

# The Good Shepherd Rejected

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] You're listening to the online sermon podcast ministry of the First Baptist Church of Jackson, Kentucky. Hi, my name is Jonathan Clemens and I'm the pastor of the First Baptist Church.

We've put this sermon archive together and we pray that it will be a blessing to the saints and edifying to those who follow the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as that it would be a light to those in our community who have questions about the gospel.

One of the wonderful benefits of the internet is that it can give us so much access to good quality Bible teaching materials.

But I want to encourage you not to use the internet as a crutch or a substitute for obedience to Jesus. It's so important that each and every one of you are trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for your salvation and growing in spiritual maturity and in fruitfulness before the Lord.

And that requires obedience to His command to assemble and be a part of a local congregation. God calls each of us to go to church, but not just go to church, be a part of a church.

[ 1 : 0 5 ] And I want to encourage you, if you're not a member of a church, to find that biblical church. One that preaches and teaches the Lord Jesus Christ and one that will embrace you as an important part of the congregation.

And be active and involved. You can never use online materials to substitute obedience. Well, our sermon will follow shortly.

I pray that this ministry will be a blessing to you. And we would love to hear from you. Feel free to reach out to us over our Facebook page. You can contact us on our church website.

And of course, you're always welcome to join us on a Sunday morning. You'll find us at 1105 Main Street in Jackson, Kentucky. That's at the corner of Main Street and Broadway down by the police station and City Hall.

We gather at 1045 in the morning and we would love to see you. Have a wonderful day. God bless. God bless. God bless.

[ 2 : 2 5 ] That's it. So John chapter 10 verse 31. Today's sermon is entitled, The Good Shepherd Rejected. The Good Shepherd Rejected.

Of course, the Good Shepherd was not rejected by the sheep. Jesus makes clear of that. He says, my sheep hear my voice and they what? They follow me. So the sheep do not reject Jesus.

It is the nation of Israel, the unbelieving nation, the Jewish leadership that is rejecting Jesus. The old Pharisees, as we like to think of them, are the ones rejecting Jesus.

And that's the way that the parable teaches us. On the positive, the sheep follow Jesus because they hear His voice. On the negative, on the flip side of that, those who are not His sheep reject Him.

They will not follow Jesus. In our previous couple sermons, we looked at the Good Shepherd and His relationship to the sheep.

[ 3 : 25 ] We see, for example, that Jesus is the Good Shepherd and that He alone has a rightful claim over the sheep. We belong to Jesus if indeed we're Christians, if indeed we're in Christ.

The sheep were given by the Father to the Son as a gift. The sheep are eternally secure in the hands of God. No circumstance can remove us from God's hands. No person can remove us from God's hands.

The gates of hell cannot remove us from God's hands. We are secure in Jesus' name. Secure in His hands. We are His sheep, the sheep of His pasture under His protection.

We see that Jesus makes clear that those who have come before Him, they would be false Christs or false teachers in the nation of Israel, false prophets.

They came to take from the sheep. Of course, He's making an indictment against the leadership there in Jerusalem. The whole system of religion is like many world religions today.

[ 4 : 26 ] It's based on God expecting something from you. That was Judaism. That God is there with His hand out wanting something from the worshippers. And the idea was that the leaders would also enrich themselves and benefit from the flock.

That was the system. That was the setup of the false religion. And we see that today. So much false religion is about God wanting something from you. And if you give God that thing, then He'll respond in whatever way the religion says He'll respond.

He'll make you healthy or wealthy or prosperous. Or, in some cases, they do offer eternal life only after the necessary price has been paid by the worshipper.

Of course, we understand the gospel is completely different, isn't it? See, true biblical religion, true gospel faith is about Jesus. And Jesus didn't come with His hand out.

Jesus didn't come to get. He didn't come to take. He doesn't need anything that we have. Rather, He came to give Himself as a ransom for the sheep. He came to bring life and to bring it abundantly.

[ 5 : 34 ] He came because God loved the world. That's why Jesus came. He came to bring and He came to give. Of course, Jesus describes false teachers and false religion using very descriptive terminology.

