

The Garden and the Courtyard

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[0 : 00] Spring has finally arrived. Have you been taking advantage of the better weather? Most people will enjoy the arrival of spring more daylight and warmer and less dark.

But for many, spring brings on hay fever and runny nose. The arrival of a certain time can be good news for some and bad news for a few. We have come to a similar time in our study of the Gospel of John.

There are four Gospels in the Bible. They are like a biography that accounts for Jesus' life and works to save God's people from ultimate destruction.

John's Gospel highlights Jesus' power as a son of God, his divine nature, and at the same time we feel his human nature. Jesus is fully human and fully God, and he made that claim about himself, which no one in the entire human history had ever dared to say the same.

John uses time markers, especially annual Jewish festival, in his Gospel to highlight Jesus' teaching and what he had come to do.

[1 : 15] It also served as a tool to understand the length of time between the chapters in his Gospel. Jesus started his public teaching at 8th Passover back in chapter 2, and Jewish people gather at Passover to be reminded of what God did to save them from slavery under a human king in Egypt.

It's a time of annual sacrifice for the forgiveness of their sins. By cleaning out the temple at this particular time, Jesus displayed his zeal for God's house and laid judgment on the Jewish leaders who had allowed worship to deteriorate into commerce.

Jesus' words in chapter 2, verse 19, said, Destroy this temple, and will raise it again in three days. Jesus, when answering the Jews' question about his authority, prophetically foreshadowed his crucifixion and resurrection.

A year passed between John chapter 2 to 6 when Jesus fed 5,000 people as the next Passover approach. It was at this time that Jesus' verse of seven I Am statements in John's Gospel was recorded.

Jesus uses this I Am statement to allude to the same self-identification that God uses in Exodus 3 to claim his deity. Jesus told us during this time that he will give up his life for the life of the world.

[2 : 51] The only way to eternal life is by believing in him. In chapter 6, verse 40, he said, For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life.

And Jesus shall lose none of those the Father has given to him. It's also at this Passover that we are first introduced to the person who betrayed Jesus at the next Passover, Judas, Simon's, and Scariot's sons.

And now, we come to the third Passover in John's Gospel from chapter 11, which is also the last Passover of Jesus' human life. This time is the hour that he became the one and for all sacrifice that fulfilled God's requirement to allow God's creation to be reconciled with the Creator.

Today and the following few weeks, in the next three chapters of the last four chapters of John's Gospel, time traveled at a much slower pace, while John tells us of the arrest, trial, death, and resurrection of Jesus to secure our place in heaven, our eternal life.

We read about Jesus' arrest in the garden and the beginning of his trial in the high priest's courtyard in today's passage in John 18, 1 to 27.

[4 : 22] So please keep your Bible open at that chapter. In both the garden and the courtyard, we will look at what Jesus did and refer to one of his disciples.

We see Jesus and Judas in the garden, and we see Jesus and Peter in the courtyard, and I hope you will see Jesus and yourself at the end of my talk.

After many references to my time has not yet come in the first 12 chapters, John told us in chapter 3, verse 1, it was just before the Passover festival, Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father.

And then, in our chapter today in verse 4, Jesus knew all that was going to happen to him, went out and faced those who came to arrest him.

Three times, between verse 5 to 8, Jesus used the phrase, I am he, to connote he is God. Jesus' life's purpose is to make sure God's word, which including his words, is fulfilled so that God is glorified.

[5 : 35] John tells us that Jesus lived to fulfill his own words and the Old Testament and any contemporary prophecy in verse 9, 11, and 14 of our passage today.

In verse 9, Jesus said, I have not lost one of those you have gave me, is Jesus repeating words from chapter 6 that I have highlighted earlier.

He knew who would betray him all along and he said in chapter 17, verse 12, none has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that scripture will be fulfilled.

The cup that Jesus referred to in verse 11 is alluded to Isaiah 51, verse 22. This is what the sovereign Lord says, your God who defends his people.

See, I have taken out of your hand the cup that make you stagger. From that cup, the gobble of my wrath, you will never drink again.

