



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

John 11:46-57

“The Prophecy of Caiaphas”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Returning to John chapter 11 and reading verses 47 through 54 for our Scripture reading. For those of you who have not been here Sunday after Sunday we have been studying in consecutive fashion the Gospel of John. And in chapter 11 is the Johannine account of the restoration of Lazarus to life. This is the seventh of the signs that Jesus performed, selected by John in order to bring his readers to faith in Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, and that in this faith they might have life through his name.

The restoration to Lazarus according to John's thinking was extremely important in the presentation of the ministry of Christ because John sees this as the crisis that brought on the final decision of the chief priests to put our Lord to death. And so it's important from that standpoint to John, but it is particularly important as being the last and climactic one of the signs and it illustrates the fact that the Lord Jesus is able to bring life out of death.

Now he has just described the resurrection of Lazarus and we pick up the story in verse 47. There were two responses to the resurrection of Lazarus, many of them believed on him but then others went to the Pharisees and told the Pharisees the things that Jesus had done. And so in verse 47 we read,

“Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? For this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation. (By the way, this is one of the many places in the New Testament in which the word “all” does not mean every single person. Of course they mean, “All men,” in the general sense, they certainly are not saying, “We’re going to believe in him.” Verse 49,) And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation, (now, when it says here that he spoke this not of himself but was the high priest that year and prophesied that our Lord should die for the nation, it’s clear that he acts in an official capacity and that God had this man say something which as we shall try to point out later on he did not really fully understand; that is, the ultimate significance of it. Verse 52,) and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.”

May the Lord bless this reading portion of his word. When one attends theological seminary, one of the subjects that sooner or later must come before the student is the subject of Christology. Christology, as most of you know in Believers Chapel, is the study of the doctrine of Christ. And in the study of the doctrine of Christ there is the study of the person of Christ and the study of the work of Christ. And Christology, of course, is one of the most important of the theological disciplines because it’s clear when one reads the Bible that the study of the person and work of Christ is right at the heart of everything that is found in the word of God.

It's sometimes not realized that all of us have a Christology. All of us have some ideas about the person of Christ, all of us have some ideas about the work of Christ. Even those who are not Christians have a Christology; that is, they have a view of Jesus Christ, his person and his work. Many preachers have an unbelieving Christology. They do not really believe that Jesus Christ is as he is presented in Scriptures, the Son of God, possessed of deity. And many, of course, who teach and preach religious things do not believe that the work of Jesus Christ is the work of atonement. That is, a work by reason of which and on the basis of which a person who is out of relationship with God, may come to a relationship with him that means eternal life. But all of us do have a Christology, it may be very deficient, it may be very wrong, it actually may be very much opposed to the Bible, the word of God, but we still have it. Of course, the ideal thing is to have a Christology that is in harmony with the word of God.

Caiaphas was the high priest in Israel at the time of our Lord's ministry. And Caiaphas had a Christology. His Christology, however, was not a biblical Christology; that is, it was not in accordance with the things that are found in the word of God concerning the Messiah. We sometimes speak of four gospels: the Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of Mark, the Gospel of Luke, the Gospel of John. But there is a fifth gospel that one might conceivably write, it would be relatively short of course, but it would nevertheless be called a gospel and one could call it the gospel according to the enemies of Christ because it is remarkable that the enemies of our Lord often make some rather startling statements about him; things that are surprising.

For example, the enemies of Christ said of him, “He's the friend of publicans and sinners.” Now what a magnificent tribute and yet it was uttered by the enemies of our Lord. Or take the statement made by the chief priest and Pharisees as our Lord was hanging on the cross, “He saved others, himself he cannot save.” He saved others; interesting isn't it that as our Lord died they were confessing the fact that he was able to save others. Magnificent tribute coming from the enemies of Christ. And then there is the

time in which they said of him, “This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them.” A magnificent tribute to the Lord Jesus Christ but one made by his enemies. This man receives sinners and eats with them.

Well we’re going to see in the passage that we’re looking at this morning that Caiaphas, the high priest, actually uttered a prophecy concerning the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ. Now he didn’t realize what he was saying because his tongue was under the control of God but he didn’t realize it. But still it’s a remarkable statement. “It’s expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.” If that had come from a friend of our Lord and from a follower of him we would have said that’s a good statement concerning the death of Christ, “It’s expedient for us that one should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish.” But it was uttered by an unbelieving man who counseled with the council to put him to death. It’s one of those statements under the direction of God which glorifies the Son even contrary to the intentions of the individual who uttered it.