Calling them thieves, plunderers, or brigands, robbers, murderers. That is, those who slaughter and destroyers. Those who annihilate. That come in to destroy the flock.

But Jesus, of course, has come to save His sheep. He loved His sheep. His sheep know Him. And His sheep follow Him. And He sustains His sheep daily, caring for them and shepherding Him.

Now today, we're going to see, of course, the Good Shepherd rejected by those unbelievers that were present there. They, of course, become violent. And the rage of the Pharisees is manifest here today through an attempt on Jesus' life.

And today, we're going to see the reality of persecution. This passage is about Jesus, but it also has a lot to do with us today. The reality of persecution that we will face as Christians.

[ 6 : 48 ] We can see how people react to the truth in Jesus. And if Jesus' truth is lived out in us, then they will react the same way. Not only that, we're going to particularly see that Jesus was rejected there in the city.

The holy city in Zion, the epicenter of Jewish religion, the epicenter of Jewish culture. Yet He was embraced in the wilderness outside of town.

Please look with me at John chapter 10. And we'll start in verse 31. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him.

And Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shown you from my Father. For which of these works do you stone me?

The Jews answered Him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy. And because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

[ 7 : 52 ] Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, ye are gods? If He called them gods unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken, say ye of Him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?

If I do not do the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works that ye may know, and believe that the Father is in me, and I in Him.

Therefore they sought again to take Him. But He escaped out of their hand, and went away again beyond the Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized.

And there He abode. And many resorted unto Him, and said, John did no miracle, but all the things that John spake of this man were true.

And many believed on Him there. This is the word of the Lord. So the reality of persecution, we see Jesus rejected in the city of Jerusalem, the seat of Jewish culture and community, but embraced on the margins of society in the wilderness.

[ 9 : 12 ] And of course, as we started this section of Scripture up, what stood out the most, right there at the very beginning, well, the spectacular anger of the Jews.

They're filled with fury. They're picking up rocks to bludgeon Jesus to death. They want to murder Jesus. And of course, we understand that there's a whole range in the spectrum of anger or hatred.

hatred. And people experience it in different ways, and perhaps the most severe way of expressing anger or hatred is to actually murder someone.

And we see them going to that. You see, these Jews in the presence of Jesus, they were very displeased with Jesus. Now, it was more than that, but at the very least, we can say, they were very displeased with Jesus.

They did not like Jesus. He didn't do things that made them happy. Their happiness was not His objective and His goal. His goal was to bring the gospel of the kingdom.

[ 10 : 21 ] They were not interested in the gospel of the kingdom. Therefore, they were displeased with Jesus. But not only did they disapprove of His ministry, they disliked Him.

They didn't care for Him. They found His preaching and His teaching to be an annoyance. They had a religious system that they were trying to engage in.

They had activities that they were trying to do. And people kept going out and hearing Jesus and getting different ideas that were coming from the Bible. And it was frustrating the Pharisees.

You see, they were annoyed with Jesus. They disliked Him. They were uncomfortable around Him. But it was more than that. You see, these Jews were antagonistic towards Jesus.

And we all encounter things in our life where we're bothered. We're bothered or that we dislike them. We encounter people. We encounter circumstances. And for the most part, we move on.

[ 11 : 24 ] We move on. Well, you see, they were so opposed to Jesus that rather than just ignoring Him, they began to actively oppose Him. To actively engage in conflict.

And if any of you have ever seen the sad circumstance of a falling out between people, you know that a lot of times it kind of starts as maybe passive.

Maybe a sigh or a rolling of the eyes. Or they start to avoid the other person. But then what happens eventually? It starts to escalate. Bad things are said about the person.

Gossip begins. And of course, we see the Pharisees treating Jesus this way. There's contempt shown. Nasty looks that would be given. Perhaps the Pharisees, when they saw Jesus, would simply turn away like they did the other sinners they didn't want to look upon.

But it didn't stop there. The argumentation started. The disputing started. They wanted to put Jesus in His place. But they struggled greatly to put Jesus in His place.

[ 12 : 32 ] Because every time they went up against Him, He would quote Scripture. And He would teach them the Word. And they could not refute Him. And He would always ask them extremely difficult questions that they couldn't quite answer that exposed in the end their hypocrisy.

