

Responding to Conviction for our Sin!

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word.

All right, take your Bibles if you would and go with me to Matthew chapter 27. When the Holy Spirit is doing His job, He convicts people of sin. He convicts the lost people.

He convicts us as Christians that we're doing wrong. And how we respond to conviction in our lives and for our sin is an important thing. In this passage of Scripture, God's going to be dealing with different people.

And they're all going to respond in different ways. And I hope that you'll examine yourself and see exactly where you fit in this passage of Scripture. How do you respond to the work of God in your life?

As He shows you, you have sinned. As He shows you that you failed. Read with me in Matthew chapter 27 and verse 1, if you would. Matthew 27, verse 1. The Bible says, when the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put Him to death.

[1 : 06] So we start out with a concerted effort to get Jesus killed. They're working at getting Him killed. There's a whole multitude of people that are working right now.

There's an inside job because Judas is one of the 12. Judas is one of the ones who loved Jesus. Jesus loved Him. They spent time together. And so Judas is plotting about how he will bring about Jesus' death.

Or at least how he's going to get Him before Pilate and before the religious leaders. And then there's Jewish religious leaders. And they hated Jesus from the very beginning. And they wanted to get rid of Him. They wanted to get rid of Him because you've got to remember that Jesus makes you see your sin.

The Bible says in John chapter 3 and verse 20, For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.

Look at that. Everyone that does evil. When you do wrong, you hate light. Because when you get to the light, your deeds will be reprov'd. Verse 21 said, But he that doeth truth comes to the light, that his deeds might be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

[2 : 13] And don't forget Jesus and the Pharisees and the religious leaders, they've been on a headlong clash since the very beginning. On the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus made this statement in Matthew 5.20.

He said, I say unto you that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. So he's been fighting with them for three and a half years.

He's been saying, You act like you know God. You act like you're saved. You act like you're Christians. But the truth is you hate the truth. You hate the light. You don't want to get your life right with God.

And so they are working to bring about his death. And they need the help of Rome. They can't kill him themselves. Rome will not allow the Jews to put anybody to death.

And so in chapter 27 and verse 2, When they bound him, they led him away and delivered him to Pontius Pilate, the governor. So they're going to get Rome involved in killing him.

[3 : 10] You know, as a kid, you grew up hearing that the Jews killed Jesus. And there it became this anti-Semitic attitude, this hating the Jews because they killed Jesus.

That's just simply not true. The Jews delivered him to Rome. The Romans are going to get him killed. Judas is part of the original 12. And he's going to help get him killed. And Rome represents the entire world because they're a world kingdom.

And there are armies made up of people from everywhere. And it was the whole world that really killed him. Jesus isn't really crucified by Jews. It was against the law for them to do that. You could say he died for the whole world.

The world, all authority, all humanity was guilty of his death. There were false witnesses involved in getting him to there. But the biggest truth of all that you have to come away with when you study the Bible is that God had planned for Jesus to die.

It wasn't Jews and it wasn't Romans. It wasn't false witnesses and it wasn't Judas. It was God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit of God working at bringing about our salvation.

[4 : 22] Right in the margin of your Bible. Acts chapter 2 verse 23. Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

Underline that. The determinate counsel and the foreknowledge of God you have taken and by wicked hands have crucified. So the Bible's coming true. This is exactly what God said was going to happen.

He knew from the very beginning. You do know that before we were ever created, God already knew we were going to sin. God already knew we were going to mess up. God already knew what a wretch as we would be.

And Jesus is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Revelation chapter 13 and verse 8. The Bible says, And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb.

Slain from the foundation of the world. God knew nothing surprised him. Your sin doesn't surprise him. God didn't look down through there and say, I had no idea they were going to do that.

[5 : 19] God knew we were sinners. God worked a plan of salvation. So here's the first question for you today. Individually. Do you acknowledge that it was your sin that put Jesus on the cross?

Do you acknowledge it was your sin? You can blame the Jews. You can blame the Romans. You can blame Judas. He's the bad guy in the story. But the truth of the matter is, God sent Jesus to die because he loved you.

