

The Shadow Of The Cross

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Preacher: Rev. Thomas Davis

[0 : 0 0] Good evening to you all and a very, very warm welcome to our service. It's lovely to see you here and great to welcome visitors as we gather to worship a risen stadia together and as we look forward to sharing in the Lord's Supper, Lord willing on the Lord's Day.

So thank you very much for being here tonight. A very, very warm welcome to you all. As you know, our main preacher for the weekend is Professor Bob Androyd and he'll be taking the service tomorrow at noon.

Then there's the usual evening prayer meeting tomorrow evening and then both services on Sunday. You're very warmly invited to all of these.

After the service tonight, the Kirk session will be opened and if there are any who would like to meet with the Kirk session to profess faith in the Lord and to seek to come to the Lord's table for the first time, we'd be absolutely delighted to meet you.

And if you would like to meet with the session, please just make your way to the rest of the back. The session will be meeting in here and we'd be delighted to receive you after the service. Let us worship God together and we are going to sing together to his praise from Psalm 40.

[1 : 16] Psalm 40, singing from the beginning. I waited for the Lord my God and patiently to bear.
At length to me he did incline my voice and cry to hear.

Singing down to verse 4. O blessed is the man whose trust upon the Lord relies, respecting not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. The first four verses of Psalm 40 to God's praise.

I waited for the Lord my God and patiently to bear.

My voice and patiently to bear.

[illegible]

[3 : 35] O blessed is the man whose trust upon the Lord relies, respecting not the doubt or such, as turn aside to lies.

Let us pray together. Dear God, our Father, we are so thankful that we can come to you this evening.

We thank you that we have the opportunity and the access and the freedom to come into your presence in the name of your Son, in the presence of your Spirit.

We pray that as we gather here that you would still our hearts and help us to focus our minds as we seek to come before you in worship, in praise and thanksgiving.

So often, Father, we are busy in life, so often our minds are full, and we can so easily be distracted and so easily feel pressured and pulled in all sorts of directions.

[5 : 09] Our prayer as we come to you this evening is that we would be still and know that you are God, that we would come and be reminded of the amazing transformation that you have brought in our lives through your Son, our Lord Jesus.

We thank you that you are the one who takes us from the pit of our sin and our fears and our frustrations and our regrets, and you are the one who sets us on an immovable rock, that you give our lives stability and security, that you put a new song into our mouths, giving us joy and hope in a world that is so desperately in need of salvation.

So as we come together this evening, Father, we just pray that you would help us, that you would draw us near to you, that your blessing would be upon us. We bow before you and worship you, our God, our Maker, our Saviour, our Lord, our King.

We recognise that you, our God, are so full of glory and majesty and power and wisdom. And even if we stretch your thoughts as far as they can go, we can get barely a glimpse of your majesty and glory.

And so we come offering you our praise, so conscious that in so many ways that praise is just tiny and insignificant before you, and yet at the same time we marvel that our praise and prayer is precious to you.

[6 : 51] And so as we come to you, we thank you that we come to such an extraordinarily gracious, merciful and loving Father. And as we come, we pray, Father, that you would just help us, that you'd prepare us.

We pray that as we look at your word together shortly, that our hearts and our minds would be open to hear what you're saying.

We pray that we would be built up in our faith, that our love for you would deepen, that our love for one another would deepen, and that we would be equipped so that we can know you more closely and serve you more faithfully in every part of our lives.

We pray that this weekend will be a time of renewal and refreshment and encouragement for all your people here, both the congregation here in Kalanish and all visiting to join for services this weekend.

May it just be a time of refreshment and encouragement and blessing. May it be a time where we just can say that we met with you and that we experienced that thrilling joy of your nearness and of your spirit working within us and among us.

[8 : 01] And so we pray, Father, that you would bless us, but we also long to see more come to faith, and we pray that even over this weekend you will be working in people's hearts. We pray, Father, that for those who come along to hear your word, that you would just be drawing them to you, and we pray for those who stay away, that they would feel an emptiness in their hearts and a longing for the peace and security that only you can give.

