

# As a Lamb to the Slaughter

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- [ 0 : 00 ] Please be seated. So last week we looked at denying Jesus. This week we're looking at judging Jesus.
- Jesus is on trial. Jesus is on trial before an earthly governor. A man who had the power to set him free or to execute him.
- Here is the great irony. Here is the eternal judge standing before the temporary mortal judge.
- Here is the impartial righteous judge, the son of God, standing before an unjust, careless governor. And here is this pilot, this governor, who knows the charges against Jesus are trumped up.
- He knows that Jesus is innocent. Yet, yet, he still condemns Jesus to death.
- [ 1 : 19 ] Judging Jesus. Here in the gospel of Mark, Mark has written his gospel in such a way as to draw us in.
- He's written his gospel to be read and to be listened to and to be responded to. He does not very often make his own comments. He simply tells the story in such a way that makes us say, huh.
- He draws us to ask questions ourselves. Who is like this? Who is this man who calms the storms and hushes the waves with a word?
- Who is this? And now as we see Jesus judged before men, Mark is writing in a way that makes us ask ourselves, who is he?
- How do I judge him? What view do I have of Jesus? And so this is the very question we will look at.
- [ 2 : 22 ] What do we do with Jesus? Pilate had to ask that question. What do I do with him? What do you do with him? How do you view him?
- Now chapter 15 of Mark, it is one day. It begins early morning in verse one. This is Jesus's final day.
- By evening of this day, he will be dead and buried. He has been up all night. After the Passover meal, he was arrested in Gethsemane, taken before the high priest, and they judged him and condemned him through a monkey trial all night long.
- And now early morning, he's rushed to judgment. And the reason they were up all night doing this was because they had to get him to Pilate by daylight, because the Romans held their court at the first break of dawn.
- And the Passover was going to be this next day. Passover started at the evening of this next day. They had to, they could not bring this charge before Passover.
- [ 3 : 38 ] So they have just a few hours left. That's why they were up all night. So now they can bring the, bring Jesus to the Pilate and get the execution started so that they're quote unquote clean.
- And can celebrate the Passover. So chapter 15, verse one starts with a transition. Jesus is now surrendered to the Gentiles.

We see in verse one, as soon as it was morning, so daybreak, the chief priest held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. So in other words, the whole Sanhedrin, the official representatives of Judaism decided together to bind Jesus, condemn him, lead him away and deliver him to Pilate, deliver him to the Gentiles.

They had their own trial that night. They condemned him. They called him blasphemous. He had equated himself with God, but they don't have the authority to kill him. So they must now deliver him to the real authority, to the Romans who do have the authority to execute.

And this is exactly what Jesus had predicted would happen to him. Back in Mark chapter 10, he had foretold the son of man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes.

[ 5 : 05 ] They will condemn him to death and they will deliver him over to the Gentiles. And the Gentiles, they will mock him and spit on him and flog him and kill him.

And after three days, he will rise. Well, it's just exactly as Jesus said it would be. This is no surprise to him. And notice that it is the chief priest driving all of this.

Verse one, they're the ones who deliver Jesus over. Verse three, they are the ones bringing the accusations. Verse, excuse me, verse 10. They are the ones who are motivated by envy.

And Pilate knows this. He knows they're envious. They're doing it because Jesus has robbed them of some popularity. Jesus is popular and has an authority and an integrity that they can't deal with.

And they just want to get rid of him. Pilate sees through all of this. He's very, he's a politician. He knows how politicians work. And then finally, in verse 11, they're the ones that stir up the crowd because Pilate is asking the crowd.

[ 6 : 13 ] He thinks the crowd will go his way, but the chief priests have twisted it on him and stirred them up and get what they want to happen to Jesus. Now, this is in the plural as well.

Verse one, chief priests. Now we would think, well, wait a minute. There's one chief priest. There's one high priest. Well, there was one that was elected every year, but the scriptures tell us, Mark tells us that there's a plurality of chief priests.

In other words, previous chief priests or high priests who have retired like Annas and the chief priest this year is Caiaphas. And then Annas had five sons who would eventually be high priests as well.

So there's a half a dozen guys that are part of the chief priests or high priests family that are influencing everything. Now we have the mention of Pilate.

Pilate with an A, not with an O. not the flying the plane kind, but governing the people kind.

[ 7 : 21 ] Who is this pilot? He's mentioned 10 times in chapter 15 of Mark. He's a central figure. Who is he? Well, he's governor.

