

## How to Rejoice in Hostility

Luke 22:35-38

February 16, 2025

Turn in your Bibles to Luke chapter 22, Luke chapter 22. We come to the final word of instruction that Jesus gives to his Apostles in the upper room, in this last section of instruction is verses 35-38. That's what we will cover this morning. This is Jesus setting expectations for his Apostles, for those who follow Christ.

Well, as we come into this section, we remember that the betrayer, Judas Iscariot, has gone from the room. He's left, and Jesus has instituted the Lord's Supper. He's enjoying the intimate company of his Twelve, his what was Twelve, now it's eleven men. He's enjoying their close fellowship and company, and he's giving them a series of instructions in the upper room to get them ready for life and ministry after he's gone, after he has ascended into heaven.

In Luke 22:21-23, that section, he teaches them about betrayal, which he has deeply experienced for himself, but he teaches them principles, there, on how to handle suffering; and they will endure suffering in their apostolic ministry. In verses 24-27, that section, he defines greatness for these men. He tells them how to attain it. He tells them how leadership is fundamentally defined by serving, very important for them to understand, and they will all exemplify that in their own life and ministry.

In verses 28-30, Jesus promises to receive these men, and he remembers their service to him, their loyalty to him. He promises to receive them, to reward them. And this puts before these men the anticipation of kingdom authority and privilege and duty. It's the anticipation of their hope and of glory. As we saw last time in verses 31-34, Peter and the others, they receive some rather disturbing news. They realize they have targets on their backs. They're going to be subjected to satanic sifting. And even in this news, Jesus wants to assure Peter. He wants to put his mind at ease, telling Peter that they will



recover; they will become stronger for it and through it because he's prayed for Peter's faith, a faith that will not fail.

Peter will grow stronger through testing. He'll learn to exercise his faith, and though falling at first, he's going to return. Peter is going to return, and he's going to be much used of the Lord to strengthen his brothers when he's recovered, when he's restored.

So today we come to this final portion of Luke's abbreviated account of the upper room discourse. The larger, largest section of that, as we have been saying, is in John 13-17. This is an abbreviated account of the upper room discourse. So we come to the last section, verses 35-38, and we're going to see, here, the hostility of Satan is about to expand and turn the tide of public opinion against the followers of Jesus Christ. John the Apostle tells us in 1 John 5:19 that "the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." Paul says the same thing, "The spirit of the prince of the power of the air," Ephesians 2:2, that is a satanic power that flows through and

energizes the sons of disobedience. We read similar things in John 15.

But knowing this, Jesus intends to prepare his men for what's coming, for what they're about to face. Take a look at the text, Luke 22:35: "And he said to them, 'When I sent you out without money belt and bag and sandals, did you lack anything?' They said not a thing. And he said to them, 'But now whoever has a money belt is to take it along, likewise also a bag. And whoever has no sword should sell his garment and buy one. For I tell you that this which is written must be completed in me, "And he was numbered with the transgressors," for that which refers to me has its completion.' And they said, 'Lord, look, here are two swords.' And he said to them, 'It is enough.'"

It's kind of a simple section. There's some things going on, there, that may strike your ears or your eyes as maybe a little bit odd, maybe some things you want to investigate and understand a little bit better. But what I want to tell you is that we've come to the pinnacle of what he reveals to them, at least in Luke's accounts, this abbreviated account of the upper

room discourse. This is the high, climactic point of revelation that Jesus gives them about his ministry, about the climax of entire, entirety of history and what it's going to mean for them.

This is a very, very important text. It's not just about what to carry as you go on your journey. It's not just about swords and bags and money belts. There's something else very potent, very powerful, very instructive in these few verses that Jesus gives. As Christians, we, we expect to suffer, don't we? Luke 9:23, "'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.'" That "take up his cross part," that's when we understand that, that imagery and what that metaphor means. We understand there's a, there's a literacy to that metaphor, that it started with an actual cross that Jesus actually died on, and that death was a culmination of hostility and hatred of the Son of God.

And so if we're going to follow after him, it does mean, if we're going to take up our own cross, there's going to be some element of this Christian life that's going to involve

suffering; and it's going to involve enduring hostility from sinners against us. So we expect to suffer. We expect to suffer in varying degrees for putting our trust in Christ, for following Jesus as Lord. Following a rejected Savior means we're going to experience rejection. Worshipping a crucified Christ means we're going to be like him: scorned, mocked, ridiculed.

Living obediently to the words and the commands of Jesus means we're not always going to be recognized as wise, as reasonable people, but rather we're going to be counted as the worst of fools, to be pitied and ignored, and sometimes even our counsel and our way of living as being counted as harmful, dangerous.

Following Jesus Christ in this world means we embrace shame for his name's sake, we suffer for his name's sake. We're not going to be popular in this world. Rather, we're going to be scorned. We're not going to be respected, highly regarded, highly esteemed. We're going to be marginalized, maybe even persecuted. But Jesus says this. "Blessed are you" when that's the case. "Blessed are you when men insult you and persecute

you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great.'" He's been saying that from the very start of his ministry. He's not been unclear. He's not been equivocating at all. He's been very clear, abundantly clear.

The Apostle Peter, he was obviously present on this occasion in Luke 22 to hear this, but he reminded his readers in 1 Peter 4:12 "not to be surprised at the fiery ordeal that comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you." Instead, he says in verse 13, "To the degree that you share in the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing." Down in verse 16 of that same chapter, he says, "If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, but in that name let him glorify God."

Maybe you're sitting there thinking at this point, well, I'm sunk. Every time I'm treated poorly for the sake of Christ, I am surprised by it. It does catch me off guard. Look, I get it. I certainly understand that. It is disorienting that doing what is right and good and pleasing to God and loving to people,

it is startling when people react to goodness and love with hostility. But they do, don't they? It's even more discouraging, isn't it, when the world attacks for you doing what's right and speaking what's true, and other Christians come in to nitpick the way you've handled yourself. Well, you could have said it this way. Well, if you understood that person's background, you might not have said it that way.

