

# Jesus Has Sacrifice on His Mind

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, good morning everyone. Are we well? Excellent. Thank you so much to everyone who's participated so far in the service. What a week. It's a week, I don't know about you, but if anyone saw that video, it's a week where I learnt that I can fully trust the Lothian bus drivers to get me wherever I'm trying to go on time and safely.

Did anyone see that video? Quite remarkable, wasn't it? Love this week. Also, my funniest thing of this week was the ski centre down in Kent that had to close because of excess snow. Loved that headline then when I saw that one.

But what a week. But we turn to God's Word, God's never-changing inspired Word, which I hope he's going to do just that to us this morning as God by his Spirit works amongst us.

So why don't we pray, let's just pause and let's still our hearts as we come to this passage in Luke 22. Psalm 119 verse 105.

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[ 1 : 24 ] Let me pray all these things in Jesus' name. Amen. So just to kick us off this morning, I wonder if anyone's seen this film? Some of us. The Bucket List starring Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman.

If you've not seen it, it's all right. Not going to go right home about it. But we watched this recently, Alex and I, The Bucket List on Amazon Prime because we had nothing else to do one evening. So we chucked on The Bucket List. And essentially it's a film about two terminally ill men who meet each other in hospital and who set about coming up with a list of things that they want to do before they die.

Okay. And I think they call it The Bucket List because it's the things they want to do because before they hit the bucket, that's where they get the name from. So they call it The Bucket List. The things that they want to do before they die.

So here's what I want to do this morning just to get us thinking and trying to get us into this passage. Turn to your neighbor for 30 seconds. What are the things that would be on your bucket list? Okay.

[ 2 : 25 ] 30 seconds just to get a bit of volume in the room and then we'll kick on. Okay. What would be the things in your bucket list? Okay. Excellent.

Well, here are the top five entries on the website. I believe there is a website called this bucketlist.net. Okay. Here are the top five things that the people in our world want to do before they die.

Here's number one. See if anyone had this one. Northern Lights. Somebody has probably actually seen it. Chris, have you seen it? Brilliant. There you go. Northern Lights. Number two. Go skydiving?

No? Some of us. Okay. Here's the third one. Get a tattoo. Number four. Now, I was surprised at this one. We'll see because I think that's a great idea.

Go on a cruise. Stage of life I'm at. I would love a cruise. There we go. Number five. Swim with dolphins. So there we go. The things that people in our world would want to do with the lights before they die.

[ 3 : 27 ] And here's what we're going to do this morning. We're going to spend some time with a man who's in the final days of his life. And here is Jesus in the final days of his life.

And he's got sacrifice on his mind. And he's got sacrifice on his mind because the cross, the place as we journey through Luke's gospel, the place that he's repeatedly told his disciples where he is going, the place where his life is going, the cross is no longer just a point on the horizon.

The cross is imminent. Let me just help us see the rough timeline of events here. Very rough timeline as Luke requires them just so we can see where we are in the story. So Jesus entered Jerusalem at chapter 9 verse 28 on the Sunday.

On the Monday, chapter 19 of verse 45, roughly, he's in the temple. And he's in the temple. He's driving out those who had turned God's house into a marketplace.

On the Tuesday, chapters 20 and 21, roughly, he's back in the temple. And he's challenging the religious leaders.

[ 4 : 37 ] He's clarifying the future of this whole temple business. And so here we are today, chapter 22, looking at the Wednesday and the Thursday before it all kicks off on Good Friday.

So here we are today, and Jesus, in the final few days of his life, with a cross just around the corner, has got sacrifice on his mind. But I wonder if you've ever asked yourself why.

Why does Jesus have sacrifice on his mind? Why? It's my three-year-old daughter's favorite question at the minute. And it starts off cute. Why?

Why does Jesus have sacrifice on his mind? Canadian novelist and artist Douglas Copeland was asked recently in an interview what his greatest fear was in life. I wonder how you'd answer that question.

What is your greatest fear in life? He said that his greatest fear in life is that God exists, but he doesn't care much for human beings.

[ 5 : 44 ] Now, if that's true, that is a legitimate fear. That God doesn't care. That God created this world, and then off he went. God doesn't care much for human beings.

