

The Cost of Salvation

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[0 : 00] If you don't know me, my name is Alan. I'm one of the staff here at Watermark. It's an incredible joy, an incredible privilege to bring God's Word to us this morning. Before Annabelle and Catherine comes and reads the Scripture to us, I thought of just recapping a little bit.

We've been going through, for about four weeks now, we've been going through 2 Samuel. And one thing we've been looking at is this David, right? David, the glorious king in his glorious kingdom, which because of sin, just feels like there's a lot of stuff happening because of the consequences of sin.

Even though David repents, we see the consequences at working itself throughout the story. Now, we see him being very passive. We see him being very quiet, not bringing justice.

And finally, if you remember last week, we start seeing some changes in David. More of he was going back to who he was. Now, David, we start seeing him praying a little bit, him surrendering to God last week.

But what we find in the story last week was that his son, Absalom, was chasing him because there's almost like a coup, a rebellion to get rid of David so Absalom, his son, can steal David's throne.

[1 : 14] What we're going to see today is God is going to finally rescue David. God is finally going to, in many ways, bring salvation to David. And what I mean by salvation is he's going to save David.

Now, it's not going to be a great story. It is a great story. But what you're going to find is that salvation, that David's deliverance, is going to come at a very deep cost.

So in many ways, it is a great story. It is a very sweet story. But it ends on a very, what we call a very bitter and sweet ending. So, hey, let's listen to God's word.

This is God's word. This is what's going to change our life. God's word is God in spell, speaking to us, revealing who he is to us. So let us sit under God's word. Let us receive as Catherine and Ann go.

We'll read that in one. So, guys. The scripture for today comes from 2 Samuel, chapter 18, verses 1 to 5, 9 to 15, 24 to 33, and chapter 19, verses 1 to 8a.

[2 : 22] So do follow along on the screen in your bulletin or your own Bibles. Then David mustered the men who were with him and set over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds.

And David sent out the army, one-third under the command of Joab, one-third under the command of Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and one-third under the command of Ittite, the Gittite. And the king said to the men, I myself will also go out with you. But the men said, You shall not go out, for if we flee, they will not care about us.

If half of us die, they will not care about us. But you are worth ten thousand of us. Therefore, it is better that you send us help from the city.

The king said to them, Whatever seems best to you, I will do. So the king stood at the side of the gate, while all the army marched out by hundreds and by thousands.

[3 : 26] And the king ordered Joab and Abishai and Ittite, Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave orders to all the commanders about Absalom.

And Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak.

And his head caught fast in the oak, and he was suspended between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on. And a certain man saw it and told Joab, Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak.

Joab said to the man who told him, What? You saw him? Why then did you not strike him there to the ground? I would have been glad to give you ten pieces of silver and a belt.

But the man said to Joab, Even if I felt in my hand the weight of a thousand pieces of silver, I would not reach out my hand against the king's son. For in our hearing, the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittite, For my sake protect the young man Absalom.

[4 : 40] And on the other hand, If I had dealt treacherously against his life, and there is nothing hidden from the king, then you yourself would have stood aloof. Joab said, I will not waste time like this with you.

And he took three javelins in his hand and thrust them into the heart of Absalom while he was still alive in the oak. And the ten young men, Joab's armor bearers, surrounded Absalom and struck him and killed him.

At verse 24 we read, Now David was sitting between the two gates, and the watchman went up to the roof of the gate by the wall. And when he lifted up his eyes and looked, he saw a man running alone.

The watchman called out and told the king, and the king said, If he's alone, there is news in his mouth. And he drew nearer and nearer. The watchman saw another man running, and the watchman called to the gate and said, See, another man running alone.

The king said, He also brings news. The watchman said, I think the running of the first one is like the running of Ahimeaz, the son of Zadok.

[5 : 50] And the king said, He's a good man and comes with good news. Then Ahimeaz cried out to the king, All is well. And he bowed before the king with his face to the earth and said, Blessed be the Lord your God, who has delivered up the man who raised their hand against my lord, the king.

And the king said, Is it well with the young man Absalom? Ahimeaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, your servant, I saw a great commotion, but I do not know what it was.

And the king said, Turn aside and stand here. So he turned aside and stood still. And behold, the Cushite came, and the Cushite said, Good news for my lord, the king, for the lord has delivered you to this day from the hand of all who rose up against you.

