

# Our Faithlessness, Christ's Faithfulness

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[ 0 : 00 ] That you are good. We thank you that you have brought us here this morning to worship you, to sing songs to who you are, to proclaim the name of Jesus, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords.

God, I am just reminded of your faithfulness to the Israelites. Lord, as they call upon your name, Lord, we call upon your name here today.

As Mike talked about last week, how, you know, in the past couple of weeks, as Christ is, you know, the way John writes, he's showing that Christ is the second Adam.

He's that second David. He is the fulfillment of the prophecies. That what is occurring in the text that we're going through is not a surprise to Jesus, but it's actually that Jesus is guiding the narrative.

And that he's taking us to the cross. He's not just, like, surprised by what's happening and amazed that these people are trying to crucify him and persecute him. But he is actually dictating it.

[ 1 : 05 ] And we'll continue to see that today, Lord, as the Jewish people, the leaders are saying things to him that are about him that are not true.

As we see somebody deny Jesus, we see how Jesus remains faithful to the cup that he has been given by the Father. And, Lord, we can be here 2,000 years later remembering what has been done, who you are, what you've done.

And, Lord, we can look at the ministries at Shoreline or the ministries that Shoreline individuals are part of. Lord, we think of the Anchor of Hope ministry, Lord, where we can, you know, give a little bit of cash, a little bit of some coins to go and bless a ministry in the local area.

And we think of Legacy, Lord, as they look forward to the launch here in August. God, there's so much to do. But, God, your people are ready for work.

And so, Lord, those that are able to, like, you know, Kevin and Keegan just went all the way to Wisconsin to help build a church. God, I pray that you would provide for Legacy the people that can serve them as well.

[ 2 : 21 ] And, God, as Randy, as he's ministering in Tanzania and Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India, and, you know, all the places that he's been and the ministries that he's been part of and the people that he's poured into.

God, as he's training leaders to go back to their churches, go back to their local establishments and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. God, that you'd be with Randy, give him energy, comfort.

God, that you would be his source of strength in the midst of the chaos that he's in, whether it's the chaos of just the organizational aspect of the ministry, whether it's the chaos because the area he's in is under chaos.

But, Lord, you are the king of the chaos, and we thank you that you, in the midst of craziness, you're steady and you're true. God, I pray that you'd be with Mike as he comes up and proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ in this little section of the book of John.

God, that you would bless his words, that those here this morning who know you would be comforted by the words of Jesus, the words that you gave John. And those that don't know you, Lord, that they would be convicted of their sin and their need for a savior, that they would see that this God who sent his son to live this perfect life was questioned about his ministry.

[ 3 : 43 ] And his response is grace and faithfulness to his call. And so, Lord, we pray that you'd be with Mike, give him words to speak, and be with those that are here listening, that their ears would be open to your word this morning.

God, may you be glorified in all that we do. Amen. The sermon text for today is John 18, 12 through 27.

So the band of soldiers and their captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound him. First, they led him to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year.

It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should die for the people. Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest.

But Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the servant girl who kept watch at the door and brought Peter in. The servant girl at the door said to Peter, You also are not one of the man's disciples, are you?

[ 5 : 03 ] He said, I am not. Now the servants and the officers had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves. Peter, who also was with them, standing and warming himself.

The high priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus answered him, I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together.

I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me what I said to them. They know what I said. When he had said these things, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand and said, Is that how you answer the high priest?

Jesus answered him, If what I said is wrong, bear witness about the wrong. But if what I said is right, why do you strike me? Annas then sent him bound to Caiaphas, the high priest.

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?

[ 6 : 16 ] Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed. This is the word of the Lord. Praise be to God. Heavenly Father, we come again to the passion narrative of Christ.

And we want to rightly recognize that Christ did this for us on our behalf. We want to rightly recognize that our sin put him there.

Our sin nailed him to the cross. And as we watch Christ in his suffering, in the injustice, bearing the full weight of wrath for sin, I pray that we would be amazed at his love, amazed at his faithfulness, drawn to our knees in confession of our sin, and that we would be empowered and motivated to live lives of faithfulness for him.

Help us now as we unpack this word that you have for us. May you be the one speaking to us today by the power of your spirit, for our good and for your glory, we pray in Christ's name.

