

Strategic Design Part 2

Pastor Jordan Biel 04.10.22 Rock of Grace

INTRO

Sometimes I like to open with a story - maybe warm you up a bit =) and sometimes we start right off with Scripture; today we're going to start off with some key points - things I want you to know before we open the text. So go ahead and turn to JN 12

As you're turning there I want to set up the scene. Jesus had just been anointed by Mary - she was being prophetic using perfumes allocated for burial - strong spices and expensive perfume and yet she poured it all out on Jesus. Why? She was overwhelmed with gratitude.

The same is true of us. When we realize how much we've been forgiven, we are overwhelmed with gratitude and our actions reflect that.

Before we read this I want to set some parameters about God's strategic design - some things that typically I might give you later in the sermon but I want to share a few now then we'll return to the concepts throughout the sermon today.

First of all, **God's plan has always been to redeem you, His special creation**

Ephesians 2 and other places indicate that it's always been God's plan to restore you back to the perfection of the Garden of Eden. He loves you and me so much that He wants to be in unity with you.

God is sovereign over all. Sovereign ... God's right to exercise His ruling power over creation.

Comment

Jesus, God's Son, knows how you feel. He's prophesied as being the suffering servant. Isaiah 43, 53, Ps 69, etc

It's not just that God is sovereign IN CONTROL distant God, He is somehow incredibly empathetic towards us and He demonstrated that by not cleansing the earth of sin by simply wiping it out, instead He sent His Son, Jesus, to feel what we feel, suffer what we suffer, grieve like we grieve and even be tempted like we are tempted. That's incredible. Jesus knows how you feel!

That's an important part of doctrine - an important belief that we must have as humans created in His image.

While God has all the power, He came to serve.

Why would someone with ALL the power come to SERVE? (Pause)

Isaiah 46:8-11

⁸ "Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors,

⁹ remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other;

- I am God, and there is none like me,
10 declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done,
saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,'
11 calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country.
I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it." ESV

God's love has always been sure! OT reveals His love as "Yahweh" NT reveals His love as Savior. Deut. 7:7-9

He's the same God! He would invite them to a life of holiness set apart from idol worship - set apart from other peoples and sometimes they'd listen and sometimes they wouldn't. When they'd rebel, God would lift His hand of blessing and they'd be either beaten in battle or worse, captured and taken to Babylon.

This is where we get the prayers of lament like Ps 137 and others.

When God's people would sin, rebel against His instructions, then pay the consequences of that sin bc His hand of blessing is lifted, God would raise up a man or woman to lead them BACK to God, back to repentance and guess what GOD would ALWAYS forgive them!

His love is sure! His love and desire to protect you and care for you and provide for you and be your Father has never ever changed and never ever will!

When we face troubles in this world

Jesus TOLD US that we would indeed have many troubles in this world.

I love what scholar Tim Mackie says about suffering. He says look

Jesus promises us in this world you will have trouble. The temptation is to be mad at God instead of mad at satan or what Job calls "The Satan"

In our journey of faith we must learn that GOD is good and that our anger towards suffering can be directed at God but instead at satan and then rejoice knowing that in the end he is defeated!

When we suffer, we think WE HAVE A BETTER WAY

"This is God's universe and God does things His way. You may have a better way but you don't have a universe."

J Vernon McGee

Turn back now to John chapter 12, starting with verse 9 and we'll talk about the days leading up to Jesus' crucifixion.

Jesus enters Jerusalem and they shout "Hosanna!" Which means "Save us now"

John 12:9-26 (ESV): The Plot to Kill Lazarus

9 When the large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there, they came, not only on account of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 10 So the

chief priests made plans to put Lazarus to death as well, 11 because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.

The Triumphal Entry
SIDE NOTE =)

You know you're messed up when you are plotting to kill the guy Jesus just raised from the dead! Dude was already dead. Jesus brought him back to life and now you're gonna kill him again!? Really!? You got issues!!! Lol

So the Pharisees were mad that they were losing their followers - losing their crowd - we'll come back to this concept later in the sermon.

12 The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. 13 So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" 14 And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, 15 "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!"

16 His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him. 17 The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. 18 The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. 19 So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him."

20 Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. 21 So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." 22 Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. 23 And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

24 Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25 Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

There's so much packed into this moment when Jesus enters town.

They roll out the red carpet!

