

Hello Central Faith!

I know there are some of you out there that appreciate a good barbecue brisket, I know I sure do! If you are like me, you also appreciate all that goes into it. It takes time, it takes patience, you also need to know what you are doing. When you are the one who is barbecuing, you get it, you know what's ahead. You understand it takes time and you believe that you (and all the others) are going to really enjoy the results. The more convinced you are of the goal, the more patient you are for the process. If you know the one cooking the BBQ is skilled, you know the wait will be worth it. There are many things we enjoy in life that take time, patience and understanding.

I am taking these weeks to look at the last hours of Jesus' life, the false trial, the interaction with Pilate, the contrast with the religious leaders, so we all can identify with it in a deeper way than we have before. It has been very good not to rush through this. Reading through the other Gospels, comparing notes, seeing how John unfolds these painful, but important details, has created in me a deeper appreciation for all Jesus did. This includes how Jesus went through these events, along with the display of the different people involved as they are unpacked with John's retelling. Cross-referencing with the other Gospels adds even more color and texture. I am finding this year to be different and more impacting than years in the past. This year, these truths (because of teaching through this in John), have been marinating in me in a deeper, more significant and more efficacious way than in my previous 43 years or so of being a Christian.

Our culture's addiction to convenience can truly rob us of the rich fullness of the journey. Staying with the BBQ illustration, I have to say I like watching shows that feature the process and the insights of their craft in the quiet hours of fire building and the reason they love doing what they do. It reminds me of the faithfulness of the follower of Jesus, opening the Word and investing the time to read, study, memorize and meditate on the truths that are easy to understand (for God so loved the world...) and the things that take more time to unpack (like the significance of the punishment Jesus went through to the cross). There is great blessing for those who take the time and invest their hearts in God's Holy Word.

This Sunday, we will be covering John 19:17-27, which includes the way to the crucifixion, right up to just before He dies. We will be looking at the other Gospels as well, as they add such great elements. As always, I would encourage you to open your Bible and go through each of the Gospels to see the more full picture; a critical part of the greatest story ever told! More and more, I am so grateful for Jesus.

Much love,  
Bill