The restoration of Lazarus had a two-fold effect. We noticed in the Scripture reading that some of those who hear of the restoration of Lazarus believed on him. And then there were some who went to the Pharisees and told the Pharisees the things that Jesus had done. John thinks of this as a crisis in the ministering our Lord. The synoptic gospels used the cleansing of the temple as the crisis but it provokes decision, the resurrection of Lazarus. It’s almost as if in the resurrection of Lazarus, God knocks for the last time on the Sanhedrin’s door for entrance into their spiritual heart. But of course they turn away from him.

That, of course, is repeated in the lives of all of us. We hear the gospel of Christ and we do not respond. We keep hearing the gospel, we do not respond. Some never respond. Some reach the place where it is impossible for them to respond because by not responding finally the retributive judgment of God makes it impossible for them to respond for, you see, the more we refuse the harder our hearts become. And finally, we

will not believe because we cannot believe. Or we cannot believe because we will not believe. There is such a point in an individual's life when we refuse the gospel of the Lord Jesus.

So God is still knocking. He is very patient. He is very long-suffering. And almost for the last time now he has spoken. And we shall see that the chief priest and the Pharisees do not respond to this last knock of the Lord God on their doors for admittance into their hearts. The Sanhedrin was the supreme ecclesiastical court of Israel and in the Sanhedrin there were Sadducees and they were chief priests and then there were also the Pharisees, the traditionalists. The Sadducees outnumbered the Pharisees and the council and so it was largely under the control of those who were the chief priests.

Now in verse 47 John says after the restoration of Lazarus and when news comes to the Pharisees and a council is gathered together, they say, “What are we doing?” Incidentally, that does not mean, “What shall we do,” but probably, “What are we doing?” “What do we? For this man is doing many signs? But what are we doing?” Well the answer, of course, is nothing. They are not doing anything. They admit the signs which seems to indicate incidentally that faith is not so much a matter of the head, that's important, that's the place where faith begins. We have to have something to believe. But faith, ultimately, is something that touches the innermost being of a man. It touches what we would like to say unscientifically as it touches our heart. And so they acknowledge that the Lord Jesus is doing many miracles, many signs, but they are not responsive and further, they ask, “What are we doing?” Nothing.

It's like a person in a business that's not doing very well and he might gather some people together and say, “What are we doing?” Well, the point is we're not doing anything and we need to do something. So what are doing? Nothing. Well that poses a difficulty; that is, our Lord's ministry for them because they go on to say, “If we let him thus alone, all men are going to believe on him.” Now again, remember, this doesn't mean all in the sense of all men without exception because obviously they're not going to

believe on him. But all men will believe on him and the Roman's shall come and take away both our place and our nation because the Jews enjoyed certain privileges from the Romans that other nations under Roman domination did not enjoy for the simple reason that the Jews were so hard to get along with. And as a result of that the Romans had necessarily given them certain privileges they hadn't given to others. They had their temple, they could carry on their worship, they could even under, in a limited kind of way, exercise judgment. They did not have the power of death so far as we can tell and therefore when our Lord is accused they must bring not simply a religious accusation against him but a political one as well in order to have acceptance with the Romans. But nevertheless chief priests sensed that if this movement continues to grow, the privileges that they have from the Romans are liable to be taken away from them because the situation is getting somewhat chaotic. And there are difficulties that will lead, finally, to the Roman's coming and saying look, we're going to take away the privileges that you have. We're going to take away your place. That's evidently a reference to the temple. And further we are going to take away your privilege of existing as a nation. “If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him and the Romans will come and take away both our place (that is, our temple,) and our nation.”

Well they were very much disturbed over this and there is – incidentally, there is little emphasis upon “our place” and “our nation”. They were concerned about their position. Now do you notice this, they're not so much concerned about the things our Lord is doing which are magnificent and impressive things. He is doing many signs, admit that, but they are not as concerned about that as they are, “Our place and our nation,” the privileges that we have from the Romans.

