

Divine Appointment

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Preacher: Jason Webb

[0 : 00] Luke chapter 24. I'll begin reading at the first verse. On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb.

They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them.

In their fright, the women bowed down with their faces to the ground. But the men said to them, Why do you look for the living among the dead?

He is not here. He has risen. Remember how he told you while he was still with you in Galilee, The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified, and on the third day be raised again.

Then they remembered his words. When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the eleven and to all the others.

[1 : 20] It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles.

But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb.

Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves. And he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

Now jump over to verse 36. Verse 36. While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, Peace be with you.

They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, Why are you troubled? And why do doubts rise in your minds?

[2 : 28] Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself. Touch me and see. A ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.

When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it, because of joy and amazement, he asked them, Do you have anything here to eat?

They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence. He said to them, This is what I told you while I was still with you.

Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms. Then he opened their minds so they could understand the scriptures.

He told them, This is what is written, The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

[3 : 44] You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my father has promised, but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.

Do you believe in divine appointments, where you know you're there however you got there, because the Lord wanted you there?

God had set this up, and now you're here. Well, you're here this morning by divine appointment. You might not know that or realize that. The Bible tells us that those are the kinds of things that happen.

We just read Luke 24. We skipped over the passage, but two disciples were on the road to Emmaus, and they were talking about all the things that had happened, but they had a divine appointment with the Lord Jesus, and he talked to them.

Peter, in Luke 24 also, the Lord appeared to him. Peter hadn't set that appointment up, but the Lord had, and so Peter had a meeting with the Lord Jesus, something we don't really know anything

about.

[4 : 58] No one recorded what was said between Jesus and Peter. Well, you're here by divine appointment. The Bible tells another story about a man who lived in what is present-day Sudan.

We call him the Ethiopian eunuch, but he was really not from present-day Ethiopia. He was from further up north, and he was on his way home from Jerusalem, and in Jerusalem, he had been thinking a lot about the Lord, had been thinking a lot about the Word of God, and as he went home, he was reading a copy of the book of Isaiah.

So he was thinking about the Bible. He was wondering about it. He had lots of questions and no answers, and just then he met someone. He had a divine appointment.

Philip was there, and Philip had answers, answers that that man was looking for. Philip was there to bring that man to God.

The Lord is always constantly doing things like that, bringing people together, people that need to hear the gospel with someone who knows the gospel.

[6 : 10] Well, you're here this morning because God has appointments with people, just like Philip and that African man. Some of you are here because you have a standing appointment with the Lord.

This is what your family does. You come here every week, and whether you realize it or not, God is here to meet with you, and that's what he's doing.

But I don't want you to miss this, that you're here now because God has something he wants to say to you. It's not just me.

It's the Lord, the Holy Spirit, speaking his word to you. Now, the very same thing happened in Jerusalem at Pentecost 2,000 years ago.

People were in Jerusalem from all over the whole world. Some were all the way from the Far East.

[7 : 14] It would be present-day Iran. And they had made it to Jerusalem over weeks of travel. It wasn't airfare. It was boat and road and camel and horse, and that's how they got there.

And there they were in Jerusalem at Pentecost. They were there to celebrate the Jewish feast. Now, you need to understand, they probably, almost all of them, wouldn't have gone every year. That would be far too expensive, far too time-consuming. For some of them, this would have been a once-in-a-lifetime thing to do. Once-in-a-lifetime vacation.

Once-in-a-lifetime religious pilgrimage. Some were all the way from the far north, from what is now present-day northern, northern Turkey. And it took them weeks to get there.

Some were from Libya and Algeria, and some were from the Mediterranean Islands, and some were from far away Rome. But everything had worked out for all of these people.

[8 : 16] They were able to get off of work. They were able to save up enough money. Everyone was healthy at home. They themselves were healthy. They had finally had the chance to go, and so they had gone.

And now they are all in Jerusalem. They come from all over, all kinds of different ways of how they got there and who they were, but there they were. Lots of them lived in Jerusalem.

You need to understand that under normal situation, Jerusalem was not a huge city. It was a religious city. It was a small city. But during the festivals, the city would swell to three, four, five times its normal size.

So if you can imagine the town of Bremen in a festival, and all of a sudden it swells, well, it would swell to, I don't know what, 20,000 people. But you need to imagine in Jerusalem, it's swelling to a million people.

And everyone is out and about, hustle and bustle. And so these people, maybe they loved it, and they were out enjoying the festival atmosphere of what was going on.

