

Wednesday 5th August

John 11:45-57 The Plot to Kill Jesus

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what he had done. So the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the council, and said, 'What are we to do? This man is performing many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation.' But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, 'You know nothing at all! You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed.' He did not say this on his own, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but to gather into one the dispersed children of God. So from that day on they planned to put him to death.

Jesus therefore no longer walked about openly among the Jews, but went from there to a town called Ephraim in the region near the wilderness; and he remained there with the disciples.

Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. They were looking for Jesus and were asking one another as they stood in the temple, 'What do you think? Surely he will not come to the festival, will he?' Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who knew where Jesus was should let them know, so that they might arrest him.

Caught up in a plot, but who was in control? The words of Caiaphas were words from his lips, his mind and thoughts but where was the source of those words? Were they purely his own? The Gospel writer gives an explanation, the Gospel writer explains that they were words of prophesy, words that had their origin in the mind of God.

The words were a truth that was very different from the meaning Caiaphas had when they came out of his mouth. He saw that the killing of Jesus, the one man, was a small cost to pay for the protection of the people from a Roman suppression of an uprising.

Over the last few weeks Anita and I have been watching some of the early episodes of Spooks, a drama series based upon the work of MI5. In a number of episodes there is the question of what can the Secret Service do to stop a plot that will have devastating implications upon millions of people – better one man die than a major terrorist attack happens on the streets of the country. In the argument of the greater good it makes sense. Is it true though? Does one person's life have less value than others?

We have seen a lot in the news coverage recently about Black Lives Matter and some have responded that All Lives Matter.

Many years ago Graham Kendrick wrote a song entitled; - "How Much Do You Think You Are Worth?" In the song questions such as these are asked

"Is a rich man worth more than a poor man? A stranger worth less than a friend? Is a baby worth more than an old man? Is a president worth more than his assassin? Does your value decrease with your crime?"

Also in recent months some doctors in ICU have had to ask questions about whom to prioritize in the giving of treatment; fortunately it was not asked as much as it may have been. Despite the huge numbers who became ill and died as a result of Covid 19, behaviour of the majority of people in the country did stop the NHS becoming overwhelmed. There is though a fear that with the releasing of "lockdown" measures another wave of infections could come causing the question to be raised again. Others though have had treatment withheld or suspended for other illnesses or medical conditions; a choice was made.

I encourage you to seek out the rest of the lyrics to the Graham Kendrick song, or view it on YouTube, where the answer to how much you are worth is given as Jesus.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJWsUYSCiII>