

John 19:31-42

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Date: 07 July 2024

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[0:00] For those of you who don't know me, as has been said a couple times, my name is Kyle Spivey. I've been coming to the church for a while, since the beginning. And I get the privilege this morning to share what God has laid on my heart through this text.

And I'm going to share a quote that Dan Couture told me that he was quoting somebody else. So it's not his, but I'm going to give him the credit.

I love the New Testament because it reminds me so much of the Old Testament. And I think that is going to point us, kind of guide us as we walk through some of this text. So I pray that the words that come out of my mouth this morning will be the words that you need to hear.

The words that God's laid on my heart are going to be the ones that I'm going to speak. And I pray that that's going to land on your heart. So let's pray this morning before we dive into the text. God, we thank you that you are a good and loving God.

God, we thank you that you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and mercy and faithfulness. God, we thank you that as we've walked through the book of John over the past months, years, God, that we've seen more of who you are.

[1:17] And God, I pray that this morning we will continue to see that. More of the God who sent his son, Jesus Christ. That as we continue on from the text that Rob spoke on last week, where Jesus died.

God, that this text would be a text that sits well with us. It sits in our hearts. It's not just something we read and know, but something that we read and that we know at the depths of our soul.

God, that it's the words written by the Apostle John for us here this morning. God, be with my words. Be with the hearts of those who are here.

And church, just for a minute, I want you to sit in your seat right now. And come before the Lord, the God of the universe. And prepare your heart to receive the words this morning.

Amen. Thank you, Lord, for this morning.

[2:37] May you be glorified. Amen. So this morning, John 19, 31 through 42. Kenny, thanks for reading that. I'm not going to lie. When the elders asked if I wanted to preach at all during the end of this sermon series, I said, I thought I've told you guys this scares the living daylights out of me.

I don't want to do this. No, it's a joy to do this. I had the opportunity, the availability for this week, so I figured, why not? And then I read the text.

And I said, what did I get myself into? This is a text that has absolutely zero dialogue. This is a text that in the first time throughout the book of John, as we've looked at a text, as it's been broken up, you know, however we've broken it up, this is the first time that there's actually zero words spoken. There's quotations, but there's zero words that are actually spoken by anybody. There's not like this nugget that we can cling to and say, Jesus said this, let's take this and let's apply it to our lives. But the beauty of this text is that it's full of truth.

We just hit the climax of the story. Rob preached last week, it is finished. He bowed his head and gave up his spirit. So what do we do? Right?

[3:49] We've talked, we sing. There's no songs that end with Jesus died on the cross. There's no songs. I tried. I led worship last week. It's not possible to find a song that says, Jesus died on the cross at the end.

It always ends with three days later, he's alive. So what do we do when we read this text? When you're reading through the book of John, you get to John 19, verse 30.

It is finished. He bowed his head and gave up his spirit. And for those of you who are here that don't know, Jesus isn't dead. So we blitz through his burial to get to his resurrection.

We go from this wonderful steak dinner and we blitz to Tony D's ice cream and we don't talk about the drive in between. And that's what we're here for. The drive in between the climax of scripture and then the rest of the climax of scripture, right?

Jesus died. His death was necessary for us to be here this morning to talk about these things. His resurrection was necessary. Without his death, there is no resurrection.

[4:52] Without his death, there is no salvation. So why does John write these words? Does this thing work? It never works.

We tried it this morning, but it didn't. All right, we're going to go with it. So we're going to talk about this. But before we do that, let's remember John's purpose. What is John's purpose?

The first sermon that we had of this series was about John 20, verse 31 through 32. We started the series of the book of John at the end. And it says, Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book.

But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. And then in this section that Kenny read, the section that we're talking about, John 19, 35, it says, He who saw it has borne witness, his testimony and truth, and he knows that he's telling the truth.

That you may also believe. So we're going to break the text into two sections. 1931 through 37, and then 1938 through 42.

[6:00] And throughout this, we've seen that Jesus is pitted against the Pharisees. The righteousness of Jesus against the unrighteousness of the Pharisees. And we're going to continue to see that kind of theme throughout. But we're going to see two big things.

The title of the sermon was Jesus the Passover Lamb, or Jesus the Lamb, and Jesus the King. These aren't two new things. These are things that have been written throughout the book of John. I'm not trying to reinvent the wheel this morning. Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus is the Passover Lamb. These are things that John has written. Then we'll answer that so what question. So let's set the stage again.

