

Jesus on a Mission

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I'd invite you to turn to the Gospel of Luke this morning. For a message that I am very very excited to be able to bring to you today. The Bible teaches us, as we read about it, as we come to Christ, and we start to read about the work of Christ in the scriptures. We find something very remarkable. We find that we are not the spiritual products of a spiritual accident in Christ. We find as we read the Bible, as believers in Christ, that we are part of the outworking of a great plan of God. Scripture makes this abundantly clear. It is undeniable. It is plain. It is clear. It is what we want to consider here this morning. To introduce what we are going to talk about from Luke, I want to read a couple of brief passages out of the book of Acts to you. You don't need to turn there, but you will want to write them down. In Acts chapter 2 in verses 22 and 23, we see a clear statement that the redemptive work of Christ unfolded according to a divine plan that was established before time began. When we read scripture, when we hear the gospel proclaimed, when we contemplate the work of Christ, there should be a sense in which we understand that we're entering into a realm that transcends time, because that is exactly what scripture teaches us.

In Acts chapter 2 verse 22, Peter was preaching, and he said, "Men of Israel, listen to these words. Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles, and wonders, and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know." So he is appealing to recently completed events at Calvary that were a subject of common public knowledge, and he interprets it for them. He says, "This man," referring to Christ, listen to what he says, "delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put him to death." Christ was on the cross at Calvary according to a predetermined plan of God. The crucifixion was carried out by the willful actions of sinful men, but, make no mistake about it, Christ was on that cross according to the plan of God. Scripture couldn't be more clear about it.

In Acts chapter 4, verse 27 it says, "That truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus," they're praying to God, "whom you anointed both Herod and Pontius Pilate along with the Gentiles and the people of Israel." So he says, the rulers of this region were gathered together against Christ, along with the Gentiles, along with the Jews. The whole group of them were gathered together against Christ. And why were they gathered together? Verse 28, Acts 4:28, "to do whatever your hand and

your purpose predestined to occur.” The work of Christ was according to a predetermined plan of God. The crucifixion of Christ was according to a predetermined course that God had established before time began. Brothers and sisters, when we gather together to study scripture together, we’re entering into a realm that touches on the divine mind of God in such a great and a profound way that it completely lifts us beyond the realm of earth and gives us a sense of perspective about what is actually taking place.

That’s all by way introduction to what I have to say from the gospel of Luke here this morning. When you read the gospel of Luke, what you are going to see here this morning is that Jesus was conscious of this divine plan as He walked through life. And Jesus taught his disciples. By extension, He teaches us that the details of His life all unfolded according to a divine plan that was certain in its fulfillment. There was no accident. There was no random chance. There were no random events that contributed to the life of Christ. This was all according to what God wanted to occur. And He had established His purpose before time began. And so, when you read the gospel of Luke, what we’re seeing is that in the highest, loftiest sense of the term, Jesus was on a mission that was certain to be accomplished.

Now, I’m going to do something that I normally don’t do at this point in the message, which is also part of the service. I want to give you just one little strand of the Greek language to help you understand what lies behind this. In the passages that we are going to see this morning, Jesus uses a short three letter Greek word that defines all of this for us. It is the Greek word *dei*, but it’s not like a 24 hour day. In English, it would be translated *dei, dei*. And this Greek word *dei*, which is a verb, it means that something is necessary. It means that something must happen this way. And Jesus uses this verb, that’s all the Greek that I’m going to give you today, Jesus uses this verb to teach, to show that His life as He was living it out, His life was unfolding according to a divine plan which could not be thwarted. There was no opposition of Satan or sinful men that could thwart the plan of God that was in operation during the life of Christ while He was on earth. And, what we are going to see in the book of Luke is how many times Jesus teaches this so that we won’t miss the point. To read one verse in Acts that it was according to a divine plan is really all it takes to establish it, but when you see it in the details, when you see section by section, chapter by chapter in the life of Christ, and Christ saying it must be this way, it must be this way, it has to be this way. What you need to understand is that He is expressing the fact that He is on earth executing a divine plan that was certain to occur. There was no chance that it could go amiss. Jesus was in perfect control, even as men were nailing Him to a cross, because, as the Son of God in full omnipotence, in full omniscience, He is carrying out the plan of God that was bound to occur.