He is a governor of Judea. He's under the emperor of Rome, under Tiberius. He has a delegated authority over a certain area. He's to govern that area, keep the peace.

Remember Pax Romana, the peace of Rome was, was the leading theme of the day. And so his job was to keep the peace at all costs, keep the peace.

To, to run down rebellions and revolts and to keep the peace. And he just happens to be in Jerusalem. He's not there very often.

He just happens to be in Jerusalem because the Passover is at hand. And because there is huge crowds coming to Jerusalem for this Passover. And so as governor, he's there to make sure these, these crowds are peaceful.

[ 8 : 22 ] So that's what brings him to town. So he happens to be there. Now, when the Jews deliver Jesus over to the Gentiles, they know that Pilate won't be interested in their religious issues.

They will not care that Jesus calls himself a Messiah. They won't care that Jesus is not conforming to their rules.

Pilate will not care. So they have to spin it. When they judge Jesus, they said blasphemy. Well, Pilate's not going to care about blasphemy.

That's your problem. I don't care about that. Does it disturb peace and order? Pilate will not care about that. So they spin it. They call Jesus. Their accusation against Jesus is that he is the quote unquote, King of the Jews.

Now the Jews would call him Messiah, but they translate that into Roman terminology, King of the Jews. In other words, he's a rebel. He's a competitor with Caesar.

[ 9 : 25 ] He's a rebel King. He's a revolter. So this is what's going on. So we see Jesus surrendered to the Gentiles. Now, more importantly, what Mark wants us to see is that Jesus is the substitute for sinners.

That's what's really happening in this passage. Mark's just not recording us some simple, very concise details about his trial, but Mark has actually crafted it in such a way that we'll see it.

We'll see the bigger picture behind it. We see Jesus as a substitute for sinners. In fact, Mark reveals two things about Jesus in the two scenes that he portrays.

Excuse me. In the first few verses, verses one through five, we see Jesus before Pilate. And then in verse six through 15, it's Pilate and the crowd.

So two different scenes. So Pilate shows us is Jesus as the silent lamb. He's fulfilling the prediction that Jesus, that the Messiah would be a silent lamb going to slaughter.

[ 10 : 38 ] And that's the picture Mark gives us. In the second scene, verses six through 15, Pilate before the crowd. Now Mark shows us that there's this exchange going on between Barabbas and Jesus.

Jesus becomes the substitute for Barabbas. Barabbas was supposed to hang on that middle cross between the thieves.

And Jesus takes his place. So we see Jesus, the substitute for sinners. So I want you to see Jesus today.

Look at this first picture. Jesus is the silent lamb. And actually the way Mark puts it, he's the silent lamb king. He's not the lion king.

He'll be that later. He's the lamb king. Now, silently suffering shame, as he gives no answer, no defense to the accusations and the slander and the twisting of words.

[ 11 : 40 ] So note the crime. Verse two, Pilate asks him, are you the king? Are you the king of the Jews? Obviously, that's what the Jews have alleged against him.

And actually, technically the way that Pilate said it in the Greek was, you, king of the Jews? It's a question, but it's more of a mocking question.

You, king of the Jews? Really? That's it? He's unimpressed. As you read through this, you can tell that he has no fear of Jesus.

This is not a threat to him. This is the king. And then Jesus's answer in verse two is, you have said so. Literally, you say, now that's a popular song today, you say.

This is a different, you say. This is what Pilate says. In other words, Jesus is kind of being ambiguous. He's not saying, yes, because that term, king of the Jews, is a political term by the Jews.

[ 12 : 51 ] And Jesus says, no, I'm not that kind of king. He just says, you say. Whatever. not what I'm saying. In other words, he's hinting that he has a different view of the kind of king that he is.

And in fact, when we read the gospel of John, John tells, adds a little bit more to the scene. John says, Jesus and Pilate had more of a discussion about this kingdom. And Jesus said, my king, you know, Pilate asked, are you the king?

And Jesus says, you say. And then Jesus went on to explain, my kingdom is not of this world. If it were of this world, my servants would be fighting and you'd be toast.

But, as it is, my kingdom's not of this world. I'm not of this realm. So, he affirmed it, but he clarified it. I'm not king of the Jews. I'm king of the world.

My kingdom is not this temporary earthly thing. It's much, much bigger. So, we have Jesus giving his answer that's ambiguous.

