

# Jesus Rejected of All Men

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[ 0 : 00 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alpharetta, Georgia. This is the next message in our series on the book of John entitled, Jesus is God.

Take your Bible, go to John chapter 18 if you would. John chapter 18, just a couple of things. Number one, if you've emailed me and have not gotten an email answer and you're using my gardener at bcwe.org email address, it hasn't worked for days, I've made some kind of mess, so send it to my gmail, wagardener at gmail.com and I'll answer your email.

I wondered why nobody was writing me and everybody was mad at me, but I found out why. John chapter 18, today makes three weeks since I was in a hospital bed.

About three weeks ago, right now I was in mortal agony from gas pains. I had no idea what that meant until I watched it on the internet to see what they do when they fill you up with a gas so they can get their machines in and around you.

And so when we went and told them I was hurting in my neck and they had cut me in my stomach, they said, well, you've got gas pains. And I was like, you know, I'm 58 years old and I've never had gas pains in my neck before.

[ 1 : 19 ] I have had gas pains, no doubt. But anyway, I've also had a lot of time to think, a lot of time to think about you, a lot of time to think about the church. In all of my life, I've never been off this long.

I've never laid in a bed so much that I have. My daddy used to complain about bed sores. I think I literally have them. But I would like to ask you some questions before I read John 18 to you.

I'd like to talk to you like a guy who's been laying in a bed for a while and thinking about you. And you're on my mind a lot. I want to challenge each of you to be hearers and learners, but more than that, doers of the word.

I got to thinking as I listened to Trent preach and as I preach and as I thought about everything, and I wonder how many of you have gotten to where you like coming to vision because you can listen to Bible preaching.

You're not getting ripped every week. Nobody's fussing at you about tithing. Nobody's screaming at you about any of that stuff. You're just reading the Bible and hearing what the Bible says. And so maybe you've become a hearer and a learner, but not a doer.

[ 2 : 21 ] I hope that's not true. I hope that the Bible getting into your heart is really making something happen. I worry that we might be big on Bible study and little on Bible practice.

Big on Bible study, little on Bible practice. Are you learning to put into practice in your personal life what we are in ministry, what we're studying?

I'm going to talk to you tonight about how Jesus was rejected. This is going to be like the saddest chapter so far. Chapter 17, you just finished with Trent, was like one of the most exciting chapters in the whole book of John.

Jesus stops and prays for the church then and the church that would be led to Christ. And he ends the chapter saying, I want to take you all home. I want to show you my daddy. I want to show you my place.

I want you to see my glory. I want you to be with me. And he was like an excited child almost saying, come meet my daddy. I can't wait for you to see it. I remember in 1973 when I wanted Betty so desperately to go home and see the old country farm, see the farm, see the horse, see all the stuff, ride the tractor.

[ 3 : 28 ] I was excited. Can you imagine how Jesus felt when he prayed for us and said, someday I'm taking you home? Take you home. You'll be with my daddy. You'll be with me and you'll spend eternity there.

But in John chapter 18, everything's going to turn completely the opposite. They all reject him. And I wondered as I studied for this chapter, how you show that you do accept him. They reject him.

And it's clear in this chapter. How do you show that you accept him and that you love him? How many people would know that you accept him and that you love him? Another thing I'd like to ask you as I read this chapter, and of course it has to do with my personal life.

How would you face a great testing and temptation that might come on you? How would you face a great testing and a temptation that might come on you? Peter has no idea.

Peter is really strong in the Lord. When the apostles are together, everybody knows it's Peter. But Peter has the answer and Peter's ready to answer. And Peter's quick on his feet and Peter's quick to think.

[ 4 : 25 ] And Peter's the strongest one. When they need somebody to cope with an answer, it's going to be Peter. But in this chapter, Peter's going to draw a sword ready to defend. But before it's over, he will deny his Lord three times.

And I thought about the day I spent wondering if I was living or dying. The day after I heard that I had cancer. And the first day everything was such a turmoil of all events and people coming around me.

The second day was pretty much me withdrawing into myself and wondering what I would do. And then asking God to help me. And I would ask, are you ready to face great testing and temptation?

Because it's coming to every one of us. You're going to hear the cancer word sooner or later. Or you're going to hear the my mama's dying word sooner or later. Or my daddy's dying. Or my wife is dying. Or my child just died.

Or my business just folded. And how are we going to deal with it? Because in John chapter 18, Peter's not ready. And I've sat by the bed of people who died and they weren't really ready.

