

John (Part Twenty-Six)

John 17:22 - 18:28 Jesus Christ's Purposeful and Voluntary Sacrifice

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The last time we left off near the end of John the 17th chapter. I believe we were specifically up to somewhere around verses 20 to 23. Just recall that John 17 is a prayer of Jesus, the prayer that He made just prior to being arrested, and His prayer falls basically into three divisions.

The first division is He is praying for the glorification of the Father and Himself and what is just about to take place, that is, in His crucifixion. Secondly, He prays for the disciples, those that God had given to Him during His lifetime. Then thirdly, He prays for those who are going to be converted as a result of the word, as He puts it, of the disciples. So He is in effect praying for you and me in the third part of this prayer.

And so this ought to have at least some additional interest to you because of His prayer for you and me, and it certainly points out His confidence in God's purpose being carried forward. Because here He was facing a death, it certainly was not going to be pleasurable in any way, and one could very easily think that this is the end. I have lived and I have carried out my purpose, but it is kind of the end. But He was looking forward to not only His resurrection, but the continuing life of the church all the way up to the consummation of the age, which is the period of time that you and I are living in. So He had complete faith in the future, that God's purpose was going to go on and that what He was going to go through was just another step, another stage in the great purpose that God was working on.

It certainly shows a way that you and I have to adjust our thinking to. God's thinking in reference to time is certainly a lot different from ours. We think in terms of minutes and days, sometimes weeks, sometimes years. And then if we really have a long-range vision, we might even be thinking off a couple of years, five years, 10 years. But it says that 1,000 years are with the Lord as a day. He probably thinks in 1,000 year segments the same way that you and I think about a day, and that is hard for us to grasp because we are so

concerned about the immediate. But here is God, thinking in terms of thousands of years, and that is difficult for you and me to grasp.

But that is the way it is and so we have to adjust our thinking that way too. When we get sick and we expect God to heal us; when we are having financial problems and we expect God to prosper us; we are having difficulty in relationships with other people and we expect God to solve those difficulties; when we get frustrated with ourselves because we are not growing or overcoming as rapidly or as easily as we think that we should and we wish God would come to our aid and just give us an infusion of faith, of love, some kind of spiritual strength. And just like David, I think I read this verse in the last sermon that I gave, he says there, I think it is in Psalm 40, "I waited and waited" and then finally God came to his assistance.

Well, God is thinking in terms of 1,000 years and you get frustrated that way. Boy, I can get lost in 1,000 years. I can live and die. And it is no wonder He says that our days are just like the grass of the field. We spring up and we are nice and green, the sun comes out and we begin to wilt, and it is all over inside of a day.

I just happened to think of another verse in regard to this. How when God told Adam, "In the day that you eat thereof, you shall surely die." And Adam did die—in 960 years. It was one day as God reckons time. And in the way God reckoned time, why, he literally died in that one day. He did not live out even the 1,000 years.

John 17:20-21 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one as You, Father are in Me, and I in You, that that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me."

The interesting thing about this is the unity that He is praying for, and that it is that they all, meaning you and me, may be one as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You.

Now, the unity that He is praying for here is not the administrative unity or organizational unity that anybody can put together. I mean, there are businesses, corporations that have organization and they are unified in their

purpose. They are all trying to make a lot of money, they are all trying to beat the competition. They are all trying to be number one. They are trying to monopolize all the business that they possibly can. And the men and women on those teams can be well organized, they can administrate themselves well because they have something that they want to accomplish. Why even thieves can get together if they have an interest in accomplishing the robbing of a bank. They can get together and they can have an organization or administrative unity and they can work real hard in accomplishing that.

Well, that is not what He is talking about here. The kind of unity that He is talking about is one of relationships, personal relationships with one another. That is what He means when He says "that they may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You" It says back in John the first chapter that His only Son, the one who was in the bosom of the Father, declared Him to us. And it means a personal intimate relationship, like somebody is hugging you into your bosom.

That is the kind of unity that They had. They were one in everything. They were not just one in the carrying out of some kind of a project that They were working on. They had agreed in everything and They carried that agreement so that They really loved one another, honored one another, respected one another, glorified one another. They were not trying to compete with one another. And even though They were on the same team and trying to accomplish basically the same things, They did not try to pull the rug out from under one another. They were unified in every way.

A second very interesting thing is that last line in verse 21, "that the world may believe that You sent Me." That is an interesting statement because what He is saying is that the world is going to believe that God is in us because of the unity. You need to think about that and sort of expand your thinking out in a historical perspective over thousands of years. Men have simply never have been able to get along together. You know, it is the blacks against the whites, against the yellows, against the reds. It is this language against that language. It is this religion against that religion. It is this business against that business. Mankind has an adversarial relationship with one another. Mankind is always competing and competition necessarily involves enmity. Satan's spirit is dominating this world.

