

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Honor of Jesus the King

Scripture: John 12:1-26

Code: 80-304

I want you to open your Bible to the text that we read earlier, the 12th Chapter of John. As we enter into this wonderful week of remembering the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, we know that it all began with what is commonly called "Palm Sunday," that Sunday in which Jesus entered the City of Jerusalem and did so to the waving of palm branches and a hailing of Him as king. And of course, it ends with the resurrection. This is a great and glorious week for us to celebrate.

And in thinking about what we might look at today, I have been unable to avoid over the last number of months and weeks and even days the flood of material that attacks the account of the Bible. Whether it's the Gospel of Judas, which is the new *National Geographic* product being foisted upon the world that has reached the front page of newspapers *USA Today* and every other newspaper, *Wall Street Journal*, every newspaper practically in the country, a new approach to the Gospel that Judas and Jesus were buddies. They were good friends. And Jesus asked Judas to betray Him because it was a better way to work out His plan, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

I went into a Barnes & Noble bookstore the other day and I decided that I would spend about a half an hour and find every book I could find in there that attacks the Gospel. I couldn't count them all. I couldn't even find them all. I couldn't even browse through the index of all of them. Everything from *The Da Vinci Code*, which is like oxygen, it's everywhere, (*Laughter*) down to every other strange and bizarre and demonic attempt to assault the Gospel.

There was one section of books one Mary alone, as co-redemptrix and co-mediatrix through whom all saving grace has passed to all humanity. That in itself is a category of assault on the Gospel. There is a new treatment of the idea that John the Baptist and Jesus were both Messiahs because there were supposed to be two Messiahs and they were twin Messiahs and they kinda worked together to bring that all about, and everything beyond. There are old documents. There's the Gospel of Peter and the Gospel of Thomas.

There are Gnostic gospels that abound. Gnosticism is a religion that hasn't gone away. It's still around. It comes back in new forms all the time. There are those who advocate goddess worship. That attacks the Gospel. Respostures Mary as the primary personality in the Gospel. It's really endless. And I found them in virtually every section of Barnes & Noble except the travel section. (*Laughter*) so they're scattered all over everywhere, fiction, non-fiction, history, philosophy, religion, education, you name it.

How are we to respond to all of these things? Very simple. It's very, very simple. There has always been a proliferation of trash out there. The internet has created that. The internet has just given a format for it. When somebody puts something on the internet, it doesn't make it true. In fact, if you have any sense at all, you probably ought to question it. The same thing is true with ubiquitous material that's been around since ancient times that assaults the truth and assaults the Gospel.

The answer to all of it is simply to compare everything with the Word of God. This is the inerrant authoritative revelation from God Himself. It tells the real story, the only story. And anything that contradicts this is a hoax. Whether it was written in 1990, whether it was written in 1750, 1620, or whether it was written in the 3rd Century, or whether it was written in 180 A.D., when the Gospel of Judas first appeared. There has been spurious information from way back.

Even prior to the life of Christ, there were spurious and false religious documents. They've always been around. The discovery of one doesn't change anything at all. No matter how old it is, if it contradicts the Bible, it is a lie. It is a deception. And it is spawned by the enemy of men's souls, Satan himself. There are demonic sources to much of this material, some human sources, much of it demonic.

How do we then understand these events around the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to Jerusalem, His betrayal, His death, and His resurrection? And so I decided the answer is let's just go back and see what the Bible says. And since is the heart and soul of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and these are the main events, they occur in all four Gospels, including the triumphal entry.

It is one of the things that occurs in all four Gospels. No one left this out because of its vital importance. Just so happens that I love the account of it that's found in the Gospel of John. And since it's been a long, long time since we've look at the Gospel of John, I thought we would turn there. Let's go to Chapter 12 then and consider this account.

Traditionally, Palm Sunday is a day filled with meaning for us as Christians. We sing, "Halleluiah, we've done it." We sing, "Hosanna." We praise the name of Jesus. We hail Him as king, celebrating His entry into Jerusalem to the praises of His people. This is day when everything that Zechariahs, the father of John the Baptist said in his benedict, "This would come to pass," actually came to pass. You remember when he was told by the angle that he was gonna have a child who would be the great prophet to announce the arrival of the Messiah?

His response was, "This is it. This is the great moment. All that was promised to David, all that was promised to Abraham, all that was promised in the new covenant is going to come to pass." He said that, "God has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people. He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David, His servant.