Jesus just died. That's what we just heard about last week. But going back a couple chapters a couple days before, Jesus enters Jerusalem. They have the Passover Thursday night, which is technically like the Friday of the Passover.

They had the Passover. They go to the Garden of Gethsemane. They pray. Jesus was betrayed by Judas. He was arrested. Peter tries to cut off an ear. Peter denies Jesus. Jesus is beaten, mocked, crucified, like Rob said.

[7:04] All the Gospels talk about that. That Jesus was crucified. It is finished. Only John records these words from 31 to 37. The other Gospels say Jesus died.

Joseph took the body and buried it. John includes a lot more detail. If we go back to the purpose of this book, John writes these words, so that you may believe.

So here this morning, the words that we're talking about, the words that are spoken by the book of John, are so that you may believe and have life in his name. John's not mincing words. He's not verbose.

He doesn't include these details for no reason. There's a purpose, and that's what we're going to see. It works now. Cool. So, since it was a day of preparation so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, that they might be taken away.

So the soldiers came, broke the legs of the first, and the others who had been crucified with him. I thought Jesus was dead, right? It says, the last verse, it is finished, he died, he gave up his spirit.

[8:10] So why do they want to go break his legs? It's because the Pharisees have absolutely no care in the world. Jesus is just crucified. He's on the cross, right?

You're on the cross. Your hands are pierced to the wood. Your weight is bearing down on your shoulders. Your shoulders eventually dislocate. You're standing on your legs. The crucifixion process is an excruciating process that takes multiple days.

So why would the Jews try to expedite this process? It's a good question. I'm glad you asked. If O.T. Phil was here, as we call him in our community group, he would say, why don't you go back to Deuteronomy?

Sorry, not Deuteronomy. Exodus 12, Numbers 9. And as Mike talked about, Deuteronomy 21.

So the Jews want Jesus down so that the cursed man is not on the tree overnight. So Mike talked about, cursed is the man who hangs on the tree. So that was the focus.

[9:14] The Jews wanted to show that Jesus was cursed by putting him on a tree. But the rest of that verse actually says, And you better take that body down because if you leave him up there, your land is cursed. So the Jews crucify Jesus and then want to expedite his death.

So they say, hey, can you go break his legs? Because if you break their legs, they can't push up. They asphyxiate themselves pretty quick. I'm not a nurse. Matt's a nurse. He can describe that a little bit better. Talk to him after service.

But so the Jews go crucify Jesus. Then they want to go break his legs so that he will actually be physically dead. But as we know before, Jesus gave up his spirit. He's finished. It's gone.

So what do they do? The soldiers come to break the legs of the first, the second. But when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead. They did not break his legs. One of the soldiers pierced his eye with the spear.

And at once there came out blood and water. This without a doubt shows that Jesus is dead. It's not that the Roman soldiers thought that Jesus was maybe alive. They know death.

[10:19] They invented crucifixion. They understand when a body is dead. The Roman soldier was probably just upset that he didn't need to break the leg. So he throws his spear up. And out of it instantly comes blood and water.

In church, I think that this is written not to show that the Romans actually killed Jesus. But for us here today to have without a shadow of a doubt that Jesus was dead. It would be easy for me to think, oh, Jesus died on the cross at 3.

They took him down at like 5 or 6 in the afternoon. He probably just passed out. Right? That makes sense. You can go without breath for a while. I don't know what that is, Matt. But if a soldier goes and jabs a spear into his side, that is without a shadow of a doubt, to me, shows that Jesus is truly dead.

Without a shadow, we know here in 2024 that Jesus is dead. But John wrote that, I think for that reason.

That's my opinion. We'll talk to him later. But it's not about what John saw, but what it shows. And that's where we get into the meat of the text. If you look at your cheater notes at the bottom of your text, when it gets to this next section, Exodus 12 and Numbers 9.

[11:47] When the Passover feast is instituted, God says, sacrifice the lamb, but don't break its bones. Why? I don't know. That's what he said. So that's what they do.

And all around Jerusalem right now, these lambs are being sacrificed to the law. Not one of their bones are broken. John is showing that in the Jewish desire to go completely destroy the body of Jesus, to get him off the cross, to throw him off the cross into the burn pile, Jesus fulfills scripture. The Jews send the Roman soldiers to go destroy his body. They already crucified him. But in that, Jesus being shown as a Passover lamb is seen.