It says in Romans 8:7 that "the carnal mind is enmity against God." It is enmity also against each other. And cooperation is not the byword of the world, it is competition, and that just naturally leads to warfare. Warfare in business, warfare on the athletic field, warfare when you sit down to play cards, play a game. You know that is true. You can hardly sit down to play a game of Risk without getting a little bit hot under the collar. That game of Risk became so hot at one time, way back in the late 60s and early 70s, they had to kind of ban it from campus because people got hot under the collar.

Well, all of these things of course, have led to warfare. What God is working in you and me is something that has never been accomplished anywhere in any kind of an organization. And that is that there is not only organization in terms of administering toward a given end, accomplishing a goal, but there is also genuine love between those who are participants in that organization. It is just another way of saying: "By this all men know you because you love the brethren." Jesus just put it in a different context, that is all. So He prays that there would be that kind of unity.

I believe I read a couple of scriptures and I think it is good to go back and review them in the book of Ephesians in chapter 2. This was a few years later, probably about 20 years or so, after Jesus uttered what He did in John the 17th chapter. Here we have Paul writing to a Gentile church. So he says,

Ephesians 2:11 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision.

See there it is, the haves against the have nots. So the Jews called the Gentiles the Uncircumcision. And of course, the Uncircumcision called the Jews the Circumcision, but they probably made an epithet out of it. Then it became a term of disdain.

Ephesians 2:12-14 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the

world. But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far off [that is, the Gentiles, the uncircumcised] have been made near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace.

If there had not been warfare, why would he even make that kind of a statement? If there was not competition, if there was not enmity, if there was not antagonism, he would not have had to have made that kind of a statement.

Now, peace with whom? First of all, peace with God. Circumcised or uncircumcised, all have been at war with God (Romans 8:7). And so Christ becomes the means of peace. He is the Mediator. He is the one in between two parties who have been at war and He knows them both. He is the friend of both and He wants to work toward the reconciliation of both. Then there also, of course, is the enmity between the uncircumcised and the circumcised, between the Gentile and the Israelite. And they have been at war.

Ephesians 2:14-16 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one [body, His body, the body of Christ], and has broken down the middle wall of separation [separation implies enmity], having abolished in His flesh the enmity [that is, while He was a man He provided the means for there to be a reconciliation between the two warring parties], that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God. . .

He is talking about two reconciliations there: all of mankind to God and then eventually all of mankind to one another. And in what body is this being done? It is in the church. Mankind, without the Spirit of God, without Jesus Christ, has never been able to have peace. And so what God is doing, He is calling people from all over the world. It does not matter what color, what race, what economic or social status, it does not matter what language people talk, God is gradually calling people out of these. He is adding them to the one body and they are being reconciled within that one body. He is making one Family—His Family—out of what were formerly warring peoples, competitive people.

Incidentally, have you heard the cries that have gone up from, especially, the people who are directly affected by the Iraqis shooting of that Exocet missile at the start? The cries are for blood. Let us get the Iraqis now, which is a natural human reaction.

Ephesians 2:16 . . . that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

That is what He is praying for here in John 17. And it is this unity of very diverse peoples that is taking place within the church and is going to show to the world that God indeed is in us.

John 17:22 "And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one."

That is such an interesting statement too. It says "the glory which You gave Me I have given them." And the reason is "that they may be one just as We are one." Here is what I get from that. What is the glory that He had that He has given to us? Well, basically, it is this: that He has passed on to us the responsibility that was given to Him by the Father.

He started this chapter by talking about glory, did He not? He asked that God be glorified and that He Himself also be glorified. Now the glory would be that Christ would finish the work, we might say, in a blaze of glory and that that glory would be given to God. That is the glory that He has given to you and me. The glory is that we have picked up the work that He was doing. Now, He finished His part, His earthly part. It was the work that He did that brought Him glory. It was the work that He did that brought His Father glory, which included the crucifixion. And now we have been given that glory and that glory is to bring glory to the Father by doing the work.

There is a second part of this and that is that in doing the work, it was a major instrument in unifying us. We are all involved in doing the same thing. Remember, Mr. Armstrong always used to say, he put it in a slightly different way, he said that God has given us the work to do in order to perfect us or to qualify us. It is the means through which or by which we receive salvation. It is just another way of saying basically the same thing. Another way of saying it is this, that we are saved by the work that we do.

Now, do not take that the wrong way. I do not mean that that earns us salvation, that it is in doing the work that it qualifies us. Let me give you an example.