They cheer him on like a celebrity!

Why? They are expecting him to finally save them from the immoral Roman government and the hypocritical Jewish Ministry Leaders.

Finally! They have a Savior! Someone to save them from their oppression and in a way they do but most of them - likely not all of them - most of them had it all wrong.

Elaborate on this idea: **The crowd wanted NOW. Jesus wanted forever.**

Today's Christian would mistake a crowd for a sign of success. The world AND Christians do this. A crowd does not equal success and a crowd does not equal compromise either.

Crowds are fickle and if you crave a crowd (likes follows fame) it's an indicator that you're not yet living in the

We've all seen the news of Hillsong Church.

I think it's healthy for as pastors to address the elephant in the room. At least some of you have maybe even seen the documentary ...

It's been made clear not only by the Royal Commission, Investigators AND the journalist of 20/20 Australia that dozens of sexual abuse reports of Carl Lentz and other pastors were buried by the pastoral staff and leadership team.

Its' so sad. It's sickening.

Brian Houston

Why do I bring this up?

Two reasons 1. It's important that as your pastor you hear a few things that are important regarding a case like this; the things I'll share in just a moment. 2. It's an indicator of the problem that people had in the FIRST church and the in the 21st Century church.

There's a sinful part of us as humans that are drawn to fame or crowds.

Crowds can be deceiving.

Crowds can change a man.

I heard a preacher commenting on this - a well-known preacher you would all know - he said an interview on this topic ... "I have never seen anyone survive fame."

That line jumped out to me. WOW. Fame. The crowds or more importantly the need for crowds can be an indicator - like a red light on your car saying "check engine"

Jesus had crowds.

Crowds do not equal compromise.

I think Jeff Leake who has crowds is a man of God, a man of genuine integrity.

I think

I don't KNOW as I can't know the heart of ANY man. And this is also an important note- something to understand- you can not know the heart of any man fully. WHY? Scripture says ONLY GOD CAN.

That should bring you into the correct perspective in life. In your faith walk, etc With this worldview - one based on scripture - you won't elevate a man to an unhealthy position. You won't elevate him higher than God.

The same things that took place at Mars Hill with Mark Discoll were playing out in Sydney Australia and then New York and other Hillsong church plants. Why? If you don't deal with sin, it will creep up and only next time it's bigger and more powerful and worse.

Sin must be repented of.

Leaders who are blow it must be held accountable in love - in gentleness but held accountable- not ignored. Victims must be protected. At rockof grace will always do our absolute best to ensure every child is protected at all cost. Why did you think we are so strick on our background checks? Why did you think we are so struck on our pick-up name tags for Childrens ministry - it's all with the aim of protecting your child.

There's many lessons to be learned in stories like this.

1. Vision is great - when it multiplies the kingdom, not your brand.
2. Crowds can be deceiving - a crowd does NOT equal biblical success. Jesus will say "Well done good and faithful servant" not "well done good and successful servant."
3. We tend to want a King but not a Lord - that's indicative of our sinful nature - a nurture that need repented of then replaced with the divine nature. (See 1 Cor..)
4. When abuse of a child or anyone is covered up repeatedly its because the brand and reputation of the church has become more important than the people it's called to serve.
5. When pastors and leaders become insulated it always leads to problems.

What we must realize is that the internal problems of the people 2000 years ago are the same today.

1. People want a King but not a Lord. "I want someone like God to provide health wealth and happiness to me but I don't want to submit to His rules and His ways." **Jesus must be both lord and savior; he can't be one or the other.**
2. People want a crowd and not a crown. meaning, they want a crowd NOW, everyone to agree with them NOW; if you don't agree then you're the enemy NOW as opposed to stopping, listening to Jesus and making HIS WORDS the standard knowing that He wants to save us FOREVER not just help us now.
3. People want a God who agrees with them not a God who teaches them a better way - opposing what they've known to be true. *ONLY GOD, ONLY JESUS really knows the best way and His Word provides perfect truth.

Think about what we said earlier...

While God has all the power He came to serve.

This all-powerful, all knowing God came to serve you!!!!

For Jesus ALREADY paid the punishment for your sins!

There's NOTHING you need to do to earn salvation and a life of peace with God.

We all want peace and only JESUS can give us that peace in our soul and in our mind.

