Wicked Men and a Sovereign God Pt 2

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Preacher: Dr. Michael Staton

[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. Good morning. You can be seated.

We are glad that you're here at First Baptist Mustang and welcome to the 9 o'clock service. We've had a great weekend of ministry already. Yesterday we had our Crossroads Conference as we studied from the book of Jude and thankful to Jeremy Davis and his team of volunteers who helped to put that together.
We had a wonderful time of singing together and study and they had a number of breakouts to choose from. So we had a great time with our 18 to 25-year-olds. The Lord has really blessed that ministry and we are excited for what the Lord is doing there and had a great time together yesterday.
For you today, we hope that you've come today ready and prepared to worship and that all of you feel welcomed here in this place. We pray that you would be encouraged as we sing and as we study God's Word together.
If you are a guest today and new to our church, let me ask if you would just do us one brief favor. On the side of the bulletin you were given when you came in is the connection card. If you would locate that and tear that out any time during the service, just take a brief moment, if you would, and complete that card.
[1:24] We would love to know that you're here. We'll be able to pray for you by name this week. If there's a prayer request or where we can serve you, make note of that if you would. On the back side of the connection card, when you exit at the end of the service, you'll notice a wooden giving box at each exit door.

That giving box is for our members and regular attenders to be able to worship through giving. But if you're a guest of ours, we certainly don't ask or expect or want any money from you in the offering at all today, but we would love if you would put that connection card in there so we would be able to pray for you by name.
If this is your church home and you today come prepared to give and worship through giving, thank you for that. And as always, let's make sure as we give that we do so joyfully and prayerfully and that we give with faith.
I do want to just take a moment and thank you as a church for your faithful generosity and your worship by giving to the Lord through our local church.
As you know, the summer is a very full time of ministry for us as we have a number of mission trips and four or five different camps along with Vacation Bible School and all kinds of special events that we do.
[2:36] And those things are possible because the Lord in His grace moves in the heart of His people to give. And while many of you I know have been directly a part of some of those events, for others of you, you may not physically have been to a camp or physically been on a mission trip or physically been to a conference of EBS that we've done, but as you give, you are on the front lines of helping us provide the ministry that we do.

And so for every one of you that faithfully gives, thank you for your generosity. I don't suppose it's ever an easy time to be faithful in giving unless it's just something that we trust the Lord with and see as an act of worship.
And so I just recognize that you as a church have been so faithful and so kind in loving what God's called us to do. And I just want you to know that we are appreciative, all of us who serve and lead and try to do what God's called us to do.

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We can't do that without each of us being faithful in that way. So thank you for being such a generous, faithful church in that way. We have, I hate to tell you this, but after today, we have one Sunday until it's back to school week.
At least in Mustang, that's true. I know. Sad, isn't it? So what that means is we are actually on the finishing touches of getting ready for next school year.
[4:05] Please be praying about that. We're excited about what the Lord is doing here and all the people the Lord has brought to us. We're already looking forward to the people who will be joining us in August.

We anticipate just having just an amazing year of ministry. So let's approach that prayerfully, carefully, and also let's approach that ready to serve and ready to say yes to different doors that may be open to you to make a difference.
These are good days, and we're excited what the Lord is doing. If you've got your Bible, open with me to Hebrews chapter 10. As we return in our study in a moment in preaching to Mark 14, we look at the events leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus.
Let's remind ourselves from Hebrews 10 about His sacrifice that He gave for us. If you would stand with me and honor the reading of God's Word, I'm going to read Hebrews 10 verses 1 through 10 if you would follow along with me as I do.
For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.
[5:29] Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed would no longer have any consciousness of sins. But in these sacrifices, there is a reminder of sins every year.

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Consequently, when Christ came into the world, He said, Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me.
In burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.
When He said above, You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings. These are offered according to the law.
Then He added, Behold, I have come to do your will. He does away with the first in order to establish the second. And by that will, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.
[6:44] Our Father, we thank You for Your plan of salvation, for Your kindness in sending Your only Son to us to be our sacrifice.