"This is salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. This is God showing mercy to us, remembering His holy covenant which He swore to Abraham. This is God bringing us to the holiness and righteousness that He pledged to us. This is God giving His people the knowledge of salvation, the forgiveness of sin through His tender mercy. The coming of Messiah," said Zechariah, "is the sunrise visiting on us to shine on those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of everlasting peace."

He knew that with the coming of Jesus, all of those great prophetic elements of salvation were coming into focus. And so Jesus comes and He comes to do all that had been promised to David and Abraham, and promised in the new covenant, to bring salvation. We now come to the end of those 33 years. We come to the end of His life and His ministry. It's really over. All that he needed to do to prove who He was is done.

The announcement was made at His birth by the angels. The affirmation was confirmed by the shepherds. His perfect, sinless life was in evidence that He was, in fact, God, the Messiah, the Lord, the Christ, the Redeemer, the Savior. His words and His works demonstrated His supernatural power.

His power over demons to command them and to direct them wherever He desired, and to deliver people from them. His power over disease, His power over death was proof enough. And He had banished illness from Palestine, from the land of Israel for the duration of His ministry and raised the dead and cast out demons. And it was wonder upon wonder, day after day after day. And He had fed tens of thousands of people by creating food. He had walked on water. You know the wonderful record of all His miracles.

All the evidence was laid down. All the proof was in. Nothing more needed to be said. Nothing more needed to be done. One capstone miracle. That miracle was designed to happen in proximity to Jerusalem, just couple of miles walk over the hill on the east side of Jerusalem into the little village called Bethany. And there that capstone miracle to His life and ministry was done. And it was the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Not after He had just died, as if it was a resuscitation, but after He had already been wrapped and buried and entombed. And He came and raised him from the dead.

This was the pinnacle. This was the capstone of His evidence to be the Messiah. All that needed to be done was done. And now it is time, based upon all that evidence to which the people have been exposed both in Judea in the south, and Galilee in the north. And now it is Passover and they have all come to Jerusalem. All the people from all across the land had all come to Jerusalem for Passover. And they all came with all their stories of Jesus. This was the perfect time with the capstone miracle to make His official presentation of Himself.

And so it is that He comes into the City of Jerusalem on this Sunday. Before we look at the actual entry of Jesus, I want you to look at Verse 1 because it's presented in the opening section here, perspective, that I think sets the tone for the extremes and the tensions and the paradoxes of this event.

"Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead." And the account of that is in the previous Chapter so they made Him a supper there, as they often had done. And they were very close friends of Jesus. He had stayed at their home many times. And Martha, as always, was serving.

But Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him, which would make this the happiest dinner that family had ever had. For he who had been dead was now alive and once can only imagine the questions and the discussion and the dialogue that was going on. And the first question, certainly, I would ask was, "Where were you and what was it like while you were gone?"

Nothing is said about that. But what an event it would have been. And Mary, always the devoted one, the one who sat at Jesus' feet and listened to His words, took a pound of very costly perfume. A pound in their measurements would be 12 ounces; twelve ounces of very costly perfume.

Part of the cost of the perfume is indicated it was made from pure nard. Nard is a root that grew in India. It had to be dug up and then it had to be extracted. The oil from it was extracted. It was a dense oil they made the perfume out of, extracted from the root. And then it had to be carted on the backs of camels or some other animal, all the way from India to get it there. Twelve ounces of that would have been a huge amount. In fact, you see in Verse 5 that it was worth 300 denarii. That's a year's wages. Just imagine what your annual salary is. And in that economy, that would buy you this perfume. Very expensive. It would have been probably the largest component in Mary's net worth.

And she took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus. Now foot washing was a common thing to do. But you certainly didn't waste something like this on feet. Maybe you washed the feet and put one drop, but not 12 ounces. This is way over the top. And then she did what was totally unacceptable for a Jewish woman to do, she let her hair down in the presence of men, which was considered a disgrace and a shame, and she used her hair to wipe His feet. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. No doubt not only then, but for a long time afterward; 12 ounces of that.

This is lavish love. This is extravagant love. This is unimaginable devotion. This is shocking disregard of the Jewish rules for female propriety in the presence of men. This is forbidden stuff. This is love at its most extravagant, at its most extreme. This is to be understood on this day when Jesus rides into the city. There are those who love Him extremely. There are those who love Him

lavishly. There are those who love Him extravagantly.