[6 : 37] What Jesus is about to fulfill on the cross will remove the cup of God's wrath from the hands of his believers. Jesus knew there's no other way to achieve that.

And then in verse 12 to 14 says the people took Jesus to Caiaphas. Caiaphas made his prophecy back in John 11, 49 to 52.

He did not say this on his own but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God to bring them together to make them one.

Jesus substituted our broken tainted record with his perfect record in his obedience towards God. By our own merit humans can never be forgiven and reach God but Jesus made the impossible possible.

At no point did Jesus draw back because he knew in order to save us sinners he had to offer up his life in God's hand. Even though he knows God is trustworthy and will not live in the death he still needs to learn to trust that God will resurrect him after the cross.

[8 : 01] Jesus faced the cross knowing he had to go through death for all his followers to be saved and have a life and not just end life but abundant life. Every one of his followers except one who have already been introduced to Judas the one who betrayed Jesus.

He led the arresting party to the garden. The Bible tells us Judas betrayed Jesus for the love of money because he loved money more than God.

He loved the things of this world and his love of money. Back in chapter 12 six days before Jesus last Passover Mary took a pint of pure nut and poured on Jesus.

Other gospels highlight that she broke the jar which would mean no holding back nothing can be saved to sell later. Mary's action brought indignation and disgust to the people at that event.

The writers of other gospels did not provide any names of those people that were so upset but John did in his gospel. He named Judas and told us the reason behind the objection.

[9 : 15] In John 12 verse 46 but one of his disciples Judas Iscariot who was later to betray him objected. Why wasn't this perfume sold and money given to the poor?

It was worth a year's wages. He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he is a thief. He as keeper of the money bag he used to help himself to what was put into it.

And then fast forward seven days in chapter 13 John says again that Judas had charge of the money when Jesus predicted his betrayal. Jesus took the bread and gave it to Judas and in verse 26 of chapter 13 as soon as Judas took the bread Satan entered into him.

So Jesus told him what you're about to do quickly. Jesus is fully and always in control of the whole situation. And with my background in business and management it seems odd that Jesus who is God with God's all-knowing characteristic would allow Judas to be the keeper of the money bag.

Especially when Jesus knew that Judas would betray him and for his love of money and things of this world would sell him out for 30 silver coins. That is one of the why questions that I don't have an answer to.

[10 : 44] Maybe Judas was the only one that put up his hand to do the job. Maybe he's a better choice compared to a tax collector and a bunch of fishermen. There can be many speculation and questions but the healthier approach is not to do what some modern scholar try to do when they face part of God's word that have questions about.

A lot of people take the liberal approach to read back into the Bible what they think should be the most appropriate modern view of different issues. But when you do that you're not listening to God or following his words.

One thing we are sure of though is that Jesus loved Judas as much as anyone who came to follow him. we cannot find in the whole Bible any reference that Jesus treated Judas differently because of what he knew of Judas.

As we follow Jesus a lot of things can confuse us cause us pain and leave us searching for answers. Sometimes life hurts so much that it shakes our confidence in the character of God.

We are deeply hurt by the realization that for reasons we cannot understand our all-powerful God has chosen not to step in and fix the things the way we have begged him to do.

[12 : 07] Our imagination at times of suffering especially if it's self-inflicted can take us down a dark path. We can find ourselves agitated at God and walking away from him.

We are told in other gospel that Judas did that after he realized what he had done. he disconnected himself from God and other believers and stayed in isolation and end in despair.

Hold on to what you do know about God in times of painful circumstance. In the coming weeks you will see Jesus took a savage beating and nailed to a cross for you.

Jesus never abandoned you but supplied the grace you need to see you through. The cross proves Jesus is deeply committed to you every sinner of this world.

Jesus' interaction with those who question him in the high priest courtyard in verse 19 to 23 exhibited again Jesus is fully in control when faced with the most excruciating punishment known to the human world.

[13 : 26] John put this interaction between Peter's interaction with those asking him about his relationship to Jesus it provides such a contrast.

Where Jesus declared three times at the beginning of the chapter about his deity by saying I am we see Peter deny any association with Jesus by answering I am not three times.