Jesus came to restore you AND your neighbor AND your coworker to the Father but

HOW did He come? In power, demanding to be worshiped? Did he take over with violence?

Did He take over with cunning political gain? No.

Look at how Jesus came. As the prophet said LONG AGO _ He came humbly - writing into Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey.

Passage about coming into Jerusalem >>>

I want to not only talk for a moment about why He came but HOW Jesus came.

Scripture says that He not only rode on a donkey (NOT A HORSE) but a BABY donkey. His feet may have been dangling on the ground - dragging along. Jesus was always choosing the humble way - teaching us what God is like. God is approachable.

Yes God is sovereign but God is also approachable! WOW!

Even in the fall of man we see the workings of Gods plan- We see that Jesus was always the remedy for man's sin problem that Jesus wasn't a reaction to man's surprise sinning in the Garden but rather Jesus was a proactive move to eradicate sin before there was a world for man to sin in. (Based on Eph 2)

You and I now carry this message of the Gospel! This GOOD NEWS that God the Father wants EVERYONE in His family! It's not just for the "good people" or those born in the right neighborhood. A relationship with Father God is for EVERYONE and JESUS makes that possible!

The problem we have today, over 2000 years later, is the same. The crowd (we) want NOW.

Jesus wants FOREVER. **We want saved from others. Jesus wants us to save us from ourselves.**

People tend to turn to God only in crisis and only for the length - time period - of the crisis. It's as if they want Jesus to fix their problems but not fix them. It's as if they want a savior from oppression (of others - in biblical times - the harsh Roman Empire) in our times the oppression could be a perception of our government much like they viewed theirs. Others view this

oppression from outside as being from “the world” their upbringing, their parents, even nameless ideals. The idea is that I need God to save me from THEM. The Gospel message though is different. The difference may be subtle but it’s there. The Gospel message - the message of Jesus - is that we need saved from ourselves. That it is US - our sin - that leads us to death - to problems - to pain.

Apostle Paul said it like this ... vs about “my sin leads me to...”

We live in a fallen, HURTING world. Sin causes revenge. Revenge causes sin...

Then there’s the unexpected losses. The grief.

Last week I listened as someone poured out her anger towards her husband - their marriage is on the brinks.

This weekend alone, I have a relative who was found on the floor due to a heart attack. The family is grieving and wondering WHY?

Yesterday at a funeral in andover, I witnessed 4 daughters grieving the loss of their mother.

You know what I also witnessed there? About 30 people from Bob Pashley’s life group and our church family comforted Bob and their family in their grief.

I witnessed love, compassion, empathy and HOPE in the midst of suffering.

WE get these glimpses of heaven - pictures of GOD’s perfect love don’t we?

Why would a perfect God allow suffering in His strategic design? When we suffer, we wonder... Is god not good enough or powerful enough?

We think “Do I need to lower my view of God?”
WOW! Tragedy and grief is terrible!

Many of David’s Psalms show this lament - this crying out to God in the midst of pain.
It’s good to read through those when we’re hurting

What does Jesus say about PRAYER - how to come to God when we’re suffering injustice?

Mt 7:7-8

The one who seeks finds, to the one who knocks the door will be open.

Luke 18:1–8 (ESV): 18 And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. 2 He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. 3 And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’ 4 For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, ‘Though I neither fear God nor respect man,

5 yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.’ ” 6 And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge says. 7 And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? 8 I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

It seems like when we have problems we tend to come to one conclusion
Either God is not powerful enough or God is not good.”

I’ve heard this concept

Theodicy
The justice of God.

How does a perfectly good great God allow pain and suffering?

The Jews were suffering

Robbed.

Marginalized.

Does God care?

There are hundreds of kids being trafficked on our southern border!

There are women who after pay \$2000 to a coyote are taken to the border only to be raped before they are helped across.

painful terrible things

There are kids who have to watch mom and dad go through a divorce - separate - painful terrible things...

Does’t God care?

If everything is POSSIBLE for GOD and God is POWERFUL why would He not STOP the suffering NOW?

At some point in your adult life, you’ve come to this question I can all but guarantee it.

“In this world you will have trouble.” Jesus said

Why did He say this?

He gave a parable on the heals of making this statement predicting the trouble we’d experience in life.