[ 14 : 01 ] And then the priest level accusations. Verse 3, the chief priests, again, these high priests, this chief priest family, were accusing Jesus of many things. Mark doesn't tell us in verse 3 what those accusations were other than they accuse him of being a king.

But Luke fills us in that they made three accusations specifically that Jesus was misleading their nation, that he was forbidding taxes being paid to Caesar.

Pilate ought to listen to that. Oh, we're losing taxes. And thirdly, that he claimed to be a king. So, in other words, they're implying he's a rebel, he's a revolutionary, he's an agitator, he disturbs the peace, he stirs up revolt against Caesar.

He's no friend of Caesar. So, these are the accusations. And then we see Jesus' response is no response.

In fact, we hear it from Pilate in verse 4. He can't believe it. He asked him, have you no answer? Don't you see the charges they bring against you? How you make, you make no defense? Pilate marvels.

[ 15 : 12 ] This is unusual. This is curious. He's stunned. And verse 5, Mark tells us that Jesus made no further answer.

Literally, Jesus no longer answered anything else. At that point, he stopped. He is willing to bear the shame.

He allows his name to be slandered. Have you been slandered? Have people said false things about you?

Is it not so difficult to not respond to that? Our first instinct, our first natural impulse is to defend ourselves. And here is Jesus hearing these lies about him, these twisted lies.

Jesus never forbid taxes. He said, give to Caesar what Caesar and give to God what Caesar. But they had twisted it. But Jesus doesn't clarify. He doesn't. To hold his tongue.

[ 16 : 11 ] Why? He's willing to bear that shame. He allows his name to be slandered. Why does he not defend himself? He's innocent. Well, because Jesus is doing something bigger here.

He fulfills the word of Isaiah written more than 700 years before that he is the servant of the Lord who bears sins as the lamb who is sacrificed.

Isaiah 53, 7 said, he was oppressed. He was afflicted. Yet he opened not his mouth. Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter and like a sheep that is, that before it shears is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

This is what Jesus is doing. He's doing as he was told to do. He is obeying the Father. So Jesus is the lamb king silently suffering shame.

But there's something else we learn here. We not only see Jesus, but we see him as our example when we suffer. You see, how do we respond when insult, slander, false words come against us?

[ 17 : 22 ] Well, Peter says it this way. He says, to this you have been called because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example so that you might follow in his steps.

So in other words, this trial of Jesus and his suffering is not just, it is most importantly, we see him as our suffering savior. savior. But Peter's saying there's also an example there to follow.

He's also setting an example for us how we respond in difficulty so that you might follow in his steps. Peter says, he committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.

When he was reviled, he did not revile in return. When he suffered, he did not threaten and he could have threatened. but continued, listen to this, did not threaten but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

Here he is standing before the unjust governor and he entrusts himself to the real judge. I trust you, Father, what you're going to do with all this.

[ 18 : 33 ] I accept, I don't threaten, I don't speak back because he himself bore our sins, Peter said, in his body on the tree that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.

By his wounds you have been healed for you were straying like sheep but now have returned to the shepherd and overseer of your souls.

Do you see what Jesus is doing? He's not defending himself because he intends to die for us. And at the same time he shows us how to trust the Father as we endure slander and false words.

So there's our first scene. Jesus before Pilate and Mark shows him to be the the lamb king. silently suffering shame giving us an example of how to do the same.

But now in verse 6 to 15 we see a second scene. Now it shifts to Pilate before the crowd. Now he's going to talk to the crowd about what to do with Jesus.

[ 19 : 40 ] And in this scene Mark portrays for us Jesus as the innocent substitute in the place of the guilty. he will be the one exchanged for the criminal.

So Mark introduces to us to set that up verse 6 he introduces to us the situation. There's a custom. At the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked.

So that was what Pilate apparently did every year. He would release a prisoner kind of as a gesture, as a goodwill thing, as a probably political way of gaining approval or at least diffusing a situation.

He released a prisoner. He granted amnesty to a prisoner and they could ask for the one that they wanted. And so now Mark introduces to us this person, this rebel.

Who is this rebel, this dissident? He is Barabbas. among the rebels in prison, verse 7, who had committed murder in the resurrection.

[ 20 : 53 ] That's not specifically in the text actually. It's not that Barabbas himself had committed murder. He was in a group of people who had committed murder. Who, plural, the rebels had committed murder.

In the insurrection, in the rebellion, there was a man called Barabbas. In other words, they called him that. That wasn't his name, it was what they called him. It's like saying, oh, they called Jesus king of the Jews.

