

# Inconvenienced by Christ

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 29 May 2022

Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[ 0 : 00 ] John chapter 18, if you're there, verses 12 through 14, would you please stand with me as we honor the reading of God's word together.

! So the band of soldiers and their captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound him. First they led him to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year.

It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should die for the people. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated?

When I was going through seminary, Danny and I had to stretch our pennies as far as they could go, and so a cheap form of entertainment for us was to visit the used bookstore.

And those used books were torn and tattered, but they were cheap, and we could afford them. I remember one of those trips that we took to the used bookstore, we learned the value that some of those old books contained.

[ 1 : 24 ] Danny was looking for a copy of *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell, and I remember helping her try to find it, found one, pulled it out, and that book looked more used than all the rest.

It looked like it had been run over by a truck, and so I remember grabbing it and flipping it over and looking at the back and seeing that the price tag on it was \$1.50, which felt about right for this book that was falling apart.

Then I flipped the book open, and looking back up at me was the face of Benjamin Franklin on a \$100 bill.

And I knew immediately that this is a book that we needed to buy, right? And so we went to the cashier, and she sold it to us for \$1.50, and she gave us the \$100 bill tucked inside.

That was a great thing for us to have received. You know, I think that book probably, just trying to think, how did that \$100 bill get in that book?

[ 2 : 33 ] I think it was probably belonged to someone who was in the habit of stashing money away and saving it for a rainy day, and had either failed to realize that they had put it there when they sold it to the used bookstore, or maybe it was a family member or relative who didn't take the time to look through that book and just stuffed it in a box and shipped it off to the used bookstore where they sold it.

You know, Danny and I learned that day that you can't judge a book by its cover, but also we learned that you can't judge a book's true value based upon its price tag.

While that book was a great find for us, I recently read about a woman who purchased an old statue at a thrift store for \$35. Some of you are nodding your heads.

You've heard about the story. Turns out it's a 2,000-year-old priceless piece of art that went missing during World War II. We hear stories about paintings produced by famous artists like Jackson Pollock and Pablo Picasso that were sold at a garage sale for next to nothing because the owner failed to realize what they had.

Could you imagine being that person who sold one of those valuable things for next to nothing? Feeling good about yourself in the moment, right?

[ 4 : 03 ] I've cleared out some space from my house. I've made a few dollars in the process, only to find out later on that what you sold for cheap was worth more than everything that you own.

Sometimes we fail to realize the true value of things. You know, the Bible tells us over and over again that the most valuable person, thing that there is, is Jesus Christ.

There's nothing more valuable than him and the salvation that is received by faith in him. Jesus said so many times himself, multiple times, in fact.

In Matthew chapter 13, that records him telling a parable where he communicates that very truth. Matthew 13, 44-46, Jesus says, The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which a man found and covered up.

Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and he buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who on finding one pearl of great value went and sold all that he had and bought it.

[ 5 : 14 ] See, these two parables picture salvation. It's something that is hidden, but to those whom it has been revealed, to those who see the true value of Jesus Christ, his sinless life, his atoning death, his victorious resurrection, they see in him a person, a possession of greater worth than anything or anyone else.

And so I ask you this morning, does that describe you? Is that how you see Jesus? Is the pursuit of his kingdom and his righteousness and his will for your life, what you seek, what you value more than anything else?

Are you willing to dispossess and abandon whatever is necessary so that he is the one who truly is reigning in your heart over your life?

Or does your lifestyle and your actions portray a different truth? It's easy in this setting to speak about how worthy Jesus is, but when the cost of following him becomes inconvenient, when it means losing out on the things of this world that your sinful flesh desires, when following Christ is inconvenient, do you find yourself placing a cheap price tag on the cross by which his priceless blood was shed for you?

You know, Jesus never said that following him would be easy. In fact, he said the opposite. Matthew 16, 24 through 27. Jesus told his disciples, If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me, for whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

[ 7 : 16 ] For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

Jesus said it wouldn't be easy to follow him, but that it is totally worth it. He desires that you not waste your life on cheap thrills, on cheap excesses and cheap comforts that cause you to sell yourself out to sin and short of the abundant life that he and only he can give you.