Really? Maybe you're thinking to yourself something like this: Well, I'm no apostle. I mean, rejoicing in suffering and persecution, that's like, that's like super-Christian stuff. I'm nowhere near that: rejoicing, being glad when my family turns on me, when my friends reject me, when my coworkers won't associate with me and don't even want to be in the break room with me. No, that doesn't feel good. Again, I get it. But at the same time, what's the alternative to us? Jesus, in seeing the rejection of the multitudes, walking away from him, leaving him with just a few men.

In John chapter 6, he'd just done great, marvelous things: good, kindness, mercy, power, feeding 5,000 men; with women and



children that had to bring the number up to 10, 15, 20,000 people. He's fed them miraculously, kindness for kindness, showing to them. And the end of the day, they depart, they take off, they reject him, they walk away. Ah, his sayings are too hard. He's talking about cannibalism, drinking his blood. Ooh, yuck. And he turns to his Twelve and said, "'You don't want to go away, too, do you?' And they say, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.'"

Yeah, it doesn't feel good when they all walk away. No, it doesn't feel good when they all reject and despise and hate and ridicule and scorn and scoff and make fun. They've misunderstood everything. They don't get the truth. They don't understand. But it doesn't feel good to be slighted, to be lowly esteemed, to be set aside. But we do, at the same time, we do want to stand firm, don't we? We do want to stand firm. We do want to confess Christ. We do want to continue in this love and in this faithfulness. We want to endure the test. We want to please God. We love Christ, and actually, it hurts us and it offends us when he's scorned, and rejected, and despised, when his truth is maligned. That's what makes our blood really boil. And so we will endure it.

But how do we do that? How do we endure this kind of hostility? Listen, the secret to that kind of courage, the secret to standing up, standing firm when all around us everyone else is sitting down, the secret of not being surprised at scorn and disfavor, even persecution, but instead to rejoice, instead to rejoice in the honor to suffer for his name's sake, the secret is found in the text before us. So I want you to pay attention, listen closely.

We're going to divide the text into three points, starting with this point. Point one: the reality of hostility. The reality of hostility. Remember, Peter said, Don't be surprised. "Don't be surprised at the fiery ordeal of testing. Don't be surprised when it comes upon you as if some strange thing is happening." Instead, we're to expect it. That's secret number one: expect suffering. Expect persecution. And if it's reality for you, you'll actually be surprised when you're not suffering.

All right, just flip it around. That's the way we first stand firm against hostilities, just to acknowledge the reality

of it. "He said to them," verse 35, "'When I sent you out without money belt and bag and sandals, did you lack anything? And they said, 'No, not a thing.'" Jesus has reminded them of an earlier time in his ministry, as he travelled in and around Galilee. We've been through this. Some of you will remember way back into, speaking of archives, going back into Luke chapter 9, he was traveling in and around Galilee preaching the kingdom of God and healing. And the time came for him to wrap up that Galilean ministry, to move beyond Galilee and move into Perea and Judea.

And so he needs to make his way to Jerusalem, and we find that in Luke chapter 9. But first, before he does that, he needs to wrap things up and tidy things up and close some loops there in Galilee. So he deploys the Twelve, and it says in Luke chapter 9 beginning there, he called the Twelve together, gave them power and authority over all the demons, to heal diseases. He sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and heal the sick. "And he said to them, 'Take nothing for your journey, neither a staff, nor a bag, nor bread, nor money, nor have two tunics apiece. Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that city. 'And as for those who do not receive you, as you go

out from that city, shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.' Departing, they were going out throughout the villages proclaiming the Gospel and healing everywhere."

That gives you the sense that their mission is successful. Most of the villages that they came to were receptive villages, not rejecting. The mission of the Twelve was successful, and that furthered his renown as they are healing everywhere. This power is being unleashed in the land. And we've, Bill mentioned this morning how many people we are missing, how many faces that we love have not been here. My, my wife is home, too, sick, you know. And it's just, just been a season for our church, hasn't it?

Imagine if one of you all of a sudden has this power from God to just eradicate sickness, and everybody's here and everybody's with us. You know what kind of joy that brings? That would be a great gift to have, wouldn't it? If the gifts had continued, wouldn't you like to go and empty out the hospitals? All of this power being unleashed for good, bringing joy,

bringing happiness, eradicating sickness and disease, casting out demons. It is amazing.

And so his renown is spreading further and further. It's, it's, it's going throughout the world, reports about this Jesus, his Apostles. All the popular enthusiasm is increasing. It fuels messianic fervor that's already stirred up. Could the kingdom of God be descending on us now? Could we, could Israel be the nation to drive out the Romans and take over the world? And by the end of the chapter, we see Jesus has recognized the time has come to start making his way to Jerusalem. Luke 9:43, it says that "while everyone was marveling at all that he was doing, he turns and says to his disciples, "'Let these words sink into your ears, for the Son of Man is going to be delivered in the hands of men.'"

It's not going to end well for this mission, guys. This all looks really good right now, but a time is coming when they're going to turn. The disciples didn't understand, Luke tells us. They didn't understand what he meant by that, didn't understand it at that time. They're still blinded by this expectation of

immediate messianic glory, kingdom glory is going to happen right now. And Jesus sees what they can't see. The meaning was concealed from them at that time. Luke 9:51 says, "When the days were approaching for his ascension," for him leaving, the word literally is exodus, he's going to exodus, "he set his face to go to Jerusalem."

