

Not Guilty...Crucify Him!

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 28 September 2025

Preacher: Bill Story

[0 : 00] First time I heard that song sung, I know it's an older song, but first time I heard that song sung was at Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C.

when a congregation of 900, mostly 30-somethings, who worked on the hill, sang that boldly. I remember hearing that and thinking, what have I never heard that song? Hearing all these young people singing, no, not one, no one like Jesus. It was great.

Great, great encouragement. Rick was there. Rick remembers that. We were there. Okay, take out your Bibles with me to the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 23.

Yes, that's correct. Chapter 23. We only have two chapters left. And by the way, next week, Lord willing, we're going to have a review discussion.

[1 : 12] We've covered all of Chapter 22 and now part of Chapter 23. And we'll take some time next Sunday, next Lord's Day, to discuss and review what we've learned, what has God been teaching us.

So, look forward to that time together. This morning, we're in Chapter 23 as Jesus has been determined guilty by his chief priests and scribes and elders of the people have determined that he is guilty of blasphemy because he has called himself Messiah, the Son of God.

And now the council, the Sanhedrin, the official ruling body of the Jews, is going to turn him over to the Roman government. Because they don't have the authority to kill him.

But Rome does. And so this is what they determined to do. They hand him over to Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judea. So that's what we're going to be looking at, the trial of Jesus.

So if you're able, please stand as I read from the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 23, Verses 1 through 25. Luke 23, Verse 1 to 25.

[2 : 34] Then the whole company of them arose and brought him before Pilate. 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.

And Pilate asked him, Are you the king of the Jews? And he answered him, You have said so. Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, I find no guilt in this man.

But they were urgent, saying, He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place. When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean.

And when he learned that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him.

So he questioned him at some length, but he made no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him.

[4 : 07] And Herod, with his soldiers, treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then, arraying him in splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate.

And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other. Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, and said to them, You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people.

And after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him. Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us.

Look, nothing deserving death has been done by him. I will therefore punish and release him. But they cried out together, Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas, a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city and for murder.

Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus. But they kept shouting, Crucify! Crucify him! The third time he said to them, Why? What evil has he done?

[5 : 35] I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him. But they were urgent. Demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified.

And their voices prevailed. So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their will.

So it reads. Let us pray. Father, guide us through this time. We ask, Lord, that you would show us. Show us Jesus.

Show us the sinfulness of men. Show us, Father, as Zach prayed, that we would know with more certainty the gospel that we have been taught.

That we might see it in this passage that Luke demonstrates for us. We ask this in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. Amen. Amen.

[6 : 54] Amen. Amen. Jesus is delivered into the hands of the Roman government and to a man by the name of Pontius Pilate.

And it comes to him to judge Jesus. Can you imagine that? To judge Jesus.

Jesus is on trial before an earthly governor who has the power to set him free or to execute him.

But in Ireland, here is the eternal judge of heaven before an earthly mortal judge. The impartial, righteous son of God before an unjust, careless governor.

Pilate. Pilate knows the charges are trumped up. He knows that Christ is innocent. In fact, proclaims it three times. Yet, he will still condemn Jesus to death.

[8 : 23] Pilate. The gospel of Luke is written that we might have certainty about what we have been taught, about the certainty about the gospel of Jesus Christ, who he was, what he did, how he laid down his life.

It's also written in a way to draw us to make a judgment ourselves about Jesus. From what Luke has written to us, we are to read it and make our decision ourselves about who is this Jesus.

Is he who he claims to be? Luke is urging us to answer the question, what do you do with Jesus? What judgment do you make about him? How do you respond to him? So in Luke 23, we see that Luke is showing us a Jesus who is declared not guilty, yet crucified.

We're first told in verse one that Jesus is surrendered to the Gentiles. Jesus himself predicted that this would happen, that he would be delivered over, handed over to the Gentiles.