And he loved me. And Jesus was dying for us. He died for you. It wasn't them that were so bad. It was my sin and his love for me that put him there on the cross.

In all honesty, we know we've sinned. We know our need. But now we must decide how we will respond to this guilt we feel. You see, the facts are, and you're going to go through and study today, the conviction, how they knew they were wrong, and how they would respond to knowing they're wrong.

Everybody in this room, if we're honest, we know we have done wrong. If we're honest, we know that we are not in ourselves, by ourselves, prepared to stand before a holy God. Everybody.

[6 : 26] If you're a born-again believer here, you know that. You know, thank God you got Jesus. But if you're not saved, you may somehow think, I'm going to respond to the conviction in a different way.

You may think, I've got ways to fix things with God, because that's kind of what goes on in the story. But you know that you have sinned, and you know that.

So now we want to see how you'll respond to the conviction you feel for your sin. You see, there's this thing inside of you that says you've sinned. There's this thing inside of you that says you've failed God.

There's this thing inside of you that says you're going to stand before an almighty God one day, and something inside of you, so how will you respond to that? So the first person we'll look at is old Judas.

Look at verse 3. And he responds with false repentance. False repentance. Did you know that you could, quote, unquote, repent?

[7 : 21] Did you know that you could, quote, unquote, say you're sorry? You could, quote, unquote, begin to think you'd fail God. Look, if you would, at Judas in Matthew 27, 3 and 4. The Bible said, Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself.

Underline that. He repented himself and brought again the 30 pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned that I betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What's that to us?

See thou to it. Do you understand the story here? I don't know what's going on with old Judas. I don't know what's happening in his mind. I don't know why he turned Jesus in. But obviously he didn't really expect Jesus to be condemned to death.

He didn't really expect Jesus to be killed. He didn't want it to go that far. I don't know exactly what was going on. Was it a political thing? Was he trying to push the envelope? Was he trying to make Jesus step forward?

Who knows what's going on? But this much we know. He was sorry for what he did. He said, You know what? He comes back with the 30 pieces of silver.

[8 : 22] He had contracted with him. He made a contract. He had said, You pay me money and I'll turn him into you. Now he comes back in and he throws the money on the floor and says, No way. I was wrong.

I was wrong. And he repented himself. You should underline that if you would. In verse 3, he repented himself. He repented. Verse 4, he said, I'll even tell you what I did wrong.

I have betrayed innocent blood. I have betrayed innocent blood. He saw the consequences of his actions that Jesus was condemned to die and he repented.

So I never meant for that to happen. I do love him. I never meant for him to die. I didn't know that was going to happen. I didn't know it was going to go that far. I didn't know that was going to happen. I'll never know what was in his mind.

But somehow, he was sorry. The question here, the first question for us is this. What kind of sorry? See, when I was a boy, my daddy used to say that I wasn't sorry for what I did.

[9 : 22] I was sorry for the fact that I got caught. And let me just tell you the truth. He was right. I was rarely sorry for what I did wrong. I was sorry that he had this belt.

And before then, he had what they called a razor strap, which no young person's ever even heard, ever seen. But they were wide and they were thick and they were hard. And daddy knew how to apply that to the seat of education and to help me learn how to do different.

And I was always sorry when I sinned. And he found out. I wasn't that sorry when I sinned and he didn't find out. And he was right. Well, here's old Judas. And Judas is really sorry.

How's he going to respond to the conviction? I want you to consider that for a second. Because almost all of us are sorry when we do wrong and we see the consequences of our sin.

Almost all of us can understand that. And if you're here this morning, you may not even really be saved because you may have come to a place in your life when you were caught and trapped and you realized you needed to repent. And you went through all the religious motions, but it wasn't from your heart.

[10 : 29] And we'll know that because of what's fixing to happen to old Judas. But let me show you a Bible verse where we're at. 2 Corinthians chapter 7 and verse 10. In 2 Corinthians chapter 7 and verse 10, it says, Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation.

Not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death. If you've got your Bible open there, which I hope you do, underline godly sorrow and sorrow of the world.

