

This Day is This Scripture Fulfilled

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- [0 : 00] A very warm welcome to our service this morning as we join together in the worship of God we look to him to bless our time together under the sound of his word.
- We are going to begin by singing to God's praise from Psalm 119 and at verse 57.
- And we are going to sing this section of the psalm. Thou my true portion art alone which I did choose, O Lord, I have resolved and said that I would keep thy holy word.
- With my whole heart I did entreat thy face and favour free. According to thy gracious word be merciful to me. I thought upon my former ways and did my life well try.
- And to thy testimonies pure my feet then turned the dye. I did not stain or linger long as those that slothful are. But hastily thy laws to keep myself I did prepare.
- [1 : 20] Bands of ill men me robbed. Yet I thy precepts did not slight. I'll rise at midnight thee to praise. Even for thy judgments right.
- I am companion to all those who fear and obey. O Lord, thy mercy fills the earth. Teach me thy laws. I pray. Let us sing this section of Psalm 119, verse 57 to 64.
- There my true portion art alone which I did choose, O Lord. O Lord, I have resolved and said that I will be the Lord. O Lord, I have resolved and said that I will be the Lord.
- O Lord, I have resolved and said that I would keep thy home.
- O Lord, I have resolved and said that I will be the Lord. With my whole heart I did indeed.
- [2 : 44] Thy face and faith were free. According to thy gracious word, be merciful to me.
- I thought upon my former ways.
- And did my life well dry. Until thy testimony's cure, my faith entered the day.
- I did not stay, nor linger long as those that sought for God.
- But history I rose to keep.
- [4 : 19] Myself I did prepare. Bands of will mend me rocket eye.
- Thy place it did not slide. Arise at midnight, be to praise.
- In for thy judgment's right. I am companion to all those who fear and thee obey.
- O Lord, thy mercy fills the earth.
- Teach me in thy lost, I pray. Let us join together in prayer.
- [5 : 51] O Lord, O God, as we gather in your presence, grant to us a sense of being in the presence of God.
- And that as a worshipping people. Help us to understand that there is no place on the face of this planet of ours that we are not in the presence of God.
- That the God who is, God is omnipresent. That there is no place that you are not to be found.

Whether we are conscious of it or not. Whether we have an awareness in any meaningful way of being in the presence of God.

We know that even you people who should understand that to be a truth that they can put their trust in.

[6 : 53] Often fluctuate in the manner in which they appreciate what that truth is all about. We find that in the experience of your servant.

That is spoken of when he discovered himself to be in the presence of God in a way that he had not fully comprehended previously.

Even though he was your servant. Even though he was someone who experienced the gifting of God. And who knew in his own soul that God had made himself known to him.

And yet there came a point in his experience where he was persuaded to declare that the place whereon he stood was holy ground.

Because of the awareness that he had of the God of heaven being in near proximity to him. We know that there were other occasions written of in the scripture.

[8 : 03] Where instead of being an experience that was in any way uplifting.

The effect upon those who went through it was one of fear and alarm. Because the holiness of God was something that was brought home to them.

As they experienced your being near to them. And they cried out for mercy. We know that we live in a world that disputes the reality of God.

We know that we live in a world that the vast majority within it have declarations of interest in God.

But it is plain that that interest in a God of their own making. Help us to understand from your word who you are as God.

[9 : 15] That there is no God like unto you. Who is able to show mercy in abundance. And who is able to exercise the graces necessary that would bring salvation into the reality of experience.

We pray for your word to remind us afresh of the need that we have of mercy. And of grace even from your hand.

We pray for an experience of Christ. An experience of him as the alone savior of sinners. The one that we need to know for ourselves.

That it is not enough for us to have a second hand knowledge of him. The testimony of others may well be something that we are familiar with.

We may even be familiar with the scripture that speaks of Christ. And some of the truths contained within it. And yet the truth concerning us is that we do not know that Christ for ourselves.

[10 : 29] And we cannot continue in this world with any hope that is viable. Or able to sustain us in the time of testing.

Were it not for the fact that that knowledge of him would be a knowledge that you have given to us. For ourselves.

We pray that you would remind us afresh through your word of the power of Christ. To save sinners for such as what he came to do in this world.

And not one of us is excluded from that banner. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And your word reminds us that we are amongst that lot.

