

# Last Six Months Before the Passion

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[0:00] Good morning, everyone. Thanks. This is my indoor voice. Hey, how about you take out your Bibles and turn to the Gospel of John, specifically John chapter 7, John chapter 7.

Before I get into today's sermon, a couple of house cleaning items I need to do. So last week I spoke to you about the missions trip that will be going to the Philippines in October, just asking you for finances and all that.

There will be a letter going out on how we're going to take care of that. So Lord willing, this week you'll get a letter just kind of explaining a little bit more of the detail about that trip and what's going on and how to give according to that trip.

I know some of you have asked questions, so we want to make sure everything is neat and tidy for Jody who does our bookkeeping. So we are now looking at the last six months of the life of Christ. If you are new or visiting this Sunday, welcome. My name is BK. I have the pleasure of serving as one of the pastors here. And for the last several months, we've been looking at the life of Jesus Christ.

[1:19] As we're going through each of the four Gospels, kind of all at one time, harmonizing the story so you're able to see the flow and the significance to many of the events that sometimes we take for granted.

When we read the Bible, we just kind of take for granted. There's some of the observations that we make, kind of, we just kind of roll over. But there's a significance to some of those events and how it affects the rest of the events going forward.

This last six months of the life of Christ, I find incredibly interesting. So just to let you know, yesterday when I kind of finished, or Friday kind of finished writing up the sermon, I was about 3,500 words.

Usually I try to do a sermon in 3,000 words. So I came in this morning to fix it. I'm up to 4,000 words. All right? So there's going to be a couple of things I'm going to try to speed up on. But I want you to carry some of the most significant events that happened in the last six months before the Passion Week of Jesus Christ. And this is what I want you to take away more than anything else from this sermon.

[2:30] That Jesus Christ was never a victim of circumstance, nor is he a victim of history. Do you understand that? It's not like he was doing his thing and all of a sudden the Jews threw him off balance and he started to have to act in different ways at different times and act differently.

We're going to see so very clearly that Jesus, for lack of a better word, or maybe this is the best word, he was the master of history. Just, and I want you to see that he does these things not in his deity form, but in his humanity.

Just in his brilliance, his knowledge and understanding of people. He's able to move certain people around, almost like it was this chessboard. And he knew when to speak at certain times to gather a response from other people that would lead to the cross.

And as you all know, the cross was no accident. The cross was planned from eternity past, before this earth had even been created. God knew that we would be redeemed and that action plan began.

If you remember last week, we talked about in this last kind of, you know, Jesus' first year and a half with his ministry in Galilee. It was a preaching ministry. It was a preaching to the crowds.

[3:50] But the last year of his life, it was a time of private preparation. A time of preparing his disciples, the apostles, for their coming duties as they were going forth.

But last week we learned something, or the apostles learned something new about Jesus. Matthew 17, 22 tells them. And they were gathering in Galilee, and Jesus said to them, The Son of Man is

about to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him.

Up until this time, Jesus had never spoken openly about his death. They did not know that he was going to die. So you have all these disciples, and it wasn't just the 12 apostles, but many people traveling with him.

And all of a sudden, he drops this bombshell. Oh, yeah, I'm going to die. And the text continues to say, but this is ironically the part that they always seem to forget.

Every time that Jesus announces that he's going to die, he also says, and I will be raised on the third day. I'm going to die, but I'm going to be raised on the third day.

[ 5 : 06 ] I'm going to die, I'm going to be raised on the third day. Apparently, all the apostles were deaf in the right ear. Because they all heard, he's going to die, but they seemed to not hear that he was going to rise again.

So what does Matthew say? And it says, they were greatly distressed. Another word is sorrowful. They were grieved. This man who they deeply loved, they followed, they gave up everything to be with, has just announced, hey, the direction we're going with all this, I'm going to die.

So this is the mood, so to speak, that we find ourselves in, in this last six months of the life of Jesus. And like I said, what I want you to really understand, and I want you to see, what I'm hoping to show you, is the significance of the circumstances that occur in these last six months, so you can see how Jesus is directing history.

He literally is moving and bending history to his will. And sometimes, just with simple words, simple interactions, he's able to bring about the result that would, in the end, lead us to salvation.

Amen? It would lead us to the cross. So like I said, the timeline that we're in, we're in the last six months. And what I've done is I've divided these last six months into three significant events.

[ 6 : 43 ] And we're going to cover what happens at these events, and I'm going to briefly cover some of the teaching, but more or less kind of the changes in Jesus' teaching. But more importantly, I'm going to talk to you about why, in each of these events, they are so significant.

