

Jesus Chose This

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[0 : 00] So let's pray together, and then we are going to get into our passage. Before we pray, though, let me get...! Technology failed me today, so I have to go to plan B, which is more technology.

Try and figure out that logic, because I can't figure it out. All right, I have notes. You don't want me to wing it. If I'm winging a sermon, it inevitably goes really long.

But I have my notes. Life is good. Turn in your Bibles, before we pray, to Mark chapter 14. I just want to give you these in advance so you kind of got your fingers in there. Mark chapter 14.

John chapter 18. And Romans chapter 3. You got all that?

Mark 14. John 18. Romans chapter 3. Put three fingers in there, and now you got one here and three to turn pages.

[1 : 10] And to make it even harder, if you have in front... You should have in front of you, somewhere nearby, access to a pen and a piece of paper, because I'm going to have you write something down today that I want you to remember.

All right? By the way, I forgot to mention this, even though I put it in my announcement notes. In front of you, in a lot of the seats, is a connection card. That's something relatively new for us.

Fill that out. If you've got something we could be praying for, or a change of address, or you want to get in touch with one of the pastors, fill that out. Put it in the offering basket at the back, and we'll give you a call. But you can also use that for the notes.

So you need a pen and paper. Remember, you've got your Bible open to Mark 14, John 18, and Romans 3. And now, let's pray together.

Father, this morning, we're going to step into looking at the unbelievable cost of the good news that Jesus came to proclaim to the poor.

[2 : 23] Lord, oftentimes, when we share good news, it's something that doesn't cost us anything. But this good news costs a higher price than we can ever imagine.

And yet, you willingly paid it for us because you love us. You chose to love us. And you chose to sacrifice your son so that we could be brought back into relationship with you.

Lord, I pray that as we look at Jesus' experience through his trials and then through the cross, that we would recognize that, Jesus, you chose this for me, for us.

Really get that thought centered in our minds, Lord, above all else, that this price was paid for me. God, we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. So, we're going to take a long walk down memory lane because it's been an entire month since we were last in the book of Mark.

[3 : 30] We did our brief three-week sermon series out of prophecies in the Old Testament, which I'm going to come back to a little bit over the course of our sermon. But the focus a month ago was the Garden of Gethsemane.

I listened to that sermon again this week, and it really struck me how many times I used the word terror and terrified, talking about Jesus.

He was scared to death. He was so fearful of what he was about to encounter at the cross. And what did we realize as we looked at the Garden of Gethsemane?

First and foremost is the Garden of Gethsemane proves two things. Number one is that Jesus was fully human. He was a man. Any sane man would have been terrified at the prospect of what he was about to face in just a few hours, and over the next 24 hours of his life.

So, Jesus was fully human. But there's another point that I've emphasized multiple times over the course of our study of the book of Mark. Jesus did not have a cheat code.

[4 : 38] Now, for those of you who don't play video games, I'm going to explain it again just to make sure you got this idea. In a lot of video games, you can play it the normal way, which is a

competition between you and people online or you and the game.

And there's challenges that come along there of increasing difficulty until they overwhelm you and you lose. But there's a cheat code. And if you put in the cheat code, your character never dies. It's bulletproof. Or if you're playing basketball on a video game and you turn in the cheat code, you can never be blocked. It's great. Unfortunately, that's not the way life works.

There isn't a cheat code. Jesus, some would say, had a cheat code. Well, he was fully God. And being fully God meant that he could bob and weave around all the difficulties of life because, after all, he's God.

He could just wave his magic wand and dodge a bullet. He could wave his magic wand and heal somebody or feed 5,000 or call them a storm. Jesus was fully God.

[5 : 45] Make sure you hear that. But he chose not to exercise his rights as God. And so, when Jesus did what he did, he was using the same tools that you and I have access to.

He just used them fully. So, maybe he did have a cheat code. But it's a cheat code that's here in the Bible and it's available to all of us if we'll just do it.

If we'll just follow his example. So, Gethsemane proves that Jesus didn't have a cheat code because if he did, he wouldn't be afraid. He just pushes a cheat code and, oh, I can go through the cross, but I'm not going to feel any pain.