And that's what John writes. Not one of his bones will be broken. Numbers says the Passover bones of the lamb should not be broken. The Jews know this. And John shows that by the death of Jesus, he's fulfilling the law.

The Roman soldiers had no idea what they were doing. That what they're doing by their actions, the law was being fulfilled. That Jesus is the Passover lamb. This is Jesus, the Messiah that the Old Testament predicted.

[13:04] So that's just breaking of the bones. But what's cool is, with this text, there's fulfillment of so much of the Old Testament.

Will Parker this week quoted Psalm 22. The beginning of the Psalm says, That's not in this text, but that's in some of the other Gospels.

That Jesus starts when he's on the cross. He says, But it also says later on in the Psalm, There's a lot of things that we've just read in the past two weeks that are fulfilled right in that Psalm.

David's writing these things out of anguish. He's crying out to God. But it sure sounds to me like the bulls of Bashan with their mouths screaming wide. It sure sounds like the Pharisees proclaiming, Crucify him.

I'm poured out like water. Legitimately, that's what it says. Out of his body came blood and water. His bones are out of joint. He's on the cross. His shoulders are most likely dislocated.

[14:31] But they've pierced my hands and feet. I can count all of my bones. Not one bone of his body was broken. Jesus is fulfilling everything of the Old Testament right here in the New.

Jesus, or David writes those things in Psalm 22, and Jesus is experiencing it. And then your footnotes for verse 37. And again, another scripture says, They will look on him who they have pierced.

That's Zechariah 12.10. I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that when they look on him who they have pierced, they shall mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him as one weeps for a firstborn.

The first Passover was the protection of what? It was for the salvation or the protection of the firstborn. The Egyptians didn't have the blood of the lamb wiped over their doorposts with the hyssop branch.

The same hyssop branch that Jesus was fed a sour wine with. We're seeing the imagery continue to be portrayed throughout. The first Passover was the protection of the firstborn.

[15:45] In this Passover, God's firstborn, the lamb of God, is being pierced for our transgressions. They're looking on him who they have pierced. This is a Roman soldier who had no idea what he was doing.

He's just a violent, brutal man with a six-foot-long spear with like an iron tip on the end of it and just goes and jabs it into Jesus' side, and out of it comes blood and water.

The blood that needed to be spilled for our sins. The water that cleanses us. The firstborn of God, the firstborn of creation, is being sacrificed in this Passover for the safety of his people, for the eternal security of God's people.

And then if you go down a couple verses in Zechariah 12.10 is towards the end of the chapter. The firstborn of the chapter 13.1 says, On that day, a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and unrighteousness.

The fountain was poured from Jesus for us here today. Centuries after the Passover was instituted by God for the salvation of an entire nation of Israel that are under the captivity of Egypt.

[17:02] Centuries after the Psalms were written, as we looked, you know, when we did the summer and the Psalms, if we've looked at Psalms over the years, we see how much they point forward to Christ. So centuries after the Passover was set up, centuries after David wrote the Psalms, centuries after the prophets like Zechariah prophesied, Jesus is fulfilling it all.

When it says, cursed is the man who hangs on the tree. When it says, you know, they've pierced my hands and feet. Those are all things that occurred before the Romans were the Romans. Those are all things that occurred before crucifixion ever existed.

God is working in his spirit through the writers of the Old Testament to look forward to Christ so that we here today can read this text in six or seven verses and say, Old Testament fulfilled, Old Testament fulfilled, Old Testament fulfilled, law fulfilled, law fulfilled.

Jesus is the Lamb of God. And this isn't a new thing. John the Baptist, the other John in the story. Verse 129, the book for John 129.

John the Baptist says, The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and he said, Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. John the Baptist knew who Jesus was.

[18:15] He knew what the prophets had prophesied. He knew that through a virgin birth was going to come the Messiah. He knew these things, and he said, Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

He proclaims that at the beginning. The Apostle John writes that at the beginning of the book of John so that we have that picture throughout the story. So when we get to this, we see that during the Passover feast, when every other sacrifice is happening, when all the other sacrifices are occurring, no bones are being broken of any of those sacrifices of any of those lambs. Jesus dies on the cross, pierced. His blood is shed. His bones are not broken. The fulfillment of the Old Testament is completed in who Jesus is.