Amen. Well, good morning, church. My name is Mike. I'm one of the pastors here at Shoreline. I'm so glad that you all have joined us this morning. If I could, real quick, just put a quick plug in for that book, Gensel and Lowly, that the ladies are going to start.

[ 7 : 45 ] That has been one of my favorite books that I can remember reading. Went through it earlier this year. Fantastic book. Whether or not you're able to attend, I highly recommend grabbing a copy of that book.

It's so good. We'll eventually have more extra copies on the back table, I think. But I just want to recommend, get that book. Whether or not you're able to go, I don't think you will regret it.

So I want to ask this morning, have you ever made a promise that you failed to keep? Anybody. I see some head nods, yes. I see some hand raise, okay, yeah. Nobody's, I guess, being dishonest in church this morning.

Perhaps you said something like, Mom, I promise I'll take out the trash before you get home. I promise. And she comes home. Hmm, what's that stench in the air that I smell?

Sweetheart, I promise to plan the perfect anniversary getaway. And a little time passes, and your wife says, Happy anniversary, babe. Boss, I promise you, I won't miss a deadline again.

[ 8 : 51 ] Promise. Promise. Okay, you say, Mike, all right, I know where you're going with this. The difference is, the apostle Peter, he made a promise to Jesus, right?

He made a promise to Christ that he failed to keep. And my husband sure ain't Jesus. Yeah, that's true. That's true. But let's be honest. You know, are you telling me that, that you've never told the Lord that you would do something for him and then failed to do it at any point in your walk with the Lord?

Perhaps like, I don't know, read your Bible and pray every day in 2024. Has anybody failed to keep that recommitment at the start of the year? Maybe it's a commitment that you made to Christ that you were going to share the gospel with that unsaved coworker or that family member. Maybe it was a commitment that you wouldn't yell at your spouse like that again. Maybe it was a promise, I'm never going to indulge in pornography again.

You know, the truth is, we've all failed in a myriad of ways to be true to our word. And what's more, you know, my own word isn't the standard, right?

[10:02] Your word isn't the standard. The standard is this. It's God's word. And if we've failed to live up to our own standards, we're downright faithless if we compare ourselves to the true standard of God's word.

And you say, well, how encouraging of you, Mike, this morning. You know. But here's the good news, friends. Here's the good news. That though you and I, that though man is faithless, Christ remains faithful.

Amen? Christ remains faithful to obey the Father and redeem the lost. And that's where we're going today. The title is Man's Faithlessness, Christ Faithfulness.

Man's Faithlessness, Christ Faithfulness. So, last week, we began walking through the Passion narrative in the Gospel of John, the events of Christ, betrayal, arrest, trial, and crucifixion.

In John 18 to 29, I encourage you, last week, to read the resurrection happens in 20. Read 18, 19, 20 through, you know, over and over again as we keep walking through it. You'll start to see the connections.

[11:10] You'll get into the story. And we saw last week, right, that in the first 11 verses, in another garden encounter, reminiscent of that original one in the Garden of Eden, Jesus, he looked evil in the face, right?

He declared his supreme authority over it, and then he submitted himself to the good and sovereign will of his heavenly Father. Shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?

Jesus had asked. See, Jesus was set, he was set like a flint on accomplishing the mission for which the Father had sent him, which was to drink that cup of God's wrath for sin down to the dregs so that man would not have to.

And today, we pick up the narrative in verse 12. And the first thing that we're going to see is the Jews' ignorance. And the question is, who's really on trial?

The Jews' ignorance, who's really on trial? And the text starts by saying, so the band of soldiers and their captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound him. Now, I didn't mention this last week, but it's important to note that these are Roman soldiers and Jewish officers, right?

[12:23] So you have Jews and Romans, Jews and Gentiles are involved in the death of the Son of God. And this represents the fact that Jesus' death on the cross was for the sins of the world.

It's of the world. So therefore, as we progress through this narrative, John Stott writes this in his book, *The Cross of Christ*, it would be most unseemly to feign a cool detachment as we contemplate Christ's cross, for whether we like it or not, we are involved.

Our sins put him there. So I want to exhort us, church, as we read of officers slapping Jesus, as we read of soldiers mocking and beating him and placing on his head the crown of thorns, when we read of Pilate flogging Christ, the crowd yelling, crucify him, crucify him, the soldiers driving the nails into his hands and feet.