So arguing with Jesus didn't work. Gossiping didn't work. Making false accusations against Jesus didn't work. They grew in their anger.

They grew in their hatred. And by this time, they were enraged. They were full of wrath. Filled with emotional hatred and disgust towards Jesus.

They, like a bunch of wild apes, were going to pick up rocks and bludgeon Him to death in the street of Jerusalem. They were filled with rage.

Irrational hatred towards Jesus at the words that He spoke. But in between those fits of rage and anger, you see a seething hatred.

[ 13 : 34 ] You might say, well, how do you know that? Well, just one example. They're in the streets of Jerusalem in public areas. And the stones that would be required to kill someone weren't present.

Because if these large stones are out in the street, the donkeys and oxen are going to break their ankles, people are going to trip and fall on them. If you want stones large enough to kill people, you have to find and bring them in.

They premeditated this. They hated Jesus. And they were even looking for the right opportunity to kill Him.

Oh, while it looks like they hadn't given murder of Jesus any thought, and they just flew into an irrational rage, you see that they had to bring and take up their own stones to kill Him.

The Pharisees, these unbelieving Jews, they hated Jesus. Why is this important to us today? Well, Jesus, if indeed you're a saint, is your Lord and Savior.

[ 14 : 40 ] And you want to know about Him. You want to know about His life. You want to know about His experiences. And we learn a lot about His character and His godliness and the sacrifice that He made in this passage.

But for the sake of love alone, we should be interested in those events leading up to the end of His life. I don't know if you've ever had the circumstance of meeting a parent that had lost their child.

You know, sometimes that happens, and especially in instances I'm thinking about now is war and conflict. And what you'll find is that parents will often want to know how their child's life ended, and they'll want to know the details leading up to it.

They'll seek out those questions, and they'll seek out those answers. What happened on that day in the battlefield? What did He do? How did it happen? What were His days leading up to it like?

What was He thinking about? They'll even ask the soldiers' friends to find out what those last moments were like. Why? Because they love that child, and they're interested in that child.

[ 15 : 44 ] And for love's sake alone, we should want to know about the life of Christ. Yet we also understand this, we already have Him back to us resurrected. He's ascended into heaven.

He's at the right hand of the Father. We have Him by faith, which definitely does alleviate the bitterness. But we ought to want to know. But not only that, it's very personal for us because of something that Jesus said.

Something He said to us, and it was a warning, and it's coming a few chapters later. John 15, 20. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord.

If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

Every one of us has enough faults and flaws in our life that we're more than capable of offending the entire community. It's easy. It's easy.

[ 16 : 52 ] We have to be very careful. You know Jesus had no faults? If Jesus was just Himself unbridled, He would be a good and godly and perfect and flawless man.

And they hated Him because of His message. They hated Him because of His ministry. And if they're going to hate a perfect man with such a great passion, how much more are they going to hate us as flawed individuals seeking to be faithful to the same ministry that Jesus was?

Jesus warns us. If they're going to treat the Master this way, they're going to treat the servants this way. He puts us on notice. So the attitude of this crowd towards Jesus, any one of us can experience today.

And believers all over the world experience this level of hatred today. Now thankfully, it's not as severe here in other places yet, but it is real.

And what we see here is Jesus is in the city. He's in Jerusalem. He's in a place where there's a lot of worshippers who should be God-fearing men and women. And He's here in this city and He's ministering.

[ 18 : 05 ] And it's in the epicenter of Jewish culture that they try and kill Him. He's in the center of their world. And they don't like it.

Verse 31, The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. And Jesus said to them, Many good works have I shown you from My Father. For which of those works do ye stone Me?

The Jews answered Him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, because that thou, being a man, makest thyself equal to God.

Jesus points to His ministry. Which of the good works are you going to stone Me for? Of course, what's His ministry characterized?

Well, the blind see. The lame walk. Lepers, it's a horrible skin disease. There was no treatment for it during this time. If you had leprosy, you were cursed to have your flesh fall off your bones.

[ 19 : 04 ] in Jesus' day. He was healing lepers. The deaf regained hearing. Dead were raised and returned to their families.