But juxtaposed to that in Verse 4, "But Judas Iscariot." And now we go from one extreme to absolutely the opposite extreme at the same moment in the same situation over the same commodity. Judas Iscariot, that is to say Judas from Cariot, one of His disciples who was intending to betray Him said, "Why was this perfume not sold for 300 denarii and given to poor people?" He was a hypocrite of the rankest kind. He was wretched. Jesus called him a devil. Jesus said, "Satan entered into his heart." There is no way to do revisionist history on Judas and come up with a good Judas without ignoring what the Bible says.

He said this, Verse 6, here's the commentary, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief. And he has the moneybox he used to pilfer what was put into it. How does a thief get the moneybox? By being really a good hypocrite. When they vote your treasurer, they think they can trust you. That's the stock and trade of a clever embezzler. And so Judas is clearly characterized there. Here is extravagant hatred. Here is extreme animosity. Judas has grown to despise Jesus.

It didn't start out that way. At the beginning, he thought Jesus was his ticket to the big time. He followed Him out of greed. He followed Him because he loved money and power and prestige and he thought this might be the Messiah who will bring the Kingdom. "And when He sets up His Kingdom and He sets up His throne and He becomes the king, I'll be on the inside and I'll get a position of rank and power and money."

The more Jesus talked about dying, which He did talk about -- in fact, back in Chapter 11 in Verse 16, Thomas said to the fellow disciples, "Let's go to Jerusalem that we may die with Him." He made it clear that He was gonna die. They thought if they went to Jerusalem with Him, they'd probably get killed, too. Things were really going south for Judas and there wasn't any real way out. And the more he could begin to see that Jesus wasn't following the path that expected, no doubt the more he began to steal to make up for the lost time. It's now three years he's been following Jesus and he's got nothing for it, nothing.

By the time you get to this point, this is the last straw. This is where Judas comes completely unglued. And he's gonna get what he's gonna get and get out. He's starting to feel frenzy now. There is a kind of mad despair welling up in his heart. And by the time it all shakes out, he figures out a way to at least get 30 pieces of silver out of this wasted life. He sells Jesus to the Jewish leaders as the price of three fruitless years.

And in horrific remorse and guilt, goes out and hangs himself. And he can't even do that well. Either the rope or the branch broke and he fell down a cliff and his bowels were burst open. You can't even think of a more horrific person than Judas, nor can you think of a more wonderful one than Mary. And

the juxtaposing of those two characters in the same event shows you the discrepancies and the extremes in this very life of Jesus. There are those who hate Him profoundly. There are those who love Him profoundly.

And it's been that way since then. And it is that way now. And there's a lot of mishmash in the middle. But the extremes are very real. And they show up on Palm Sunday. They show up on Palm Sunday. It's almost as if the love and hate tensions set the stage for what will happen. By the way, Jesus said to Judas, "Let her alone in order that she may keep it for the day of My burial." It was as if she was using it to anoint Him for His burial. "It's okay. She did it out of lavish love. And it's a fitting anointing for My burial." And by saying that, He rubbed in the reality that Judas didn't want to hear, that He was headed to death.

And He said, "The poor you always have with you who don't always have Me." Well that brings us to Verse 9, and that's where we want to pick up the story of the next day. This is the next day. This is Palm Sunday as we call it. The great multitude, therefore, of the Jews, learned that He was there. A huge crowd learned that Jesus was there, meaning in Bethany at the home of Lazarus. And they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that -- this is still on Saturday until we get to Verse 12. This is still on Saturday.

He was there. "They came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead." So part of the crowd in Jerusalem moves out there on Saturday. The chief priests to council that they might put Lazarus to death also. It's not gonna be enough to kill Jesus now. They're gonna have to kill Lazarus because if they don't kill Lazarus, Lazarus will run around telling everybody he's been dead and he's back. And that's gonna make them look back because they killed the one who raised him from the dead.

So now, they not only need to kill Jesus, but they need to kill Lazarus. Now this shows you the extreme hate. They're just so hateful. They're really on the Judas side of attitude toward Jesus. But the crowd in general is furious. So they come out to see Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead. The leaders are panicked. Verse 11 says, because on account of the raising of Lazarus from the dead, many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus. Jesus' stock has arisen. The people are fascinated by Jesus. It's very fickle at this point, as we know. The same crowd that's so excited about what He did to Lazarus is the same crowd that screams for His own death a few days later.

But you have this crowd then going to Bethany to find Jesus to see Lazarus. Now you come into the next day in Verse 12. On the next day -- and this is where we want to pick up the story. Let's call this the fateful or the final presentation. Let's say the final presentation, okay. This is it. This is Jesus' final presentation of Himself to the nation. This is the official presentation at the highest point of exposure because of the Passover where everybody was there, not only from the land of Israel, but

from other parts of the Gentile world where Jews were living and proselytes had come to Judaism and they were all there as well.