The king said to the Cushite, Is it well with the young man Absalom? And the Cushite answered, May the enemies of my lord, the king, and all who rise up against you for evil be like that young man.

And the king was steeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And as he went, he said, Oh, my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom, would I have died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son.

[7 : 18] And in chapter 19, it was told that Job, Behold, the king is weeping and mourning for Absalom. So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the people.

And for the people heard that day, the king is grieving for his son. And the people stole into the city that day as people steal in who are ashamed when they flee in battle.

The king covered his face and the king cried with a loud voice, Oh, my son Absalom, Oh, Absalom, my son, my son. Then Job came into the house to the king and said, You have today covered with shame the faces of all your servants and have this day saved your life and the lives of your sons and your daughters and the lives of your wives and your concubines.

Because you love those who hate you and hate those who love you. For you have made it clear today that commanders and servants are nothing to you. For today I know that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead today, then you would be pleased.

Now, therefore arise, go out, and speak kindly to your servants. For I swear by the Lord, if you do not go, not a man will stay with you this night.

[8 : 32] And this will be worse for you than all the evil that has come upon you from your mouth, from your youth until now. Then the king arose and took his seat in the gate.

And the people were all told, Behold, the king is sitting in the gate. And all the people came before the king. This is the word of God. Thank you guys.

Hey church, why don't we pray before we start. Father God, we come before you this morning. You're a God who's gracious and kind, who's good in all of your ways.

Lord, as we sit under your word, Father, we pray, may your spirit work in our hearts to receive what you say this morning. Would you help us not just understand, but also would you change our hearts to live a life that's pleasing to you, that brings you glory, that brings you honor in all ways.

Father, we pray, come do your incredible work through your word in our lives and in our church. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. So, as you saw, that was quite a reading, wasn't it?

[9 : 46] Okay, this mic, I'm just going to move away from this mic. I wonder if how many of us have been in that kind of situation where you know what is the right thing to do, but you find it so difficult to do it because it comes with a very heavy price or a heavy cost.

You know, maybe if you're a youth there, it's standing up for something that you believe is right, something that is right, but the cost is you're looked at as if you're very arrogant or ignorant or very weird.

Or maybe if you're working in office, maybe if you, your boss is being very unjust to a colleague and the right thing to do is to stand up against your boss, but the cost is you might have a target on your back now.

Or maybe a promotion comes your way and you know the right thing to do is reject it because that takes time away from your family, which is already tight, but the heavy cost is you're going to miss out on a higher salary, which might be, could have been helpful for your family.

You see a situation where you know what is the right thing to do, you know what has to be done, but it's very difficult because of the heavy cost that comes with it. In today's story, that's what we find in David's life.

[11 : 01] David finds himself in a very similar situation and if I may, actually a much more difficult situation. So why don't we dive straight into God's word. Let's dive into God's word and the first thing you're going to see is this tension that David has.

David's tension. So if you have your Bible with you or if you have the bulletin, just follow along the scripture. So verse 1 and 2 in chapter 18, right? What you're going to find is this battle between Absalom and David's people, David's servants, army, that's going to start and you can see them organizing this army, thousands and hundreds and it almost feels like this, like a lot of the rings kind of final war kind of thing, right?

They're marching outside and this huge, feels like, oh, something's going to happen. Something's going to go on and then you come down to verse 2 and David comes and he says, hey, I'm going to join you guys as you go out in the battle.

David says, hey, I'm going to go out and fight this battle with you. But verse 3, if you calm down, what do they say? Verse 3 says, hey, you shall not go out. David, you shall not go out for if we flee, they will not care about us.

If half of us die, they will not care. But you, you, David, you are worth 10,000 of us. In other words, David's men really value David because it's something that they understand and they understand this, that the king is important for the kingdom.

[12 : 29] There cannot be any kingdom without this king. So David has to be alive. So, which is why, if you think about that, which is why what David says in verse 5 is pretty ridiculous.

Right? What does he say? He calls them, he calls the three commanders and in front of, as the army's marching on, he calls them and he says, hey, deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom.

I mean, it's like, it's like telling the doctor who's doing a cancer operation on you, telling the doctor like, hey, can you deal gently with the tumor? Like, don't, just don't fully cut it, okay?