Now, in terms of a little outline for this message, what I want you to see is as we go through, is that this refers to the entirety of the life of Christ. It’s the complete life of Christ that is under this divine umbrella of a divine certainty to occur. We’re going to express the completeness of this plan with a simple outline. The beginning, the middle, and the end. Those are your three points for this morning. The beginning, the middle, and the end. And the outline is simply identifying the comprehensive nature of the divine will which was at work in the earthly life of Christ. Remember the verb, it must, it is

necessary, it must happen this way. This is what you are going to see woven throughout the entire book of Luke.

So, let's look at the beginning first of all in Luke chapter 2. You can turn there if you would. When Jesus was a mere lad of twelve, He was already conscious of this divine imperative upon his life. You remember the story, they had, they had gone up with His parents, Jesus and His parents had gone up to Jerusalem, and they spent time there at the feast of Passover. They came time to leave, and His parents left, thinking that He was part of the caravan somewhere else, even though He wasn't with them. Look at verse 44. His parents supposed Him to be in the caravan and went a day's journey, and they began looking for Him among their relatives and acquaintances. When they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem looking for Him. They didn't know where He was. So, they retraced their steps. And then, after three days, those of you who are parents could sympathize with the angst that they must have felt, verse 46. Luke chapter 2 verse 46, "After three days they found Him in the temple sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and answers." At twelve years old, the teachers of Israel were astonished at the wisdom that was in front of them in this twelve year old boy. And so, his parents happen upon this scene, verse 48, when they saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to Him, "Son, why have you treated us this way! Behold your father and I have been anxiously looking for you." Now, watch Jesus' response to her. It's more significant than you might get on a superficial first reading. He said to them, "Why is it that you were looking for me? Did you not know that I had to be in my Father's house?" There is that Greek word, *dei*, there. "I had to be here. It was a divine requirement. I wasn't lost. I was exactly where God wanted me to be. Didn't you know that?"

Verse 50, "They didn't understand the statement which He had made to them." How could they? How could they understand that He was expressing to them of such profound eternal depth that He was there on a divine mission. He was there according to the plan of God, even at the age of twelve. He said, "I had to be here. This is what God had appointed for me at this point in time, and I had to be here." It wasn't simply a subjective sense that He wanted to be in the temple. This was part of the plan of God. A contractor plans construction and then builds a house. He's got a plan in mind before it ever begins, and he carries it out. Do you think that there is any possibility that the sovereign eternal God of the universe, when He was planning to send his eternal Son into the world to accomplish eternal redemption, did anything less than an earthly contractor would do? It's foolishness. Of course there was a divine plan that was being carried out. God had a plan from the beginning that transcends all the blueprints of all of the contractors throughout the whole course of time. He'd established the course and sent Christ into the world, and Christ, understanding the plan in full submission to his Father, in a joint operation of salvation, says, "I've got to carry this out." He was under divine compulsion. It could be no other way for Christ. Men could not distract Him from the work. He had to meet the divine purpose.

Look at chapter 4 verse 42. We now accelerate forward eighteen, nineteen years in the life of Christ. And Luke is unfolding the early days of the ministry. And in Luke chapter

4, verse 42, by the way, one thing that I want you to notice in all but one of these passages that we are going to look at this morning, this sense of divine necessity that comes from the lips of Christ himself. Christ was teaching this all the way along. It wasn't an afterthought. It wasn't something that was added on later by men who wrote about Christ later. Jesus was saying this from the beginning. Luke chapter 4 verse 42, "When day came, Jesus left and went to a secluded place, and the crowds were searching for Him and came to Him," watch this, "they tried to keep Him from going away from them." They liked having Him there. They say, "Hey, stay! Be with us!" Verse 43, "But He said to them, I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also. For I was sent for this purpose." Who sent Him? God the Father. What purpose? To preach the kingdom of God. That was the plan. What was His response? "I have to do this." He was independent of the wishes and directions of men. He had a solitary focus on His mind that, "I will carry out this divine plan without fail, without distraction, without exception. I must do this."