So we find on the next day, the great multitude who had come to the feast when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. Took the branches of the palm trees -- and we'll stop there for a moment. So we've got two crowds. We've got a crowd in Bethany. And we've got a huge, massive crowd, hundreds of thousands -- we don't know the numbers.

They're hard to reconstruct. But there are occasion of which people will go up to 2 million people because as many as a quarter of a million animals could be sacrificed according to some historians in one Passover period. And it was often one animal for 10 people. So if you multiply that, you get as many as 2 million. That's maybe more likely hundreds of thousands of people, massive crowd in an around Jerusalem. Then you've got a crowd in Bethany.

So the next day, the crowd from Bethany comes on the way. Jesus leading that crowd back to Jerusalem, filling in some details, He would leave Bethany, come up the back side of the Mount of Olives, and down the front side of the Mount of Olives and toward the eastern gate of Jerusalem. On the way, He sends two of His disciples to a nearby village, a suburb. And He asks those disciples to go into this little village and go to a certain home, and there He will find a donkey and the colt of a donkey, tied to a post.

And the disciples go into that little village. They go to that home. They tell the owner of the home, "The Lord needs these animals. The owner probably followers of Jesus, quickly complied, gave them the animals. The disciples then take the animals. They threw their own outer garments over the colt and over the colt's mother. And Jesus gets on the colt. So when Jesus, leading this crowd from Bethany, meets the crowd coming out of Jerusalem, He is riding on the colt, with its mother alongside.

Most of the people who accompanied Jesus from Bethany, Scripture says, began to throw their cloaks down in front of Him like producing a red carpet kinda thing, and throwing palm branches down. And the crowd coming out of the city of Jerusalem are waving, cutting tree branches from the palm trees and waiving them, and then throwing them at His feet, creating this sort of royal road. This is the climax to a life of healing and a life of casting out demons and raising the dead and speaking profound truth.

So the Passover pilgrims come out. The ones from Bethany come in, just a massive, massive crowd. And what circulates through the crowd is that this man, Lazarus, has been raised from the dead. And there's more interest in Jesus than there's ever been at that moment. Massive enthusiasm engulfs the crowd. Everybody gets swept up in it. We all know that kinda marks or bruises attitude, the collective mob emotion. The two crowds come together. The enthusiasm is contagious.

Some people start to shout, "Hosanna, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." Even the king of Israel and the cry of the crowd escalates and escalates. And finally, they're all engulfed in it. We've seen this. This is like a riot. This is like a protest, only it's a positive one and not a negative one. We've even seen recently 100,000 people, 200,000 people marching in the street for some cause here in America or over in France. We're used to that. Well that's this kind of massive, uncontrollable event. And the point of it all, what's carrying the crowd away is that Jesus is the king. He is the Messiah. And in no way, does He deny the Hosannas. That is His final presentation.

And He's saying something by riding in on a colt, by the way. He is riding in on a donkey's colt, not a white horse. This is not how a typical conqueror would ride in. This is saying, in a sense, He comes not to make war, but He comes to make peace. He comes not to kill. He comes to die. So the final presentation has behind it the fulfilled prophecies.

Look at Verse 13, and we come to the second point, the fulfilled prophecies. When they took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began to cry out, "Hosanna, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord," that statement was right out of the prophecy of Zachariah, Zachariah 9:9. And the prophecy of Zachariah is this, "It is that rejoice greatly, oh daughter of Zion. Shout, oh daughter of Jerusalem. Behold the king comes unto thee. He is just in having salvation. Lowly riding upon an ass and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." To the image is from Zachariah 9:9.

The words, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord," are directly out of Psalm 1:18, Psalm 1:18, the halel, Verse 26, the last of the halel Psalms, the praise Psalms. Jews sang them all the time. They still do. And 1:18 is called "the conqueror's Psalm." So they know this is their conquering Messiah. They are singing the halel. They are reciting the words of the conqueror's Psalm while He, in posture, is fulfilling Zachariah 9:9.

Verse 14 comments on the fact that He came on a young donkey as fulfillment -- Verse 15 -- of Zachariah's prophecy that the king would come seated on a donkey's colt. So these two prophecies are fulfilled. The prophecy of Jesus' posture on a colt from Zachariah. And the cry of the crowd which is taken right out of Psalm 1:18-26. "This is the halel. This is the hail, the conquering hero, the Lord has come."