We pray that you would be at work in our community all across the generations. We pray that we would just see hearts melted by your love and grace, and that we would see lives transformed by the good news of the risen Lord Jesus.

And so we pray that your blessing will be upon this congregation and community. And for everyone here tonight, we pray that you would be with us as we come before you. We come confessing our sin and acknowledging with regret that we just, we do things we shouldn't, we fail to do the things that we should.

We succumb to temptation, we fall into the same traps, we confess all of that before you. But we also rejoice that the promise of the gospel is that as far as east is from the west, so far have you and your love removed from us our iniquity.

And how we thank you for that reality. How we thank you that that is possible because of everything that you've done for us through your Son on the cross.

[9 : 28] And so in our time together just now, please bless us and meet with us. Please be with any here tonight in particular need, any going through difficult times, anyone facing struggles, either with their own health or other pressures in their lives, or anxious about loved ones.

We also pray for any here who are maybe doubting or who are feeling weak or low in their faith. Please encourage them. And for any here seeking you, we pray, Father, that they would find you, find the amazing peace and transforming power that comes from knowing Jesus.

Thank you so, so much for the gospel. And thank you that we can be here together tonight to praise and honour your name and to hear your voice speaking to us. May your abundant blessing continue to be upon us all.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to sing together again, this time from Psalm 25. Psalm 25, singing the first version.

And we're singing from verse 4 to verse 9. Show me thy ways, O Lord. Thy paths, O teach thou me. And do thou lead me in thy truth.

[10 : 46] Therein my teacher be. These are such wonderful words for us to sing. They're words we often sing. They're a great prayer that God would guide and direct us.

They express a confession of sin, as in verse 7. We acknowledge our sins and faults of youth. And yet it also rejoices in the fact that God will show sinners the way that they need to follow.

So we'll sing 4 to 9, 5 stanzas, Psalm 25, to God's praise. To me thy ways, O Lord.

Thy paths, O teach thou me. I'll give thy faith, O Lord. I'll give thy faith, O Lord.

I'll give thy faith, O Lord. I'll give thy faith, O Lord. If thy faith, O Lord. Let him thy teacher be.

[11 : 53] For thou art for our God. To me, O Lord.

To me, O Lord. I'll give thy faith, O Lord. I'll give thy faith, O Lord. All of me expecting to attend.

Thy tender mercy, Lord, I pray Thee to remember And my incandescent for me Have been a hold forever.

My sins and faults of you To thou, O Lord, forget After Thy mercy, Take on me And for Thy goodness grace God good and the Christ is The way He'll stand and show And make His judgment He will guide me And make His path to know

The reading this evening is from the book of Genesis and chapter 22. Genesis 22 And we'll read the first 19 verses.

[14 : 37] And it came to pass after these things that God did tempt Abraham and said unto him, Abraham, and he said, Behold, here I am.

And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, And offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I tell thee of.

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and claved the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

Then on the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off, and Abraham said to his young men, Arrive ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder, and worship, and come again to you.

And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son, and he took the fire in his hand, and the knife, and they went, both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father.

[15 : 47] And he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire, and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.

So they went, both of them, together. And they came to the place which God had told him of, and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham. And he said, Here am I.

And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him. For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.

And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering, in the stead of his son.

[16 : 59] And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-Jireh, as it is said to this day, in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven a second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed, as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore.

And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice.

So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up, and they went together to Beersheba, and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba. Amen, and may God add his blessing to that reading of his word.

Amen. But before we come back to this chapter, we're going to sing from Psalm 119, and we're going to sing from verse 33 to verse 37. Psalm 119 at verse 33.

[18 : 16] Psalm 119 is always a wonderful psalm to sing as we prepare for the sermon. And very often this psalm is offering a prayer to God that we will be taught and led and directed according to God's word.