[9 : 21] But all of them had an appointment in Jerusalem that Pentecost morning. So by boat, by train, by car, however they got there, they were there.

And they met God, and God saved them. God forever changed their eternal destiny because of this one divine appointment at Pentecost in Jerusalem.

He gave them new life. He gave them new joy. He gave them new peace. That's what God does when he brings salvation to people. He forgives their past. He gives them a new future.

He gives them a new heart. And that's what God was doing. Well, you have, your Bible's open to Luke chapter 24. And we just want to look at a few verses here because this is what I want to speak to you about.

Luke chapter 24. Now you need to know that I was just talking about Pentecost. This is about seven weeks before that date. Before that divine appointment that all of those people had that was going to lead to their salvation.

[10:25] This is seven weeks before that. And back in Turkey or Iran or Africa or Rome, people were already leaving. People were already getting on their ships and getting their horses ready.

They're already on the road. They're already heading to Jerusalem. The divine appointment was in the works and they didn't know it. So this is, that's Luke 24, seven weeks earlier before this divine appointment.

Now, three days earlier, Jesus had suffered and died. He was brutally murdered, unfairly tried, crucified, at the hands of the citizens of Jerusalem, at the religious leaders, at the Romans.

And now three days earlier, or three days later, early in the morning, God declared him to be his son by raising him from the dead.

God did something that he hadn't done for anyone ever before, raising him into eternal life. This, the God-man Jesus Christ. And now Jesus appears to his disciples and that's what we just read.

[11:36] He starts to appear to his disciples and he appears with explanations. He explains, this is what happened, this is what the scripture said. But he also comes, he says, this happened all according to what was written.

And then he also comes with instructions. You are going to be my messengers. So he explains what happens and now he gives them, this is what your task is from here on out.

You're my messengers. You're my witnesses. Starting here in Jerusalem. It's going to go to all the nations, but I want you to focus again.

Where does it begin? At the very end of verse 47, starting in, beginning at Jerusalem. Jerusalem. Repentance and forgiveness of sins are going to be preached to all the nations.

There are going to be divine appointments happening, just like this. And they've been happening since that day where repentance and forgiveness of sins have been preached.

[12:37] It's going to happen to all the nations, but it's beginning at Jerusalem. So who first heard? Who first heard the gospel?

God wants you to turn around and live. You can and you will be forgiven of your sins. Who were the first people that heard the full gospel message of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

It says, beginning in Jerusalem. Jerusalem sinners are the first people to hear the full gospel message. And you say, well, so what?

What does that matter? Well, what I want to say is there's never been greater grace than that.

There was never greater mercy shown to any sinner than to be the very first to be from Jerusalem and to hear the gospel.

Because you need to remember what happened three days earlier. who did that? It was Jerusalem. Jerusalem.

[13:52] Who was Jerusalem? What were they? What was it? Well, Jerusalem was a festering, rotting spider in the middle of the nation just belching out poisonous gases.

And there they were. There were never sinners quite like these Jerusalem sinners. sinners. In Matthew chapter 23, Jesus shows up in Jerusalem. He didn't spend a lot, a lot of time in that city during his active ministry, but Matthew 23, he shows up in Jerusalem and he preaches a withering sermon.

If you think Jesus is Jesus, meek and mild and won't say anything mean about anyone else, I would just encourage you to read Matthew chapter 23. He's preaching to Jerusalem.

He was a prophet and as a prophet, he unleashes divine condemnation on the city. He says seven times, woe to you. Woe to you, teachers of the law.

Woe to you, Pharisees. Woe to you, you hypocrites, you blind men. He calls them you sons of hell. He says, I see inside of you. He's talking to Jerusalem people.

[15:10] I see inside of you. Outside, you're beautiful, but you have the beauty of a well-decorated grave site.

Have you ever seen those? People pour a lot of money and energy and they put flowers and statues and beautiful little things all around that grave, but inside, you are death.

That was Jerusalem. Beautiful on the outside, full of dead men's bones on the inside. They were filled with self-righteous, the holier than thou, the pretenders.

So, Jesus says, Jerusalem, you are the hive, you are the heart of this all. All of that self-righteousness that is filling this nation, it begins here. It begins with you. It begins with these teachers. It begins with these people that you are. You are a bunch of self-righteous frauds. That's Jerusalem. And that's who God says, you're going to be the first people to hear the gospel.

[16:20] You are going to be the first people to hear about a Savior who would die for the self-righteous. Jerusalem was more than just self-righteous.