The phrase added even the king of Israel is not in Psalm 1:18. They do an interpretation of Psalm 1:18 with that comment. "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." They knew to be Messianic. So they add, "Yes, this is the king of Israel." So here is the coronation moment.

By the way, calculating from the prophecy of Daniel 9, in Daniel 9:24 to 27, Daniel said this event, the coming of the Messiah, in the official sense would occur 69 times seven years. Sixty-nine weeks of years. So that's 483 years, 69 times seven. Daniel said it would 483 years from the decree of

Ardisupsisto rebuild Jerusalem. That decree is 445.

That decree was what freed up, of course, the Jews in Babylonia in captivity to leave and go back and rebuild their city and their nation. Four-hundred and eight-three years from there can be calculated down to the ninth of Nison, A.D. 30. The ninth of Nison, A.D. 30. if you do all the calculations -- I won't take you through all of that -- we know exactly this day and it is exactly to the day, 483 years from the decree of Ardisupsis, exactly on schedule.

There's another fulfilled prophesy. On the colt, that's fulfilled prophesy. The crowd says exactly what the Old Testament says is the appropriate thing to say when the Messiah arrives. And the event occurs precisely at the moment it should occur, on the ninth of Nison, 30 A.D. when you do all of the necessary calculations. Now just to show you that Jesus wasn't fooled by this very superficial response, I want you to look at Luke 19.

This has to be taken into consideration at this moment if you're gonna understand the event. You pick it up at Verse 38 -- actually, you can see prior to that the talks about the colt and spreading their garments on the road. And as he was -- Verse 37 -- descended the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles they had seen. And these are the ones coming from Bethany with Him. And they're all saying -- and they probably launched the great Hosannas.

They're saying, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. And peace in Heaven and glory in the highest." And that's all Messianic stuff. And some of the Pharisees in the multitude, that are obviously colliding here, said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples. Tell them to stop this claiming that you're the Messiah." And Jesus answered and said, "I tell you if these become silent, the stones will cry out." And when He approached -- this is so interesting -- He saw the city and wept over it.

He wasn't caught up in the emotion of the event. He knew better. He wept. And He said, "If you had known in this day even you, the things which make for peace -- if you only knew the peace, the eternal piece, temporal peace and eternal peace that's available to you. If you only knew. But now they've been hidden from your eyes." That is a judicial judgment by God on an unbelieving nation. "You wouldn't believe and now you can't. For He says shall come and they'll come up on you when your enemies will throw up a bank before you and surround you."

That's a siege. It happened in 70 A.D., 40 years later. And _____ on every side. That's exactly what the Romans did. "And level you to the ground." That's what they did. "Your children within you and they will not leave in you one stone upon another." And they did that. They tore the city to the ground, and the wall because you did not recognize the time of the visitation. It isn't the Romans that are judging you, it's God that's judging you by use of the Romans. And then it goes on to say, "Enter

the temple and began to cast out those who were selling."

Judaism was apostate. The nation was apostate. This fickle kind of attitude that was going on -- this huge emotional movement that was launched on that day had nothing substantial behind it, and He knew it. He knew they were fickle. It might have been a triumphal entry in one sense. But in another sense, it was a tearful entry, a tearful entry. When a king came in to proclaim war, he rode a horse, a white horse.

Historians say that when a king rode a donkey he was coming in peace. There wasn't a single Roman soldier in a garrison. In the garrison, it was established in Jerusalem on duty that day who saw Jesus riding on a colt that would have thought that He looked like a threat. And He had no soldiers anyway. But the next time He comes, according to Revelation 19:11, it says, this, "Behold a white horse and He who sat on it is called faithful and true and in righteousness He judges and makes war."

This time He came in peace to die. The next time, He comes in war to kill. So the final presentation fulfills prophecies. A third point, the faithful's perplexity. And I think this is understandable. Verse 16, "These things His disciples did not understand at the first." How could they understand Him and they were being yanked from pillar to post. How could they sort it all out? One minute He was telling them, "I'm gonna die. I have to go to Jerusalem and I have to die." And Peter's saying, "Lord, no, you're not gonna die. We're not gonna let that happen. That's the wrong plan." Jesus says, "Get thee behind me, Satan Peter."

Next thing you know, He's healing people. He's raising the dead and they're thinking, "This is it. This is triumph. The Kingdom is gonna come." And then He goes back to saying He's going to die. Now they're coming into the city and it all looks like this is it. "The moment we've hoped for and prayed for. Forget all the death things. Forget the words of Thomas. Let's go to Jerusalem and die with Him. Look at this. This is phenomenal. He's gonna establish the Kingdom and we're all gonna reign with Him in that Kingdom."