And perhaps you're here this morning, and that's where you are on this whole God thing. Does God care about my life? How do I know that God cares about my life?

It's a great question to be asking yourself. Well, as we see Jesus here, let me invite you, as we see God's Son, as we see God in the flesh in action here, ask yourself, what does this tell us?

What does this tell you about God? And what does this tell you about you? Jesus has got sacrifice on his mind. And sacrifice, as we just quickly, briefly follow through these verses, sacrifice is going to mean three things for Jesus.

Here's the first thing, verses 1 to 6 of chapter 22. It's sacrifice for Jesus will mean surrendering. So here we are on the Wednesday of Easter week.

[ 6 : 51 ] Jesus is about 33 years of age. He's been in the public eye now for about two or three years. And he is becoming, and we've seen this over the last few weeks, extraordinarily popular with the people.

They love Jesus. But as time has gone on, and particularly now that Jesus is on the temple turf, so to speak, the religious leaders in Jerusalem have had about enough of him.

Because they resent his popularity, they are suspicious of his motives, and they fear the power that he has. And so all of this is added up to mean simply, pure and simply, in their minds, that Jesus has to go.

Jesus has to be crushed. Jesus has to be exterminated. And so we pick it up here, verses 1 and 2. The only question in the minds of the chief priests and the teachers of the law is how are we going to do it?

How are we going to do it? The people are not on their side, and the calendar is not on their side either. Because you see it, detail in the text, it's Passover.

[ 7 : 54 ] One of the great moments of the Jewish religious year. It's a festival with both national and religious elements to it. I guess it's something akin to what we do as we do Christmas, and as we do Remembrance Day.

It's that kind of thing. National tones, religious tones to the Passover. And Passover means that Jerusalem is rammed full of people. And so if they were to try and arrest Jesus, then that is way too risky.

So something needs to give. So here they are, verses 1 and 2. They're scratching their heads. How are we going to do it? And they could not have imagined, in all their wildest dreams, that it would get as good as it was about to get.

Now here it is. This is what my gran, my grandpa, one of the two, maybe the two, they used to call it a never-look-a-gift-horse-in-the-mouth moment. Judas walks in.

And when you think about it, Judas is the perfect solution to their problem. Because Judas isn't just a follower of Jesus.

[ 9 : 05 ] Judas is one of the twelve. Now no one is suspicious of Judas at this point. It's not like some of the TV crime dramas that we watch. And there's a mole in the ranks, and everybody knows that there's a mole in the ranks.

Nobody is suspicious of Judas here. Judas is trusted. And Judas knows where Jesus hangs out. And to top it all off, it's not like they tapped him up.

It's not like they sent him a private message on Facebook and offered him a bit of money if he would only come and talk to them. Judas, of his own accord, goes to them. Now exactly when and why Judas' heart towards Jesus changed, we can't be sure.

But Luke wants us to know, in the text, that there are two factors in play here. Now firstly, Satan. Don't miss the importance of that.

That the one who, from the very beginning of the Bible story, is set on thwarting God's purposes. In Luke's gospel, we last read of Satan, back in chapter 4, verse 13, when he tempted Jesus during his 40 days in the wilderness.

[ 10 : 13 ] And after it had become clear that Jesus would not succumb, Luke tells us, rather, that Satan disappeared until an opportune time. Well, here is his opportune time.

Judas is his opportune time. So Satan's at play here. Second factor, money's at play here. Verse 4, they agreed to give him money. I think we're meant to understand that Judas went to them, and he asked for money.

So there they are. They're here. They're plotting. They're meeting. Ideas as to how to catch Jesus are being shared. Before Judas returns to Jesus and the other 11 disciples, and he waits to make his move.

Now, for all intents and purposes, it looks like forces are conspiring here, behind Jesus' back, to ensure that the wheels are about to well and truly come off the Jesus bandwagon.

The religious leaders are in on it. Judas is in on it. Satan is in on it. The question is, who's in control here? Who's in control? Well, it might not look like it, but Jesus is in control.

[ 11 : 27 ] He's in full control here. He's been telling his disciples that this will happen all the way through the gospel. This gospel, if you want to check it out, chapter 18, verse 32. This is the most recent one we have of this.

