

Why God the Son Came Into The World

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[0 : 00] We'll be reading our sermon text, which is from John 18, picking up where we left off last week. So this week we'll begin reading at verse 25, John 18, 25.

As I read, remember that this is God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, and sufficient word. It's God's very own word for you and me, his people. When I'm done reading, I'll say, this is the word of the Lord and we can celebrate.

Thanks be to God. John 18, starting at verse 25 and to the end of the chapter. Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself.

So they said to him, you also are not one of his disciples, are you? He denied it and said, I am not. One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, did I not see you in the garden with him?

Peter again denied it. And at once the rooster crowed. Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters.

[1 : 10] It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover.

So Pilate went outside to them and said, what accusation do you bring against this man? They answered him, if this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you.

Pilate said to them, take him yourselves and judge him by your own law. The Jews said to him, it is not lawful for us to put anyone to death.

And this was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die. Verse 33. So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, are you the king of the Jews?

Jesus answered, do you say this of your own accord or did others say it to you about me? Pilate answered, am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chiefs, the chief priests have delivered you over to me.

[2 : 19] What have you done? Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting that I might not be delivered over to the Jews.

But my kingdom is not from this world. Then Pilate said to him, so you are a king. Jesus answered, you say that I am a king.

For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.

Pilate said to him, what is truth? And after this he said, after he said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, I find no guilt in him. But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover.

So do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews? They cried out again, not this man, but Barabbas. Now, Barabbas was a robber.

[3 : 23] This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. You may be seated. The grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of the Lord stands forever.

Let's pray.

Father, we praise you that though we wither like the grass in this body, through the word of God, you reveal to us Jesus Christ, the truth, the way, the life of heaven.

We praise you for revealing yourself to us by the person and work of your son, Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and man. We confess our utter dependence on you.

We thank you, Lord, that you have not left your church as orphans, but that you remain with us. We thank you for how you have sent what you called an even better ministry, and that's the Holy Spirit,

wielding the sword of the Spirit, the word of God.

[4 : 48] We pray that your truth in simple, plain language will enlighten our minds, will put a flame in our hearts, will stir us up, Lord, to follow you more closely.

Lord, we are your people in this life as pilgrims. We're hungry. We need our daily bread. We need Jesus Christ himself. Please feed us today, Lord. Sustain your people by the ministry of your word, we ask.

Amen. Well, beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, I want to walk through this passage with you and declare what Christ declared, and that's why God the Son came into this world.

Why God the Son came into this world. We read it a bit earlier, Isaiah 53, 6, how we all, like sheep, have gone astray.

We have each turned to our own way. That's you, isn't it? That's my wondering heart. Now, in this passage, our good shepherd, Jesus declares in verse 37, it's to this end that I was born, for this cause, that I came into the world.

[6 : 10] It's to be the good shepherd of my people. You have steered away from his green pastures. You have ventured off into the wild.

You're in the valley of darkness. There's thorns. There's those beady eyes of wolves and predators. There's a vulture circling around you.

That's how you are if God would leave you alone. But the good shepherd says, for this reason, I was born. For this reason, I came into the world. It's to rescue you.

I see in this passage, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and the way that the Apostle John is arranging this glorious message, I see five reasons he gives us to meditate on.

And I invite you to ponder these truths with me. The first reason that God the Son came into this world was to prove himself most faithful when you and I are most faithless.

[7 : 17] Have you been faithless this past week? Have you lacked the faith that you want in your spirit? I have. That's the first reason God the Son came into the world, to prove that he is most faithful when you and I are most faithless.

You and I are Peter. Look at verse 25. Simon Peter stood warming himself at the fire. This tells us that it was a cold night.

Our Lord Jesus being interrogated by Annas and Caiaphas in the middle of this cold night was faithful. Peter was cold, was weak.

Isn't it so common for the enemy, for Satan, to tempt us most in our weakness? When we're tired, when we're emotionally drained, when we're physically weak, we are so susceptible.

Our guard drops too often. And they said to Peter, Aren't you also one of his disciples? You see Satan baiting the hook.

[8 : 31] We don't know exactly what Peter was thinking or feeling. We can infer that he has fear and maybe pride. Here's the one who he believed would be the Messiah, the conquering Savior.

Arrested. Tied up. Peter denied him a second time. He said, I am not. In John 13, 37, Peter had told Jesus in front of all the other disciples as witnesses, I will lay down my life for you.

Jesus Christ replied to him, Will you? There's the tender patience of our Lord. Will you? Jesus said to Peter, truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.

In verse 26, we read that one of the servants of the high priest, his kinsman, whose ear Peter had cut off, he said, Did not I see you in the garden with this man?

In verse 27, Peter denied Jesus the third time. Immediately, the rooster crows. We read in verse 28, then it was early.