I'm not going to be embarrassed. I'm not going to be shamed. No, no cheat code. He went through all of it. Every last step. Just as if you or I were going through that same horrible experience.

Jesus was fully man. He did not have a cheat code. So, something interesting happens. So, if you remember that sermon on the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus takes a bunch of his followers to the garden, sets them down, then takes Peter, James, and John.

[6 : 55] They pull away. He says, you guys stay here and keep watch. I'm going to go right over there and I'm going to pray. And what was the word? He was terrified. He was so afraid that his emotional state was so great that the capillaries around his sweat glands burst.

And he sweat blood. Literally, his face was running with blood. It says he fell down on his face. And he prayed. And then he went to the disciples who were asleep.

Then he prayed some more. Disciple's still asleep. Prayed. What a shock. They're still asleep. And he says, okay. The time has come. Something very important happens.

Judas, with the mob, appears in the garden. Open to John 18. One of the principles I've operated as a parent was do as I say, not as I do.

So I told you to turn to John 18, but I didn't turn to John 18. So bear with me here a second. John 18, verses 3 through 6. So this is a scene from John's perspective. Judas and the mob comes into the garden.

[8 : 13] Judas then, having received the Roman cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees. So all the guilty parties are present. Judas is there.

The Roman authorities are there. The Jewish leadership is there. Judas then, having received the Roman cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon him, went forth and said to them, Whom do you seek? They answered him, Jesus the Nazarene. He said to them, I am he.

And Judas also, who was betraying him, was standing with them. Verse 6. So when he said to them, I am he, they drew back and fell to the ground. You ever been in a crowd and the person at the front asks for a volunteer and you volunteer like this?

I'll do it. I don't really want you to see me, but I'll do it. That's not what happened here. I want you to imagine a scene.

[9 : 19] If you've read J.R.R. Tolkien's books, The Fellowship of the Ring in particular, or seen the movie, The Fellowship of the Ring, there is a scene where the fellowship, the nine walkers, go through the mines of Moria, which had been this great vast city built by the dwarves, but they'd abandoned it.

Because in digging deep, they had exposed this ancient evil, a demon who had been living trapped underground, and they released him. And he and the evil that he attracted cast out the dwarves.

And Moria became a place of horror. But the fellowship had to go through that. They had to go through to get to their destination. And as they go through, trying to be sneaky and quiet, they awaken the demon.

And the demon and the goblins are chasing them through the mines of Moria. And they're getting closer and closer. And eventually they get right to the, almost to the exit, and there's a narrow bridge.

And the fellowship runs across the bridge, and Gandalf stops. And he faces the evil. And if you've seen the movie, it's this monstrous beast, covered in smoke and fire.

[10:38] It's terrifying. And Gandalf is this little, tired man, with a sword and a stick. He stands on that bridge, plants his staff.

And says to the evil, you shall not pass. With all of the authority of one of the great powers of the age of Middle Earth. You shall not pass.

That's what Jesus was saying. It wasn't a timid finger in the air. We're seeking Jesus of Nazareth. And somehow, probably somewhat similar to the Mount of Transfiguration, the power that was latent in Jesus was exposed.

I am he. And they fell down. What happened? Minutes ago, he was sweating blood, terrified.

Desperately needing his friends to just simply watch over him. And have his back. But now, he stands as one with authority. I am he.

[11:55] He chose. He made a choice. I'm ready. This is the path, Father, that you've chosen for me.

I will follow it. I will follow. He resolved to face the evil to get through it for us.

Take out the pen and paper I asked you to grab. I'm going to dictate something to you that I want you to write.

It's very short. If you don't have it, you can look up the notes later or listen to the sermon later and pick this up. Are you ready? Jesus chose to endure suffering of every kind.

Emotional, spiritual, and physical for me. Not for me, John Hopkins. For, fill in your name.

[13:02] For you. For me too. Just to be clear. Jesus chose to endure suffering of every kind.

Emotional, spiritual, and physical for me. You've got it? I want you to say it out loud.