Our text today seems to be there just to serve the purpose to transition us from the last day of Jesus' life when he was in the Garden of Gethsemane to Peter's denial.

But I believe that there is something more here that God has for us to see. These verses reveal to us how cheaply Jesus, the Son of God, was handled by those who did not see his true value and his true worth.

Jesus was an inconvenience to them. Jesus was a problem to be done away with, an impediment to the acquisition of what they truly valued.

[ 8 : 46 ] And you know, the things that they valued are things that we oftentimes value too and more than Jesus.

More than we'd like to admit, as followers of Christ, we seek to avoid the cross that he's called us to bear for the sake of earthly comforts and conveniences.

And so my hope is that through this text, God will put an end to that today in my life and in your life as his Spirit examines our hearts through his Word and that we would see again, or maybe for you for the first time, the true value of Christ and the grace that is received in him.

And not treat such precious things so cheaply. And so the main idea for this morning's sermon is that your actions and willingness to be inconvenienced in following Jesus Christ demonstrates how valuable you believe he is.

And so again, in these few verses, we encounter men who were inconvenienced by Jesus.

[ 10 : 16 ] And in their inconvenience, they failed to see the true value and worth that he had. If what they valued is what you value more than Jesus this morning, then my prayer again for you is that the Holy Spirit will perform an audit of your heart, revealing the discrepancies that are there in your life and transform your understanding or renew your understanding once more of the true value and worth that Jesus Christ has.

And so in our passage today, we see three treasures that people valued more than Jesus, that they coveted, that they desired more than him.

And as we go through these things, I wonder, I want you to ask, are these things that I value more than the Lord too? And the first one is this. Jesus was an inconvenience to the soldiers who valued keeping the peace.

Jesus was an inconvenience to the soldiers who valued keeping the peace. Now you might be thinking, Pastor Mike, haven't you read the Bible? Peace is a good thing.

Peace is something that we should value. After all, Jesus preached in the Sermon on the Mount, blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God. And you're right, Christians should value peace, but there are things that they should not value to make peace with.

[ 11 : 38 ] Christians should never make peace with sinful activities in this world and sinful activity in their life. Jesus was innocent. The soldiers were making an unjust arrest.

They were accomplices in this conspiracy to put Jesus to death. And I think they justified their actions with the excuse that, you know what?

We're just keeping the peace. But they shouldn't have. Not just because, well, primarily because Jesus was innocent, but also what they had just experienced.

Remember where we were a few weeks ago? They had experienced the awesome supernatural power of Jesus. Look back at verse 6 in chapter 8. When Jesus said to them, I am he, they drew back and fell to the ground.

These tough guy soldiers had just had their clocks cleaned by Jesus who did so by only speaking a couple of words and not even lifting his finger.

[ 12 : 41 ] They should have known, they should have realized when they were on the ground after being knocked down by him that they are in the presence of something, someone powerful who is God and they should have stayed there on their hands and on their knees and worship of him.

But duty called. Jesus was an inconvenience. And there would be consequences for them if they disobeyed their orders.

And so they desired to keep the peace with their superiors and in their fear of them that led them to justify their actions, thus making peace with their sin and arresting Jesus.

and delivering him over to those who sought his unlawful execution. They made peace with sin to save themselves from the inconvenient consequences that may have come from doing the right thing.

You know, as Christians, we are commanded to be peacemakers. But the peace we seek and the peace that we value is not peace with sin but peace with God.

[ 14 : 02 ] A peacemaker is someone who inserts themselves into conflict with the purpose that I'm going to make peace. And Jesus is our ultimate example of that, is he not?

The Bible says that all of us are born with a sin nature. And that puts us in conflict with God from the moment we take our first breath who is holy and who hates sin.

