**Series Road Map**

**Series Overview:** In order to see the power of what Jesus said, sometimes, we need to look at what Jesus didn’t say. Jesus said a lot of things, but Jesus also clearly didn’t say a lot of things. We’re looking at 4 things Jesus didn’t say and discovering the Truth about these commonly misunderstood topics.

**Week Overview:** Karma feels good when it happens to other people...but what about when we get what we deserve. We often hope that other people get what they deserve, and we may think the same about ourselves. But, if we truly got what we deserved, we would all receive death and punishment. In Christ, we can get better than we deserve because He got what He didn’t deserve.

***Outline:***

**Grab the Room (Intro):** Feeling guilty

**Tension (what’s the struggle):** We’re all guilty of something

**Text:** Luke 23:32-33; Luke 23:39-42; Psalm 103:10-12

**THP**: **You get better than you deserve**

**Supporting Points:**

Jesus didn’t come to make bad people good. He came to make dead people alive.

**Application (call to action):**

You can reject or receive God’s invitation to get better than you deserve.

Gospel presentation

Be filled with gratitude.

Message Series: Things Jesus Never Said

Message Title: You Get What You Deserve

Key: [Media] Scripture Slides

If you’re new to the Bible, what Jesus said is in the color red. Jesus said a lot of things. The words of Jesus are so other-worldly, and we can take what He said for granted.

We can look at what he didn’t say, what I might have said, and what he could have said…but we’re going to look at what Jesus said to see the power of what He did say.

How many of you battle with feeling guilty. One of the top types of guilt is food guilt. We’ve all had that moment where we should have a slice or two of pizza, and it turned into the whole thing. Or, have you ever had one of those moments where you’re slamming a giant bag of chips, and you wonder how you did all that by yourself, and you feel like a monster?...yeah, me neither.

It’s researched that 29 percent of what we eat makes us feel guilty. That’s about 1/3 of what we eat…

And there are other types of guilt. Like student guilt. If you’re a good student, you feel bad that the teacher likes you more than anyone else and you mess up the curve on grading…but, if you aren’t the best, you feel guilty for not being good enough.

Maybe you feel guilty because your best friend asked if an outfit looked cute, and you said yes, but you really wanted to say “heck no” because you wanted to make her feel good. There’s general guilt for so many random things. You may have spiritual guilt…you don’t feel like you do enough or your siblings are more holy than you. You don’t feel like you serve enough. Or, you say you love Jesus, but you look at lustful images.

I struggle with guilt. I struggle with pastor’s guilt. I sometimes have such high expectations for myself, and I feel guilty when I don’t live up to the expectations of myself or others. I feel guilty when I should have slowed down to have a conversation, but I was too busy on a mission, or I missed an opportunity to show love when I was too inside my head… I struggle with guilt because I wonder if I live up to God’s standards, and I think that there are so many other people who are more talented and better leaders than me who could lead where I lead…and I wonder if I am letting Him down sometimes.

Tension

The Truth is, whether or not we struggle with feelings of guilt, we have all done things that we are truly guilty of. Some are big, and some are small. Some of those big things may still eat at you, and you feel guilty for something you did or said YEARS ago.

And there is a phrase that people say that helps guide a code of living…some call it karma. Finish the sentence with me. You get what you…. [deserve] What comes around [goes around]. You get this. When people are guilty, they get what they deserve…maybe not right away, but doesn’t it feel good when sweet justice is delivered.

There is a sick part of me that loves it when people get what they deserve. Like when that one kid who constantly cheats the work out gets called out in practice by the coach and has to do sprints. When that kid who cheated off of you and got a better grade gets caught. Or, when someone speeds by me at 90mph, and 3 miles down the road, I see that same car that is pulled over, and I think, you get what you deserved…

But Jesus didn’t say this. Jesus didn’t say that you get what you deserve. Because if that was the fact, we all deserve punishment for our actions, and there is no way that we can escape that punishment on our own. Lucky for us, Jesus didn’t say, “Well that’s Karma, right?! You shouldn’t have messed that up. Or Adam and Eve messed you guys up for life, and now you have to deal…”. No, Jesus lived in such a way that is so counter-cultural from our sense of justice. He made a way for us to not get what we deserve.