Now you can see immediately that they are not so much interested in truth as they are in privilege. Now that, I think, is very, very instructive. They are not interested in truth, they are interested in their own privileges. In fact, later on here is the Jewish nation, receiving from God the revelation from God. They were the administrators of the

knowledge of God among the nations. God had revealed himself to Abraham. He had through the ages communicated his will to the nation Israel. They were designed to be the mediators of the knowledge of God to all of the nations. They were a theocratic nation. One under God which had as their head their Lord God himself. But later on because of their own privileges, because of expediency, they will be say to the Romans, because they are so anxious to get rid of Jesus Christ, “We have no king but Caesar.”

In other words, the very revelation of God that gave them their place said to them, “God, Yahweh, is the only king that you have.” But in order to preserve their position, their place, and their nation, they are willing to deny their own theological views. They were full of expediency. Now of course expediency is something that touches all of us in our daily lives. Sometimes it's expedient for us to deny the claims of Christ. We may be speaking to a friend and when the subject of Jesus Christ comes up we keep quiet. We're anxious to preserve our relationship, we don't want to be thought strange. We don't want to be thought fanatical. And so we keep quiet. We actually deny the things that we are supposed to believe as believers. Expediency, you see, is something that reaches down into the little simple decisions of life.

There is a Johannine irony here which a person reading this gospel in 95 AD or so when John wrote it would perhaps notice because you see what they were trying to do was to preserve their place, their temple, and their nation. And of course we know from what happened that when they crucified the Lord Jesus Christ they brought upon themselves the divine judgment which led to their scattering to the four corners of the earth. And ultimately in 70 AD the city of Jerusalem is destroyed and the Jews are sent to the four corners of the earth, the very thing that they sought to prevent by their giving over of the Lord Jesus Christ, the crucifixion is brought about.

You can never defeat God by the principals of expediency. You can never defeat him. You can never get the best of him. You can never do yourself any good by acting by expediency when matters of truth are at stake. And so it's rather ironic that the

crucifixion with they brought about is the very thing that caused them to lose their place and their nation.

Now Caiaphas utters however a remarkable statement in the midst of the group as they come together, and incidentally the Sadducees were known for their rudeness. And they were rude even to their own peers. And you can sense the rudeness of it as they gather the council together and Caiaphas who's the high priest that year stands up and he says to the, “You folks don't know anything at all.” That's the meaning of, “You do not know anything.” You know nothing at all, the King James Version has it. “You're just ignorant, nor have you even considered that it's expedient for us that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation perish not.” Now that's a remarkable prophecy. Comes from Caiaphas.

What kind of man was Caiaphas? Well he was the religious leader. He was the preacher. He was the bishop. He was the cardinal. As a matter of fact he was the only pope they had. He was the reverend and he was the reverend doctor of the crowds. He was the religious leader now and what kind of man is he? Well he had been appointed by Vlerius Gratis, the predecessor of Pilate in 18 AD. He was the son-in-law of Annas. Annas was a vile high priest that preceded him and he was still living and actually the power behind the throne. And he appears in the gospels. Annas had five sons who were high priest and also he had a son-in-law who was a high priest and that was Caiaphas. He was the son-in-law of Annas. When the Romans seized Jerusalem they found two-and-a-half million pounds stored away by him. He was a cold blooded cynic, he was a hypocrite, and the things that are said about him in the New Testament are true to his character. The things that we know about him are otherwise. When finally the Lord Jesus appears before Caiaphas personally and Caiaphas asks him to confess that he's the Messiah and Jesus says, “I am.” Then Caiaphas in hypocrisy tares his garment. That of course is a sign that he's committed blasphemy, he's terribly blasphemed the revelation of God that we have. Incidentally the high priest were always careful to rend their garments



only a certain length, just a few inches in order that it could be easily repaired. It was purely a hypocritical action and this is the man who ultimately is responsible for it.