Now, we've come to this point in the past couple of weeks as we looked at Matthew, and as we looked at Mark. And I want to reinforce it here at this moment in your mind, because it's so important. What I want you to see is that our view of Christ, our appreciation for who He is, our reverence for the majesty of His being should only increase, and elevate, and get higher and higher to unlimited heights as we see these things in the scriptures. We need to set aside the things of earth that were occupying our minds when we came in and give this hour to thinking high thoughts of Christ and coming and deepening our understanding of who He is. When you just read the gospels quickly and lightly, you miss this kind of detail. But this is no detail. These are the pillars upon which it is all built. And what I want you to see, what I want you to embrace in your heart, what I want you to grasp and then fall down in worship at the feet of Christ, is the magnitude of who He is and the magnitude of what He was doing on earth. The magnitude, the inexpressible, the incomprehensible magnitude of the divine plan established in the divine counsels before the beginning of time. Jesus steps into time from that eternal realm to execute in time on earth in history a divine plan that existed before the foundation of the world. And not only was He doing that, He knew He was doing that, He understood, He gladly placed Himself under this divine compulsion to carry this out. So that even when onlookers and, if we could call them this, this is not great, but He had these Jesus groupies in Luke chapter 4 saying, "stay with us," and He is undeterred and undistracted. "I must move forward. I'm on a plan. I'm on a time table. I've got something to do." It was right there from the beginning. It was impossible for Him to settle in one place. Look at it again, verse 43, Luke 4:43 before we continue on, He says, "I must," Greek word, *dei*, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also for I was sent for this purpose." God sent me. That's why I'm here. I'm going to do it. So, from the very beginning, from his very youth, Jesus is expressing his consciousness of his mission.

Now, let's step on, and this is an arbitrary break, an arbitrary second point here. Let's look at the middle. Let's look at the middle. We've seen the early days, now let's step into the middle, into the substance of the ministry of Christ while He was here on earth. The beginning, now we're going to look at the middle. And I said, just a moment ago, the

loftiness with which we view Christ that comes out of this, this sense of divine plan, respecting, revering Him for all that that means. Will we revere Him even more when we understand that He knew, He knew that the divine plan required His crucifixion? Crucifixion! The most torturous, humiliating form of capital punishment that the world has ever known. Jesus, as He was carrying out this divine mission, knew that that was what was ahead. And still, He was not a victim in the hands of his opponents. He was carrying out a divine plan. Look at Luke chapter 9. Luke chapter 9 in verse 21. I'll give you a second to turn there in your hard copy bibles, to scroll there in your electronic bibles. Didn't use to have to say stuff like that ten years ago. That's alright. Luke chapter 9 verse 21. Actually, let's start at verse 18. This will echo some of what we talked about last week. Luke 9, verse 18. "It happened that while Jesus was praying alone the disciples were with Him and He questioned them saying, who do the people say that I am. They answered and said, John the Baptist, and others say Elijah, but others that one of the prophets of old has arisen. And He said to them," verse 20, "but who do you say that I am? Peter answered and said, the Christ of God. Jesus warned them, instructed them not to tell this to anyone." Now watch this, watch this in verse 22, saying, oh, this is so important! Even the lips of babes affirm, all of heaven bears witness to what we are about to see in verse 22. Jesus said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and be raised up on the third day." A clear understanding that His life was moving toward an appointment with the cross. He knew it, and He said, "It has to be this way." The Son of Man must end up on that cross. And so, you have the Son of God who in conjunction with the other two members of the Trinity conceived this eternal plan before time began. And He steps into the world knowing what the outcome is going to be. The condescension of such an act, the self-emptying of such an act. The brilliance, the genius of the mind that can seize that. The power that is able to be on earth and be totally independent of contrary forces, as if in the sense that they could not stop it. And then, more, to realize that this divine compulsion was leading Him to humiliation, humanly speaking, on the cross.