It wasn't his personal name, it's just what they called him. So Barabbas. So what does that mean? Bar, in Hebrew, son, Abbas, son of Abba.

Abba, as in Abraham, right? Abigail, son of Abba. It was a familiar term used often for the rabbis.

Barabba, son of daddy, son of, yeah, I mean, Abba, right? We saw that back in Gethsemane when Jesus was praying. He prayed, Abba, father, that intimate term daddy.

[ 22 : 02 ] So, in other words, they called this man son of daddy. They felt close to him. He is a patriot. He is a hero to them. See, he's a rebel in the insurrection.

He is mutinying against, mutinying, is that right? He is rebelling against Rome. He's a freedom fighter, and he's willing to kill.

We don't know if he's specifically killed, but likely he is a leader of rebels. Of him is used the same term as the two people that hung on either side of Jesus when Jesus was crucified.

The two thieves, Barabbas is also called a thief. So, they likely were part of that rebellion. They wouldn't be killed simply for stealing. They would be killed for insurrection, crime against the state.

He's a freedom fighter, a popular hero, a patriot. Imagine, these are the Jews wanting rebellion from Rome.

[ 23 : 14 ] They want to be set free. That's what they're waiting for a Messiah to do. So, in verse 8, Mark tells us that the crowd asked Pilate for Barabbas.

Well, they didn't ask for Pilate yet. They asked him to do the custom. The high priests later are going to stir them up to ask for Barabbas specifically. So, now we come to Pilate.

Here's Pilate before the crowd. He's been asked to do this. Verse 9, we see him answering, do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?

Do you want me to release for you this Jesus? And by the way, Matthew tells us that Barabbas' real name was Jesus. Yeshua was his real name.

Do you want Jesus or do you want Jesus? Do you want Jesus Barabbas or do you want Jesus king of the Jews? So, he has to say, do you want the one you call king of the Jews?

[ 24 : 17 ] Do you want him released? And he's thinking that that's what they're going to want because verse 10 tells us that Pilate knew that it was out of envy that the chief priest had delivered him up.

So, he knew that this was a political move, that the crowds weren't in on that. That's just the chief priest. They wanted Jesus released. And he's trying to go against them.

He's trying to get Jesus released. And so, he asked the crowd, what do you want? Certainly, they're going to want this popular man, Jesus. And that way, Pilate can kind of just dismiss this case and get on with things.

He's negotiating. He's trying to free Jesus. And his plan backfires. Verse 9, he asked the question, do you want me to release the king of the Jews?

They say, no, we want Barabbas instead. Verse 11. Verse 12, then Pilate says, then what will I do with this Jesus? What will I do with the king of the Jews?

[ 25 : 19 ] Jesus? And they say, crucify him. Verse 14, then he asks a third question, why? What evil has he done? See, he is not intending to crucify Jesus.

He's trying to get him off. He knows Jesus is innocent. He says, what evil has he done? Luke and Matthew bring it out, or Luke and John bring it out even more. That I think three times in Luke 23, Pilate says, I find no guilt in him.

I find no guilt in him. He is not deserving of death. So he clearly states Jesus' innocence. There's nothing you've given me to back it up.

And certainly, as governor of the area, he would have heard rumors if Jesus were truly a troublemaker. The irony in verse 11 is there's an exchange.

Notice in verse 11 how the chief priests stir up the crowd so that instead of saying Jesus of Nazareth, they say, no, we want Jesus Barabbas.

[ 26 : 31 ] The chief priest stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. That word instead is really important. Instead. Instead of Barabbas, we want to kill Jesus.

Instead of Jesus being free, we want the criminal, the convicted murderer to be freed. I want you to exchange, in other words, the guilty for the innocent.

I want you to substitute the righteous man for the unrighteous man. I want Jesus to take the place of the criminal. criminal. That's what's being done.

And what does Pilate do? He has just stated why? Why crucify him? What evil has he done?

He has done nothing evil, let alone criminal. criminal. What does Pilate do? Here's the twist on the story that if we were reading it for the first time would shock us.

[ 27 : 46 ] Verse 15, so Pilate wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas and having scourged, flogged, beaten, Jesus, then delivered Jesus to be crucified.

Boom. There's the decision. He releases the criminal and punishes the one who's not guilty. What a travesty.

What an injustice. What kind of governor is this? This is Rome. If, by the way, if we complain about our government, you don't know what an evil government is if you didn't live during Rome's time.

you think our government is political and motivated by selfish things. We at least can change that.