[9 : 50] The Gentiles meaning the Roman governor, Pilate. Jesus has gone through several trials at this point. I want you to notice there's a Jewish part of the trials and there is a Roman part of the trials.

At the end of chapter 22, he had been determined guilty of blasphemy, but the Sanhedrin, the Jewish leadership, did not have the authority to kill him.

So they sent him to the Roman government who had the authority to execute him. In all, Jesus endured six trials throughout the whole night.

He was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, remember? He was led right away to the chief priest's home. In fact, there were two chief priests in those days.

There was Annas and there was Caiaphas, his son-in-law. There was a whole slew of Annas' family that were considered the chief priest's families.

[10 : 59] Even though, according to the Jewish law, there was only to be one, there were several in this day. So he went to Annas, the old man, the godfather of the family, then sent to the son-in-law of Caiaphas, who was on record as the high priest of the day.

That took all night long. And by morning, they had a third trial, which was what Luke records at the end of chapter 22, the Sanhedrin, the whole council that met and voted on what to do with Jesus.

So the trials went on before to try to trump up the charges so that when they got Jesus to the Sanhedrin, the Supreme Court of Israel, they had a case and they presented him as one who blasphemed.

So they took that vote and decided, yes, he's guilty. We see the last verse of chapter 22. Then they said, what further testimony do we need? We have heard it from his own lips.

So they transfer him to Pilate. So he goes to Pilate and then Pilate sends him to Herod and then Herod sends him back to Pilate. Six trials in all. Through the night, into the morning, hours.

[12:21] And by 12 noon, Jesus will be hanging on a cross. No, by 9 a.m., sorry. 12 noon is when the darkness comes. So Pilate, who is Pilate?

Well, he's mentioned nine times in these verses. So he must be central. He's the governor of Judea. He is under the Roman emperor Tiberius. And he has been delegated to the Judean area. And he's in Jerusalem because of the feast. He's in Jerusalem not because he's going to participate in the feast, but because that is a time when there are 3 million Jews in town and there is always potential for disruption and disorder and mayhem if the Jews get riled up and decide to rebel or revolt, which they did from time to time.

So Pilate is there to keep the peace. Rome has no interest in the religious issues of the day. They could care less whether Jesus blasphemed God or not.

They could care less whether he was Messiah or not. They did not. Rome did not care about those things. Rome cared about peace, keeping the peace, which meant keeping the people down, and order.

[13:49] That's all. So notice in verse 2 that the charges that are brought up are spinned. They're twisted.

The high priest spins it in a way that Rome might appreciate. That Jesus is some political rebel king revolting against Rome.

That would find the interest of Rome. So what I want us to look at here in these 25 verses, we see a portrait of Jesus. Now Jesus only says two words in these 25 verses.

When Pilate asked him, are you the king of the Jews? Is he, literally he said, you say, you say, what does that mean? It's all he said. You say.

It's translated, you have said it, but literally he said, you say. So it's not about his words in this chapter.

[14:52] It's about his actions or his lack of actions. He doesn't defend himself throughout all these trials. He lets the trials proceed with their lies, false accusations, trumped up charges.

What we see here is Jesus as a substitute for sinners. We will see him at the end be substituted for Barabbas.

Barabbas is the criminal, the guilty one, the guilty one, and Jesus will be, he will be exchanged for Jesus. The guilty one escapes the cross and the innocent one goes to the cross.

We see Jesus as a substitute for sinners. We see in Barabbas ourselves is what we see. So there's two fulfillments that happen in this chapter.

In the first 12 verses, we see Jesus' silence pronounced, particularly before Herod. He's the lamb king who is silently suffering shame.

[16:02] It fulfills Isaiah 53, 7, as a sheep before the shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

Jesus, in other words, does not defend himself, does not fight back. He's laying down his life. So we see this fulfillment of Jesus, the lamb king, silently suffering shame.

Notice verse two, the charges fabricated. Fabricated. That's a word, isn't it? Fabricated. Made up. Right? They have three. They say, verse two, we found this man misleading our nation.