Your mind gets lost in wonder, love, and praise at the greatness of Christ, and so Jesus knowing that an appointed time was coming, knowing that it was necessary, it was the divine plan that He would suffer many things, not just one or two, many things, and be rejected and be killed. Knowing that, what did He do? Chapter 9 verse 51. Our verb for the day is not in this verse, but this is an important passage. Luke 9 verse 51. "When the days were approaching for his ascension," look at this, "He was determined to go to Jerusalem." Knowing what lay ahead, Jesus set his face toward Jerusalem and was committed to going there. The incomprehensible courage of our Lord, the incomprehensible majesty of our Christ moving toward Jerusalem according to a divine timetable knowing that it would cost Him His own life. And when you inform it with the other things in scripture, where you know that He laid down His life in love on behalf of His people to purchase a people for himself, our minds start to shatter trying to get a sense of comprehension in our souls about how great this is. And I don't mean great in the sense of, "Wow, that was a great hamburger." I mean, this is GREAT! This is beyond human expression! The Lord Jesus Christ transcends all of us. That in this magnificent transcendence, He carries out this plan with the intention that His life would be a sacrifice for you and me. That His blood would cover the sins of those who would come to Him.

With the intention, brothers and sisters in Christ, with the intention to take all of this inexpressible magnitude and to convey it to the blessing of His people, because that was part of the divine plan. I don't know about you, I don't know how anyone can respond with indifference to that? Do you? How could you be indifferent to that? How could this not just captivate your soul and say, "This is the one I must know." And why did it have to be Jerusalem? Look at Luke 13. Luke 13 verse 33. Jesus said, "I must," you see the word again, right? You all see that? "I must," four letters. You see it. It's ok. You can nod. You can let me know that you are tracking with me. You see it, right? "I must journey on today, and tomorrow, and the next day, for it cannot be that a prophet would perish outside of Jerusalem." Why is He going to Jerusalem? Because that is where He was supposed to go. It was according to divine compulsion, the divine plan, the divine mission that He goes, knowing what lie ahead.

So, you see, beloved, Jesus did not spend his life reacting to unforeseen circumstances. He wasn't continually dialing up plan B and plan C. He was on plan A from beginning to end. This was all according to the divine plan that God had determined for His Son. Jesus, in saying, "I must do this," is expressing the fact that He was willingly acting upon divine obligation. Huh, think about this, this kind of just occurred to me: Jesus Christ, it was utterly unthinkable to Jesus Christ to stray an iota from the divine will. Does that convict you like it does me in terms of how we view the word of God, how we view the law of God, how casually we can set it aside when it is to our convenience, when it is contrary to our desires? To the Lord Jesus Christ it was unthinkable to stray from the will of God. Huh! He's here; that's unthinkable. We're here. Yeah, it's kind of a casual matter to us sometimes. Is that the way it should be? Shouldn't our approach, shouldn't our thinking of submission to the word of God somehow start to be elevated and conformed to the attitude that Christ had to the will of God? I must do this. It should be on our heart that when we see scripture clearly, I must do this! How could I excuse myself from an obligation that Christ himself would not excuse from Himself? Even more searchingly, why would I want to? What does that say about those motions of sin in your heart that this would even be an option to you? What does it say about my heart? You see, at so many levels, we see the exalted nature of Christ as he carries out the divine mission and, yes, beloved, yes, it humbles us in His presence. It humbles us to see such greatness on display. It humbles us to see that we by comparison treat the word of God and His will for our lives so lightly.

Look at Luke chapter 17:24. Jesus reemphasizes what we saw in Luke 13. Looking toward His second coming, He says in Luke 17 verse 24, "Just like the lightning when it flashes out of one part of the sky shines to another part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day." Ok. That's cool. That's going to be glorious. That'll be spectacular. That'll be fireworks like no one has ever seen before. Verse 25, but first, before we get to that glory, Jesus says, speaking of himself in the third person, He says, "but first, He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation." He must. It has to be this way.