Say it with me. Jesus chose to endure suffering of every kind. Emotional, spiritual, and physical for me.

We're going to do it again. Jesus chose, say it like you mean it. To endure suffering of every kind.

Emotional, spiritual, and physical for me.

I'm going to have you repeat it one more time. This time it's going to feel weird. But there's a brain science reason behind it. Instead of saying, for me, say your name.

[14:09] Here's why. Psychologists have learned that we listen to ourselves. You know, we have self-talk all the time. We kind of pay attention to ourselves. But if someone else says our name, if our brain through our ears hears our name expressed, it perks up and pays attention.

Even if we're talking to ourselves. So if I say, hey dude, you need to watch the speed limit because there's police around this neighborhood. I'll slow down. But if I say, John, take your foot off the gas. I'm more likely to do it. Isn't that weird? It's just a strange quirk of human nature. So we're going to repeat that statement again. But you're going to put in your name. And I want you to say it owning what we're talking about here. Jesus chose to endure suffering of every kind, emotional, spiritual, and physical, for John Hopkins.

For you. For me. We're going to unpack Mark 14 and 15 this morning. And every single thing that we look at, he did for you.

You've got to remember that. This is not a cute little Sunday school lesson. This is not something to just make you feel good about yourself. This is the fundamental reality upon which our lives should be built.

[15:28] Jesus died for you. So back to Mark chapter 14. This is a long passage. A few months ago, I did a 14-point sermon and did it in less than 45 minutes.

Today, I've got even more points and I'm going to do it in less time. How do you like that? So, starting in Mark chapter 14, starting at verse 43.

Immediately, while he was still speaking, so we just finished the Garden of Gethsemane. He just told the disciples, my time is at hand.

And boom, right on cue, here's Judas. Immediately, after a while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs, who were from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.

Now he who was betraying him had given them a signal, saying, whomever I kiss, he is the one. Seize him and lead him away under guard. After coming, Judas immediately went to him, saying, Rabbi, and kissed him.

[16:32] They laid hands on him and seized him. But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear. And Jesus said to them, Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as you would against a robber?

Every day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures. And they all left him and fled. They are his followers.

A young man was following him, wearing nothing but a linen sheet over his naked body, and they seized him. But he pulled free of the linen sheet and escaped naked. They led Jesus away to the high priest, and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes gathered together.

Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest, and he was sitting with the officers and warming himself at the fire. Now the chief priests and the whole council kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus to put him to death, and they were not finding any.

For many were giving false testimony against him, but their testimony was not consistent. Some stood up and began to give false testimony against him, saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.

[17:45] Not even in this respect was their testimony consistent. So even when they had accurate testimony, they couldn't figure it out. The high priest stood up and came forward and questioned Jesus, saying, Do you not answer?

What is it that these men are testifying against you? But he kept silent and did not answer. Again the high priest was questioning him and saying to him, Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?

And Jesus said, I am. And you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven. He declared himself the Messiah.

I am the triumphant King. Tearing his clothes, the high priest said, What further need do we have of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy.

How does it seem to you? And they all condemned him to be deserving of death. Some began to spit at him and to blindfold him and to beat him with their fists and say to him, Prophecy. And the officers received him with slaps in the face.

[18:48] Now turn over to Mark chapter 15. I'm going to break this down a little bit here. So, the suffering doesn't begin when the nails enter Jesus' flesh.

His suffering doesn't even begin where we began reading in Mark. His suffering began when the Holy Spirit came upon Mary and Jesus' human body was conceived in her womb.

God, you know, we use the phrase, God became man and dwelt among us, which is accurate.

That's what John said. But actually, before he became a man, he became a zygote.

I think there's a term for even smaller, but I don't, it's been a long time since Kara's been pregnant, so I haven't paid attention in a long time. But the scientific term, there's a, Jesus was a zygote first, then an embryo, then a fetus, then a baby.

The suffering began all the way back then and he chose that. But in this particular instance, where we are in Mark, he's betrayed by Judas, who was with him throughout their journeys.