And so as we're singing these words, we're also praying these words, that God would teach us the perfect way of his precepts, that he would give us understanding, that we would lead us in the path of his law, that he would turn us away from sin and lead us in his way.

So Psalm 119 from verse 33 to 37, Teach me, O Lord, the perfect way of thy precepts divine. Teach me, O Lord, the perfect way of thy patience divine.

I'm new, O serenity to the end, I job my heart in mind.

Give understanding down to me, So be thy love shall I, And even my whole heart I shall, Do of heaven and dear glory.

[20 : 06] In thy love shall I make me to know, For thy delight, heaven and dear glory.

I heart unto thy testimony, And all to thee in time.

Turn our love shall I, Turn our way, my sight and light, From you in time with thee, And in thy good and holy way, He made you quaint and me.

Amen. As we turn to God's word, let's pray for a moment.

Father, we pray that as we look together at your word, That we would hear your voice, That we would be drawn closer to you, That you lead us all in your ways, To the glory of your name.

[21 : 42] Amen. Well, I'd like us to turn together to Genesis chapter 22. Let me read again at verse 6.

And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, And laid it upon Isaac his son, And he took the fire in his hand and a knife, And they went, both of them, together.

And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father and said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood, But where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering. So they went, both of them, together. And he said, I think we could maybe say that Genesis 22 is possibly the most distressing chapter in the whole Old Testament.

And at the very same time, the most comforting. It's distressing because it's a difficult chapter. And whether it's a chapter that we know well, Or one that is less familiar to us.

[23 : 01] The whole scene that's been described is an immensely distressing one. The idea of a father sacrificing his son, And it's awful.

It seems unthinkable. If any of us, you know, you even, You only have to go a couple of steps into putting yourself into Abraham's shoes To just think, to be overwhelmed at how distressing this whole situation is.

But at the very same time, What I hope we will see is that this chapter is astonishingly comforting and encouraging to us. Because it's all an immensely powerful picture of the incredible love that lies at the heart of the Christian faith.

Now in order to understand a chapter like this, We need to understand the wider question of how the Old Testament and the New Testament fit together.

As you'll know, the Bible splits into these two big parts, Old Testament and New Testament. And the theme that runs right across them is the theme of covenant.

[24 : 11] That's really what the word testament is referring to. So when we say Old Testament, New Testament, We would maybe be even more accurate to say Old Covenant, New Covenant. That's the theme that's running, the theme and the thread that runs right through the whole Bible.

That term covenant is describing the relationship between God and his people. The relationship between God and humanity. And the whole message of the Bible is about how that relationship between God and humanity was created, then broken, then restored.

Now Genesis 1-3 describes the first two steps. When humanity is created, a beautiful relationship is established, and then everything is broken in Genesis 3.

The rest of the Bible, from Genesis 4 onwards, really from Genesis 3.15 onwards, is describing the astonishing work of restoration that God undertakes.

And that work of restoration begins in the Old Testament and is fully accomplished in the New. And so the way in which the Old Testament and the New Testament fit together is in a sense that the Old Testament is a shadow of the full reality that is revealed in the New.

[25 : 34] So, sometimes people draw a very sharp distinction between the Old and New Testament, and sometimes almost see them as kind of an almost like separate religions or certainly separate systems.

And they see that the New Testament is completely undoing and replacing everything in the Old. That's not how we would view it. It's not that the Old Testament is completely undone and abandoned by the New Testament.

Instead, what we believe is that the Old Testament gives us a shadow. A shadow of the full plan that is implemented and accomplished through the coming of Jesus in the New Testament.

So, if you imagine two buildings, and you might imagine that the Old Testament is one building and the New Testament is another, some people might argue that that Old Testament building is just blown up, like you see on TV, demolished, and a new one is built.

That's not the right way to think about it. Instead, you need to think of the New Testament as a tall building, and its shadow falls backwards across the Old Testament era.

[26 : 50] So, everything that you're reading about in the Old Testament is part of this shadow that is being made and created by the New Testament building, by the full accomplishment of God's purposes.

