

God and the Sanhedrin Prepare for Jesus' Death

Matthew 26:1-5

Halifax: 18 February 2007

Introduction

Today in our Matthew sermon series, we come to a whole new section in this gospel.

- All along, we have seen how Matthew presents Jesus to us King Messiah. He focuses on His royal dignity.
 - Way back in the first four chapters, He was introduced as King Messiah by His genealogy, His remarkable birth, the attendance of the wise men, and then by His presentation by John the Baptist.
 - Then, in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), we were given an example of the kind of teaching He did wherever He went—
 - It was the teaching of One endowed with the regal authority of heaven such that the people marvelled.
 - In chapters 8-16, we saw His royal divine authority over sickness, nature, and all human misery as He went about healing and blessing the people.
 - In chapter 16, He began to speak to His disciples about how He would suffer, die, and be raised again to build His church,
 - and to instruct them about what was acceptable and not acceptable in the kingdom of the church that He was establishing.
 - This theme continued right on through to the end of Matthew 25 where He is presented as the King who comes at the end to judge.
- But now, as we come to chapter 26, there is a transition from Jesus' prophetic ministry to His priestly ministry.
 - Here we are given the historical account of the great event that is central to all history...
 - the death, burial, and resurrection of King Jesus!
 - All four of the gospels give a lot of attention to these glorious days.
 - The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the very heart of our religion, it is the very life of the Kingdom of God.
 - It is here that we see God's wrath poured out on the Head and King of the Church for the sake of all the members...
 - It is here that we see the free and willing offering up of our Holy and righteous King for this purpose—that He might bear our sins and so take away the wrath and judgement of God...

- It is here that we see the Father's gracious acceptance of the sacrifice of King Jesus as He raises Him from the dead and gives Him authority over all things.
 - The church's destiny hinged upon the acceptance of the great sacrifice of God's Son that is described in these gospel accounts.
 - Without it, we would all be condemned to everlasting punishment away from the joy of the LORD.
 - We do well to give earnest attention to the gospel accounts that are so carefully preserved for us in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
 - It is here that we find the basis of our hope, the only hope for mankind.

- In the four gospels, we find that each of the evangelists (gospel writers) speaks about these great events, but each includes details according to His own purpose.
 - And so it is that with Matthew, who has so often focused on the presentment of Jesus as King and Messiah,
 - we will find that he brings out what we might call...
 - **the regal bearing of King Jesus,**
 - demonstrated to us as He
 - faces His suffering,
 - bears His sufferings,
 - and then rises again announcing His kingly reign and mission to the world.
 - Matthew in particular, shows us that Jesus never lost His royal dignity in His sufferings, but that it shined forth all the more gloriously...
 - Even in His greatest humiliation,
 - He had the bearing of a great king...
 - He had the bearing of a great king because He **is** a great king.

- Matthew's distinctive emphasis on the regal bearing of Jesus in His death, burial, and resurrection, is introduced by Matthew right from the beginning of his account... in the passage that we read this morning:
 - Matthew 26:1-5.

- All four gospels tell us about the plotting and scheming of the Jewish leaders to take Jesus and crucify Him,
 - but only Matthew includes the announcement of Jesus in verse 2 in connection with this:
 - Jesus says:

- Matthew 26:2: “You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”
- By placing this announcement right before the plotting of the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders,
 - Matthew is highlighting the fact that these wicked men are doing nothing other than what God the Father and God that Son had already purposed to be.
 - Matthew is highlighting the truth that King Jesus is in full control.
 - Don’t get me wrong—the other gospels show us the same thing in various ways...
 - But Matthew emphasises it uniquely by including this announcement of Jesus right at the start.
 - He shows us that God’s counsel comes first, and man’s counsel follows it to fulfill it.
 - As Peter states it in his first sermon,
 - Acts 2:23: “Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;”
 - They did precisely what God’s hand and purpose had already determined would be done.
- This is something we very much need to see in our day when, as John MacArthur has said:
 - “Unbelieving sceptics have long tried to explain Jesus’ death as a quirk of fate, the unintended termination of a well-meaning revolution that was discovered and crushed or the sad end to the delusions of a madman. Others picture Jesus as a visionary whose dreams were ahead of the age in which He lived, or as a prophet who overstated His claims and thereby roused the ire of the religious establishment. But such assertions do not square with the gospel accounts and are blasphemous.”
 - Yes, the chief priests, scribes, and elders of the people wickedly purposed that Jesus would be crucified,
 - but their purpose could only come to fruition because God the Father and God the Son had already purposed exactly the same thing.
 - This same point is brought out again if you look ahead to verse 24 where Jesus comments about Judas’ betrayal, saying:
 - Matthew 26:24: The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.