Probably the clearest example in all the Bible is Noah. Noah was given a work to do. That work has brought him glory ever since that thing was completed. For all eternity, men will be reading about the ark that Noah built to bring honor to him. Now, the work that he did was to build an ark. There also may have been verbal preaching as well, it was connected to it, but that is not emphasized in the Bible as much as the building of the ark was. Then once he had completed his work, the work that he completed became the means of his salvation because he got in the ark and he rode out the Flood. Thus, Mr. Armstrong came to the conclusion that it is those who are doing the work that God is going to save, and that in turn is going to bring glory to us and it will glorify the Father because the work is to point out who the true God is and what His message is, what He is doing on earth.

John 17:23 "I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one [that is, in the one body], and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me."

That is another way of saying the same thing He said in verse 21, "that the world may believe that You sent Me." And so it is the doing of this work that unifies us and also brings us the glory and brings God the glory.

John 17:24 "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world."

Now, let us add a couple of things to this. Another way of putting what I said a little bit earlier regarding the glory is this: it is the glory that comes from being His witness. "You are My witnesses" (Isaiah 43). It is the glory of being His witness. This includes a number of things. All we have to do is look at Christ and we get an idea of where the glory comes from. Right in this chapter, His glory comes from bearing the cross that He had to endure.

Then our glory is also going to come from bearing the cross that we have to endure.

The bearing of the cross is the circumstances that come into our life as a result of our conversion, as a result of God's calling. Now, the bearing of that cross is not a momentary thing. It is not something that takes place within a few hours. It is the bearing of all the difficulties that take place over years and years from the time that we are called. This is a hard task, but nonetheless, the harder the task, the greater the glory, the greater the achievement, the greater the honor. And so our glory is going to come from the doing of the work, or another way of putting it, of bearing the cross that we have been given to bear.

And then secondly is, that the glory will come as a result of God being recognized as being in our lives. Another way of saying it would be this in John 3. "Nicodemus said to Christ, 'We know that You are a Teacher come from God, because no man can do these things that You do.'" That glorified both the Father and the Son. It was His witness that brought that glory because the Father was recognized through the Son. Now that is what will bring us glory as well. So it is in the bearing of our responsibilities. And secondly, the fact that the Father is recognized in our lives; and then He prays that we also share His glory.

I am going to take you to a few verses. First of all, back in II Timothy 2.

II Timothy 2:11-12 [notice the way Paul put this] This is a faithful saying [it is true, it is right]: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. [notice the parallels here in the sharing of glory] If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

And if we do as Christ did within the limits of our abilities, then we will share the glory with Him.

Romans 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time [that is, bearing our cross now] are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

I John 3:1-2 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him [that is what He asked back in John 17, that we be able to share His glory], for we shall see Him as He is.

Back to John 17.

John 17:25 "O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me."

That was something that was given to them. It was revealed. Matthew 16:13, Peter told Jesus that He was the Son of God. And Christ responded by showing him that "flesh and blood had not revealed this to [him], but My Father who is in heaven."

John 17:26 "And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, . .

This is one final thing that He prays and it ties the end of the prayer in with the beginning, where He said that I have revealed Your name. That is, He revealed the Father, He revealed the Father's attributes in the way that He lived in, the things that He spoke.

John 17:26 "I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

So that was His purpose in revealing the name of the Father. The same love which the Father had given to the Son would also be given to you and me.

Beginning chapter 18. Now just a little bit of a word before we go into John 18. If you would read carefully the other accounts of the crucifixion and then compare it with John, there is a distinct difference in John's

approach. The others tend to show Jesus more or less passive. John chose to show another aspect, that Jesus was not passive in His trial or His arrest. And of course, though events were swirling around Him, John was very careful to show that, despite Jesus' apparent weak position, He was actually in charge. Remember He said that, "No man takes My life, but I lay it down." He is the Good Shepherd. And we will see as we go through here that He is not passive, that He is active within it.

Another fairly careful examination was that Jesus chose to answer when He wanted to answer and He chose to remain silent when He chose to remain silent. Nobody could force anything from Him. It is also interesting, most of the time He chose not to say very much to the Jews, but He seemed to speak very freely to Pilate. There was a reason for that. The Jews should have known better because they were witness to His preaching for 3½ years. Pilate, on the other hand, had paid no attention. And so Jesus was careful to answer him respectfully and pretty fully. But to Caiaphas and to Annas He pretty much said, "Well, you know the answer to that and I'm not going to say any more."

John 18:1-11 And when Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?" They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." And Jesus said to them, "I am He." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. Then when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground. Then He asked them again, "Whom are you seeking?" They said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way," that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, "Of those whom you gave Me I have lost none." Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your

sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?"

Let me go back to the last two verses in John 14 just to show you the tone or the attitude that was in Christ's mind.

John 14:30-31 "I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here."

Now, I told you what it literally says there is, "Let us go to meet the advancing enemy." He did not sit passively around and wait for them to come to Him, but rather He purposefully left that room and went to a place where they could not help but find Him.