Let us be sure to see our own sinful selves performing those hideous actions. Let us feel the weight of our sin and our corruption, our faithlessness, and what Jesus, our Savior, endured to pay our penalty for that sin.

So back here, having willingly offered himself up to Judas and this mob of Roman soldiers and Jewish officers, Jesus is then bound and arrested.

[13:49] Now first, they led him to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. Now real quick, some cultural context. It's a little confusing in this passage.

Who is the high priest being referred to? Is it Annas? Is it Caiaphas? Who is actually the one questioning Jesus? Annas was the high priest from 6 to 15 AD. We're a little bit later now, around 30, 33 AD.

But Annas continued to hold influence through his five sons. So he had five sons who held the high priesthood for various amounts of time and then also through his son-in-law, Caiaphas, who is here, the reigning high priest.

So while Caiaphas is actually the high priest in office, Annas, due to the power, the influence that he still held over the Jewish religious system, he's essentially respected and regarded as also a high priest.

So this scene here that John captures is Jesus before Annas, which we'll get to. But then John reminds us of this. It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should die for the people.

[14:56] Now John is jogging the reader's memories here of a scene that you may recall occurred earlier back in chapter 11. Back in chapter 11, Jesus, in his final sign, he had raised Lazarus from the dead.

And the Sanhedrin, which was the council of Jewish religious leaders, they gathered together panicking about how they were going to respond. They didn't read the sign. They just wanted to eliminate Jesus.

And you can turn in your Bibles if you want, John 11, verse 47. They say, what are we to do? For this man performs many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.

But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, you know nothing at all. Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.

But, John the narrator, adds this, he did not say this of his own accord. But being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.

[16:13] So here in John 11, we see Caiaphas. He's speaking words out of pride, out of self-interest, meaning one thing. And at the very same time, God, in his sovereignty, intends Caiaphas' words to foretell of something far more profound.

See, Caiaphas, we had said before, was unwittingly prophesying the gospel. That's what he was doing. See, Jesus, Jesus would die on the cross, but not for the nation's social and political life, but rather for their sin.

Right? And not, and not the nation's sin only, but the world's sin. Jesus would die on the cross, but not to avert the wrath of Rome, to avert and absorb the wrath of God, and to bring eternal life.

So by referring back to this scene in John 11, the Apostle John's reminding us again here in chapter 18 who it is that's actually advancing the narrative forward, which we saw last week.

And for what purpose? See, John is flipping the script. It might look like Jesus is standing trial. It might look like Jesus is answering to the rulers of the day, but in reality, church, in reality, God is wielding their plans and their schemes to fulfill his plan.

[17:31] Ordained from before time began to redeem sinners. See, those rulers in reality are on trial before Christ, the judge.

And ultimately, they will stand trial before him, and they will give an account to everything that they've done. Now, there's another allusion in this text to Jesus' divine identity and authority.

It comes a little bit later. When Jesus is before Annas, it says, the high priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus answered him, I have spoken openly to the world.

I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple where all Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Side note, your Bible's cross-reference is a really good thing to use.

It's a really good thing to use. And what you find if you have a study Bible that has cross-references is that when Jesus says this phrase, I have said nothing in secret, similar to how when Jesus says, I am he, there's a lot of weight and significance behind it.

[18:38] This here is another claim to divinity. And it's alluding again to God's declaration 700 years earlier through the prophet Isaiah. Listen to this. Isaiah chapter 45, verse 18 and 19.

For thus says the Lord who created the heavens. He is God who formed the earth and made it. He established it. He did not create it empty. He formed it to be inhabited. I am the Lord and there is no other.

I did not speak in secret in a land of darkness. I did not say to the offspring of David, seek me in vain. I, the Lord, speak the truth. I declare what is right.

And that phrase recurs in Isaiah. The Lord saying these similar words, I have not said anything in secret. I have not done anything in secret. Christ again is pointing back to his divine identity as the I am, as Yahweh.

So who's, who's really standing trial here? Is Jesus Christ the creator of heaven and earth? The, the source of life and truth?

[ 19 : 43 ] The, the only true God who shares his glory with no other? Is he standing trial before a human authority? You know, Jesus said back in chapter 5 in a clash with these same rulers, for the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father.

Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

See, that's the real trial. That's the real trial. The ultimate trial. The one in which every human of every generation, whether a ruler, a religious ruler, a dictator, a peasant, we will all stand before this judge, Christ, the Lord, and we will give an accounting of our lives before him.