He said, plainly, that he was about to be delivered over to the religious leaders, and ultimately to the Gentiles. This is what he said all the way along in this gospel.

This is going to happen. And so these background events, these dodgy deals, which we'll see Jesus eventually handed over to be crucified, they're all part of God's plan. All part of God's plan. Jesus is one completely in control. It was about this time last year where I first learned to play chess. Never learned to play chess before. Upstairs in Basics Bank, it's the only time I've ever played chess.

There's one guy called John who taught me how to play chess, and he's literally taught me everything I know about the game. And he taught me one thing when I started. He said, Graham, a good chess player doesn't just think one move ahead.

[ 12 : 29 ] A good chess player thinks five moves ahead. And I have no idea if that's true or not. As I say, I've learned everything from him. But a good chess player thinks five moves ahead. Here's what we need to understand about Jesus.

He's not thinking one move ahead. You're not just thinking five moves ahead. Actually, what's going on down here is the plan since before the foundation of the world.

And it's going down exactly as God ordains it to go down. God's master plan of redemption, the grand weaver of history, here he is, his plan to rescue his people by sending his son to die in their place.

Now that is a wonderful truth about the God of the Bible that's so sovereign and so in control is he that even the world's worst turns out to be nothing other than a plan that plays into his best.

This is the kind of God that we're dealing with here. Here is a Christ who is in control. And here is a Christ who is choosing the cross. You see, in the final days of his life, here is Jesus.

[ 13 : 37 ] What has he got in his mind? He's got sacrifice on his mind. And sacrifice means surrendering. Here's the second thing it means, verses 7 to 23. Sacrifice means suffering.

Luke tells us that the day that the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed is here, which means that it's now Thursday of Passion Week. And Jesus wants to eagerly eat the Passover meal with his disciples.

Notice that word eagerly there. He's been waiting for this. This is it. This is the climax. You'll see that Luke mentions the Passover there five times in those seven verses, I think.

Five times. He wants us to see the connection between what is going on here with Jesus and the Passover. Again, see how Jesus is in control. I love how Luke records this. Peter and John ask where?

Jesus doesn't just give them the where. He gives them the where, the who, the how, and the what. Follow with me. They're to go into the city. They'll meet a man carrying a jar of water. They have to follow him to a furnished house.

[14:38] And there, they are to make preparations for the meal. Verse 13, it happened just as Jesus said. Here is a Christ who is in control.

Verse 14, eating the Passover meal together. It was a meal of celebration, looking back the way to the time when God delivered their forefathers from Egypt.

But it was also a meal that looked forward, that had anticipation to it, looking forward to the day when God would ultimately win freedom for his people.

And the centerpiece of this meal was a lamb. As the people remembered how God had spoken to these people, their ancestors, who were slaves in Egypt and who had told them to take a lamb and to kill it.

And to put its blood on the doorframe of their houses so that the angel of the Lord would not kill the firstborn of the family. To get it in their minds that they lived this.

[15:42] That the lamb died in their place. And its blood was the thing that stood between them and death. The lamb died so that they didn't have to.

And God provided these lambs. And so at this Passover meal, each family's Passover lamb was killed the night before and eaten at this meal as the people, the nation, came together, looked back, looked forward, took this meal and declared together that this is our God.

This is our God. So this meal that Jesus and his disciples are eating together, just like every other Passover meal, except Jesus takes everything that it symbolized and he gives it not just a new meaning, but he gives it its full meaning.

Jesus takes the bread, verse 19, what does he say? This represents my body which will be broken for you. Jesus then takes the cup, verse 20, and says, this represents my blood which will be poured out for you.

Interesting to note that Luke and the other gospel writers, as you read them, record this, they mention nothing about there being a Passover lamb on the table. Nothing about there being a Passover lamb on the table.

[17:13] Surely the connection that we readers are meant to realize, is that the focus isn't meant to be on the Passover lamb on the table. Our focus is to be on the Passover lamb who is seated at the table.

Jesus was about to stand in and be the real, the true, the promised Passover lamb whose body would be broken and whose blood would stand in the defense of his people. And what does Jesus say at the end of verse 19?