- And again at His arrest in verse 55-56 where He says:
 - In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.”
 - Clearly, the wicked acts of man are fulfilling the plan of God—
 - Judas, the Chief priests, and the soldiers were able to carry out their wicked designs only because the LORD had already determined that these things should be done.

You need to understand that even the wicked counsel and acts of men do nothing else but carry forward the gracious and glorious purpose of God.

- Here is a story about Junior to illustrate.
- Junior was very excited!
 - He and his mother had just come back from the grocery store, and while they were there, they had bought some groceries for Mrs. Jones, a godly widow who lived at the end of their street.
 - They often looked after her, and they knew that she had just had guests in her home...
 - They knew enough about her to know that she was often so generous with her guests that she was left with nothing for herself after they were gone.
 - So while they were out, they had picked up some milk and bread and few other things to take to her.
 - But while they were unloading the groceries, Junior’s mother had twisted her ankle on the stairs and was unable to walk.
 - The groceries for Mrs. Jones were still in the van, and the van door was still opened.
 - Junior’s dad was coming home from work to take his Mrs. Jones to the doctor.
 - Junior was worried about the groceries.
 - How could they get them to Mrs. Jones?
 - He was not strong enough to carry them all the way to her house, but he hoped somehow they would be able to take them to her.
- At the very same time, some wicked boys were near Mrs. Jones’s house.
 - It was a beautiful spring day, and the windows were opened.

- They heard Mrs. Jones praying and began to listen in.
 - She was asking the Lord to provide her with her daily bread—she was out of food (just as Junior’s mother had suspected).
- The boys were going on their way when one of them noticed the groceries that Junior’s mother had bought for Mrs. Jones in the van.
 - He had no idea that these were intended for Mrs. Jones...
 - But he had a sinister idea,
 - “Let’s play a trick on old widow Jones. Let’s take these groceries and put it by her door. We’ll ring the door bell and run away, and she will think God gave them to her.”
 - The other boys laughed and immediately went to work.
 - When Mrs. Jones came to the door, and saw the groceries,
 - She lifted up her eyes and gave thanks to the Lord.
 - The boys, who were hiding in the bushes, jumped out and said,
 - God didn’t put those groceries on you steps, we did!
 - Mrs. Jones replied, “Oh no lads, you are quite mistaken about that...”
 - “The Lord is the one who gave those groceries to me in answer to my prayer—you were just the ones He used to deliver them to me.”
- Now you see, those wicked boys had no intention of doing the will of the Lord, but that was exactly what they did.
 - That is exactly what happened when the Sanhedrin delivered Jesus over to the Romans to be crucified.
 - God’s people had been praying for redemption, and God’s Son had come to give Himself for our sins.
 - The Sanhedrin did what was necessary on their part to deliver Him up to be crucified.
 - They did what they had purposed to do, and that was precisely what God had already purposed to be done before He even made the world...
 - Materially, it was the same purpose as God’s—that Jesus be crucified...
 - Yet, what a difference there was in their purpose and God’s purpose!

TRANS> This morning I want to look at three great differences between the purpose of Jewish leaders and the purpose of God in seeking the death of Jesus Christ.

- First of all, see that...

I. God's purpose is gracious, the Sanhedrin's (Jewish leaders') purpose is selfish...

A. It is quite clear from these words of Jesus that will be delivered up to be crucified that this is something He is graciously giving Himself over to.

1. He knows that in only two days this is going to happen...

a. Now the normal response, if you find out that something bad like this is going to happen, is to go into hiding or to hightail it to another country!

- You can remember how Joseph and Mary took off for Egypt when Herod was trying to kill the baby Jesus.
- We often read about Jesus avoiding his enemies during his ministry years...
 - The Gospel of John often tells us that He did this because His time had not yet come.
 - But now the time has come, and Jesus knows it.
 - It is the Father's plan and He is in full agreement with it.

b. Jesus knew all along what would happen on this visit to Jerusalem, but He went anyway...