They were filled with blood. Again, Matthew 23, the same withering sermon. Jesus says, you decorate the tombs of the prophets. Now, what they thought they were doing and what they really meant by what they were doing was, oh, yeah, we're honoring the prophets.

And Jesus says, it's actually more appropriate. Your fathers, all Jerusalem sinners, killed the prophets. He says, no prophet can die outside of Jerusalem and that's why I have to go there.

That's what he says later. Old, your fathers killed them and you decorate their tombs. They no doubt meant it as an honor, but Jesus says, it's more like you are glad they're dead.

That's the more appropriate understanding of your decorations. And you aren't done. He says, I'm sending you prophets and wise men and teachers and how are you going to treat them?

[17:26] That's what you've done in the past. That's what you're going to do to me. Now, what are you going to do in the future? Well, some of them you will kill and crucify others. You will flog and pursue from town to town.

That's what Saul of Tarsus did. Because Saul of Tarsus was a Jerusalem sinner who was saved. The self-righteousness and murder go together.

Yeah. The self-righteous cannot bear to be exposed. The self-righteous cannot bear to be called out and so they kill the messengers.

And so Jesus says, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often have I longed to gather your children together?

You are not willing. Well, that's Jerusalem. And that's who hears the gospel first. That's who God intentionally says, that's where we're going to begin.

[18:34] That's who's going to be saved with the gospel preached first. Now, Jerusalem topped it all off by murdering the Christ. Again, beginning in Jerusalem, three days earlier, Jerusalem had killed the Messiah.

Messiah. They had risen up, they had murdered him, they had cried, crucify him, crucify him. Jesus was the holy one, the innocent one, the lamb of God. Have you ever seen a young lamb?

One time in my life, I don't live on a farm, I don't know anything about sheep really or anything, but one time in my life, I saw a three-day year-old lamb and I was physically shocked with how weak and helpless it looked.

It was physically, it did something to me about how gentle and innocent the lamb was. And they had taken the lamb of God and they had flogged him and they had nailed him to a piece of wood and then they had hung him up there and then they had made fun of him as he suffered.

Jesus said, no prophet can die outside of Jerusalem and now it was his turn. Jerusalem said, his blood, let it be on us.

[20:00] Can you imagine saying that? That's what they said. We would rather him die and if his blood has to be on us, then let it be on us.

Now, Jesus had preached, come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. He stood up in the temple precincts in the middle of Jerusalem and said, I will give you rest and they had crucified him.

Two times out of the sky, the father broke out with, this is my son whom I love with him. I am well pleased. He is wonderful. He is delightful.

I love him. Listen to him. And they tore him to pieces. They plucked his beard. They beat his face. And so now Jerusalem is marked for judgment.

And that is something that you also need to understand. Before they had ever crucified the Messiah, Jesus said, this city is destined for destruction.

[21:00] There's nothing that's going to happen that is going to change that. This is going to happen. Jerusalem will be destroyed. And so at last they had gone too far.

the temple you love so much. Jesus says, not one stone will be left on another. I'm going to come to you and I'm going to destroy the city. And the people were scattered. The people were destroyed. Forty years later, that's exactly what happened. The temple was destroyed. The city is crushed. The people scattered. So this is the city. It's filled with self-righteousness. They think they are so good. They are filled with blood and murder. They kill the Messiah. They are destined for destruction. But beginning with Jerusalem. Do you see God's heart?

Do you see God's heart? They were the worst sinners. But the worst sinners got to hear the best news first.

[21 : 58] Because that's God's heart. Jesus said to the apostles, and I just want you to look at God's heart. Look at how he's given thought to this. How he's given care to this.

How he's planned this. The father, according to his plan, gave his son over to them, and they killed him. Now look at his plan.

He says to the apostles, stay in Jerusalem. He says that a number of times in his post resurrection appearances. He wants the apostles to understand that eventually you are going to be in Jerusalem, and you are to stay there.

After my last appearance, I want you to go there, and you stay there until the Holy Spirit comes. And so there they are. They stay there. They don't go anywhere. So Jesus, again, is setting up a divine appointment.

He's setting up. He's putting his people in the place where these sinners need to hear. And that's exactly what happened. They're right in the middle of the city. That is where the Holy Spirit came down.

[23 : 05] He didn't come down far away in the desert. He didn't come far away in the north. He didn't come in Galilee. He didn't come in Nazareth. The Holy Spirit came down in the middle of Jerusalem.