Two different kinds of sorrow. One sorrow says it's godly sorrow. And it says, man, I've done wrong. And I need to run to the one who has grace. I need to run to the one who has mercy. I need to run to the one who has paid for my sin.

I need to run and humble myself to God and be saved and have the freedom that comes from knowing that he paid my sin debt. The other is the sorrow of the world. This is a cry in your beer kind of sorrow.

This is a guy down at the bar who's saying, man, I really messed up today. Hand me another drink. This is a guy. This is a guy in jail who's about to be put to death or prison, about to be put to death.

[11 : 34] And he's really sorry for what he did. But he wasn't sorry. Godly sorrow. No godly sorrow. He did wrong. But he didn't see what he'd done wrong.

There's a contrast here. In the story as we study, we study Peter and Judas that are together. Both of them did almost the same thing, if you're honest about it. I mean, Judas turned Jesus in, and he didn't really want him to die, evidently.

But Peter had a chance to stand there with Jesus. And they come up to him, and they say, hey, you're the guy that's with him. He said, no, I'm not. They come back, and he said, I swear to God I'm not him.

They come back the third time, and he said, blankety-blank, blank, I swear to God I'm not him. I mean, that's the story. But old Peter will look and see Jesus, and he'll realize he sinned, and he'll go and weep bitterly.

But he will repent, and he will be used of God. Look at Matthew 26 and verse 75. Matthew 26 and verse 75. Right where you are in your Bible, Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice, or three times.

[12 : 46] And he went out and weep bitterly. But Peter will be back in the ministry. By the way, he does have some down days there. He got quite a few down days. It isn't like he just jumped back up, and everything was okay.

If you remember, he goes out fishing, and Jesus comes, and Jesus says, you love me, you love me, you love me. But he'll be back. God's grace shows greatly as he allows Peter to be the preacher on the day of Pentecost.

To be blunt honest with you, had I been the Lord Jesus, I wouldn't have had Judas preaching, and I wouldn't have had Peter preaching. I think I'd have had old John preach. You know, John's standing at the foot of the cross, and Jesus looks at him.

There ain't none of the rest of them anywhere around. Peter, the big mouth who said, I'll never leave you, I'll never forsake you, I'm the guy you can count on. He's hiding somewhere, and he says, John, would you take care of my mama? And John's the one he loved.

I'd have picked him, but the grace of God says, hey, I don't pick the people you'd pick. Ain't you grateful for that, amen? Aren't you grateful for the fact that the guy who messed up more than anybody got recognized, and God did something in his life, and he was a preacher on the day of Pentecost.

- [13 : 54] How often have I repented falsely? I was sorry I got caught, called out on something where I knew I was wrong. How often have I felt a sorrow that didn't bring a change?
- How often have I felt a sorrow that didn't bring a change? Maybe you're here, and you feel bad about your sin, but you continue down the same path.
- You're sorry. You cry even, but you continue down the same path. Today is the day to see what sin does to you, because sin will eventually bring about your death.
- It is death to continue feeling bad about your sin without running to God. You understand that? In just a few minutes, Judas will kill himself.
- Suicide. That's how sorry he was. I'm telling you, he was really sorry about what he had done. He was humiliated publicly.
- [14 : 58] He was embarrassed. He saw no way out. The only thing left he could do was kill himself. But today, you can know the grace of God. Today, you can know that God loves you.
- Will you respond to your sin by feeling sorry and making no change? Or will you respond by acknowledging your sin and believing in Jesus and what he did on the cross of Calvary?
- It's a sad passage. Because they've now turned Jesus in, and Judas has figured out he did wrong, and he's sorry. But it's not the right kind of sorry, because the next thing we find out in Matthew chapter 27 is that Judas hangs himself.
- Look at verse 5 with me. Matthew 27 to 5. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed and went and hanged himself. That's a very tragic part of the story.
- You understand what happened? They caught Jesus. I don't know how much Judas knows, but he realizes they've grabbed him, they're beating him, they're plucking him, pulling the beard out of his face, and they're slapping a crown of thorns.
- [16 : 05] And he said, all the story that's going to happen, I'm not sure exactly when everything happens. But he realized Jesus didn't defend himself, Jesus didn't raise up the kingdom, and all of a sudden Jesus is condemned to die. There's been a trial.
- They've taken him to Pilate, and he knows that Jesus is going to die, and he is so sorry. He never, ever meant for it to go that far. He never, ever meant for it to happen like it did.
- And he comes back and he throws the money back at the feet of the guys he made the deal with. I mean, he's sorry. Watch the video. He's broken. He's sorry.
- And at this point, he could have run to the God of heaven for salvation. He could have gone and said, I'm a filthy, dirty, wicked, worthless sinner, and I deserve to go to hell. I don't deserve it.
- You never loved me. He could have done like the prodigal son and said, hey, I've said, he heard that story. He heard Jesus preach that story. He knew about the prodigal son. He knew he'd done wrong.
- [17 : 02] He could have run back and said, please forgive me. And you know what? The Lord would have forgiven him because he's a God of all grace and full of mercy. But he's gone too far. And he kills himself.
- He went out and he hanged himself. Suicide was the 10th leading cause of death for all ages in 2013. There was one suicide every 13 minutes in 2013.
- And 76% of those who killed themselves were using either alcohol, antidepressants, or opiates. So they were already so messed up. They were trying to drown their sorrow with medication or with drugs or with alcohol.
- And research, this is all secular stuff I just pulled off the internet. Research indicates there's several reasons people commit suicide. I'd just like to talk to you briefly about suicide and let you know that's never God's answer.

