

Jesus' Trial

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[0 : 00] So, page 1021, we're in Mark 14, and we're looking at that passage.! Thank you for the word, and we pray for our hearts now as we meet you in the word, as we meet you.

We pray that you'd speak to our hearts, and that you'd change us. Where we've thought wrong things about you, I pray that you'd correct us. Where we've thought wrong things about ourselves, or not understood ourselves, I pray that you'd correct us, shape us so that we might become more like Jesus ourselves.

We ask for this in the name of Christ. Amen. We now live in a world, I think, where if you think about truth, so often, maybe this is on the news, on social media, lots of different things, where we don't, we're kind of living in an age where we don't really know what to believe.

You might have seen that. We don't know, do we? If statistics are manipulated, we might have thought that from politicians or others. Or even now, we're even concerned about when we see a video or an image, is that real?

Or has it been altered by AI? So we don't even know if we look at a picture, is that a real picture?

And I suppose, what I want to just to begin with is, you know, our response to truth is, we're kind of suspicious about anything we, things that we hear, things that we see, things that we read.

[1 : 53] We're more suspicious than ever about all of that, because there's this kind of disinformation and you hear all these quotes of fake news and things like that. If we do, if that is the way that the world is working now, I think we have to, all of us, we have to get better at discerning the truth, making, being better at making judgments about what we hear.

However, I think, and I think this is still true, regardless of all this sort of suspicion, one of the things that influences us more than anything is not actually the facts, it's not actually what you hear, it's who is telling us it.

That is true. If we know someone has a history of distorting the truth, then instantly, before they've even spoke, we're kind of a little bit suspicious about what they're going to say.

What is their character? Who else listens to them? Do we trust other people who listen to them? Do they have trustworthy followers? We need to become discerning and informed about who we listen to.

Is it worth listening to? You know, Christianity is centered on the person of Jesus Christ, and everyone has to make a discernment, a judgment about him.

[3 : 21] Everyone, without exception. You have to make a discernment, a judgment about who is Jesus. And think about what he says, who he is, and what he's done.

And come to a conclusion, actually, about that. What we have in our Bible reading this morning, we see lots of people making judgments, or who have already made judgments and discerned things about this man.

Lots of things. Lots of things. We see, and we see that in this morning's reading, we see lots of them are just fake responses. They're wrong about him. Either they don't understand him, they don't know him, they haven't listened to him, or they're just, they've been swept up with the noise. It's easy to listen to what other people say and get swept up with what they think, and maybe you believe that they're more trustworthy. When it comes to Jesus, when it comes to Jesus Christ, and this is true for us, this is, the reality is, actually, what is important for each of us is not what everyone else thinks, but it's about what you think about Jesus.

The personal, your personal understanding of what you think about Jesus Christ is important. It's really important. You must discern and think and actually ask the questions for your own heart about what you make of this man.

[4 : 52] Decide who he is. What we see is three, I'm going to call them fake, or fake reactions. We see fake affection for Jesus in this reading.

We see a fake trial, and then we see a fake judgment. Fake affection, fake trial, and fake judgment. What's incredible, as we look in on Judas' moment of betrayal, and through to his arrest, through to his trial, what's incredible is this first thing that we're going to think of is the fake affection.

It's about the act of betrayal as Judas, you know, goes through with it. Verse 43, we see Judas appears as Jesus has just finished talking.

And what we see is that Judas has arranged a signal with the armed crowd that come along with him. The signal is surprising. You look with me, I think it's in verse 44.

You see where he starts speaking. Judas is now named as the betrayer. And he says to the crowd of armed men, The one I kiss is the man.

[6 : 08] Arrest him and lead him away under guard. Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, Rabbi, and kissed him. There are lots of different words for kiss or kissed in Greek.

It's connected to different words that we have in Greek for love. But the word here is a very affectionate term. When the sinful woman washes Jesus' feet and wipes them dry with her hair, it's the same word.

She kisses his feet. And the same word for kiss there is used for the sinful woman when she kisses Jesus' feet as when Judas kisses Jesus' face.

When the prodigal son returns home and his dad runs out to greet him with open arms wide and he kisses his son to welcome him back home, it is the same word. It is a kiss that comes from the deep love between close friends and among relatives.

There is something really sad about this moment. Judas uses a moment of deep affection to betray.

[7 : 25] And Jesus lets him. You know, it's worth remembering the mind of Jesus towards his betrayer Judas. It's worth remembering Jesus didn't hate Judas.

He loved him. He knew him. They knew each other. They'd walked together for three years. They would have known how each other liked their breakfast cooked. They would have known the colour of each other's eyes.