[ 5 : 24 ] They were saved. But they weren't really ready to face it. I'd like to talk to you about that just a little bit tonight. I'd like to ask you, how are you... This is just me mumbling. How are you sharing your faith and magnifying the Lord Jesus right now?

It was interesting. When I was in the hospital in Tennessee, I went in the room to prepare my urine sample for them. And there was a gospel tract on two different places. Are you ready to meet Jesus?

I thought I'm the guy who usually leaves those tracts. Somebody beat me here. Are you ready? Are you testifying? Are you sharing Jesus? Are you carefully leading your family to grow in the Lord and His word?

You know, the most important thing when it comes down to it is how much are you leading your family? How much are you... How faithful are you to church?

Can I just be honest with you? I'm just talking to you. I've been out of church for three weeks, basically. I don't know how many services I missed. And the one last Thursday I was here and I really wasn't here. From the second I sat down, all I could think about was when will this be over?

- [ 6 : 27 ]     Because I'm hurting and I want to go home. I may be there before this night's over. But I would ask, how much are you faithful to church? How much are you getting your family involved in Bible studies?
- I remember as a boy, I remember as a boy, my parents having me in church every time the doors are open. And I notice a flippancy among us today. For anything and everything, you'll skip church.
- But you won't skip work. You could have the slightest migraine headache. It won't even be a migraine. It won't even be a one aspirin, baby aspirin headache. But you'd skip church, Bible study, serving God, seeking Jesus.
- Most important thing, I laid in a bed for hours saying, God, if I'm leaving, I really want to leave right. I hope that's your heart. Do your children see a good testimony in you and in your spouse?
- Because they know you at home. Are they learning about grace and walking what Jesus has already done? Are you teaching them how to do that? Those are just some ramblings. I'll read the Bible with you now.
- [ 7 : 29 ]     But I would just challenge you to think about it. I don't think I have ever sat that long except in language school on the pew and listened to the preaching all of my life.
- Since I was about, I guess, 15, I started preaching. But I didn't preach all the time until I was probably 18 or 19. But I sat on there and I wondered as I listened, how much do we really love Jesus?
- I hope you do love him. And I hope your family knows it. This may sound morbid and you may not like me saying this, but I thought if I die, which I might die.
- A man in my mother's church had the same kidney cancer, but the cancer got outside the kidney sack or kidney fat and got into his body and he's dying.
- And I thought if I die, will Betty really say I knew him? And he does love Jesus or he did love Jesus. Would Betty really know that?
- [ 8 : 31 ]     Does Betty know I love Jesus? Would my children say, no, daddy was real. He loved Jesus. Would your children say that? I wondered if you'd say that about me.
- So I challenge you as you read John 18, don't reject him. You didn't reject him. You aren't rejecting him. And don't let that be part of it. Read with me, John chapter 18. We're going to read the whole chapter.
- I don't know if I can cover it all. But after we read it, I'll just jump through without going back to the verses. So you mark them as you go through the first time. John 18, one. When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Sedron, where was a garden into which he entered in his disciples.
- And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place. Judas knew exactly where Jesus would go because he knew Jesus. For Jesus oft times resorted to the disciples.
- Judas then having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees coming thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth and said unto them, Whom seek ye?
- [ 9 : 36 ]     Well, we should underline that. Verse 4 is so important. The apostle John has a reason to write this chapter. It's exactly the reason. It's written on the wall here. He wants you to know Jesus is for real.

This isn't something that the apostles made up. And here's something that all that's about to happen in chapters 18 and 19, he knows every bit of it. He knows Judas is coming to betray him. You know, I woke up on a Tuesday morning that ready to preach that morning at a camp and had absolutely no idea that in just a few hours my life would drastically change.

Jesus knew every bit. And yet he died for me because he wanted to. He died for you because he wanted to. Jesus, knowing all things that should come and went forth and said, Who are you guys looking for?

They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. And Jesus said unto them, I'm he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. And soon then, as he had said unto them, I am he. They went backward and fell to the ground.

I wish you'd underline that because I won't have much time to say it. Would you underline? They went backward and fell to the ground. You realize what happened? Jesus did not get taken because he couldn't defend himself.

[ 10 : 44 ] Jesus didn't get taken because there weren't enough swords. Jesus didn't get taken because Peter was the only one who'd swing a sword. When they came and asked him the question, all he said was, I'm him and I'm he.

And boom, they fell on their backsides. He could have knocked them down with the word. This is the guy that with words creates a world in six days. He had no problem defending himself.

He came to die on purpose. Verse seven. Then ask he them again. Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he.