[9 : 53] You see, a whole cold night has passed. Why does our Lord prophesy that this will happen? A rooster will crow.

Peter, at least, maybe John and others will take note of that and be reminded. When does a rooster crow? A rooster crows while it's still dark, but it's a signal that the sun will be rising soon.

This was the darkest hour of Peter's life. And he hears this sound. And it's a reminder of his weakness and of Christ's faithfulness.

The rooster signals the break of dawn. In Peter's darkest hour, Jesus Christ is most faithful.

Let that comfort you. Through those moments of your life when you have felt yourself to be most faithless, God has sustained you.

[11 : 02] That's why you're here on a Sunday morning. It's because in his covenant of grace, God's steadfast love endures forever. That's his promise.

And so the rooster crows, and soon it was morning. I'm reminded of Psalm 110. Remember the covenant of redemption. The Father makes the promise to the Son, the reward for his obedience. And Psalm 110 says, You, Son, you will rule with majesty. In the womb of the dawn. Our Lord is about to show the type of rule of his kingdom.

And he conquers Satan. He crushes the serpent's head on the cross. In the womb of the morning, he's holding on to that promise of his Father. It's curious how John, the same apostle, begins this whole gospel in John 1, 5 by declaring, The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

Peter was tempted three times. Three times. Exposed for being faithless. Our Lord Jesus was tempted in the desert three times. It's his perfect active obedience as a substitute for Peter's perfect failures.

[12:33] You and I are failures. We are faithless just like Peter. We need Christ's active obedience. Because where we are faithless, Christ has been faithful to fulfill all righteousness on our behalf.

That's what Paul declares as an encouragement to Timothy. 2 Timothy 2, 13 When we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself.

Praise God like Peter for Christ's active obedience on your behalf. Jesus declares, To this end I was born. For this cause I came into the world.

Because you, Peter, and each one of you and me, we all like sheep have gone astray. We have turned every one of us to our own way. But the Father has laid our faithlessness on Christ to prove that he is faithful.

Praise be to God. The second reason I see here why God the Son came into the world was to satisfy God's justice in his dying.

[13:47] that you and I may justly live. Sinners deserve death. The wages of sin is death. And God is just. So how could a just God remain just by allowing sinners to live?

There's only one way. God the Son. He had to come into the world. And he had to be the one that would satisfy God's justice by dying in your place and in mine.

That's the only way that you and I could justly live. Look with me at verse 28. They led Jesus from Caiaphas into the hall of judgment.

It was early. They themselves went not into the judgment hall lest they should be defiled. They wanted to eat the Passover. Well, we know that Jesus with his disciples celebrated the Passover the day before.

So there are two ways that this can be possible. Because so many people migrated to Jerusalem it was an accepted custom that you would celebrate either on Thursday or Friday.

[14:53] There was also a law in Deuteronomy where the Levites and those of the tribe of Levi that would be administering the public Passover in the temple they would have a special meal and a special celebration on Friday.

And so this is potentially what that was as well. But I think what John the Apostle is highlighting here is the irony. The situational irony in the way he uses the language.

Irony was a literary technique originally used in ancient Greek culture. When they were describing a tragic life or a hero they would use situational irony.

So an example that we can relate to of situational irony would be like the fire station caught on fire. You know or the Supreme Court would not submit themselves to the rule of law. Those types of things would be situational irony.

Now let's notice in this passage John mentioned that they led Jesus into the hall of judgment. They wanted to unjustly condemn the only sinless man in their hall of judgment.

[16:05] He who is the creator and judge of all the world. In verse 29 we read that after spending time with Jesus Pilate goes back out and he asks them what accusations do you bring against this man?

See the Jews are trying to use Pilate in order to to condemn an innocent man.

They're thinking that they can be smarter and more clever than God with God's own laws. They're saying our hands will stay clean if we can get this Gentile this man from the Roman Empire to cast the judgment and sentence Jesus though he's innocent to die.

The irony is that the people of God were always intended and called to take the good news of God's forgiveness by grace to the nations and here they are trying to condemn the nations putting blood

on the hands of Pilate.

In verse 31 Pilate says take him and judge him according to your own law. It is not just for us to kill a man they say. They're they're telling Pilate we want this man dead.

[17:19] We want capital punishment. We want him to die on a Roman cross and we do not want to be associated with the clear injustice that needs to be done to that man.

But Pilate are you going to are you going to play ball with us? You know how powerful we are here. Pilate's a puppet of the Roman Empire. So here they are twisting God's own law the law of the holy God the law of Jesus Christ the whole law was meant to be a shadow of God's work and a picture on earth of his coming kingdom and yet they're twisting that law to put the king on a cross.

In verse 32 John makes it as clear as can be all of this was by God's providence so that the word of Jesus himself would be fulfilled.