A sacrifice that was so perfect, so complete, so final that it is once for all. Nothing left to do. No other sacrifice to be made.
But that we as Your people, forgiven by Your grace and set free through Your mercy, could rest confident that in the work of Your Son, our debt has been paid in full.
And so today, we pause just to recognize the depth of what we've been given and pray that with grateful hearts, we would worship in spirit and truth, knowing that in Jesus, our needs have been met.
Lord, we pray today for any number of needs that I know are represented in this sanctuary. We pray, Lord, for those who are hurting and those who are grieving.
[8:01] We pray, Lord, for those who are looking for jobs. We pray for those who are preparing to move away for college. We pray for families as they prepare to adapt to new changes with students starting school or maybe going to new schools, all of the things that come with that.

We pray that we would honor You, that we would live lives that show the difference Your grace has made every single day of our life. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.
If you will remain standing as we continue to sing. As Michael just said, our debt has been paid in full, and that is the reason that we sing today.
There's a reason I can sing. There's a reason for this life inside me.
One name above all names. Jesus, yes, it's Jesus. There's a reason for this hope.
[9:25] There's a reason for this peace that I know. One worthy of all praise.

Jesus, yes, it's Jesus. I will lift my hands up.

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I will raise my voice high. I will shout of Your love. Till the day that I die. Everything that I have. All my worship I bring. You're the reason I live. You're the reason I sing. You're the reason I live. You're the reason I sing. For the victory over sin.
[10:24] For the goodness of Your grace each day. I will bow and bless Your name.

I will bow and bless Your name. Jesus, I thank You, Jesus. I will lift my hands up.
I will raise my voice high. I will shout of Your love. Till the day that I die. Everything that I have.
All my worship I bring. You're the reason I live. You're the reason I sing. You're the reason I live.
You're the reason I sing. All Flying All Looking All Pulled All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All All When my time on earth is through, when my final breath has left these lungs, I'll forever be with you, where the song goes on and on.
[12:06] I will lift my hands up, I will raise my voice, I will shout of your love till the day that I die.

Everything that I have, all my worship I bring, you're the reason I live, you're the reason I sing.
I will lift my hands up, I will raise my voice high, I will shout of your love till the day that I die.
Everything that I have, all my worship I bring, you're the reason I live, you're the reason I sing.
You're the reason I live, you're the reason I sing.!
[13:06] ! What gift of grace is Jesus my Redeemer?

There is no more for heaven now to give. He is my joy, my righteousness and freedom, my steadfast love, my deep and boundless peace.
To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus, for my life is wholly bound to His.
O how strange and divine, I can sing, all is mine, yet not I, but through Christ in me.
O how strange and divine, the night is dark, but I am not forsaken, for by my side, the Savior, He will stay.
[14:42] I labor on, in weakness and rejoicing, for in my need, His power is His way.

To this I hold, my shepherd will defend me. Through the deepest valley, He will lead.
O the night has been won, and I shall overcome, yet not I, but through Christ in me.
O how strange and divine, no faith I dread, I know I am forgiven.
The future's sure, the price it has been paid. For Jesus bled, and suffered for my pardon, and He was raised, to overthrow the grave.
[15:58] To this I hold, my sin has been defeated. Jesus now and ever is my plea.

O the chains are released, I can sing, I am free, yet not I, but through Christ in me.
In me. With every breath, I long to follow Jesus, For He has said, that He will bring me home.
And day by day, I know He will renew me, until I stand with joy before the throne.
To this I hold, To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus, All the glory evermore to Him.
[17:16] When the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat, Yet not I, but through Christ in me.

When the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat, Yet not I, but through Christ in me.
When the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat, Yet not I, but through Christ in me.
When the race is complete, Still my lips shall repeat, Yet not I, but through Christ in me.
Yet not I, but through Christ in me. Yet not I, but through Christ in me.
[18:22] I once was lost in darkest night, Yet thought I knew the way, The sin that promised joy in life, Had led me to the grave.