Now, and so, Jesus sees this great macro plan from the beginning to the end, all points in between. And, as He marches through in His earthly life, He is teaching His disciples, "This is what is going to happen, and it's what's going to happen because it must happen,

and it must happen because this is what God determined to be." So there's this great macro plan, this great overarching sense of divine compulsion that you can step back and see from the Space Shuttle view, and you see the whole thing laid out, and you see the majesty of it all, and you see the grand design from beginning to end. Watch this. Watch what comes next! This isn't simply a macro plan. It's a micro plan as well.

Look at Luke chapter 19. Luke chapter 19 and the story of Zacchaeus who most of you know was a wee little man. Luke 19, "Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through, and there was a man called by the name of Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and he was rich. Zacchaeus was trying to see who Jesus was, and was unable because of the crowd for he was small in stature." So he's trying to see. He's trying to peek over and he can't, and so there's this sense of urgency on Zacchaeus' heart, and so in verse 4 he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree in order to see Christ, for Christ was about to pass through that way. You get the picture. It's a pretty vivid story. Look at verse 5. "When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for today, I must stay at your house." There was a divine appointment with a single man by name in this great earthly life that is fulfilling the eternal plan of God. That eternal plan of God included one man by name on that day in that tree. A universal view of this plan, universal in the sense of wide ranging scope down to the detail of a particular man who would have been despised by everyone around him because of his station in life. The Jews hated tax collectors. And yet, there's a divine appointment. Jesus says, "Zacchaeus, I've got to be with you. I must be with you tonight." And so, it's not just that Jesus was on a plan of general redemption. Jesus was on a plan of particular redemption. It wasn't just mankind in general. He was after people by name, all part of the divine plan. And the urgency that was in Zacchaeus' heart to see Jesus was part of it. You see, the whole force of divine history was moving not only on Jesus but in Zacchaeus, so that he would be there at just that moment. That's how great the divine plan of redemption is. When you and I came to Christ it wasn't any different. There was a divine appointment certain to be taking place. Listen, you should praise God for what I'm about to say: God did not leave your redemption up to whether you would initiate the first step or not. God had his eye on you from the beginning of time and it was certain that you would be brought into his family. It must. It must. Jesus' time with Zacchaeus was a divine necessity. Jesus had to bring salvation to him because it was the will of God, it was the will of the Father, and Jesus was always obeying the will of his Father.

You see, and I labor over this point. Not necessarily in this room, but so many resist this most glorious truth. Zacchaeus was no surprise to Christ. This was no accident. This wasn't Zacchaeus taking the first step. It was a divine appointment that Jesus was certain to fulfill, and He did. Look at verse 6. "Zacchaeus hurried and came down and received him gladly." That joy of being a mark of the work of God in his heart. "When they saw," verse 7, "they all began to grumble saying, he's gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." Talk about people who are missing the point. They're concerned about ceremonial defilement while they are observing the outworking of the eternal plan of God. And it's no different today! As people watch the proclamation of the gospel and mock it, as people disregard the scriptures, while people are getting saved around them, they are completely blind to the fact that a divine plan is working out, and they're

worried about who's going to be the next hero on American Idol. It's so trivial when you see it from this perspective. We haven't changed in the ensuing 2,000 years as a race.

Verse 8, "Zacchaeus stopped and said to the Lord, behold Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor. If I've defrauded anyone of anything I will give four times as much back." The divine work of repentance in his heart. Greedy tax collectors didn't do that sort of thing. It's a miracle. Verse 9, and "Jesus said, today salvation has come to this house because he too is the son of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." What is this divine plan? Jesus Christ is here on earth coming to seek and to save that which was lost. Not to bring us prosperity. Not to give indiscriminate signs to people who would never believe anyway. A divine plan, a divine rescue mission. Lost sinners headed for judgment suddenly have a champion on the scene. There's no surprise. The train is pulling into the station right on schedule.