And the mood is it's a distressful mood. It's a sorrowful mood. Because the text tells us that Jesus keeps teaching that he's going to die and raise on the third day, over and over and over.

That is what he's teaching his disciples. So remember, they actually believed they would rule with Jesus in an earthly kingdom.

That was their hope. That was what the Messiah was supposed to do. And if they figured, right, kind of that earthly, hey, if I stick with this guy, things are going to look pretty good for me and my family, right?

But anyway, they just heard that Jesus is going to die. And now they're struggling with this. So, without much further ado, let's turn in your text to John chapter 7, please.

[ 7 : 56 ] So, like I said, there's going to be three events. I'm going to describe these events beforehand for you. The first event we're going to talk about is what is known as the Feast of Tabernacles, or the Feast of Booths.

This happens in the fall of A.D. 32. It's in Jerusalem. This is kind of like a harvest festival, and what all the Jews who would go, they'd come to Jerusalem, and they would camp out in the fields, and you'd come as a family.

What you'd do is you'd harvest the vines, the grapes, the fig trees, all those things together, and it was kind of a happy family event. And then there'd be a time of teaching in the temple.

The second event is going to happen at the Feast of Dedication, which today is known as Hanukkah. And if you guys pay attention, Hanukkah happens around our Christmas time.

So, the first event is going to be in the fall. The second event I'm going to focus in on is going to be around Christmas, our Christmas, not their Christmas, right? Our Christmas, which didn't exist then, but it's Hanukkah anyway.

[ 9 : 03 ] Just so you know, Hanukkah is not in the Bible. Hanukkah is a celebration, and you guys will know if you're paying attention to the history of Israel in about 168 B.C., you remember? The Jews threw off the Greek yoke.

Remember, the Greeks had gone into the temple. They sacrificed a pig, and they wanted worship to Zeus. And then the Hasmonean brothers, remember he was a priest, killed all the Roman soldiers, got all his sons, led a rebellion, threw the Greeks out, and for about 100 years, Israel was able to operate as an independent state until the big bad Romans came.

So, they celebrate, and that's still a celebration to today. It was the cleansing of the temple, that last one. And then the third event will be the Passover, six weeks before the Passover, which is in the spring of AD 33, and it will occur at the death of Lazarus.

You guys remember the story, Lazarus, the good friend of Jesus, dies, and Jesus goes to raise him from again. So, that's the third event we're going to focus on. All right?

So, first event, Feast of Tabernacles. It's fall AD 32, and let's take a look at John 7, chapter 1. If you don't have a Bible, you're going to want a Bible, because I want you to see the power.

[10:22] These words are in the text itself that I'm going to be speaking about. We've got great ushers who will bring you a Bible if you don't have one. I'm not a big PowerPoint guy. I actually want you to see it in your Bibles.

You know, Dave's so advanced, he can use PowerPoint. I'm not that guy, right? You know? And the church hasn't seen fit to hire me a really good admin to do all that for me and read my mind.

But anyway. So, all right. So, let's take a look at what does John 7, 1 says? Jesus would not go about in Judea. Judea is the land, southern part of Israel, where Jerusalem is found, because the Jews were seeking to kill him.

Remember, when that term, the Jews, is used in the Gospel of John, it doesn't mean all Jews, but it's talking about the Jewish leaders, right? Pharisees, scribes, those type of people.

They were seeking to kill him. Now, the Jews' feast of booth was at hand. So, that's the exact same feast as tabernacles as some of the Bibles have.

[11:25] So, it says, so his brothers said to him, remember, Jesus had brothers. He had family. We know that he had four sisters. Some of his brothers actually come to know the Lord, but at this point in history, they do not believe him.

And they said to him, leave here and go to Judea, right? We just heard Judea, where they want to kill Jesus, and their brothers are like, hey, go to Judea. Good brothers, right?

You know, nothing like good brothers to keep mocking you. And it goes that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly.

If you do these things, show yourself to the world. For not even his brothers believed in him. So, the mood. Leaders hate him, brothers mock him, right?

So, this is the scenario of Luke. Now, John, or Jesus, is going to go to Jerusalem. We're going to look at that in a second. But this is where Luke 9 comes in.

[12:25] And Luke 9 actually records for us the journey Jesus takes to get to Jerusalem. What's interesting, he goes through Samaria. And as we've talked about a long time ago, Samaria wasn't the place that good Jews went to.