And the poor, that is, those who were not self-righteous, the poor heard the gospel of the kingdom preached to them. And that was the ministry of Christ.

And those were the good works that Jesus was performing in the midst of Jerusalem. He says, for which of these good works do you stone Me? And they said, not for the good works, but for blasphemy.

Blasphemy. Because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God. They sought to kill Jesus, not because of the good He was doing, but because He made Himself to be God, they said.

Now, of course, the Jews understood something that later Gentiles in the early church would really struggle with. That is, the divinity of Christ. The Jews understood that by Jesus saying He was the Son of God, He was claiming divinity.

[ 20 : 24 ] And we can see this in our own world today. If, for example, you have a grapevine, and you take some seeds from that grapevine and you plant them, what do they grow into?

Grapevines. A grapevine makes a grapevine. Cattle breed cattle. People make people. The Father and the Son are linked to each other.

So, for Jesus to say He is the Son of God, He is saying He is made up of the very stuff of God. He is of God's divine nature. They understood that He was saying that.

And they were enraged. And they were ready to kill Him. You know, deep down they saw the works. Nicodemus revealed that they knew only someone from God could work the miracles that Jesus was working.

And they heard the Gospel and they knew deep down it was true. yet they sought to squelch out that truth and reject it because they didn't so much mind the miracles it was the message that they didn't want.

[ 21 : 37 ] It was the message that they didn't like. They didn't want Jesus. If Jesus' message with the miracles was I'm going to make Jerusalem a great empire we're going to rule the world that's exactly what they were looking to hear.

They wouldn't have minded those works a bit. But it was actually who Jesus was that offended them. And we see this in the world today.

If a church supports disaster relief or if a church feeds the poor or if a church does many different things the community is okay with that. They're actually relieved when we do stuff like that because it takes the burden off of them.

But what gets them mad? What causes them to reject Christians? It's because of who we believe God is. And who we believe is God. That is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because God is a judge and God has a word and God has left instructions and God will not tolerate their sins. And they cannot stand that we agree with that.

[ 22 : 44 ] And they must silence us. Just like they were so intent on silencing our Lord back here in Jerusalem. Of course Jesus he corrects them.

He rebukes them. Verse 34 Jesus answered them. Is it not written in your law? And here's one of those things that just made them hate Jesus so much.

He just used the Bible. Is it not written in your law? I have said you are gods. If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came and the scripture cannot be broken.

And he goes on. What's going on here? Well in the Old Testament the word for gods there was a generic word for God. It was Elohim.

It's a general word for deity. And the word Elohim was used in relation to the God of the Bible who would be called Yahweh. It was used in relation to him.

[ 23 : 41 ] Sometimes it was used to speak of false Elohim or false gods. Sometimes angels were referred to as Elohim and sometimes very rarely people were referred to as Elohim.

This is that instant. Is it not written that you should be called gods because the word came to them? So these men who received the word in the Old Testament referred to as gods were judges and they were viewed as extensions of God's justice.

Now this is difficult for us to understand but we're familiar with this with prophets. If the prophet Isaiah stood up and said thus saith the Lord and he gave his message we could walk away saying God spoke to us.

But it was in Isaiah's voice. Yeah but God spoke to us. We heard God's voice today. Well the same thing was true with a righteous judge. If the righteous judge judged! Judged rightly according to God's word.

God expressed his judgment through the justice system. Through the law as it was applied. In more recent history in our own culture theologians used to be called divines.

[ 25 : 01 ] And we of course in the olden days refer to a blacksmith as a blacksmith. Why? Well they smithed metal and they got covered in soot. And they referred to theologians as divines because they worked with that which was considered divine.

Now I think we have rightly moved away from some of these words and they rightly make us uncomfortable. But Jesus pointed at something that made them uncomfortable to point out if God is going to call earthly judges Elohim why are you so offended that he has called me the son of God?

It is as if Jesus is saying this. He says look at your judges. We all know judges. We have known county judges and perhaps some state judges and maybe if you have family a federal judge and you know they are just flawed ordinary people aren't they?