That's never the answer. One of the primary reasons people commit suicide is they've been hurt and they want to hurt somebody. Retaliation. I want to strike back.

[18 : 13] You did me wrong. You hurt me. So I know the best way to hurt you back is to kill myself. That's really kind of dumb. But that's how deep they're down in their depression. That's how messed up they are.

They have no reason to live. They may think they no longer deserve to live. They need to punish themselves for whatever horrible thing they did. And so they want to kill themselves.

They're feeling extreme guilt. Extreme guilt. They're depressed. They're crying out for help. They're in trouble.

And they need help. That's where old Judas was too. By the way, I think I can see every one of these characteristics that psychologists say. I think I can see them all in old Judas' life.

He's feeling guilty. He's depressed. He wishes somebody could help him. He don't want to think he has a reason to live. He wants to hurt those that have hurt him. But he doesn't realize that wherever you are in life, you need to know that Jesus is the answer.

[19 : 17] Not taking your life. Wherever you are in life, whatever's going on with you, whatever things you think are happening, the answer is Jesus. Your life is not yours to take.

God gave you life, and he has a purpose for you to learn and grow. So, it's not new that you might want to commit suicide. It's not new that you might want to not live.

You're not the first person who's ever been that discouraged. By the way, in all the suicides in the Bible, every one of them were wicked people. It wasn't the right people who did it.

Some right people thought about dying, kind of wished they could die, but they got the victory. And you can respond correctly today and have the victory. Solomon hated life.

According to Ecclesiastes 2:17, he said, Therefore, I hated life, because the work that is wrought unto the Son is grievous to me, and all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

[20 : 17] What's the point of my life? There's no value to me being here on the planet. That's what Solomon said. Elijah wanted to die, the great man of God. In 1 Kings 19:4, he said, But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat under a juniper tree, and he requested for himself that he might die.

And he said, It's enough now, O Lord. Take away my life, for I am not better than my father's. He's discouraged. He's depressed. He's afraid of what's going to happen to him.

And he just liked a quick and easy way out. Jonah was so angry, he wanted to die. In Jonah 4:8, the Bible said, It came to pass, when the sun did rise, that God prepared a behemoth east wind, and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted and wished himself to die.

And said, It's better for me to die than to live. His dreams were crushed. He felt betrayed by God. Because God made him deliver a message to Nineveh that he would have been glad to deliver if he hadn't have known that God was a forgiving God, and a loving God, and a merciful God.

And so he's all discouraged because, man, I went over there and they got saved. I would have liked it if they'd have died in 40 days, but they didn't. Every selfish thinking, very selfish thinking, only of his self and his desires.