So hear our prayers on our own behalf and on behalf of others today as we meet in your name. Bless our gathering. Bless the word that you have given to us. As we read it and as we sing it and as we reflect upon the truths contained.

[11 : 35] Remember the constituent body of the congregation. Members and adherents. The community represented by it.

Every home and household. Those present from that number. And those who choose for whatever reason to absent themselves from the means of grace.

Of that number we know that there are some who by choice are absent. We pray for mercy for them. And ask that you would draw them to yourself by the power of your spirit.

And that they may know that there is a God in heaven who is willing to save to the uttermost by way of Christ. We pray for those who are absent by reason of their own providential circumstances.

Many frail elderly whose place was never empty. Well the opportunity was theirs. Some confined to their homes. Some to hospitals.

[12 : 41] Some to care homes. Some even experiencing the care that is marking out their demise in the world.

We know for some that they have been told that there is but a short time for them in the world. And yet whatever that may mean for them we pray that it would be sanctified to us.

That we may understand that for some who have been told that their life is ebbing. And others may approach that end of life without knowing that that is the point at which they are found.

We even in this past week have heard of some who have suffered sudden death. We cannot but ponder what it would mean for any one of us.

For whatever reason or by whatever means that the path that we are on would suddenly come to be the end for us. Make us wise to consider it.

[13 : 55] Make us wise to consider it. Because we foolishly map out our lives and extend our years. And think that in the comfort of our homes that we will approach our dovetage and make preparation for eternity in that secure environment.

You have not promised such to us. You have not promised such to us. But you expect us to make our calling and election sure while the opportunity is ours.

Remember the preaching of the word that it may be blessed to every single soul that is privileged to hear the invitation of the gospel.

By whatever means. Through the pulpits of our communities and beyond. Through the medium that you have ordained for good.

Whether it is television or radio or electronic media. Whatever way it is afforded us as a privilege that we hear of Christ.

[15 : 05] We give thanks that there are countries in the world that are close to the gospel. Effectively. Effectively. As far as the open proclamation of truth is concerned.

And yet through these other channels the gospel finds inroads into these places. And it is blessed to many.

We give thanks for that. We wonder at how many who are in such circumstances. Who have delighted in Christ having heard of him.

While there are so many within our own communities who have free and ready access to the gospel. And yet despise it. We pray for mercy.

The day of opportunity is ours. And do not allow us to make little of it. Remember the nation that we form a part of.

[16 : 06] Those who govern over us. The king newly crowned. We pray for him and his family. We pray for wisdom. To come from on high. That you would turn us again.

By your own power. That we may repent of our sin. And embrace Jesus Christ. As he is freely offered in the gospel. May we do that to a man.

And do it earnestly, honestly and with haste. Remember the nations of the world that suffer at the time present.

Those who are suffering because of war. Some because of natural disaster. So often we hear. And the frequency of what we hear.

May harden our hearts against such things. Where there are terrors associated with wind and wave. Where the earth is shattered.

[17 : 06] By reason of earthquake. Where all kinds of disasters come without warning. And many lives are forfeit.

And in these many places we know. That some of your people live. And we remember them to you. Who are sorrowing and broken hearted. By reason of the devastation brought.

By reason of the dead. The dead. We remember others who live in ignorance. And who have entered into eternity. Unprepared. And without recognition.

That there is a God that waits. As the judge of the quick and the dead. We remember the starving. And the deceased. And all the many circumstances that speak to us of a fallen world.

You are a God of mercy. And your eye is ever upon us. And turn us again we pray. To yourself. Continue to watch over us this short time. But together in this place.

[18 : 09] And bless the world preached. Less the world taught to our children. And may those who seek to do so. Do so with the help of the almighty.

Thankful that they are not left to their own devices. As any one of them is not. Continue with us we pray. Forgives in Jesus name.

Amen. We are going to read from the scriptures of the New Testament.

And the Gospel of Luke chapter 4. Luke chapter 4. And we are going to read from verse 14.

Reading from verse 14 down to verse 32.

[19 : 10] And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee. And there went out a fame of him.

Through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues. Being glorified of all. And he came to Nazareth. Where he had been brought up.

And as his custom was. He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. And stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah.

