



Text: John 18:1-40<sup>1</sup>

Series: Life in His Name – The Message of John’s Gospel

Title: “For this purpose I was born...” (1)

Date: Nov 27, 2011

Place: First Baptist Church, Olds, AB

- John 17:20-26 “**Jesus’ Purpose-Driven Prayer**” flowed from the purpose of this “hour” in Jesus’ life and ministry...

**“Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you”  
John 17:1**

- It was “the hour” of the cross ... the focus of Jesus’ life and ministry; the focus of world history

- “Jesus’ Purpose-Driven Prayer” led immediately to **Jesus’ Purpose-Driven Cross-Examination** in John 18 [p. 904]

- Three scenes:

- 1) Jesus’ arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane
- 2) Jesus’ interrogation by the High Priest(s) -- Annas / Caiaphas
- 3) Jesus’ trial by Pilate

**In each scene, Jesus should be under the thumb of those who stand against him BUT instead, He’s in charge of the situation! Each confrontation is turned to His purpose, not theirs!**

The **first scene** ... the darkened Garden of Gethsemane where we see that...

**Jesus could have evaded his captors ... but he had a  
purpose to fulfill  
John 18:1-11**

- Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane at night with his disciples
- Judas gathers an armed mob to take Jesus prisoner by force

**“Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, “Whom do you seek?” They answered him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am he.” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground.” John 18:4-6**

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**Jesus had predicted this betrayal (John 13:21-30)**

- this did not surprise him, as it did the disciples who were with him
- he took charge of the situation: "Whom do you seek?"

**"I am he" = ego eimi (cf. 8:24, 28, 58)**

- based on Ex 3:14 – Moses' encounter with God in the burning bush
- Moses told to return to Egypt and lead Israel out from slavery
- "Whom should I tell them has sent me to do this?"

**"God said to Moses, "I am who I am." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I am has sent me to you.'" Exodus 3:14**

**This is the last "I am" statement of John's Gospel and perhaps the most profound ... notice the response, even of men who did not believe in him: "they drew back and fell to the ground." (v.6)**

Into this "I am" is poured all the spiritual truth and power of all the previous "I am's"...

- 1. I am the bread of life -- John 6:35, 48, 51**
- 2. I am the light of the world – John 8:12; 9:5**
- 3. I am the door of the sheep – John 10:7, 9**
- 4. I am the good shepherd – John 10:11, 14**
- 5. I am the resurrection and the life – John 11:25**
- 6. I am the way, the truth, and the life – John 14:6**
- 7. I am the true vine – John 15:1**

They sought a man ... "Jesus of Nazareth"

But Jesus was "I am" ... God incarnate and they could not control him ... involuntarily, they fell to the ground before him in abject worship.

**"For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." (Isaiah 45:23) So then each of us will give an account of himself to God." Romans 14:10-12**

These men thought that they had come to place Jesus under judgment – BUT the "I am" is the One who will judge them

Judas brought an armed guard ... but so what! **Jesus evaded capture many times before; he could easily have done it again!**

Cf. Luke 4:30 – Mob in Nazareth brought him to the brow of a hill to throw him down, "But passing through their midst, he went away."



Cf John 8:59 – In the temple – surrounded by the crowd -- “Before Abraham was, I am” (v.58) The crowd picked up stones to kill him “but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.”

Cf John 10:39 – Again, in the temple, with people pressing all around him, asking him to declare himself, Jesus pronounces: “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30) – they wanted to stone him; others wanted to arrest him, “but he escaped from their hands.” (v.39)

Peter was ready to defend Jesus with his sword – he cut off the ear of one of Jesus’ captors, a servant of the high priest by the name of **Malchus**  
- Jesus healed the man’s ear (Luke 22:51) and then said to Peter...

**“Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?” John 18:11**

“the cup” – speaks of the wrath of God against the sin of mankind (cf. Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17)

- the cross was not the plan of the mob – it was the plan of the Father for the salvation of sinners who stood under his wrath

- Jesus would drink our cup – he would taste the wrath of God for us!

**Jesus could have evaded his captors** BUT in the Garden he surrendered himself to them ... because he had a purpose to fulfill ... it was his Father’s appointed hour of the cross.

The drama moves to **scene two** in the house of the religious leader of Judaism, the high priest and his retinue...

**Jesus could have confounded his accusers ... but he had a purpose to fulfill**  
**John 18:12-32**

He was led first to the house of the former High Priest, **Annas**

- deposed by the Romans, many still considered him the true High Priest (cf 18:19), even though his son-in-law, Caiaphas, now carried the title of High Priest

- **Peter followed at a distance** -- stood in the courtyard of the High Priest’s home – cold night – warmed himself by a fire

Annas questioned Jesus about his teaching but Jesus gave him no answer – he said to Annas...

