

Luke 22:37

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Preacher: Rev Andrew Coghill

[0 : 00] In Luke chapter 22, we read it verse 37, For I say unto you that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, and he was reckoned among the transgressors, for the things concerning me have an end.

For the things concerning me have an end. As always, every text that we seek and take from the Word of God is set in the midst of a context.

And the context here is Jesus saying to his disciples that whereas previously when they went out taking the good news of the gospel, they had nothing, and he deliberately told them to take nothing with them and that they would be provided for, and they were, yet now things were different.

We can just sort of backtrack slightly to chapter 9 and to chapter 10. We see at verse 1 of chapter 9, he called his 12 disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases.

And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves nor strip. That's a little leather pouch in which your necessities would be kept, a script that sounds to describe.

[1 : 15] Neither bread, neither money, neither have two coats apiece. And whatsoever house ye enter into, they abide and thence depart. And whoso at all not receive you when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.

And they departed and went through the times, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere. And then we read at verse 10 in that same chapter, the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done.

And he took them and went aside privately into a desert place, belonging to the city called Bethsaida. Then in chapter 10, we read, after these things, the Lord appointed others seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whether he himself would come.

Therefore he said unto them, The harvest is great, but the laborers are few. Go your ways, behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves, carry neither purse nor script nor shoes, and salute no man by the way into whatsoever house ye enter.

First say, Peace be to this house, and so on. Verse 17 of chapter 10, we read, The seventy are turned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

[2 : 27] So the Lord has sent disciples, whether the twelve, or the larger band of the seventy out two by two before, and preaching the good news, healing the sick, casting out demons.

And what we should understand, I think, from that, is that this was comparatively, favorably received. There is nothing as yet too controversial in what Jesus has done with his disciples there.

It's spreading the news, the kingdom of God is coming, and it's all great, kingdom of God's come, diseases being healed, demons being cast out, people being raised up from their sick beds, and this message, yes, it's a message of power, it's all good.

But it hasn't yet started to clash with vested interest. Vested interest is that which begins to feel threatened by the good which Jesus is both doing and preaching.

And when the vested interest, those who have their power center on the temple, on the revenues that it brings in, on their own position in society, or whatever it was, is that they want to pursue, when the message and the teaching and the witness and example of Jesus comes into collision with that, then there will be increased hostility and opposition.

[3 : 47] Then as now. Now the message has not changed. Jesus is not saying to his disciples, now I say to you, preach something different. Be a bit nastier.

Don't heal the sick. Don't raise people from the dead. Don't cast out demons. Just make it a nasty message of how the kingdom of God is going to cause trouble. But no, he says, and now he that hath a purse, let him take it.

Likewise his skirt, his leather bag, with all the necessities in it, he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and Bible. And you're going to need ordinary protection. You're going to need ordinary clothes.

You're going to need whatever help you can sustain yourself. Because nobody's going to help you now. That's what he's saying. Why is this? Because he says, this must yet be accomplished in me.

He was reckoned amongst the transgressors. Now we think, oh yeah, but that just means Jesus is crucified with the two thieves, one on either side. So he's numbered with the transgressors. And you know, this is fulfilling.

[4 : 45] It's fulfilling. As he says, it's fulfilling. What we read in Isaiah 53, at verse 12, therefore will I divide him a portion of the great. He shall divide the spoiled with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bared the sin of many.

And Mark tells us that this is explicitly fulfilled when he is crucified between the two thieves. With him they crucified two thieves, the one on his right hand, the one other on his left, and the scripture was fulfilled, which says, he was numbered with the transgressors.

Mark 15, 28. But that's not all, is it? It's not just that he is numbered with the transgressors by being crucified between two malefathers.

That is, yes, a literal fulfillment, but how does that affect the disciples? They're not the ones being crucified. Because when the world and vested interest turns against Jesus, it will turn against his followers.

The disciples do not themselves experience persecution until after, after Jesus has been crucified and risen again and ascended into heaven.

[5 : 58] Once Pentecost has been and the spirit is poured out on the disciples, and they start preaching in the temple the good news of Jesus, they start healing somebody who's been lame from birth and so on, and suddenly it's a great miracle, and they are preaching the resurrection as it is in Jesus, but there's temple authorities there, and the Sadducees that don't believe in the resurrection, and don't believe in there's an afterlife, and don't believe there's anything spiritual, and this is a threat.