Truth

See, Jesus didn’t get what He deserved either. Jesus lived a perfect life, and He was literally God in the flesh. He was all powerful, ruler of the world. And instead of a crown of gold, he was given a crown of thorns. Instead of being given a throne, he was given a cross to die on. Instead of having servants around him at his death, he was crucified next to two thieves. If the God of the universe was given this type of death, someone so innocent…I don’t want to live by a code that says I get what I deserve. Because if an innocent God was given this type of death, I don’t want to think about what a guilty me would get.

We see that Jesus didn’t get what he deserved in Luke 23:32-33 Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left.

Death by crucifixion was well known as the most painful and brutal way to die in those days. In fact, the word excruciating comes from the word crucifixion… ex- means out of, and cruce- means cross. It was not only incredibly painful, but it was also humiliating and spiritually shameful. Only the lowest of the lows, the most heinous people received this punishments.

Before the cross, the torture started with scorging with a whip that would be embedded with glass or nails. He was whipped 39 times, the layers of flesh were exposed, and sometimes, internal organs could be seen. The body would be in a state of shock, but Jesus was handed his own cross to carry. There, the Roman centurions took 7 inch stakes to the wrists and the feet. Often, it was said it would take 4 days for someone to suffocate on the cross because you would have to lift yourself up to breath. If on day 4, you were not dead, as an act of mercy, the centurions would break your legs so that you could not go back up for breath, and you would suffocate and die.

Jesus did not get what He deserved. When I don’t get what I deserve, maybe I got punished for something my little brother did, I throw a fit, but not Jesus. In fact, listen to what He says.

On the cross, He says “Father forgive them because they don’t even know what they are doing.” In the moment He was not getting what He deserved, He was giving grace, giving people what they did not deserve.

Jesus was crucified between two criminals. One was arrogant, prideful, and guilty, and he saw no need for mercy, grace, or even a savior… 39One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? 41 We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”42Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

This is what Jesus said. In other words, He said “You get better than you deserve.”

We say: What goes around, comes around. Your past will come back to, haunt you. If you make your bed, you gotta lie in it…

But we can have two responses to Jesus’s statement. We can receive this gift with gratitude, or we can reject this invitation…and if we do reject it, we will get what we deserve, and that is punishment. But if we receive Christ, we will get better than we deserve, and that’s eternal life.

The second criminal, the Guilty, sinful, and repentant man recognized He needed help. There was justice for his actions, and He wanted another way. Jesus said, today you will be with me in paradise. Your sins will be forgiven, even though you can’t earn it, I will show you grace…and you’ll be with me in paradise. And that’s not fair. He didn’t deserve that.

Let me tell you what I don’t deserve. I don’t deserve to be preaching in front of you. I am an imperfect human with a messy past. If you knew everything in my story, you would know that I didn’t get here on my own because of what I have done. My position and opportunity is not a result of good karma. But, my sin was not the end of my story. Jesus made a way for me to not just be seen for what I’ve done, and He made me a new creation…so that I wouldn’t have to seen as guilty, but I can be seen as forgiven. And because I’ve received that gift, God has welcomed me into His Kingdom.

Maybe you’re here, and you’re like that criminal on the cross. But, which criminal are you? Are you rejecting your need for a Savior, okay getting what you deserve? Or do you want more?

Maybe you’re ashamed, and you hate who you are. The guilt in you is overwhelming, and you feel dead on the inside. You have no hope. No joy. No life, and you might think that you deserve this…

We do deserve punishment from God…but because of his great love for us. Who is rich in mercy made us alive to Christ. Jesus did not come to make bad people good…he came to make dead people alive.

And this is not from yourselves but a gift from God. Imagine for a moment…what would it be like for that undeserving criminal to hear the words “you are forgiven.” What if the guard heard that, took him down from the cross, revived him, and let him have a second chance. Now, this didn’t happen, but imagine it did. His wounds would heal, he would recover, there would be years added to his life.

What do you think his life would be devoted to? Someone else died so that he could live? There would never be a day when he didn’t think about what that man did for him. Devoted to the man who gave him life. He would wake up each morning, grateful because He has gotten better than He deserved. He should have been dead, but He can be alive!!