[21 : 36] Even Paul, the spirit of life. Not necessarily that he wanted to die, but he wasn't sure he was going to live. In 2 Corinthians 1:8, he said, We would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia.

We were pressed beyond measure, pressed out of measure, above strength. In so much, we despaired of life. He was like, Man, I don't even know if I could hang on anymore. Living under pressure and danger over his life to the point he wasn't sure what was going to happen.

Not sure of the value of his life. Not sure he was going to live. So if you're here and you've got some major issues going on, and we're in a passage of Scripture that talks about suicide, I just want you to know you're not the first one to think like you're thinking.

But you do not have to give in to that. You do not have to accept the idea that that's the only way out. The way out is Jesus. The way out is trusting him. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 6.9 that he has forgiveness.

I want you to look at 1 Corinthians 6.9-10 with me. I want you to work your way through this passage of Scripture. I want you to realize it doesn't matter what you've done. It doesn't matter where you've been. It doesn't matter how much of a mess you've made out of your life.

[22 : 43] You are a sinner, and God full well knows that. You would not shock him with whatever you've done. You say, I messed up my life. God will be like, you're a mess since Adam. You've all been a mess.

Ain't been one of you born yet that wasn't a mess. For all of sin that comes from the glory of God. And there is none righteous, no not one. And the devil may talk you into thinking you're so bad, but the truth is we serve a God who takes messed up people and changes their lives.

He changes our lives. In 1 Corinthians 6.9, the Bible says, Do you guys not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do you all not know that? Know you not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?

Don't be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves of mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkeners, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God.

Boy, we're in trouble. None of us anywhere in this list are going to heaven. Until you read the next verse. He said, In such were some of you there in Corinth.

[23 : 45] Some of you people were like, Your name belongs in that list. But you are washed. You are sanctified. You are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus. And by the Spirit of God.

I really wish you'd open your Bible and underline washed, sanctified, and justified. That's what God does to us. I want you to look at your life right now. I want you to say, Man, I am so messed up.

There is no reason to live. I've messed up my life. I have nowhere to go. Can I just tell you He'll wash you? Can I just tell you He'll wipe away all the filth? He'll wipe away all the past.

He'll remove that from you. And then He'll sanctify you, which means He'll make you holy. He'll look down at you and say, You dirty, filthy sinner. Let me give you a bath.

And He'll forgive you and wash you. Then He'll move you and sanctify you to the Lord God. He'll put you, He'll move you into the holiness of the God of heaven. And then He'll justify you.

[24 : 42] He'll make you so righteous that you're just like Christ. And what Jesus does in your life. There's no reason for you to end your life. You can restart your life through Jesus.

In John chapter 10 and verse 10, He has the answer to your needs. The Bible says, The thief comes but for the steal, to kill, and to destroy. Now you listen to this.

The thief is Satan. And if there's a thought in your mind, Hey, my life is worthless and I should just end it. If you think, Man, I've lost everything good I had in my life.

You need to know who did all that. That's the stinking devil. And the Bible says, But I am come that they might have life and have it more abundantly. That's not a prosperity gospel.

That's a salvation gospel. That is, I was on my way to hell. I'd messed up my life. The thief had won everything in my life. And I'd ruined everything in me. But by the grace of Almighty God, He gives me life.

[25 : 41] I don't even deserve life. I know I don't deserve life. When did He love us? In Romans chapter 6 and verse 6, He loved us while we were yet without strength.

He loved us when we deserved to die. In Romans chapter 6, Excuse me, that's 5-6. Excuse me, that was wrong. Please change that. Romans 5-6. For when you were yet without strength, And when we were yet without strength in due time, Christ died for the ungodly.

Guess who He died for? He didn't die for the good people. He didn't die for those that deserve to go to heaven. He didn't. There's no such animal. There's no such person. In Romans chapter 5, verse 8, The Bible said, But God committed His love toward us.

And while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. What's the Bible say about suicide real quick? It's not the unpardonable sin. Rejecting Jesus is the unpardonable sin.