So the disciples get arrested, and they get whipped, and they get cast into prison overnight, and they get told that they're not to do this anymore, and then after Stephen comes, and then Stephen contrasts the stiff-neckedness of the Jewish leaders with how Moses was responded to by the Israelites before, he says this generation, this nation has always been antagonistic to the Lord and to his messengers, whether it was Moses, whether it was Elijah, or whether or not it was the Messiah, Jesus, and they put him to death, and then a huge persecution arose against the church, and they were all scattered, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles from Jerusalem except the apostles.

This must yet be accomplished in me. He was reckoned amongst the transgressors. The message has not changed. The good news of the kingdom has not changed.

The good that the disciples were to go out and do, to heal the sick, and to cleanse the lepers, and to open the eyes of the blind, and to cast out demons, they're still doing just the same.

It's just that now vested interests have come to recognize this is a threat to us. This is potentially hostile.

[7 : 48] We have got to crush it. See, why is it now that Bibles are taken out of hospitals and schools and even prisons? It's made to be an abuse of the prisoners' rights that have Bibles there automatically given to them.

Why is it that Christianity is portrayed, whether in the media, or the newspapers, or the broadcasters, and so on, as those somehow toxic, or poisonous, or evil in some way?

The message hasn't changed. Jesus hasn't changed. The gospel, the good news of deliverance from sin, hasn't changed. But now it's coming up against different vested interests that maybe weren't a factor before.

Whether it is the rise of false religions, or whether it is the rise of institutionalized immorality, whereby which the purity of the gospel is a challenge, and it causes there to be a contrast between the purity of the gospel and the immorality of the world.

Or the truth as it is in Christ Jesus over against false religion. And so the gospel must be suppressed. God's followers must be attacked. They must be regarded as enemies.

[9 : 01] Jesus says, I say unto you, Jesus himself was silent, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me. All the prophecies beforehand, he was numbered with the transgressors.

The Messiah that was prophesied, the suffering servant of Isaiah, must yet be accomplished in me. It will all be fulfilled in him. All the meaning of the scriptures, all the meaning of the prophecies, all the meaning of life itself from day one is fulfilled in him.

It is yet to be accomplished in him that he was numbered with the transgressors. And this is that which the disciples must prepare themselves for.

Yes, there were those in the former mission that they were sent out and who didn't want anything to do with them. But probably they were people that just, I can't be bothered, just get on with our lives, get on with our work, and we don't want anything to do with you guys.

Shake the dust off their feet, move on to the next one. But it was probably kind of irritation rather than open hostility. But Jesus says to them, Now he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.

[10 : 17] For I say unto you, This, for that it is written, must yet be accomplished in me. He was reckoned among the transgressors, for the things concerning me have an end.

The context is that of increasing hostility against Jesus and then against his followers. That which was once joyfully received is now at odds with the prevailing power in the land.

Ring any bells? Well, it's as true now as it was then. And so those who are Christ's followers will needs, must look to themselves and every possible means of protection and sustenance that they have.

It's not that they're not to depend on the Lord, quite the reverse. They are to depend on the Lord, but they cannot any longer depend on the comparatively positive reception that they will get as they went out throughout the coasts of Palestine preaching the good news.

So, likewise, we are taught in Scripture to be as wise as servants as well as as harmless as doves. To use every means that the Lord provides and gives for our protection and sustenance to recognize that friendship with the world is enmity with God and vice versa.

[11 : 40] I say unto you, said Jesus, this that is written must yet be accomplished in me. It is fulfilled in him. He was reckoned among the transgressors.

Nor can we simply say, as some, of course, would portray, oh, well, of course, there's no problem with Jesus. It's just his bigoted, narrow-minded followers that we've got a problem with nowadays because those who say they are Christians, they're nothing like Jesus.

Well, the problem, of course, is that sometimes they're too much like Jesus. When Jesus walked the earth, the vested interests and the powers that be hated him, and they put him to death.

This must yet be accomplished in me. He was reckoned among the transgressors. For the last hundred years, much of mainstream Christianity has sought to dilute itself, to empty itself of the potency, the power of God's spirit and word, the authority of the Bible.

It has sought to water this down, to make itself more and more accommodating to the world. Now, what has been the result of that? Has it meant that the world has become more and more friendly to the Lord's people, to the church, to the gospel?

[12 : 59] Or has it resulted in greater and greater hostility? You see, that which we think is making ourselves appealing to the world is in fact simply stirring more and more of the world's enmity.

what they perceive is that there is no strength, there is no power in this contemptible religion or faith that people follow. Where is the power?

The power is in Christ. When we abandon Christ, we invite greater attack. When we abandon the authority of his word, we invite greater attack.

But Jesus said this would happen. He was reckoned among the transgressors. The things concerning me have an end. Now, different translations of the Bible recount this last phrase differently.