- He went in order that He might give Himself up to be crucified.
 - The whole time, He had the authority as the Son of God to call down legions of angels to destroy His enemies and His persecutors.
 - He could have put a stop to it at any point, but He would not do it because it was His gracious purpose to give Himself in this way.

2. Brothers and sisters, for your encouragement and for your praise of Jesus, you need to see in this how gracious He is!

a. A person is gracious when He freely gives Himself for others...

1) To use the words of Jesus in Matthew 25,

- If you see them hungry, you give them something to eat,
- If you see them thirsty, you give them something to drink,
- If naked, you cloth them...
- If in prison, you visit them.
- You take something of your own and in love you give it to the one who has need.
- That's graciousness...

- 2) And graciousness is more gracious when the thing you give is very precious and costly, or puts you to suffering...
 - A gracious person will give up his own comforts and his own rights for others.
 - He will go hungry so that others won't have to...
 - That is even a more gracious graciousness...

TRANS> But there is something that makes even this graciousness yet more gracious...

- 3) When you give yourself for one who is your enemy and who is completely undeserving of your gift...
 - Like the person who is robbed and then goes to help the robber when that robber falls on hard times...
 - or when you speak kind words about the one who is always bad-mouthing you...
 - These are the things that need to be seen in our Christian homes and in our church...
- b. Just consider how the LORD Jesus, deliberately giving Himself for us, scores the highest marks on every one of these points...
 - 1) First of all, that He freely gave Himself to our need...
 - He saw us dead in trespasses and sins,
 - and while he might have gone on about His business and pleasure living in the sweet fellowship of His Father and of the Holy Spirit,
 - He made our wretched condition his business, and willingly set Himself to do what was necessary to redeem us.
 - He cared for us.
 - 2) And at what cost to Himself...
 - We were justly sentenced to eternal punishment because of our collusion with Satan—
 - joining in His rebellion to overthrow the holy and just government of our Creator by whom we have our being and for whom we were made.
 - The penalty due from us was eternal punishment—nothing less would satisfy divine justice.
 - The Son of God alone was able to pay this penalty...

- But at what tremendous cost to Himself!
 - Not only did it involve leaving the glories of heaven,
 - but it meant that He must put Himself in our place to receive our punishment...
 - He had to bear the pains of Hell on the cross!
 - Justice had to be fully meted out.
 - It was the payment of this penalty that He spoke of when He said that in two days, He would be delivered up to be crucified!
 - It is the ultimate in self-sacrifice!
 - His grace defies description!
- 3) But His grace is even greater than that because it was extended to us while we were yet His enemies!
- a) The demands of justice were so great just because our wickedness was so great...
- God did not overstate our guilt or sentence us to more than what we deserved.
 - We really are as wicked as He says and we really deserve the penalty that His law demands!
 - In our fallen state, we do not yet see the glory of the God against whom we rebelled...
 - But my friends, if we understood it we would see that failing to worship Him with our whole being is a far greater wickedness than whatever we think to be wicked now!
 - We have set ourselves against our own Creator to whom we owe everything for whom we were made...
 - This is worse than murder, worse than torturing every human being you find, worse than rape and incest and theft and whatever else you might come up with.
- b) And yet, Jesus' grace is such that He comes to the likes of us to redeem us...
- He comes to us even while we are yet enemies who would all crucify Him if given the opportunity!
 - Believe me, if you have ever refused to obey God, you have it in you to crucify Him.

- You are, as much as you are able, doing what you can to murder God—to unseat Him who, as long as He lives, must always rule.
 - You cannot set aside His rule without setting Him aside.
 - Jesus comes to those who are **this** wicked to redeem us—
 - even when that means He Himself must bear the shame and the penalty of such great wickedness!
 - Such is His grace!
3. Now I say what great comfort you ought to take in this Saviour’s grace!
- a. Christian, see here how much He loves you!
 - There is no love like His love,
 - that even while we were yet enemies, Christ died for us!
 - b. In this world you will often be unloved and uncared for by others,
 - but here is a Saviour whose love exceeds all boundaries!
 - A Saviour who deliberately gave Himself up to be crucified in order that you might live!
 - This was His gracious purpose!
 - This is the place for you to rest with joy and gladness forever!
 - Who would want to live apart from this grace?
 - c. And be known that this is not only the love of the Son of God, but also the love of God the Father...
 - For the Father, who loves the Son, purposed to give His Son for the purpose of our redemption.
 - This was the triune God’s purpose of grace for us in having His Son crucified.
- B. But now contrast this gracious purpose to have Christ crucified with the selfish purpose of the Jewish leaders to have him crucified...
1. A gracious person gives all he can give, and when he has finished, he gives more; but a selfish person takes all he can get...
 - and when he has taken it, he tries to take more...
 - You can picture them here with furrowed brow, plotting how they may take Him.
 - They want to get Him out of the way for good.