And I just want to ask, are you prepared? Are you prepared for that trial? Have you heard the word of Christ and believed in him for eternal life?

Have you repented of your sin and by faith entered into a personal relationship with the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent? That's how you prepare for that trial.

[ 21 : 06 ] And if you have not, you are not ready for that trial. Do not go to that trial having rejected the one who offers himself as life.

But a word of comfort, saints, saints, those that are prepared for that trial, if you do believe in Jesus, if you belong to him and to the Father, then we can take great comfort in knowing that the real judge is Christ.

And even in this life, as we face ourselves in justice, as we face offenses committed against us, Christ, the judge, is going to right all of those injustices in the end.

He's going to right that. That means that you and I, we don't actually need to seek our own vindication in this life. We don't need to seek our own vengeance. We can entrust ourselves to him who judges justly and so bear up under temporary injustice.

following in the example of Christ. You know, ironically, that's what Peter encourages us to do in 1 Peter 2. Peter, Peter's writing that letter on the other side of Pentecost.

[ 22 : 24 ] Right here in John 18, before Christ's death on the cross, before the resurrection, ascension, and the sending of the Spirit, Peter does not have the resources to bear up under the weight.

Now, you may have noticed, as Josiah read the text earlier, that John is alternating between this scene on the inside with Christ and then the scene on the outside with Peter.

He's going back and forth. And the point is that John wants us to compare and contrast Jesus and Peter. And so the next thing we're going to see here is Peter's cowardice.

How far will he follow? How far will he follow? Now, the main contrast that John sets up is between Peter and Christ. But there is another smaller contrast between Peter and this other disciple.

If you see there in verse 15, Simon Peter followed Jesus and so did another disciple. Now, we don't fully know who this other disciple is, but pretty strongly think that it's John.

[ 23 : 33 ] as John throughout the Gospel of John, I'm just going to not use this thing, I guess. Throughout the Gospel of John, we see John keeping himself unnamed, right?

The disciple whom Jesus loved. The disciple whom Jesus loved. And now here, this other disciple. So we're pretty sure that it's John. And so we see here Peter in contrast to John.

And actually, just real quick as an aside, sometimes when we hear the disciple whom Jesus loved, we're like, wow, what an arrogant guy. The disciple whom Jesus loved, really? Like, that's how you're going to refer to yourself? I thought the same thing.

I was talking to a brother earlier this week about that. And I want to flip that perspective real quick. John, without even naming himself, considers his identity to be all because of Christ's love.

Like, he sees himself, thank you, he sees himself as unworthy except that he was loved by Jesus. Like, he's not doing that in arrogance, he's doing that in humility because that's the best thing.

[ 24 : 36 ] Like, his identity is all wrapped up in Christ and Christ's love for him. You know, the apostle Paul does similar things. It seems sometimes like Paul's writing in arrogance and he's not. He just, he knows his true identity apart from Christ and that Christ is his everything.

So when we see that, like, let's see the humility in John's heart and let's ourselves be encouraged to view ourselves in the light of Christ's love for us. Okay, so Peter, in contrast to John, what we see

here is that John continues to follow Christ into the high priest's private residence and that's where this trial is taking place and Peter's sort of trailing behind but John has some sort of special access. He seems to have some sort of connection with the high priest's family and so he, what's important about that is John becomes an eyewitness of this account. John is writing the whole gospel account as an eyewitness.

He's an eyewitness of what happens but then John realizes Peter is not actually with him. And so, so Peter's outside and John sees that so John goes back out.

He snags Peter and he brings Peter into the courtyard and then the servant girl asks this question, you also are not one of this man's disciples, are you? And it's important to see here that she actually is assuming that John's a disciple, right?

[ 25 : 55 ] You also are not one of his disciples and yet unlike Peter, John is completely unfazed. He just, he keeps going, he goes into the courtyard, he goes into the trial.

See, John's focus is on Christ. He sees Christ, he wants to be with Christ. He doesn't seem to get entangled up in any sort of fear of man like Peter clearly is.

And so what we see in John, we see a man committed to following Jesus and then leading others, namely Peter, to do the same, right? But Peter, apparently so overcome with fear of man, he denies any relation to Christ.