Do this in remembrance of me. Do this in remembrance of me. That word remembrance is an active word. Remembering, bringing something to mind.

So there's something about this meal that as the disciples take it from now on and as the church down the ages has taken it together and as we as a body of believers this morning take communion together this morning, something about this meal is supposed to help God's people remember.

I don't know how you are at remembering things. I'm terrible at remembering things. I've got a diary, I've got an app and I've got an iPhone and I still forget things.

[18:29] Still forget things. But you see, Jesus is talking about a different kind of remembering here. So this meal is not supposed to get them to remember that the cross just happened.

It's supposed to help us remember what the cross means. Looking back the way that the Lamb took the hit that I deserve for my sin so that I can go free.

I remember going to see a preacher called Rico Tice down in London a few years ago and he walked up to the stage and he said, let me tell you what happened to me this week and he was holding a smashed up bike helmet and everyone's thinking, has he lost the plot here?

What's going on? Walks onto stage with a smashed up bike helmet and he puts it next to him and he said, I was riding my bike this week at speed and a bus ever so slightly, he was sent to London,

a bus ever so slightly knocked me off balance and down I went and I'm sitting there as I'm falling in my mind thinking this is it, this is it, I think at the time he was just newly married as well thinking this is it and down he went and he said, I fell and the helmet took the hit so that I can have life. The helmet took the hit so that I can go free. The helmet died so that I don't have to. The helmet got death, I got life.

[ 20 : 03 ] That's what Jesus has done on the cross. For those of us here this morning and maybe this is what I was feeling as I was praying through this passage this week, for those of us here this morning feeling weighed down and beaten up by our guilt and our sin and what a wonderful morning to stop as a family and that is all of us isn't it, feeling weighed down by our sin to stop and to remember what the lamb has done for us and to allow that to sink in.

I've never seen so much snow in my life as I have this week. Never seen so much snow. When I was walking to work on Thursday traipsing through, love that word traipsing, traipsing through the snow and I come to the meadows and I'm walking across the meadows and I'm looking at it it's about half eight in the morning, nobody's touched the meadows and I look at it pristine, untouched, pearly white snow and do you know what song is in my head?

Let it snow, let it snow, no it wasn't that one. It was Jesus paid it all and all to him I owe. Sin had left a crimson stain but he washed it white as snow.

This is the gospel, the meal that helps us communion, look back the way and the meal that helps us look forward to the day when the slain lamb returns and he will return as a victorious king and we will eat this meal together with him in his kingdom.

So we come together this morning as one family and we declare that this is our God, this is our God, this is what he's done for us, this is the gospel and this truly is good news.

[ 21 : 54 ] And from that high, Jesus proceeds to drop the bombshell at verse 21. that one of them at this table will betray him.

So Jesus has done all this in serving and remember who else is at the table. Judas is at the table here. What must be going through his mind here? You can imagine, can't you, the disciples looking at each other at this point, giving each other ugly, squinting their eyes at each other, trying not to swallow in case that makes them look guilty.

Which one of them would do such a thing to Jesus? Which one of them would have the audacity to do this, having seen him all these couple of years do all these wonderful things?

Of course, it's not news to Jesus, is it? Here is a Christ who is in control and here is a Christ who is choosing the cross. In the final days of his life, Jesus has got sacrifice on his mind.

sacrifice will mean suffering, sacrifice will mean surrendering, sacrifice will mean suffering, and thirdly, verses 24 to 39, sacrifice will mean serving.

[ 23 : 10 ] It's not difficult to imagine, is it, how the disciples get from talking about how great their faith is. Do you see it? Who is the greatest there? How it would never be them who would betray Jesus, to talking about verse 24, which to them is the greatest.

And Jesus, he hears this bickering going on and he breaks in with a timely word about the life and the soul of his kingdom. He says to his disciples that you're thinking, you're thinking how the world thinks.

You're thinking about position, you're thinking about promotion, you're thinking about how others can serve you. But if you want to follow me, do you see at the end of verse 27, you need to start thinking service.

You see, here is Jesus saying that his people are to be marked by a radical other people centeredness. That their lives are to be about not being served, but serving.

I was so encouraged this week to read the reports of people, Christians, out on the streets helping this week. Bethany, food banks, care vans, you name it, the rest of it, helping.