And that's a very helpful way to look at it because it's reminding us that the two are inseparable, just as you and your shadow are inseparable. But the Old is just an outline of the real thing.

So, you see this apply in loads of ways, in every way in the Old Testament. So, the Exodus is a shadow of the New Testament reality whereby God delivers us and rescues us out of slavery to sin.

The temple is a shadow of the New Testament. The temple is a shadow of the New Testament reality whereby God comes to dwell in our hearts as the true temple united to Jesus.

And King David later in the Old Testament is a shadow of the New Testament reality whereby the Kingdom of God is established, inaugurated, and advanced through the coming of Jesus the King.

[28 : 05] The other thing in the Old Testament is a shadow of the New Testament reality. The other thing in the Old Testament is a shadow of what we find in the New. And this definitely applies in Genesis 22. This chapter is a shadow.

It's a shadow of what happened on the cross. And I want us to look at that together tonight. We're going to look at three things.

The first two will be longer and the last one will just be very, very brief. We're going to look at a shadow of a son who's precious. A shadow of a substitute which is provided.

And a shadow of a blessing which is poured out. Shadow of a son who's precious. Of a substitute which is provided.

A blessing which is poured out. So, first of all, a shadow of a son who's precious. Read again at verse 1. And it came to pass after these things that God did tempt Abraham and said unto him, Abraham, and he said, Behold, here I am.

[29 : 13] And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I tell thee of.

So, in these verses, Abraham is commanded by God to offer his son as a sacrifice. And as God gives that command, there is one key truth that is very strongly emphasised.

The key truth is that this son is precious. And you can see that in the words God uses in verse 2.

He isn't told to take Isaac or to take the boy. He is told, Take now thy son. This is Abraham's very own child.

And not only that, he is thine only son, Isaac. Take your son, your only son.

[30 : 27] Isaac's unique. He's the only one born to Abraham and Sarah. He is the one who had been promised by God.

He is the one for whom they had waited and prayed and longed for years and years and years.

Abraham has been asked to offer something utterly unique, something utterly irreplaceable. And that's reinforced by the fact that he is the one whom thou lovest.

You can see that there in verse 2. He's not just a unique child. He's an utterly cherished child. Abraham loves his son. For Abraham, there is no one else in the world like Isaac.

That father-son relationship between them is a bond of the deepest, deepest love. So, just these few words in the first half of verse 2 are just pressing so hard into us as the reader that this child is precious.

[31 : 40] Now, at this stage of the chapter, all of that just reinforces just how shocking and distressing God's command to Abraham is. The whole thing just seems unthinkable.

And you're asking the question, why is God doing this? Is God just being horrible? Or is he showing us something? And the fact that the Old Testament is a shadow is telling us that it's the latter.

God is showing us something. God is showing us something. Isaac is a son who is incredibly precious, but he is actually just a shadow.

He's a shadow of the son who is the most precious son of all. And that son is Jesus Christ. If you go forward into the New Testament and read about the life of Jesus in the Gospels, there's two crucial moments when God, the Father, speaks from heaven.

A voice from heaven is heard. It's heard at the baptism of Jesus and it's heard at the transfiguration of Jesus. Two crucial moments in the ministry of Jesus.

[32 : 53] And at each of these, God says the same thing. He says, this is my beloved son.

You think how rare the voice of the Father is in the Gospels. When he does speak, this is what he wants to say.

He wants to reinforce how precious and beloved his son is. And in John 17, Jesus himself speaks about the Father's love for him. Father, I desire that they also whom you've given me may be with me where I am to see my glory that you've given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

Now, in Genesis 22, Isaac is probably about 12 years old. For every second of those 12 years, Isaac has been utterly loved by Abraham.

But God the Father has had God the Son with him forever. And for every second of that eternity, the Father has poured his love into his precious Son.

[34 : 11] So here in Genesis 22, we're just getting a glimpse. We're getting a shadow into that intimate bond of love that exists between God the Father and God the Son.