But God in his grace sent his son who willingly gave his life to atone for our sins and give us peace with him through faith in Jesus. As Colossians 1, 19 through 20 says, For in him all the fullness of God, speaking of Jesus, was pleased to dwell and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

And this is the kind of peace that we seek to be used by God to make. We don't encourage people to make peace with their sin, but we implore them to be at peace with God through Jesus Christ, his son.

Far from making peace with sin, as Christians, we declare war on sin. War on sin in our lives and war on sin in the lives of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

[ 15 : 25 ] Every day, every day, you and I are tempted to justify making peace with sin. And here's how it typically goes. You look at our culture and you see its lack of morality and you measure yourself up against it and comparably speaking, hopefully you can say this, you're living at a higher moral standard than a lot of people around you.

Your sin then, by comparison, seems small. Maybe it even seems respectable and understandable. You think you also may have those sins that you've made peace with under control. I've got it under control. I've got this. But when you think that, what the Bible says what you've done is you've set a trap for yourself.

As James 1, 14 through 15 says, but each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire, when it has conceived, gives birth to sin.

And sin, when it is fully grown, brings forth death. We see many examples of this in Scripture, don't we, of men and women who have made peace with sin in their life and the consequences that then resulted from that.

[16:53] I think of King David. Remember David in 2 Samuel 11? The Bible says that he was supposed to be out with his soldiers leading them in battle.

That was the place where the king was supposed to be. But David decided that that doesn't work where he's going to be this time around. And so he makes an excuse to stay at home.

And while David is at home, guess what? He gets bored. And let me tell you, a bored man is a dangerous man. A bored man will find things to do that will lead to no good for himself and those around him.

And so David is bored and he thinks, I'll just go for a stroll through my palace from the elevated position of it. And while he's there doing that, he sees a beautiful woman bathing.

And she was married, but that didn't stop him because he was the king. And so he took her and then he tried to cover up his actions for what he did with her by ordering the execution of her husband.

[18:07] And he thought that he had covered it all up. Nobody knew. It's all in the past. But God saw it and God knew it and God was not pleased with it.

And there were consequences. The same thing will happen to you if you make peace with sin. I'm sure you, like me, have experienced that before more than once.

It starts small. You justify its presence. But then it grows. And it grows like cancer. And it spreads and it consumes.

And if you continue to make peace with it, if you continue to justify it, if you continue to excuse it, not only in your life, but in the lives of your brothers and sisters in Christ, it leads to horrible things, destructive things.

And so it's no wonder we're told repeatedly in Scripture that as Christians, we are commanded by the Lord to step in and be peacemakers when we see a brother or sister stumbling with a sin that they're justifying in their lives.

[19:18] Galatians 6.1 says, Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him. Restore is the big word there that we can't forget. We're going with the purpose of making peace in that person's life that they would be restored to the Lord.

And we do so in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself lest you be tempted. 1 Timothy 5.20 As for those who persist in sin, they're not repentant of sin, rebuke them in the presence of all so that the rest may stand in fear.

James 5.19-20 My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

You see the great responsibility that we have and what can happen when we are courageous to do this in James 4.17 So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him, it is sin.

So listen, God, through his word, has given you permission and his expectation is that you step into those situations where you see a brother or a sister making peace with sin in their life and you ask the uncomfortable questions in the spirit of gentleness that seeks restoration by going to war not with them but with their sin.

[20:49] And if it's you who's in that position then you receive it gladly and thankfully for someone who God has sent to help you in your time of need.

You know, think about this. What if God made peace with our sin like we are so often tempted to? You know, what if God after Adam and Eve sinned and after he saw the rest of mankind continuing to progress in their sinfulness, what if God up in heaven said, you know what, they've made their choice and they seem happy with it.

You know, I know what it's going to result in. I know that it's going to result in eternal separation from me and they're going to spend their eternity in hell but they've made their choice and you know what, it just might be too uncomfortable to step into that and address it.

In fact, being God he would know the great price which he would have to pay in order to forgive rebellious sinners which thankfully he was willing to do because he did not make peace with your sin or mine.