Deal gently with it. Or imagine you're going for a volleyball final, final match and then the coach calls you guys and says like, hey, deal gently with the other team, okay? Just don't play too hard. We don't want to hurt them or something like that.

And that's exactly what's happening here, right? It's like, imagine you're marching up in the battle, you're marching out and the king, you hear the king say, hey, deal gently with the enemy. Like, hey, if you see them, like, yeah, you know, just let them kind of go.

[13 : 38] But the thing is, Absalom had to go in the same way the tumor has to go if the person had to, if the man had to live. Absalom was out to kill David.

Absalom was not around playing. He was out to kill David and if you remember Absalom's track record of murder, there's no doubt about it. I mean, we skipped chapter 17 but chapter 17 is a lot about receiving counsel about how to get rid of David.

How can we get rid of David? Now, Absalom was out to kill and murder David. And you see, if the kingdom of God, if this kingdom was to live on, if God's chosen king was to live on, then he needed to be alive.

You cannot have Absalom around if you want the king and the kingdom to be around. So it was this tension. But, but then Absalom was not just any enemy, was he?

He was not just another one of David's enemy. You see, and this is where David's tension comes in because Absalom was his son. But Absalom had to go if David was to live.

[14 : 46] But that was his son. But, but the thing is, David and Absalom didn't have the greatest father and son relationship, right? I mean, they spent like almost two years not speaking to each other.

Absalom spent most of his, about four years of planning and working to kill David. Now, it's not the best father and son relationship, but nonetheless, this was David's son.

And the tension was that of having Absalom to die, but the tension was David did not want that to happen. David did not want that to be sin. And this tension is something we're going to see throughout today's scripture, throughout today's word.

But I want us to just sit on that for a while. You know, a situation where you know what is the right thing to do, but it's difficult, but it comes with a cost. That kind of situation.

And if you think about it, whenever we are in those kind of situations, it tells us a lot about our own heart, doesn't it? In the same way, it tells us about David's affection towards his son, Absalom.

[15 : 54] I mean, the last chapter of chapter 19, it talks, I mean, Joab scolds David about that. He says like, man, you love your son, Absalom, more than you love us.

We have fought and given our lives to save you. And think about our lives. Whenever we are in those kind of situations, does it not tell us about our heart?

Think about that example of standing up to your boss, but it comes with the cost of having a target on your back. Maybe it tells us that our heart treasures our own comfort and security more than justice.

How about for the promotion that can take away time? Maybe it tells us about our heart that we would rather love our family with money than actually spending time with our families. You see, these examples are of course very complex, right?

It's more, it's not just black and white. But what I'm trying to push us to see is that whenever we find it difficult to do something that is right because it comes with a cost, it actually tells us a lot about our heart.

[16 : 59] Maybe it's something as simple as getting out of your bed to read your Bible. Maybe the cost is getting out of your bed. But does that not tell us about our heart that we would rather enjoy our comfort in our bed rather than sitting in God's word?

So that's something to think about. But now coming back to the story, as we see this tension and all the people hear of David's request, they hear, hey, deal gently with Absalom, deal gently with this young man Absalom.

Now what we're going to find in the next act of this story is the battle starts. The battle begins and through this battle what we're going to see is that David is going to be delivered which leads us to the second act of the story.

So if you're on your bulletin look at from verse 6 onwards. Verse 6 and 7 it tells us about the battle. Now this battle is devastating, is brutal.

About 20,000 people are killed and because the battle is in a forest, the forest itself takes more life. I don't know how that was, maybe it was branches and swamps, but it's a very brutal and devastating war.

[18 : 10] And what we're going to see in this battle is that God's hand in delivering David is fully in control. God is fully in control throughout this battle.

Now in the midst of the battle, what do we find? We find Absalom riding his mule. Now we must wonder, why is Absalom in the middle of the battle when the army of his enemy, King David is not even in the battlefield?

Why is he there but King David is not there? And for that we got to go back to chapter 17. And if you look at chapter 17, God actually had a hand in bringing Absalom to the forest.

It's not in the bulletin but if you look at 17 verse 14 it says, for the Lord had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel. Now basically what happened was Absalom was taking counsel on how to kill or how to defeat David.