I am not. I am not. Now, we see in verse 18, it seems to imply that John does continue on into the trial because Peter, now clammed up by fear, probably now mulling over guilt that he just denied Christ.

He chooses to stay out in the courtyard among the servants and the officers who are warming themselves by this charcoal fire. So it's implying it's the middle of the night here, it's dark, there's a charcoal fire, there's not much light, he can be kind of hidden by the veil of darkness.

[ 27 : 15 ] So that's Peter in contrast to John. But the starker contrast that John draws out in this text is Peter in contrast to Christ. Right? In between these two scenes involving Peter on the outside is the scene on the inside involving Jesus.

And what is Jesus doing? He is, he's fearlessly, he's boldly, unapologetically, even regally bearing up against the injustice. Right? He's not backing down.

And Jesus is refusing to be deterred from his mission to obey the Father and to redeem the law. So we're going to come back to that later. So John, you know, after the inner scene in the trial, John returns again in verse 25 to the outer scene and he reminds the reader that now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself.

He tells us a second time. Peter is being, he's with the servants and officers, he's acting like the servants and officers because while Christ is turned outward, right, total disregard for self, Peter is on the outside bent inward, worried about his own comfort, worried about his own safety, paralyzed by fear of man, acting like the world.

That's what Peter's doing. So they said to him, you also are not one of his disciples, are you? And he denied it and said, I am not.

[ 28 : 38 ] Once you've succumbed to temptation and fallen into sin, it becomes that much easier the second time, does it not? And so again, Peter denies association with Christ.

And 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.

Peter, the leader of the twelve, bold, courageous, zealous, the one who, when many of Jesus' followers turned aside back in chapter 6, Peter declared, Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life and we have believed and have come to know that you are the Holy One of God. Peter, who only hours ago had valiantly declared in the upper room, Lord, why can I not follow you?

I will lay down my life for you. Peter, who only a little while after that in the garden of Gethsemane, had drawn his sword and struck the high priest's servant.

[ 29 : 47 ] Now, for the third time in a row, Peter has succumbed to fear, to temptation, to sin, denying any relation to his Lord and his Master.

Now, of course, in this denial of Peter, we also ought to see the sovereignty of Christ who had predicted this threefold denial and the crowing of the rooster. So once again, once again, the words of Christ come to fulfillment, right?

The word made flesh continues to reveal himself as such, but this does not remove Christ's prediction, does not remove the agency, the responsibility of Peter.

This is true all over Scripture. God's sovereignty does not remove our responsibility, the hard hardness of the Jews back in chapter 12, their responsibility, their agency, even though God had foreseen that and predicted it all the way back in Isaiah, Peter has failed.

Peter's failed miserably. Unwilling to follow Jesus any further into the battle, even as Jesus bears up against the injustice for Peter's sake.

[ 30 : 58 ] I just want to ask ourselves here, how far, how far are we willing to follow Jesus into the battle? How far are you willing to go?

Jesus had said, whoever loves his life loses it. This is John 12. And whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me and where I am, there will my servant be also.

Jesus has called us to be where he is, to follow him. He's called us to pattern our lives after his, which is a life of self-denial, a life of self-sacrifice for the sake of love.

Right? Love for him, love for others. It's a life that rejects fear of man as a legitimate motivation. It's a life driven instead by fear, by worship, by love for God in Christ.

Are you, church, are we willing to cling to the truth of God's word, to cling to Christ, even when it's costly? That looks like a lot of different things.

[ 32 : 11 ] Maybe just a couple examples. In our present culture, this might look like being ridiculed or even losing your job because you believe the Bible's clear teaching about God's design for sex and gender.

There's actually one person in this church who has lost their job in the past because of that. And I am so encouraged by that testimony. This might look like being shunned by family or neighbors or coworkers because you crossed the pain line.

Remember that book, Honest Evangelism? You crossed the pain line. You shared with them the true and clear gospel of Jesus Christ. And rather than be met with acceptance, you're met with hostility.

It might look like that. It looks like all sorts of things. How far are you willing to follow Jesus? How far? But, lest we walk away from this text thinking it's mainly about our willingness to be faithful, we have to remember that Peter, the leader of the disciples, failed.

He failed. Right? We would be arrogant to think that we would not. He would be better than Peter. Now, true, John, in this text, we do see John.

[ 33 : 23 ] He continues to faithfully follow Jesus. But John doesn't make it at all about himself. He doesn't even name himself. We have to, like, put the pieces together that this is John.