Don't make peace with sin. Don't justify its presence in your life or in the lives of others or in this world thinking that it doesn't matter what you believe just as long as you truly believe it and it makes you happy.

[ 22 : 16 ] Love whomever you want. Be whatever you want. But listen, we know from experience, we know from God's word that sin destroys. It kills.

Don't let it destroy and kill you. As John Owen famously said, be killing sin or sin will be killing you. The good news is that those of us who are in Christ are forgiven.

When we repent of our sins we are forgiven. And so if you know that you've been making peace with sin and you know this morning that you've been justifying its presence in your life then God today is calling to you through his word saying to you stop it.

Bring it to him. Come to him for help. Go to those whom he surrounded you in his church for help and you will receive it. Don't hide.

Go to him. The second treasure that we see people value more than Christ comes through Annas. Jesus was an inconvenience to Annas who valued his dishonest prophets.

[ 23 : 25 ] Verse 13 again says first they led him to Annas for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas who was the high priest that year. So after seizing Jesus because these soldiers made peace with their sin they led him to Annas.

Although Annas no longer held office he was an extremely powerful man during this time. He had been high priest during the time of AD 6 of 15 when he was removed by Pilate's predecessor from his post.

However he could still hold the title of high priest in much the same way that a former president of our nation still holds that title long after they've been they've left office.

But Annas was not retired. Annas was not playing with his grandchildren and growing a garden in his backyard or anything like that. Annas was very much active in what was going on during this time.

And he wanted to keep that control. In fact five of his sons and one of his grandsons served as high priest after him and currently here in this passage it was Caiaphas who was his son-in-law.

[ 24 : 33 ] So I imagine Annas is being kind of like the mafia kingpin in the background who's under the radar who's under everybody thinks is this great guy but man he's behind the shadows pulling all the strings.

Annas was proud ambitious and notoriously greedy. A major source of his revenue was the income he unjustly received through the temple.

Annas took a large cut of the proceeds that were made from the sale of sacrificial animals and the exchange of foreign currency into monies that could be used to pay the temple tax.

And through those two practices Annas and his conspirators found ways to cheat people and make a large profit and all of that was taking place in the outer court of the temple the court of the Gentiles and you remember what Jesus did in that place when he saw these things happening? Twice he cleansed it. Twice he drove out those animals twice he overcharged the money changer's tables. In fact that outer court was nicknamed by the people they called it the Bazaar of Annas because they knew who was profiting from the sinful practice that was taking place there.

[ 25 : 54 ] And so when Jesus overturned the money changer's tables when he drove out those animals what he was doing is he was exposing not only the hypocrisy of the people but the hypocrisy of one of their chief priests who was supposed to be a man of God and wasn't.

And so Annas was threatened in Jesus in part because he was losing his business thus making Jesus an inconvenience to his economic prosperity.

You know it isn't sinful to be wealthy so long as it's acquired through sinless methods but people are tempted to look to money for what they should look to God for aren't they?

Security happiness purpose peace and when they do what they're doing is they're making an idol of money and their worship of it leads them to make sinful acts to keep it and to obtain it.

The Bible warns us in 1 Timothy 6 9-10 but those who desire to be rich fall into temptations into a snare into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction for the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil it is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

[ 27 : 21 ] So I think it's worth noting that the treasurer of the disciples Jesus' treasurer was who? Judas. What was his motivation to betray Jesus?