So Mike asked a couple weeks ago, when we were going through the trial of Jesus, Who is your king? It might have been the sermon title. He's talking about the Pharisees when they say, We have no king but Caesar.

Which is like a shocker, because there are these Jewish people who have to have Jewish law, and you would expect that their king would say, We have no king but God. But they don't. They say, We have no king but Caesar.

[19:26] So Mike asked, Who is your king? And so what I want to tell you this morning is, I'm not asking a question. I'm telling you, Jesus is the king. So let's read this text again.

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was the disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission. So he came, took away his body.

Nicodemus also, who had earlier come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about 75 pounds in weight. So they took the body of Jesus, bound it with linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.

Now in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden. In the garden, a new tomb, in which no one had yet been laid. So because the Jewish day of preparation, since the tomb was closed at hand, they laid Jesus there.

So the last section, for a lot of the whole crucifixion story, we see the people in the narrative, the people in the story, are the Jews, the Pharisees, the Jewish leaders, as we continue to say, right?

[20:36] It's not all of the Jewish population. It's the Pharisees leading the charge. We see Pilate, we see Roman soldiers, and we see John. The testimony that we talk about in verse 35 is John's testimony.

The next section introduces a new person and an old friend. So before we get into it, let's talk about them. That's what I picture them looking like. I'm kidding, there's no way that's what they look like, but PowerPoint has limited images.

So Joseph of Arimathea, he's the only member, he's the only person, or he's only, he's written, sorry I distracted myself.

Joseph is written in every single one of the Gospels. He's a popular guy during the crucifixion story. So if we look at it, what do we gather from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John?

We see that Joseph is Jewish. He's a respected member of the Council of the Sanhedrin. He did not consent to their actions. He's good, he's righteous, he's wealthy, and he's a secret disciple.

[21:41] Why was he a secret disciple? Because of the fear of the Jews, for the fear of most likely his respected member position. We have Nicodemus. We don't have as much from him. He's only talked about in John.

There's not much in history about him, but we know he's a Pharisee. In chapter 3, we see him come under the cover of night, right? In one of the most popular verses in all of Scripture, John 3.16, that's Jesus and Nicodemus having their conversation.

He tried to defend Jesus in chapter 7 when the Pharisees were like, hey, we're going to go put this guy on trial. We're going to go murder this guy. Nicodemus says, whoa, why don't we give him a fair trial? They're like, nothing good comes out of Galilee.

And that's all, that's the entire conversation. And we know that he's wealthy. So, now that we have all that facts, those are the two men. That's who we're talking about.

One of the things that we try to do when you preach a sermon is you have the text, then you have application. There's a lot of other things that go into this. And I think the beauty of this text is that the application is right here.

[22:45] The Pharisees are not even around, right? They had left to go prepare their Passover feast, to go slaughter their lamb, not break his bones. But Jesus, in controlling the narrative of his story, is

continuing to show that he is the king, that he is the Passover lamb.

That Jesus, when he's dead, he's still controlling the narrative. His bones aren't broken. Why? Because the spirit led, you know, God was working in the Roman soldiers to not break his bones and to stab him.

So, what do these two men see? Joseph and Nicodemus. We see some really cool things. Jesus is dead. What do the disciples do?

Disciples aren't around. They're gone. We know John's there. Rob talked about it last week. In 19, it says, woman, behold your son, then behold your mother. So, John is there. We know he's there. He's got the eyewitness.

The other gospels don't say anything about the other disciples, really. And it only says that the women saw where Jesus was laid. So, you have these people that were around Jesus, following him day in and day out for three years, listening to his teaching, running away.

[23:47] And then you have two other people who are respected members of the council who are wealthy Jewish people saying, I'm it.

I'm going in. And if we cheat and read ahead, I'm all about cheating and reading, right? As long as it's reading. Mike had encouraged all of us to read, right?

Not just the verses that are coming up, but have an understanding of the rest of the story. And in 20, verse 9, it says, as of yet, they did not understand. He's talking about the disciples. They did not understand the scripture that he must rise from the dead.

Disciples didn't have an understanding that Jesus was rising. And these are men that followed Jesus for three years, hearing him teach day in and day out. In Matthew 27, we even see the Pharisees know that Jesus said he's going to rise from the dead.