Was he misleading the nation? Actually, he's leading them back. But in the notice, or think about it, in terms of the chief priests and the scribes' view, they were misleading the nation.

Jesus was leading them back to God. But from their point of view, Jesus was misleading the nation because he wasn't subscribing to their point of view. So he's misleading the nation.

[17:08] He is forbidding to give tribute to Caesar. Did Jesus forbid to give? No, he specifically said, give to Caesar what is Caesar. So that's an outright lie.

And then thirdly, that he's saying that he himself is Christ or Messiah, a king. Is that true? Yeah. He didn't go around proclaiming it, but he did confess to it.

So two of them, well, one's right, one's a disagreement, and one's an outright lie. So the accusation, so he claims to be a king.

Well, so notice that they're interpreting for Pilate. He claims to be Christ. Well, again, Pilate wouldn't care about a Christ or a Messiah, but he says, they say, well, the Christ means a king.

Oh, a king. Well, there's only one king, Caesar's king. So Jesus can't be king unless he's a rebel, unless he's an agitator, unless he's disturbing the peace and revolting against Caesar.

[18:19] Well, is Jesus that? Again, Pilate asks, he hears that he's a king, so he says, are you the king of the Jews?

And we have Jesus's very vague answer, you say. He doesn't say, I say. He says, you say. Or as it's translated, you've said it.

What is that? Is that an admission? Is that a, what is that? It's very vague. It's very unclear. It's ambiguous. It hints, perhaps, that he's a different kind of king.

In fact, Luke is giving us a very condensed version in John 18, accounting the same, the same trial before Pilate. They have a longer discussion about this kingship.

And Jesus says to Pilate there in John 18, my kingdom is not of this world. Are you a king?

[19 : 22] Yes. But my kingdom is not of this world. My kingdom's a lot bigger than this world. So we have a little more clarity.

Maybe he's hinting at that. And then we have a surprise. Verse 4, then Pilate said that the chief priest in the cross, I find no guilt in this man. There's no cause to execute him.

No cause for crucifixion. Interesting. I find no guilt in him. So Pilate had apparently examined him closer.

Verse 5, then the people are protesting. They were urgent, saying he stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee, even to this place.

So they keep pushing. You're going to notice that the Jewish leaders are not going to take Pilate's verdict of innocent. They're going to keep pushing. So they become more urgent, more insistent.

[20 : 27] So he's a political threat. Now Pilate hears that he's from Galilee, so he sends him to Herod. That's Herod's jurisdiction. So pot him off.

That might be easier. Let Herod deal with it. He's his citizen. So sends him over to Herod. What happens? So he sends him over to Herod.

Herod was there because he was in Jerusalem at the time. Verse 8, when Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad. He'd never met Jesus before. He had long desired to see him.

Because he had heard about him. Remember, he had heard about Jesus. He thought maybe John the Baptist had raised from the dead. Remember that Herod was the one who had chopped off John the Baptist's head.

And all of a sudden he hears about these miracles going on. And he thought maybe John was back. But it turned out to be Jesus. So he wanted to see this Jesus. Wanted to see him do a sign. Do some miracles for me.

[21 : 26] Do some entertaining for me. Verse 9, so he questioned him at some length, but he made no answer. It's interesting, isn't it?

To Herod he makes no answer. No answer. Questioned him at some length, made no answer. So there we have the fulfillment of Isaiah 53, 7, as the sheep, as a sheep before it's shears a silent sow, he opened not his mouth.

He makes no defense. He's willing to bear the shame and the suffering. In fact, when he doesn't answer, what does Herod do? The chief priests and scribes are there vehemently accusing him, again raising their voices.

Verse 11, Herod and his soldiers are treating him with contempt and mocking him and arraying him in splendid clothing, dressing him up, mocking him, taunting him as a king, sending him back to Pilate as this fake king.

He makes no answer. He does not defend himself. How hard would that be? Would that be hard for you?