I want you to think about this because if He was typical of an insurrectionist, of a treasonous, of a seditious person who was trying to save His life in order to fight once again, He surely would have fled to the hills somewhere, gone out into the wilderness as David did, in order to preserve His life so that He would live to fight again, regather His troops, get His strength together, and mount an attack. But He purposefully went to a place that He knew. Judas knew, and He knew Judas would think, well, where would Christ go at a time like this? So He said, "Arise, let us go meet the advancing enemy." He was hardly passive. He went to the place where He knew they would find Him.

Back to John 18. Now when Jesus left that room with the disciples who were with Him, He walked approximately a mile or two to the side of the Mount of Olives. Jerusalem was on one hill and it looked across the Kidron Valley to the Mount of Olives. The Garden of Gethsemane was on the side of the Mount of Olives.

From what I understand, it is very likely that the reason there was a garden there is because they were not permitted to have gardens in Jerusalem. It was the holy city, you know, and believe it or not, they had a city ordinance which prohibited the putting of manure on the ground. It was the holy city, you had to fertilize things in that day and age with manure. They did not

have the chemical fertilizers that we had. Remember, Jerusalem was a pretty old city and the ground was probably pretty worn out. And so there were no gardens in the city because you could not re-fertilize the ground. It would not grow a great deal. And so the wealthy people in the city had gardens outside the city on the various hillsides that surrounded Jerusalem.

Now, one of these was the Garden of Gethsemane. Gethsemane means oil press. It is likely that what they had there were was an olive orchard and somebody, a friendly disciple, had given Jesus access to his particular little garden spot and it was a place that, again, apparently Jesus and His disciples often retired. When they wanted to get away from the press of things within the city, they would retire to this area where they could reconnoiter, talk with one another, kind of rest and regroup.

Judas surely had been there many, many times with Christ and with the other apostles and it was only natural for him to think that if there was anywhere that Jesus would leave the city to go to, it would be this area that He had so often retired to. And sure enough, he was right.

Incidentally, there is an interesting little aside here, and I want to go back to this In II Samuel 15. There are a lot of parallels taking place here. One that I want to put in your mind is that man's dominion, or being ruled over by Satan, began in a garden, in the Garden of Eden. You know, I almost think (maybe this is going too far out), but maybe there is enough of God's personality in here shown in the Bible that He would begin to reverse the process in the very same area that the process began. That is, that man's being ruled over by Satan began in a garden, in the Garden of Eden. And where would be the most likely spot for the Garden of Eden? Why it has been the center of action for the whole Bible. In Jerusalem or maybe in its environs, and maybe the Garden of Gethsemane, who knows, is the same general area that the Garden of Eden was in. And God begins to reverse the process there where God begins to throw off the yoke of Satan in the very same area that the yoke was thrown on mankind through Adam's sins.

Here in II Samuel 15, the same area is spoken of in regard to David. Now, David was a type of Christ and it says in verse 23 that "All of the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people crossed over." Crossed over what? "The king himself also crossed over the Brook Kidron." We just read about

that in John 18. "and all the people crossed over toward the way of the wilderness."

Now, David here was fleeing for his life because Absalom had rebelled, kicked David off the throne, was taking over the throne, and David escaped for his life over the same brook that Christ is now crossing as well. In the Septuagint, this Brook Kidron here is translated "the ravine of cedar trees." Apparently it has some relationship to its literal meaning. Brook Kidron, the ravine of cedar trees. It would probably make an interesting study just to go through the Bible and follow the Brook Kidron and how many different interesting historical events occurred right in that same general area.

Back to John the 18th chapter. So we have a type of Christ fleeing for his life in a rebellion over the Brook Kidron probably on to the same general area of Gethsemane. And now we have the real David—Christ—also going across the Brook Kidron to a favorite hide out.

John 18:3 Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.

This phrase, "detachment of troops." How many of you have ever seen a movie like *Jesus of Nazareth*? Most of us have or maybe you have read a book and they had pictures, maybe from Sunday school or something, of a group of people coming to take Jesus prisoner. Now, how many people do you see [no audio]? Now it is the equivalent of the Latin "cohort." You know how many people were in a cohort?

Now, you have seen all these Roman movies, where the tribute comes in with his cohort. There was one tribute per cohort and there were six tributes to a legion in the Roman army. You have heard about the Roman legion? How many people were in a legion? 6,000. How many people were in a cohort? If you look it up in a dictionary, you will find a variety of numbers that they give. The smallest that I was able to find is 60. No, sometimes that word *spira* is used as the equivalent of a Roman manipullus, which had anywhere from 60 to 200 men in it. That is the smallest number. But most of

the time this *spira* was the equivalent of a Roman cohort. A cohort had a minimum of 600 men in it. It could have as many as 1,000. If it was 1,000 it consisted of 720 infantry soldiers and 280 cavalry.