If therefore you seek me, let these go their way. That the same might be fulfilled, which he spake of them, which thou gavest me. I have lost none. Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and smote the high servants, high priest servant and cut off his right ear.

The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, put up thy sword into the sheath. The cup, which my father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Just to stop there for a second.

[ 11 : 44 ] And you know, this is the same Jesus, Peter that loves Jesus so much that he says, you're not going to go to Jerusalem. I know they'll try to kill you there. And Jesus looked at him and says, get behind me, Satan.

And Peter still hasn't learned his lesson. Peter's about as dumb as a Baptist. That's why I'm pretty sure this is a Baptist church. Amen. I mean, he got told, get behind me, Satan. And now he's going to strike him.

And Jesus's answer is, don't you think I ought to die? That's what the father has prepared for me. I'm here to die. What a savior. Verse 12. Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus and bound him and led him away to Annas first.

For he was father and law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. And Simon Peter followed Jesus.

And so did another disciple. That disciple was known unto the high priest and went in with Jesus under the palace of the high priest. But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door and brought in Peter.

[ 12 : 49 ] Then said the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He said, I am not. And the servants and officers stood there who made a fire of coals.

For it was cold. And they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself. The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples of his doctrine. And Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world.

I ever taught in the synagogue and in the temple whether the Jews also resort in secret. Have I said nothing? Why do you ask me then? Ask them that heard me what I said unto them.

Behold, they know what I said. And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus, slapped him with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?

And Jesus, he knew who he was. He knew he was right. He said, if I said anything wrong, okay. But if I didn't, why'd y'all hitting me? He said, if I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil.

[ 13 : 48 ] If I said something wrong, you tell me what it was. But if well, then why are you smiting me? Why smitest thou me? Now, Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas, the high priest. And Simon Peter stood and warned himself.

They said, therefore, unto him, art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it and said, I am not. One of the servants of the high priest being his kinsman, whose ear Peter cut off, said, did not I see thee in the garden with him?

Peter then denied again. And immediately the cock crew. Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment. And it was early. And they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover.

Pilate then went out unto them and said, what accusation bring you against this man? They answered and said unto him, if he were not a mild factor, he wasn't an evil guy, a wicked worker.

We would not have delivered him unto you. Then said Pilate unto them, take ye him and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, it's not lawful for us to put any man to death.

[ 14 : 50 ] That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die. Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again and called Jesus and said unto him, art thou the king of the Jews?

Jesus answered him, sayest thou this of thyself or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me.

What hast thou done? Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my disciples, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews.

But now my kingdom is not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, art thou a king then? Jesus answered, thou sayest that I'm a king. To this end was I born and for this cause came I into this world that I should bear witness of the truth.

Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate said unto him, what's truth? When he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews and said unto them, I find no fault at all.

[ 15 : 50 ] I find in him no fault at all. But you have a custom that I should release unto you one at the Passover. Will ye therefore that I release unto you the king of the Jews? Then cried they all again saying, not this man, but Barabbas.

Barabbas was a robber. Father, I pray that you would work tonight in our hearts. I pray that your name would be glorified. And I pray that you would help us to desire to serve you and love you and to stand with you every minute of every day in our families, in our workplace, and everywhere.

Help us to be prepared for the temptations this world brings to not stand for you and be ready for it. And I'll give you praise for all in Jesus name. Amen. Well, I fully recognize you're not going to get it all, but if you would remember Isaiah 53, 3, you might look that up.

But in Isaiah 53, verse 3, Jesus is rejected of men. It was prophesied and it's happening now. The Bible said all the way back in Isaiah 53, he is despised and rejected of men.

A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid as it were our faces from him. He was despised and we esteemed him not. That's a pretty lousy verse.

[ 17 : 04 ] He spent three and a half years doing some most wonderful things. He has just come into town and had him throw coats in his way and have what we call Palm Sunday. But in John chapter 18, he is rejected and he is despised.

I guess that's why I would ask you, are you showing that you love him? Are you showing that you are on his side? Are you showing that you believe in him because he is a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, rejected and despised?

But I'd like you to take some notes and I will skip a lot of the verses for the sake of time. Number one, nothing surprised Jesus. Would you write that down?

And I'll tell you why in a minute. Nothing surprised Jesus. He knew. He had told them what would happen. He is willingly laying down his life. I want you to understand two or three things.

And maybe it's because I've always had, I grew up through a liberal denomination and I went to a liberal school and I heard Jesus mocked. Maybe it's because I read more theology stuff than you do.