But his prophecy, this unscrupulous priest, says that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation should perish not. This is expediency under the guise of patriotism. After all, it's important for us to preserve our nation and it surely is important for us to preserve the temple. And so let's put one person to death in order that we may have our temple and that we have our place of privilege among the Romans as a nation. Now remember who he is. He's the chief priest. He's the high priest. He's a man who has his office from Aaron. He has all of the traditions of the priests of the Old Testament. He has the miter on his brow. What did the Old Testament say about the priests? Well, the Old Testament said the priests' lips should keep knowledge, keep divine knowledge. He's the one who had in a sense the responsibility of the teaching of the word of God; a man responsible for the teaching of the word of God. Again, the irony of it stands out because the death of the Lord Jesus led to the destruction of the temple and the nation, expediency never pays.

You know, one could spend the rest of the day illustrating the things that have happened in Christianity over the past century among the religious leaders in Christianity. There've been many Caiaphases and there are many Caiaphases today who expediently deny the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. And often individuals who make profession of faith act in such a way that expedient actions sacrifice the truth of God because it might be somewhat unpopular. But Caiaphas uttered a statement that meant more than he thought. As we read on in verse 51 and verse 52, we read, “This spake he not of himself.”

Now I must confess when I read that I have to smile because, you know, he thought he was uttering a piece of cynical utilitarianism. He thought he was saying, “Listen, we've got to sacrifice this one man, Jesus, in order that we all not go under and lose our privileges.” That's what he thought. But he was unconsciously summarizing the

gospel. “One man should die for the people, that the whole nation should not perish.” He was unconsciously telling us things that the Scripture tell us with a different sense. You know, there are people who prophecy in the name of the Lord God and who make true prophecies even though they themselves may not believe them. The Lord Jesus speaks about those who prophecy in his name and he will say to them, “I never knew you.” It is well for us to remember that.

One other ironic thing that amuses me is when you study the views of the Sadducees one of the things that they did not believe in was they did not believe in predestination. They did not believe that God really controlled the affairs of men. Isn't it striking? Here is a man who stands as the chief representative of a group of people who don't believe that God controls the actions of men and so he utters this statement, “It's expedient for us that one man should die for the people and the whole nation should perish not.” And all the time God is controlling his tongue so that he expresses the gospel in the words that he utters: “And this he spake not of himself.” But being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation.”

In other words, John sees in the divine control of the chief priest's tongue a designed expression of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and in this piece of cynical utilitarianism that this man uttered. I think that's the height of irony. It always amuses me when I read it because it reminds me of so many people who fail to realize that even the little things of life are controlled by the Lord God.

Well, that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation should perish not is to summarize Caiaphas preaches elimination, but God preaches substitution. He says, “We will eliminate him in order that we may have our privileges.” God says, “Yes, the language is the same but the real meaning is he dies as a substitute.” Caiaphas says, “Substitute Jesus in order that the nation may life.” God says, “Substitute Jesus as the sacrifice that men who believe in him may justly have eternal life because the Lord Jesus pays the penalty for their sins.” The Old Testament has a passage in Psalm 76 in which

the psalmist says, “Surely the wrath of men shall praise Thee.” You cannot defeat God. There is no way in which you can manage to make God do your work and accomplish your goals and accomplish your ins. God is absolutely sovereign and he will make the wrath of men to praise him.

Well now having said that notice also that not only does the high priest say that one man should die for the people that the whole nation perish not, but John goes on to say he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation and not for that nation only, but also that he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. And so John sees in this further indication of the fact that the Lord Jesus will be substituted but the substitution that he will offer, that sacrifice that he will offer will be the means for the gathering of all the people of god who are scattered throughout the world who make up his elect people.

Back in chapter 10 in verse 16 remember the Lord Jesus had said, “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring and there shall be one fold, (or one flock,) and one shepherd.” Well, that’s included too. The Lord Jesus shall die and also as a result of his death the children of God who are scattered abroad now shall be gathered together into the family of God.

You know I like this because this indicates that it’s possible to speak of a person before he is saved as a child. Now we noticed in chapter 10 that it was possible to speak of an individual before he came into relationship to the shepherd as a sheep. Remember Peter says, “We were his sheep going astray, but we’ve now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of our souls.” The children of God are scattered out among the world, not yet have they come to the experience of redemption but they shall come to the experience of redemption and shall come into relationship with their heavenly Father. So the Lord Jesus dies in order that the whole nation perish not and in order that there should be gathered together in one, the children of God that were scattered abroad.

Now we read in the final two verses of the section,

“Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.”