And when he had opened the book. He found the place where it was written. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. Because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.

He has sent me to heal the broken hearted. To preach deliverance to the captives. And recovering of sight to the blind. To set at liberty them that are bruised.

[20 : 10] To preach the acceptable ear of the Lord. And he closed the book. And he gave it again to the minister. And sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were hassled on him.

And he began to say unto them. This day is the scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness. And wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.

And they said. And they said. Is not this Joseph's son? And he said unto them. You will surely say unto me this proverb. Physician heal thyself.

Whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum. Do also here in thy country. And he said. Verily I say unto you. No prophet is accepted in his own country.

But I tell you of our truth. Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias. When the heaven was shut up three years and six months. When great famine was thrown out all the land.

[21 : 17] But unto none of them was Elias sent. Saving unto Sarepta. A city of Sidon. And to a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet.

And none of them was cleansed. Saving Naaman the Syrian. And all day the synagogue when they heard these things were filled with wrath.

And rose up and thrust them out of the city. And led them unto the brow of the hill. Whereon their city was built. That they might cast them down headlong.

But he passing through the midst of them went his way. And came down to Capernaum. The city of Galilee. And taught them on the Sabbath days.

And they were astonished at his doctrine. For his word was with power. Amen. And be the Lord at his blessing.

[22 : 17] To this reading of his word. And to his name be the praise. Well boys and girls before you go out to Sunday school.

I believe that in Sunday school you're continuing to follow. What is taught us in the Old Testament. About the Exodus.

The time and the history of the people of God. When they were saved out of Egypt. Where they were imprisoned.

Where they were kept for many years. And God took them out of Egypt. And the road in which he took them.

Was a road that required them to cross the Red Sea. And in the book of Exodus. We're told how that came about.

[23 : 15] How God. How God. Leading them by the hands of Moses. Took them. To this place.

Where they thought. With the sea in front of them. And the Egyptians behind them. That they were bound. To perish. But God did not mean.

To take them out of Egypt. To die. As you know. He meant to take them out of Egypt. To live. Now in Exodus chapter 14.

We read there. The Lord said unto Moses. Wherefore cryest thou unto me. Speak unto the children of Israel. That they go forward.

But lift thou up thy rod. And stretch out thine hand. Over the sea. And divide it. And the children of Israel shall go. And dry ground.

[24 : 14] Through the midst of the sea. And I always remember. When I read these verses. When I was a lot younger. There was a film.

That was made. Called the Ten Commandments. And the star of that film. Was a man called. Charlton Heston. And one of the.

Posters that was used. To advertise. That film. Was a poster. Which was a still. A flip from the film.

Which shows. Charlton Heston. Charlton Heston. Acting the part of Moses. Holding out his. Rod. Over.

The Red Sea. I always remember the picture. It's stuck in my mind. I can't. Forget it. There are many things. You would want to forget. Many things. That you.

- [25 : 10] Probably should. But. Memory is a strange thing. And. It nails things. In place. And that's one picture. That's in my memory. Now. The thing is.
- That. The children of Israel. Were. According to the Bible story. Which is the true story. They were in a very difficult situation.
- They couldn't. Cross the Red Sea. Physically. It was impossible for them. And. Moses. God's servant. Knew that.
- As well. And yet. He taught. He. God. Told. Moses. What he needed. To do. And.
- Moses. Had it to be. Had to believe God. And. The children of Israel. Had to believe God. You had to have. Faith. Faith. In.
- [26 : 05] The God. Who was able to. Take them across the Red Sea. A God who could do. Something that was impossible. And. That I suppose.
- Is what. Is at the very heart. Of what happens here. A story told of a little boy. Who was a minister's son. And in school.
- They were being taught. Some. Some. Some. Truth. According to the teaching of the school.
- And the. The education department. That. Conflicted. The teaching. Of the Bible. And. Very often. That is the case. What.
- The Bible teaches. Is. Often. Dismissed. As being wrong. And. Not. True. True. And.
- [27 : 01] On this occasion. The little boy. Was. Being. Tormented. By his. Friends. In school. Because. His friends.
- Were saying. That. The. It was impossible. For. Jonah. To be swallowed.
- By the whale. Whale. It was not. Physically. Possible. Biology. Taught. That. A whale. Could not. Swallow.
- A man. And. The little boy. Was terribly. Upset. Because. He had been taught. From the Bible. When he. When he was growing up. That.
- That was what the Bible. Was telling him. To be honest. And told his father. What his. What his. Friends. Were saying. But. All his father. Said.
- [27 : 57] To him. Was this. That the Bible. Says. That God. Had prepared. A great fish. To swallow. Jonah. And that was all.
- The little boy. Needed to hear. If God. Had prepared. A great fish. To swallow. Jonah. That. Is what. Happened.
- Because. He believed. God. More than. He believed. What man. Was saying. When. Moses. Stood. On the.
- Brink. Of the. Red Sea. Moses. Said. To himself. There is no way. I can cross. This sea. The children. Of Israel.
- Said. There is no way. That we can cross. This red sea. But what. The Bible. Tells us. In this passage. Is that. Not only. Did they do so.
- [28 : 52] But they did so. Because. God. Said. To them. If you read on. In chapter 14. It tells you. There.
- In verse 21. Moses. Stretched out. His hand. Over the sea. And the Lord. Caused. The sea. To go back. Back. By a strong.
- East wind. All that night. The Lord. Caused. The wind. To divide. The sea. And. It wasn't. Moses.
- It wasn't. The children. Of Israel. But. Their God. Who did that. And that's. What we need. To remember. That. What God.