I had no hope that you would own, A rebel to your will.
And if you had not loved me first, I would refuse you still.
But as I ran, My help outraced, Indifferent to the cause, You looked upon my helpless state, And led me to the cross.
And I beheld God's love displayed, You suffered in my place, You poured the wrath reserved for me, Now all I know is grace.
[19:50] Alleluia! All I have is Christ. Alleluia!

Jesus is my life. Now Lord, I would be yours alone, And live so almighty, The strength to follow your commands, Could never come from me.
Oh Father, use my ransom life, In any way you choose, And let my song forever be, My only boast is you.
Alleluia! All I have is Christ. Alleluia!
All I have is Christ. Hallelujah. Jesus is my life.

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[21:36] You can be seated. Open with me, if you would, to Mark chapter 14. As we return in our study through Mark's gospel, we are in chapter 14.

The crucifixion takes place in chapter 15. The resurrection in chapter 16. On August the 11th, two weeks from today, we will have our Sunday school promotion day.
That's when everybody goes, our children and students go to their new classes and new teachers start their role in that way. Also on August the 11th is when we resume our evening service at five.
And I would love to just encourage you as best you can to plan to make that a part of your Lord's Day this fall. It's a great time.
It's a great way to be able to bookend Sundays, to begin Sunday morning here in worship together and on Sunday nights to come back as we sing and study God's word together.
[22:48] I'm going to be teaching through the book of 1 Thessalonians this fall. I believe that we will start at August the 11th. I believe we will finish it before the end of the year.

And so, I want to encourage you to be here on Sunday nights. 1 Thessalonians is really a marvelous book. It's got a lot of important practical teaching for us.
It's got a lot of doctrine in it. It's got a lot of explanation of eschatology study of the end times. I think you'll really enjoy our time together this fall on Sunday evenings.
That's at five o'clock starting August the 11th. And if you're able to, I would love for you to come and be a part of that. Not just August 11th as we kick it back off, but to be here on Sunday evenings with us.
But on Sunday mornings, we return to the Gospel of Mark and we're getting close to the final events. Chapter 14, we introduced this a couple of weeks ago.
[23:52] We'll pick back up today. Listen to the words of Psalm 2. Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against His anointed one.

Let us break their chains and cast away their cords. The one enthroned in heaven laughs. You don't need convincing, I'm sure, that this world, the world system, is opposed to the things of God.
It's all around us. You can't escape it. It is an interesting thing. It's been talked about the last several days. It's not just locally, not even nationally, but literally all around the world.
The reality that the world can mock Christians and mock Christianity. But you don't see that happening with other religions.
Even interesting to me that so many people who would say they don't believe in God, don't believe the Bible, don't believe Christ, will joyfully take the Lord's name in vain, will joyfully mention the Lord, will joyfully mock the things of God.
[25:12] You don't see that with other beliefs. There's a reason for that. The reason for that is that our enemy is not concerned or consumed with diverting people's faith or belief away from false religions.

No need. He already has them. But there is a wholesale attack against Christianity and against the things of the Lord.
And we understand why that is. And you might wonder, what is God doing and what is God thinking when these kinds of attacks and these kinds of things come from the world against the church, against believers, against the Scripture, against the things of God?
While the nations rage and plot their evil schemes against Christianity, Psalm 2 verse 4 reminds us that our God is the one enthroned in the heavens.
And we need to remind ourselves of God. And we need to remind ourselves of that because it's always been true that our enemy has been against the things of God.
[26:33] It's always been true that the world system has been against the things of the Lord. And yet somehow in some ways we can fully understand and in some ways that just remain a mystery to us.

You have at the very same time, people making their decisions and doing what their heart chooses to do. And at the very same time, the Bible affirms and upholds the sovereignty of God ruling from his throne.
And somehow mankind can act out their sinfulness as they desire. And yet even that is not contrary to the sovereignty of God.
A lot of that we can understand. Much of that we can explain. But there is a part of that that remains a bit mysterious to us.

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No more is that so clearly made evident than what we study here in Mark 14, 1 and 2. We just introduced these first two verses a couple of weeks ago.
[27:48] So let me take just a moment and remind you, I was out of state preaching last Sunday. And so it's been a couple of weeks since we were here. So let me just kind of remind you where we were. These events are taking place in April, according to our calendar, 2,000 years ago.