This is after Jesus has predicted he would deny him three times before the rooster crow only a few hours ago in chapter three during the Passover meal. How Peter answered those who question him makes Jesus answer to the high priest in verse 21 all the more challenging.

When questioned about his disciples and his teaching Jesus replied was why question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said.

Many at Jesus' time have heard Jesus' teaching even seen signs that show he has the power of the son of God. And some even have close daily interaction with him and they all left Jesus at his arrest.

[14 : 53] One chose to deny and disown him. Another chose to betray him. The same can be said of today's follower of Jesus. If you call yourself a Christian, you have heard Jesus' teaching.

Do you know what Jesus says? What kind of defense will you provide for your faith in him? John tells us that many Jesus' disciples realize Jesus' teaching with the help of the Holy Spirit after his resurrection.

The resurrection has already happened. You already have God's spirit in you. What is holding you back from speaking up for Jesus? What is holding you back from telling others of the good news of Jesus or live out a life what will it take for you to realize what Jesus has done?

His death on the cross, his resurrection were all done for you. His substitution for the punishment of your sins is to free you from living for yourself or Satan, but for him, your Lord Jesus.

Our passage today has many characters who treated Jesus differently. Are you going to be like Judas? Or Peter? Or the soldiers and officials?

[16 : 17] Or the high priests and the Pharisee? Or the other disciples that was known to the high priests? Where are you standing in your life now? Are you standing with those who want nothing to do with Jesus?

Are you standing with your Lord, facing a child and suffering, bringing glory to the Father? Judas, stand with the soldiers or official, from the Pharisee.

He stands with those who slapped Jesus in the face, arresting him unlawfully, accusing him of wrongs that he did not do. Peter stands outside of the door of the courtyard where he denied his disciples for the first time, then later stood around a fire made by the servant and official of the high priest, warming himself in the cold of the night, he denied second and third times of being one of Jesus' disciples.

The other disciples that was known to the high priest that mentioned in this passage stood with Jesus throughout the trial and the crucifixion. Where are you standing with Jesus in your life now?

I hope you asked yourself the two repeated questions from this passage. I believe they are repeated for our attention. One is asked of Peter by people standing around him in verse 17 and 25.

[17 : 50] How would you answer the question? You aren't one of his disciples too, are you? If your answer is affirmed, yes, I am, may Jesus' word in first night and other parts of the Bible be your encouragement.

Once Jesus finds you, you will never be lost again. Your security comes from the promise and prayer between our Heavenly Father and his Son.

I have not lost one of those you gave me. Jesus gave his word in chapter 6 verse 40. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life and I will raise them up at the security in Jesus word not in yourself and stay connected with other believers.

That was what Peter did after his big failure of answering I am not three times and Jesus restored him at the end of John's Gospel. But Jesus asked another more important question to those who come to him in verse 4 and 7.

Who is it you want? If you are seeking and searching about who Jesus is or finding out what Christianity or coming to church is all about the who question is more important than the what question.

[19 : 21] Focus on who Jesus is. My hope and prayer are you find Jesus as your savior and willingly submit yourself to him.

Not like those came with Judas who drew back and fell to the ground on seeing the power and authority of Jesus because they were looking for Jesus for the wrong reason.

If you are a Christian a follower of Jesus do you really want Jesus as your lord and savior? How active are you in asking for help from the Holy Spirit to guide you into all truth and help you to testify about Jesus in all of your life.

If you are happy being indifferent seeing no need for a savior because you think you are both moral and religious. My prayer is that the Holy Spirit will work in your heart through the gospel message to create a faith you need to believe in Christ.

Everyone's growth in your worship of God is directly related to your understanding of the gospel in all its fullness including the understanding that the faith in which you believe was a gift from God.

[20 : 38] We have faith in God because it's a gift from God. God's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life and Jesus will raise them up at the last day.

Now is the time to look to Jesus and believe in him. Taking hold of God's gospel and this faith. Please speak with me or any staff about how to know Jesus.

Don't let this time pass you. Let this time be time of good news for you. Let go.