Some say, are drawing near their fulfilment. The things concerning me are drawing near their fulfilment. The things concerning me are drawing to a conclusion.

[14 : 02] Or the things concerning me perhaps have a purpose. purpose. Now, an end can mean not only a finishing point, a conclusion, it can also mean a meaning, a purpose.

For example, as we have, bearing in mind, this is the authorised version of the language, in 1 Timothy 1, verse 5, the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart.

And that doesn't mean as long as you love, well, that's the end of the law. That's it all over and done with. What it means is that is the purpose, the objective. When we talk about a means to an end, we don't just mean a means to bringing something to its finish.

We mean a means to an objective, to a goal. The end, the objective, the goal of the commandment of the law is love, charity, out of a pure heart and of a good conscience and of faith, unfaithed.

The things concerning me have an end. They have a purpose, they have a meaning, a fulfilment. a reality. Now, what is it that is the end, the purpose concerning Jesus?

[15 : 07] There is an end, there is a purpose, there is a fulfilment in him. And that is, as we, if we did, 2 Corinthians, we read, he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, numbered with the transgressors, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

And there is a purpose that things concerning me have an end. And this is the end, this is the objective, the goal. It is that he, in taking our sins upon himself, puts them to death upon the cross.

and as he dies, they die. In the same way as if somebody has some kind of, you know, life-threatening disease, whether you've got, oh, got cancer, or whether you've got HIV, or whatever it may be, or some other fearful disease that is going to sap your life, and all the bacteria, and all the little microbes inside the body are working away, trying to destroy the body.

And then, the individual dies. In a very real sense, that illness dies with them. Because once they have died, all the, all the evil that was working away, the body, it all dies.

The microbes, the bacteria, and the things, they can't live in a dead body. When the body dies, they die too. They can't just jump out and transfer out to somebody else, provided that corpse is kept in isolation.

[16 : 35] All the things in it that were bad, and wrong, and rotten, and illness, and disease in it, are dead themselves, or die themselves. So likewise, when Christ takes upon himself our sin, and that sin becomes, as it were, part of him, and then he dies on the cross, all our sin, if we are trusting in him, dies there with him.

That is the objective, the end, the purpose, if we take this as part of the meaning of what he says there, the things concerning me have an end. This is the end.

He hath made him to be sin for us. He who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. If we are believing in Christ as our Savior, and that is the only way that our sins can be applied to him, and his righteousness applied to us, if we trust and believe in him, and in his sacrifice, then all our sin dies there with him.

And I think, yeah, but wait a minute, I sin again the next day, and then I commit more sin tomorrow. Then you confess that sin, and you confess it in the name of Jesus. And in the name of Jesus, it is taken and applied to his sacrifice on the cross.

He has already died. So in that sense, your sin that you confess and repent of is already put to death. How do we be made the righteousness of God in him?

[18 : 01] Well, if you take away all the sin, then there's nothing left but cleanness, nothing left but purity. We are, as it were, refreshed, remained in the likeness of God.

Yes, his righteousness is also infused into us. His righteousness becomes ours. But just to see if you've got a filthy, dirty plate or whatever, after me, you've had a lovely meal and what's left of the plate is all we're going to need to congeal and it's gooey and it's minky and so on.

So how do you think? Well, you put on the water, you scrub it away, you make it all bright, sparkling, clean, because you've removed all the dirt and all that's left is clean and pure like new.

So likewise, when we are cleansed by the sacrifice of Christ, the things concerning me have an end. And this is the end, the objective, that he was made to be sinned for us.

He knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in heaven. But it's not just that they have an objective of fulfillment. It's also that they are drawing to a close, drawing to a conclusion.

[19 : 12] Now when does Jesus speak these words? He speaks them on the night in which he is betrayed. The night when he is about to be arrested in the garden of Gethsemane, they have finished the Lord's Supper, he is speaking to his disciples himself.

They are striving about who's to be the greatest and he then gives them this lesson about how they are to be amongst one another as those who serve. He warns them about the coming animosity and hostility.

He says, but the things concerning me have an end. They are drawing to a conclusion and all that I have done and all the ministry I have conducted, it is drawing to its fulfillment, drawing to its end.

To be numbered amongst the transgressors, not only in the sense of the increased animosity and hostility of the world, but literally crucified amongst criminals.

One on his right, one on his left. He is numbered with the transgressors. It will have an end, it will have a completion, such that he is able at the last to bow his head upon the cross and say, it is finished.