It was signifying the death that he should die. The gospels pick up on this. Matthew 20 verse 19 Jesus tells them the son of man will be handed over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified.

And the Jewish law says that cursed is any man who hangs on a tree. And Jesus also said on the third day the Messiah the anointed Savior will rise again to life.

[18:49] John Gill pointed out how God's providence conducted every detail and our Lord Jesus cheerfully submitted in great love to his people to redeem you from the curse by being made a curse for you.

I love how this comes from Peter himself who's the failure in this story. In 2 Peter 2:24 Peter wrote to the church Jesus Christ himself bore our sins in his body on the tree that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.

By his wounds we are healed. what comforting words for Peter to meditate on. Jesus is declaring it's to this end that I was born it's for this cause that I came to the world.

You all like sheep have gone astray but it pleased the Father to lay on the Son the guilt the death deserving guilt of sinners in your place and mine so that we may justly live.

The third reason that God the Son came into the world was to transfer prisoners in darkness into his heavenly kingdom of light.

[20:18] God the Son came into this world to transfer prisoners who are in bondage to sin and Satan in darkness into the kingdom of heaven a kingdom of light.

in verse 33 we see that Pilate entered into the judgment hall again to address Jesus and he asks him are you the king of the Jews?

So there's Pilate standing in the presence of the king of glory and he's questioning him rather than confessing the truth.

It's possible for you and me to be like Pilate we're in the presence of the king of glory and rather than bowing our knees and our hearts to him in worship we stand here questioning him.

Jesus are you who you say you are? In verse 34 Jesus said is this what you judged for yourself or did others determine it to you of me?

[21:24] Jesus is being patient with Pilate he's asking Pilate to think for himself you judge for yourself you don't get to be a slippery middle man the king of glory looks you in the eye who am I to you?

Who do you say I am? Are you only going off of what others have told you? Pilate's answer reveals his heart in verse 35 Pilate says am I a Jew?

Your own nation and your chief priests have delivered you to me what is it that you have done? See Pilate refused to bow his heart in humility to Jesus and by doing that by remaining proud and standing before him he's missing out on the best news for his body and his soul now and forever more it's possible to be that close to the king of glory and to stand in pride against him missing out on the most glorious news for your soul and your body now and forever more in verse 36 Jesus declares he is a king Jesus says my kingdom is not of this world if my kingdom were of this world then would my servants not fight

I would not be delivered to the Jews my army would stand with me we would not be having this conversation so Jesus says for this reason you can tell clearly my kingdom is not of this world so now Jesus has owned the fact that he is a king he has a kingdom his kingdom is not of this world in another twist of irony his passive surrender to the Jewish leaders and to Pilate it proves his kingdom is of another world in Matthew 4:16 quoting Isaiah 9:2 we read that Jesus would come to a

people dwelling in darkness they would see a great light the sun would be dawning in the shadow of death that's why

Jesus came to this world is to transfer prisoners who are in darkness into his heavenly kingdom of light in verse 37 Peter said to Jesus are you a king then Jesus replies you said I am a king see it's possible to be like Pilate and to be so entangled in our own little kingdoms that we live as if Christ were dethroned it's possible but we belong to a spiritual kingdom we belong to this glorious kingdom of heaven the kingdom of light one commentator pointed out that the subjects of Christ kingdom are not of the world they are chosen and called out of it the kingdom itself does not appear in worldly pomp or splendor nor is it supported by worldly force all that is carnal sensual and worldly must be removed from our conceptions of

[25 : 00] Christ kingdom Jesus declares this is why I was born it's for this reason that I came into the world because all you have gone astray like sheep you've each turned to your own way but I came as the king of heaven to transfer you who were prisoners in bondage and darkness into my heavenly kingdom of light God the fourth reason God the son came into the world was to declare truth to you who were once deceived by Satan's lies all of us were deceived by Satan's lies that's our natural condition that's how we're born but God the son came into this world to declare truth and those who hear the truth that he declares will follow his voice in verse 37 Jesus says to this end was

I born God the son according to his human nature is reflecting on his own incarnation I was born of a virgin conceived by the Holy Spirit in a very miraculous manner not inheriting the curse of sin from Adam's line that's why God the son was born and it's for this cause that I came into the world Jesus says in verse 37 his mission was to bear witness unto the truth being image bearers of God every single person knows they are living in darkness Romans 1 18 says that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth the truth and faithfulness of

God in his word and promises all of God's actions and revelations and all of redemptive history are what Christ comes to most clearly reveal and accomplish and fulfill Jesus Christ himself came as the truth he is the true God and the true man the truth of all the covenant transactions all the types all the promises all the prophecies Jesus Christ came to declare and reveal to everyone who will hear his voice and he will not fail in his mission notice what Jesus says at the end of verse 37 everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice if a person does not believe they are ignoring the truth they are deceiving themselves they are suppressing God's truth by their unrighteousness in verse 38