And Ahithophel was this one counselor, one consultant who had the best consultant firm at those days. And he and he his counsel was basically defeated by God.

[19 : 18] But then Absalom took the counsel of another man which told him to go out into the field. You see the reason Absalom was there in the field in first place was because God had put him there.

And what happens if you look at verse 9? And Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule and the mule went under thick branches of great oak and his head was caught fast in the oak and he was suspended from heaven and earth while the mule that was under him went on.

In many ways that looks very comical. Imagine you're out in the battlefield, you turn around the bush and boom, your enemy is there hanging on a tree. Like that.

It's sad but it feels like wow, that's so much easier than I thought, right? But if you think about it, this is not a coincidence because in God's word there is no coincidence.

God was very much in control because if you remember in Deuteronomy 21, it says that anyone that is hanging from a tree is cursed by God. Absalom was cursed by God.

[20 : 27] In other words, if you look at the verse we looked at chapter 17, it said that God had ordained to bring harm to Absalom. God was out to bring justice against Absalom.

So we find Absalom hanging on the tree, unable to do anything and here again we see this little bit of tension, right? A soldier comes in and he's like, oh man, I cannot kill, this is the king, king said don't kill him and Joab is like, why don't you kill him?

And there's this whole tension and finally, Joab comes in, the commander, he knows what needs to be done and he goes in and he takes the life of Absalom and it was done.

So the question is, what was done? What did Absalom's death mean for David or for the kingdom of God?

So I want us to look at verse 19 onwards and that's where we find our answer. Verse 19, we do not read in our scripture reading but what happens here is, now the battle's finished, Absalom is dead, now who is going to go and tell David the news?

[21 : 37] Who is going to go tell David that the battle is won but his son is dead? And there's this whole tension again, right? There's one guy who's, Ahimez says, I want to go and tell the king.

And Joab in all his wisdom says, I don't think it's a great idea, it's not the best news and he sends another guy but Ahimez is like, no, no, no, no, I want to go and finally Joab was like, fine, go and Ahimez takes a shortcut, wins this other guy to tell the news.

But what I want us to notice here is, I want us to notice the news that they were bringing. See what was the news, what had actually happened from their mouth.

Look at verse 19 on the bulletin, it says, then Ahimez, the son of Zadok, said, let me run and carry the news to the king. And what was the news? That the Lord has delivered him from the hand of his enemies.

Now, this is not just a random message because this is a message that's repeated two more times, in a total of three more times and anything that's repeated in God's word is important. Okay, look at verse 28.

[22 : 44] 28, he says, again, the news is, who has delivered up the man who has raised their hand against my lord, the king. Look at verse 31 again. The good news is what?

For the Lord has delivered you this day from the hand of all who rose up against you. So, what has God done for David? God has delivered David from the hand of his enemies, those that have raised their hand against him.

Those, they are all defeated. David is saved. David is delivered. Man, that's the great news, isn't it? That's the great news for the kingdom. God's kingdom, God's chosen king is saved.

I mean, all these people that had to run away because of the rebellion, that had to, as they were running away, being mocked as they ran away, being cursed as they ran away, being stoned as they ran away, being exiled because of their sin away from God's kingdom, all these people, all this situation is finally over.

God has delivered David and his people. But then, it doesn't really feel that way, does it? It doesn't feel like it's a great and joyful moment.

[23 : 57] Look at verse 28. Ahimez comes with the same joyful attitude, right? He comes with this like, woohoo, it's done. Let's go and tell the king.

And Ahimez says, yeah, God has delivered you. And David asks him, hey, but what about the young man Absalom? What happened? And Ahimez was like, whoops.

And he knows what happened, but he tells a lie, right? He says, I don't know, there was a crowd there, something was happening, not exactly sure, but yeah, I don't know.

And David tells him to, why don't you stand at the side? The second messenger comes in, David, God has delivered you from the enemies, the young man Absalom? Ahimez must have been at the side, like, don't tell him.

And he says, basically, Absalom was no more. And then in verse 33, David goes back to his room and he grieves and he mourns.

[25 : 02] Now, I don't think David was shocked by the news. he knew that this was going to happen. If you remember verse 1 to 5, the whole army, you cannot, as the army was going out against Absalom, we know that war isn't over until the enemies are defeated.