Luke tells us that Jesus sent messengers ahead of him to a Samaritan village at that time to make arrangements for him. He, he sends again in Luke, if you look at Luke 10:1, Jesus appointed 72 others. As he's making his way now to Jerusalem, he sends 72 others. Luke says he sent them in pairs ahead of him to every city and place where he himself was going to come. So this is another advance party. They go ahead to kind of reconnoiter the villages of Judea and Perea. They're trying to determine which villages are receptive and which are rejecting. Because if they're rejecting as a village, We're not even to go there. We're going to go to the receptive villages and make the best use of the time because we're on a schedule. We got a schedule to keep.

Jesus knows the itinerary, so they are sent ahead to kind of determine the itinerary. He is going to visit the villages that are receptive to his ministry. He's going to bypass the villages that reject him. So he needs to be efficient, he needs to make the most use of the time and keep on moving. So this advance party of 72 heralds of the kingdom, they're to go out and in Luke 10:4, he tells them, this is language that's very similar to what we hear in Luke 22:35, "'Carry no money belt, no bag, no sandals. Greet no one on the way.'" Don't stop, don't get into conversations, don't stop by a roadside stand and get some melons. Just keep moving. Same terms: no money belt, no bag, no sandals. Same terms put in the same order.

We see him again in Luke 22:35. So he says, "'Remember that time when I sent you out without money belt, and bag, and sandals?'" And that's a reminder, isn't it, of how adequately they were provided for? He asks them, "'Did you lack anything?' They said, 'Not a thing.'" As a matter of fact, when the 72 returned, they said nothing about the provision. They didn't talk about that at all. It had been totally adequate, completely sufficient. In, in fact, it seems that they were filled to overflowing.

In that time of popularity in Jesus' ministry, the villages along the journey, they were all inclined to receive him, to receive his disciples. Many of those villages inclined to welcome them and show a generous, abundant hospitality. In fact, Jesus said, "Expect their favor and receive it. Don't deny it, don't push it away, receive it." Luke 10:7, "'Stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give to you.'" And in verse 8, Luke chapter 10, "'Whatever," city you, "receptive city that you enter, eat what's set before you.'" Sounds like it's going to be quite the party.

They're heralding the kingdom. They're showing great power. There's a lot of joy; there's a lot of celebration. So all the matters of physical provision and physical protection are arranged, sovereignly so, sovereignly attended to by the means of popular favor and support. God had made these people favorable to Jesus and his Apostles, and all the disciples did was receive it, receive that support, rejoice in it, enjoy the receptivity, marvel at success, relax in hospitality.



Wouldn't it be something if you take your family on a little vacation, and you just, there's no packing, there's no thinking about what you need to bring. There's no worry once you get on the road or once you get on that airplane that you forgot something. But you just know that wherever you go, everybody loves you. They say, hey, you want to go to that restaurant? Let us buy. We'll take care of everything. You want to go there? We'll take care of it. We got it covered. You, you want to have that food? Eat! Eat and delight and rejoice. We got you covered. Oh, man, I forgot my toothbrush. Got one, covered right here, toothbrush. Can you imagine what travel would be like for you? That's what they enjoyed. That's what they received.

Now having reminded them of that bountiful, joyous days of plenty, Jesus is now letting them know times, they are a changing. Verse 36, "He said to them, 'But now.'" Very strong contrast, there, in the original. "'But now.'" Different situation, different set of circumstances. Now whoever has a money belt, he needs to take it along. You're going to need that money, likewise, also a bag, like a knapsack or a backpack, a travellers bag. You got to bring extra stuff, have it packed, have it ready. "'And whoever has no sword should sell his

garment and buy one.'" That outer garment that kept you warm in the winter, more important, maybe even for your survival, to have some element of protection with you. New circumstances requiring different arrangements.

Now, it's not that Jesus is no longer going to make sure that his men, that his people, that his disciples are provided for. That's not the issue. The issue is that they could no longer rely on popular support, no longer rely on a favorable reception, no longer depend on the hospitality of their countrymen and their neighbors and the villages. The tide of public opinion is, is changing, shifting. Public sentiment is shifting. It's swinging radically from favor to enmity. And we've seen that just in the text that we've been covering as he entered into the city of Jerusalem, and they're all saying, "'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'" They're rejoicing. They're, they see this as triumphant. It's his triumphal entry. They see him, him as king. They love him. A week later: "Crucify him!" What in the world has happened?

We read earlier in the service, John 16:2, “They're going to put you out of the synagogue. You're not going to be the invited preacher. They're going to put you out. And everyone who kills you is going to think he's offering service to God.” Now that's a frightening set of circumstances. It's not just that people are going to be let off for killing the disciples. They're to face a situation where their deaths are not only justified in the courts of men, but considered to be righteous before men. That's frightening. Righteous in the sight of God himself, as an act of religious devotion.

That's how we see in the book of Acts as we are introduced to Saul, who is to become Paul. He considers it, he's righteously pursuing the traditions of his fathers in persecuting Christians and throwing them in jail, having them killed. It's a righteous thing. That expectation Jesus sets, there, about the sentiment of Jews in his day is going to be akin to what we know in our own day as radical Islamic terrorism, where they think that blowing themselves up and taking innocents with them is actually earning them favor with Allah.

Killing a disciple of Jesus is going to be seen akin to the righteous zeal of Phineas who drove a spear through a couple engaged in the act of adultery. Killing a disciple of, of Jesus is going to be on par with halting the plague of judgment against the Jews. That's a scary set of circumstances. Talk about being hunted. Now, an interpretive question comes up here in verse 36, when Jesus said, "'Whoever has no sword, he should sell his garment and buy one,'" is he authorizing the use of force? Is Jesus legitimizing the use of force for the sake of advancing a kingdom agenda? Or maybe even if we back off that a little bit, maybe if not to advance the kingdom, is a sword or a gun okay for, say, self-protection, for protecting one's family in a hostile world?

