

A Time to Keep Silence and a Time to Speak

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

² a time to be born, and a time to die;

a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

³ a time to kill, and a time to heal;

a time to break down, and a time to build up;

⁴ a time to weep, and a time to laugh;

a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

⁵ a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

⁶ a time to seek, and a time to lose;

a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

⁷ a time to tear, and a time to sew;

a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

⁸ a time to love, and a time to hate;

a time for war, and a time for peace.

ESV

When Brother Walter Swain was preaching his series on “The Man Who is God,” and came to the trials of Jesus before the High Priest and Pilate I was reminded of this sermon that I first preached in Franklin, TN in 1971.

When Jesus was on trial:

Why was Jesus silent at times and yet He speaks at other times?

The answer to that question was an exciting discovery that I made in 1971 as a much younger student of the Bible.

Let’s consider several texts. Follow along with me if you wish.

I will be reading from the English Standard Version of the Bible.

Jesus before the High Priest:

Matthew 26:57-68

⁵⁷ Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. ⁵⁸ And Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. ⁵⁹ Now the chief priests and the whole Council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, ⁶⁰ but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward ⁶¹ and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.'" ⁶² And the high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?" ⁶³ But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." ⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." ⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his robes and said, "He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. ⁶⁶ What is your judgment?" They answered, "He deserves death." ⁶⁷ Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him, ⁶⁸ saying, "Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?"

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Jesus before Pilate:

Mark 15:1-5

And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole Council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate. ² And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." ³ And the chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴ And Pilate again asked him, "Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you." ⁵ But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

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Matthew 27:11-14 {See also Luke 23:1-5}

¹¹ Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You have said so." ¹² But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer. ¹³ Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?" ¹⁴ But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed. ESV

Luke 23:1-5

Then the whole company of them arose and brought him before Pilate. ² And they began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king."

³ And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"

And he answered him, "You have said so." ⁴ Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no guilt in this man." ⁵ But they were urgent, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place." ESV

As I read those various texts it is clear that on certain questions Jesus was silent and on other questions He answered?

Why was Jesus silent at times and yet He speaks at other times?

One of the questions on one of the courses that I grade for the Mount Zion Bible Institute asks if the divine nature and the human nature of Jesus are ever co-mingled or confused. The answer is, "No!"

Jesus is one Person. He is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, with two natures. He has a **divine** nature and He has a **human** nature.

Jesus of Nazareth is truly God and He is truly Man.

That His divine and human nature are never co-mingled or confused is seen in the way He either kept silent or answered the High Priest and Pilate.

Jesus was always true to His divine or human nature in the circumstance of the moment. If you will read the gospels with this thought in mind you will see that this is consistent throughout His earthly life from childhood to His crucifixion.

E.g., How did a 12 year-old boy know that God was His Father? Cf. Luke 2:49

So when He was accused of all manner of sin He stood there in the place of sinners; sinners like you and me. He was vicariously guilty! He was not personally guilty; but as the only **sufficient** Substitute for sinners, He **was** guilty and He kept silent.

When He was asked if He was "King of the Jews," which means are you Messiah? Are you the Son of God? He answered, "You have said so."

The prophecy of this display of His majesty is Isaiah 53:
As Jesus took the place of sinners it was “a time to keep silence.”

Isaiah 53

Who has believed what they heard from us?

And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

² For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
and no beauty that we should desire him.

³ He was despised and rejected by men;
a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.

⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his stripes we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned every one to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he opened not his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he opened not his mouth.

⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away;
and as for his generation, who considered
that he was cut off out of the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people?

⁹ And they made his grave with the wicked
and with a rich man in his death,
although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him;
he has put him to grief;
when his soul makes an offering for sin,
he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;
the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

¹¹ Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;
by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
make many to be accounted righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.

¹² Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,
because he poured out his soul to death
and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and makes intercession for the transgressors.

Isaiah prophesied about His humanity.

Then there is another prophecy about a King and “a time to speak.”

Jeremiah 23:5-6

⁵ "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called:

'The LORD is our righteousness.' [Jehovah Tzidkenu]

Now I want to expand on this theme, i.e. the Person of Jesus Christ and ask and answer three questions:

1. Who is He?
2. What did He come to do?
3. Why did He do it?

If you can correctly answer, and by correctly I mean from the Scriptures, those three questions then you know the Gospel. But knowing the Gospel and repenting and believing the Gospel are not the same thing. Judas Iscariot knew the Gospel.

There will be many souls on the Day of Judgment who knew the facts about Jesus and still did not commit to Him as their only righteous standing before God.

1. Who is He?

Jesus is the Word: The Greek is *logos* [logic, wisdom, communication].

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. John 1:1-4

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,.... John 1:14

Then in John 14:

"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way to where I am going." ⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?"

⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him." ⁸ Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? John 14:1-9

Who is He?

a. Jesus is the Way; i.e. the only Way to come to God the Father.

There is only one Way to God and that Way is Jesus.
That is an unequivocal claim that is either true or false!

Postmodernism preaches "pluralism" which means that any and all religions are equally valid and are ways to God.

Mary is not a way to God;
Mohammad is not a way to God;
Buddha is not a way to God.

To accept pluralism is a denial of Jesus Christ!
The issue is the integrity of Jesus!

Paul writes to the church in Rome:

Romans 5:1-2

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Who is He?

b. Jesus is the Truth personified; i.e. the Truth in a Person.

J

ohn 8:31-38

³¹ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

³³ They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, "You will become free?"

³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵ The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. ³⁷ I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. ³⁸ I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard^l from your father."

John 18:37-38

³⁷ Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world— to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." ³⁸ Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"

Who is He?

c. Jesus is the Life; and apart from a vital union with Jesus Christ and there is no life.

John 17:1-3

When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, ² since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

1 John 5:11-13

¹¹ And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.
¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. ¹³ I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.

2. What did He come to do?

a. Jesus came into the world to be the Savior of sinners:

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³ "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel"

(which means, God with us). ²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.
Luke 2:11

b. Jesus came to be the Substitute for guilty sinners:

But he was wounded for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his stripes we are healed. Isaiah 53:5

c. Jesus came to be the Sacrifice on behalf of sinners:

Titus 2:11-14

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³ waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

3. Why did He do it?

Why did He do what? Why was the Word made flesh? Why did He have to grow up as a Man without sin, keeping the holy, just, and good Law of God perfectly?

Why did He have to prove by His works that He is the Son of God? Why did He have to die on a cruel cross as the Sufficient Substitute for those given to Him by the Father before the foundation of the world.

Why did He do it?

To redeem the church!

The church is all of the souls of all time, past, present, and future until the Lord Jesus returns; all who repent and trust Jesus alone for their righteousness.

Ephesians 3:1-13

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— ² assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³ how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴ When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶ This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷ Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. ⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, ¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. ¹³ So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory. ESV

Eph 5:25-28

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. ESV

As best I know it; that is the Gospel!

Jesus of Nazareth:

1. Who is He?

Jesus is God!

2. What did He come to do?

He came to be the Sufficient Substitute for sinners!

3. Why did He do it?

To redeem the church!

Is what you just heard your only hope for eternal life?

Every soul will live as long as God lives and every soul will live either with Christ or with Satan in hell.

What is your condition at this moment?

Are you repenting and trusting Jesus Christ and His righteousness?

Amen!

Vineland Park Baptist Church

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