So, what came to get Jesus? I mean, look at this. They are after *one* man, and they come out after him with a *minimum* of 60 but it could have been as many as 1,000 soldiers plus the officers from the Temple, to get this one unarmed Galilean carpenter. Now that teaches you something; they were serious about making sure that He did not escape. The Jews wanted to make sure that they put an end to the threat of this Man and they were not going to give Him any opportunity to escape. At the very least, the odds were 60 to 1. At the most, probably 1,000 to 1.

These things were not done in a corner. They were not hidden from anybody, just like Paul said. Those who needed to know God makes sure that they knew it, that they had participated in something that was as unjust as could possibly be unjust.

So we have then here a Roman cohort, maybe even cavalry. I do not know. Certainly a possibility. And the officers from the Temple, which were like the police. Notice Jesus' response:

John 18:4 knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward.

He did not even wait for them to ask. He went out to meet them just like He said, "Let us go out and meet the advancing enemy." He was not hiding. But He went out and said, "Who do you want?"

John 18:5 And they answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." And He said, "I am He."

That is the Greek language equivalent of the "I Am" of Exodus 3:14. When Moses asked God what His name was He said, "I Am that I Am." When Jesus responded, "I am He," He gave that name. Now when He gave that name, just as God gave a demonstration of the power, because He did not want those people to think that they were just taking Jesus, but rather that He was giving His life, He was laying it down. And so when He said, I Am,"

they all fell over. It is just like—boom! Like the force went forward and they just all collapsed, which was certainly a demonstration that if He wanted to, just like He said, "You think My Father wouldn't send 12 legions of angels?" Now, we know there is 6,000 to a legion and 12 times 6 is 72,000 angels that He could have on a moment's notice.

You see, He was *giving* His life. So you see there was very calm courage. He did not flee, He did not sulk around in a corner anywhere. He went out and met them in, kind of a nice way, a glorious defiance. "Well, here I am. Come and get Me if you can." Actually in verse 7,

John 18:7 Then He asks them again. . .

In the Greek it says, He 'demanded' of them in a strong voice, "Who do you want?" He did not swallow twice, "gulp, gulp." Who is it that you want? You know, it was not anything like that.

John 18:8 Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way."

And they did, they let them go. Possibly that demonstration of them falling backward was enough, that they did not want to mess with the disciples for fear something greater might occur. That was frightening enough as it was.

So again, it very clearly shows that He was active in this, that *He* chose to do what He chose to do. He was running the show. He was orchestrating things. That though He gave the appearance on the one hand of being weak, He showed enough to let everyone there know—and you and me to know—that He was the Good Shepherd laying down His life for the sheep.

Then Peter did his thing there in verse 10 and we will have a little bit more to say about that in a little bit. And so Jesus then rebuked him.

John 18:12-14 Then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him. And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year. Now, it was Caiaphas who

gave counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

Here, I am going to interject something that I think will help you to understand the flow of events a little bit better, because there appears to be a mistake, apparently a scribal mistake, and almost all the commentaries will make a notation of this. And that is that verse 24 seems to be out of sequence and that it actually belongs right between verses 13 and 14. What that does to the flow of the chapter is this: If you want to understand the flow of events, it is verse 13, verse 24, verse 14 and 15, then verses 19 through 23, and then verses 16 through 18. And then the rest of the chapter seems to be in the right order. Now I will read them this way.

And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year. And then Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Now we will explain about Annas in a little bit and why it is likely that He was taken to Annas first. Because Annas was not the high priest, he was the father-in-law of the high priest and Caiaphas, the son-in-law, was the one who had the ecclesiastical authority, not Annas. So why take him to Annas first? Verse 14.

Now it was Caiaphas who 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. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest.

Now down to verse 19,

The high priest then asked Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine. Jesus answered him, "I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in the synagogues and the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing. Why do you ask Me? Ask those who heard Me what I said to them. Indeed, they know what I said." And when He had said these things, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand

saying, "Do you answer the high priest like that?" And Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?"

Now back to verse 16,

But Peter stood at the door outside. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to her who kept the door, and brought Peter in. Then the servant girl who kept the door said to Peter, "You are not also one of this Man's disciples, are you?" And he said, "I am not." And the servants and the officers who had made a fire of coals stood there where it was cold, and they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself.

Now we would jump up to verse 25,

Now Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. Therefore they said to him, "You are not also one of His disciples, are you?" And he denied it and said, "I am not!" One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of him whose ear Peter cut off said, "Did I not see you in the garden with Him?" Peter then denied again; and immediately the rooster crowed.

Back to Annas. Annas had been high priest. He was high priest from 6 ^{AD} until 15 ^{AD}. Then after him four of his sons served in succession. And then finally here in 31 ^{AD}, his son-in-law Caiaphas was the high priest.

As God established the office of high priest, it is very plain that God intended that the high priest serve for life. Once he went into office, he remained in office. However, when the Romans took over, they found a way to govern the people that was more to their liking and to make money on it besides. And that is that they would offer the high priesthood to the highest bidder. The office, then, became a matter of intrigue, bribery, and contention, and the high priest would toe the line with the Roman governor and they two together would collaborate with one another for the ruling of the people.

Now, the family of Annas became very rich and it is how he became rich that has something to do with why He [Jesus] was first taken to Annas. It is very likely that Annas played a very large part in the events that we are reading about right now. Now, how did Anna become wealthy?

(Incidentally, this is all recorded in the Talmud.) How did Annas become wealthy? Annas sold sacrificial animals at the Temple. He had set up his stalls in the courtyard of the Gentiles, which was all right.

Now, whenever anybody brought an animal in to be sacrificed, it had to pass inspection because the law in Leviticus required that the animals be without blemish. It was very simple, you know how human nature is, to bribe the priests to reject any animal that was not bought from Annas. They would always find something wrong with the animals that were brought in by the farmers or herdsman or whatever from the outer precincts of Judea, and the animals would invariably be rejected. The people then had no alternative but to go out to the stalls that were on the perimeter of the Temple which Annas controlled and buy an animal from Annas, probably some of the same animals that had been rejected the day before because that is the way business men could do.

That in itself could have been honest. But the only trouble was that he charged up to 20 times the going price for animals. And thus he became wealthy extorting from the worshippers who came, let us say, in all sincerity, to make a heartfelt sacrifice at the Temple. Those prices were 15 to 20 times higher. Now, guess who turned over Annas' stalls, money changing facilities, drove the animals out with a whip, and scared the bejabbers out of the people there? The Talmud has this to say about Annas, "Woe to the household of Annas! Woe to their serpent's hiss! They are high priests. Their sons are keepers of the treasury, their sons are guardians of the Temple, and their servants beat the people with staves."

Now it begins to show why Christ was brought to Annas first and not Caiaphas, because it was going to give Annas, in his vanity, an opportunity to gloat. "You thought You could get me, Jesus of Nazareth. Well, I got You now right where I want You." And so he had his little bit of fun because Jesus had hit him in the pocket, right where it hurts, and he got back at Him. And so then you see, verse 24, Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high

priest. And then on to verse 14, it was Caiaphas who gave counsel to the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die for the people.

Jesus' trial was a mockery, and Jesus knew it, and that is why this by-play that goes on there in verses 19 through 23. The Jewish law stated that no one could be convicted on his own testimony. Does it not say in the Old Testament that by the mouth of two witnesses? Now what they were asking Jesus in verses 19 to 23 was for Jesus to convict Himself. So what He was doing here, in effect, is what so many do that really frustrates us at sometimes. You know, when people stand before senate committees or congressional committees and they take the Fifth Amendment. Here, Jesus was doing the same thing. He was pleading the Fifth Amendment. He is saying here, "You know that you don't have the right to ask Me those questions."

So what He did is He took advantage of their own law and He kept His mouth shut. And when He caught them at this attempt to try to incriminate Him on His own testimony, they smacked Him. That was their way of getting back at Him. "Don't you talk to the high priest like that!" Well, the high priest was embarrassed because Jesus was using the law in the right way and they were using the law to try to railroad Him to His death. Nobody is supposed to be able to be condemned on his own confession. Jesus then appeals to them. He said, "Look, there are plenty of people who heard what I preached about."

In verse 20 it says that, "I spoke openly." It means that He spoke forcefully, clearly, unambiguously. He said, I was not trying to hide anything. You know, I was not furtively going around to the corners. He is saying that everywhere that I went, either in the Temple or the cities and spoke publicly, there were thousands of people who heard, why do not you go out and get a witness to testify?

You know from the other accounts that they could not find any until they finally got a couple of men to really twist what He said about destroying the Temple in three days. Now, this is actually the same thing that happened back in John 8. They were accusing Jesus of witnessing for Himself. Their approach to this was very interesting.

Back in verse 15. The other disciple, who was it? I do not know. There are some who feel that it was John. It could have been. It is not real strong though. Since he refers to himself as the disciple Jesus loved in two other places, it is likely that he would have said the same thing if he was referring to himself again. There is another thought as well. If it was John, would there be reason to support that it might have been him? Well, the only reason that people have been able to come up with is this: that it is evident from the other accounts that John's family was fairly well off. They were well enough off, as was Peter's family, to not only own a fishing boat but also to have servants. They had employees.

What one legend says (and that is all it is, a legend), was that John's family had a contract for supplying salted fish to the high priest's family. And that John might have had access because he was known in the high priest's house because of the delivering of fish or whatever, of having conducted business with them. But that is very weak. It seems more likely that it would have been someone like Nicodemus or Joseph of Arimathea. Both of whom were very likely, at least Nicodemus was on the Sanhedrin and he certainly would have been known to the high priest and to the high priest's family. Joseph of Arimathea was wealthy and he was secretly a disciple it says a little bit later in the same book. And it is highly likely that he too would have been known to the high priest's family.