[22 : 42] It would be hard for me to not defend yourself, to just let the lies pour out, let the slander pour out, and then the mocking, especially if you're Jesus.

He endures it for a reason. Jesus' response to the insults and the slander, the false words, is to endure it.

And in that, as he endures suffering, he becomes our example. Peter writes about this in 1 Peter 2. He says, for to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example so that you might follow in his steps.

Well, what steps of Jesus are we to follow in? Well, Jesus 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, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. Wow.

[23 : 54] When suffering, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. Think of that particularly in this trial before Pilate, where he's not being treated justly.

under the accusations of the chief priests and the scribes, he's not being treated justly, and he continues to entrust himself to the one who does judge justly.

Wow, what an example. Peter goes on, he says, he himself bore our! our sins in his body on that 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. So he endures suffering and he becomes our shepherd, our overseer. So Jesus entrusts himself to the father. We're able to entrust ourselves to the father and to the son who endured as our shepherd and to the spirit who encourages us to do so.

What a gift we have. And do you see what Jesus is doing here in this trial? Do you see that he's not defending himself?

[25 : 20] Why is he not defending himself? Why is he letting the injustice and the lie and the slanders happen to him? To him of all people.

Huh? He's going home. Yeah, well he is going home. But he has something to accomplish before that. He's not defending himself because he intends to die for us.

Because he intends to take our sins upon himself. Every blasphemy that he hears against himself, every slander he hears against himself, he thinks he must be thinking and praying to the father all the time.

This is for them father, this is for them, this is for them. The very ones who slander me, I will die for them. Amazing.

His death is to bear our sins, to heal our failure, to make satisfaction for our death. What a savior. So Jesus is first fulfillment, he is the silent lamb king suffering for us.

[26 : 37] There's a second fulfillment we see in verse 13 to 25. He's sent back to Pilate now in verse 13. Pilate then calls together the chief priests and rulers and all the people.

So he calls them all together, the leaders of the people, the chief priests and the rulers and the people. Now, don't think of the people he's talking about here, the crowd, as the same crowd that was cheering him when he came into the city on a donkey.

Remember? Remember when he came, we call that Palm Sunday, he came, you know, riding on the donkey through the palms. And remember the great multitude was cheering him, hailing him as savior, hailing him as king, right?

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, right? And they're praising him. Remember Luke told us that that was the multitude of his disciples.

That was not a fickle crowd at that point. That was his disciples coming with him to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast. Here is a different crowd.

[27 : 44] Here's a different crowd. And to give you a picture of this, we must remember that the great majority of the crowd in Jerusalem at that time were not followers of Jesus by a long time.

We know that there were about three million people in Jerusalem at that time. And we know that because they kept track of how many lambs were killed. So we know in that year, 30 AD, there were so many lambs killed and they could extrapolate out to determine there were around three million Jews in Jerusalem.

So at Pentecost, how many were saved? 3,000. So 3 million, 3,000. What gap?

Okay? Minority. 3,000, that's a lot. That's great. That's wonderful. It would become, it would grow to 5,000 a little later. But compared to 3 million, okay, the great majority were not followers.

of Jesus. Okay? Keep that in mind. The great majority of the crowd would be saying, crucify him, crucify him.

[29 : 02] I just want you to have that context in mind. Now look at verse 13 again. Here comes Pilate again. Oh, let me give you our, the fulfillment picture here is that Jesus is the innocent substitute in the place of the guilty rebel.

Here we have this picture of the people asking for Barabbas instead of Jesus. Right? The people want the guilty insurrectionist and murderer and they want to kill the innocent Jesus.

So we have this picture of substitution exchange. So notice once again, Pilate wants to verify Jesus' innocence and notice the degree to which he goes.

Verse 13, Pilate called together the chief priests and rulers and the people and he said to them, you brought me this man as one who is misleading the people. Now watch what he says.