To God the Father, there is none like Jesus. He is the Father's one and only Son. He's the Father's beloved.

He has been the object of the Father's love forever. And when the Bible says that God is love in 1 John, it's so important to remember that's not just kind of a vague, nice, mystical thing to say.

It's actually a logical, indisputable fact that from forever until forever, at the heart of the very essence and being of God, is a Father who loves his precious, beautiful, treasured Son.

And this is one of those instances where exaggeration is actually understatement. Because I could use every superlative, every big word that I can think of to describe how precious Jesus is to the Father.

[35 : 29] And yet, no matter what I say, and no matter for how long I say it, I cannot get close. I cannot take you close to the magnitude of the Father's love for his Son.

I cannot get close to conveying the fullness of what it means when God the Father says, this is my beloved Son. And for everyone here who is a parent, every ounce of love that you have for your children is a glimpse of this.

In fact, that's part of what it means for humanity to be made in the image of God. The fact that we love our offspring. And that's particularly important in relation to fatherhood, because the uniqueness of that love for our offspring, I think, applies particularly in terms of fatherhood.

And many of you right now are in the midst of lambing. Lambing. I am not an expert at lambing. And so if I'm wrong, you can correct me when I say this.

But I am pretty certain that I have never seen a ram looking for his offspring. I don't even know if he's aware he has been.

[36 : 53] And even those expressions of care that we do see in the animal kingdom, they're always only temporary.

Humans are different. Fathers love their children. And when fathers fail to love their children, and that does happen, when fathers fail to love their children, it's because they are failing to be the fathers that God wants us to be.

And that's a desperate, desperate tragedy. When we, we must never idolize our children, but when we pour our love into our children, as mothers, and in this instance, in this chapter, especially as fathers, we are honoring and glorifying the God who has made us.

And all of it's a glimpse into what God has spent eternity doing. Loving his precious son. And so when you think about Jesus, and as you think about Jesus this weekend, alongside recognizing that he is our king, our teacher, our savior, our guide, we must always remember that Jesus is the precious, unique, beloved son of God.

In Isaac, we see a shadow of Jesus. A shadow of a son who is incredibly precious. We also see the shadow of a substitute, which is provided.

[38 : 19] You see that from verse 9. They came to the place which God told them. Abraham built an altar, laid the wood there, bound Isaac's son, laid him on the altar, on the wood. Abraham stretched forth his hand, took the knife to slay his son.

And then the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven and said, Abraham, Abraham. And he said, here am I. And he said, lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do anything to him.

For now I know that you fear us, God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked. And behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns.

And Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And this is a very familiar chapter.

And so I'm sure that there's perhaps nobody here who's reading Genesis 22 for the first time tonight. But imagine you were.

[39 : 21] Imagine you did not know the outcome as you read through verses 1 to 10. And even though I've known the outcome since I was a child, even as I read them just now, I'm still so relieved to hit verses 11, 12, 13, where God says to Abraham, stop.

And he provides a ram to die instead of Isaac. Two important things are emphasised.

The first is that the ram is provided by God. And so even as they walked to Mount Moriah, Abraham was looking to the Lord to make a provision.

Isaac says, where's the ram? Abraham says, the Lord will provide. And at the moment, at that moment when it looked as though the worst was going to happen, everything changes because of the provision that God makes.

And Abraham calls the place Jehovah Jireh. As it's said to this day, in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen. Now, that language of seen is often translated and understood in the language of seeing to something, in the sense of seeing to it that it's dealt with, providing for it.

[40 : 44] And so there's that emphasis on the Lord's provision, even in the name that Abraham uses. The second key point is that the ram is a substitute who's offered instead of Isaac.

And those, that wonderful phrase, in the stead of his son, at the end of verse 13, are beautiful. And they're telling us the reason why God is making this provision.

The ram is provided so that Isaac is protected. The ram is the substitute who takes his place. And again, the key point in all of this is that God's showing us something.

This is a shadow of a substitute provided. Now, all of this is raising the whole question and the whole issue of sacrifice.