Remember, they were kind of the half-breed, so to speak. They were the ones that had intermarried with a whole bunch of pagan races. They hated the Jews. The Jews hated them. But there was a place. If you wanted to go travel where you weren't going to see any other Jews, Samaria was the place.

So, if you looked at the map, there's a river that runs all the way down the Jordan River from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea. On the west side is Samaria.

On the east side is a land called Perea. So, Jesus is traveling in the Samaritan side. It's a shorter route, but like I said, you can run into some of the Samaritans.

But anyway, he goes down there. But there's something that I want you to know. Jesus starts almost as if he's preaching a different message. And I don't know for you guys who've been in church your whole life, this is where he really begins an intense call.

[13:36] Take a look at Luke 9, 59. These are the stories that you've heard. And you don't have to turn there. You'll know these stories. And I'll just read them to you. You know, it said, to another, Jesus said, follow me.

But the person responded, Lord, let me first go and bury my father. Remember that? Jesus gives these quick little quick hit stories about people wanting to follow Jesus, but Jesus saying, no, no, don't go do that.

Come follow me right now. Leave all that behind. Before, he really did not present that type of message. He said, to repent and believe. But now he's kind of getting in people's kitchens, in their grills, so to speak.

Listen, if you're going to follow me, you need to follow me right now. So it's almost like there's this time-intensive element that has begun to happen. It says, and Jesus said to him, leave the dead to

bury their own dead.

But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God. Yet another said, I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home. Jesus said to him, no one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.

[14:52] So, right, there's this intensity to his call. That's the message going forth. All right, John 7, look at your Bibles, verse 11.

All right, so now this is the feast, and this is where things start to get very interesting. Verse 11 says, the Jews were looking for Jesus at the feast, and were saying, where is he?

So just think, there is this whole expectation. Now, Jesus hasn't made an appearance at the temple for three years. Remember, he did so at the beginning of his ministry, and John's gospel records it. At the very beginning of his ministry, he went into the temple, turned over the money tables, and created quite a stir. He hasn't been there making a scene like he's going to be making right now. So that happened in end of John chapter 2, and in John chapter 3, he was there. So here he is again. It says that people are looking for him. There's this pressure that is building in the land, and you need to understand this.

[15:57] The expectations for a Messiah is high. Jesus has followers that number in the thousands, the crowds. They don't all believe in him, but they love him, right?

He's the healer. He's had run-ins with the Pharisees and those people up in Galilee, and he is the talk of the land. So here's this expectation that if there's going to be this feast, Jesus has got to be coming.

So it says, where is he? And there was much muttering about him among the people. While some said he is a good man, others said, no, he's leading the people astray.

Now I want you to turn down, and note what it says in verse 13. Yet for fear of the Jews, that's the Jewish leaders, no one spoke openly about him.

So there's also this understanding in this pressure-packed environment that the Jewish leaders are already letting the word out.

[17:02] You know what? You start siding with this Jesus, you're out of the synagogue. You're out of the faith. We will destroy your business. Okay, this is what's going on. I'm going to show you where this takes place a little bit more in John 8.

So there's this huge expectation, and there's like this division in, is he a good man, or is he going to lead them astray?

Let's take a look at verse 25. Now some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, it's not this, so he's been teaching, it says, it's not this the man whom they seek to kill? Well, and here he is speaking openly, and they say nothing to him.

Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ? But we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ appears. No one will know where he comes from.

All right, what that is, it's a reference to, and we're going to get to this in a couple seconds, where's Jesus from? Shout it out, where's Jesus from? Nazareth.

[18:05] But where's he from right now? Galilee, right? Nazareth, way up north. Where was the Messiah supposed to be born?

Bethlehem. Where was he supposed to be born? Yes, thank you. Remember that we covered the whole story of Jesus, and that prophecy is starting to intertwine.

People who know Jesus. Now remember, the Jewish people he's speaking here are the southern Jews in Jerusalem, and they're kind of the metropolitan urban Jews, right?

And anybody who's lived in a big city knows that all big city people, they think they know better than everybody else, right? So instead, those farmer, fishermen, hicks in northern Israel, right?

In Galilee, it's like what we would say, Brackendale. What do they know, right? They're not from downtown Squamish. So that's kind of this attitude that's going on. He may have swayed those Jews, but he's not swaying us Jews.

[19:07] You with me on this? So these guys have been hearing this. Jesus has done no teaching in this area, remember. He's all been up in Galilee for a year and a half.