They could, they had dictators and they had, the Caesars were notorious. Pilate's reason for scourging Jesus, by the way, scourging or flogging was just an absolutely cruel, malicious act to execute as much punishment.

[ 29 : 15 ] Many people died from the Romans flogging. When the Jews flogged somebody, whipped them, it's a leather whip with, sometimes it had metal and bone attached to the ends of the straps so that when it hit, it didn't just slap, but it would actually pull things out.

I'll try not to go into more detail than that. But when the Jews did it in the synagogue, they flogged people, but they had a limit. 39 times Paul was flogged more than once.

Because 40 or more might kill the person. So they showed some mercy. Well, the Roman soldiers had no such mercy. There was no limit. They could do it as much as they wanted.

And it was the pre-punishment before a crucifixion. It was in order to shorten the length of the crucifixion that they flogged a person first so that they're beat up and torn down and have little strength to sustain the crucifixion.

So anyway, I don't want to kind of pass by that. I don't want to make a big highlight of it either because Mark doesn't make a big highlight of it. He just simply mentions it. In fact, for Mark, what he emphasizes is not the physical suffering, but the emotional and psychological suffering, Jesus, or the mocking, and the reviling, and the shaming.

[ 30 : 49 ] That's what Mark highlights that Jesus went through. Yes, he went through incredible physical stuff, but it was the words that they said to him, the taunting and the mocking, and the, oh, you're a king, and Jesus endured it all.

But we notice that Pilate's decision, what was his intent to satisfy the crowd? He's a politician. He's a politician.

Although he does deliver on his promise. he does what is expedient. He does what's easy. Can you imagine being this kind of person? No, I'll just let him die because that's easier than dealing with the crowd.

I don't want to do what's just because then we've got a whole thing and I don't want to deal with that. I know Jesus is innocent, but I'm going to keep the peace and keep the order and not do what's just and right.

I'm just going to let him die. Who cares? I don't care who this guy is. So why does this happen? We're kind of left reading this story thinking well, why does this happen?

[ 32 : 03 ] What injustice? Is this just a big mistake? Is Jesus' life a mistake? Is it just a big tragedy? Here he is. He's such a good man.

He's a prophet. He's doing good things. He's helping people. He's healing people. He's doing a marvelous way. He's actually doing some very unexplainable things as well as helping people. But why?

What a tragedy to end this way. Why does this happen? Well, we find out this was God's plan from the beginning. Even from Genesis, we're told that even though Adam and Eve sin, the consequence of that is that the serpent, the satanic figure who causes and tempts them to sin will continue to work in the world, but that the son of Eve, the seed of Eve would overcome that seed of Satan.

That there's a long planned battle that will be decided by God's son. God's plan has been that from the beginning. God didn't shift his plan.

There was always plan A to send his son to die in our place. And the clearest example of that is in Isaiah 53. Isaiah describes, prophecies, this is 700 years before Christ was born.

[ 33 : 31 ] Isaiah said 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.

Surely has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.

That's certainly what we see here. He's being crucified. He's being afflicted. Did he do something wrong? Isaiah goes on and says, but here's what really happened.

He was pierced for our transgressions. See the exchange? See the substitution? He was pierced for our transgressions.

He was crushed for our iniquities. Not just our errors, by the way, our iniquities. Those are the worst sins we commit. Those are the twisted, perverted things. He not only forgave our errors and our faults, but he forgave our rebellion and our twisted evil stuff that's in us.

[ 34 : 48 ] And upon him was the chastisement, the punishment that brought us peace. With his wounds we are healed. See, he's an exchange for us. All we like sheep have gone astray.

We each have turned every one of us to our own way. We're all rebels. We're all wanderers. But the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

By oppression and judgment he was taken away. Here's this judgment. Here is this trial being predicted. Oppression and judgment he was taken away.

And as for his generation who considered that he was cut off, in other words killed, out of the land of the living. Why? Stricken for the transgression of my people.

A substitute for their transgression. Out of the anguish of his soul he made many to be accounted righteous. Wow.

[ 35 : 52 ] So not only does he bear their sins but he exchanges with them his righteousness. righteousness. He makes them righteous by taking their sins away and giving them his righteousness.

He made many to be accounted righteous and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.

Why? Because he poured out his soul to death. He voluntarily initiated and laid down his own life and was numbered with the transgressors.

Let them call him a criminal. Yet what he's really doing is he's bearing the sin of many and making intercession in the place of the transgressors.