Isaac is almost a sacrifice. And the ram is offered in his place as a substitute. And as you read the rest of the Old Testament, there's a massive emphasis on sacrifice.

[41 : 54] Why is that? Why is the shadow of God's plan of salvation so full of sacrifice? Well, central to the emphasis on sacrifices is the fact that as far as the Bible is concerned, death is a massive problem.

And this is a very important thing for us to understand that very often we associate the word sin with being bad. And that's correct because sin is a rebellion against God's commands.

And it's a failure to conform to the moral perfection that God intends for his creation. So sin is bad. But that is not actually the primary connection that the Bible makes. The primary connection that the Bible makes is not between sin and badness.

The primary connection is between sin and death. And as far as the Bible is concerned, death is a massive problem.

Humanity was created by God to live. You were created by God to live. But sin has ruined that and sin has placed us on a path to death.

[43 : 06] And to God and to us, that is a massive problem. And it's a great reminder that if you are ever, if you or people you know are ever asking the question, is the Bible relevant to me? Is the gospel relevant to me?

Well, ask yourself the question, is death a problem for you? And if it's not, then the Bible is not going to do much for you. But if death is a problem for you, then the Bible is everything that you need.

The Bible tells us that death is a problem. And that problem is caused by sin.

Now, here is where we get to the heart of the issue. The way to get rid of death is to get rid of sin.

But the only thing that gets rid of sin is death. The way to get rid of sin, the way to get rid of death is to get rid of sin. But the only way to get rid of sin is through death.

[44 : 11] So, and this is why death creates, sin creates an unstoppable path to death. Let me try and illustrate. I want you to imagine that my heart, the physical organ, the thing that's pumping blood around my body right now, I want you to imagine that that's been contaminated by radiation.

Now, I know that I would be dead already if that was two, but just imagine that's two. Okay? That my heart has been contaminated by radiation. So, every time my heart beats, it's producing radioactiveness, whatever you call it, in my blood.

And that radioactiveness is going to slowly kill me. Okay? So, you're looking at me and you're thinking, right, my heart's pumping. It's pumping poison throughout my body.

And that pumping is slowly going to kill me. And so you think, okay, in order to fix that, we need to stop the heart from pumping.

But if you stop my heart from pumping, I die anyway. And that is the situation that sin has left humanity in.

[45 : 17] Humanity needs to get rid of sin in order to avoid death. The only thing that gets rid of sin is death. Sin creates an unstoppable path to death.

And that is why God hates sin. And that's why God judges sin. Because it is so utterly horrible. But a radioactive heart is a good illustration for sin.

Because if something is radioactive, you cannot un-radioactively it. If that was a word. What can you do? What can you do?

All you can do is get it away from you. And put it somewhere else. And that's exactly what sin is like.

We can't un-sinnify it. All we can do is get it away from us.

[46 : 22] And put it on someone else. And the sacrificial system of the Old Testament is pointing us towards that.

It is grounded in the principle that the death that sin makes inevitable is diverted off us and onto a substitute.

And Genesis 22 and the rest of the sacrificial system in the Old Testament is a shadow of that. Ultimately, it wasn't effective in and of itself. That's because it's impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin, as Hebrews 10 tells us.

Animals cannot adequately substitute for humans. But it was never intended to be effective because it was only ever intended to be a shadow. A shadow of the sacrifice where a perfect substitute would take the death resulting from all of our sins in our stead.

All of that means that in Genesis 22, we see a shadow of a precious son. And we see a shadow of a substitute provided.

[47 : 39] And the key point is that on the cross, both of these come together. And there's something fascinating about the place where all of this happens.

God tells Isaac to go to the land of Moriah in Genesis 22. If you go forward to 2 Chronicles 3, you read that when Solomon built the temple, he built it at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah.

And so the hill that Abraham is on is the hill that Jerusalem and the temple is on.

Which is the hill that the cross is on. And on the cross, the precious son of God becomes the perfect substitute provided for us.