Now, with that kind of power available to you, either from Nicodemus or from Joseph of Arimathea, it would have been an easy thing for them to vouch for Peter and have him allowed to go into the house. So it seems a little bit stronger that it was not John, but rather someone else who was secretly a disciple but was well known to the priest's household.

Another thing that I want to pick up here and that is about the cock crowing, that a rooster crowed. There are two alternatives here. I only give you the second one because it is mentioned in commentaries. The Bible plainly says in verse 27 that immediately a rooster crowed. Now you wonder why people would question that. Well, again, it is because of a city ordinance. Roosters, chickens were not allowed in the city of Jerusalem. It was the Holy City and they did not want those things in there. Even though they were a clean bird, they did their doo-doo all over the ground, you see, and they did not want them in the city. And so there was a city ordinance that forbid chickens,

roosters, and so forth from being in the city. So they wonder then, how could a rooster crow in the city if there were not any?

Well, you know how law enforcement is. People really obey laws, do they not? And it is highly likely that they had chickens and roosters in the city anyway. The commentators recognize that, but they go on to offer another explanation. It is kind of interesting and I will give it to you for what it is worth. (And apparently this is historically founded.) And that is this: The Romans divided the day up into various parts, and the night watch was divided up into four parts. It went from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. That was the first watch. The second one was from nine to midnight. The third watch then was from midnight to three and the fourth watch was from 3 a.m. to 6 a.m.

Now, they had a custom that for some reason, I guess it was a kind of a safety measure, that whenever the watch was changed between 3 a.m., that is, between the third and the fourth watch, they would very briefly blow a trumpet to let everybody know that all was well, that the guard had been changed successfully, and that there were no uprisings or anything going on in the city. And both the Greek speaking people and the Latin speaking people called the blowing of that trumpet, the cock crow. It was not literally a cock crow, it was actually the blowing of a trumpet, but they did call it the cock crow. That is well attested to apparently. And both the Latin word that is used for that and the Greek word that is used for that both mean a cock crow.

That is plausible, what Jesus was saying, because it would be something that He would know absolutely would occur. It would be a set time, that at 3 a.m. in the morning, the cock was going to crow. Now, it is true that when Jesus prophesied it, He did not say a rooster. He said the cock crow, before a cock crowed. Here in my New King James, they have translated it rooster or the rooster crows. I should have looked it up. I just did not have the time and to tell you the truth, I did not even think of that. I should have looked it up in the Greek to see whether it says rooster or whether it says the cock crowed. But at any rate, that is that.

I said I was going to look at Peter a little bit. Peter has gotten, I believe, a bum rap over all of this. He denied Christ three times before the cock crowed and ever since that we hear about Peter's infamous denial. Look at it. There

was not one other of the apostles apparently within earshot, within eyeshot, of all of this that was going on. There is no mention that John was there. There is no mention that James was there. There is no mention that Bartholomew was there, or the other Judas. There is no mention that anybody else was there during all of this that was going on in Jesus' life. *Only* Peter had enough courage to follow along and go where Jesus was being taken.

Now who had the most courage? Peter who was there but denied his master or the others who fled away and cowered in fear somewhere? Who would you say had the most courage? Was not their denial more blatant than his? Was not their running away a more blatant denial than Peter, who at least under the pressure of being right on the scene, denied Him there. You know, you do not read of John denying Him at the high priest's house and being an eyewitness of those events.

Which of the disciples drew a sword and was ready to fight? Remember, how many people were there? Was it going to be Peter against 1,000? Jesus did not have a sword but Peter whipped out his sword and he was ready to do battle. He was ready to die on the spot. He meant what he said. "I'm ready to die for You!" Whoosh, out came the sword and off came the came Malchus' ear—and he meant business. I think Peter has gotten a bum rap. His failure was a result of his courage. If he had not had the courage to do what he did, he would not have been in that spot to fail.

Well, there is something to learn from that and I am sure that God appreciated it and I am sure that Christ appreciated it. He failed trying to do his best while everybody else ran away. Now, do we fail running away or do we fail trying to do our best? Which do you think that God is going to appreciate? You can see why Peter was made the lead apostle. He failed doing his all, he failed facing something that the others would not. So, as I said, Peter gets a bum rap.

John 18:28 Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium.

That word Praetorium stands for the whole circle of buildings that Pilate would occupy in his official function as procurator. It would include even the barracks that they used for the soldiers that he had with him and any other

administrators that he needed, you know, the offices that they would use and could just as easily be termed his residence, his residence within the city.