2. You need to see what is at the root of this bitter hatred and selfishness...
 - a. In Jesus Christ, they have met God in human flesh...
 - and they can't stand Him!
 - They want to take Him out of the world—
 - When you boil it all down, they want God Himself out of the universe!
 - That is the underlying sentiment!
 - They find that His government interferes with their selfish desires and purposes.
 - Rather than giving up those selfish desires and purposes, they choose to deliver Him up!
 - b. Think about what this is!
 - 1) They want to take the very One who gives life and light to all,
 - who alone is the source of every blessing,
 - and destroy Him because He is in **their** way!
 - 2) This One who, even in His human nature, daily displayed His grace by healing and feeding and teaching words of gracious wisdom...
 - They want to eliminate Him...
 - because of a very deep seated hatred of God.
 - 3) What greater crime than to destroy the giver of every blessing and every perfect gift—
 - to remove the fountain of all life and light and leave nothing but death and darkness in the world!
3. Now brothers and sisters,
 - a. I have already pointed out that this very same wickedness is in the roots of every human being since the fall.
 - This destroying root of incredible selfishness that would at last destroy God Himself for getting in your way is daily displayed in our lives.
 - It is there in your covetousness, your impatience, your ingratitude, your lust—it is there and it is ugly.
 - This selfishness of our purposes stand directly opposite to the gracious purposes of Jesus Christ who came not to take, but to give!
 - b. But be thankful that in His gracious saving mercy,

- the LORD Jesus Christ comes to us and promises to deliver us out of this wretched condition if we will but look to Him...
- He gives His Holy Spirit to us to change us—
- The Spirit turns our hearts to yearn for this change from selfish hatred to gracious love...
 - And over time He works in us to make it happen.
 - Oh we are yet so defiled and full of this corruption,
 - but praise be to His name,
 - the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in us to make us gracious as He is gracious!
 - Do it LORD Jesus and we will bless your name forever!

TRANS> What a difference there is in God's gracious purpose that gives Christ and the Jewish leaders' selfish purpose that tries to take Him away!

- That's the first great difference between the purpose of God and that of the Sanhedrin in wanting to see Christ crucified.
- Now let us consider a second great contrast...namely, this; that...

II. God's purpose is wise, the Sanhedrin's purpose is foolish...

- You act with wisdom when the course you take ends well—when it leads to what is good and excellent.
 - For example, if you make a foolish investment, you end up losing your savings...
 - If you make a foolish decision in the person you marry, you set yourself up for years of sorrow and heartache.
- A. Consider, therefore, how foolish the Sanhedrin's purpose was to eliminate Jesus from the earth!
 1. If they could have been successful as far as what they were aiming to do—not just crucify him, but crucify him to rid the earth of Him—
 - they would have removed, as we have seen, the sole source of life and light from the universe!
 - They would have destroyed every hope of happiness, peace, prosperity—
 - They would have pulled out even from their own lives whatever comforts and good things they were enjoying in this world.
 - A world without Christ is a world of death—that is what they were aiming for...