On the cross, Jesus dies in our place as our substitute. In doing so, all our sin is placed on him and his perfect righteousness is placed on us.

[49 : 09] And as a result, we are saved.

The fact that Isaac was saved was because the ram took his place. It's a shadow of the fact that we are saved because Jesus takes our place. But the key point of Genesis 22 is that the magnitude of what Abraham almost had to do is giving us a glimpse into the magnitude of what God actually had to do in order to save us.

In Genesis 22, there is massive relief when Abraham's precious son is spared.

But when God the Father saw Abraham's son being spared, he knew that when it came to his own precious son, there would be no ram to take his place.

In Genesis 22, the son is replaced with a ram. And that's the pattern for the rest of the Old Testament shadow as the bulls and goats and rams are offered in a sacrificial system.

[50 : 34] But at the cross, all the bulls and goats and rams of that Old Testament shadow come to an end. In Genesis 22, the son is replaced with a ram.

In the New Testament, the rams are replaced with a son. And Abraham's statement, the Lord will see to it, the Lord will provide, ultimately means far more than Abraham probably ever realised.

As Romans 8.32 says, God did not spare his own son, but gave him up.

And this is where we see the massive cost of the cross. Because the awfulness of Genesis 22 is a glimpse into the awfulness of the cross. It's no wonder Jesus was in agony in Gethsemane on the night before the cross.

And that he prayed that this cup might pass from him. It's no wonder that he needed to be strengthened by angels. The cross costs God everything. His son is not spared.

[51 : 42] His father has to give him up. At the cross, God provides a substitute. And that substitute is his own beloved, precious son.

And in the midst of all the agony and pain and distress and loss that this causes, we have to ask the question, why? Why on earth would God do this?

And the amazing answer is that you can answer that question with one word. Why is God doing this?

Because of you. As Romans 8.32 says, he who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all.

All of this is so that you can be saved through faith in Jesus. And if you can see just how precious Jesus the Son of God is, and if you can see just how perfect the provision that has been made is, then you will see just how much you are worth in the eyes of God.

[53 : 03] The massive cost of the cross is paid in full because of how precious you are to God. I heard this summed up so beautifully by Eric Alexander, who is a preacher in Glasgow for many years and a couple of years ago was taken home to be with the Lord.

He was talking about Genesis 22 and he said, when you look at Abraham you think, wow, see how much he loved God. But when you look at the cross you think, wow, see how much God loves me.

And that preciousness of the one on the cross and that perfection of the provision that God has made tells you and reinforces to you the amazing truths that lie at the heart of the gospel.

So, I'm going to do something a little bit different. I'm going to ask you two questions. I hope you guys see them. I wanted to hold this up to make it work better.

What is blank line worth? And I want you to put your name in that line. What is that line worth? Okay, what are you worth? Okay. Another question is, what are you?

[54 : 35] Same again, put your name in that line. What do you have to do to be worth something? So, what are you worth? What do you have to do to be worth something?

Now, usually, if you're anything like me, your answer to the first question is going to be this. That's how we feel. We feel worthless.

Struggle with self-esteem. We feel like we let God down, that we let others down, and that deep down, we're a waste of space.

And maybe we look for self-worth in our career or our possessions or whatever. All of that is to mask the fact that deep down we feel so inadequate. And then, our answer to the second question, what do you have to do to be worth something?

Usually, our answer to that is this. Everything. And so, we need to prove ourselves. We need to show that we're smart enough.

[55 : 42] Or that we're good enough. Or that we can match up. And every man-made religious system follows this pattern. Thinking that we have to reach a certain standard. That we need to, in some way, do stuff, learn stuff, know stuff.

Prove ourselves. We define ourselves. We need to do this, that, or the next thing. We need to be this, that, or the next thing. In order to show that we're worth something.

To be good enough for our parents, or for our children, or for our boss, or for the people in our community, or even for God. We think that we've got to do everything in order to show that we are worth something.