[19:56] He's abandoned by his followers, all by himself. He's denied by Peter. Peter. He goes in front of a kangaroo court on trumped up charges in violation of the Old Testament law and is convicted in violation of the very law that dictates how that sort of a court is supposed to be carried out by the people who are to ensure that the law is obeyed and who are very proud of the fact that they're sure that they do so.

So the suffering is there. These are men who claim to be his followers. They say we follow God and yet they violated God's own rules.

Now let's pick it up in Mark 15. Early in the morning, the chief priests with the elders and scribes and the whole council immediately held a consultation and binding Jesus, they led him away and delivered him to Pilate.

Pilate questioned him, are you the king of the Jews? And he answered him, it is as you say. Yes, I am. The chief priest began to accuse him harshly.

Then Pilate questioned him again saying, do you not answer? See how many charges they bring against you? But Jesus made no further answer. So Pilate was amazed. Sometimes the best

answer you can have to a stupid argument is to say nothing.

[21 : 21] Now at the feast, Pilate used to release for them any one prisoner whom they requested. The man named Barabbas had been imprisoned with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the insurrection.

Really upstanding citizen there. The crowd went up and began asking him to do as he had been accustomed to do for them. Pilate answered them saying, do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?

For he was aware that the chief priest had handed him over because of envy. Even an unbeliever who doesn't recognize the Jewish God can label sin.

But the chief priest stirred up the crowd to ask him to release Barabbas for them instead. Answering again, Pilate said to them, then what shall I do with him whom you call the king of the Jews? They shouted back, crucify him.

But Pilate said to them, why, what evil has he done? But they shouted all the more, crucify him. Wishing to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified.

[22 : 29] One other important part in one of the other gospels, the Jews very significantly say, we have no king but Caesar. So they've rejected their king to the uttermost.

They've taken a pagan king who, by the way, the Caesars declared themselves to be the sons of God. So they've rejected the true son of God in favor of a false son of God.

So what is Jesus continuing to suffer? He's put outside the reach of the law and given to the Roman authorities who also, Pilate doesn't obey his rules either.

If you think ahead to the book of Acts, Paul is grabbed by a crowd in Jerusalem, and long story short, the governor says, well, we have to have a trial before his peers.

That was Roman law. Jesus didn't get that. Pilate succumbed to the pressure from the people he was ruling, from the Jews. So he suffered injustice at the hands of Pilate in violation of Roman law.

[23 : 32] A known murderer and insurrectionist in the form of Barabbas was spared instead of Jesus. He was betrayed by the Jewish mob who supposedly was looking for him but totally missed the point.

Crucify him, they cried. Another violation of the law. Crucifixion is in the Old Testament. Violation of the law was actually a community act where the community took the person outside the city gates and stoned them.

Everybody participated in meeting out the punishment. So again, they failed to obey the law. They requested a king other than God. Now verse 16, the soldiers took him away into the palace, that is a praetorium, and they called together the whole Roman cohort.

They dressed him up in purple and after twisting a crown of thorns, they put it on him. And they began to acclaim him, Hail, king of the Jews! Sarcasm is in the Bible. They kept beating his head with a reed.

That is not a reed like a little bitty stick. It's a reed like in a bamboo shaft. This is not. This is a very painful experience. They kept beating his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling and bowing before him.

[24 : 43] They're mocking him. After they had mocked him, they took the purple robe off of him and put his own garments on him and they led him out to crucify him. They pressed into service a passerby coming from the country, Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

So Jesus has made a public spectacle. He is humiliated. He's mocked by pagans. One of his fellow Jews is pulled in to help carry the cross in front of the man's children.

Abject humiliation. Jesus suffered that for you and for me. Then they brought him to the place Golgotha, which is translated place of a skull. They tried to give him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it.

The idea there was to sedate him so they could hold him still because as you can imagine, thieves being crucified were not likely to hold still so they could get nailed to the cross.

But Jesus rejected it. He allowed nothing to numb his pain. And they crucified him and divided up his garments among them, casting lots of them to decide what each man should take.

[25 : 55] It was the third hour when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read the king of the Jews. They crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left.