They would have known the signs. They were tired and needed a rest. They knew when one another needed space in a moment alone. They probably knew how each other smelled. They were close.

Jesus and his 12 friends. Jesus, this last moment of affection that Jesus has with his friend of three years, Judas, because Jesus still loves him, Judas uses to betray him.

It is sad. It's so ironic, this affectionate moment, but yet it leads to Jesus' arrest.

[8 : 30] And we know, we kind of know that Judas doesn't actually feel the same way in his heart. You see, he shows affection, yet what does Judas expect?

Judas is expecting a set too. He's brought an armed crowd with him, ready for a barman. So, it's like cloak and dagger.

He's got the crowd all with clubs and swords in the shadows, hiding, and he approaches his friend of three years with a kiss, all knowing that he's going to get his crowd out to arrest him.

Jesus says, am I leading a rebellion? You come out for me with swords and clubs to capture me. Every day I was with you and you didn't arrest me.

He's saying, you've never really understood me, have you, Judas? All these years, you've never really understood me. Even now, you're expecting a fight.

[9 : 35] Even now, you're expecting that Jesus is going to change and he's going to abandon all those principles he's had for the last three years. Pull out and they're going to have a big scrap in the garden.

Judas never fully loves Jesus or understands him. When I was younger, I don't know if you ever, one of the things I used to enjoy doing, used to enjoy sort of getting your sweets weighed out at the corner shop.

I used to love doing that. There was one sweet, you can only really do this once because it didn't work, was there was a sweet called Cherry Lips. Do you remember Cherry Lips? They weren't a real sweet, they were a joke sweet.

I mean, they're called Cherry Lips, so you expect them to taste of cherry, but they were red. But actually, they were fake sweets and they tasted like soap. So it kind of only worked once.

Because once one kid's done it, it doesn't work the next day if another child buys them because everybody's already tried the soap sweets the day before. Some kids did try it, just wasted their money.

[10:44] You know, what we see here is, that's what Judas is like. Judas is like, he's like a Cherry Lips sweet.

He presents himself as sweet and nice and wants to show affection, but inside his heart is just sour. His heart is not far from sweet.

Judas shows Jesus' fake affection. The reality is, Judas probably still liked him, probably still had a high value of him.

There's kind of a degree of respect there, but there's no love. He's like the fake sweet. He's bitter. Do we get Jesus?

Do you get him? Do you understand him? Do you understand what he's about and why he came? It's important to discern and get that right. And here's why it's important to understand Jesus.

[11:47] Here's why. If you have an idea why he came, maybe you've all got an idea why he came. If you have an idea why he came, but you've been misled for whatever reason, you will only be left with disappointment when he doesn't meet your expectations of what you think he's here for.

You will be. Because he came for a particular purpose. So if you've got him wrong, you will be disappointed. Judas has got it wrong. He's disappointed. He's bitter with Jesus.

You might respect him. You might hold him in high regard as a teacher or a man of great wisdom. Maybe you think he's some sort of revolutionary. But if any thoughts you have about Jesus are not based on the truth of who he says he is, your affection will drop.

Your respect will be as changeable as the wind. And so you'll love for him. When the hard realities of life hits us, you'll respond to Jesus like Judas does.

Maybe with outward affection, but inwards, your heart is far from sweet. So we need to discern.

[13:00] To not have a superficial, flimsy love, but have one that's based on who he really is. And if you do that, you won't be disappointed. You won't be disappointed because what he'll do is what you expect of him.

Not surprised by him. So that's the first thing, is true affection, but not fake affection. Secondly, the thing that we're going to look at is the fake trial.

The fake trial. He's arrested and then he's taken straight to trial. Notice how those who put Jesus on trial, they didn't even go and bother getting Jesus themselves.

You know, they think that that's beneath them. That's how far their ego is inflated. And what we see is they are narcissistic bullies with one agenda and determined to come what may.

They will get what they want from the evening. The reason we see that and I think that what comes through is because in the trial they break every rule in the book.

[14:04] Every rule about Jewish trials is broken according to their own Jewish laws. The way they go about things, it isn't right. And they know that. Here's a few things.

Trials were supposed to be held in temple grounds. This is in someone's back garden. It's in the courtyard. It's in someone's back garden. So straight away this was illegal.

You can't do that. It has to be in the temple grounds. It's written in their Jewish law. Second thing, holding a trial during Passover was strictly forbidden and it's Passover evening.

It's not just... It was forbidden during the whole Passover week and this is on the night of Passover and they're holding a trial. Trials are supposed to be in the day, never at night.