Now he rolls into town. So verse 28. So Jesus proclaimed as he taught in the temple, you know me, and you know where I come from.

But I have not come from my own accord. He who sent me is true, and him you do not know. I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me.

Guess who's he talking about? God, right? You guys claim to know him. You don't. I do. I come from him. And this is going to bubble up some more in the next feast, all right?

So everything is leading here. All right? So verse 30. So when they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him. Why? Because his hour had not yet come.

[ 20 : 09 ] Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, when the Christ appears, he will do more signs than this man has done. And remember, we talked about this. All those miracles and signs were to authenticate that he was indeed the Christ, that what his words said were true.

And Messiahs had come before. Jewish history is full of other Messiahs, but what happened to all them? They died, right? They got wiped out. But something is so very different with Jesus.

So things are starting to get hot. And like I said, it's one thing for a bunch of hillbilly farmer types in Galilee to declare that Jesus is the Christ, but to come into our city and start declaring, you know, we're the Jews of the Jews, right?

We're the Jerusalemites. We're the Judaites. We're the guys who stayed faithful for God.

Remember when the northern guys, back in late 780 BC, they became so unfaithful, God sent the Assyrians.

Okay, you know, God sent the Babylonians to wipe us out, but we last another 200 years, right?

You know, we're the place where David came from. We're the true Jews. Now look at verse 42, 32, sorry.

[ 21 : 28 ] The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him.

That's a significant verse we're going to get to in a second. As we all know, they're unable to. Let's look at verse 37. On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.

And these are all prophecies that are clearly foretold in the Old Testament.

And when they heard these things, some of the people said, This really is the prophet. Others said, No, no, no. This is the Christ, okay? These guys are even kind of getting it when the crowd in northern Israel didn't get it.

But look at the question. In verse 41, Is the Christ come from Galilee? That's the tone. See, the Christ come from Galilee does not fit their prophetic understanding of Jesus.

[ 22 : 42 ] Had they only gone to a really good Sunday school church, right? They would have figured this all out at the Christmas pageant, right? Everyone talks about this. But they're not figuring this part out.

Verse 43. So there was a division among the people over him. And some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him. The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees who said to them, Why do you not bring him?

And look at this. Just think the officers. These are like the temple guards. Man, no one ever spoke like this, man. Right? Like they know what their duty, but there is this guy who is proclaiming truth unlike anything they had ever heard before.

And it was beyond marveling at. It was almost paralyzing. And remember, the Jewish people hadn't heard God speak for over 400 years.

They had been wanting this. They had been praying for this. They had been waiting for God finally to bring the prophet to redeem them. And here is this man alone in the temple teaching unlike they had ever heard.

[ 24 : 00 ] Then the Pharisees answered them, Have you also been deceived? And any of the authority or then when I have, here is the question of 48, Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him?

But this crowd that does not know the law is a curse. Right? So they are saying, You know, these guys just don't know the prophecy. They don't know the law. That is why they are enamored with this guy.

Look at verse 50, Nicodemus. Remember Nicodemus? Nicodemus was the guy who showed up the first time Jesus came to town. And at night went to Jesus and said, You must be from God because nobody can do the signs and the things that you do and the things that you say.

Now remember, Nicodemus was the ultimate teacher of Israel. Out of all the Pharisees, this guy was the guy who knew his scripture more than anybody else.

So Nicodemus, who had gone to him before and was one of them, so he's one of the ruling council, said to them, Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?

[ 25 : 08 ] Right? He's just appealing to the law that we all abide by. He's not tipping his hands one way or the other. They replied, Are you from Galilee too?

Really? Are you that much of a hickster, huckster? Search and see that no prophet arises from Galilee. That's their judgment. You know what? There was a prophet who raised from Galilee. Remember who he was? We preached on him a couple of weeks, a couple of months ago. I think everything's a couple of weeks ago in COVID, right? Could have been like four years ago. But Jonah, right?

We taught on Jonah. Jonah was from Galilee. So how quickly they're forgetting that one of Israel's greatest prophets who turned a whole nation around in his word came from Galilee.

So they're showing their urban smugness here. So what we have here is this feast and Jesus is preaching truth.

[ 26 : 07 ] And people are believing. But there's discord. People are talking. They're comparing it to prophecy. Can it be? This is a good thing. Because Jesus checks all the box, right?

Is this from David? Yes, he's born of David. Just go ask him. Right? But you know, when we're going to get to this very briefly and don't really talk too much about it, remember they actually call him, they question his parentage because they even believe.