You need to understand, The devil would like you to think, You have so messed up your life, There's nothing left for you to do but kill yourself, And that means you'll go to hell. That's simply not true. Truth is, you hadn't messed up your life that bad.

[26 : 45] You were such a mess to begin with. You know, He died for us when we were without strength. That means we couldn't fix ourselves. He died for us when we were ungodly. That means we were not godlike. He died for us while we were still sinners.

You need to understand, Salvation is not about you taking any steps towards God. It's about God taking steps towards you. It's not about what you did to go to heaven. It's about what God did. So you could go to heaven.

And so you can be saved. It's not the unpardonable sin. The unpardonable sin will be if you today say, I don't care what the Bible says. I don't care what the Word of God says. I reject God's free offer of salvation.

That's an unpardonable sin. You continue saying that long enough and you'll go to hell. But today you're hearing the gospel and you could be saved. Suicide is obviously not the answer to any problem at all in the entire Bible.

And can I remind you of this quickly? If you know the Bible, death is not the end. You say, I'm going to just die and put myself out of misery. Are you crazy? If you're lost, you'll put yourself out of misery and put yourself in a real misery for eternity.

[27 : 52] It's not the answer. Everyone lives somewhere forever. Judas feels despair and he kills himself rather than turn to the one that could have forgiven him.

Judas feels despair. He's at a really bad place in his life and he'd heard the gospel for three and a half years and he walked with the gospel and he saw the gospel and he turned from the gospel and rejected it.

If you're feeling defeated and needing to end it all, then do so on your knees before God and find new life today. I don't care who you are, how beat up you are, where you've been.

He loves you. And he died on a cross for you. And he's already paid your sin debt. He's not waiting to pay your sin debt. It's already paid. We even sing a song, he paid it all.

And we sing that because that's what the Bible says. Get your thought life under control if you're a Christian. And trust God to be working in your life. Christians can get so discouraged they don't know where to turn.

[28 : 56] But that's only because you're listening to the thief who comes to steal, to kill, and destroy. It's only because you're listening to the world that would try to do anything to ruin your life. You want to listen to the word of God so you have victory getting your thought life under control.

Do not allow sin and Satan to rob you of all that God has for you and can do in your life. So how will you respond to your sin and guilt? Will it be the coward's way out or will you humbly admit your need of God's grace and mercy?

I'm asking you today to say, God, I have sinned. I've messed up my life. I have nothing I can do.

I have anything to bring to you. I have no reason you should love me. I have no reason you should save me. But I'm asking for grace. I'm asking for mercy. I'm asking for you to save me.

And he will. The next thing that happens in verse 6 is the religious leaders realize they've done wrong. Look at verse 6.

[29 : 58] And the chief priest took the silver pieces and said, It is not lawful for them to put into the treasury because it's the price of blood. And they took counsel and brought with them the potter's field to bring strangers in.

Wherefore that field was called the field of blood to this day. Isn't that amazing? Listen, these guys were willing to give 30 pieces of silver. These guys were willing to get Jesus betrayed.

When the money came back, they said, That's not good money. That's not good money. That money, bad money. We did wrong with that money. We don't want it coming back onto our account. We're not going to do that.

So they wouldn't accept their own money that they had given Judas to betray Jesus. So they used it to buy a place to bury strangers or foreigners in. That field was called the field of blood, reminding them of their failure and sin.

You realize every time they went by that potter's field, they say, Yep, that's where the money went. We used to betray Jesus. They knew they'd done wrong. Old Judas knew he'd done wrong and killed himself. Old Peter knew he'd done wrong and was in the ministry again.

[31 : 00] They need to get counsel together to find out what they can do about their sin. So they all get together and they talk about it. Because the money's been thrown back in their face. Our sin finds us out.

They say, We've got to try to do something to atone for it. Or we would have to turn to the one who died for us and accept his free gift of salvation. So you know what they do when they realize they've sinned?

They're like, Hmm, we should do something nice. Let's buy a place to bury strangers. The Gentiles that are in our town, you know, let's buy them a place. We don't want to take that money back in here, so let's do something.