After you'd had a trial, they were supposed to have two days period of reflection. That was supposed to allow the whole council to see if mercy from the court could arise.

[15:01] That doesn't happen. None of that happens. They go against their own laws. It's a sham. It's a total kangaroo court. Verse 55, you see they look for evidence against Jesus.

They can't find any, no evidence and so they make it up. They can't even make evidence upright. They can't even make it up. They try and make it up but when they make it up that all their false testimony is against him, they don't agree.

So, they can't even like, they can't even do a false trial correctly. That's how inadequate and how ridiculous this whole thing is. We read verse 57, then some stood up.

They gave this false testimony against him. We heard him say, I will destroy this temple made with human hands and in three days we'll build another not made with human hands. Jesus didn't say that.

He said something very similar but it's a misquote. He never said I, he just says this temple will. So, he never said that. It's like fake news. It's like clickbait where there's no news story but fake headlines to grab your attention.

[16:07] there are no accusations on Jesus. They've got nothing on him. Absolutely nothing. They have to make it up. Here's the interesting thing about Jesus' trial.

Because they had nothing on him, he could have gotten out at any moment. He could have walked on multiple occasions because they have nothing to charge him with.

You see, Jesus has a legal right here, a legal right, to remain silent. That's the way the court system worked. I think it's, you know, I don't know if it's similar now but in the way that the Jewish court system worked that any accusation that you had to respond to needed two to three witnesses who were in agreement.

But that doesn't happen. We read, none of them agree. So, the testimonies don't match up. He doesn't and he needn't respond to anything they say.

That was his legal right. That's why we know in Isaiah 53, 7, this was prophesied that he stays silent. He doesn't have to say a word.

[17:17] Jesus could have walked here. He could have walked out. He doesn't need to respond to the accusation. Legally, right now, he could save himself. But he's so determined to get to the cross.

He's so determined to get to the cross. His mind is made up that he will, what we're going to see as we look is that Jesus will implicate himself again with truth to get there.

That's what happens at the trial. He implicates himself with truth. He knows how they're going to respond. Imagine doing that. Imagine being in court and accused of things you didn't do or say and then what you say you implicate yourself purposefully.

It is just yet another example of Jesus' determination to save you. It's a total fake trial. He could walk away right now. But he takes the cup.

He continues to drink the cup. Remember last week we saw he said he prayed that if the hour might pass from him at the end of the chapter you can look with me in this in just the passage before.

[18:34] The hour has come in verse 41. The hour begins when Judas arrives. He drinks the cup slowly right until his death.

But he will drink damnation dry. And he drinks it again. He's surrounded by darkness and temptation.

But he keeps drinking. As we know as I've said he doesn't do that. The high priest Caiaphas knows where this is going.

He can see what's going on. He knows and anticipates if I don't do something here Jesus could walk free. He could walk away scot-free.

And so another what happens we see another highly illegal move in the court. The judge imagine this you know the judge comes down off the bench and starts trying to pin accusations on the accused.

[19:42] Even in the British court you can't do that. The judge can't come down. He's the one who's listening to everything. He can't come down and start asking questions to the accused. It's illegal. If you've ever seen a court drama that never happens because it just wouldn't be true of reality.

He's not allowed to pin questions on the accused without evidence. he's looking for an angle to tear him down because he's scared that Jesus is going to walk away. He goads him. What does he say? He says to him are you not going to answer?

Jesus doesn't have to answer. What is this testimony? There is no testimony because none of them agree that these men are bringing against you. He's pushing him knowing that Jesus doesn't have to answer. Can I get him to say something?

Caiaphas is fretting. He knows if he doesn't try a new tactic Jesus is going to walk away. So he switches instead of looking for evidence from others of why not ask him himself.

And so he does based on a question not about this, not an accusation this, it's just asking Jesus who he is. You see that? Verse 62 Are you the Messiah, the son of the blessed one?

[20:57] Essentially are you that God's anointed, the Messiah, the Christ, the blessed one, the son of God? I want to stress here Jesus doesn't have to answer because what is happening is illegal.

Jesus answers. He answers. We're going to look in a second at what he says. He stays silent where there's a false accusation but he answers when the question concerns who he is. He answers when the question concerns who he is. It's worth just pausing and reflecting here that Jesus could walk away but he chooses to engage Caiaphas.

He says I am. I am, says Jesus. Even that verse in itself, Exodus 3, Moses meets God at the burning bush, God's name, I am who I am.

Jesus answers I am. He's identifying himself in the answer with the living God. He could have stopped there but he doesn't. he says, I am God.