The things that bothered Him before would have driven him crazy, but he would be so filled with gratitude at the sacrifice of Jesus. The friendship drama wouldn’t have gotten him so bent out of shape because he knows what true relationship looks like since he had a relationship with Jesus. He wouldn’t be focused on how unfair it was that his life wasn’t as good as other people’s because at least He is alive! He wouldn’t be thinking about how he deserves to get to heaven because he is a good person because he KNOWS he is guilty, and he knew what his life should have looked like, and that is death… he would be so aware of the fact that he was given an absolutely outrageous gift of forgiveness, and he would choose to live each moment in remembrance of that gratitude and grace.

He might have even gone back to the cross and taken the nails of Jesus that held him there as a reminder that he should have been dead. But because of the death of an innocent Jesus, He is able to live. He might have kept them as a reminder of where he should have been…

And each day, he would be reminded of the blood flowing through his veins because the blood was emptied from Jesus. He would be filled with joy because Jesus took the pain, shame, and punishment of our sin. He would be filled with the knowledge of a relationship with Jesus when Jesus was betrayed on the cross. He would forever be changed. Filled with hope, new life, love, peace, and the Spirit of the living God inside of him! Do you feel that?

His story is my story. His story can be your story. I am undeserving, guilty, unworthy, and I should have gotten what I deserved, and that is death. I was dead in my sins, but I am alive in Christ now! The innocent man, Jesus, was slain for my sins.

And I live for God, it’s because everyday, I’m aware that I did not get what I deserve…I thank God for His grace. Psalm 103:10-12 says He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

God does not deal harshly with us as we deserve. You may have been taught a version of Christianity that says that God is harsh, judgemental, and not very kind...and I’m sorry if that is you. Because God is so loving, and He is so kind to us. In Christ, we can have better than we deserve. And this should so change your life. You should be so filled with gratitude, passion, and love for Jesus!

Because we all deserve the punishment of death, but the difference is some of us have realized that we can get better than we deserve…not because we’re better than others but because Jesus got what He didn’t deserve.

Jesus introduced something better than justice. He introduced mercy and grace. Mercy is not getting something you deserve, and grace is getting something you don’t deserve.

So, he freely offered us mercy, and we didn’t get the punishment of sin that we deserve, and we received grace, the gift a new life with Jesus that we did not deserve.

We get better than deserve when we receive peace when our world goes crazy, healing when we’ve been hurt, comfort from God when we feel like we’ve been betrayed, when we receive love because we aren’t very loving all the time...we get better than we deserve because each day is a reminder that God is with us and he put breath in your lungs to keep going and to keep living for Him.

Jesus could look at a criminal stuck in sin, rejecting his gift of eternal life who will get what he deserves…or, He can see a repentant criminal, and He says your sins are forgiven, and we can get better than we deserve. We can choose to reject or accept God’s invitation, but we can’t choose whether or not we are guilty. We are all criminals.

If you would like to recognize your need for a Savior and ask for Jesus to give you better than you deserve, freedom from your guilt, sins, your past, the chance at a new life, you can do that today.

Gospel presentation.

Celebrate

So, just as Jesus died for that criminals sin, but if you’re like the repentant criminal, you are no longer guilty of your sin, but you are forgiven. You don’t just have a second chance at life, but you have a new life!

So, you may have already made that decision, and you may have just made that decision today...but, if you have made the decision to make Jesus Lord and Savior of your life, to believe that you get better than you deserve, I’m going to invite you to respond by picking up one of these nails [have a cross up front if you have one at your campus. If you choose to do a cross for week 1, you can pin the notecards with “forgiven” to the cross to tie week 1 and 3 together] as a reminder that you get better than you deserve. You get eternal life because Jesus was put to death.

So, I want you to pick up one of these as daily reminder of the life, the new life flowing through each day to be filled with gratitude, joy, love, and to remember that we don’t deserve anything...and if we do deserve anything it’s death.

So, we’re going to play a song, and I want you to thank God for his sacrifice before hopping up to get a nail. And this is not a shameful act to pick up a nail, but it is a joyful act because you get to experience true life. Would you reflect, pick up a nail, and worship God to thank Him for who He is and what He’s done.

Let’s worship.