**“I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together. I have said nothing in**



**secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me what I said to them; they know what I said.” John 18:20-21**

Unsatisfied, Annas sent Jesus to **Caiaphas** for questioning, but we're told even less of what happened than with Annas.

**Jesus was silent before his accusers ... but he could easily have confounded** them in debate on spiritual matters! He done it time and again before!

cf when he was 12 years old he amazed them with his knowledge of the Scriptures!

- during Passover, Mary & Joseph had travelled from Nazareth to Jerusalem with Jesus – they started for home, thinking that Jesus was with other family members – they discovered a day later that Jesus was no where to be found!
- they returned to Jerusalem to look for him...

**“After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.” Luke 2:46-47**

He **could easily have frustrated their devices** to snare him ... he done it before!

cf. John 8:1-11 -- a woman caught in adultery was brought before Jesus

**“Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?” This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him.” John 8:4-6**

- Jesus bent down – wrote in the dirt on the ground and then stood up and said...

**“Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.” John 8:7**

- they went away, one by one, beginning with the older ones
- Jesus could have easily confounded his accusers...

But this time, he offered no defense, no explanation, no artful rejoinder, no overwhelming insight into the Law of God... he simply let them have **what they thought**, was their way!

But Jesus had a “cup” to drink from the Father’s hand, and these accusers were being used by the Father to hand him that cup ... and they didn’t even know it! Annas & Caiaphas would hand Jesus over to the Romans to be executed by



crucifixion, thinking that they had won over Jesus! Death by crucifixion in the eyes of a Jew was a mark of God's judgment against a man. The Law of Moses declared...

**“a hanged man is cursed by God.” Deuteronomy 21:23**

And they wanted Jesus to die in the most humiliating way possible ... death by stoning was too good for Jesus in their eyes! They wanted to curse Jesus! They wanted to ruin him! They wanted to humiliate him! They thought that if they could hang him up to die then people would stop believing that he was sent by God. The Roman method of crucifixion was perfect for what they wanted to do to Jesus.

But even in this, Jesus was in control! When Annas & Caiaphas arranged for the Romans to execute Jesus by crucifixion, they thought they were getting one over on Jesus but in reality they were calling the play right out of Jesus' play book. As John wrote in his Gospel...

**“This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die.” John 18:32**

Jesus had already predicted that he would die by being hung up for all to see! Jesus had prophesied...

**“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.” John 3:14-15**

Annas & Caiaphas unwittingly had a role in Jesus becoming the Saviour of the world! Because as Paul would later write...

**“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree’”  
Galatians 3:13**

Jesus took our condemnation for sin upon himself on that cross so that we might be set free from God's wrath against sin!

Cf *Grace Unmeasured* by Bob Kauflin (sung on Thursday night)

**Grace amazing, pure and deep  
That saw me in my misery  
That took my curse and owned my blame  
So I could bear Your righteous name**



Annas & Caiaphas helped make that possible, all the while thinking that they were destroying Jesus! Jesus was in control!

**Just a word about Peter** – we left him warming himself by a fire in the courtyard

- 1) first denial – servant girl of the high priest: “Aren’t you one of Jesus’ disciples?” “I am not” (v.17)
- 2) second denial – other servants and officers around the fire: You’re one of his disciples aren’t you? “I am not.” (v.25)
- 3) third denial – a relative of Malchus, the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said: “**Did I not see you in the garden with him?**” (v.26)

**“Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed.” John 18:27**

The point is **not to pillory or pour scorn on Peter for being faithless** ... it’s another example of **Jesus’ control** of the situation! Jesus had predicted exactly this! Peter had pledged his faithfulness to Jesus but Jesus had warned him...

**“Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.” John 13:36**

In every aspect of this turn of events in Jesus’ life, **Jesus was in full command!**

Finally, **scene three**, the judgment hall of the Roman governor, **Pilate**, where we see that...

**Jesus could have appeased his executioner ... but he had a purpose to fulfill**  
**John 18:33-40**

Caiaphas and his officials handed Jesus over to Pilate but didn’t spell out the charge against him. Pilate asked them...

**“What accusation do you bring against this man?” They answered him, “If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you.” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.” The Jews said to him, “It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death.”**  
**John 18:30-31**

Although John doesn’t record the charge that Caiaphas made against Jesus, we can read the substance of it between the lines of Pilate’s interrogation. The first question Pilate asks of Jesus tells us what we need to know...

**“Are you the King of the Jews?” John 18:33**



Jesus claimed that he was the Christ, the Messiah, the promised One sent by the Father to save his people. That meant that Jesus claimed to be the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies made to King David that God would give him an heir who would reign on his throne forever. Caiaphas took that and twisted it, just a bit, to get Pilate's attention: **if Jesus claimed to be the king of the Jews then he was a challenge to the Roman emperor who was the ruler over the Jews.** If Jesus was challenging Caesar's rule then he was guilty of treason and that was punishable by crucifixion!