According to our calendar, it would have been about six weeks before this in what we would consider February, where Jesus went to Bethany and he raised Lazarus from the dead.
For us as Christians, when we read that account, we are reminded of the power of God, of the might of God, of the sovereignty of God.
And it's this amazing account, not only of God's power, but just a reminder and a picture that the Lord can do anything.
Yet, that very event of Jesus raising Lazarus back from the grave is the very precise event that pushed his opponents over the edge.
[28:53] And from that point on, in our reckoning, what we would call in February, before April, about six weeks before, the religious leaders from that point on said, Jesus must die.

Why? Well, because they know that if Jesus is now able to go to a tomb and raise a man to life with nothing but his words, Lazarus come forth, they fear that he'll be able to do anything.
They fear that if he's able to do these kinds of things, that he may get larger and larger crowds and get more power.
And if he gets too much power, Rome may come down and try to squelch them and their leaders.
And so their thought is, we've got to get rid of him.
He's a threat to us. He's a threat to our power systems. He's a threat to everything that we hold dear in terms of worldly political strength. And so they want him to die.
[29:56] Not also to mention that his message is clear that everyone is a sinner in need of forgiveness. And these self-righteous men don't take real kindly to somebody else telling them that they need forgiveness.

So they decide he must be put to death. You can read that in John 11. Then Jesus comes into town.
That was in Bethany. He goes away. Fast forward about six weeks. Now it's Friday before what we call the Passion Week, the week of his suffering, kicking off with the triumphal entry of Jesus.
It's Friday before what we would call Palm Sunday. He's back to Bethany. This is going to be where he's going to stay for the next several days leading up to his crucifixion.
He's going to go into Jerusalem, go to the temple, clear the temple out, teach in the temple, spend time with his disciples. He'll go back across the Mount of Olives to Bethany to stay with his friends in the evening.
[31:08] And as we started two weeks ago, there are three words I want you to make note of in just these first two verses of Mark 14. And the first word we looked at was the word sacrifice.

Let's look at the text. So the first word we looked at was the word sacrifice.
I want you to have that word in your mind because Jesus is not going to die as a victim. He gives his life as a sacrifice.
He's not overpowered. His luck didn't run out. He wasn't running, running, running, running, and finally got caught. He gives his life as a sacrifice.
He has already said, no one takes my life from me. I willingly lay it down. Now what's going on as we get to Mark 14?
[32:22] Remember that the Jewish people had three main feasts. You had the Feast of Pentecost. You had what's called the Feast of Booths or the Feast of Tabernacles. And then third, you had the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which was connected to Passover.

Passover was one day. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was seven days. By Jesus' day, those two things had pretty much become commingled.
And it was referred to as one event. Though it was really two separate events, one day and seven days. It by that point had become essentially one event considered to be eight days.
Passover is a time where God's people would look back and remember the protection that he gave them from the judgment when they were in the land of Egypt. And it tells us that they were, verse one again, seeking to kill him.

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So, at the same time, they are acting out of their heart's desire to kill Jesus. That's absolutely what they wanted to do.
[33:35] Yet, Jesus won't simply die as a victim. It's a sacrifice because God is still in charge of this moment. This is not the first time, as we looked at two weeks ago, it's not the first time that they tried to kill Jesus.

Herod tried to kill him when he was a baby. In the Gospel of Luke, they tried to throw him off of a cliff. In John 5, people wanted to kill him after a healing.
In John 7, it's become so well known that people were trying to kill him. The leaders wanted to kill him. That in John 7, the people referred to Jesus as that man that they were seeking to kill.
Yet, they can never do it. And the reason why they were not able to do it earlier is simply one reason. It wasn't his hour.
So, the fact that they want to kill him is not new. What is new by Mark 14 is that the people are saying, this must happen.
[34:49] It cannot go on. They're not just looking to kill him. Now, they are determined to kill him. They're planning to kill him. They're not just saying we would like to kill him if we get a chance.