And so, in light of what we've seen. When Christ was crucified, we already know by the time we get to that account of the gospel, nothing was going wrong. It was a plan being fulfilled to perfection. Look at Luke 23 verse 46. Our verb is not in this voice. The verb, the Greek verb that we've been focusing on here, but you get a window into the divine plan when Jesus, hanging on the cross in Luke 23 verse 46, "He cried out with a loud voice and said, Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." The words of the Old Testament prophet on his lips, fulfilling, even in his dying breath, the divine plan of God. Fulfilling, even in his final moment. Yes, beloved, from the moment of his conception in Matthew chapter 1 to his dying breath here in Luke 23, Jesus, under the authority of the plan of God, under the authority of the Word of God, Jesus fulfilling divine prophecy to the letter, to perfection, not one jot, not one tittle will be left undone. Matthew 5:17-20, "Don't think that I came to abolish the law, I came to fulfill it."

And so, He is crucified, for sinners slain. Three days later, He comes out of the grave, and in the announcement of the resurrection the same theme of the divine plan is expressed once more. Verse 6. "He is not here, but he has risen. Remember how he spoke to you while he was still in Galilee saying that," here it is again, "the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise again." And verse 8, "they remembered his words." After his death, in the resurrection, remember this is the divine plan. It must happen. It had to occur this way. Don't look for him here! The divine plan has moved into its next stage.

So the beginning, the middle, now we come to the end. The end of the gospel really, of course not the end of the life of Christ, because He's a Son of God, eternal, now living, and ascended at the right hand of heaven, interceding for us, even as we speak here today. For he ever lives to make intercession for his saints. And, oh, the majesty, of the glory of Christ. The majesty of our Savior, the majesty of our salvation. We have a Brother in heaven who has fulfilled the divine plan, and now He pleads for us; He intercedes for us; He represents us before the holy throne of God having fulfilled this divine plan with our salvation now accomplished. Merely waiting for Him to return and bring it to its ultimate consummation and our final glorification. That's the divine plan.

But now, point number three, the end. That sounded like the end, but that wasn't the end that I have in mind here. Because there is more even in the gospel of Luke for us to see. Point number three, the end. That's where you're with me on your notes, right? Jesus interpreted His earthly life after His resurrection for the men on the road to Emmaus. Look at Luke chapter 24. You remember the story. We won't go over it all. These two men were with Jesus, but they didn't recognize Him; they didn't know who they were talking to. Luke 24 verse 16, their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him. And Jesus said to them, "what are these words that you are exchanging with one another as you're walking on the way," and they stood still looking sad. And so they tell him their sad tale, verse 20, the chief priests and our rulers crucified him. We were hoping He was going to redeem Israel, but it's the third day since these things happened. Verse 22, some women amazed us; they were at the tomb; they didn't find the body; they saw a vision. Verse 24. Some of them went to the tomb; they found it just like the women had said, but Him they did not see. It's all so confusing to us. We don't know what to make of it. Verse 25. And Jesus with a certain element of rebuke in his voice said to them, "Oh foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken." Verse 26. Here is our verb again. "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into His glory?" It was necessary. Don't you get it? Verse 27. "Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the scriptures." "I'm fulfilling what Moses and the prophets said would happen. The Word of God cannot fail. Nothing will be left behind. When it's all gathered up at the end, you'll find that I fulfilled every single thing that my Father sent Me to do."

Why was this necessary? It's necessary, beloved, because the word of God cannot fail. The word of God must be fulfilled. Look at Luke 24 verse 44. "Now He said to them, these are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you. That all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." The threefold division of the Hebrew Bible. Everything that's in there, it had to be fulfilled. It must be fulfilled. God, our God, the God of the universe, sees the end from the beginning. He does what no one else can do and sets it forth in motion, a plan throughout the ages that is certain in its fulfillment. What He speaks must come to pass, because He is a God of truth and His word cannot fail. God said these things will occur. Christ came; they had to occur. It must be fulfilled. God planned redemption before time began. He foretold it through his servants the prophets in what we now know as the Old Testament. Jesus Christ who, as He walked on earth, had the appearance of any other man. No silly Catholic halos hanging over His head. No wings on his back to distinguish Him. That Christ fulfilled the plan in faithfulness to His Father. Christ would have it no other way. Beloved, it could not have been any other way. What God plans, He accomplishes, and He planned redemption, and Christ accomplished it to the last detail in His earthly life. What a great salvation.

