same place in that garden.

[38:17] The same place when, you know, when the prayer meeting was going on and he decided to sleep instead of pray. I wonder if he went back to that same place. And the Bible says he wept bitterly and maybe he got down there. And as those tears are flowing down and he's imagining what Jesus Christ looked like as he's being led by the chief priest over there to the pilot.

And he's thinking about how they're making fun of him and they're mocking him. And he's thinking how Jesus Christ is is there. And and he feels like he's in a helpless position and he can't help him. And I wonder if Peter what's not going through his mind. I wonder if he's not just saying to himself, why? I could have done something. I could have helped. It didn't have to end like this.

I could have got in the way. I could have done something. I could just let me help. They wouldn't be making fun of him like this. They wouldn't be mocking. He wouldn't be in this predicament. Why didn't he just let me help? But aren't you glad that it didn't go Peter's way? You know, I think, well, the reason why a lot of Christians get bitter at the Lord is because things didn't turn out the way that they thought.

[39:24] It should turn out. But you need to trust the Lord that whatever he does is right. Now, you know what Peter does, though, John 21, John 21.

If you look at verse 15 through 17, John 21, 15 through 17. This is where the Lord asked Jesus asked Peter three times if he loves him. And he responds, you know, I love you.

And by the third time, he's getting a little irritated. Lovest thou me? And it finally goes. I know it's all things. I know it.

I love me. Three times. He denied him. Three times. He gets there and makes it right with the Lord. You know what Peter found at the end of that thing? Even though he messed up, he found a pardon.

You ever messed up? I've messed up. But you know what you can find? A pardon. You know how many times I've been down to this altar? Oh, numerous times. I don't even know the number.

[40:25] But every time I go and I say, Lord, I'm sorry. God, forgive me. I'm not making excuses. You understand? I'm not making excuses. You know, some people, that flesh starts getting in there and say, well, I can just go and do it and get forgiveness.

No big deal. Oh, no, it is a big deal. Be not deceived. God is not mocked. What is for man, so that shall also reap. But you know what I'm glad? I'm glad to know that I can find forgiveness. And you can find forgiveness.

Peter, at the end of that thing, man, he got that thing settled. He was ready to quit. I go fishing. Now, he was there on a Sea of Galilee. I am done.

Now, I don't want to admit this, but there have been times in the ministry where I was done. And I was going to walk out. I'll never forget one time the strongest urge I ever had to quit the ministry was after my church had a business meeting.

And didn't tell me about it. And then started to tell them. It was when I was in that Spanish church and started to tell them, you don't have a pastor. Man, they started to. I got so angry and so hurt.

[41:37] How could this be? You know what happened? Really? My pride welled up inside of me. And I remember walking out and I grabbed Shannon and said, let's go. We're not coming back.

We're out of here. Now, I don't know if you've ever gotten that point where you felt low. I don't want to go back. But you know what I did? I went to the Lord and I found forgiveness over my pride.

I'm not excusing them. Say what they did was right. But I know my part. I can only work on me. And I found forgiveness for my pride. You know, the Lord did.

He helped me. I found a pardon. In John chapter 21, after this thing went down and the Lord and Peter got it right. You know what you find in Acts chapter 2? Preaching like a house on fire.

I'm telling you, you can find forgiveness. You can come down an old fasher altar today. And you can find forgiveness. You can find a pardon. And you can get up and go out and live the victorious Christian life.

[42:36] Don't be like Judas Iscariot. He just punished himself. That didn't do any good. Be like Peter. Come to the one who can give you forgiveness. Now, last of all, the last vantage point is the vantage point of principalities and powers.

Go over to Colossians chapter 2. Colossians 2. Colossians 2. There was a lot more going on that day than met the eye.

There were things going on in the spirit world that you couldn't see. You read about them in passages like Psalm 22 when he says, The bulls of Bashan compass me about.

There was a lot of things going on that day where the devil was trying to make Jesus Christ quit. There was attacks that he did. There was subtle attacks.

Stay in Colossians 2. I'm going to read you Matthew 27 and verse 43. It says, He trusted in God. Let him deliver him. If he will have him. For he said, I am the son of God.

[43:49] Now, I read that passage and I noticed how it says, If he will have him. He trusted in God. Let him deliver him. Now, if he will have him. For he said, I am the son of God.

And that I thought about something. And I thought about how the devil took Jesus Christ one out one day, put him on the pinnacle of the temple. So if thou be, if thou be the son of God, cast thyself down from hence. I said, Man, you know what I realized?

I realized that at that, around that cross, when Jesus Christ is standing there, there are those Pharisees and Sadducees, and those people are casting the same in his teeth.

There is a spirit that was working and using their mouths to get Jesus Christ to quit. There was a subtle attack. In Isaiah chapter 50, there's a passage of scripture where Jesus Christ is talking prophetically.

Isaiah is talking prophetically about Jesus Christ. And it says there in a passage, it says, Who is my adversary? Let us stand together. Who will contend with me?