They're now saying we've got to make our own opportunity to kill him. Although, interestingly enough, in verse 2, the people said, we want to kill him.
This needs to happen. However, look at verse 2. Not during the feast. They want to kill him. They want to kill him. They want to kill him. But we can't do it during the feast.
So, they are acting out their true heart's desire. And yet, somehow, even as that's true, what they are doing is still subject to the sovereignty and providence of God.
Christ's not dying as a victim. He's dying as the Passover lamb, as the true payment for our sins.
And so, our first word is the word sacrifice.
[35:58] I don't want you to think just in terms of Jesus died. He did, but he died as a sacrifice. Huge difference. Because the day Jesus died, that very day, two other men died by crucifixion.

One on his right, one on his left. They also died. They have no saving power for you. It's not just that he died.
And it's not just that he was crucified. Thousands of people were crucified. It's that he was a sacrifice. It's that on the cross, he took upon himself our sin.
It's that by taking upon our sin, being our expiation, he was able to also be our propitiation, which is where God the Father poured out his wrath on the Son as a payment for our sin, because Christ, as our Passover lamb, held, carried our iniquity.
He did not just die. He was a sacrifice for us. Our second word I want you to consider, we'll pick up, that's review from two weeks ago.
[37:22] Let's pick up from there. Our second word is the word sin. What's taking place in Mark 14 and culminates in chapter 15 when we get to the crucifixion, are that sinful men have made sinful plans and they carry out sinful actions.

Now, there's a plan, there's a scheme that's going on. If you ever wondered, how did all of these events come to pass? How is it that Jesus came to be arrested?
How was it that he went through his trials? How was it that he was killed on this day and not a different day when crucifixion day arrives? Well, there's a scheme, there's a plan, there's a strategy that's happening.
Let me show a part of it to you. Matthew 26 gives us the location for what's unfolding in Mark 14.
Matthew 26 says, Now let me just stop you right here in Matthew 26 verse 2.
[38:44] Jesus tells his disciples, before it happens, in two days I'm going to be handed over.

How did he know that? See, the leaders are acting out their sinful desires.
They're making real decisions and they're accountable and responsible for their sin. But even then, they're not sovereign. Jesus told his apostles two days before it happened, what's going to happen and when it's going to happen.
We read on and it says in verse 3, At that time the chief priests and elders of the people assembled in the courtyard of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas.
That helps us. We can put some details together. We know where this plotting is taking place. It's in the courtyard of Caiaphas. Verse 4, So, what happens is just a couple of days before the crucifixion, these leaders gather away from the crowds at a private residence.

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[40:05] They've already decided back in February of our calendar that they've got to put him to death. Now, this smaller group is working out the details. How are we going to actually make this happen?

So, how are we going to find him? How are we going to arrest him? How are we going to go through the motions to look like we're following the law in some way and put him to death?
And the text tells us who's involved in this. It's the chief priests and the scribes, according to verse 1.
The chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him. They meet at the courtyard of Caiaphas, who's the high priest, to try to hash out the details. The chief priests and the scribes, these are the wealthy.
These are the most influential people, and the most influential, the priests, were Annas and Caiaphas. Annas was the former high priest. Caiaphas, his son-in-law, is the current high priest.
[41:07] When Jesus broke up the temple, all that was going on in that a couple of days ago in the Passion Week, when they were exchanging money and cheating the people and forcing you to buy animals for sacrifice and saying the animals you brought were blemished, you couldn't use them, all of that was about extorting and stealing money from the people coming in to worship.

And that whole temple event was an event known as the Bazaar of Annas. Annas was the most influential man in the land. His son-in-law was the high priest.
Five of his sons followed him as high priest. He's the most influential man in the land. He's the one at the top of the pyramid scheme. So when Jesus shuts that down, he is shutting it down saying, you've made my father's house a den of robbers.
It's supposed to be a house of prayer. And so he is stopping that event. But as he stops that event, it is Annas at the top of the pyramid scheme who is having money taken out of his pockets from Jesus stopping it.
You can imagine how much he and those underneath him who were getting rich by cheating, the people hated that.
[42:24] So the chief priests and the scribes, you've got Annas, you've got Caiaphas. The scribes are the teachers. They're the interpreters. They're the judges of the law.