They knew, the stories of Jesus knew that he was fathered by someone other than Joseph. So they even had that understanding. The ruling class are feeling threatened. But notice verses 32 and 45.

The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering and the chief priests and Pharisees sent offers to arrest them. Why is this significant? For the first time, the two political bodies in Israel are now talking.

Remember we talked about there's the class of the Pharisees. They work out of the synagogues. They're the men of the people. They're scattered all around Israel. And that's who Jesus has been dealing with in his ministry.

[ 27 : 19 ] The Sadducees or the temple priests are only located in Jerusalem at the temple. And remember they're actually political parties as well.

Now, you guys might know this. Do you guys remember Ross Perot? Put up your hand if you know the name Ross Perot. All right. Five of you. All right. Ten. Good. All right. So just so you know, when Bill Clinton, do you guys know who Bill Clinton was?

All right. He was a guy who was the president of the United States in 1992. And who ran against Bill Clinton the first time? Oh, it was George W. Bush. First father. And what happened is this guy named Ross Perot came out in an independent party to run.

And he was this big computer tech guy, billionaire. And what he did is he siphoned a lot of, they say, the votes of the Republicans. But he was an independent. But both Democrats and Republicans hated this guy.

They hated this guy. And they just went after him tooth and nail. That's what's kind of going on here. You've got the Pharisaic party.

[ 28 : 26 ] You have the Sadducees party, which is known as the Hasmoneans. And Jesus is stuck in the middle. And they're now coming together to come against him.

Now, why is that significant? Second, one, they want to put him to death. But you know what Jews can't do? Put anyone to death.

By law, they are not Israel. They're under Roman rule. The only group of people who can put anyone to death are the Romans.

And Judea, Jerusalem is ruled by name by Pontius Pilate. And Pontius Pilate doesn't give a hooey about their religious stuff. He doesn't.

He's got two things that he needs to do. Two things. That tells you where my vocabulary is this morning. Two things. Two objectives. One, he needs to keep the peace.

[ 29 : 23 ] And two, he needs to make sure the taxes flow to Rome. Okay? You with me? That's the only thing a governor is supposed to do. Make sure money goes to Rome. If there's infighting and taxes don't get collected, Rome gets a little bit mad.

Hey, Pilate, if you can't handle that, there's a long list of men who want to come in here and do that. So he's going to try to keep the peace as great as he can. Now, what's really interesting, in Judea, Jerusalem, where he has the rule over, that is the greatest concentration of Jews in the world at

that time.

What I mean by that is, let's just say there is a population of one million people in Judea. 900 are Jews, 100,000 are Gentiles.

Are you with me on that? So 90% of that controlling party are Jews. In Galilee, there's far more Jews, but there's far more Gentiles.

So if you were to get all the Gentiles together, you might only get 50% of the mass population. But in Judea, you can get 90% of the population.

[ 30 : 36 ] So you know who controls that population? Sadducees, the priests. Everybody goes to the temple. So what the leverage they have on Pilate is, hey, Pilate, you don't do what I say.

We're going to revolt, man. Yeah, some of us might get killed. Yeah, maybe a couple hundred thousand, but so will you, right? So that's going to be a tension that's going to exist going forward. So the Jewish leadership has a greater center of power and influence over government in Judea, in Jerusalem. So that's where they have the power to kill him.

So if you just look briefly, you're going to see John 8, 9, and 10. We're going to skip those. You guys will know John 8, the story of the woman caught in adultery. The Pharisees bring the lady to Jesus, trying to trap him.

John 9 is one of my absolute favorite stories in all of the Gospels. Remember the guy who's blind? Jesus heals him. The guy was blind. He doesn't know who heals him. They keep asking him who healed him.

[ 31 : 39 ] I don't know who healed him. Then they're like, they're trying to get him to deny that he was actually blind. That for 30 some years, he's been at the gates pretending to be blind, right?

Remember that? It's just this comedy of errors that are going on because the Pharisees refuse to believe that Jesus could do such a miracle because only God could heal someone that was blind. And they even go to his parents, and they're trying to get them to denounce that their son was born blind. It's just, it's just great story. And then in Luke 10, we read that Jesus sends out the 70.

Okay, what is significant about that? Jesus chooses 70 disciples to go out and blanket Judea with the Gospel. Remember in Galilee, he sent out his apostles two by two by twelves.

This time Jesus is up in the ante. He's getting them out there. So that's the pressure from between October and December. You with me on that? So this is that first stage.