So, you ask the question, what are you worth? Instinctive answer, nothing. You ask the question, what do you need to do to be worth something? Instinctive answer, everything. The amazing thing about the gospel is that if you ask these two questions to God, the answers are the other way around.

You ask God, what are you worth? Everything. And the cross proves it.

[57 : 00] And what do you have to do to be worth something in his eyes? Nothing. Nothing. And the cross proves that as well.

Because Jesus does everything, everything that is needed for you to be God's precious child forever.

That's how amazing the gospel is. And that brings us to our very last point, which is very short.

But it's so important. In this chapter we see a shadow of a blessing which is poured out. You see that at the end of the passage that we read, verse 15, The angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven a second time and said, By myself I have sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee.

And in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, as the sand which is upon the seashore. And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice.

[58 : 18] The key point here is the fact that as a result of the fact that Abraham did not withhold his son, blessings are poured out upon Abraham and upon others.

There's the blessings of a family. His offspring will be multiplied. There's blessings of security. His enemies are not going to be a threat. There's blessings for all people. All nations of the earth shall be blessed. And this is also a shadow of the cross.

Because the fact that God did not withhold his son has meant that incredible blessings have been poured out upon humanity.

Because if you are a Christian or if you become one through faith in Jesus Christ, we have the blessing of a beautiful family. We're brought together as God's children, as brothers and sisters in Christ, united in one beautiful family.

We have the blessing of unshakable security. Sin and death cannot threaten you again. Nothing can snatch you out of our Father's hand.

[59 : 22] And we have an amazing blessing for all nations. And the good news of Jesus is transforming lives all across the world. And we have the incredible privilege of continuing to share that message.

And it's summed up perfectly in Romans 8.32 again, which we've come back to again and again. Romans 8.32 He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

God's great purpose is to pour out his blessing upon us and upon the people around us and upon the generations coming after us.

Genesis 22 gives us a shadow of a precious son. It gives us a shadow of a substitute provided. It gives us a shadow of a blessing poured out.

And the amazing thing about the cross is that there, all of these shadows become a reality. And now, as we marvel at the preciousness of Jesus, as we rejoice in the substitute that's provided, and as we receive and enjoy the extraordinary blessings that God has poured out, what do we do?

[60 : 38] What do we do? We do what every family does. We share a meal of celebration together. And in that meal, the bread and the wine speak to us about the preciousness of this child. And the bread and the wine speak to us of the perfection of the substitute provided. And the bread and the wine speak to us of the extraordinary blessings that God is continuing to pour out on us all through his son, our amazing saviour, Jesus.

Amen. Let's pray. Dear Father, we thank you that you did not spare your son.

That you gave him up for us all. And we recognise that because you've done that, how will you not also graciously give us all things?

[61 : 51] You have graciously given us all things. And so we look back at the cross with just the deepest thanksgiving in our hearts.

And we look forward to sharing the Lord's Supper with unspeakable joy and thanksgiving in our hearts. And so we pray that in it all you will be leading us closer to you.

And we pray that every heart here tonight would see and understand in you how precious they are to you. Amen. We're going to close with Psalm 103.

And we're seeing from verse 13 to verse 17. Such pity as a father hath unto his children dear, like pity shows the Lord to such as worship whom fear.

For he remembers that we are dust, and here frame well knows. Frail man his days are like the grass, as flower in field he grows. For over it the wind doth pass, and it away is gone.

[63 : 08] And the place of it where once it was, it shall no more be known. But unto them that do him fear, God's mercy never ends. And to their children's children still his righteousness extends.

These verses to God's place. Such pity as a father hath unto his children dear, like pity shows the Lord to such as more to him in fear.

For he remembers we are dust, and here frame well knows.

Till man his days start like the grass, as flower in field he grows.

For over it the wind doth pass, and it away is gone.

[64 : 36] And of the place where once it was, it shall no more be known.

But unto them that do him fear, God's mercy never ends.

And to their children's children still his righteousness extends.

Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Amen.