30 pieces of silver money so we must be aware of that sinful desire but the good news is that when you know Jesus he does transform you even if your love is of money for example in Luke 19 1-10 that records the salvation of a man named Zacchaeus you all know Zacchaeus right?

he was a wee little man and a wee little man was he he was a tax collector and people hated him because tax collectors came and knocked on your door your house and they took your money not only would they take what the Romans wanted but then they would charge extra and they would be able to keep all of that and so he was a very rich man and he was very much despised in his community but Jesus saw him and I love this Jesus looked at him and he invited himself over to Zacchaeus' house Zacchaeus I'm coming to your house today I hope that you're ready and when Zacchaeus met Jesus his life was completely transformed he realized that this is the true treasure this is what I've been missing in my life money has made me a person hated by those in my community and he gave back everything that he had stolen and he paid it back with interest money was no longer his God Jesus was and when you know Jesus and when you know the riches of his grace that you've undeservedly received it changes you doesn't it it changes the way you view what you have at least it should 2nd

Corinthians 9 6-7 says the point is this whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully each one must give as he has decided in his heart not reluctantly or under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver Adrian Rogers once said some people have made a God of wealth they worship at the shrine of money their God is gold their creed is greed their theology is get all you can can all you get sit on the lid and poison the rest does that describe you does that describe you are you stewarding your resources that God has given you to advance his kingdom or are you hoarding them to build yours are you spending your time coming up with ways to to get rich quick share this post on

Facebook and and you're going to be blessed with some huge gift in the next five minutes you've seen those what about the lottery what about gambling are those get rich quick schemes and the motivation is to make lots of money without working for it is that the best use of your resources we aren't owners of what we have we're stewards what you have belongs to God your life belongs to God does that pursuit of wealth honor him you know I had a friend in ministry who was witnessing to a he was discipling actually a reformed gang member inner city Kansas City and he found out that this guy he was discipling was still selling drugs and my friend wasn't going to make peace with that sin right so he confronted him said what are you doing and the man excused it he said look

[ 31 : 33 ] I don't have a high school education I didn't go to college the best job I can get is working at McDonald's and I cannot feed my family on that kind of income so I have to keep selling drugs my friend asked him point blank who do you trust who do you trust you think God's so small that if you don't trust him and you keep doing this that he can't provide for you and he told him in fact you keep doing this you're going to end up in jail and nobody is going to be paying for your family to be able to eat or do anything who do you trust is your goal to be like Jesus or to make as much money as you can by whatever means necessary when he overturns the money changing tables in your heart and he exposes how you too look for it to what you should be looking to him for do you see that as an inconvenience or do you trust him you know inscribed on all of our coins and dollars is the phrase in

God we trust do you trust God and value Jesus more than the coins and papers that that statement is printed on the third treasure that people value more than Jesus we see in the life of Caiaphas Jesus was an inconvenience to Caiaphas who valued his power in verse 14 it was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should die for the people Caiaphas was concerned with Jesus influence over the people he was concerned that Jesus claimed to be king would cure the wrath of the Romans who would then seize what little power they still had Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin over that region and so he sinfully rationalized that you know what it'd be better that he dies so that we can maintain our position of power and you know what God's people lust for power too when Jesus disciples were arguing over which of them would be the greatest in his kingdom remember that here they are they've been with Jesus for a while! and they're bickering over you know who who's going to be Jesus' top guy right hand man in his kingdom and what did Jesus say to them he called to them and he said in Matthew 20 25 through 28 you know that the rulers of the gentiles lorded over them and their great ones exercise authority over them it shall not be among you but whoever would be great among you must be your servant and whoever would be first among you must be your slave even as the son of man came not to be

served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many you know the apostle Paul one of the greatest Christians to ever live in his life he accumulated a whole lot of titles for himself but you know what his favorite title for himself was slave of Jesus Christ slave of Jesus Christ and I ask you does that title sound degrading to you or unworthy of you the

Bible says that all of us all of us are a slave of either one of two masters in John 8:34 Jesus used the analogy of slavery to communicate that spiritual reality he said truly truly I say to you everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin and so listen if Jesus isn't your master then sin is your master and sin is a cruel master it blinds people to the truth like Caiaphas it seeks to put God to death to deny him his existence his authority and you know it seems fun at first to be your own authority to think that you can determine your own truth but it never ends well many years ago I had a student who was in our youth ministry and he was getting in a lot of trouble and