And before they can barely catch their breath, it's apparent to Jesus that this is very fickle and that nothing has changed and the whole place is apostate. And the next moment they see Jesus cleaning the temple out, creating massive public conflict with the leaders of the temple operation that eventually escalates to the point where the crowd screams for His blood, the same that screamed, "Hosanna." And He winds up at the end of the week dead. No wonder on the road to Amass, they're saying, "It's over. That's the end. What's the point?"

They were perplexed. They were confused. They couldn't understand it. And they didn't, it says, until when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered -- Verse 16 -- that these things were written of Him and that they had done these things to Him. They didn't understand all of this. They didn't

understand the death of the Messiah. They didn't understand that He had to die until afterward. After it all was over and the Spirit of God came. Because when Jesus was glorified, He sent the spirit and the spirit, according to John 14:26, Jesus said, "Will teach you all things. Bring all things to your remembrance and the spirit will teach you the things concerning Me." When the spirit came, the light went on. They got it all. They understood the whole thing.

Now you have to understand, it seems easier for us to understand. We're on this side. We have the full revelation of this in four Gospels and all the epistles that explain it in the New Testament. They were dealing in the moment with things that were incomprehensible to them. Just didn't make sense until the spirit came and they understood. Now we understand. We're not confused about what was going on here. I'm not confused about Judas. I'm not confused about Jesus. I'm not confused about the triumphal entry. I know exactly what the events are because I have the written revelation of the Spirit of God and the illumination of the spirit in my heart.

I don't need to read the Gospel of Judas, the Gospel of Peter, the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Mary, or any other heretical Gnostic document. I'm not searching for the historical Jesus. I know where the historical Jesus lies. He lies in the pages of the Scripture, just exactly where God placed the divine revelation about Him. But they didn't have the Word of God. Talk about being emotionally jerked around. That was them. But from the faithful's perplexity, we look at the fickleness of the people.

Look at Verse 17. It saw the multitude who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead were bearing Him witness. They were saying, "This is the guy that did it. He raised that man from the dead." But this caused also the multitude who went and met Him because they heard that He'd performed this sign. There's the dead giveaway right there. There was this curious, fickle, thrill seeker mentality.

They were all there. They were in Galilee when He fed them all. They were in Galilee when He walked on the water and showed up the next morning. And all they wanted out of Him was another free meal. They were in Judea when He did all of His wonderful miracles of healing there. They were always the thrill seekers, always looking for the next miracle, wanting the next show. They are the same crowd that screamed for His blood and prefer Borabis, a terrorist, to be released to reek havoc in their midst again than to have Jesus released.

And if we meet the fickle people and the perplexed faithful, we come now in Verse 19 to the frustrated Pharisees. They're caught in the middle of this thing. We know how they feel about Him, because of our study of Luke. They want Him dead. They can't wait 'till He's dead. Go back to Chapter 11, Verse 53, "From that day on they planned together to kill Him."

And that was exactly the way God wanted it. Jesus needed to die on the Passover. He needed to die as a Pascal lamb, a Passover lamb on the Passover. The Jews didn't want that to happen. They wanted to avoid the crowd. They didn't want to kill Jesus when the crowd was there, especially when the whole world was going after Him. They are in a panic, but He is causing them to have to act.

Verse 19, the Pharisees said to one another, "Do you see that you're not doing any good. Nothing we have done has worked. Look, the world has gone after Him." They are really irate. They are really frustrated. They are really in a panic. Already Caiaphas, who was the high priest that year, said, "You know what's gonna happen to us," Verse 48, "if we let Him go on lie this all men are gonna believe in Him. And the Romans are gonna come and take away our place and our nation. We're gonna lose everything.

"The Romans are gonna come and get us. Because if everybody follows this Jesus, the Romans are gonna read that as a rebellion and an insurrection because He's a king. And they're all hailing this king. And Caesar's not gonna like that. And the Romans are gonna see that as a real revolution. And the Romans are gonna come and make war against us and we're gonna lose our position. We're gonna lose our place."

And they were appointed or allowed to be appointed in the positions they were in of power and money by the Romans. "We're gonna lose our nation. And we're gonna wind up getting killed and slaughtered at the hands of the Romans. This man keeps drawing people after Him."