See what Jesus is doing is fulfilling scripture obeying the father's plan that they together made from the very very beginning.

[ 36 : 55 ] That God's own son would be rejected, would suffer shame, mocking, despising, that he would bear their sin.

He would take, as Peter said, he would bear our sin in his body on the cross so that our sins will be paid and forgiven and then his innocent blameless lamb, righteousness would then be exchanged with us.

God says to you sinner, I have a deal for you. You give me all your wicked sin and stain and iniquity and I'll give you the righteousness of Christ.

Now God doesn't say it that way. What he says is repent, believe, but what we're believing is that very thing, that exchange. it's too good to be true, isn't it?

That an innocent substitute dies in the place of guilty sinners, the righteous for the unrighteous. I want you to see Jesus today.

[ 38 : 10 ] In the midst of all that we're going through, I want you to take a few moments today and see Jesus. He is the lamb, silent before his accusers.

And he is the substitute in exchange for the guilty. So what difference does all of this make?

Well, I mentioned at the beginning that we're judging Jesus. We're not judging to condemn him, we're making a judgment. Mark wants us to ask the same question that Pilate asked.

What shall I do with Jesus? What do you want me to do with him? What do I do with him? He's innocent, but you want to ask the same question.

What will I do with Jesus? The priests, their judgment was to reject him and their motivation was envy. The crowds, boy, they're just swayed.

[ 39 : 09 ] Well, we prefer the criminal, we prefer, but we don't see him that way. We see him as a patriot. We see him as a zealot.

We see him as a hero because we are God's people and he is leading the charge to defend us. We want that kind of Messiah. We want one that takes things into his own hands and fights a physical battle and wins the cause.

And we Americans love that because those are the most popular movies we watch today. The ones where the hero wins the war. But Jesus isn't that kind of hero.

Pilate, what was his judgment? He dismisses Jesus for expediency. But that doesn't matter how they all responded.

What matters is how do you respond? How do you respond to Jesus? What do you do with him? How do you view him? And by the way, you can't just pick any, oh, I think he's a good guy.

[ 40 : 20 ] You know, obviously he's a preacher and a teacher and he did good things. He helped people. He's an example of love. Yes, he's all that. Yeah, yeah, yeah. In fact, there's a lot of other religious as a prophet, they accept as well.

They don't accept everything he says, but they accept that. Well, here's the problem. Jesus doesn't let you do that. Jesus does not let you just kind of say, oh, I think he's a good guy.

I think he's a good prophet. He's a good moral teacher. No, Jesus doesn't let you have that view of him because he claims to be the eternal king and the son of God.

So he's either that, he can't be that and be a good prophet if that's not true. If that's not true, then he's a liar, he's a false prophet. You only have three options that Jesus gives you to believe about him.

You either believe that he's a false prophet because of what he claims and isn't true, or he's a madman, he's a lunatic who thinks he really believes he's the son of God but obviously isn't.

[ 41 : 33 ] so he's either a liar or a lunatic or he's who he said he is. Those are the only options you have. That's the only options he gives. He doesn't give you something in between because you have to take his claims seriously.

So who is he? What view do you have of him? And he doesn't claim to be an earthly king. He brings no sword. What he does instead is lay down his life and willingly suffer.

to rescue the guilty. So what will you do with Jesus? And Christians, many Christians today, many believers, you've already done something but what will you do today?

What will you do today? Brother Rick had a great suggestion. You're kind of stuck inside. Use that time to read and sing and meditate and pray.

pray. Maybe that's part of what God wants us to do, to back off from the busy world and just... Let me close with the words that we're going to sing in just a moment.

[ 42 : 49 ] I want you to consider these words from the great old hymn called A Sacred Head Now Wounded. These words are both a meditation and a prayer. O sacred head now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down, now scornfully surrounded with thorns thine only crown.

How pale thou art with anguish, with sore abuse and scorn. How does that visage language, which once was bright as morn?

What thou, my Lord, has suffered was all for sinners gain. Mine, mine was the transgression, but thine the deadly pain. Lo, here I fall, my Savior, tis I deserve thy place.

Look on me with favor, assist me with thy grace. what language shall I borrow to thank thee, dearest friend, for this thy dying sorrowed, thy pity without end.

O make me thine forever. And should I fainting be, Lord, let me never, never outlive my love for thee.

[ 44 : 12 ] Let's sing that softly, meditatively as a prayer. Prayer.