John's gaze was fixed on Christ. And that's the whole point. John wants our attention fixed on Christ. And what we see here is Christ's faithfulness.

How much will Christ take? How much will he take? So let's go back to the inner scene, the trial taking place in the high priest's residence. The high priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching.

So we see here that the Jewish leaders, they're primarily concerned about Jesus' claims as to his identity. And we've seen that over and over in the book of John. And ironically, of course, they're concerned that he's leading the people astray.

Irony of ironies. There's a lot of ironies in this section of the gospel. And Jesus answered him, I have spoken openly to the world.

[ 34 : 28 ] I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple where all Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me what I said to them.

They know what I said. A few things I want us to notice here. First, is that Jesus continues preserving his disciples.

Annas questions Jesus about two things, his disciples and his teaching. And Jesus ignores the question about his disciples. He's not going to bring his disciples into this.

The good shepherd, the good shepherd, he continues ensuring the preservation of his sheep. So beautiful. Secondly, Jesus continues testifying to truth.

Now he does this in a couple ways here. First, he does this by upholding the truth of his own witness. Jesus' public ministry is over. He has already borne witness to the truth in word and in

deed.

[ 35 : 31 ] And here he is pointing back to that witness. He's like, look guys, look at what I did and said. There are countless eyewitnesses of that. Go talk to those guys. He's pointing to the fact that his witness was not hidden.

It was out in the open where many people could see, many people could hear and testify to what he said and did. And the Gospels attest to this. Jesus did have scenes of intimacy with his disciples, but he was just unpacking the things that he was already saying in public.

There wasn't a private conversation and a public one that were different from each other. He's upholding here the truth of his witness. He's upholding the truth of God's word. Now I'm specifically talking about here the law of Moses.

For what Jesus is really doing here, he's asking for a fair trial. That's what he's doing. See, the law required priests and judges to inquire diligently throughout the book of Deuteronomy when charges are brought up against somebody.

Inquire diligently and also prescribe that only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established. See, Annas should not even be questioning Jesus.

[ 36 : 41 ] He should be bringing forward witnesses. He should be inquiring diligently in order to discover the truth, in order to execute justice. Justice does not appear to be a very high priority in this scene, does it?

When he had said these things, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand saying, is that how you answer the high priest? Jesus answered him.

If what I said is wrong, bear witness about the wrong. But if what I said is right, why do you strike me? Annas then sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

So Jesus, with poise, with dignity, he continues to make this a matter of truth. And we're going to see that even more. Ian's preaching next week, Jesus before Pilate.

We're going to see that theme continue of bearing witness to the truth. But Annas right here, he's not buying it. He's not buying it. He sends him off to his son-in-law, Caiaphas. He sees that he's not going to get anywhere with Jesus.

[ 37 : 49 ] And Jesus' further question, that's where the formal trial takes place, where an official ruling of the council happens, and the other gospel accounts all talk about that. But a third thing that we see in Christ here, in addition to preserving his disciples, to testifying the truth, we see Jesus emptying himself, emptying himself in faithful love.

Now remember the first point of this sermon, how we started this sermon, that the real judge is Christ. He is the real judge. He is the one that is wielding all authority in heaven and on earth. And yet, Jesus, the judge of the universe, he places himself willingly under the authority of these unjust men. Jesus, the one who, who less than a week before, was riding into Jerusalem as the conquering king.

Here he's becoming the suffering servant, prophesied again by Isaiah. Isaiah chapter 50, verse 6. This comes in the third of four servant songs in the middle of Isaiah, talking about the future servant to come.

I gave my back to those who strike and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard. I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting. Suffering servant.

[ 39 : 15 ] Of course, the suffering servant is most prophesied in Isaiah chapter 53. So many allusions to Isaiah 53 as we walk through this passion narrative.

I want us to consider the participles that are used of Christ in this passage. Who knows what a participle is? Anybody learning that in grammar? The verb used as an adjective. In verse 12, Jesus is arrested.

Verse 12 and 24, Jesus is bound. Verse 13, he's led. In verse 19, he's questioned. In verse 21, he's struck. The judge of all mankind arrested by men.

The creator of the universe is bound by those he created. The king of kings and the lord of lords is led by his subjects.