[ 32 : 43 ] He's been teaching truth. People are talking about prophecy. There's division in the people. Is he a prophet? Is he a Christ? These are all good and wonderful things. All right, we're now late December, 32 AD.

Look in your Bibles in John 10, verse 22. So we're three months ahead from just where we were. At that time, the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter. And Jesus was walking in the temple in the colonnade of Solomon.

So the Jews, remember this is the leaders, gathered around him and said to him, how long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.

Remember, I'm talking about that pressure that is starting to build. Like before the people were kind of looking for him. Now it's the leaders and they want him to declare.

[ 33 : 44 ] Now, there's a reason. They don't believe he's the Christ, but we're going to find out why they want him to tell us plainly.

Now look at verse 25. Jesus answered them, I told you, you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name bear witness about me.

But you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they will never perish.

And no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father who has given them to me is greater than all. And no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

I and the Father are one. The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. Here Jesus interrupts them.

[ 34 : 45 ] I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of them are you going to stone me? The Jews answered him, it's not for a good work that we are going to stone you, but for blasphemy because you, being a man, make yourself God.

God. Why is this so significant? We know it was part of God's plan, Jesus' plan, to communicate that he was sent by God, that he was the long-awaited Messiah.

Remember, we had John the Baptist who was the great herald who came forth, who announced that he was coming. But the way that Jesus did this shows how absolutely brilliant, if I could say the word clever, because if Jesus walked into Jerusalem and openly said, hey, I'm the Messiah, I'm the one who's going to rule over you, guess what's going to happen?

Rome is going to jump in and take care of him right away. And what was brilliant about Jesus, the way he presents himself as both Messiah and Son of God is he communicates in terms that only a Jew would understand.

So you go to a Roman, he's claiming to be the son of his father. Okay. You know, these Jews are a little bit wackier than, no, no, no, no, God the Father.

[ 36 : 22 ] So he's Hercules? You know, like, it just wouldn't make sense to them. So that's why Jesus is able to walk around without basically any Roman harassment.

Do you guys get, Hercules was the son of Zeus. Come on. Anyway, all right, thanks. So, so that, so the way Jesus is communicating is in such a way that if the question is ever, and now, and here's so what we know.

We know and understand that the Jews understand what he's saying. And today, when people say that Jesus never openly declared himself as the son of God, the Messiah, then what were they stoning him for?

Right? Jehovah's Witness, a lot of different, the cults teach that Jesus wasn't, in fact, never declared himself God. Oh, yes, he did. And he did it in such a way that only the Jews would understand.

And if you know your prophecy, you know exactly what he's saying. So here's that situation. And then look at verse 39.

[ 37 : 27 ] Again, they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands. So he comes back, feast of dedication. He's there. And then let's skip down to verse 40.

He now escapes out of Jerusalem, Judea. And notice what it says, verse 40. And he went away again across the Jordan to a place where John had been baptizing at first.

This is John the Baptist. And there he remained. And many came to him. And they said, John did no sign, but everything that said about this man was true.

And many believed in him there. Now, why is this significant? And I just explained it to you. Guess where Pilate's rule ends?

The Jordan. Pilate has no influence in Perea. Where John the Baptist was. Who killed John the Baptist? Do you guys remember?

[ 38 : 28 ] Herod. Herod Antipas. This is the land he's now in. Herod Antipas. Does Herod Antipas care what the Jews think? Not at all. The only thing that Herod really cares about is his rule and himself.

That's why he was afraid of John the Baptist. Because the masses followed John the Baptist. So, and we know the story is why he, the reason given is that John was calling him out because of his adultery.

Anyway, so right now Jesus is in this area. He cannot be arrested. The Jews have no influence on him there. And I'm just going to read for you this quick section out of Luke 13.

And here we go again. And this is just proving my point that Jesus begins to teach a message that has consequences. If you want to look, it's Luke 13 and it's going to be verses 23 to 30.

And it said, And someone said to Jesus, Lord, will those who are saved be few? And he said to them, strive to enter through the narrow door.

[ 39 : 35 ] For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door saying, Lord, open to us, then he will answer you.

I do not know where you come from. Okay, we've all heard that. Do you see where that fits in the chronology here? The next time Jesus goes to Jerusalem, guess what happens?

He dies. Okay? So there's this extra push almost on the teaching as he's going into this time. But he's also going to reveal something else here.

Then you will begin to say, We ate and drank in your presence and you taught in our streets. But he will say, I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil.