They're not powerful in the same way the high priest is, but they were highly influential because they controlled the theology of the nation. It tells us that the elders were there.
Matthew 26.3 tells us the elders are also a part of this group. These are the prominent men. Most prominent of these were the men on the Sanhedrin, the supreme court of their day.
The elders were the lay people on the Sanhedrin. And so in the Sanhedrin, you've got the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. Here's the takeaway from that. In this private meeting happening in the courtyard of Caiaphas, you've got all the groups of the Sanhedrin represented.
You've got all the powers that be in on this scheme and this plot to put Jesus to death. Let me read to you from John 11, starting in verse 45.
[43:39] Many of the Jews, therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, What are we to do?

For this man performs many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him. And the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.
But one of them, Caiaphas, who was the high priest that year, said to them, You know nothing at all, nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people than that the whole nation should perish.
He did not say this of his own accord. But being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.
So, from that day on, they made plans to put him to death. Jesus has raised Lazarus.
[44:51] Caiaphas says we've got to put him to death. Fast forward to Mark 14. We're a couple of days before the cross.

These leaders reconvene in the courtyard of Caiaphas. And they say, how do we finally make this happen?
Back to Mark 14. Look back at verse 1. The chief priests and scribes are seeking how to arrest him by stealth.

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Whatever it takes to get him. They need to find him away from the crowds because they don't want to risk that the crowds would come to his defense.
They don't want to risk that people will love him or worship him or believe in him or feel sorry for him and get in the way of what they want to do. They are ruthless.
[45:48] They care about nothing more than fulfilling their agenda, which demands that they find a way to arrest Christ and kill him. Plain and simple.

They want to arrest him, but they don't want to arrest him for the purpose of putting him in prison. They arrest him simply as a means to the end of putting him to death, which is exactly what verse 1 tells us.
They were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him. Their motive was sinful. Their tactics were sinful.
Their goal was sinful. Everything about their plot was sinful.
And yet, even that reality does not trump God's sovereignty.
[47:00] That's your third word. Sovereignty. Sacrifice. That's what Jesus is for us. Sin. That's the motive and the action of his enemies.

But we see a very interesting detail in verse 2 that speaks of the sovereignty of God. So they want to arrest him by stealth and kill him.
Verse 2. For they said, not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people. Now what's going on during the feast? Well, this town of maybe 50,000 people swells to hundreds of thousands during the feast, during these eight days.
Some historians speculate as many as a million, some as high as two million people that come into town. So a town used to 50,000 people, now for a few days is filled with a million, maybe a million and a half, maybe two million people.
And the people have come into town to celebrate Passover. They're commemorating when the Lord set them free from Egypt, a Gentile nation.
[48:20] The nation today is under the thumb of Rome, another Gentile power. So when the people come in to celebrate the feast, the leaders know this is a very tenuous situation.

Huge crowds have come in. And they are in this fervor. They have a spirit of joy and celebration and remembrance, but also a spirit of remembering that God had set them free from a Gentile nation before, and longing for God to set them free from the current oppressor who is Rome.
And so the leaders know this is a powder keg. So many people are here. The fervor and the zeal is off the charts.
And now you've got this man who can raise people from the dead. We don't know what to do with him. He's a threat to us, at least a threat to their system and their power, because he calls them out on their sin.
And he's got authority that no one's ever seen before. Who else could go by themselves into the temple and take this massive complex and shut the whole thing down?
[49:38] Nobody except Christ himself. And so this is a powder keg situation. Tensions are high. People are anxious. The leaders are nervous.

And so they say, we've got to arrest him and we've got to kill him, but not during the feast. We do not want an uproar from the people.
And here you have the spiritual leaders conspiring. How can we get by with putting to death an innocent man?
When the men who are supposed to protect a people instead choose their power over service, that nation has fallen.
It may take years for the tree to come down, but it's fallen. So there's a big question in verse 14, or in chapter 14, verse 2.
[50:57] And the question is, why is all of this happening now? They wanted to put Jesus to death as a baby?