Some of them might be believers. Some of them might be very just and good at what they do. But they are just flawed ordinary people. And Jesus is saying if such a lofty title is bestowed upon these men why are you offended that God refers to me as the son of God considering this following verse.

And he lays out kind of his resume. Verse 36 say ye of him whom the father hath sanctified and sent unto the world. Thou blasphemeth because I said I am the son of God.

[ 26 : 24 ] He points to the fact, Jesus points to the fact that he has been sanctified by the father. Excuse me, he's sanctified by the father. And to sanctify something is to set it aside as special.

In the Old Testament we see many examples of that. For example, there was the tabernacle and later the temple and there were all types of implements that went along with it that were sanctified.

Those tent pegs that held the tent down were set apart for a special purpose that an average tent peg wasn't. They were going to hold up the tabernacle. The bowls, the basins, the implements, the tools, similar to what you can find in an artisan's workshop in Israel, if they were in the temple, they were sacred.

As a matter of fact, judgment came upon the king of Babylon when he held a feast with what? The bowls and cups and plates from where? The temple. Why was that? They were sacred.

They were set aside. The Levites were set aside unto God for His service. The priests from the Levites were set aside unto God to come to the closeness into His presence.

[ 27 : 32 ] The high priest was the most set aside who could go into the Holy of Holies. Israel was set aside from all the other nations as the people of God. The Bible has been set aside as the word of God and Jesus has been set aside.

How has Jesus been sanctified? How has Jesus been set aside? Well, He's been set aside by God the Father to be the head of the church. He's been set aside by God the Father to be King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

He's been set aside by God the Father to be our great high priest. And particularly in view here in John, it's leading up to the crucifixion. He's set aside by God the Father to be the perfect sacrifice to take away our sins.

God has sanctified the Lord Jesus Christ. So why are they offended? That He's referred to as the Son of God. Not only that, He's sent by the Father.

John 3 16, For God so loved the world, He did what? He gave His only begotten Son. He was sent by the Father on this mission.

[ 28 : 42 ] Not only that, Jesus makes clear, He's doing the works of the Father. He's preaching the gospel. The gospel is the word of God. And not only is He preaching the gospel, He's working the signs.

And the scripture is clear that when signs are worked in the Bible, that is the Spirit of God bearing witness of the messenger. And Jesus had these signs worked in His presence.

He worked them evidencing He was indeed the Messiah. He was indeed who the scripture says that He was. The one that was sent.

Yet they would not accept Him. They would not accept His identity. They were filled with hatred. And what's John say? After Jesus speaks to them, therefore they sought again to take Him, but He escaped out of their hand.

They sought again to take Him. They were going to stone Him in the street. They were going to kill Him. But He escaped miraculously.

[ 29 : 43 ] He eluded them out of their hand. And we see here the absolute corruption of humanity. We see how hateful the Pharisees are, but we must realize that this is the human condition.

The natural human, apart from God's grace, wants to suppress and hide all knowledge of God. Paul makes this clear in Romans 1. 18, for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

You see there's two ways to hold the truth about who God is. You can hold the truth in righteousness which means you have faith and you believe the truth and you rest in the truth or you hold the truth in unrighteousness which means you don't believe the truth.

You suppress the truth. You try and hide the truth. That is to hold the truth in unrighteousness. And this is speaking of humanity in general. Humanity in general suppresses the truth.

It holds the truth in unrighteousness. Verse 19, Because that which may be known about God is manifest in them. For God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen being understood by the things that are made.

[ 31 : 00 ] Even his eternal power and God head. Because that when they knew God they glorified him not as God. Neither were thankful but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Everyone deep down knows a little bit about God. And what is the sin nature doing? Suppressing it. Hiding it. Squelching it out.

Trying not to be encountered with that reality. And what do we see when sinners are inescapably pressed by Jesus?

John 3 19 and this is the condemnation that the light has come into the world and men love darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil.

They love their sin more than Jesus. And when Jesus just wouldn't go away, what did they decide to do? Kill him. Let's kill Jesus.

[ 32 : 00 ] We'll get rid of him. We won't have to deal with this anymore. We'll get him out of our life. That was the sinner's motive. And of course, where is this all taking place?