What should you do now having heard this? If you're not a Christian, come to Christ. Do you realize that as you reject the gospel, and resist it, and doodle around on all kinds of other things, do you realize that you're spitting into the face of the divine purpose? Do you realize that in your puny little earthly life you have arrayed yourself against the might of divine omnipotence? You are rejecting the divine plan of God. There will be

consequences for that. And it's utterly foolish for you to live your life that way when the word of God is so clearly set forth before you in your own lap. I haven't told you anything that you couldn't read for yourself today. So what should you do? Well, the work is finished, and now the Spirit of God calls you to come to Christ in repentance and faith. Look at Luke 24 verse 47. What do you do in response to such a message? What do you do in response to this divine revelation of the accomplishment of the divine will? We're not talking in philosophies, we're not talking in alternatives here. You have heard today what has been done. And now, it is upon you as a moral obligation to respond. Verse 47, "repentance for forgiveness of sins will be proclaimed in his name to all the nations beginning from Jerusalem." You're part of the nations, right? You're one of the many. This is the divine call. The divine compulsion on you. Repent from your sins. Repent from your rejection of Christ and come to faith in Him for your salvation. Why would you refuse a perfect redemption that's being offered to you? The complete forgiveness of your sins, new, eternal life, the surety of heaven, fellowship with Christ. Why would you reject that? Turn from your life. Come out of your sinful life and come to this Christ who has been proclaimed to you through the Word. Come! Come! Come to Christ!

As you contemplate that thought, turn to Acts chapter 4 verse 12, also written by Luke. Acts chapter 4 verse 12. We see our word again. "There is salvation in no one else. For there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we," what? "We must be saved." This is the divine plan. There is no other salvation. There is no hope for you apart from Christ, but in Christ there is the certainty. There is the absolute assurance that you can find full and complete forgiveness by putting your faith in Christ. It's the divine plan. This is how you must be saved. It is the divine imperative. What about those of us that know Christ? What do we say to all of this? Well, if you're a Christian, if you're a Christian, it should be almost impossible for you to contain yourself. The glory and the majesty that God saw fit to include you in this divine plan. To bring you into the divine family. To bring you under his divine protection. Not only on earth, but for all of eternity! So overwhelm your thinking! This is too great for words! This is wonderful, marvelous, spectacular, amazing! Choose your own superlative adjective, and it won't be high enough to express the glory of this.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, you're a Christian today, because God planned it that way. You are on the receiving end of unspeakable grace, unspeakable power, unspeakable mercy, unspeakable love. You are on the receiving end of the mercy of a reconciling God to which you had no claim. And having given it to you in the divine plan, He's not going to take it away. He's not going to reverse course. It's yours forever. And you can see how Luke ends his gospel to bring us to exactly that point. You should worship with joy. Luke 24 verse 50. "Jesus led them out," Luke 24:50, I don't want you to miss it. I've got time. Oh, all the time in the world. Until you find that passage of scripture and see modeled for you what your heart should take out with you today in Christ. Luke 24 verse 50, "Jesus led them out as far as Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and he blessed them, and while he was blessing them he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. And they, after worshipping him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy and were continually in the temple praising God." There you go! There's your heart response. This is the framing

disposition of your Christian life from this moment forward. Out with the doubt, out with the anxieties, out with the bitterness and anger of past disappointments, out with it all. Our response, yours and mine, to this great accomplishment of Christ revealed in the gospel of Luke is one of worship, one of great joy, one of great praise. This is how we think about life now that we see the divine plan carried out in Christ and applied to our hearts. I'll say it one more time. What a great salvation!

Bow with me in prayer.

Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors, and do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil, and the evil one. For yours and yours alone is the power and the glory forever. Dear God, we are the beneficiaries of Your divine plan. Your greatness calls forth our worship and obedience. Your mercy compels our joy and love. And now, Father, as grateful people, we bless you, and you alone, in the name of our Christ. Amen.

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