Verse 14, and after examining him before you, so much more went on besides what Luke is telling us. There was an examination that went on. Okay?

[30 : 15] We have that from the other gospels. Matthew, Mark, and John tell us about other things that were discussed before Pilate. Okay? After examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any, any of your charges against him.

He's not misleading the people. He's not forbidding paying of tribute to Caesar, and he's not a king. We know from John, he told him, I'm a king of a different realm.

I did not find that. And then he says, verse 15, neither did Herod. Herod sent him back, which means that Herod found nothing wrong with it.

Nothing deserving death has been done by him. Verse 16, therefore I will punish and release him. So I'll punish him, I'll flog him, and we'll let him go.

Flogging is no little deal, by the way. That is no little deal. We know that he gets flogged. Pilate will flog him anyway, and then send him to his death.

[31 : 28] Pilate was no nice guy. He was a corrupt man. He was an immoral man. In fact, he had a reputation before this of treating the Jewish people very harshly and unjustly.

And he had just been, I learned that he had just been reprimanded by Tiberius Caesar himself to go easier on those Jewish people. Because if you come down with too much of an iron fist, they will rebel.

And I'd rather you deal with it with tact, Pilate, than me needing to send troops to crush them. Now, 40 years later, Caesar will have to send troops to crush the Jewish revolt, 70 AD when they destroyed Jerusalem and the temple.

Remember? So Rome will do that if that's what it takes to keep the peace. But right now, Pilate, play the politician. Go easier if you can.

So he's trying to do the right thing and at the same time dealing with this, I have to be a politician.

[32 : 47] Notice how emphatic Pilate is about his innocence. Back in verse 4, I find no guilt in this man. Verse 14, after examining him, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him.

Verse 15, nothing deserving death has been done by him. He'll say it one more time in verse 22, a third time he will say to them, why, what evil has he done?

I found in him no guilt deserving death. Four times not guilty. Jesus' innocence is put forth to us in many proofs by Pilate himself who's no just man to make clear that his death is for another.

The Sanhedrin verse 18, when Pilate says, I find no guilt, I'll just punish and release him. Verse 18, they throw a fit. They all cried out together, away with this man and release to us Barabbas.

So here's the new element coming in. Away with this man and give us Barabbas. They insist. Who's Barabbas?

[34 : 13] It's an interesting name, Bar Abba. Okay, this is a Jewish name, Bar Abba. Here, do you recognize anything? Abba.

Abba, what's Abba mean? Father, Bar, Bar Mitzvah, Son of Father, Bar, Son of Abba, Son of Abba. Isn't that ironic? The Son of Abba is the rebellious, guilty one. And the real Son of Abba will take his place.

They insist. They want this exchange. They want Barabba, verse 19, who is a man thrown in a prison for an insurrection started in the city and for murder.

An insurrection. He's a rebel. He's probably judged by the Jewish people as a hero, a local hero. Go get him. Take out your Machaira and maybe he took out a Roman guard.

[35 : 27] We don't know what he did. He murdered somebody in the city. We'd rather have a man that will take the sword and stand against Rome than this peaceful Messiah who doesn't have a sword and just wants to forgive people.

we want a real hero. Pilate continues to try to free Jesus.

Verse 20, Pilate addressed them once more desiring to release Jesus. He's trying. He's trying to do justice but they kept shouting, crucify, crucify him.

A third time he said to them, why? What evil has he done? I found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him. That's what I'll do.

He's made his verdict. He has stated his verdict three times. I will punish and release him. Nothing deserving death.

[36 : 35] I have decided. Well, what happened? we have the people demanding again verse 23.

They demand more urgent with loud cries, the loud cries that he should be crucified and their voices prevailed. Away with this man and release to us Barabbas.

Here's the irony, the exchange of the guilty for the innocent. The son of Abba for the son of God. A substitution of the righteous for the unrighteous. Christ takes the place of the rebel and sets the captive free.

Which brings us back to the original theme that Luke discussed that was the purpose of Jesus. He came, right, Isaiah 61 to set captives free.