And the scripture was fulfilled which says that he was numbered with transgressors. Those passing by were hurling abuse at him, wagging their heads and saying, ha! You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself and come down from the cross.

In the same way the chief priests also along with the scribes were mocking him among themselves and saying, he saved others. He can't even save himself. Let this Christ, the king of Israel, now come down from the cross so that we may see and believe.

Those who were crucified with him were also insulting him. When the sixth hour came, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour. And this is the worst. At the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani, which is translated, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

When some of the bystanders heard it, they began saying, behold, he's calling for Elijah. They still want a spectacle. Someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave him a drink saying, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.

[27 : 14] Which would be really cool because if you remember the Old Testament story, Elijah left in this fiery chariot. So they're thinking, this is awesome. CGI isn't going to be invented for two centuries.

We get to see this live spectacle of Elijah coming back in his chariot. But Elijah doesn't come. And Jesus uttered a loud cry.

Matthew tells us he cried out, it is finished. The work is done. And the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

When the centurion who was standing right in front of him saw the way he breathed his last, he said, truly, this man was the Son of God. There were also some women looking on from a distance among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James the less and Joseph and Salome.

When he was in Galilee, they used to follow him and minister to him. And there were many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem. Just as a side note, Christianity is often accused of belittling and minimizing women.

[28 : 26] People who level that accusation haven't actually read the Bible. Notice who stayed with Jesus. The women who were faithful to care for him, who provided for him out of their own means.

Those who say that Christians devalue women don't even understand Jesus' heart. We come before the throne of God equally. Fully worthy of receiving all of God's blessing.

Gender is totally irrelevant. And I want to just make sure that that's clear today. that God honors women and men equally. Different roles but equal value.

This is the hard part to read. So Jesus carried the cross to Golgotha. He was stripped naked in public.

He was bleeding. He had a crown of thorns on his head. He was weak from blood loss and from carrying the cross to Golgotha.

[29 : 49] He's then nailed to the cross. I hit my thumb with a hammer once. Not an experience I want to repeat.

My uncle hit his thumb with a hammer once with a brand new framing hammer. You know the waffle type? And then five minutes later did it again. I learned a whole new world of vocabulary that my mother would not allow me to repeat.

Jesus allowed that on both of his wrists and his ankles. He chose that. He was mocked by the leaders, the crowd.

His own words were put back out of context and thrown at him in mockery by the people who should have recognized him, who claimed that they were looking for him, anticipating his arrival, the Messiah.

And they rejected him, mocked him, come on down or maybe Elijah will come and rescue you. Now Mark doesn't talk about this.

[30 : 59] Paul does in 2 Corinthians 5. He who knew no sin became sin on our behalf. I want you to think of the most disgusting thing you've ever put your hands in.

A friend of mine was a maintenance man in a camp that I've talked about a lot out in Colorado. And he was asked to help the maintenance man at a neighboring camp fix their septic system.

It was clogged. And so Sean got in there trying to snake this thing out to unclog the septic system. And the blockage burst right into his face.

Gross, right? And he couldn't get clean. He had to drive all the way back to our camp to get in the shower. Nasty. That's nothing.

That's nothing. Jesus, who was entirely pure, he was without sin, chose to become sin.

[32 : 05] Your sin, my sin, the things that we do, that we know violate God's will, that displease him and hurt us and the people around us. Jesus took it all.

He was immersed in it. That's what Jesus did. And then he was rejected by God. The whole earth was dark. God withdrew his presence.

That's the only time in all of eternity that the Trinity broke. For you.

God for me. God rejected his son because that was the final punishment.

And then he died. He died. The Lord of life, the author of life died.

[33 : 11] he died the death that we should die. And we're not done. Verse 42, when evening had already come because it was a preparation day, that is the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God.

And he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate wondered if he was dead by this time, and summoned the centurion. He questioned him as to whether he was already dead.

And ascertaining this from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. Joseph bought a linen cloth, took him down, wrapped him in a linen cloth and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out in the rock.

And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were looking on to see where he was laid. The final indignity is Jesus' corpse was taken off the cross.

He was completely and utterly powerless, wrapped in a cloth and put in a tomb. This is what he chose for us.