And so Acts 2, it is the Pentecost. It's time for that big divine appointment. There are 120 disciples in a room. It must have been a fairly large room, but there they are.

They all fit down and suddenly God comes down. And what is the manifestation? What is the proof of his coming? Well, first there were flames of fire above their heads.

Picture of God resting upon them. And what did they start doing? They start speaking in tongues.

And by tongues, it's not talking about some weird heavenly language.

It's not talking about the language of angels. It's not talking about nonsensical babbling. The Holy Spirit comes down and they start talking in other languages.

[24 : 09] Other known languages. The Holy Spirit comes down so they can preach to the people and so the people can hear them. So the people can hear them not in their second language, but in their first language.

The Holy Spirit wants no confusion. The gospel is going to reach these people. people. That's God's heart. So Peter stands up and he preaches the first Christian gospel message.

There's been millions of them ever since, but there it was, the very first one proclaiming the death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and the call to repentance and faith in him.

There's been millions of them. This is one of them. And that was the first. Now, I want you to understand, they had rejected God again and again and again.

Remember, Jesus said, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, like how I've longed to do this. I've sent to you prophets and teachers and I've done this again and again. They've rejected God again and again.

[25 : 09] Maybe that's you. Maybe you've heard the gospel again and again and again. You can't even count the number of times. I, like, personally myself, I could not tell you how many times I heard the gospel before I believed it.

I rejected it hundreds of times. But I want you to see God's heart. God doesn't quit after one or two times. God doesn't take your rejection, your second rejection, your third rejection, as final.

They've turned him away again and again, but here he is. God's back with mercy. Judgment's coming. Death is coming. Hell is coming. God is coming.

Jesus died for your sins. You must repent and give yourself to Christ. And they've turned away before. They've rejected God before. He's knocked on the door and they've not answered him before.

And we would say maybe have some self-respect. Have some self-respect, God. Why give it to them again?

[26 : 19] Well, God wants to see these wicked wretches. saved. He wants to see them saved. And we would really object if we're really thinking about this.

Well, they don't deserve it. They don't deserve it. No, they don't. They don't.

They don't deserve it at all. But praise God, the gospel isn't about God giving us what we deserve. deserve it. It's about mercy.

Just mercy. It's not about what is fair or what is right or what is sensible or what we would say is respectable. It's not about that. It's about mercy.

It's not about deserving. It's about grace. And God says, be reconciled to me. And he says it again and again. He wants people to respond.

[27 : 15] So that's God's heart. He longs to show compassion. Mercy is sort of the riverbed of his heart. That's where his heart loves to flow. It's like wrath. That's the river overflowing its banks.

Mercy is where his heart loves to flow. And so it's not about justice. It's about need. God is not responding to their sin.

He is responding to their need. That's what mercy is. He sees them. And there is no one so needy as these people. No, they don't deserve mercy. You've rejected me again and again.

But yet here you need this. So, maybe you've rejected him again and again. Maybe that's absolutely true of you.

And that is absolutely true of some of you. You're here and you're hearing the gospel again and again and you keep doing nothing.

[28 : 20] God speaks to you and you sit there like a bump on the log. Well, thank God he's merciful and he's saying to you again, come to me.

Come to me. It's not about what you deserve. It's about your need and you need saved. So, Peter preaches to them. You disown the holy one, the righteous one.

You asked for Barabbas instead. You asked for a thief instead of him. You killed the author of life. Repent and turn to God that your sins may be wiped out. Now, that's God's heart.

That's what you've done. But here's what I'm offering you. Repent and your sins will be wiped out. You'll be forgiven. forgiven. Well, that's God's heart then and that's God's heart now.

Turn to me. Come to me, all of you, and you will be forgiven. Well, what happened? Acts 2 tells us what happened.

[29 : 21] 3,000 people were saved in a day. There were numerous divine appointments. There were at least 3,000 divine appointments that day.

God had brought them from the east and from the west and the north and the south. He brought them by river and by ocean and by land and He had brought them all there to here and now God opens their hearts.

They were far, far away. He brought them to Jerusalem and when they were there, God began to open their hearts and they were cut to the quick. You need to understand they had an armor of self-righteousness, of justifications of why they didn't need to do this, why they were good enough. There was an armor, but God started cracking open that armor and they were cut to the quick. In a flash, they saw their sin.

Do you ever have those moments, those epiphanies where you see all of a sudden things that you didn't see before? Well, that's what they saw. In a flash, they saw their sin. They had killed the Son of God.