I'd like to say just a few words as we conclude the message this morning about the danger of an ecclesiastic. Caiaphas was a very resolute man. He was a very defiant man so far as the revelation of God is concerned. He was certainly a diplomat and he also was a wily, crafty, evil religious leader. What was his view of his nation and the temple? Well, he thought of Israel as a nation that had a place of worship and in that place of worship there was a lot of privilege that was dealt out to those who were involved in that work. What was Israel according to the Old Testament? When one reads the Old Testament one gets the clear impression that God intended that Israel should be the channel of divine revelation to the nations. One gets the distinct impression that God intended that Israel should be the theater of grace of God so that individuals could stand and look at Israel and say, “God is surely gracious. God surely saves wicked men. God may save me.” So that as a theater of grace and as the channel of divine revelation, Israel was to be the servant of the nations.

In fact, in the Old Testament the term that preeminently applies to the Lord Jesus, “The servant of Jehovah,” is applied to the nation Israel as well. They were to be the servant of Yahweh. Well you know, that's what the church should be today. We are to be the servant of Yahweh, the servant of Jehovah; the servant of God in the sense that in us there should be the exhibition of the grace of God. The theater of the grace of God. Individuals should be able to look at us and say, well I don't know what it is. I may not even understand it but I do see the operation of the grace of God in that company of people. God has certainly done something for them.

And then also we are to be a missionary agency. We are to be the channel of divine revelation to others. That's what Israel was supposed to be. They were to be in a sense the very arms of God, the earthly arms of God, sheltering the oppressed, providing a way of escape for the guilty, open to the airy. But what was Israel to Caiaphas? Well first of all Israel was an institution. It had offices and he had the chief office. They had buildings, they had the temple, they had power. So to the chief priest, instead of being things that Israel should have been why, it was offices and buildings and power and the one thing for which they existed to point forward to him, the Messiah, they had forgotten that. Now you can translate that all down to human life. Why do we exist? Why do we live? Why do we have the blessing of God upon us as believers? To be an instrument of the grace of God, to be a theater of the grace, to be a channel of divine revelation: these are things that we are to be as individuals.

For Caiaphas, was it truth above our interests at all costs? No. It was the aim of Caiaphas to preserve the status quo of privilege and position. Truth, well truth is secondary to expediency. I sometimes think that the same sins that characterize the high priest are the sins that characterize us as individuals. It's not truth above all costs. It's not truth above all our interest. It's amazing how often we can deny the faith when opportunities arise. We don't positively deny it, we just don't take advantages of our opportunities. And then sometimes we can actually deny the faith, many Christians have. Many have been sorry. Many of them, like Peter, denied the faith. And then there are others down through the history of the Christian church, Cranmer, Thomas Cranmer. Great Christian man, denied the faith, then later on confessed and recanted. But it's easy for men to deny the faith.

Well, that's what he was in view of the nation and the temple; they must be preserved at all costs, even to the rejection to the one for whom we look. Now what about Bible doctrine? Expedience. Caiaphas may not have been self-consciously evil. In fact, Caiaphas may have been one who walked up and down the streets of Jerusalem in

the robes and when little children came by he may have walked over and patted them on the head. Said nice things about them, said nice things to their parents, may have been well respected by men. Later on they found out otherwise. The great truths of the faith cannot be shaken. There is nothing that we can do to shake the things of the faith of the word of God. Of course, they may shine in new light. We don't say that there are not new ways to present the truth. Sometimes we have to modify our thinking in some things. But always we should ask is it true. Is it true? And we must stand for what is true.

Sometimes we take the attitude, how will this affect the church? How will this affect my family? How will this affect me? You never find a Luther doing that in the days of the Reformation. You never found a Calvin doing that. You never found a Knox - or I wouldn't say never but their general lifestyle was one of standing for truth. You did not find a Knox doing that or a Wesley doing that. You don't find them breathing the word “expediency” with reference to questions of truth, with references to questions of life, with references to questions of destiny. But here is a man whose heart is as fixed as the ice of an Arctic winter and as unreceptive as the dead are to truth.