Pilate said to him what is truth Pilate commits two sins at least here he's suppressing the truth by his unbelief and he's also misusing the office God appointed him to he's ruling with the authority God put in his hands but he's doing it unjustly and here before him stands Jesus Christ God the Son the living God the King of the world in verse 38 after Pilate said this he went out to the Jews he had the opportunity to hear from God himself the way the truth the life what is truth he wouldn't even pause to be taught he immediately went back out to the Jews following his heart holding on to his little kingdom even though

Pilate was such an unjust ruler who denied the truth God used Pilate to confirm the perfection of Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God Pilate declares in verse 38 to the Jews the keepers of the ceremonial law I find no fault in him at all there was no sin in the nature of Jesus there was no guile in his lips as someone put it there was no iniquity in his life and the devil himself could find nothing to accuse in Jesus praise God 1 Peter 1 19 we read that the redeemed of God were bought with his precious blood that of an unblemished and spotless lamb that's who Jesus is unblemished spotless there is no fault in him at all he came to live for you and for me to this end

[30 : 26] I was born Jesus says it's for this mission that I came to this world I came to declare the truth of God to you who were once deceived by the lies of Satan if you hear my voice of truth you will follow me well the fifth and final reason I see in this passage for why God the son came into the world it was to be the Passover lamb so that criminals like you and me could be called sons of God Jesus came to be the Passover lamb so that criminals like you and me could be called sons of God in verse 39 Pilate says to the Jews you have a custom that I should release unto you one criminal at Passover Pilate was eager to please the mob the people they had all the power he was the new guy trying to play by their rules he was negotiating with them he would use their own customs to try to appease them so that he could hold on to his power the

Jews knew they could use this leverage and get whatever they wanted out of this man this puppet and so Pilate asked them in verse 39 do you choose therefore that I release to you the king of the Jews he can't help getting a jab in at them the people cannot choose the right thing according to their will they are so bound in sin they cannot choose their own king in sin every one of us chooses to use whatever power we have and unless God regenerates you and unbinds that fallen will you will never choose God nor would I if Jesus is your king it's because God chose you and the Jews use their power here to get rid of what they considered their biggest threat everybody's grabbing grabbing what they can in this life

Barabbas was a thief he grabbed what was not his Pilate was grabbing hold of the little power God gave him thinking that it was his own scheming that put him in that spot and the Jews did not want to let go of all the power they held because of their religion and so in verse 40 they cried again saying not this man Pilate calls him the king of the Jews they call him this man but Barabbas now Barabbas was a robber it's no accident in God's providence that the man that would be released the criminal that would be set free was named Barabbas if you're familiar with Jewish names you know Bar means son and Abba means father Bar Abba the son of the father though he was a criminal so deserving of punishment he was let go he would be perfectly free because

Christ God the son was taken captive condemned and died we all like sheep deserve to die if left to ourselves we're all criminals before a holy and just God we've turned our own way Augustine declared what we believe that God chooses us not because we believe but that we may believe Ephesians 1:4 says that God chooses us in Christ and he did this before the foundation of the world he chooses you and me to be holy and blameless before him because we will be robed in Christ righteousness the father laid our iniquities on his own son so that we who were criminals like Barabbas could be released in Romans 8:14 we read that all who are led by the spirit are sons of God it's not to leave daughters out but it's because in the ancient world of the time of the early church the son is entitled to the inheritance man and woman you are sons of God in the sense that you are entitled to the inheritance that God's own son merited for you

Galatians 4:6 because you are sons God has sent the spirit of his son into your heart and by that spirit you now cry Abba father glory be to God you and I are like those sheep stuck in the thorns with the wolves coming around to devour us if we are left on our own but God the son became the good shepherd he came to the world he was born to be your perfect sinless unblemished Passover lamb so that criminals like you and me could be called sons of God for this reason that Jesus came into the world if you hear his voice you will joyfully follow your good shepherd all glory be to God would you pray with me oh

[36:27] Lord our triune God father son holy spirit what else can we declare but that you are perfect love you prove this by your son's mission thinking of first Corinthians 13 we praise you for how in the person and work of Jesus Christ you have rejoiced in the truth you have you have born our sins and even now as you shepherd our souls you bear with us in all things where we are faithless you are faithful believing all things Lord where we look at our lives and we can feel hopeless we praise you for Christ perfect hope hoping all things where we are impatient where we buck against long suffering Lord we praise you that Jesus Christ endured all things on our behalf and we stand here simply confessing

Lord we need your love we need more of the love of God proven through Jesus Christ we ask that by the power of your spirit you put that love in our souls more love for you Father and more love for our neighbor we ask this for Christ's sake and for his glory in our lives Amen