[30 : 33] And the cry was, what do we have to do to be saved? Oh, that God would cut some of you open.

You haven't killed the Lord of glory, but then again, you never had the chance. You know, they never thought they would try to kill God.

that wouldn't have been something that they thought they would do. But they did. And who's to say that you wouldn't if you were given the chance?

You know, people are the same wherever and whenever. Bremen sinners are no different than Jerusalem sinners. You know, they thought they were better than other people.

there was a poll they took last year and they asked, you know, several thousand Americans, who's the best person they know?

[31 : 35] Who's morally the best person they know? And over 50% said, I am. So are you a pretty good person? The people that killed the Lord of glory thought they were pretty good people.

do you just want to rule your own life? Do your own thing? Well, you know, the people that stripped Jesus and mocked his pain, all they wanted to do was do what they've always done. They just wanted their religion.

They just wanted their lives. They didn't like him telling them what to do. Do you ignore the gospel message? You don't think it's all that important. That's what Jerusalem did. The word became flesh and spoke to them.

the God who speaks came down and talked to them and dwelled among them and they killed him.

They just didn't really like hearing from God. They didn't want to hear from God.

They just it's my life is better without him. They wanted left alone. Maybe that's all you want. I just don't want God to bother me. Well, that's exactly what they wanted.

[32 : 46] And they were me and I was them. We're going to sing at the end, ashamed, I hear my voice crying out among the scoffers. Because that is exactly the truth. I wasn't there.

I didn't do it. But I was the kind of person that would have done it. But you say, well, surely I'm not as bad as all that.

Well, this is important. The good news is not that if you sin less than others, you will be saved. You need to know that. That's a very common thought.

That if somehow I'm not at the very, very, very, very bottom, that's enough. Like, you're in the maximum security prison and you haven't done the worst guy there, that you're innocent, that you don't belong there.

That's not the gospel. And the good news is not that if you sin less than others, you'll be saved. The wages of sin is death. death. It's not graded on a curve. The soul that sins shall die.

[33 : 52] The point is not only really bad sinners need saved. The point is that the worst of sinners can be saved. That's what you should be taking from this message.

Beginning in Jerusalem, you should say, oh, if the worst of sinners can be saved, then I can be saved. No matter what you've done.

You know, there's no place, there's no limit on God's grace. It does go further than what we are typically comfortable with. We need to realize that. We start to domesticate it, we start to say, well, I can't believe, or we start to say, God can never save them.

And what we do is we've just taken something that is divine and supernatural and it's completely wild and we just domesticate it down to what our expectations are.

It goes further than what we're comfortable with, deeper than all my sin and shame. So my sins are many, his mercy is more. And that's what every sinner can say as they come to Jesus Christ.

[34 : 57] So the greatest sinners need a Savior, but we're all by nature enemies of God. You know, some might be bigger and badder, but if we're all on the same side, then we're all enemies of God.

Romans 5, 8 says, while we were still sinners, while we were still enemies of God, Christ died for us. So to belittle, to marginalize Jesus, to ignore him, to despise him, that's just what enemies do. You don't have to be absolutely violently hostile to be an enemy. You can just belittle, ignore, and make him invisible. But here's the good news.

There is good news for enemies. The way is open to come to God. Jesus says, repentance will be proclaimed. That's part of the good news, is repentance will be proclaimed.

So repentance is a word to sinful people, going their own way. Repentance is sort of like, it's a word of intervention. Maybe, I don't know, you know, you've seen these on TV, or you've heard about them, or maybe you've had them in your family where, you know, Joe there is killing himself with alcohol, he's ruining his life, he has a problem, and the whole family comes together and they have an intervention.

[36 : 14] And what do you say in intervention? You don't say, hey, Joe, you're good. You don't say, hey, Joe, you're doing the right thing, you need to have a better self esteem about yourself. No, you say, Joe, you have to stop.

You have to get help. You have to do something different. You can't go on the way you're going.

Well, this divine appointment is a divine intervention.

It's God standing in the way of sinners saying, you need to repent, you need to turn around. You're killing yourself. You aren't living the good life. The thing that you are trying to use to escape is actually the thing that is killing you.

So turn around. And God says, turn to me. That's why repentance is a good word. It's good news because it's turning away from what kills us to who gives us life, to God himself.

And believe in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins. So repentance and forgiveness are going to be proclaimed. And that's good news. You can be forgiven. You. Not just your sins.