Does. And what God. Says. He is going. To do. That is. Exactly. What will happen. No matter. How. Much.

[29 : 47] It appears. To us. To be. In the face. Of our. Understanding. However. Clever. We are. However. Much.

We think. That. The impossible. Is. The God. And. Whatever. He says. And whatever. He wants. To do.

That. He will do. Even. Using. The powers. Of his disposal. Controlling. The winds. That he. Himself. Has created.

To allow. The people. Of God. To cross. With dry feet. Well. I hope. You remember. That. Humanly. Speaking.

To me. It. An impossibility. But God. Is. Someone. Who. Is. Greater. Than. The waves.

[30 : 42] And all. That is. In this world. I'm going to sing. From. Psalm 22. Psalm 22. At verse 22. I will show forth.

Thy name. Unto those. That my brethren. Are. Amidst the congregation. Thy praise. I will declare. Praise. The Lord. Who do.

Him. Glorify. All ye. The seed. Of Jacob. Fear him. All. But. Israel's. Children. Be.

For he. Despised. Not. Not. Not. Not. Not. Did cry. And so on. Down. To verse 27.

I will show forth. Thy name. And to those. That my brethren. Are. Amidst the congregation. Amidst the congregation. Thy. I will. I will show forth. I will show forth.

[31 : 38] Thy name. And to. Those. That my brethren. Are. Amidst the congregation. Thy praise. Thy. Thy praise.

Thy will. Be clear. Praise. Ye. The Lord. God. My brethren. Amidst the congregation. Amidst the congregation.

Thy praise. Thy will. Be clear. He will declare, Praise ye the Lord, who give him faith, In glory, high, or he, the seed of Jacob, fear him all, That his love's children be.

For he despised not, not apart, The afflicted mystery, For all the wickedness is, But ever when he to him to cry, Within the congregation great, My praise shall be of thee, My voice before them,

The rotten field, Shall be performed by me.

[34 : 05] The meek shall eat, and shall be filled, They also praise shall give, And to the Lord, that you him seek, Your heart shall ever live.

All ends of the earth, remember shall, And turn the Lord unto our kindreds of the need, And to the Lord, that you are kindreds of the nations, To him shall all be seen.

Let us turn to the passage of scripture that we were reading together from the Gospel of Luke, chapter 4.

You can read again at verse 14. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, And there went out a fame of him throughout all the region round about, And he talked in the synagogues, being glorified of all.

And so on. Reading the chapter before us, you find, It begins with the account that Luke gives us of the temptation of Jesus.

[36 : 19] He is 40 days fasting in the wilderness. And during these 40 days, we know that he is tempted by the devil.

And three of the temptations are brought home to us. And in the account that we have in Luke's Gospel, he follows the account of the temptation, With the account given to us of Jesus' return, Return to Galilee.

And several things are brought to our attention. There may be slight variation in the way the account is recorded in Matthew's Gospel and Mark's Gospel.