In Jerusalem. Significant. The most significant city built by the hands of men. In the Old Testament, it was the most exalted city in the world.



Why was that? Well, it was Zion. It's the seat of King David's throne. It's in the heart of the promised land. The capital from which God's people were ruled.

In Jerusalem was the temple. That special place in all the world where God came down to meet with man. You couldn't go to the burning bush, but you could go up to the temple.

You could be in God's presence there. You could worship Him there. It was a place where all Israel would go on pilgrimages and festivals, being there regularly. It was the epicenter of their lives.

[ 33 : 02 ] It was a place where nations could come in mass and gather to worship God. Jerusalem was the seat of the priesthood. Sure, the priests might live out in the countryside, but they're going up to Jerusalem to fulfill their obligations.

Jerusalem was meant to be a picture of heaven on earth. It was the epicenter of Jewish culture, of Jewish practice.

It was the residence of the elite and accepted by broader Judaism. It was the trend-setting city in Jerusalem. And the Jews all around the world looked to Jerusalem for guidance.

It was the epicenter of their culture. and Jesus was not welcome in Jerusalem. Jesus was not accepted at the center of Jewish society.

John 1 10, He was in the world and the world was made by Him and the world knew Him not. He came to His own and His own received Him not.

[ 34 : 11 ] Jesus was not welcomed by the top of society. Jesus was not welcomed at the center of society. The very city that should have embraced Jesus pushed Him away.

Christians the same is going to be true of us. It has been true of Christians throughout the ages. And we've had a brief time where we have felt like that wasn't the case in America.

But it will be true of us. Christians are not welcomed at the top of society. Christians are not welcomed at the center society. Christians are not welcome to be trend setters.

Christians are not welcomed. Increasingly, we're being pushed out of the public square. We're being marginalized. Why is this happening? Well, Jesus told us not to be surprised.

It's happening because of Him. That's exactly why it's happening. If you came up with some other religion that didn't have Jesus, you would be rewarded and you would be embraced by society.

[ 35 : 14 ] But it's because of Jesus that Christians are becoming increasingly persecuted and increasingly marginalized even in our own country.

How many mainstream influential actors and actresses are devout Christians? You say, well yeah, but we got the Christian video industry. Exactly.

Exactly. We're not welcome. We're not welcome. How many musicians are devout Christians? How many music producers and record labels are run by devout Christians that are on the top ten list?

But we have Christian music industry exactly. Exactly. We're on the margins. We're being pushed out. Even in politics it's always been remarked how hard it is.

My whole life I've heard it from wise and godly people time and time again. It's so hard for a genuine Christian of conviction to last. Why is that?

[ 36 : 16 ] Jesus is not welcome. They want to tear down monuments. They want to rewrite history books. They want to close down churches. What we're going to see in our culture is that they're going to start with the most influential.

They're going to go after the Christians that are trying to lobby. They're going to go after Christians in those parachurch ministries. We're seeing this now with the Sunrise Children's Group in our own state.

They'll kill babies in the state and they're fine with that. But heaven forbid that Christians are allowed to foster children according to their convictions. They won't have it. They won't tolerate it.

And as it comes down they're going to work their way down to the churches and churches are going to be attacked and persecuted. We can expect to lose tax exempt status and all that stuff.

That's normal persecution. They'll go after the leaders of the churches then they'll go after you. That's how persecution works.

[ 37 : 19 ] In countries that were once Christian that are not it is predictable and it happens. And they want Christians to be a bunch of bumpkins in the countryside if they're going to be at all.

That's their heart. That's their desire. That's their goal. And why is that? Why is that? Because they're not welcome at the center of society. They're not welcome to influence arts.

Christians are not welcome to influence thought. Christians are not welcome. That is the attempt to persecute. That's exactly what they tried to do with Jesus. Let's get Jesus out of the city at the very least.

Let's keep him on the run. If he's hiding up in Galilee well that's a far flung district. If he's out with the Samaritans we can use that against him. I hope he's not in the Judean countryside but hey that's better than at the temple.

I mean you get such a big hearing at the temple. They just wanted to get rid of Jesus. And that's exactly what they try and do today. Marginalize the Christians.