[37 : 26] I think that's helpful. You can be forgiven. You know, somehow we like to separate our sins from ourselves. But sin is what we do because that's who we are.

Sin is just an expression of our crookedness, of our smallness, of our rebelliousness. sin. Well, I think everyone knows that you sin, you sense that sin isn't just the things you do.

You need forgiven. You need forgiven for what you are. Not as a creature, not as a man or a female or anything like that, not as a sufferer.

You need to be forgiven for what you are toward God. And that's what God is saying. I will forgive you of your sins. I will wash you and forgive you and make you new.

Well, that's what is being offered. And the question is how? How can this be? Well, here's where we can say ironically, we can thank those Jerusalem sinners.

[38 : 42] because they and all their evil crucified the Son of God. But he was there because of God's plan.

See, Jesus too had a divine appointment. You need to see that. There's constantly running through the Gospels.

Jesus knows. All those other people that were coming from all over the place that made it to Jerusalem, they didn't know they were destined for a divine appointment. But Jesus knew he was going to the cross.

He knew he had a divine appointment. He had an appointment with God. And it wasn't to receive mercy. And there was not going to be any good news. And there was not going to be any surprising grace.

He was there to suffer for the sins of sinners. He was there to bear the wrath of God for sins. And so this was a terrible appointment.

[39 : 42] There was no mercy. There's no surprising light. There's no surprising grace. The wrath of God was on him. Our sins were laid on him.

And God's justice did what men could not do. All that wrath and anger of men, all they could do was hurt his body.

God's justice did was cut a sword right into his heart so that now the love and the joy and the peace that he had experienced forever was driven a sword right through.

And now all of a sudden he cannot cry Abba Father. We saw that in Sunday school forever and ever. He had been saying Abba Father. He can't say that anymore. All he can say is my God.

God's righteous anger for all that we were and all that we did, all of our falling short, all of our crookedness, all of our despising him, all of our malice, all of our self-righteousness and pride came on him and for our sakes he died.

[40 : 55] Him for us, the righteous for the unrighteous. So Jesus had this terrible appointment with the holy God of justice and God held nothing back.

Father turns his face away. In a moment, as it were, the father despised his son. The father said, you are a thing I cannot look upon with a smile.

You are a thing I can no longer enjoy. He became sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God. Well, that's the good news.

See, it's not about you and your doing. The good news is not you turning over a new leaf. The good news is not about you making something of yourself.

The good news is about what God the father did with his son by the Holy Spirit for us. It's all about what God was doing on the cross for sinners. Now, that's the message that the Jerusalem sinners heard.

[42 : 00] the worst sinners heard the best news. And now here's where we're going to end. They had their appointment. They had their appointment.

And they did what they did with it. 3,000 believed that day and were saved. So, do what they did. If you're from God and are far away from God and you're not forgiven, you've never had this divine appointment where God showed you your guilt and your sin and showed you how far you fell short. You've never had the divine appointment. You've never come to terms with that. Well, now this is it. This is your time and you need to do what they did. They heard and they believed. They let that guilt touch them.

They let that guilt come in and rest upon them. For the first time in their whole life, they took off all their masks and they looked God in the face in all their ugliness and they were honest with him. And they cried out for mercy. And they put all their hope in what Jesus did and the Jesus that they had killed. Can you imagine having that kind of faith?

[43 : 15] Three days earlier, we killed him. Now I'm going to trust him that he loves me enough to save me. And that's what they did. That's what faith does. And they were saved and they were forgiven and they had new life.

So their divine appointment ended in their salvation and it happened in a day. They woke up in one situation and they went to bed in a different situation. Salvation can be yours today.

It's not a huge long process. It's meeting God. It's being honest with him. It's praying. It's believing. Salvation can be yours today.

God meets you with good news. This morning. And so do what they did and receive it and believe it and take it seriously. I don't know. There's nothing more serious than this.

And it just begins with a prayer. Lord, be merciful to me for Jesus sake. That's it. Lord, be merciful to me for Jesus sake.

[44 : 19] God so today is your divine appointment. What are you going to do with it? What are you going to do with it?

Well, let's pray. Lord, thank you that you meet sinners with grace and I pray that you would meet sinners this morning with grace and that you would not let Satan come and take away the seed that has been planted, that you would not let the distractions and the worries and the cares and the foolishness of this world distract them, but I pray that you would have real dealings with them.

May this be a day when there is a divine appointment and salvation comes. Show your power, show your grace, show why you are so praiseworthy and so awesome.

I pray this for Jesus' sake. Amen.