There are some who believe Jesus is authorizing the use of the sword for self-protection, and they say in verse 38, where the disciples say, "'Look, here are two swords.'" Jesus answered by saying, 'It's enough,'" some take that as tacit permission. Yeah, go out, get a sword, conceal-carry, do what you need to do. Now verse 38, his answer, there, we'll get to this in a moment, but it's actually not a permission he's giving. It's

just a concession. It's a concession to them kind of not getting it.

If we look ahead in the chapter down to verse 49, they take one of those two swords, and thinking that it's time to act when the arresting party comes, they say, "'Lord, shall we strike with a sword?'" One of them doesn't wait for the word from Jesus, and yeah, it's, it's Peter again. He takes out his sword and he aims for the, the head of the high priest's slave, barely misses, probably because the guy ducked, cut off the guy's right ear. And that's when Jesus speaks up and says, "'Stop! No more of this,'" heals the man on the spot.

There's more to that story, actually. In Matthew 26, you don't need to turn there, you can just listen, Matthew 26 in verse 52, "Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword back into its place, for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. Or do you not think that I cannot appeal to my father and he'll at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? Therefore, now the scripture is going to be fulfilled, which says it must happen this way.'" That's a stern rebuke

coming from the Lord. Stop it! Enough of this! Wrong answer, wrong action. This is not how it's going to go down. He's not authorizing the use of force for the sake of advancing a kingdom agenda. Not at all, not remotely.

Okay, well what about if we back off that a little bit and say he's talking about using the sword for self-protection? Is that what Jesus is saying here? Well, the answer is maybe, Maybe. But even that would be missing the point, as verse 38 shows. And we're going to get to that in a moment. But I'll just tell you where you need to, how you need to think about this. Most faithful commentators see Jesus speaking more figurty, figuratively than literally, here. They did not, the disciples did not understand him well at this particular point, but they do demonstrate, maybe not in this moment, but how they actually live it out in the book of Acts, they didn't ultimately take Jesus literally at this point.

Because as they go in and out of the temple, and as they're in Jerusalem and conducting their ministry, they don't dress up like travelers. They're not wearing their money belts all the

time. They're not carrying their travelers bags. They're not strapping on short swords and hiding them in their tunics as they enter in and out of the temple. That's just within a couple months. They have got this figured out. They understand that Jesus is here using these literal commands that he gave them, and then he's pulling back from that in order to paint a contrast. That's what's going on.

So carrying a money bag in verse 36, that's contrasted with verse 35 and with Luke 10:4 about, the contrast is, then they didn't need to worry about a money bag. Now you no longer can rely on neighborly support. You no longer can rely on hospitality and provision. You're back to providing for yourself as you always used to do all throughout your life. Carrying a traveler's bag in verse 36, sort of, as I said, like a backpack, that's contrasted with verse 35 and, and also Luke 10:4, a time when they didn't need to worry about carrying a backpack, extra clothing, their toothbrush, all that stuff.

It pictures, now is a new set of circumstances. It's changed. They need to now be always ready. They may be on the

move if necessary. So they need to take clothes and necessities and plan for travel, plan for having no roof over your head. The final part of verse 36 makes this plain, very plain, that it is speaking more figuratively. "Whoever has no sword should sell his garment and buy one." Well, to forego the outer garment in favor of a weapon, that's really the picture of a hostile environment. And that's really what Jesus is trying to paint, is a picture of a hostile environment, when you will be at a point where you're willing to give up your comfort and even endure very cold temperatures, disregarding that for the sake of protection.

He's talking about not everybody get a sword, necessarily. He's actually talking about, it's a different day, it's a different environment. You need to get your head screwed on straight for what you're actually going to face. He's not telling them answer violence with violence. And by the way, the Holy Spirit did not put this saying in Scripture because he anticipated the United States of America and its need to establish and defend the Second Amendment. That's not what's going on here either. You Second Amendment advocates, which I am one, I share that, but that's not what's going on here.



Incidentally, I'll just say I believe we defend the appropriateness of the Second Amendment by the principle of neighbor love. We love our family and our friends and our neighbors by protecting them from threats and evil actors. That's what justifies things like the Second Amendment and protecting your family and having to actually resort at times to violence to put down a threat. But that's another message for another day.

To interpret Jesus, here, in a wooden, literal manner is to miss the point altogether. I. Howard Marshall wrote this, He says, "A garment for wear at night was an utter necessity, and to give it up for a sword implies that dire circumstances are at hand. Rather," he says, "the saying is a call to be ready for hardship and self sacrifice. That's the point that they're supposed to get."

Literal money belt, literal traveler's bag, literal sword by these literal pictures, Jesus is portraying for them the changed situation, the changed world, which they will have to,

in which they'll have to attend to their own provision, having a pilgrim's mindset, that there is no home for them. They're going to have to remain always watchful, always vigilant, always diligent. This mindset of watchfulness is going to be put to the test in very short order in the very next scene that Luke actually records in, in the next verses, 39 and following, as they enter Gethsemane, following after the Lord, and they fail to be watchful. That's for next time.

At this point, though, Jesus is warning them. He's telling them about the reality of the hostility, that they face a changed world, a changed situation, a new set of circumstances. The popular support that they had once enjoyed earlier in his ministry, those days are gone. The crowd, crowds are soon to abandon him and side with their religious leaders and call for his blood and his crucifixion. Anyone associated with Jesus, they will hereafter become a target.

J. C. Ryle suggests that we treat Jesus' words, here, kind of proverbially, that we think of this as kind of like

illustrating and applying to the entire church age before, or between Jesus' first coming and before his second coming.