[ 24 : 19 ] It's wonderful to see. An example of how Jesus has been serving these disciples. Do you see how Jesus has been spending himself praying for Peter? We read often in Luke how Jesus would retreat to quiet places to spend time praying.

And amazingly, amongst other things, he's been praying for Peter. Peter's probably even seen him do it. What a wonderful thing for Peter to know that Jesus is a saviour who is spending himself praying for him.

Of course, Jesus is doing exactly the same thing now for us. Except he's not doing it on earth, he's doing it at the right hand of the Father in heaven, interceding for his people, praying for his sheep.

This is the kind of saviour that we have. What do we sing? Before the throne of God above, I have a strong, a perfect pre, a great high priest whose name is love, who ever lives and pleads for me. What a wonderful truth for some of us to comprehend, all of us to comprehend this morning. You know, it was Scottish minister Robert Murray McShane who used to say, if I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would fear not a million enemies.

[ 25 : 33 ] Yet distance makes no difference. Christ is praying for me. But what has Jesus been praying for Peter? Verse 31. that his faith would not fail.

And not only does Jesus know that Peter will fail, but he's even talking about the love and the welcoming grace that he will show Peter when Peter comes back to Jesus.

Peter understandably responds that he would never do such a thing, but Jesus knows. Here is a Christ who is in control. Before the cock crows three times, three times you will deny knowing me, Peter.

Love it. Peter's song in these verses here must have been, how great is my faith. Give it a few days later. He will not be singing that. Give it a few days after that, when he comes back to Jesus, he will be singing, how great is my God.

How great is my God. Is it not a wonderful thought, friends, that Jesus is not like a baseball umpire? This is not strike one, strike two, strike three, and you're out of here.

[ 26 : 39 ] Praise God that that's true. None of us would stand, even for a week, would we? He is not like a baseball umpire, but Jesus, failures like Peter and failures like me, when we come to him and fall at his feet, confessing our sin, we are met with abundant forgiveness, with mountains of mercy, and with the depths of the storehouses of grace and restoration.

This is the kind of Jesus that we're dealing with here. And if life following Jesus has been rosy up to now for the disciples, because of their association with Jesus, they've been met with people's affection, they've been met with people's attention, well now Jesus is symbolically telling them that life following him is about to get really hard.

The way of the master is going to be the way of the servant, that Jesus is about to suffer, and it means that they can expect to suffer too. But what a comfort to know.

Luke wants us to know that here is a Christ who is in control, and here is a Christ who is choosing the cross, and in the final few days of his life, Jesus has got sacrifice on his mind.

You know, just as we close this morning, I remember my gran used to take me and my brother on walks to Victoria Park in Glasgow. She used to take us there as we went fishing for minnows, a dying art.

[ 28 : 02 ] But as we would walk across the fields going there, now and again she would stop and she'd pick up a daisy. And after putting it under a chin to see if we like butter or not, she proceeded to pick off its petals.

Maybe you did this when you were a child, I don't know. He loves me. He loves me not. He loves me. He loves me not. He loves me. He loves me not. Friends, in the final few days of his life here, as we see Jesus choosing the cross with one thing in his mind, one thing on his bucket list.

Choosing the cross, intent on going there to die for our sin, to deal with our biggest problem. That should leave us in no doubt at all that Jesus loves us.

Let me finish with these words from 1 John chapter 4. This is how God showed his love among us. He sent his one and only son into the world that we might live through him.

This is love. Not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

[ 29 : 18 ] This is our God. Let's pray together. And maybe just in the quietness of your own heart this morning, maybe as God's word has been doing its work in your life this morning, especially when it comes to forgiveness and coming back to Jesus and experiencing and knowing his grace.

And maybe now is the time to offer your prayer to him. And so, Father God, we thank you so much for this morning. And we pray that you would help us all to have a fresh appreciation and a fresh affection for your son, Jesus.

Thank you so much for your word, Father God, that has spoken to us this morning. And thank you this morning that we have the opportunity to take communion together. And so, Lord, would it come with a real freshness this morning, we ask.

Thank you that you are our great God. And we pray all these things in Jesus' wonderful name. Amen.