[22 : 12] And you know what else, Caiaphas? He says, you will see me, the Son of Man, sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven. You know what else?

Caiaphas has him with I am. He goes, you know what else, Caiaphas? He's like, I sit at the right hand of the Mighty One and he makes him full blown, I am equal to the living God.

And the one who comes on the clouds of heaven, that will be the one who comes to judge the world. He's equal to God and he's going to come and judge. At three levels, Jesus is making his identity as clear as possible.

There is no ambiguity. I'm not just the human Christ but I'm God himself. He blows the roof off the court. What Jesus says is a total scandal.

The room's filled with hatred. It's looked like a circus. You know, Caiaphas 63, I mean it's kind of, he tears his clothes, there's outrage, the gesture from the top dog, you can imagine everybody, it's like a pack of wolves.

[23 : 19] He incites the court. Verse 64, you've heard the blasphemy. The high priest's eyes light up. We've got him. We've got him and he's got everything he needs.

To get rid of Jesus. They know what the law says, anyone who curses their God, anyone who blasphemes in the name of the Lord will be put to death. Jesus implicates himself with truth.

The truth that comes from his own mouth witnesses against him. Just by saying who he is. it is easier sometimes to digest a lie.

Sometimes it's the truth that's hated because it's harder to handle. This is a fake judgment because he's condemned to death for the truth.

God is good. It's the thing that is the is the thing that is the truth. The idea that Jesus is God is still an outrage.

[24 : 33] It's still an outrage. Unlike the court in session, each of us must hold like a mini court in our minds and assess and discern and judge what Jesus says about himself here.

is he a liar this is a question we all have to ask is Jesus a liar is he like a trumped up nutcase who needs a psychological review is that Jesus is he a liar or is he who he says he is you see it's easier it's much easier to put Jesus in the nutcase category because it relegates him to an insignificant person character of history that's just had too much written about him that's what it does if we put him in that category but but you see the reason if he's God it causes outrage if he said if he is who he says he is because it means if you think about if you talk about Jesus the man no one's offended oh yeah just an ordinary man that people have misunderstood if he is just if he's just a man people are not offended if you start talking about Jesus as God and if you start talking about Jesus as Lord if you start talking about Jesus of Lord and heaven and earth who created you at me what it means is that we have a responsibility before him it means what he says has a bearing on your life it means that every day or every person one day will have to bow the knee to him that's what is offensive they hear the whole room hear that and they think we're not bound to him you're not going to tell me how to live you're not going to tell me what you're telling me I've got to bow down to you that's what people find offensive that Jesus says that he's God the reality is the truth this is where the rubber hits the road in everyone's life that everyone we must make an assessment of who Jesus is or a judgment if you will of what Jesus claims and this is where you end up is Jesus a deluded blasphemer like the high priest makes out or is he who he said he was is he the son of man who sits at the right hand of God the father and is equal or will he come to judge on the clouds of heaven who is Jesus to you who is Jesus to you Jesus knew all this was going to happen he knew it because it was the plan he said all this because it had to be fulfilled Jesus is not trying to pull the wool over your eyes but he's revealing through his words and through his actions that he is who he said he was he is who he said he is he's the living God come down from heaven to earth to save you people today will still show insincere affection for Jesus people will lie about him and people will make false judgments about him maybe at some point in your life you've done that too and so how

do you discern jesus today do you go with these responses or do you go with jesus do you is he who he said he was if he is who he said he is that will change and you believe that it will change your life it will change because it means that he is your god he is your savior he is your lord and he has he says that he'll by the power of the holy spirit he'll make you new worth considering today who is jesus is he who he said he is let me pray almighty god we come to you today as we read this passage it's hard to read some of it because of how much you suffered we see you beaten we see you you um treat disgracefully we see the illegality of everything that happened we see the misunderstanding of who you are um and we know in our own heart that there's times in our life when each of us have done that ourselves when we have had that kind of insincere affection for you where we we said outwardly we looked outwardly what we said all the right things but in heart inside our hearts were far from you and we didn't want to do what you said we didn't want to live like that um we believed lies about you we followed the crowd and we made judgments about you and we're sorry we thank you that you've given us your word you've told us and you've given us of your holy spirit to teach us about who you really are and i just pray for our hearts that um more and more increasingly for each of us here for our community that you'd reveal yourself so that we could truly understand and know you more to know you better and have that living personal relationship with you um that knows no limits and so um where we've been proud um humble us forgive us and shape us so that you would um be involved in our lives and that we turn to you in every moment of the day we ask for this um in the name of your son amen you