It's not a shock that Absalom was going to be defeated and that his life was going to be taken. You see, but then still, David, for some hopeful reason, he gives this request of deal gently with this young man Absalom.

But if you think about it, this whole ordeal, this whole thing, David kind of knew, he was not shocked by the news, and yet it comes and he's in his grieving and mourning.

Yes, he was delivered, but then there was this whole sadness to it, which leads us to our last thought, last act of the story, which is the cost.

If you look at from verse 33 all the way till chapter 19, verse 4, we see David grieving, David mourning. I mean, yes, he was delivered from his enemies, yes, he was allowed to come back into God's kingdom now, but nonetheless, the deliverance of him was very, very costly.

[26 : 36] You see, we see here David mourning his son, but maybe, not maybe, but perhaps, David was also mourning his role in that.

You see, because this whole story is an outworking of the consequences of David's sin. You see, his sin in being very passive when there was abuse, and murder David's sin in being very passive and not bringing justice when this was happening among his son.

And more than that, his sin right from the beginning of, with Bathsheba, where he took a woman that was not his wife and murdered her husband. And outworking of his sin, we see it throughout the story.

And look at the end of verse 33 in chapter 18, he says, would I have died instead of you? And that seems to be a mourning, yeah, both of his son, but also a mourning because of his role in this whole event.

Now, this does not mean that Absalom was completely innocent and guiltless. I mean, Absalom had raised his hand against the Lord himself by opposing God's appointed king.

[27 : 54] Right? If you remember the story of David, when he was running away from King Saul, David never raised his hand against King Saul. Why? Why? Because he was God's appointed, anointed one.

He was God's chosen and he would not raise his hand against God's chosen, no matter how much injustice he was facing. And in the same way, but what we see here is Absalom is raising his hand against God's anointed one, which is similar to him raising his hands against the Lord himself.

Not only that, he was someone who planned a murder for two years. And after that, he was planning a rebellion for four years, put it to work and done it and out to kill David.

You see, he's not like most people. Most people get angry, they do something, they say something and then they regret it. Right? It's very impulsive. But Absalom was a type of man who gets angry, who plans it out for two years, holds on to it, and then commits and executes it.

In many ways, he's a very evil man. Very angry and very out to kill man. And justice has come upon him.

[29 : 02] But going back to David's deliverance, we still see that it came with a cost. We see that what was broken between David and God, his exile, and for him to come back, it came with a cost.

But if you think about it, isn't that what life is like? Isn't that reality? I mean, if someone breaks a cup, it's going to cost someone to put it back together.

Someone got to spend some time and money and glue and stuff. I mean, even if someone buys you a cup, it's not free. Someone pays the cost for that. It's a reality in human relationship.

When a husband cheats on his wife, for there to be reconciliation, there is a cost. The wife pays it by choosing not to think about it, by choosing to forgive, learning to trust again.

There's a cost when there's a conflicts, when one person has to forgive in the midst of pain. One person has to pay the cost of saying it's okay, I forgive you.

[30 : 09] You see, it's a reality in life, it's a reality in human relationships, and it's a reality with God. God cannot just forgive us. It comes with a cost.

There is a cost for our sins to be forgiven, and who is going to pay that cost? And in this story, we see that David were in the wilderness, exiled, very symbolic of being exiled away from God's kingdom because of sin.

what is going to bring them back? And we see the cost that David goes through. But the question is, how about for you? How about for us?

Who is going to pay the cost of our sins? Who has the capacity to pay that cost? You know, by God's word tells us the wages of sin is death.

Who here has the capacity to pay that? Who is pure enough to pay that? Well, if you are in Christ, I want us to think about this.

[31 : 17] You and I, we can stand before a holy God and ask for forgiveness and have the assurance of being forgiven and be forgiven because that cost has already been paid by Jesus.

You see, when a criminal murders or kills a person, we cannot just say, oh, it's okay, that's fine, don't do it again. He has to pay the price. And it's the same for us.

Our sin is a sin against God. And the one who is supposed to pay is us, no one else. But when we come to the cross, it was not us who pays, but it was God, the one who we sin against, He is the one who pays the cost of our sin.

Isn't that incredible? You see, God was the one who pays it. In fact, 2 Corinthians 5 tells us, for our sake, God made Him, Jesus, who knew no sin, to become sin, so that in Him, we can have the righteousness of God.