Right? The Pharisees in chapter 27 say, why don't we put some soldiers in front of that, you know, that stone that was just rolled in front so that the disciples don't come take his body because Jesus said he was going to rise.

[24:53] The disciples have no idea what's going on. So what do the two men do? You have a secret disciple of Jesus and a man who had previously gone under the cover of night. They say, we can't let this happen.

We can't let this stay. Jesus is the Lamb of God who's come to take away the sins of the world. Joseph throws off everything of that.

He's a respected Jewish member. He does not consent to their actions. He's good. He's righteous. He's wealthy. He is no longer a secret disciple. In John 18, the Pharisees won't even go into the courtyard of Pilate because they don't want to be defiled.

Now we have Joseph, a secret disciple of Jesus for fear of the Jews, going and asking Pilate. I can only imagine Pilate's like in his courtyard doing whatever Pilate's doing, not worrying about what he just did, what he just commanded to happen.

In some of the other texts, Pilate was surprised because it was so fast, right? Some of the other texts say Joseph went to Pilate to get the, asked for Jesus's body, and Pilate's like, whoa, he's dead?

[26:08] I'm a Roman. I understand that this can take like three days. Jesus is already dead. It's confirmed. So he gives him the body. Maybe Joseph had to buy the body from Pilate.

Joseph isn't worried about being defiled. He goes into the courtyard to get the Messiah, to get the permission to go take the body that the Jewish people crucified, to say curse is the man, the people that his co-workers are like, that man's cursed, we're going to, that man's on the cross.

He's cursed, don't touch him. And Joseph says, enough is enough. I'm going, I'm getting him because that man is more than just a man. He is the son of God who takes away this into the world. And what's interesting, when you read the Old Testament, you see that for a lot of times, if you touch a dead body, you're defiled. You can't do things. You can't practice a religious feast. You can't practice these things.

But what's really awesome and continues to show God's sovereignty is if you look at Numbers 9, the whole reason that part's there is because some of the Israelites go to Moses and say, the Passover is coming up.

[27:18] What if I have to handle a dead body? So Moses is like, that's a great question, guys. Let me take that to God. And God in that moment

says, it's okay. If you handle that dead body, you can still partake in the Passover.

Okay. I'm reading this as I'm preparing. I'm like, oh my goodness, God, thousands of years before, prepared the way for Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus to handle a dead body and still partake in the Passover because that is beautiful.

That is exactly what God desired. And no matter what, these men saw the impact and saw who Jesus was.

They put aside their lives, their status. They came out of hiding and publicly served Jesus. Like I said, Joseph entered the quarters, the quarters that the Pharisees wouldn't even go near. He proclaimed his allegiance to Christ, publicly caring for the man that the Jewish leaders just put to death as a cursed man. The Gospels say that Joseph objected to his course.

[28:33] Here he defends his stance and rejects himself for the sake of Christ. And Nicodemus doesn't come under the cover of night. He comes, it's like six o'clock, right? So this is Friday. When it says it's the Sabbath or like it's the day of preparation for the Sabbath and the Sabbath was a high day.

There's nothing like super special about this Sabbath. It's that it's a special Passover feast. So they view it as a higher Sabbath than normal. So they have to get their preparation done, right?

The Sabbath is a commandment. Behold, like take the Sabbath seriously. That is something that God commanded to occur. So Joseph and Nicodemus are like, let's take this guy down. Let's bury him like a king.

But we got to do it now. We can't wait for the cover of night when everybody's asleep or everybody's with their families. We're doing it now. In the presence of everybody, it's daylight. It's like five or six o'clock, seven o'clock in the afternoon. Nicodemus doesn't come under the cover of night. He brings burial spices, myrrh. And you can go in and like try to like analyze all these things, right?

[29:37] Jesus was wrapped in linen cloths with myrrh. And you go back to his birth. He was given myrrh. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes, laid in a manger, right? We have a three-month-old. I wrap him whatever the heck I want to wrap him in.

He just lays there. If I wanted to put myrrh on him and wrap him, he'd probably just lay on the ground. He's as good as dead. He's not, thankfully. Praise the Lord. But that was bad.

Nicodemus goes and does the same thing. He wraps Jesus in linen. They go and buy linen cloth. They go and buy myrrh. These are burial spices. That's 75 to 100 pounds. That's a lot of spices. That's more than Costco can have. Nicodemus doesn't come under the cover of night.