- They wanted God out of the way so they could be in charge like God and do whatever they wanted... or so they thought... forgetting that God is the one who upholds their very being.
 - They were very foolish because they were biting the very hand that feeds them!
2. But their foolishness is evident in a second way in that they were supposing that they could fight against God.
- Granted, there were many of them who acted ignorantly and in unbelief...
 - They were blinded by their sin and their covetousness so that they did not realise that they were fighting against God.
 - The biggest fools were those who knew this and continued to do it anyway...
 - and were are told that there were some of that stripe...
 - They were the greatest fools of all, and they had shut themselves up to certain judgement.
 - But even those who were acting in ignorance were acting in great folly—
 - It was an act of great folly because they did not realise that they were fighting against God...
 - It was an act of great folly because they did not see what ought to have been very clear to them...
 - You would consider a person a fool if he ran up to a raging lion and assumed he would be able to overcome it...
 - You would say, “What a foolish man—could he not see the strength and power of that lion?”
 - But we are far more blind when we cannot see the glory of God revealed in Christ.
 - It is the most remarkable blindness in the world...
 - And it is a blindness that we all share until and unless God opens our eyes by His Spirit to see.
 - How could the Sanhedrin ever suppose that they could set aside Christ, this One who could raise the dead?
 - Ah, but watch your pride...
 - You suppose that you can set Him aside whenever you ignore Him to go your own way!
 - Who is free of this folly of the Sanhedrin?

TRANS> What fools they were to suppose that they could set Christ aside, and to suppose that if they could have done it, it would have been good!

- There is no greater folly than this in all the world!

B. But now compare the wisdom of God's purpose in purposing to crucify His Son...

a. His purpose was not to rid the earth of Him, but rather to establish Him as the Saviour of the world!

- The divine counsel had purposed that by Christ making Himself an offering for sin,
 - this sinful world could become a worshipping world...
 - this world of hatred could become a world of love
 - this world of folly could become a world wisdom.

b. The Sanhedrin thought they were shrewd in devising a way to get rid of Christ,

- but in fact God was exercising wisdom in delivering Jesus up to redeem the world and to establish a righteous kingdom that reflected His beauty and glory.
 - His Son, having made satisfaction for our sins, would afterward call and gather all His elect into this kingdom by His Spirit and at last come to destroy all His enemies, casting them into the Lake of Fire.
 - The Sanhedrin's counsel was a counsel of folly that would lead to their shame...
 - The counsel of God and of Christ was a counsel of wisdom that would lead to their glory and honour!

c. It is the part of wisdom for you to unite yourself to Christ and His purpose,

- and it is the part of folly to unite yourself to the Sanhedrin and their purpose to avoid Christ.
- It is not something you can be neutral about...
 - You either join up with Him and His purpose of wisdom that restores life under God
 - or you continue in folly resisting Him until at last you are cut off.

TRANS> So now we have seen two great differences in God's counsel and the Sanhedrin's counsel that Christ be crucified...

- First, that the counsel of God was gracious, the counsel of the Sanhedrin was selfish...
- Secondly, that the counsel of God was wise and the counsel of the Sanhedrin was foolish.

- Now we come to third difference... that...

III. God's purpose is sure, the Sanhedrin's purpose is unsure (contingent)

A. This is brought out in a very striking way in our text...

1. We are given these two scenes that appear to have occurred at the same time...
 - a. In the first scene, Christ is telling His disciples that He will be delivered up to be crucified in two days, at the time of the Passover.
 - b. In the second scene, you have the Sanhedrin meeting together at the house of Caiaphas, the high priest, and purposing that they ought not to take any action against Christ until after the feast is over...
 - Now this feast was one that lasted for eight days...
 - It began with the Passover meal and continued with the feast of unleavened bread for a whole week.
 - The Sanhedrin reason that if they were to arrest Christ during the feast, they might cause an uproar because many people held Him to be a prophet.
2. Now you can see in these two scenes that Matthew presents to us, side by side, that there is a contradiction...
 - a. Jesus says, "two days from now, at the Passover"...
 - but the Jewish leaders say, "not at the Passover, but after the week of feasting is over."
 - b. Of course you know what happened...
 - 1) God had purposed that Jesus would be delivered at the time of the Passover and so He was...
 - It was only fitting that this should be since He was the true Passover sacrifice, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
 - He was replacing all those Passover sacrifices that had been made since Israel's deliverance from Egypt.
 - It was by trusting in Him, the One who was punished for our transgressions, that we are able to escape the judgement of God will fall on this world.
 - This judgement will pass over all who have trusted in Him.
 - God purposed that Jesus should be offered at this time, and so He was.
 - 2) Not only was it the most appropriate time symbolically, but it was also a time when there would be no shortage of witnesses...