They wanted to put him to death in his hometown of Nazareth? They wanted to put him to death after he healed the pool of Bethesda? They wanted to put him to death six weeks ago after he raised Lazarus?
They couldn't do it. And now they want to put him to death, but by their own words, not during the feast. But you see, it's during the feast that the Passover lambs are sacrificed.

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And Jesus does not die a victim. He dies as our sacrifice. Jesus will be put to death at the very time that Passover sacrificial lambs are put to death to demonstrate he's not a victim.
He is our Passover lamb. These men who are meeting and conspiring in the courtyard of Caiaphas have a real scheme, and they're making real decisions, and they're acting out their heart's desire.
[52:21] But as mysterious as this may be to you, understand this, even then they are not in charge. If you don't have a category for that in your mind, you need to get one.

Because if your idea of what's happening in the world and the cosmos is a tennis match, where God does this, so Satan does this, and God thinks, oh my goodness, I better, you know, I've got to volley back, so he volleys back, and the devil says, okay, you did that, I'll do this, and we're just watching two equal powers back and forth.
Who's going to win? Who's going to win? Who's going to win? That's not the way the Bible describes it. Spiritual warfare is real, but it's not a battle between two equal powers.
It's a battle between the sovereign and the universe who rules and reigns in heaven and a defeated foe. If you want to know why Christ is put to death when he is, even though the people who want to put him to death don't want him to die right then, the answer is given in Acts 2.
I can tell you the answer. I cannot provide relief from the headache it may create you. Acts 2 verse 22. Men of Israel, hear these words.
[53:52] Jesus of Nazareth, a man, attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know.

Verse 23. This Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.
Stop right there. Why does Jesus die when he dies? Here's the Bible's answer. This isn't my answer. This isn't some author's answer.
This is heaven's answer to the question, why did Jesus die when and how he died? Here it is. According to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.
That's why. And you say, well, what about the people who did it? Acts 2.23 answers that too.
[55:00] He was delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God. You crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

These are real people with their schemes and their plans, acting out their sinful hearts' desires and putting him to death.
And yet, in the mystery of the sovereignty of God, even that is according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.
Amen. There is one person in charge at the cross and it's not Caiaphas. And it's not Annas.
And it's not soldiers. And it's not a mocking crowd. It's the Lord.
[56:12] Jesus is dying in the precise way at the precise time for the precise reason that God has foreordained.

And yet, the words of Scripture are that the very men who perpetrated that are lawless men and we know they're guilty for their sin because on the cross, Jesus prays, Father, forgive them and you don't need to forgive innocent people.
It's really staggering how people speak of the cross.
However you think of the cross, however you tell the story of the cross to your children, however you preach to yourself the gospel in that sense, whatever you do, don't leave this out. this is the outworking of the eternal plan of God.
He is in charge of the cross. And you say, well how is it that God can foreordain a crucifixion and these people over here can do exactly what their sinful hearts want to do and they plan and they meet and they conspire and they want to kill Him but they don't want to kill Him at this time but they're going to kill Him at this time because it's exactly when the Passover lambs are killed so the gospel is made clear even in their sinful actions.
[58:13] How is it that God can be so powerful, so strong, so sovereign as to use all things even the sinful schemes of men to still accomplish what was His eternal sovereign plan?

Here's the Bible's answer. Psalm 115.3 God is in the heavens and He does as He pleases. End of story. And people will hear that and say that and then beg for a rebuttal of yeah, but.
No, no but. God is in the heavens. He does as He pleases. He doesn't need your permission nor does He need your complete understanding to affirm something that is eternally true.
on the cross, Christ dies not as a victim as a sacrifice. He dies as a sacrifice because sinful people do sinful things according to their sinful heart.

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Yet even the sinfulness of men cannot skirt the sovereignty of God. That's right. And if you don't understand that you're going to see Jesus as a sympathetic conquered victim.
[59:44] But He wasn't. He was a sacrifice. A sin payment. Our expiation.