In other words, because He took the cost, now we can have the righteousness of God. we can be forgiven, washed, and have the right standing before God.

[32 : 41] Because Jesus, Christ Jesus paid that price, paid the cost. Isn't that incredible? Isn't that an amazing grace?

In a bit, we're going to sing this song, and there's this line in the song that says, because the sinless Savior died, my sinful soul is now set free. For God the just is satisfied, to look on Him and pardon me.

That's something to really ponder upon. That God will look at Christ and would pardon us and unworthy, undeserving sinners, because Jesus paid that price.

And if you're new here today, or if you have not really given your life to Christ, this is an incredible invitation to come and receive His love, isn't it? You see, because on the cross, the price has been paid, which means that you don't have to perform, you don't have to do a thousand good deeds to be accepted by God.

You don't have to sort out yourself and get your life in place, sorted, and come before God, because we can all come before God with our brokenness and sin, because when we give our life to Christ in faith, we can know that the cost has been paid, and that we can be accepted and forgiven.

[34 : 03] But church, isn't that incredible news? That the cost has been paid. But this is what I really want us to take away today.

This is what I really want us to think about, not just take away, but really meditate and think about in this coming week. You see, the cost was not cheap, it was not cheap for David, and it's definitely not cheap and simple for Jesus and God.

So I want us to take away these three things. And here's the first thing, don't take sin lightly, or don't take the cost of salvation lightly. You see, it's so easy for us to forget the cross and take our sin very lightly, isn't it?

We can have this attitude of, yeah, Jesus has forgiven my sin, I can go on my life and do whatever I want. We might not think that, but how about when we don't deal with our sin?

Maybe it's an addiction like porn addiction, when we just get used to it and just make it part of our lives without ever dealing with it. Or maybe it's a conflict that we don't move towards resolution and unity in forgiveness.

[35 : 15] You see, all of these things, we can, it's also an example of maybe we can usually go back to our life and have this attitude of, yeah, I've got work, I've got relationships, I'm just going to go back my life and never really think about God throughout the week.

Maybe it can go days and months and weeks without actually sitting with God. Or days and weeks without actually getting on our knees and thanking God for what He has done on the cross.

How do we take God's costly payment? How do we take God's sacrifice for us in our lives? that does come off very sharp, but it's a call for us to think about our life.

How is our time used? How is our hearts and passions used? What are we so passionate about? What is something that makes our heart beat fast? What is it?

Or is it very easy for us to compromise with the things of the world? Do we take sin seriously? do we take the cost that Jesus paid seriously with thankfulness?

[36 : 25] Now here's the second thing for us to take away. Follow the footstep of Christ. When Jesus calls us to follow Him, oh that's a baby.

When Jesus calls us to follow Him, He calls us to carry our cross and follow Him. God's words tells us to forgive one another in the same way as Christ has forgiven you.

Or what He's saying is in the same way that Jesus has paid the cost in forgiving us, He's calling us to bear the cost of forgiving one another in the same way as He has done.

I mean, it's not just in conflicts, right? We're called to consider one another better than ourselves.

We're called to disciple one another and to pour out our lives in one another and all of these things cost.

But here's the important thing. In all of these things, there is a cost when you do it, but there is also a cost when you don't do it.

[37 : 57] You see, in conflict, yeah, there's a cost to forgive, but there's also a cost when you don't forgive and walk away. And the cost is paid by broken relationships, disunity in the group.

Even for considering others better than yourself, there's a cost in doing it, but there's also a cost in not doing it. It brings disunity, it brings pride, it brings jealousy, it brings a whole lot of stuff.

And what it does is it also mars the gospel message to the world because unity is supposed to be a message. The church, unity in the church is supposed to be a gospel message to the world.

It brings it destroys that image. A cost is still paid. You see, there's a cost whether we do it or whether we don't do it. And that is true also for evangelism when we share the gospel to other people.

You see, in some other countries, there's a real physical cost in sharing the gospel, isn't there? If you share the gospel, there's a high chance that you might lose your life, lose your family, lose your work, lose a whole lot of stuff.

[39 : 04] In Hong Kong, that might not be fully true, but there's still a cost nonetheless. Maybe the cost is to be looked at as your weird or outdated, arrogant, prideful.

the cost might be to come out of your comfort zone, but there's a cost to bringing the gospel to the people. But there's also a cost if we don't do it.