John 18:28 [So He was led from Caiaphas to the Praetorium], and it was early morning. But they themselves did not go into the Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover.

I made myself a little notation in my Bible with sort of a heading for this section beginning in verse 28. And that is, that the Jews begin to use Pilate, you know, they are using him. Now, you might wonder how would these people under authority have the gall or the courage or the whatever it took to use the man who had the power of life and death over them. You are going to be surprised. But again, it is something that is recorded in history and gives a very good, let us say at least a foundation, for understanding why they could manipulate Pilate. But they used him for their ends. He was just the man for the job. God knew who to pick to put in that position.

I want to give you a little bit of an overview here of all the participants in this drama. And the first one we have to look at is the Jews. Then we will look at Pilate, and we will look at Barabbas, and also with Jesus just very briefly.

There is some very interesting circumstances that were taking place here. And perhaps one of the more interesting is why Pilate was even there. Why was there a Roman procurator in the position where the Jews could use him? The Talmud says this, "Forty years before the destruction of the Temple [when was the Temple destroyed? 70 AD. So 40 years before that would be 30 AD.], judgment in matters of life and death were taken away from Israel." So up until 30 AD, the Jews still had power to execute in capital crimes. But in 30 AD, it was taken away.

Now, why? Christ died in 31 AD. Well, I will give you the answer to that and that is, if He had been executed by the Jews how would He have been killed? By stoning. The punishment for blasphemy, which is what they accused Him of originally, according to the law was that He be stoned. Now He Himself had prophesied in John the third chapter and also I believe it is in John the 12th chapter, that He would be lifted up. And by this, He signified what kind

of death that He would die. He did this before 30 AD, which meant that if He was going to undergo a Roman execution, the Romans had to be the ones who would give the sentence whereby He would be crucified rather than stoned.

So God worked it out. Because Christ had prophesied it, God worked it out that in 30 AD judgment in matters of life and death were taken away from the Jews and put solely in the hands of the Romans. Therefore, there would be a crucifixion. You can look right in the margin of your Bible and you will find references to those things that I have just said.

Now the Jews retained one area over which they had a power of life and death, and that was crimes committed in the Temple, pertaining to the Temple or in the Temple. That is one reason why they were able to get away with the stoning of Stephen. You read it there in Acts. It took place in the area of the Temple. They tried to pin that accusation on Jesus. You can read it in Matthew 27:59. They tried to pin a Temple crime against Him but it would not hold water. And so they had to get away from that.

But the Jews began this whole incident hating Christ. They hated Him for a variety of reasons, one of which undoubtedly was that He was showing them up. I do not mean that it was His intention to show them up. But in every turn, they looked foolish before Him. They came to Him with foolish questions, they did foolish things. Everything that He did was so kind, so generous, so loving, so good. And on every turn, He made them look foolish in His representation of God. And gradually their bitterness began to develop into hatred.

What this is beginning to show you is what happens to a people, maybe a singular individual here and there, who begins to feel the pressure of being shown up by somebody who is, in this case, absolutely righteous in all of His motivations, in all of his actions, in all of His words. And the vanity keeps eating away at the person. Annas, Caiaphas, other priests in the Sanhedrin, the local synagogues. "No man ever spoke like this." Rather than loving Him for it, they hated Him and gradually they began to lose all sense of proportion, all sense of what was right and good, all sense of what was lawful.

We have already seen a little bit of it. They were beginning, even in their interrogation of Jesus, to do away with their own precepts and try to convict Him, indict Him on His own testimony, which was illegal.

But we are only beginning to see the beginning of the extent that they were willing to go to. Verse 28 really shows how twisted they had become in their thinking. They were unwilling to go into the Praetorium because it had leaven in it and they did not want to be defiled by going into a building that had leaven in it. They were willing to abide by all the ritual, all the ceremony, all of what we might consider to be the tiny things and all the while they were plotting murder in their hearts. Hatred did that. Vanity that was allowed to burn away without a recognition of truth, either of what Jesus was saying or what was going on in their own minds. So twisted. They could permit themselves to do murder while they were keeping themselves ceremonially clean.

Now, we are going to see as we go along here, not only did they begin to twist their own law and try to indict Jesus on His own testimony, they began by accusing Him of blasphemy, which as far as the Roman government was concerned, as far as Pilate was concerned, was not a capital charge and they knew that that would not float. And so when they get before Pilate, they turn the charge into one of treason, of sedition, of rebellion, and they forget all about the blasphemy until they needed it again. We are going to see that a little bit later.

So as long as they were before Pilate, they kept pushing the treason, pushing. And we are going to see that before we get to the end of it, they themselves were guilty of the very thing they were accusing Jesus of because by the time we get to John 19:15, they said to Pilate, "We have no king but Caesar!" God was supposed to be their king. And so here they are, uttering blasphemy.