[20 : 15] It has an end. It is done. Now, we think, oh yes, well, far in the future, that's what happens. No, this is on the night of Gethsemane he is saying this.

Within 24 hours, Jesus will be dead and buried in the tomb. Less than a full day after he utters these words, the things concerning me have an end.

The end will have come. The purpose, the fulfillment, the conclusion for which he lived his entire life will have been fulfilled and completed.

And he will be dead in the tomb awaiting the resurrection. The resurrection by which, as we'll look at a bit more tonight, his same body will be raised but with different qualities.

The firstborn from the dead that he will be. But for now, it is his suffering, his cross that he is facing. The things concerning me have an end.

[21 : 17] You see, Jesus didn't come to this earth to be an unlimited, ongoing, forever walking amongst men type of safety. He could have been that. God could just have come down amongst men and he could have lived with the disciples and they could have got old and grey and died and passed away and their children raised up but Jesus still the same ever young, ever fresh, ever new and so on.

He could have gone on from generation to generation but no. He will come back again in the fullness of time clothed in majesty and glory but no. His ministry was short.

His time with us at earth was brief. It had a beginning. It had an end. The things concerning me have an end. They will be drawn to a conclusion.

Now, if it is so for Jesus, then it ought to be something that we recognise as being so for us. We don't need a year planner to tell us that the number of our days are finite.

We don't need a calendar that is about to be finished. We don't need the final Sabbath of a year to finally know well, yes, things do draw to an end. You and I were all a year older than we were on the last Sabbath of the year last year.

[22 : 33] If we're spared, we'll be another year older next year. Now, what does that mean? Oh, well, we don't change much in a year. Sometimes we do. Sometimes the number of our days is fulfilled in the space of that year.

Now, I don't want to get morgan about that. It's a perfectly natural thing. The law has fixed the number of our days. They have a beginning, they have a middle, they have an end. We were every single one of us born.

We were every single one of us children at some point. We were every single one of us young at some point. Some of us are spared to be old. And even if we are, the question is not how many years did you move, but rather what did we do with them?

The things concerning me have an end. And the things concerning you and I, they too have an end. There is a purpose for which we are designed.

We all know, if we don't know all of our canonism, we all know question one. What is man's chief end? Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

[23 : 42] That is the purpose for which we are made and designed. There is a purpose, there is a fulfillment, and it is drawing to a conclusion. It has an end.

Are we fulfilling the purpose for which we were designed? Have we done in this 2015 anything that we didn't previously do in 2014?

Have we grown a little in grace? Have we committed to Christ? Have we had that decision at least in our hearts, if not in our lips, that Christ alone is the Savior from our sin?

The things concerning me have an end. Now commitment to Christ, of course, will not be a one-way street of all blessing and easiness and goodness. Like life itself, no, life is all just complete misery from beginning to end.

There are highs and lows, there are blessings and good times, there are good memories to look back upon, there are happy days as well as difficult days. But however blessed a life may be, there are still going to be the days of tears, there are the shades of dark and light, but all these colors together and all these purposes together have an objective in view which is to bring us to the Lord, which is to unite us at last with Christ.

[25 : 08] That is the reason you and I have been given life. It is the ultimate purpose for which we are designed. The things concerning me have an end.

But if we seek Christ and if we do close in with him, then we will have the animosity of the world. We will have the hostility of the world as the disciples did.

They were flogged before the Sanhedrin and they went away counting themselves blessed to have suffered shame for Christ's cause. Look at all that Paul went through and yet all that he rejoiced in because he was able to do it for Christ.

The animosity of the world didn't bother him. The world was going to pass away and we will probably pass away from it a lot sooner than it does but it is finite. It is passing away.

It has only a limited shelf life and if we would exchange our soul for the whole world as it says in Mark's account of the Gospel in chapter 8 and verse 36 what shall it profit a man?

[26 : 12] He shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul and what shall a man give in exchange for his soul. There is nothing that will last like your immortal soul.

The world will not last as long as your immortal soul. The things concerning me Jesus says have an end and the things concerning him that we take unto ourselves that we believe in or don't believe that we act on or don't act on they too will have an end.

In every sporting event there is a time when the referee finally blows his whistle and however much injury time or however much stoppage time or however much is added on or extra time or penalties or whatever there is always a time when finally it comes to an end.

Every event everything every every occasion of this world has its end and Christ himself says the things concerning me have an end how swift that end would come.

That very night he would be betrayed. That very night he would be arrested. Within the next day very early in the morning he was crucified and by the night time he was in the tomb.

[27 : 29] I say unto you that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me. Jesus himself is saying that all that is prophesied before is fulfilled in him.