In that place, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. When you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves cast out, who do you think

he's talking to?

[ 40 : 54 ] The Jews and their leaders. One of the biggest arguments that they made to Jesus Christ is, because our father is Abraham, we don't have to worry about this.

No, no, no. You're going to see them all. And what are they going to do? They're going to be throwing you out. And people will come, and this is huge, and people will come from east and west, north and south, and recline at the table of the kingdom of God.

Guess who that is? Us. The non-Jew. We will be welcome for centuries. They thought, this table was only for us. The Jews be cursed.

This is a great, glorious message. Amen? If you think you get it because of some hereditary blessing, you've missed what I've been saying.

And I love it. And recline at the table in the kingdom of God. behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.

[ 42 : 18 ] That's the kind of message that should make our goose pumps. what a glorious message it is for us that we're on the outside. Right? Whether we, how we grew up, who we grew up, outside of any kind of circle of faith, but yet, we are welcomed at the table.

Now, I want you to look at verse 31. Something really interesting happens. At that very hour, some Pharisees came and said to Jesus, get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.

That's kind of an interesting statement, because they were trying to kill him, right, earlier? And now, all of a sudden, they want to protect him?

What's given? You know what's going on here? It's called a lie. They're actually trying to get Jesus to leave the protected territory to run back to Roman territory.

That's what they're trying to do. And notice what Jesus says. Sure, go ahead, go and tell that fox.

That fox is, go and tell that rodent, as it were.

[ 43 : 29 ] But fox, you know, we see it as a clever animal. There was a pest. It went to the farms, ate the farmland, and all that kind of stuff. Kind of like our rats in our vernacular, that was how they thought about foxes.

Sure, go ahead. You guys, go talk to Herod Antipas and see what he says. He knows they have absolutely no standing in the court of Herod.

But Jesus, as we see, has his own timetable. No one is going to disrupt it. So the remaining time here before the Passover, I'm just going to read to you briefly.

Jesus gives himself over to teaching and preparing his disciples. The wonderful parables that we hear during this time are the parable of the wedding feast. You guys know that, right?

The wedding feast, all the people, the right people don't show up, but the wrong people do. Right?

The parable of the great banquet, again, the rich guy sets up this really big banquet and invites all the most important people, and no one shows up, so he sends his servants to grab all the people from the street.

[ 44 : 33 ] We're the street people, by the way. We were the ones who were homeless. We were the ones without a God who now have a God. We now have a home. We now get to recline at the great banquet. We hear the parable of the lost sheep.

We hear the parable of the lost coin, and probably the most famous parable of all, parable of the prodigal son. Right? These are some of the most wonderful teachings of Jesus Christ, and it all happens in this time.

Luke 14 tells us that there's this theme that develops, and I'm just going to read you the theme. It said, Now great cotton, this is Luke 14 verses 25, and the theme is there is a cost to discipleship. There is a theme that the Lord knows his own, and some of these things may surprise you. It says, Now great crowds accompanied Jesus, and he turned and said to them, If anyone comes to me, does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life cannot be my disciple.

Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. For which of you desiring to build a tower does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?

[ 45 : 55 ] Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation, he is not able to finish. All who see it begin and mock him, saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish. That's those who we see are easy believers.

I'm in with Jesus. I'm in with Jesus. I love Jesus. I want all these things about Jesus. But when it means you need to turn away from that life of sin and destruction and foolishness that if you've been following and solely following after Jesus, that's what you're going to look like. You're kind of only going halfway, halfway built building. So that's the second event, my friends. You with me, all right? We're covering a lot of territory here, aren't we? This is the last one. This is where it gets really good. Good for us. It is to raise Lazarus from the dead. So turn with me to John 11, 1.

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany. Now Bethany is a small town just outside the city of Jerusalem or as they say, a village, the village of Mary and her sister Martha, who was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with their hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. [ 47 : 16 ] So the sisters sent him saying, Lord, he whom you love is ill. But when Jesus heard it, he said, this illness does not lead to death.

It is for the glory of God so that the Son of God may be glorified through it. What a particular, peculiar statement, isn't it?

And that's going to lead into next week. But anyway, verse 5, now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So what do we expect?

Verse 6, so Jesus packed everything and hustled as quick as he could to get to Bethany. Right? Does any of your Bibles say that? No way. Someone comes up and tells you, hey, someone's dying, they need you, what's the first thing you're going to do?