So Caiaphas says, look," Verse 50, "it's better for one man to die for the people, than for the whole nation to perish. We've got to kill Him. If it's not Him, it's gonna be us. If it's not Him, it's gonna be us." Witlessly, not on his own initiative, Verse 51, this was a true prophesy that Jesus was, in fact, going to die for the nation, but not in the way that He _____.

Die for them spiritually, for their souls, not to preserve their physical life and position. They were in a frenzy. For this is what Jesus wanted. He wanted them to panic and to force His death so that would occur on Friday. This was critical in the plan of God. They would never determine when He would die. They had tried to do that before. They tried to kill Him one day in Nazareth and He passed through their midst because His time was not right.

This is the time. This is the hour. Not because they want it, but because God wants it, He wants it, and this is then when it will happen. So you see a confusion among the disciples. You see perplexity. They can't sort it all out. You see fickleness on the part of the people who one day are saying, "Hosanna," a few days later, "Crucify Him." Frustration on the part of the Pharisees. The little glimmer of blessing is in Verse 20.

Let's look at the following pagans. Trolling along in this crowd were some gentiles. People from pagan countries called Greeks or Gentiles here. Verse 20, there were certain Gentiles or Greek among those who were going up to worship at the feast. Remember, when they had the Passover, Jews came from everywhere. But these aren't Jews. These would be proselytes to Judaism, people who'd converted to Judaism somewhere in the Gentile world. And they joined the Jews to come to the Passover.

And so these Gentiles are curious. Having not lived Israel, they don't know all that Jesus has done. They're not eyewitnesses to any of this. They heard about Him raising this man from the dead. No doubt, they asked further questions. "Who is He? What has He done?" And they got some kind of a history of the amazing life and ministry of Jesus. So they came to Phillip, who they could see was associated with Jesus, working their way through the crowd from the _____ of Galilee. And they began to ask him saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus. We want to more about this. These things are so interesting to us."

And Phillip came and told Andrew. And Andrew and Phillip came and they told Jesus. Phillip probably went to Andrew and said, "Hey, what do I do, man? I don't know what to do with these people. There's this group of Gentiles that want to see Jesus, and what do I do?" And Andrew said, "Well, let's go tell Jesus and see what He wants to do. We don't know who they are." But they obviously had become proselytes to Judaism. They had embraced Judaism.

So they came to the Passover event, got caught up in the mob, heard all of the celebrations of Messiah. They were now in the messianic mentality. Because when you become a Jew, you embrace the messianic hope. They want to know if, in fact, Jesus is the Messiah. And they desire an interview. There's something about this that's so amazing to me. This is like a rebuke to the whole nation of Israel. The only people who want to talk to Jesus aren't even Jews.

What does that tell you? The mob is obviously a Jewish people. They're crying about Jesus being the Messiah. They're hailing Him as the king of Israel. They're in the middle of the emotion and the celebration. But the people who want to talk to Him are Gentiles. And they're just awakening to the consciousness that Jesus could be the Messiah. This is like a preview of the church. This is like a preview of the Lord turning from Israel to the world.

They came. And I'm sure Jesus received them. I actually think the conversation in Verse 23 and following was with them. I think when Andrew and Phillip came and told Jesus, these people were with them. Because what He says was so important for them to hear. Their point, "We want to know about Jesus." Come on. "Him that comes unto Me, I will in now ways cast out." I'm sure they were brought along to hear this fatal prediction.

The last point, sixthly, the fatal prediction. Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." This is it. This is the hour. Many times He had said, "My hour is not yet come." He'd said it over and over again. This time, He says, "the hour has come. This is it." For the Son of Man, that great messianic title from Daniel 7:13 and 14, "For the Son of Man which they would know about," because now remember, they have proselyted to Judaism. "The Son of Man is now to be exalted. The conqueror is to be glorified. This is my time," He says.

But not in the way that they expected it. Because in Verse 24, He said, "Truly, truly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit." He's talking about His death now. In the middle of this explosion of emotional affirmation, He talks about His death. He's weeping. We know that from Luke 19. He knows this is fickle, temporary. But He has a little group there that are legitimate. They want the message, not just the emotion of the moment. And so He turns their vision for the Messiah. He turns their anticipation and their interest to His death.

"I say to you," -- He doesn't say this to the crowd. We know He doesn't say it to the crowd because in Verse 29, "a multitude, therefore, who stood by and heard it was saying that it had thundered. Others were saying, 'An angel has spoken to Him.'" Somehow, the multitude is now disconnected. There is tearing noise. And even in the end of that noise is the voice of God out of Heaven. But I think that may be an indication that there was separation.