[34 : 19] This is what he endured to bring us life, to bring us hope. So what happened that day?

What happened? What was the transaction that happened between God the Son and God the Father that changed the people who were witnessing and believed, who has changed generations of people since, who has changed those of us who are in Christ in this room, and altered the direction of Western civilization.

That's not hyperbole. The direction of Western civilization was changed because this happened on the cross. What happened? Let's start with some presuppositions.

First of all, God's wrath at sin is just and righteous. In the Roman belief system, they had this pantheon of gods, they were polytheists, and the gods were just bigger, scarier, stupider versions of us.

They were capricious, they were petty, they fought with each other, they fought with humanity, and their wrath was a lot like when my grandson Jonah throws a temper tantrum. You've all seen a four-year-old lose his mind.

[35 : 42] That was the Greek gods. A lot of times we project that mindset onto God himself, onto Jesus, and onto God, excuse me, in our understanding of wrath.

No, that's not it. God's wrath is justified. I'm going to read you a quote from a man named Leon Morris. The wrath of God is no capricious passion. That means it doesn't just happen hit or miss. The wrath of God is no capricious passion, but the stern reaction of the divine nature to evil in man. It is aroused only and inevitably by sin.

So presupposition number one, God's wrath on us is justified. It's understandable. It's the reasonable reaction to who we are and what we do.

Second assumption, each person is guilty of sin, every one of us. Paul said, you should have your fingers in Romans 3, Paul said in Romans 3, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

[36 : 41] There's no exception except for Jesus himself. Nobody is free. We are all sinners by nature, it's in our DNA, and we are sinners by act, by our choices to disobey God.

So God's wrath is justified and it's called up by sin, and we are all guilty of sin. That's a kind of a scary combination right there. And the third presupposition is we cannot do anything, we can't do enough to save ourselves.

Paul said in Romans 6, 23, the wages of sin is death. We're going to stop there. The wages of sin is death. Ephesians 2, 8, 9, for by grace you say through faith and that not of yourselves.

It's the gift of God, not of works, because our works aren't good enough, not of works lest any person should boast. God's wrath is justified, caused by sin, we're totally lost in sin, and there's nothing we can do about it.

So there's our presupposition. So what happened in the cross? There's a concept, ready, get your thinking caps on, we're going to talk about theology. Substitutionary atonement. Got that?

[38 : 01] Throw that into a conversation this next week. You're going to tell your friends at work, yeah, we heard a sermon on substitutionary atonement. That'll guarantee you either get a weird look or a further conversation about what does that mean.

I'm going to tell you, substitutionary is to substitute something. Jesus took our place. He took our place. That's the substitutionary part.

The place we should have been in, Jesus chose to be in himself. And then atonement is the satisfaction for sin. It's the payment of a price.

And to unpack that, I'm going to give you three words, what atonement means. First of all, the word that comes up a lot in the New Testament is redemption. It's the payment of a price.

When you buy something, in a very real sense, you're redeeming it. It's often used in terms of slave for slaves. A slave is bought from the slave trader and becomes a possession of the purchaser.

[39 : 01] That's redemption. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 6, you have been bought with a price.

Therefore, glorify God in your bodies. The price is what we were just reading in Mark 14 and 15.

So, atonement is redemption. It's the payment of a price. Redemption is also propitiation. It's the satisfaction of the righteous wrath of God.

God's wrath was directed at sin and it had to be fulfilled. But instead of falling on us, the wrath of God fell on Jesus.

And that's Romans chapter 3. Look at verse 23 again. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace, through the redemption, there's the redemption word, which is in Christ Jesus, whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith.

This was to demonstrate God's righteousness, because in the forbearance of God, He passed over the sins previously committed for the demonstration, I say, this is Paul, of His righteousness at the present time.

[40 : 11] His righteousness demanded payment. His wrath demanded fulfillment. Jesus was the propitiation, the one who satisfied that requirement. I say of His righteousness at the present time so that He would be just, so He's not going around the law, He's fulfilling the law, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

That's our hope. You put your trust in Christ, because of what Jesus did, you were justified. Another big theological word. To be justified is to be declared righteous. The bill's been paid, you're free to go.