[44:52] And in that passage, Jesus Christ calls the devil out and tells him to bring it on. I don't suggest that you ever do that. But here's the God man.

God manifests in the flesh and says, Hey, bring it on. Give me the best shot that you have. Pour it all on. It will just be between me and you.

And you pour it on and try to give me everything you've got because this is the only chance that you are ever going to have. And man, that straightforward attack comes at the Lord Jesus Christ and the devil tries to make him quit.

And he couldn't make the Lamb of God quit. Last of all, about this attack, there was a shattered attack. There was a subtle attack, a straightforward attack, but there was a shattered attack, which now brings me to Colossians chapter 2.

Colossians 2, verse 13 says, And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.

[46:08] And having spoiled principalities and powers, he, that's Jesus Christ, made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

You know what that tells you? That said, Jesus Christ put on a show that day. You ever seen a couple of fighters that get in a ring, you know? And everybody hates it when he knocks, they pay all his money, and they're ready, and the guy knocks him out in less than 30 seconds.

They hate that. You know why? They came to see a show. They want to see two guys going around. They want to see them there. You know what? Bah, bah, bah. Ooh, ooh, and get some old man. Sorry, I kicked your thing. Oh, I'm so sorry. Forgive me.

Get a little animated. You know what they want? They want to... I gotta be careful. You know what they're doing? They want to see a show. They want a show. You know what they did? One day, in walked the heavyweight champion of the world.

He came down out of glory, stepped down into the ring, and there he was, a little baby. And about that time, in came the devil, and the devil said, I'm gonna knock him out.

[47:06] I'm gonna kill him. But then you know what he did? He was working on his footwork, and he went down to Egypt, and he dodged the attack. Missed him. Finally, Jesus Christ grows up, and here he is, a young man.

And now here's a young man, and he's out there, and he now starts his ministry around 30 years old, and he goes out into the wilderness, and he fasts for 40 days. And the heavyweight champion of the world steps into the ring, and after 40 days of fasting, just to try to make an even the odds a little bit, make it a little bit fair for his opponent, in steps his opponent, and takes three jabs at him, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

And when all three of those punches, Jesus Christ knocked him back with, thus saith the Lord, it is written, it is written, it is written. About that time, he gets his last chance, and the Lord says, all right, we'll really make this thing fair.

I realize you're outclassed, you're outweighed. I realize you are way out of your league, so here's what we're going to do. We're going to put him in the ring by himself. As a matter of fact, the Father is going to forsake him.

He's going to be there. We're not going to let his ringside come and help him with 12 legions of angels. He's going to be there by himself. Oh, and to make it fair, we're going to let him be beaten after staying up all night and have him just down so weak physically, and then we're going to pin both hands and both feet together, and then you have Adam.

[48:30] Boy, man, principalities and powers gotten that ring. They're like, yeah. Man, they began to lay on the punches, try to knock him out, and down went the champ.

I could imagine what was going on in heaven. Maybe the angels were standing there and going, please, just flinch your finger. Just do something. Just give us the signal. We'll come. We'll rescue you. We'll wipe them out. There won't be one human being left.

Just let us go. I imagine the AP, that's angelic police, and they're standing back. Nope, nope, back, back, back, back, back, nope, nope, no, stand back. You can't go. You can't go. There went down the heavyweight champion of the world.

They took that body and they laid it down in the tomb. Man, all principalities and powers go, woo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo! We did it! We won! I never thought we would win, but we won! Somebody over there said, yeah, but what about this passage? I don't worry about that. We won! We won! We won! First day goes by, imagine they walk by that grave and they look and they say, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, he's still on the ground.

[49:28] His body is down. Second day goes by, ah, he's still there, but that third day, man, there was a rumble on the heart of the earth and man, death and hell tried to hold him down.

I imagine they're saying, old devil says, lock the gate, lock the gate, lock the gate. Somebody reaches around and says, I don't have the keys, I don't have the keys. About that time, they said, well, go check the Pope, he might have them.

And Jesus Christ says, no, I have the keys of death and of hell. You know what he did? He came up victorious. He made a show of them openly triumphing over them in it.

If all Jesus Christ did was die on that cross for our sins and was buried, if that was the end of the story, it would be no good. But up from the grave, he arose.

So in conclusion, let me say this. There are three different viewpoints of Calvary. For principalities and powers, the prince of this world is judged. To the sinner, what will you do with Jesus who is called the Christ?

[50:28] It is better for you to deal with Jesus Christ now while mercy can be found than to die and end up at the great white throne judgment where no mercy can be found. And to the saint, are you trying to lean on your own understanding?

Are you trying to do things in the flesh and hope for spiritual results? It didn't work for Peter and it will not work for you. Let's all stand. Father, thank you for the opportunity to be able to preach this morning.

Lord, I trust that you have dealt with hearts and I pray, Lord,