He's talking to this group that's interesting and He's saying, "Okay, you're the ones that need to know this. If I don't die, there is no life for anyone. As long as the grain remains in the granary, it is preserved by its outside shell. But it can't produce." It only has the power to produce itself, any grain, when it goes into the ground, when the shell decomposes. And in the decomposing of the shell, the rotting away of the shell, the dying of that external grain, the life inside begins to flourish. And that is a beautiful analogy. Grain alone has no fruit, produces nothing. It has to die. That's what planting seed is all about. Then it produces and multiples.

Jesus is saying, "I have to die. If I don't die, I abide alone." If Jesus doesn't go to the cross and die, it's real simple, there are no people in Heaven ever, no souls redeemed. There wouldn't be anybody there from Adam to the end of human history if Jesus doesn't die. Nobody in the Old Testament is gonna go to Heaven. And nobody living since the coming of Christ would go to Heaven. There is no spiritual harvest apart from death. He must die if anyone is to live.

And so He says, "Here's the Gospel. The message is the cross. I must die. I must die. But out of My death will come life, My own life, and your life as well." His example could give no life. His teaching could give no life. His miracles could give no spiritual life. His transfiguration could give no life. Had He been translated into Heaven like Enoch, or had He been taken to Heaven in a chariot of fire like Elijah, had He been escorted like a golden grain of wheat, He would have remained forever in

Heaven alone and there would be no redeemed humanity.

There would be no people in Heaven worshiping him forever and ever. But He saw a spiritual harvest coming out of His death. And that was the joy that was set before Him. And then he told them and us, "He who loves his life, loses it. He who hates his life in this world shall keep it to eternal life." Now what are you gonna do about it? I'm gonna die and you're gonna have to die, too. Here's the principal, oft repeated. We've seen it again and again.

Luke 9, "If any man come after Me, let him deny himself whoever loses his life keeps it. And whoever keeps his life loses it." Matthew 10, Matthew 16, Mark 8, Luke 14. It's all over everywhere. "The point is this, if you want the life that My death brings, then you give up your life. You deny yourself. You take up your cross. You follow me. You turn from your sin and your personal ambition and personal will, and you fall at My feet, embrace me as Lord and savior."

He even calls it -- Verse 25 -- "He, who hates his life in this world shall keep it 'till life eternal." You want life eternal? Then you have to turn your back on your life in this world. Recognize you are a sinner, that everything in this life is folly, abandoned yourself to Christ. Lose your life. Give it up. We've looked at that so many times.

"I'm gonna die to give you life and you're gonna have to die to receive that life." "But," Verse 26, "if anyone serves Me, let him follow Me and where I am, there shall My servant also be." What's the end reward of this? Why would I do this? Why would I hate my life in this world? Why would I give up my life and forfeit it to embrace Jesus Christ? Because if I serve Him, if I follow Him, I'll be where He is. Where's that? Heaven. It's about Heaven.

This is always the promise of the Gospel. It's not about a happy life here. It's about Heaven. It's about eternal life in the glorious presence of God. What's the payoff? Eternal Heaven. And what is eternal Heaven? The end of Verse 26, "If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him." If you ever wonder what Heaven is, it's where God honors the sinner, saved and cleansed. Staggering, staggering thought.

They came to the disciples and said, "We want to know about Jesus. We want to talk to Him." "Sure, here He is." He takes them to the cross. "I have to die. Then you have to die. But the payoff, you get to go with Me where I am. And there, be honored forever by God." As He said in John 5, "Whoever honors Me, honors My Father. Whoever honors My Father, My Father will forever honor." What we will experience in Heaven is the honor that comes to us from God. That's the greatness of saving grace.

Lord, as we come to the conclusion of our service this morning, we feel a little bit of a sense like we were there that day, experiencing something of the incredible drama of the moment. Seeing the

component parts kind of unfold, the attitude of the fickle people, the attitude of the perplexed disciples, the attitude of the frustrated and angry pharoses, the horrible attitude of the hateful betraying Judas. But the window in all of it is the love of Mary, so lavish, so extravagant.

And the true interest of the few gentile Jewish proselytes who asked the right question and got the right answers and were led by Jesus to the cross and to personal repentance and abandonment and the willingness to follow Him, to obey Him, and thus, to enter into eternal life, to be honored forever by God. What a great, great glorious moment in an otherwise terribly tragic and disappointing day.

We see Jesus doing personal evangelism, promising Heaven to those who will give up their lives to embrace His life, His death, His resurrection. That _____ message and bring it even today hoping that there will be some like those who will hear it and believe.

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