And then the last word is reconciliation. I love this word. It's when two people who are at odds with each other are brought together. Turn over a page from Romans 3 to Romans 5. Verse 8, many of you have probably memorized, but God demonstrates His own love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Much more than having now been justified by His blood. We just read that in chapter 3. We shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. Propitiation. Here's reconciliation.

For if while we were enemies, enemies, we were reconciled to God to the death of His Son, much more having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life, which we will talk about next week.

[41 : 39] Reconciliation often usually means compromise by both parties. not in this case. The offended party is God. We have violated His rules.

Rules that were instituted for our benefit and good, so we're too dumb for words. We're hurting ourselves. God is the offended party, but He wants a relationship with you so much that He paid the price, created the means for you to be changed, and be brought back into a faithful relationship with God.

What's that verse say? For if while we were enemies, God does all the work, we were His enemies still. If while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

That's our hope. This is the pinnacle of the Gospel of Mark. Jesus came to die for you.

So what does this mean? I'm going to give it to you really short and quick, because we're going to come back to what I'm going to say again and again and again. As a matter of fact, what I'm about

to share with you will be appearing in a sermon series starting at the end of January.

[43 : 08] God's plan for us, His design, is for us to become like Jesus. We're going to spend our entire life being molded into the image of Jesus, becoming more and more like Him.

I think I've shared with you that the illustration, I don't know if this is true or not, but it's a great story. Somebody talked to Michelangelo when they saw his sculpture, the David. How did you do that from a big block of marble to get that work of art?

They said, well, it's easy. I just chipped away everything that didn't look like David. That's what God is doing in our lives. And his goal is that we would look like Jesus more and more every day as we go through life.

The tools that he uses are first the cross, his word, prayer, and each other. As we work together, we chip away everything that doesn't look like Jesus.

And it's going to take forever, by the way, because that's a very, very high standard. But how does it happen? How do we become made into the image of Christ? First, and this is absolutely essential, we choose to follow Jesus.

[44 : 18] And the question you have to ask yourself today is, have I made that choice? Have I recognized that Jesus' death on the cross was a substitutionary atonement for me?

I deserve that. God was justifiably angry with me. There's nothing I could do to fix the problem. But God sent his son to give you life.

But you have to accept it. Jesus said over and over again, repent, the kingdom of God is at hand.

That's the call to you. You think going this way is the way to have the life that you want.

And God is saying, nope, it's this way, following Jesus. So the first step in becoming more like Christ and becoming what God intended you to be is to follow Jesus.

The second one is in the following Jesus, you will fall in love with God. And that love will deepen and broaden. You will see his fingerprints all over your life. And out of that will come a desire to obey him.

[45 : 23] That's his love language. It says in John 14, if you love me, you obey my commands. And what's the central command? This is the third thing. The central command is to love others as we love ourselves.

To love fellow Christians as Christ loved us. We just saw that. He died for us. That's the measure of love. Jesus' death on the cross. So how do we become more like Jesus?

We resolve to follow Jesus. It's a decision that you make and it's a decision you renew every day.

We learn to love God. We begin to love others.

And finally, we obey Jesus' command to go and make disciples. Baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I commanded you.

And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

That's the promise. That is what God has for you. And you are only able to do those things because of these hard words we read today in Mark chapter 14 and 15.

[46 : 31] Jesus chose with steely resolve, I will go to the cross. Last verse and then we'll pray.

Turn over to Hebrews chapter 12 toward the end of your Bibles.

chapter 14. We're going to go through these things fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

For consider him who has endured such hostility by sinners against himself so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

That was Jesus' thought as he went to the cross. The joy set before him. And I would submit to you that that joy is us reconciled to relationship with God.

God, we're so grateful that Jesus' sacrifice on the cross was acceptable, that you were pleased by what he did for us.

[47 : 49] Lord, I pray that we would think deeply about what that means and order our entire lives around following you. God, I pray this in Jesus' name.

Amen. God, I pray this out as as as as as as as