[ 38 : 20 ] Friend if you're a follower of Christ because you think it makes you popular or winsome those days are over. Those days are over. You better be a follower of Christ because you love him.

You better be a follower of Christ because you have conviction because there's going to be increasingly a cost for following Christ. Increasingly cost.

And many people can testify of the cost for following Christ in their own work and vocation. They'll never make partner at the law firm because they follow Jesus.

That's how the world is increasingly. Christians unwelcome. But that doesn't mean that we don't have a place. We have a place with Jesus and where do we find Jesus next in this passage?

In the wilderness. Out in the forsaken margins of society is where Jesus did some of the greatest acts of his ministry.

[ 39 : 19 ] If you lived in Jerusalem and you wanted to see some of the greatest acts of God's ministry on earth through Jesus, where would you have to go? Out into the wilderness.

Out to find Jesus. It's not so bad. Now Jesus, verse 40, He went to a familiar place. Verse 40, And He went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized.

And there He abode. And many resorted unto Him and said, John did no miracle, but all things that John spake of this man are true.

and many believed on Him there. Jesus in the wilderness. Place of meeting. A place of faith.

Now Jesus went to a familiar place. By this time, John had been martyred. His followers had been scattered. But Jesus knew where He had been ministering.

[ 40 : 24 ] And He went to the place where John was first ministering. It was a place where people were accustomed to going and hearing the Word of God. And that's where Jesus was found.

Oh by the way, do you know why John was murdered? Because of his biblical view on divorce and remarriage. He just was not welcome in society as a living soul.

Of course Jesus is here. It's a place of spiritual significance. It's a place, though outside of the city, a place where the forerunner came. It's a place where the one came to usher in the coming Messiah.

It was a place that was known to the people. It was not hard to find. It was accessible. And they could come and hear the Word of God. And as people heard about Jesus going to that familiar place where they could hear the Word of God, they began to travel those familiar roads to go hear Jesus preach.

The roads that they once traveled to go hear John preach the Word of God. Jesus said this of John in Luke 7 24. And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John.

[ 41 : 42 ] Why went ye into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

Excuse me. But what went ye out to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously appareled live decadently in the king's courts.

They didn't go to the city, did they? But what went ye out to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and that much more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare a way before thee.

That's who they went out to see. They hear of Jesus and they come, and they're amazed at what they find. This is what they said. And many resorted unto him and said, John did no miracle, but all the things that John spake of this man were true, and many believed on him.

You see, they came faithfully, and they came to hear John the Baptist preach and be baptized. John did not have a ministry of miracles and of signs and of wonders.

[ 42 : 58 ] He had a simple ministry of preaching the word and calling people to faith in Christ. And they come there and they find Jesus. They see his ministry and they're amazed because he was everything and more than they ever imagined when they heard of his coming from John the Baptist.

Christ. And they received him and they believed in him that day. In the wilderness, on the margins of society. Now, when we hear about Christian charities possibly one day going away, we don't know when, but very well likely they will.

When we hear of seminaries and Bible colleges losing their accreditation, of churches with millions of dollars and facilities and property having to walk away with it because they can't afford the property tax because they've lost their exempt status.

All those things sound scary. But I want to assure you that however our culture changes and however hard they try to push us out of the center of society, out on the margins, we will find Jesus there.

And not only will we find Jesus there, we will find that there is a more receptive audience to hearing about Jesus there. And we will find great gospel opportunities that you'll never find in the middle of an art gallery looking at those bizarre paintings.

[ 44 : 30 ] No. You'll find the kingdom there. This is what the author of Hebrews says looking at imminent persecution. Hebrews 13.10 And we'll close with this verse.

We have an altar. Wherefore, they have no right to eat which served in the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priests for sin are burned without the camp.

Therefore, Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. He went outside the city to suffer.

It's significant. Verse 13. Let us go forth there unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

Like Abraham before us, we seek that city that was not made by the hands of man, but one brought to us in Jesus Christ. We will find Christ in the margins.

[ 45 : 41 ] And often time that's exactly where He's calling us to do our ministry. So let us rest in Jesus, no matter what the world may try and take from us. Let's pray.