We see that the fount of knowledge, of wisdom, of understanding, the one who declares the end from the beginning, he's questioned by the foolish and the ignorant. the lord of hosts before whom all nations are accounted as nothing.

[ 40 : 24 ] He is struck across the face by a sinner. Jesus is willingly emptying himself of that glory that he had before the foundation of the world with the father.

Why? Why would he do that? But because of his faithful, loyal love. His love for the father, right? His utmost desire is to bring glory to the father by obeying the father's every word, by submitting himself to the father's will, by carrying out the mission for which the father sent him.

Love for the father and love for the world. Love for us in this room. His desire is for his faithless disciples to be forgiven of their sin.

His desire is for enemies, for rebels to be redeemed by his blood, for the spiritually weak, the ungodly to be made righteous. His desire, he expressed in John 17, is for his disciples to be with him, to see the glory that he has.

[ 41 : 31 ] The only way, the only way for this to happen is for Jesus, according to the eternal plan of God, to go to the cross on which he would drink the full cup of God's wrath for sin so that the faithless, the enemies, the rebels, the weak, the ungodly, like Peter, like the Jewish officers and the Roman soldiers, like Annas and Caiaphas, like you and me, that we would not have to drink that cup.

Jesus is emptying himself in faithful love for us, for the Father. How much mistreatment, how much injustice, how much suffering will he take?

Friends, he will take it all. He will take it all. And this is mankind's only hope.

This is our only hope, that in spite of his closest followers' cowardly faithlessness, in spite of the ignorance and the injustice of the Jews and Romans, Jesus remained faithful.

He remained faithful to accomplish the work for which the Father sent him, the redemption of the world. He remained faithful to offer himself as the unblemished Lamb of God that would take away the sins of the world and only he could do it.

[ 42 : 56 ] Only he could do it. And this is why, you know, Jesus had told Peter in the upper room that where I am going, you cannot follow me now. Peter would follow him eventually, but where Christ was going now, Peter could not follow him.

Peter could not bear the sins of the world. Peter needed a faithful redeemer. He needed a sinless savior. Peter needed Christ first to accomplish his atoning work on the cross and accomplish that work he did.

For though man is faithless, Christ remains faithful to obey the Father and redeem the lost. Christians, this is our great hope.

This is a comfort and an anchor for our souls that our salvation rests not upon us, not upon our zeal, not upon our devotion, but upon Christ who is faithful to the end.

Jeremy Pierre in his booklet, How Can I Be Sure I Am Saved? He writes this, What saves you?

[ 44 : 08 ] Your obedience to God? Your love for believers? Your rejection of the world? None of these things. Rather, you are saved by Jesus, the Son of God, who is the fulfillment of God's commitment to act on behalf of sinners.

It's why God speaks. Your only response is to trust what He says. For those who trust in Christ, let us rejoice. We can rejoice that our salvation rests upon Him and His faithfulness and not upon our own.

And now, friends, because of His faithfulness, because He's done the work, He's finished the work, He has sent His Spirit We're capable, we're able, and we're called to live lives of faithfulness for Him.

Empowered by the Spirit, our Helper. We saw those promises all throughout the Upper Room Discourse that the Helper, the Spirit of Truth, He's going to come. He's going to enable you.

He's going to enable you to testify to the truth. He's going to guide you into the truth. Jesus implies here in John 18 as He stands trial, His work of testifying and is done.

[ 45 : 22 ] He's done the work. He's testified. He's accomplished the mission. It remains for His disciples to do that work, right? He was praying for in John 17. So for the sake of His glory, for the sake of the lost, then church, let us faithfully and boldly bear witness to the gospel.

Let's follow in His example, the example of our Savior, our Redeemer. He's given us His mission. He's given us His ministry. And He bore the ultimate cost so we can bear a cost as we witness, as we testify to the truth, as we share the gospel to our coworkers and our family and our friends, as we endure hostility even and injustice even for the sake of the gospel.

And I think we're going to endure that increasingly as our culture continues going the way it's going. But God is on His throne. He's going to advance His gospel forward. The gates of hell, they're not going to prevail.

They haven't. When the church began, there was intense persecution and it just caused the gospel to spread. That's a beautiful thing in the book of Acts, right? Persecution happens, the believers are scattered, and what goes scattered with the believers?

The gospel of Jesus Christ. That's God's power. He's the judge. He's faithful. He's not going to let His church be conquered. I will build my church, Jesus said.