Isn't that what you do so many times? Don't you so many times, instead of getting right with God, figure out a way to make up for what you did? The truth of the matter is, biblically, there's no way to make up for what we did.

We can't make up for what we did. Dying is not the answer. Trying to do something good is not the answer. The only answer is to realize Jesus died for us.

[31 : 58] And we trust what Jesus did on the cross of Calvary. Will you respond that same way, or will you admit your sin and turn to the Savior? The last thing in our passage today, verse 9.

I want you to notice this. The Word of God's always true. If there's anything we've learned in all the study of the Bible, it is this. It's the Word of God, and it's true.

It says in verse 9, Nothing surprised Jesus.

You understand that Jesus is dying on purpose, and it's not like He goes, Wow, I didn't know they'd actually kill me. I didn't know that my own best buddy would turn me in.

I had no idea. No, that's not what's happening. This is God Almighty working out an eternal plan to save us and to give us eternal life. Zechariah chapter 11 and verse 12. It said, I said unto them, If you think good, give me my price, and if not forbear.

[33 : 03] So they weighed for me 30 pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto them, He cast it unto the potter, a goodly price, and I priced it out of them. And I took the 30 pieces of silver and cast it unto the potter in the house of the Lord.

It's already prophesied. Zechariah said exactly what it said. Now notice it wasn't Jeremiah that said it. So you could easily say, Well, what's that mean? Well, it's not a mistake, and it's not an error.

In the days of Jesus, the division of the Old Testament helps us understand there was the law, the writings, and the prophets. The first book in the prophets was Jeremiah. And so a lot of people referred to them as Jeremiah. All that, again, it's the writings of Jeremiah.

It wasn't just Jeremiah that wrote it. Just like the writings, the first book was the Psalms, and they're often called the Psalms. But here's the key thing for you to learn today. Your salvation, the crucifixion, and what Jesus did that day was not an accident.

Everything was happening according to plan. He loves you. He died for you.

[34 : 09] He's calling you to salvation right now. Nothing about the crucifixion just happened. Nothing. No accidents.

Nothing surprising God. Jesus is like, I know what's happening next. Because I wrote this. Looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our salvation.

The author. He wrote the plan, and he finished the plan. It was all planned for you and me and our salvation. It was written in the scripture even down to the price that would be paid for him. So the question today is, how will you respond to the conviction you feel for your sin?

I think there are people in the room that are cultural Christians. You have done all the stuff that the southern, southeastern United States people say you ought to do. You've been going to church all your life.

You've been baptized. You've taken the Lord's Supper. You've done everything. But you know in your heart, you've never really looked at your sin and realized you've sinned against the Holy God. I want you to know for sure you're going to heaven when you die.

[35 : 12] I want you to trust Christ and what he did. Nothing you do but what Jesus did on the cross at Calvary. Will you admit that you have sinned? Will you see your need and cry out for help?

Will you make excuses or try to atone for your sin? It's not time for excuses. Not trying to atone or fix your sin. Will you just humble yourself and accept a free gift prepared for you by the great God of heaven?

It's your decision. He loves you. He paid your sin debt. And if you go to hell, it'll be you making that decision. Hell was prepared.

Matthew's already told us for the devil and his angels never was prepared for you. He wants you to go to heaven. He's done everything possible. You don't have to run to him. You just got to say, I trust.

I believe. I accept the free gift of God that he did on the cross at Calvary. And you can be saved today. And as a Christian, I'd like to ask you this also. I'm often reminded of my sin.

[36 : 13] I've been saved a long time now. 50-something years. But I'm often reminded of my sin. And I have to respond correctly to my sin and my failure.

I have to look and say, am I going to be arrogant about that or am I going to humbly accept that and let God grow me and build me? And you have to do that. So how will you respond to conviction today?

You might be angry with me and saying, you have no right to be talking like you've talked today. You have no right to be nailing us and saying that maybe we're not saved. I think the really born-again people in this room are all probably getting their hearts going, you're right, Pastor.

I hope they listen. If you're not saved and you're kind of angry, maybe it's time for you to realize you need Jesus. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia.

For more information, log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.