[36:18] Danny and I used to have him over with some of our other students who were close to him and we would repeatedly share the gospel with him repeatedly warn him to change his ways to come to Christ and it would seem like times he would be doing well and then one night I came home from the office at church and I turned on the news and he was on the evening news he had kidnapped a girl and he was on the run from the police I remember picking up my phone and calling and going to his voicemail and just pleading with him go home give her up suit sitting across from me you know about three four inch thick piece of glass separating us I'll never forget his face as he told me you were right I was wrong and in that moment again just say hey I'm glad you realize it but

Jesus Christ is who you need he must be your master now your sin that you've made peace with might not put you in jail but let me tell you the Bible says Jesus says if you don't know him as Lord and Savior if you die in your sin you will end up in a very much worse place than jail you'll spend your eternity forever apart from him in hell when sin is your master you won't be able to resist it and the consequences of it are eternal eternal separation from God where all you'll ever hear moment after moment for all eternity is weeping and gnashing of teeth both of others who have rejected him and your own weeping and your own gnashing of teeth forever and ever and ever if you refuse to surrender to

Christ for you who are Christians you thankfully won't endure that but we know that you can save yourself a whole lot of heartache by acknowledging God's authority and the authority of his word over your life and so if you realize that you've been making peace with sin if you've made an idol of wealth if you've sought to take power from God by being your own authority there is hope but it begins with repentance confession contrition and determination to be like Christ and follow him more closely and you will when you see how much more worthy he is how much more valuable he is than anything else for believer and unbeliever alike Jesus offers you hope today comes to Romans 6:17 through 18 we are sinful but thanks be to

God that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed and having been set free from sin have become slaves of righteousness do you know Jesus is true worth are you inconvenienced by him the cross reveals his worth and you know what it reveals your worth too we sin and we stumble and we mess up and we make mistakes and we make peace with sin we all do it the great news for us for those of us who are in Christ we look to the cross we are reminded of the sacrifice he made for us and if you don't feel worthy and if you don't feel valuable you look to the cross and you are reminded of what Jesus did for you that he would take your place to set you free from sin and give you his life his righteousness his hope his peace his joy his life forever Jesus is good is he not God is great he is valuable and he is worthy main point of application don't handle Jesus cheaply value him supremely don't handle Jesus cheaply value him supremely so how can you do that well two ways two application questions that I'll leave you with first discern what you truly value and here's I think a great way to do that think about what do you daydream about and what are your worst nightmares you know if you're dreaming about promotion and a bigger house and you know somebody maybe even of the opposite sex whatever it could be many different things could very well be that that's what you truly value and you've made an idol of it or it could be your nightmare what do you fear losing do you love it more than

[41:50] Christ maybe that is the idol that you have or the sin that you've made peace with and then second determine to put sin to death determine to put sin to death so I encourage you to spend some time thinking about what sin have you made peace with are you seeking to become prosperous in sinful ways for sinful reasons think about what do your actions right now reveal about

who your master truly is you cannot earn your salvation it's all of Christ it's all of him but if you've been saved you are called by the Lord to work it out with fear and trembling progressing and sanctification I'm going to pray we'll have an invitation if you want to come forward and you want to pray down here you want me to pray for you I would be more than happy to do that but

I encourage each of us to take this text these questions and do some work with the Holy Spirit that we would all see the true! of Jesus and live our lives for him because he is supreme he is the pearl of great price he is the treasure that's worth selling everything else out for in order to have him and have him more let's pray!

forgive us us and help us Lord to see that you are truly the pearl of great price that you are the treasure worth giving all that we have all of our best to have and to have more of Lord reveal to us those sins that we have made peace with Lord reveal to us how we are maybe looking to money as an idol or seeking it for the things that we should be seeking you for Lord reveal to us how we have sought to be our own authority and to be in power instead of seeking to be a slave of our savior Jesus Christ God I pray that in doing so we would live lives for you that glorify your name as we know as mentioned this morning we live in a world in desperate need for Christians to be like Christ so Lord may we all determine and strive to do that more and more for your glory in Jesus name we pray amen