Our propitiation. Taking upon Himself our sin. Absorbing in Himself God's wrath.
And then crediting to your account through faith His righteousness. That's not the work of the enemy. That's the work of God.
As we close let me give you two words here about Christ's sacrifice. Number one Christ's sacrifice redeems us.
1 Peter 1 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life you inherited from your forefathers but with the precious blood of Christ a lamb without blemish or spot you were redeemed with a price.
[60:58] His sacrifice redeems us. It buys you. It takes you out of the market of sin and it gives you a new life.

It redeems you. Let me give you one last word this morning. Christ's sacrifice reconciles us. 2 Corinthians 5 If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation.
The old has passed away behold the new has come. All this is from God who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the message of reconciliation.
reconciliation. Which means friends that through Christ's work on the cross you've not only been reconciled to him you've been given the message to proclaim reconciliation to the world.
The cross is both then the story of our salvation and the purpose for our life.
[62:15] The cross isn't only a place where you are saved it's a place where you are saved and given the ministry of proclaiming what Christ has done.

In other words salvation and evangelism go hand in hand. repentance and service and ministry go hand in hand.
The gospel that saved you is the gospel that gives you your marching orders. The message that transformed you is the message you're to pass on to others.
The reconciliation you've experienced now is the ministry you've been drafted into. So at the cross Christ redeems us and he reconciles us.
He bought us with the price and he brings us to peace with the Father but it also gives us a purpose and a reason for living.
[63:26] And in the day where so many people struggle with a reason to live in a day where so many people feel hopeless anxious depressed lonely man those things are a ramp in our society aren't they?

Here's the remedy for that. you've been given the ministry of reconciliation so get to work praying for people to be saved.
Get to work opening your mouth to tell sinners there's hope in Jesus. get to work agreeing to teach the class so you can teach children what Christ has done.
Get to work finding ways to serve in the church where you can use your gifts whatever they may be to make an impact on people so that they can see more of Christ and love more of Christ and be reconciled to the Father through Christ.
Get to work financially by giving by being a faithful giver not just so we as a church can do ministry here but so we can support people doing the work of gospel ministry all around the world.
[64:56] Let's get to work doing reconciliation ministry meaning telling sinners there's hope for them in Jesus Christ because the cross shows us that Jesus is our sacrifice and yes sin is real but greater than that is the one who is in us our God who is sovereign and rules and reigns and we have been redeemed by his blood and we have been reconciled through his cross and that gives our life purpose and that gives our life meaning and anything you do for the glory of Christ that helps this world know the truth that our God saves is a work worthy of your life.

life. So you don't need to find meaning in some outside thing. You don't need the world to esteem you.
You need instead to look to the cross and repent of your sin acknowledge that you're a sinner ask the Lord for mercy to forgive you believing that Jesus is the Son of God who died and rose again and as you receive salvation by grace through faith you spend the rest of your life making much of Jesus and telling others there is hope there is salvation there is life in the name of Jesus and no other name but Christ.

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Church lift up your heads be joyful sin is real in this world sin was real in Jesus' world in Mark 14 but it's still true that greater is He that is in you than He that is in the world.
Yes sin is real but sin is not on the throne our God is on the throne and our God does as He pleases and you if you're a believer are His child.
[67:28] This is a great day. to be His child. Go tell people Jesus still saves.

Lord we love Your Word and we need it. We pray for a heart to obey and a will to respond. I thank You for this dear congregation.
I thank You for a church that we can come to each Sunday and though surrounded all of us by imperfect people we can come into this place it's a real sanctuary it's a real refuge it's a place where the name of Your Son is lifted high it's a break away from the bombardment of the world and we can remind ourselves through song prayer reading and preaching that we have hope and that hope is in Your Son and Your Son is the light of the world.
May we this week let our light shine that the world would see our good works and glorify You our Father in Heaven in Christ's name we pray Amen Love you church family appreciate you so much God bless you you're dismissed well too much people just if you will just know this time in way it's just fathers just they there can just if you know like or as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as Thank you.

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