[ 46 : 43 ] I will build my church. And what an awesome privilege that we get to bear witness to these things. The gospel of Jesus Christ. In addition to, you know, to preaching the gospel to the unsaved, we want to be like the apostle John in this story.

Right? How beautiful. John is following Christ and then he remembers. Like, oh yeah, Peter's on the out. Let me go grab Peter. I want Peter to follow Christ too. I'm going to bring him along with me. We want to be the apostle John in this story.

That's what disciples of Jesus do. Faithful disciples of Jesus, they lead others to follow Jesus. They make and cultivate more disciples. We've been talking, I feel like we've been talking about this a decent amount because it's so vital to our mission.

It is the mission. It's making disciples. And just, I think I mentioned this a while back, but I want to mention this again because sometimes we think of discipleship as like a, it has to be formal. Like, you and I are going to agree to meet every single week at this time and we're going to read this book and ask all these, you know, prescribed questions.

It can look like that. Like, that's good. If you have that with somebody, awesome. Like, God uses that. I think farmer often, it doesn't look anything like that. It's just saying like, hey, brother, hey, sister, come along with me.

[ 48 : 01 ] Join us. We're going on a hike. Come over for dinner. Help me do some sort of project around the house and let's intentionally talk about Jesus. Let's ask one another questions. Let's savor Christ together and treasure him together.

It doesn't have to look like something formal, but the thing is, we're all called to do it. I was just at an ordination for Rocco Gamone. He's taken over as pastor at Huntington Street, which is being replanted as On the Rock Community Church.

All that to say, one of the pastors was getting up to charge Rocky, Rocco, he goes by either, he's the one being ordained for the ministry, but this pastor made sure to stop and tell the church, like, hey, he's ordained to be the pastor.

You are all ordained for ministry. We are all here ordained for ministry. We're called to do the work, right, to do the work of the ministry. All of us here, every believer in this room is ordained for ministry in the gospel of Christ, in the kingdom of God, and so we're all called to disciple one another, one another.

Let's bring one another along. We do that in community groups. We do that here on Sunday mornings. Like, after church, this is an opportunity before and after the service to disciple one another. We do that throughout the week through hospitality and just in some of the other ways prescribed.

[ 49 : 22 ] I just, I want to, like, bring down this term discipleship that I think we can think is scary. Like, I want to, like, bring that off the top shelf. It's on the bottom shelf. It's not a hard, formal thing to do, but we're all called to do it, and that's how the Lord builds his church through evangelism, which is the start of discipleship, and as we help one another follow Jesus more and more.

But we do it because of Christ who is faithful, right? I don't want us to lose that. Christ is the faithful one. That's why any of this, that's why we're all here.

That's why any, that's why the church exists. So, you know, the next time somebody makes a promise to you that they don't keep, since none of you are going to do that anymore after today, take that opportunity to adore Christ, to say to that person, whether it's a spouse, a friend, a coworker, anybody, like, look, I know that you are unable to remain faithful to your word, but there is one, there is one who remains ever faithful.

Are we here just singing about it before? Jesus, the same yesterday, today, forever. Jesus Christ, the righteous, the imperfect faithfulness. He obeyed the Father.

He redeemed the lost. All glory to his name. Please pray with me, friends. Heavenly Father, you are endlessly faithful.

[ 50 : 52 ] Endlessly faithful. We adore you. That's our first response. It has to be. We adore you. We worship you for your faithfulness to carry out the plan that you had ordained.

When we think about what happened in the Garden of Eden, it's a mystery why you tarried with man. why didn't you just start over?

And yet we see in the story of redemption throughout all of Scripture, we see your steadfast, faithful love to your people, your faithfulness to your people.

You would not give them up. And it doesn't make sense to us, but we rejoice that today, thousands of years later, we're objects of that love, objects of that grace and that mercy.

And it's because of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, the servant, the suffering servant of God, who is also the conquering king, who right now is on high, reigning in authority, advancing his church.

[ 51 : 57 ] we worship you, Jesus, this morning. We thank you for your faithfulness to us and we know that you have been faithful and so you will continue to be faithful to see us to the end.

He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion on the day of Christ Jesus and so we rejoice. God, we have nothing except for you, which is everything.

So let us cling to you and let us carry on your mission and ministry in this world. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.