This is what he says, "Until our Lord comes again, believers are to make diligent use of all the, the faculties which he has implanted in them. They're not to expect miracles to happen to save them trouble. They should not expect bread to fall into their mouths if they will not work for it. They should not expect difficulties to be overcome, enemies to be defeated if they do not wrestle and struggle and make an effort themselves. They are to remember that 'diligent hands bring wealth,' Proverbs 10:4." It's rightly said.

The Apostles could draw on their personal experience of God's faithfulness in providing for them, protecting them all during their Luke 9 and Luke 10 missions. They had that as a constant memory of his faithfulness, of his provision, of his ability to care for them, his ability to take care of every need. God's care in the past sets a pattern for them. It gives them a, an assurance. It calms any anxiety, any fear, any worry. They can expect him to remain just as he was then, to remain

just as faithful, that the past care that they enjoyed of his was evidence to them he'd provide for them in the future, too.

And it's the same thing for us, isn't it? In fact, that is really the testimony of Scripture and why we go to Scripture all the time to see that the God who acts in Scripture, who is faithful in Scripture, who's powerful, who cares for us, cares for his people, he does it now, too. He's the same God. He does not change.

So the point, as we face the reality of hostility, living as Christians in a hostile world, the point is that we need to work hard to provide for ourselves. We need to work hard to provide for our families and for our ministry as well. Treasure is not going to fall out of heaven. God is not wanting us to work that way. He wants us to use the regular, normal-use means that he's always used to provide for his people, teaching us to be diligent with hard work, prayerfulness, watchfulness.

We need to have a pilgrim's mindset, that we're not trying to anchor into this earth as if this is what we're trying to

hold on to. We're not trying to enjoy all the kingdom privileges now. We wait until the Lord returns. We're always in a hostile world, always to remain watchful, always circumspect.

So having spoken about the reality of hostility, Jesus now wants them to see, secondly, the reason for it. So number two in your notes, the reason for hostility, the reason for hostility. Now that we have acknowledged the reality of hostility for Christ's name, for his sake, the world is, understand it's full of Satan's minions. They advance his hostile agenda against God, against his Christ, against Christ's people. We acknowledge that reality. We accept that reality, but Jesus wants to take his men a little bit further and help them to understand the reason for it.

The first word of verse 37 introduces an explanatory clause, which gives the reason for the changed circumstances. He tells them, here's the reality, and verse 37, here's the reason for. That's the explanatory little particle, there. He says, “For I tell you that this which is written must be completed in

me, "And he was numbered with the transgressors," for that which refers to me has its completion.'"

Notice the explanation, there. Why the hostility? What's the reason? Anything in what he said about polling data? Does he cite surveys about the change in public opinion, about how maybe he could be a little bit friendlier in his Gospel presentation. You know, not so stuck on issues of sin and righteousness, but really kind of catering to people's felt needs? Maybe that would be a better presentation. He'd win more favor. He's silent, isn't he, on any of that. He's silent also about the very real plots of the Jews, conspiracies from Jewish leadership who are intent on taking him down and killing him. There's nothing about the infiltration of his inner circle, how they recruited Judas over to their cause, and that was a big victory.

No mention, here, even of, of Satan as an explanation for this hostility. Obviously we know all those things are there. They're in the background. But he's citing none of those things here as reasons. Instead, Jesus points to the immutability of God's will, the redemptive plan in the incarnation, the perfect

satisfaction of God's wrath through Christ's atoning work. That's the reason for the hostility. This is all about God being God, all about God getting his way, fulfilling his purpose, executing his plan so that he would secure the full redemption for his people. The consequence of that, of God getting his way on this earth? Sinful man reacts badly to that, reacts badly to God and his goodness, reacts badly to his truth clearly proclaimed, reacts with hostility against salvation offered.

Now, considering the cosmic war that's been going on ever since Genesis 3, should it surprise us, really, that there will be satanic opposition? Should it surprise us that sinners are going to align with Satan and not like us very much? Shouldn't surprise us in the least. Now, let's break this verse down a little bit. This verse, you have to see, is like a vein of pure gold flowing through the rock of this text, this final set of instructions. We are striking pure, unalloyed gold.

First, Jesus says God's Word must be fulfilled. It must be fulfilled. When he says, "'For I tell you that this which is written must be completed in me,'" now the specific verse he's

citing is Isaiah 53, prophetic Scripture. But he's telling his Apostles, that is about me. Isaiah 53, that's about me. The word, must, very important, here. It's our translation of a short, indeclinable Greek verb *dei*. If you write it in your notes, it's d-e-i. I know that has bad connotations today, but it's of actual Greek verb. And it's really a good verb because it means it's necessary, it must happen. And whenever it's used in the New Testament, the will of God is implied, the will of God is at work as that which is necessary, that which must happen.

He says, "that which is written." It makes it sound like it's a present-tense verb, which is written. It's actually a perfect-tense verb in the passive voice: It has been written. That is to say, it is durable, it's fixed, it's been written, and the results of its writing it down, have continued to the present day and are going to continue into eternity. The translators, in putting it in the present tense, are just simply trying to show the enduring nature of that which has been written. It is inviolable, it is unbreakable, it is abiding, it's continuing, it's, it will not change.



So Jesus, recognizing the messianic nature of Isaiah 53, that points to himself, he's really pointing, here, to the immutability of God's Word. His plan, his will, that's what's going to happen. What God said he will certainly do. This brings us to the message of the prophecy itself that says, second, if you're just jotting these down as kind of sub-points here, first, God's Word must be fulfilled. Second, Jesus must be identified with transgressors. He must be identified with transgressors. To be identified, it's the word *logizomai*, *logizomai*. If some of you are familiar with that word, it means, to reckon or we like this word, to impute. Impute implies the doctrine of imputation. *Logizomai* is translating a Hebrew verb used in Isaiah 53:12, *mana*, to, to count or to apportion.