But the promise Jesus gives is really amazing “but I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD”

So the hope of heaven and the idea that we will be saved then and there from what is here and now must permeate our faith and our daily living. While it shouldn’t create “escape” theology where we hide in our bubble until Jesus comes (not healthy or advised by Jesus) we should be on mission to reach as many as we can with the good news while we still can knowing that one day Jesus will make all things new (Rev - i think 21, look up)

It’s as if He wants to make it clear to us - it’s as if he’s saying “Look, the sin-filled world that you live in, I want to rescue you from that! I have a PERFECT heaven where there is no pain, no conflict, no revenge or remorse, no cancer no death no suffering! But you must admit your need for Me to forgive you. You must admit your need for my cross.’

We must realize as we approach Easter and next weeks Passion Service and Good Friday that

**People want a crowd when Jesus wants a crown.
People want now. Jesus wants forever.
It's takes admitting our sin to get to forever.
People want a King but not a Lord.
Jesus is both Savior and Lord, King of all.
You can't have him as Savior and not as Lord.**

**Following Jesus together isn't just a slogan for us at Rock of Grace.
It's a way of life.**

**We suffer together. We pray together. We celebrate together as we follow
Jesus TRUSTING that He will bring us one day to a better place so we
SURRENDER to HIM our feelings our sin our everything!**

**We want saved form our offering now and Jesus gives and prays with us
but we must remember that Heaven is our home, not earth. Are you ready
for heaven?**

**Jesus came to restore broken, hurting people and to forgive sinful, broken,
hurting people.**

Those who don't see their need for forgiveness simply aren't forgiven and restored to Father God. The offer is there. The price has already been paid by Jesus! **But when we refuse to admit our need to be forgiven of our sin, we ignore the price Jesus paid so that we *could* be forgiven.**

Scripture promises us a time in the future when all of Israel and all of us Gentiles are united and redeemed in a world perfected by God Himself!

Romans 11:26; Zach 12:10:13:9)

We must do some self-searching, some reflection on what it is GOD is forgiving in me.

2 Corinthians 13:5-6 (ESV): 5 Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! 6 I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test

1 John 1:9

When Jesus obeyed the Father and came it was for two reasons - out of love for you and obedience to the Father. That's what the Bible indicates to us.

Jesus comes to alive the suffering and the oppression of a sinful world - but this doesn't come all at once. YES we experience miracles - glimpses of heaven - but they're only a cracked door shining light through the crack - a promise of a better future - a life in heaven!

His love for you is the same today as it was 10 years ago.

“Pastor what if I’ve really messed up?”

His love for you is the same. His desire to know you and restore you is the same!”

“Pastor what if I’ve had an abortion?”

His love for you is the same.

“Pastor what if I’ve cheated on my spouse and ...”

His love for you and desire to restore you to the Father is the same.

There is a love that is different for you as a child of God who is submitted and repentant the Father. Jesus indicated this. “My love is in you when you obey Me...” Think about it. We know this as parents. We love our children EQUALLY but you can’t deny that your love will be different for a grown adult child of yours who is grateful and kind as opposed to a grown adult child of yours who is disrespectful and immoral. RC Sproul points this out. YES His love for us is the same in the sense of immense LOVE that never changes But when you are repentant of your sin and truly grateful that God forgave you and forgives you then there is a love relationship that is beautiful and different and growing that wouldn't be there if you remain in your sin, unrepentant.

Again, the crowd wants to be saved NOW from others. Jesus wants to save you from yourself. Jesus wants FOREVER.

Would you let Him in today? Would you let Him forgive you and every sin and make you a brand new Creation?

Bible says once you do... the old is gone and the new has come!

Let’s end where we began today.

JN 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25 Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

If you will reject the idea that THIS LIFE is the fulfillment of your dream and embrace the truth ATT ETERNITY is where JESUS fulfills your dreams, then you are in the will of God. It’s JESUS that is fascinating! In Heaven Jesus will be so fascinating that anything on the scales of success here on earth will pale in comparison!

Don’t let Satan outwit you - tricking you to believe that what he offers now is better than what Jesus promises then.

I have personally seen Gods power.

I’ve seen times when God has been silent

Ive seen God both silent and miraculous. You’ve seen it too. It’s hard to a vague these things right?

He’s just not predictable.

He doesn’t conform to our ways.

Today’s message is about TRUST. I want to invite you to TRUST in GOD and His strategic design. It really is an amazing plan lead by an amazing God!