[ 18 : 02 ] And I hear him mocked all the time. So I want to say some things to you. And right now in America, people don't believe Jesus is God. But he starts this chapter off and he reminds them, I know exactly what's going on.

This isn't something the apostles are going to make up later about me. They didn't later on say our great hero got, our great hero got captured.

And so he made up a religion to go about his name. John says, no, Jesus knew. I read just this afternoon. There's a new movie coming out that's going to show that Jesus was a victim of a child of rape.

A Roman soldier raped Mary and Jesus was born. And Jesus started a political movement. And that's what the whole story is about. John would say to you, that's blasphemy.

Jesus was, is, and always will be the son of God. God in human flesh. He knew what was happening. He told them that so they'd know. In chapter 18, verse 4, he said, knowing all things.

[ 19 : 03 ] I would challenge you, I tell you to know that he knew. Don't see him as a victim. Don't see him as a victim. Everybody sees Jesus as this meek, mild, sissified, long hair, blonde hair, blue eyed, weird looking young guy that gets beat up by everybody.

That's completely the opposite. That's completely the opposite of the truth. In John chapter 10, verses 15 through 18. I won't read, but don't you remember what he said? He said, I lay down my life.

Nobody takes my life from me. My father gave me permission. My father said, I can do it. I will lay down my life and I will take it again in my father's will pleased with me. He told them repeatedly what was going to happen.

So they believe in him. If you've been reading John, you're getting over to reach a climax. John chapter 20, verse 31. Jesus constantly said, this is what I'm about to do. This is what's about to happen.

This is what they're going to do. I tell you now before it happens. Because nobody but me would know what's coming. Remember, this was prophesied in the Old Testament. It was prophesied by Jesus. So we know Jesus is God.

[ 20 : 08 ] We know that his will has happened. Remember, nothing shocked him. He willingly laid down his life because when they came after him in John 18, 6, he said, I am he.

And they fell down backwards to the ground. This is not a new religion made up by the apostles. This is God in human flesh on earth living and dying for us.

If you don't get that, you've missed it all. If you don't get that, you're not really born again. The second thing I want you to look at real quickly is Judas, an intimate friend, a fake believer, seeks to destroy Jesus.

Judas is the first rejecter I see in John 18, 2. John 18, 2, Judas also which betrayed him. He knew where he was. He's going to get him. And I just want to show you, you know, if I walk you through the whole thing, I won't get it all done.

I can see that. But Judas is a fake church member, which I'm sure we have some of. I hate to say this, but I'm sure we have quite a few of. I'm sure that we have a lot of people here who have learned all the externals.

[ 21 : 18 ] And you probably look more spiritual than anybody else in the church, but you might not be real. And Judas, who is a fake. Judas, who dips his hand in the supper, in the sop with Jesus.

Judas, who has been trusted to carry the bag. Judas betrays Jesus. Judas served God with ulterior motives. Possibly it was the idea that he would be somebody in the new kingdom.

You know, the other apostles thought that. Wanted to sit on the right hand and on the left hand. And Judas was already the minister of finance, wasn't he? Maybe that's what he thought he would get. Possibly he was thinking that Israel would overthrow Rome and be free again.

He definitely thought of it as a place where he could steal money for his personal use. The Bible records that story more than once. There was definitely some prestige. Prestige for being a part of something so spectacular as Jesus.

Judas had learned to fake all the externals that made people believe him. Isn't that the saddest thing you can imagine?

[ 22 : 28 ] But how many of us are doing that? We got it down, man. We know how to carry a Bible. We know how to say amen. We know how to be at church.

We even know how to tithe. The apostles believed Judas was a good man. They trusted him with the money. At the Last Supper, if you recall, just a few days ago, they're serving the meal.

And Jesus said, somebody's about to betray me. And they're all asking, who's it going to be? Ask him if it's me. It's amazing. Everybody didn't go, it's Judas. We know he's wicked. No, they didn't know. How many of us might be hooked up to Jesus and the church without it being real?

It'd sure be a shame to die and go to hell after having been that close to the truth. That's probably what broke my heart as I studied for this. I come and I share with you every service. And Trent shared with you every service how wonderful he is.

What a great God he is. What a great Bible we have. How we've sinned and failed God. And by his love and his grace, he's paid the price. And we hear it. Maybe we just listen and it's not real to us.

[ 23 : 37 ] How could you listen to Jesus for three and a half years and not be real? Maybe you know. How many of us have learned to play the part, but nothing really happens in our heart?

How many of us have been in the business of training people to be great imposters? You know, it's amazing. Our Sunday school has often become don't lie.