He wraps Jesus. And then they put Jesus in a tomb nearby, in a garden. The garden. The garden is the place where sin entered the world, and the garden is the place here that we'll see next week that sin is destroyed.

[30:45] It's beautiful. Jesus is the Lamb of God. Jesus is the King. Joseph and Nicodemus sacrifice themselves for the sake of Jesus, their Savior, the King. They throw off themselves.

They throw off their wealth. Joseph, like, they don't have easy means to carve a hole in stone. That was done by hand.

That is done for the wealthy. That is most likely Joseph's family tomb, where he expected his entire family to be buried. In a garden. Wherever the garden was, it was nearby because the Sabbath is coming.

You got to get going on what you got to do for the Sabbath. So, Joseph throws off himself, throws off something intended for his entire family, most likely purchased at a high cost.

Who is their King? Mike asked that question a couple weeks ago. Jesus is their King. So, one commentator says, Joseph of Arimathea was a disciple of Christ in secret.

[31:48] Disciples should openly own themselves. Yet some who are lesser in trials have been fearful and greater have been courageous. When God has work to do, he can find out such as are proper to do it.

The embalming was done by Nicodemus, a secret friend of Christ, though not a constant follower. The grace which was at first like a bruised reed may afterward resemble a strong cedar. Hereby,

these two rich men showed the value they had for Christ's person and doctrine, and that it was not lessened by the reproach of the cross.

We must do our duty as the present day and opportunity are, and leave it to God to fulfill his promise in his own way at his own time. The grave of Jesus was appointed with the wicked, as was the case of those who suffered as criminals.

But he was with a rich in his death, as prophesied, and that's Isaiah 53. These two circumstances, it was very unlikely, should ever be united in the same person. The commentator, Matthew Henry, in his concise commentary, which is easy to digest, has a couple big things here.

But at the end of the day, what it says is, disciples should openly own themselves. And then we must do our duty, as the present day and opportunity are, to leave it to God to fulfill his promise in his own way, in his own time.

[33:05] And he throws in another fulfillment of Scripture, which, again, this text is just constantly full of Scripture being fulfilled in Christ. Again, after Christ is gone, the Spirit is controlling the narrative.

So what about us? Go back to John, or going forward, going back to John 20, the purpose of every word in the book of John, so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

So what do we do? We've heard this. We've been sitting in the book of John for a long time. What I'm saying isn't new. So do you believe?

Are you convinced that Jesus is the Messiah, and that he is who he says he is? And like Rob said last week, these events are true. They actually happened.

Jesus actually died. Jesus was actually buried by these two men. And as we see next week, Jesus was actually resurrected. That he's not dead. He's sitting at the right hand of God right now.

[34:17] So what do you do? What's your response? Do you believe? Are you a secret disciple? We see how the Jews treated Jesus. We see how Joseph and Nicodemus did.

They were obedient to the man they'd been secretly following. They were no longer secret disciples, but they are public. It's written about them thousands of years later that we here this morning can see that Joseph was a secret disciple, but now everybody who reads the Gospel of John knows exactly who Joseph of Arimathea is.

So for the non-Christian here, somebody who doesn't believe in Jesus, what's God speaking to you right now? I've been up talking about a man that existed 2,000 years ago, a man who lived, who died, who John wrote the entire book for the purpose of you hearing the words and for you believing.

I pray this morning that you will see that Jesus is the Savior, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. I pray that you will see your sin and that put Jesus on the cross. Without sin, there's no need for a cross, but there is sin.

There is my sin. There is your sin. I don't know some of you, but I know that you sin. I pray that you see that and see that as John the Baptist says, here comes the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world and that he offers real life.

[35:43] They may have life in his name. You may be asking at times, where is God when suffering occurs? I don't know the answer to that specific question for you or what you're looking for in that question, but I can tell you that God is here.

God is up on the cross or was up on the cross. He was brought down from the cross. He was put in the grave and praise the Lord as we're going to see next week. I haven't heard Mike's sermon, but he's going to talk about the resurrection, that Christ is not dead.

He's not in the tomb. He is alive. God loves you and that's why he did what he did. And for the Christian in the room, I'd say for the vast majority of us here, that's where we fall, the Christian in the room.

What is God calling you to? What is God convicting you of? Are you a secret disciple like Joseph? Are you following him under the cover of night? Of the cover of your morning devotion, but then you leave your devotion, you go to work and you kind of run away.