But the cost is paid by the person who does not hear the gospel. They will bear the cost, for they will never hear the gospel. They will not hear the gospel, and they might be eternally separated from the Father.

You see, there's a cost both ways. But church, I want us to think about this deeply, because if we follow Jesus, if we know his life, if we know the life of Jesus, and we follow him, shouldn't our life in many ways reflect his?

Sometimes we are so stuck with getting our own lives right. We are so stuck with getting our devotions right. We are so stuck with getting our relationships right, our career right, our life right, and I'm not saying those things are not important.

[40 : 29] God cares about them, but there's something more than those. And it's the last thing that Jesus tells us to do before he lives, and that is to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, teaching them, to follow, to obey Jesus.

If you look at the life of Jesus, he paid the cost, he surrounded his life with the fact of bringing the gospel to the world. That was his big one, and he paid that cost, and shouldn't our life reflect that too?

But many times there are other things that takes advantage or dominion of our lives. An Irish missionary to India, her name was Amy Carmichael, who died in 1952 at the age of 84.

She was in India as a missionary for 55 years of our life. She was a missionary there bringing gospel and taking care of the orphans there.

Her life was not easy. There was fractures, there was pain, there was persecution, and very hard. And she writes this poem, which is a challenge to Christians who wanted to live a comfortable life without sharing the gospel.

[41 : 59] It's very sharp. And this is the third paragraph of that poem. And she says, No wound, no scar, yet as the master shall the servant be, and pierced are the feet that follow me.

But thine are whole, can he have followed far who has no wound nor scar? It's a poem to really reflect.

on. Church, I'm not saying this as a person who has really created evangelism. As much as I'm speaking, I feel like I'm speaking to myself.

How much is mission and the gospel and the love for the lost part of my heart and my desire?

Church, it's so easy to get lost in our own lives, in our work, but there's eternity.

eternity, there's Jesus, and there's the lost outside of this, who needs the gospel, who needs to hear that Jesus has paid the cost.

[43 : 12] So follow in the footsteps of Christ, in our daily living, in our relationships with one another, and mostly in bringing the gospel to this city and to the people around us.

and here's the final thing to think about, is to go with the assurance of Christ's love for you. Now, this is not a tag on from the second point, which is very harsh.

This actually flows out. Go with the assurance of Christ's love for you. You see, Christ paid the cost for our sin, and on the cross, the cost was paid, justice was done, and in the same way, you know, for David, the cost was paid, there was justice, but in many ways, he lost his son, and in many ways, love did not really come together with justice there.

You see, there was justice, but he lost his son. But in all history, there is one place where justice and love comes together, and it's the cross.

You see, when we come to the cross, our sin is justified. The justice was done, it's paid. By the same time, we are so loved at the cross, because it was not you, it was not me who paid that cost, it was God himself, with his son, Jesus Christ, dying on the cross.

[44 : 37] When we look at the cross, in the words of late Tim Keller, we see that we are more sinful than we could ever imagine, ever think of right now, and at the same time, when we look at the cross, we see that we are more loved than we can ever dream of.

So church, don't take sin lightly. Do not take the cross, the cost that Jesus has paid lightly. and at the same time, follow in the footsteps of Christ in paying the cost in our relationships, in our servings, and especially in bringing the gospel to the people around us.

And in all of this thing, go with this assurance that you are loved, that you are justified, that nothing can take you away from the love of Christ. And go with this assurance that Christ is with you, because in the Great Commission, there is a promise at the end, that Jesus says, I will be with you until the end of times.

He is with you as you bring the gospel, as you live out a life that does not take sin lightly, that lives a life of thankfulness, gratefulness for what Jesus has done on the cross.

before we reflect on that, I understand that there is a lot of stuff in this story, and this can be quite a challenging passage with a lot to reflect on.

[46 : 00] So if you guys have any questions, please feel to reach out to us, the elders, CG leaders, where we can study together and pray together. So church, why don't we spend about a few seconds, 20 seconds, a minute or so, just to reflect on that.

Where is our heart? How is our heart? How do we take the cross and think about where is evangelism in my life? So let's take a minute or so as the band comes in.