So remarkable, here, what Jesus is doing to instill confidence and explain the reality of the hostility. But to instill confidence in these men, he is, he's citing the doctrine at the very heart and center of the Gospel itself. This is how we know, this is how we have assurance that Jesus can lawfully act as our substitute, that he's counted, that he's reckoned, that he's imputed among the transgressors. This is how we know that he can take our sin upon himself, that he can offer up

himself in our place, that he can offer himself up as our substitutionary, atoning sacrifice. This is the doctrine of imputation, our sins reckoned to the sinless Christ so that he can take them and bear them to the cross in order to pay our penalty.

Now I want to dive just a little bit deeper into this and have you turn to Isaiah 53, Isaiah 53, because this is so rich with meaning, so much precious insight into Jesus mind at this, really this historic moment as he faces the cross. This is telling us, and we're going to Isaiah 53 because I want you to see this in a little bit more detail than we get it in Luke 22:37, because this is what is on his mind and what he's thinking about as he moves inexorably to the cross.

Jesus cites the end of the prophecy, which is Isaiah 53:12, and it reinforces his belief, his firm assurance, that what is written in the whole prophecy is certain to be fulfilled. Look at Isaiah 53:12, "Therefore, I will divide for him." I, refers to God the Father, him, refers to Jesus the Son. "Therefore, I will divide for him a portion with the many, and he will divide

the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul to death, and was numbered with the transgressors.'" There it is. "'And yet he himself bore the sin of many and interceded for the transgressors.'"

Notice Jesus, he didn't even cite the whole verse in Luke 22:37. Very common for Jesus and for New Testament writers to cite a portion to speak to the whole in the New Testament. So familiar are the Apostles, the disciples, the Jews of that day with their Old Testament scriptures that just citing a portion was enough to kind of get it. If I say, "We hold these truths to be self-evident," you know what I'm referring to. I don't need to quite, quote the entire thing. You understand what I'm referring to. Same thing here. He just cites the "numbered with the transgressors" part, and he's citing that portion rather than another portion.

He's citing that portion because on his mind is the doctrine of imputation, by which he can take the sins of his disciples upon himself, including, yes, the denial of Peter, that sin. Including, yes, the abandonment of all the other

disciples. Yes, that's sin, too. And that doctrine, isolated in that short phrase from one verse in Isaiah 53, is at the heart of what he knows is going to encourage his men, not only as they reflect on the meaning of that phrase, but on the whole verse. In fact, going to the entirety of that prophecy is going to imbue them with strength and encouragement. That's what they need to hear.

Now just to keep us on track as we kind of work through a few things in Isaiah 53, let me give you several sub-points, and we'll come back to Jesus' immediate intent to cite that small portion of that verse of the whole prophecy. Sub-point A, Isaiah 53:12, that's the final verse of victory. That's the final verse of mission accomplished. That's a verse that cites certain reward. God says of his Messiah, "'I will divide for him a portion with the many. He'll divide the spoil with the strong.'" You know when you're dividing spoil? When the war's over, when the battles fought, and all the enemy soldiers are dead, and you're picking through their stuff.

If the Apostles are paying attention, or as they reflect on it later on the meaning of this, they recognize the motive, the note, here, of victory. Even as Jesus speaks of coming hostility, there's victory. Another sub-point B, sub-point B, This verse says the certain victory and the subsequent certain reward. This is something Messiah has accomplished, namely the dual messianic ministries of propitiation and intercession. Certain victory and certain reward is, as we see there in the verse, "'because he poured out his soul to death.'" That's blood atonement. It's because he was numbered with the transgressors. That's imputation. It's because he himself bore the sin of many. That substitution. And it's because he interceded for the transgressors. That's intercession.

This is the, the Messiah's ministry, now: atonement accomplished by divine imputation and then lawfully authorized by means of substitution, all allowing for the ongoing effectual ministry of intercession. None of that depends on the Apostles. None of that is thwarted by his enemies. None of that could be touched by Satan himself. All of that is what God in Jesus Christ has accomplished for them, victory.

# GRACE CHURCH



Grace

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Same truths highlighted, by the way, by the Apostle John in 1 John 2:1-2, "My little children, I'm writing these things to you so that you may not sin. If anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." There's the ministry of intercession. "And he himself is a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world, Jew and Gentile." That's the ministry of propitiation, the satisfaction of God's wrath, removing the judgment, removing the condemnation, removing the guilt.

Moving on, sub-point C, we see that Isaiah 53:12 begins with a, therefore. What's the therefore, there for? Well, it's an inferential particle which points to what logically follows as an inference or a, a consequence of what came before. What's that? Well, it's the entire prophecy, isn't it? The therefore is at the end of the prophecy, and it points to the entire prophecy. Look back at Isaiah 52:13. That's where it starts, and I'm going to read this for you because I want you to hear what the disciples failed to meditate on in the moment. I don't want you to make the same mistake.

Isaiah 52:13, "Behold, my servant will prosper. He'll be high and lifted up and greatly exalted. Just as many people were appalled at you, my people, so his appearance was marred more than any man, and his form, more than the sons of men. And thus he will sprinkle many nations. Kings will shut their mouths on account of him, for what they had not been told them they will see, and what they had not heard they will understand. Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of Yahweh been revealed? For he grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground. He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon him, nor appearance that we should desire him.

"He was despised, forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face, he was despised, and we did not esteem him. And surely our griefs he himself bore, and our sorrows he carried. Yet we ourselves esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, afflicted. But he was pierced through for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities. The chastening for our peace fell on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

"All of us, like sheep have gone astray. Each one of us has turned to his own way; but Yahweh has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on him. He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he didn't open his mouth. Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like the sheep that is silent before his shearer, so he didn't open his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, that for the transgression of my people striking was due to him.