- The Jewish Historian, Josephus, indicates in his writings that there were about three million people in Jerusalem during this week of feasting!
 - For this reason, Paul is able to point out that the crucifixion and resurrection did not occur in a corner...
 - The Jews did not hire an assassin to take the life of Jesus on a dark road somewhere...
 - they made a public arrest and had him crucified at a feast day—which by the way was a common practice—
 - They often crucified malefactors on feast days as a public example to all the people...
 - Even though it was not their original intent for His death to be so public, it was God's intent that His Son be publicly set forth as crucified.

TRANS> And so you see that in this matter of the timing of Jesus' death, it was not what the Sanhedrin had purposed, but what God had determined that was done.

- God's plan was certain, but the Sanhedrin's purpose was contingent—for all they knew, they might have completely failed to take Him as they had so many times in the past.

B. Brothers and sisters, be confident that the purposes of God cannot fail.

1. You can speak about whatever He has revealed to be His plan with the same confidence that Jesus speaks of His coming death...
 - a. The Sanhedrin are slinking around, plotting and scheming about how they are going to bring about an end to Jesus...
 - The worried, trying to determine the best way to make it happen...
 - b. But Jesus simply declares what is going to happen with absolute assurance.
 - When you do God's will, your destiny is settled in His hands...
 - When you rebel, you may accomplish certain parts of what you propose,
 - but you will find that you are like one who cuts down what you call a weed only to have ten more come up in its place...
 - They removed Christ from the earth only to prepare Him to come back again as ruling judge!
2. How you need to have confidence in the certainty of God's plan!
 - a. For example, you need to be absolutely certain of God's promise that He will cause all things to work together for God to those that love Him...

- Jesus went the cross according to the Father's will because He was certain that it would bring about the good that the Father had promised.
 - If He had been unsure about the outcome, He never could have endured the cross.
 - Just look at His disciples!
 - They could not see how the crucifixion of their Master could bring about good!
 - When He was arrested and put up on that cross, it seemed absurd to say that this was going to bring about good...
 - but you see, they were not God...
 - They did not have to know how God would be true to His promise—
 - all they had to do was trust Him.
 - And of course after it was all over and they came to understand it all,
 - then they began to boast in the cross and to rejoice in it as the greatest thing that God had ever done!
- b. Now what is it in this world that puzzles you and that you can't make sense as to why God would let it happen?
- What is it that makes you think the world is running outside of God's control?
 - You can be sure that whatever it is, you are wrong about it!
 - God's gracious purpose will always be done for the blessing of His people.
 - Sometimes, He may raise up the most wicked nations or rulers in the world to humble His people or to chasten them for their sins.
 - Sometimes He sends sickness and sorrow to us in this world for our training and growth...
 - But He will never send anything that will hurt you—and everything that comes to you is something that He has sent!
 - The crucifixion and its glorious outcome needs to be a model for you of the gracious working of God to use the wicked deeds of men to accomplish His purposes...
 - Like the boy's in Junior's neighbourhood, God uses them as His instruments to carry milk and bread to His people.
 - The only time they are able to carry forward their purposes is when their purposes carry forth God's purpose.

- Even down to the very details,
 - they carry out all that God has purposed—nothing more and nothing less.
 - This is the confidence you need to have if you have submitted yourself to Jesus Christ in faith...
 - He will not fail you.
 - Your hope is sure.
 - You can face whatever this world brings to you—poverty, bereavement, persecution, sickness—
 - whatever it may be—
 - with absolute confidence that God’s gracious will will always be accomplished.
3. How comforting it is to see Jesus speaking so definitely about His crucifixion when He had just finished a long discourse in Matthew 24 and 25 about His coming in His glory at the end of the age!
- a. These poor weak scheming Jewish leaders could no more bring fear to Jesus than a child with a toy knife...
 - b. To be sure, something of their purpose would be accomplished, they would be able to deliver Jesus up to be crucified...
 - but they had no real control of the situation whatsoever.
 - Jesus would die, but in the end,
 - their selfish purpose to take Jesus away would not stand,
 - but God’s gracious purpose to give Him to save His people from their sins would be fully accomplished.
 - c. If you are wise, you will unite yourself to Jesus Christ and His gracious, wise, and certain purpose
 - rather than man with his selfish, foolish, and uncertain purpose.
 - You will reach out to embrace Christ rather than reaching forth your hand to drive Him away...
 - If you reach forth to Him, you will find Him with great joy,
 - but if you seek to drive Him away, you may indeed succeed to drive away your only source of life and light,
 - but you will then have to face Him as your Judge.