[37 : 47] We had no idea. If this is the first time we're reading the gospel of Luke and never heard the story of Jesus, this is the first time we had no idea that he would set captives free by giving his own life.

Early on in the ministry in Luke, we saw that Jesus set captives free by his preaching, remember? Because as he preached, demons would pop up, right, and he would silence them and release people from the demons.

He would set captives free. We saw him do that with the man who, oh, what was his name? Legion, because he had a multitude of demons in there, and Jesus released him, cast out the demons, and set the man free.

So we thought, that's how he's setting people free. He's setting people free. But now we're seeing, no, it's a bigger picture. There's a longer term that Jesus is looking at to set captives free, not just from the devil.

That's temporary. But to set them free from the wrath of God, to set them free from their captivity to sin, to set them free from their guilt and shame, that's what he came to do.

[39 : 12] And so, here's Pilate, verse 24, 25. So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted to do the unjust thing.

Pilate decided. Let the crowd win. And I wonder, we get a different picture in the different gospels of Pilate.

Remember, one of the gospels tells us about his wife having dreams, right? And don't deal with this godly man, Jesus. So there's a lot of different elements that Pilate was dealing with.

He's dealing with Caesar, he's dealing with the chief priest, he's dealing with Jesus, he's dealing with his wife, he's got a lot of different things he's dealing with. Right? And he's got to make this decision.

And I wonder if that reprimand from Caesar is the one that ultimately lets him give him to the people. Because maybe he remembers, I'm trying to do the just thing, but I've got to win favor with Caesar.

[40 : 23] Because I do want to keep my job. And Caesar doesn't just fire people, he fires people. So he released him.

He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder for whom they had asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their will. Pilate's intention was to satisfy the crowd.

He is, at the end of the day, a politician that despite the innocence of Jesus, he will do what's expedient, what's easy, what will keep the peace, instead of doing the hard thing and doing what's just.

he will do what Proverbs 17, 15 talks about. He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the Lord, which is exactly what Pilate does.

Those last three words in verse 25 strike me. Do they strike you? He delivered Jesus over to their will.

[41 : 44] Now, we in America, we talk about the will of the people. We like the will of the people, right? We like to have a say and a vote. We don't want governors and kings just handing down their mandates, though we have a governor that hands down mandates.

I'm still not sure what those mean. but in this society in the first century Rome, it wasn't a mandate, it was an order.

He had the authority but to their will. Was it to the people's will? Whose will was it?

Well, the people wanted Jesus dead, yes, clearly. They're crying out, crucify him. But whose will is it that Jesus would die? We found out in Gethsemane, not my will.

Thine be done. It's the Father's will. All along, I was reminded this morning of Acts 4 when Peter was in prison and the people were praying, remember?

[42 : 55] And in Acts 4, 25, 26, they're praying, the kings of the earth have set themselves and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his anointed, meaning Messiah.

For truly in this city they were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do, watch this, to do whatever your hand and your plan have predestined to take place.

God's will, God's plan have determined to do what?

For evil men to strike the shepherd, to strike the son, to crucify the Messiah.

God's will in this instance was for something so evil to happen.

[44 : 17] So, what are the implications of that today? Charlie Kirk, good man, yes, struck down by evil, we say, why?

Why, right? Things like this happen all the time. Evil happens all the time. And we say, why? We don't understand.

And now we don't all understand. although we're hearing some things happening as a result of this. But we still say, why? And yet, the most evil thing that ever happened to the most innocent person ever resulted in what?

our life. Our life. Our hope. Our salvation. Our freedom. From the enemy.

From our guilt. From our shame. From the debt that we could never pay. We remember, James reminded me this morning, Joseph.

[45 : 38] Joseph. Remember how Joseph was treated by his brothers? Remember? Remember daddy's little gifted child with the fancy coat?