"So his grave was assigned with wicked men, and he was with the rich, a rich man in his death, because he had done no violence, nor was any deceit found in his mouth. But Yahweh was pleased to crush him, putting him to grief. If you would place his soul as a guilt offering, he will see his seed, he'll prolong his days, and the good pleasure of Yahweh will succeed in his hand. As a result of the anguish of his soul, he will see it and be satisfied. And by his knowledge the righteous one, my servant, will justify the many, and he'll bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will divide for him a portion with the many, and he will divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul to death, and he was numbered with the transgressors; yet



he himself bore the sin of many and interceded for the transgressors."

The whole thing is written kind of past tense, isn't it, as if this, written in Isaiah's times 700 years before Christ, as if this has already happened. What gives? Listen, whatever hostility these Jews, face, what Jesus is warning them about, which he calls to their attention, he wants them to see it's all part of the plan. It's all been written, it's all been done. The ink is dried. It's not changing. This is God's plan, to cause the iniquity of us all to fall on him, to crush him, putting him to grief for us.

One more note of interest, sub-point D, tells us the reason for this hostility, namely, that the Jews as a nation, as a people in Jesus' day, in Jesus' time, and I'll just say up to this present moment, they've got this thing all wrong. They have failed to see God's purpose in the coming of Jesus Christ. This whole prophecy, Isaiah 53, as I said, it's written as if it's past tense, 700 years before Christ. Past tense. It's written, isn't it, from the point of view of future Israel. It's written

from the point of view of a redeemed Israel as they look back and lament, as they call their own nation living in Isaiah's day to look again at Christ, see him differently.

If I could put it this way, imagine if your 70-year-old self could travel back fifty years through time and speak to your 20-year-old self. Would your older, wiser, more experienced, more mature self say anything by the way of correction to your 20-year-old self, you think? That's what's going on here. Future, post-Christ, post-cross, regenerated redeemed Israel, that people is speaking to the other people. That people reaching back across time to exhort the pre-Christ, pre-cross, unregenerate, unredeemed Israel, to plead, as it were, they themselves pleading with themselves. Oh, would you wake up? Will you see your Messiah as he really is?

The Jews rightly saw Jesus in their own day as stricken, smitten of God, put to grief, yes. Their error, though, was in failing to acknowledge his sinlessness, pointed to his role not as a sinner, not as rejected by God because he did anything wrong, but being the sin-bearer. His bearing their sin meant he



bore the sins of many, namely their sins. They're the sinners. They're the ones for whom he's dying.

Friend, if you're here today and some of this is foreign to you, listen, if you'll put your trust in him, if you'll see yourself as the sinner that you really are, you're guilty, you're justly condemned before a holy, all-knowing, all-seeing God, listen, on the basis of God's Word, I'm so pleased to tell you without any fear of contradiction that he will delight to be the bearer of your sins, too. He'll forgive you. Whatever it is you've done, whatever it is you've said, thought, imagined, whatever shame you feel, imagine the horror of having all your secret sins publicly revealed, revealed for all to see, writ large, put up on a screen.

Well, you know what? This Jesus was crucified, he hung publicly, so that all could see in public, in the sight of everybody, Jew and Gentile, that he was bearing not his own shame, but yours and mine. Don't make the same mistake or commit the same error that the Jews did in their day. Run to the cross,

run to Christ. Embrace him, seek his forgiveness. He'll give it. He will give it.

Listen, I'd love to camp here longer, but we need to return back to Luke 22:37 so we can finish this. We said in our points, here, just kind of recapping, we said Scripture must be fulfilled, because it's as immutable and unchanging as God is, because it's his Word, it must be accomplished. Also, we said Jesus must be identified with the transgressors, and this is what explains the hostility. The hatred of sinners against God and his Christ resulted in his crucifixion on the cross. And that same hatred against him spills over on all who identify with him, on all who take his name, on all who walk in obedience, on all who follow after him.

So listen, if you experience no reproach for his name's sake, check what colors you're wearing. If you experience no, no, no cross, no shame, if you experience no shame for his name, consider, are you even speaking about him, talk about him? Do people know? Are you confronting them in their sin? What colors are you wearing? Whose side are you on? One more thing, wrap up

this second larger point in our outline, God's Word must be accomplished, and Jesus must be identified with the transgressors. But third, Jesus will complete his mission. He will complete his mission.

He says “for that which refers to me has its completion.” *Has*, there, is present tense, a continuous kind of action. So that, that which refers to me, you could say is having its completion, as in ongoing, as in right now, Jesus says, as we speak. In other words, he's saying, My time is at hand. My time, the end of my mission is upon us. It's right around the corner. So the hostility I'm talking about, that, too, is now. Men, be watchful. Why? Because of what he said back in John 15:18-21, right, what we read earlier. “If they persecuted me, they're going to persecute you also.” Get your head straight, men, stand by, it's coming.

Listen, Jesus, here, is going to war. Within the day he's going to take the field, and though he himself will fall and die on the battlefield, contrary to all expectation, it is his death that wins the victory. No one saw that coming. Satan didn't see

it coming, in fact, he unwittingly played right into God's hand. He possessed the betrayer, got him to lead the arresting soldiers to Jesus. He set the whole thing up, and he's being used. He influenced all the leaders, religious leaders of the Jewish nation, political leaders of the Roman province of Judea. He's brought them all together to accomplish God's will.

United forces of sinful angels and humans conspired together to accomplish this horrendous deed, the greatest crime ever perpetrated in the history of mankind, or ever will be. At the end of the day, they did exactly what God ordained for them to do. They served God's purposes to glorify himself by exalting his Son in redeeming his own people. Listen, God wins.

Which brings us to a third and final point, number three, the rejoicing over hostility. We've seen the reality, and we've seen the reason for hostility, but now we see the rejoicing over hostility. Listen, we can rejoice over the hostility of sinners because every time it happens, it reminds us God won and we're on his side. Christ has overcome death by his resurrection, and right now he lives. We can rejoice that we've become targets of

spiritual forces of evil because all that hostility reminds us what side we're on.