Don't cheat. Don't steal. Be honest and pay your bills. Learn to look and act the part of a Christian. No, you don't know God. When the truth is, they must know.

None of our kids are good. And if they don't accept Jesus, they're going to hell. We have become great at making cosmetic jewelry. A friend of mine's dad gave a lady a fake diamond ring that was really big.

So she went and had it examined and found out it was fake. I wonder what would happen. And by the way, I wonder if when the testing time comes, if that's when we check the fake jewelry and find out if you really love Jesus.

[ 24 : 43 ] Because you lose your job. Because you have health issues. Because your family member dies. Maybe right now would be a good time to reevaluate our lives. And make sure that we are true believers.

Not church members. Not baptized. Not accepted by other believers. But truly born again. I'm going to give you one more thing and then I'll stop. But would you stop a second and look at your life?

If they told you, you're probably going to die. Is this what you talk about or do you really believe it? Do you know how to say all the right spiritual stuff?

Or is it all the way down in the pit of your gut? I love Jesus. He saved me. I read this week where a famous preacher said, they talk about visions.

He said, the only vision I want is that I'm an unfit, unworthy sinner who a great God came to save. That's the only vision I need. I hope you know that.

[ 25 : 47 ] Number three. Now Peter, a believer who loves Jesus very much, denies knowing Jesus, rejecting him. You see, this is the chapter where Jesus gets rejected.

He just got through praying for him. Judas has just denied him and betrayed him. And Peter now denies him. First, Peter is sure that he will stand with Jesus, though no one else will.

He even makes comments like a real good deacon or Sunday school teacher or strong pastor. I won't be the one that falls. You can count on that. Look around this room.

There's a lot of scum in here that will mess up, but not me. Now, these guys might deny you, but you won't have to worry about me. Jesus.

Peter has tried to defend Jesus by not letting him go to Jerusalem and take it up a sword. But Jesus says, I fully intend to die.

[ 26 : 43 ] He is not a victim. He is an intentional savior. Peter stands with the world and denies that he knows Jesus. He's standing out there warming his hands at the fire and says, I don't know him.

I am not one of his guys. And then two more times from verse 25 down to verse 27, he denies him again. Peter was a true believer, but so prideful to think that he would be able to handle temptation.

So prideful to think that he would be able to handle temptation. If you think you stand, take heed lest you fall. Peter loved Jesus and he had all the best intentions.

Peter had been critical. Peter had been cocky that he was prepared and others weren't. I believe that we believe too much in ourselves. We never expect that the pressure will cause us to cave.



We're prepared to be fair weather Christians. But when the storms come, we're caught unawares. I'm afraid that if real testing hit us as families, individuals, and as a church, we might not stand for Jesus.

[ 27 : 54 ] That's what happens in John 18. Peter's been there. Boy, he's got a big mouth. He's got his sword. He's ready to defend Jesus. But when it gets rough, Peter can't handle it.

Peter can't handle it. Two other things I'd say to you about what just happened. First off, be careful. When they told me I had cancer, the first day I was so strong.

The second day, I didn't say much. It's so easy to be so cocky. Things are going to happen.

Your business is going to fall apart. Your family members are going to die. You're going to get cancer. There's going to be a car wreck. There's going to be pressure at work. You can't get ready after the fact.

You've got to be ready now. Can I remind you that Jesus is praying for Peter, even while he's denying him? And he told him that before he ever started. He said, I'll be praying for you.

[ 29 : 04 ] Can I remind you, Jesus is not angry with Peter. The fact is, he is such a loving, sweet, kind Savior that just over 50 days from now, Jesus already knows, like he knows everything, that the guy who stands at the fire and denies him will preach the greatest sermon of the modern day.

You may mess up, but he won't mess up. You may walk away, but he won't walk away. You may fail, but he won't fail. You are loved and accepted, even if you do fail.

But I would sure want us to get ready. Sooner or later, sooner or later, tragedy's coming. Jesus knew it was coming. Nothing surprised him. Judas was a fake.

He denied him, rejected him, betrayed him. But Peter was one of us. He was a Thursday night crowd, wasn't he? He was a group that didn't miss church. Boy, he had it down, didn't he?

But when he came to it, he didn't know if he loved Jesus or he loved himself. Father, I pray that you would deal with hearts and draw people to you. I pray that your name would be honored and glorified.

[ 30 : 11 ] I pray that you'd magnify yourself. I'll give you great praise and great honor and great glory for what you do. You have been listening to Austin Gardner, pastor of Vision Baptist Church.

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I pray for you. I pray for you.