Was Jesus "the king of the Jews"? Was he the heir to King David's throne? Yes, he was the king of the Jews, but not in the way that Caiaphas had made it sound to Pilate. Jesus was not leading a political revolt against Roman rule in Palestine. Jesus answered Pilate...

**"My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." John 18:36**

Pilate wanted to know if Jesus was a political threat... Jesus could have **appeased Pilate** by explaining to him that people who followed his teaching became **model citizens** of the empire.

He could have pointed to the example Zachaeus, the "chief tax collector" in the city of Jericho (Luke 19)

- Zachaeus brought money into the Roman coffers and Jericho was a rich city!
- Zachaeus had once been a cheat and a thief ... but after he met Jesus he was a changed man – he gave half of his goods to the poor and he offered to repay anyone he had cheated fourfold (Luke 19:8)
- Pilate didn't need not be concerned that Zachaeus would cheat Rome ... Zachaeus would never again cheat anyone again, because he was a follower of Jesus.

And Jesus could have appeased Pilate by pointing to the day in the temple when Caiaphas and the other religious leaders who were now claiming that he was committing treason against Rome had tried to incite him to treason. They had asked Jesus...

**"Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" But he perceived their craftiness, and said to them, "Show me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?" They said, "Caesar's." He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Luke 20:22-25**

**"Pay your taxes!"** That's what any Roman governor wanted to hear.



Jesus could have appeased Pilate, but he didn't – because he had a purpose to fulfill. “Yes,” Jesus answered, “I have a kingdom but it is not of this world.”

“Ah,” said Pilate...

**“So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”**  
**Pilate said to him, “What is truth?” John 18:37-38**

“You say that I am a king.”

- D.A. Carson – a strong affirmation. Cf the NIV translation: **“You are right in saying that I am a king.”**

Was he a king? **Of course he was!** “For this purpose I was born...”

- only clear reference in John's Gospel to the birth of Christ

- many references to his incarnation (“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us...”), but this is the only reference to the day of his birth.

Was Jesus a king? Just look at the Christmas stories that Luke and Matthew record in their Gospels.

Luke 1:32-33 **Gabriel's announcement** to Mary: “And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

Luke 2:11 **the angel's proclamation** to the shepherds: “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord.”

Matt 2:2 **The Magi's question** to Herod: “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

But he was **a king born to declare a truth.** What truth?

**“I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6**

Jesus could have appeased Pilate but he pressed home on him the choice that every person must make.

Jesus came to declare the truth of the kingdom of God and to give entrance into it to anyone who would bow in humble submission before him. He came to declare the truth that the only way to know God is through his Son, Jesus Christ, and that all other gods, all other salvations, all other claims are false. He came to declare that he is the absolute King of truth.



No, Jesus wasn't a political threat to Rome – he was an even bigger threat than that! His "truth" affects everything in our lives:

- the way we relate to government isn't about "party politics" anymore – it's about what is right and good and true according to Jesus Christ, our King
- the way we conduct our business isn't about making profits anymore – it's about doing what is right and good and true according to King Jesus
- the way we live in our families and in communities isn't about serving self-interest anymore – it's about doing what is right and good and true in the eyes of our Lord and King, Jesus Christ

I don't think that Pilate was being indifferent when responded: "What is truth?" His words weren't merely the tired response of a world-weary man. I think Pilate saw exactly what following King Jesus would mean ... and he refused to bow.

He knew that Jesus wasn't guilty of treason against Rome but Pilate wanted to appease the mob that was growing outside his palace AND he wanted the King of Truth out of his life and off his back and so...

**"he went back outside to the Jews and told them, "I find no guilt in him. But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" They cried out again, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber." John 18:38-40**

**The King of Truth or a thief?** That's the choice every person must make.

- If he is "the truth" then everything else that takes his place is a lie, a pretender, a thief – stealing what rightfully belongs to the King of Truth

Kent Hughes tells this story...

*A man shared his faith openly with a Jewish merchant friend. The man had not received Christ, but a time came when he was dying. The Christian man went to see him, but the doctor said, "I'm sorry. You can't see him now. He is in too bad a condition." But when things got even worse, the doctor said, "You can go in now. It can't do any harm. But don't say anything." So the man went in and knelt by the bed of his friend. He took his frail hand, and he began to pray silently. The man, just before he expired, opened his eyes and said, "Not Barabbas, but this man."*

*...Will you say, "Not this man, but Barabbas"?*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>R. Kent Hughes, *John : That You May Believe*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1999), 428.



Will you choose the King of Truth?

- **Invitation to Prayer Ministry**
- **Final Song:** The Wexford Carol OR Christmas Offering
- **Benediction**