Jesus was never expedient. And one other thing, what about his attitude to Jesus Christ? Well Caiaphas knew about our Lord. He'd heard a great deal about him. He had done his work. They had their little CIA too. They had investigated him. They knew he preformed many signs. And there are indications that they were well acquainted, not only with the things he did, but the things he said. What does he call him? “He's just a man. It's expedient for us that one man should die for the people.” But what a man. No indication that Caiaphas ever really regarded Jesus Christ for what he was. One author speaks of our Lord in this way, “Jesus, whose poverty even the poor had pitied and relieved. Whose mercy men with unloosed tongues had blessed, whose meekness had won children's hearts, whose gentle grace had evoked their praises, whose feet women had kissed.” What's Jesus to a man like this? Well, he's just a pawn in his hands, he's a

tool in his hands. He’s a stepping stone in his ambition. He’s a decoy to mislead his opponents. What’s he to us? Let’s sacrifice him to our own interests and keep what we got. So the tendency is to become like Caiaphas.

You know, there are men who stand in theological schools who will tell you privately, “I don’t really hold to the doctrinal statement, but I sign it.” It’s amazing. Incidentally, that doesn’t have any reference to the school in this city. But this is true, all over the country, evangelical schools. It’s amazing, think of it. Think what that really means. For the man who is expedient in the little truths, it won’t be long before a little bigger one will come along because it means a little bit more and the tendency is for the truth to be sacrificed our own interests and our own privileges.

Well, the terrible consequences of this kind of attitude is evident in Caiaphas because what followed is Caiaphas seeks to carry out the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus. One might ask, what should Caiaphas have done? Well, when Jesus of Nazareth appeared before Caiaphas he should have looked down upon him and by the Holy Spirit, responsive to the things that had been told him about the mighty signs that he had performed, and having done his work of investigation he should have looked upon him, he should have been deeply moved by the obedient sacrifice in love of the Lord Jesus Christ. He should have been smitten with the conviction of his sin and guilty. He should have come down from his high priest seat and he should have said, “Thou art the high priest of God,” taken off his ephod, attempted to put it on the Lord Jesus Christ, should have fallen down before him and said, “Prophesying, behold, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, worship him.” That’s the response that should have come from the high priest.

Oh, the terrible consequences of unbelief. What happens, of course, is that Caiaphas has resisted truth, and resisted truth, and resisted truth, and blindness, utter blindness, has fallen upon him and now, as a consequence of that, murder and then eventually, eternal death. By sheer force of character, this wicked high priest bent the

whole Sanhedrin to his purpose and history reveals that God has been present with the priest and that he had that day offered a sacrifice that was more perfect than he could ever have possibly known. Because in the final analysis it is the nation that offers the sacrifice for the nation. The nation and the gentiles combine in the death of our Lord, combine in the offering of the sacrifice that removes our sins. But it was a sacrifice that sealed his destiny. You know, we either build upon Christ or we must fall over him. We either build upon the revelation of God or we will ultimately be crushed by the revelation of God.

Caiaphases and Caesars and all of the rest of the great men of history, their eternal destiny is determined by how they respond to the revelation of God in Christ. So I say to you this morning as an ambassador of the Lord Jesus, your destiny is determined by your relationship to Jesus Christ. May God help you, by his wonderful grace, to come to realize that you are in yourself lost. That you stand under divine guilt and condemnation, search your heart, and then recognize that Jesus Christ has died for sinners. And if by the grace of God you've come to recognize that you're a sinner Christ has died for you. Come to him. Receive as a gift eternal life. Receive the new life that comes from him. And then bow at his feet, acknowledging him as Lord. And follow truth and not expediency in your life. And for those of you who are Christians, remember it is truth that is the important thing. May God help you to follow the truth as God had revealed it to you.

If you are here without Christ, we invite you to trust him. It's a simple matter. Having recognized your need and having recognized the sufficiency of that once and for all sacrifice about which we sang, in your own heart give thanks for what Christ has done and receive as a free gift eternal life.

[Prayer] Our gracious God and heavenly Father, how wonderful it is that Thou has given us an insight into the truth. No man hath seen God at any time. The only



begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he has led him forth into full revelation. Oh God, work so mightily in our hearts that we will not follow any other thing or person but him who is life eternal. If there should be, Lord, someone in this audience who has never truly believed in Christ may at this very moment they confess their need and lean upon him for time and for eternity. And for those of us who are believers, oh God deliver us from expediency.