It is great and good to know the law and the prophets to know the Old Testament and the New. It is even better than for some of our professors and scholars to read it in its own language in the Hebrew and the New Testament and the Greek and to know it inside out and all the facts and details about it.

That's great if you can do it but you don't need all that knowledge in order to be saved. For things concerning me have an end because all of them are accomplished in me.

Look unto Christ. Focus on Jesus and put your trust and your hope for the future and your anxieties about the past and all your concerns about your own sin put it in him.

Believe in him. Look unto him and you will find it is all fulfilled in him. And it won't be forever that you have to endure the hostility of the world.

[28 : 43] It won't be forever that you have to suffer the antagonism and the enmity of unbelief in this world. If you hold fast to Christ the things concerning him have an end.

It will not be forever that his people are required to suffer. We read in the book of Revelation remember that the souls of those who have been slain for the word of God they cry out from under the altar how long oh Lord how long dost thou not avenge our blood?

And he says yet a little while longer there is still more to be accomplished still more to be finished. All that God does he does well.

And yet there is this small point that sometimes we miss in Genesis and I notice that Dr. Campbell made reference to this in one of his columns in the Gazette that when the Lord laid everything and he made it good and when he made man in his own image he created them and he said that was very good.

The only thing in his creation that for a time was not good was that it was not good he said for the man to be alone. and that was because when he made man in his image ultimately finally made the male and then female but for that brief period of time when there was only the one and not the other he said that that's not good.

[30 : 12] It's not good for the man to be alone. Now they might say ah something God made wasn't good. Look he says it's not good but the only reason it is not good is it's not yet finished.

It is not yet accomplished. It's like if you were to walk around behind an artist when he's still sort of got he's got his sketching there and he's got a wee bit of brushwork there and some colours there but the painting's nowhere near finished so you can't stand there and say that's rubbish you know I could be better than that my kid could be better than that look you I mean can I don't get in it's not rubbish it's just it's not finished.

The work is not yet finalised and whilst God is still creating whilst he is still in the process of perfecting that which is not yet complete not yet perfected he says it is not good.

In this case for the man to be alone but whilst as yet the work of God in our lives is not yet perfected he might legitimately say it's not good it's not good yet it's not finished yet it's not quite just right yet and that may be the state in which we find ourselves as yet incomplete in our relationship with Christ we may be committed to Christ we may be Christians of long standing many years and yet we don't feel right with the Lord things honestly should be and our sins still bother us and we're all too conscious of our failures and it's not good yet it's not yet it's not perfected perfected and the world the person on the the things concerning me have an end and the things concerning you and me as we trust in Christ have an end and if we don't trust in Christ then our end is already upon us and this world is as good as it's going to get and what a tragedy that is

Jesus says there's good news that the unfinished picture is not the end, it's not intended to be the end if the artist walks away from his canvas when it's half finished then it stays rubbish it's incomplete, it's started but it's not finished it's not even have the worth of a completely blank canvas that somebody can start on it's a half done job it's less than useless that is what so many of us choose for our lives we start a wee bit, we dabble a wee bit with the Lord but then we go away and then we come back and then we don't and we don't commit to the Lord and we don't find that fulfilment in the Lord but all the things that we seek to do and the work we seek to undertake and maybe we do it well but all the things our hand finds to do that is that lack of satisfaction lack of fulfilment lack of completeness however well we do it it is not good because it is not yet perfected all that you have and all that you are is only ever perfected in Christ this year is only complete when it is complete in Christ and you may have umpteen years behind you say well that's rubbish look at all these years I've completed oh these are years you've lived but how complete were they how full were they or were they the years that the locust has eaten which the Lord is able to restore which he is able to do good with he was reckoned with the transgressors that ultimately we should not be he was crucified and put to death that we need not be that we might have life the things concerning me have an end

[34 : 46] Jesus is the one himself who says all these things prophesy all that has gone before they are complete in me all the reason and the purpose for your living is complete in me all that you see around you in creation is pointing to me he is the fulfilment he is the pinnacle of all that exists in heaven and in earth the things concerning me have an end yes a fulfilment yes a purpose but a conclusion to which things are also drawing and that is true for the life of Jesus how swiftly it would be true in the life of Jesus and that is true for us and it may be slowly in the lives of us or it may be rapid but it is a certainty for the things concerning me have an end let that end for you be completion in Christ fulfilment in him and if that be the thing and the person to which you commit with all your heart and soul and mind and strength then this year will not have been lost it will have been crowned with the presence and the beauty and the anointing of Christ Jesus let us pray

Amen Amen