Now, is that what the Apostles thought at this moment? Well, in response to Jesus' caution about living life in a changed world because of his victory, cited in Isaiah 53:12, the response, the Apostles thought about that a moment, and they responded by taking an inventory of their gear. Huh. Look, Lord, here are two swords. Thanks, guys. Just great, good job. They kind of missed the point, didn't they? Galileans are kind of like Weld County residents. They all had conceal-carry permits. You never know who's carrying. Little Granny with a gun tucked in her purse. Do not mess with them in Weld County.

Probably all these guys at one point or another carried swords. Pretty common for them to carry what's called a machaira, the, these, kind of the Roman short sword, about 18 inches long. It was for, very common to carry that under a cloak or a garment to protect against bandits, the roads were not safe, to deal with the occasional scuffle, whatever they had to deal with. So a couple of them draw swords ready to go, say,

“Look, Lord, here are two swords.” The Lord's unimpressed. He said to them, “It's enough.” He's not saying, Good job, guys, glad you're packing. Now let's go get those Romans, your two swords and my miraculous power, who can stop us, right?

No, they missed the entire point, here. They won't be able to get what Jesus is telling them, here, until after the resurrection, when the Spirit comes to illuminate all that he taught them. That's when it's all going to come to clarity for them. John 16:12, Jesus said, “I have many more things to say to you, but you can't bear them now.” You just can't bear the weight. You can't understand. It's too early. “When he, the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth.” But for now, time's up. He's got an appointment to meet in the Garden of Gethsemane, and he needs to pray first.

And so you say to me, Wait a minute, how does this fit the outline point you gave us? Where's the rejoicing? It's coming, and it's coming, relatively speaking, in a very short period of time. In fact, let me show you, if you'll turn in your Bibles over to Acts chapter 5 and verse 27, and we'll close with this.



Let me just set this up for you, Acts chapter 5. This is post-Pentecost. The Spirit has come upon them. They've been preaching. They've been making quite the stir. In fact, thousands are coming to Christ and repenting of their sin.

And the Apostles, again, in Acts chapter 5, are preaching, healing in the temple. They've just practiced, or the Lord, I should say, has just practiced church discipline. He's, not like we practice discipline, but the Lord practiced discipline by killing Ananias and Sapphira. Just setting a clarity about the holiness of this new thing called the church. It's a connection back to Leviticus chapter 10, when he killed Aaron's two sons in the temple for offering strange fire.

But the Apostles, you would think that church discipline killed the church. No, it didn't. Thousands more came. Thousands more saw the seriousness, the sobriety of this new thing called the church, and the Spirit came upon them and drew them to put their faith in Jesus Christ, to repent of killing him, it's a remarkable thing. So they're preaching. They're healing in the temple. They're confounding the chief priests, the Sadducees

with the Gospel that they're preaching as they look them in the eye and indict them for the national crime of crucifying the Messiah of Israel.

Well, that was too much for the chief priests and Sadducees to admit. So the high priest had them arrested and jailed. We'll pick that up at Acts 5:27. "When they had brought them, they stood them before the Sanhedrin." This is the Jewish ruling council. "And the high priest who presided over the council, he questioned them, saying, 'We strictly commanded you not to continue teaching in this name, and yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us.' And Peter and the Apostles answered and said, 'We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you put to death by hanging him on a tree. This one God exalted to his right hand as a leader and Savior to grant repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. We're witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God gave to those who obey him.'"

Gamaliel speaks up, intervenes in the counsel at this at this point. He's got pragmatism, pragmatic counsel to give them. It's utterly devoid of any righteous principle. He's got no qualm of conscience over the crucifying of Jesus. And his counsel, it prevails. It wins the Sanhedrin. And we read down in verse 40, "So they followed Gamaliel's advice, and after calling the Apostles in and beating them, they commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus and then released them." Big mistake. "So they went on their way from the presence of the Sanhedrin," look, "rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for the name."

There it is, justification for my outline point. Yeah, the Apostles may not have started well that night when Jesus was betrayed on the night he warned them, calling them to watchfulness, but by God's grace, look where he brought them and in very short order. And so we look, look at the next verse and, "and every day in the temple," they said, "Don't go preaching that name," "every day in the temple and from house to house, they didn't cease teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ."

Listen folks, that is the warrior mentality right there. That's the winning attitude Christ calls for. And what you need to see in the warning of Luke 22:35-38, Jesus is not stoking the fears of his men, there. He's not telling them, watch out guys, hide out, make yourself scarce, don't speak up in meetings. No, he intends to embolden them, strengthen their faith, help them mature, help them to come a point, to a point of strength. Jesus wants his men to see, and he wants you and me to see the same thing today, right now. God is sovereign. He's always ruling on the throne. Christ is victorious. He's fought the greatest battle. He's won the victory and the entire cosmic war. He's sealed the fate of all of his enemies.

Yes, in the short term, between his first and second advents, it's going to mean some hostility for us. But let that hostility just, just remind you to double down and focus on his victory, that which secured forgiveness for all who trust him as Savior, for all who follow him as Lord. Listen, let that hostility remind you to rejoice and give thanks, and even when you receive hostility and persecution for his sake, amen? Let's pray.



Our Father, how remarkable it is that you subvert every expectation of man and angel to accomplish your good purposes. This redemption story is nothing that could be thought up by any man. No wisdom of man, no power of man could accomplish it. It's only your power and your wisdom that is glorified in the cross of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Let that fuel us, strengthen us. Let it fill, let it fill us with confidence and joy and gratitude so that we are bold, unashamed, proclaiming your name for your glory and Christ's exaltation. Amen.