So Jesus seems to be acting very unlike Jesus here. So when Jesus heard that Lazarus was ill, ah, he stayed for two days and in the place where he was.

[ 48 : 23 ] Just kind of strikes us as odd. There's a couple of reasons for that that some scholars offer. One of them is that Jesus wanted this miracle to have more of a strong point to the point that if Lazarus had been dead an extra amount of time, he's considered dead dead, if you know what I mean.

There's one day dead, two day dead, then there's three day dead, all right, he's really dead, right? So that's what some people are speculating. He wanted to make sure he gets that three day dead so nobody questions the authenticity of the miracle.

But as we're going to see, I think there's another reason for it. Verse seven, then after this, he said to his disciples, let us go to Judeo again.

The disciples said to him, Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you when you were going there again. Remember? They're trying to stone him the first time.

Three months later in December, they're trying to stone him. They want to stone him so bad that they're going into pre-aligned trying to lure him back, right? Hey, come on over.

[ 49 : 34 ] Free trip, right? Free trip to Bermuda, cruise line, right? Whoever's gotten those calls, right? Hey, call us, give us \$1,000, and we'll give you a free trip to Florida.

That's not free. But anyway, then after this, they were seeking to stone you, and are you going there again? And Jesus answered, are there not 12 hours in the day?

If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him. What he's basically saying is he's going to walk by God's will.

God's got a plan. He's got a plan. That's the plan he's sticking to. Verse 12. After saying these things, he said to them, our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him.

The disciples said to him, Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover. Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest and sleep. Then Jesus took them plainly.

[ 50 : 40 ] Lazarus has died. All right, guys? I was trying to use a euphemism. He's dead. All right? Some of these stories, they're quite funny, isn't it? Like I think Jesus got a level of sarcasm and humor.

And guys, come on. And for your sake, I am glad I was not there so that you may believe, but let us go to him. What is their mood?

It's a question. I asked you right at the very beginning. Cam, what was their mood? They're befuddled. They're distressed, right? Let's stick to the biblical terms, Cam. But yeah. They were distressed.

They were grieving. They were sorrowful. That was the whole attitude. And this is telling us there's an event that's going to happen here that's going to lift their spirits.

Because why? What he's going to be doing to Lazarus is what he's going to be doing. Amen? All right. Now, but for your sake, I am glad that I was not there so that you may believe, but let us go to him.

[ 51 : 41 ] And this goes along with you, Cam. And this is a good thing. Notice verse 16. So Thomas called the twin. We call him Doubting Thomas, right?

Said to his fellow disciples, I love this guy. Let us also go that we may die with him. Their mood is, they're going to kill Jesus.

Are we going to let him go alone? No, we're going to go. And isn't that what each and every one of them do? Later on, church history tells us they all died to give us the message of Jesus Christ so that we, the outsiders, could sit at the banquet table as insiders.

See, that is how certain death was for Jesus if he were to return to Jerusalem. And so Jesus goes, all the while knowing the very deliberate influence that these events would have on the next six weeks, which we're going to cover next week.

All these things I want you to see Jesus is absolutely moving the pieces around the chessboard to do exactly what he wants them to do in response to him during the week of the passion.

[ 53 : 09 ] Let us pray. Lord, there's not much of a conclusion to this sermon, but it's more of an introduction to the great things that are going to be coming.

If there's anything that I would want our people to see is just how godly you are. And that even these things, even these acts in our lives that we think are just fate or by accident really isn't.

That even we see you controlling when you're going to Lazarus, how the apostles feel, and how we're going to learn the news of the raising of the dead of Lazarus is going to make Jesus pretty much a national hero which allows him to walk into Jerusalem as the celebrated Messiah.

It wasn't supposed to happen that way if you would have, if the Jews had anything to do with it, but Jesus outsmarts them at every single point.

And we're amazed by this gospel, this word that you give us, oh Father, and how this word fills in the gaps for us and there's truly not a word wasted in this story.

[ 54 : 33 ] Father, I pray that we're encouraged by these events of these six months which would have been entirely, I don't know, to take these 12 befuddled men to take them in their distress and in their grief and encourage them and build into them.

And even though say that you are dying, you will rise again and still be patient when they don't even understand it. But as we all know, they get the message loud and clear.

Father, I pray you make this message loud and clear to us. So Father, as we go forward on this day, let us contemplate upon these things.

Let us read our Bibles with deeper interest and knowledge that these things played such a wonderful part of history. And they're not just stories of history.

These are the stories that influenced and created history. We ask these things your most gracious and wonderful name. Amen.