You leave your devotion, your kids wake up and you forget everything that just occurred. You're someone that grew up in the church who knows all the answers, but you don't take your Savior or your sin seriously.

[37:00] You see the text in the book of John and you see everything that Jesus did, that the service of our Savior is worth it. I was talking to a guy at community group and he had the boldness during a conversation in the past to be sharing coffee with somebody and having a meal with somebody and saying, hey, you know everything that's being talked about.

You know exactly what's going on. You know scripture. You know who God is. You know exactly the belief that you need to have, but your life does not reflect that. I think you're living in sin. That's bold to make that call. That's why we do community groups. That's why we have discipleship. If you're not in a community group, get in a community group. If you don't know what that is, come talk to me or one of the elders.

Are you a new Christian that became a Christian within the past couple years and you don't have that fire that you had three years ago, two weeks ago, a month ago? The fire that was in your soul is now just a smoldering pile of ashes.

Remember that your Savior died for you. And as David sings, I'm going through 1 Chronicles right now. I'm very slowly working through the Bible in one or five years, whatever it ends up being.

[38:21] 1 Chronicles 16, I read this weekend. Sing to the Lord all the earth. Tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nation, his marvelous works among the peoples. For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised.

That's what we can do. Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised. The commentator talks about the disciples openly owning themselves and that we must do our duty as the present day to leave it to God.

That's a call to obedience. So what do you use the call to obedience in? Obedience to listen to the call of Christ, knowing that it's going to be difficult. As Jess said a couple weeks ago, the call of Moses was to lead his people, even though he wasn't going to make it to the promised land.

And Moses said, I'm not going to make it to the promised land, but I'm going to lead. I'm going to do what God calls me to do because he calls me to obedience. So do we follow in obedience even when the outcome doesn't seem very bright for us here on earth?

But we know that the outcome is life eternal in his name. So what is God calling you to obedience in?

[39:37] Is it obedience in evangelism? To share the gospel with the person who's cutting your head, Bo? Cutting your hair? Not your head, sorry. Bo shared this week that he had the, he felt the conviction to share the gospel with the person who was cutting his hair.

And he did. But what happened? We don't know. That's up to God. Our call is to evangelize. Our call is to share the gospel. So the question, are you a secret disciple?

I pray that this text, that this sermon, that these words, that the words from John written thousands of years ago for the purpose of you believing in who Jesus is, for the purpose of you being called to him, that you may have life in his name.

That Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. And that there is an offer of salvation, an offer of life. I pray that if you don't know who Jesus is, that you take the opportunity today to look at yourself, look at your soul, read this text, and see that Jesus is who he says he is. That John is showing us something real. And that something real is just as meaningful 2,000 years ago as is today in my own life. And the concept of being a secret disciple is tough.

[41:04] It's easy for me to wake up in the morning to read very slowly through the Bible, to go to work and be distracted because, well, my kids wake up screaming and fighting.

I just completely forget that the Lord is my Savior. That I can sing to the Lord to tell of his salvation from day to day, to declare his glory among the nations, and his marvelous works among all the peoples.

So, church, I pray that this morning that if you feel like you're that secret disciple, that you're in hiding, that you are not following the Savior. If there's a call to obedience in your own life, whether it's obedience in evangelism, obedience in discipleship, obedience in community, what we see is Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus doing something right there.

It wasn't that they sold everything and ran away to another country to do missions. They served their Savior right when they needed to, right with their abilities at that moment.

And that's what God calls you to do. So let's pray. God, we thank you for this morning, for the words that you've put on these pages. God, the words that you spoke through the Apostle John thousands of years ago, that we can sit here today and see that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, that Jesus is the suffering servant, that Jesus is the Messiah that the Old Testament required, that the Old Testament predicted, that the Pharisees completely shunned.

[42:35] God, I pray that you would continue to work mightily in our lives here this morning, that God, when we see our Savior, that we would not sit in hiding as a secret disciple, but that we would count the cost and see that service to our Savior is worth it, no matter what.

Because though we may not get something that we expect here and now, that we're promised life eternal, which is far better than anything we could ever ask for. So Lord, we thank you that Jesus came and died and was buried and rose from the grave, that we can sit here in 2024 for proclaiming your name, singing songs to you, listening to your word, read and proclaimed. In your name I pray. Amen.