Well, one thing to get taunted, another thing to be sold to Egypt and suffer for 20 years before he rises up before Pharaoh. And remember what Joseph said to his brothers after he messed with them for a while?

And they stood before him, remember? He said, you meant it for evil. I know you Reuben and I know you guys Simon.

I know you guys Levi. I know you guys meant it for evil. To beat me up, to sell me, to. But what?

God meant it, intended it, not let it happen. God intended it for good. We would never see the good until 20 years later when Joseph's sitting right next to Pharaoh and giving out all the good and now saving his family, saving Egypt.

[46 : 55] They could never see that ahead. But there's so many examples of this in Scripture, are there not? of evil happening and later we see the good, we see God's wisdom, we see what God's doing.

So when evil happens, beloved, among us, yes, we can have righteous anger. Yes, we can grieve that. Yes, we can ask the questions.

We can sing the Psalms that ask God why. But at the end of the day, we hope like Joseph that was intended for evil but God intended it for good because we have Romans 8 28, do we know?

He intends all things to work for good, even the bad things, all to work for good. So why does this happen?

Well, why does Jesus' injustice happen? Why the execution of the innocent person? Was it a mistake? Was it simply a sad tragedy? Not at all.

[48 : 00] He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And as one from whom men hid their faces, he was despised and we esteemed him not.

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions.

He was crushed for our iniquities. Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace. And with his wounds we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned every one of us to his own way. But the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

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?

[49 : 07] 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. Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many. He shall divide the spoil with the strong because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors.

So he bore the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors. That's why.

He fulfills what God had proclaimed through Isaiah that he would become the innocent substitute in the place of the guilty rebels.

He would bear our iniquities. He would make intercession for our transgressions. He would be the rejected one who silently suffers in bearing their debt, the debt of sinners.

[50 : 14] He would be the innocent substitute dying in the place of guilty rebels, the righteous for the unrighteous, the just for the unjust, an exchange, an exchange.

What difference does all this make? well, how do you respond to this Jesus? What is your judgment of him?

I don't mean judge him. I mean what's your judgment? What's your assessment of him? As you read, as you ponder what Luke has written, what the gospels have written, what do you assess about him?

The priests reject him out of envy and hate. The crowds prefer a popular era.

Pilate dismisses him for expediency. What do you do with Jesus? How do you view him? Jesus does not let us view him simply as a good man.

[51 : 30] a good teacher, a prophet. He does not let us do that. Why? Because he claims to be the son of God.

Because he claims to be the great I am. Because he claims to have the authority to forgive sins. So he doesn't allow you to say you're a good man.

Jesus is a good man. Or a good teacher. Or even a prophet. You have three choices in regard to Jesus.

You must either regard him as a liar, that he spoke these things but he was telling a lie. Or that he's a lunatic, that he actually believed he was God but obviously he wasn't.

or he's Lord. Those are the only choices you get. You can't pick any because he doesn't let you.

[52 : 41] So who is he? Who is he? The father sent the son into the world to lay down his life for us.

the father loved the world so much that he would give his only begotten son to suffer this indignity and this shame and this condemnation and slander, atrocity and injustice, so that guilty rebels like you and me might be set free to serve him, to love him, to worship him, to trust him, to stand for him, to suffer like him.

Let us pray. Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for Luke's faithful recording of the events of Jesus.

We thank you Lord that each gospel writes a little different. They have a different purpose. Luke just wants to set it before us so simply so that we might see those things that give us certainty about the gospel.

That Jesus is who he said he was, that he came to die, that he came to do the will of the father, not his own will. And we thank you oh father in all your wisdom and your sovereign wisdom, Lord, that you would foresee that men would do what is their will and it would actually be your will.

[54 : 29] But your will was obviously greater foreseeing the future and the great purpose. God so help us to see Jesus once again in here and not in his great words but in his great act, in his great patience, in his entrusting himself to you.

Help us Lord when we suffer to remember that and to try to follow in his steps that we might please you.

we ask this in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.