For example, it appears in the reading here that this was the point at which the preaching ministry of Jesus commenced.

That it was at this moment that he began to preach the Gospel, or preach the message of salvation extensively.

[37 : 37] But in the account that we have in the two other Gospels, it seems, just in the way that it is recorded, That this might have been ongoing for some time prior to the temptation in the wilderness.

But it's just a, it isn't a contradiction as such. It is just, sometimes you find that when one of the Gospel writers is recording something for us, Maybe weeks pass, or months pass, or even a year may pass, between points that he focuses on.

Which may give the impression that there's a discrepancy. But the discrepancy is real, more imagined than real.

But what I want us to do today is look at this account that is given to us of the preaching of Jesus as it is spoken of here.

And there are four headings that I want us to take with us. First of all, there is the centrality of the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

[38 : 57] Then there is the celebrity of the person of the Lord Jesus. Then there is the clarity with which he proclaims the message of the Gospel.

And then finally, there is the contempt that is given to the message by many who hear it.

So four words to help you take the thoughts that we're wanting to think of together today. There is centrality, celebrity, clarity, and contempt.

Now the centrality is the centrality of the person of the Holy Spirit. And I find that very interesting. That in verse 14 we read, Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee.

If there is one passion in the whole of the Scripture that you would expect to have a constant source of the Spirit's assistance and power, it is the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[40 : 25] And in a sense, when we think of his passion as the second passion in the Trinity, he is God.

And as God, he possesses all the power that is divine, that is his. But here we are told that at the commencement of his ministry, he is endowed with a greater and a more copious amount of the Spirit's power.

And that is not just spoken of here. But it is something that God wishes us to take on board, that with regard to the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, that God made provision for the Lord Jesus Christ, that would equip him more perfectly to fulfill all that was required of him.

I think it is important for us to take that with us at this very point. I remember reading many years ago about how we are meant to understand parables.

And you know that the Lord spoke about many things using the format of parable. And it is quite amazing how many interpretations of parables we have.

[42 : 14] But somebody very wisely said about a parable, if you want to understand what a parable is saying, always remember that you will find the key at the door.

Now whether you can argue that as a truth that is universally the case. But what he meant by that is that if you are to understand a parable, you begin at the point at which the parable begins.

And you understand what the parable is meant to teach from what the Lord says. Now while this is not a parable, what we do understand is that at the very outset of his ministry, we are told that Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee.

And that itself is something that tells us that he is endowed with the Spirit. And it is important for us to understand that God has promised his Son that in order for him to fulfill his calling as the Savior of lost sinners, and the one who will address the world and declare his intention to the world, in order for him to do that to the ultimate, he will be equipped to do so.

He was filled with the Spirit so as to equip him for the ministry that was his. And I think at the very outset we are taught that.

[44 : 11] And then when we move on to what he says, when he preaches, what does he preach on? Well, you'll find that when he preaches, he is preaching about not just the word that he is meant to convey, but the person who is conveying that word to us, that God has prophesied concerning him, what his message will be and how he will deliver it, how he will proclaim it.

Now, when we read this passage, there are a lot of things in the passage that we may take for granted. But for a theologian or somebody who is an interest in the way the gospel develops, you find here that it is almost as a matter of fact that you are told that Jesus taught in their synagogues.

And we are told he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day. And we are told that it was his habit to attend the synagogue.

Now, to us looking back, we might think, well, that's not really of any significance because the synagogue was a place of worship. We understand that to be so.

But theologians will tell you that the knowledge that we have of the synagogue form of worship is very limited. And this is the introduction, if you like, that you have to such worship.

[46 : 00] It is historically something that was recent because the people of God formerly worshipped God in the temple.

And then when the temple was denied them, when they were taken away into bondage and the temple was destroyed, they were unable to worship there any longer.

And the New Testament form of worship was a development that was forced upon them. And historically, what the synagogue was, was a place of worship.

Sometimes it was a physical building where they met. Sometimes it didn't require a building at all. What was a requirement for there to be a synagogue was that there would be 10 male members, 10 male Jews.

And as long as that was there, as long as that quorum was present, then they would exercise worship in God's name in the form of a synagogue.

[47 : 13] Now, while that might be important historically for information purposes, the question that is asked about the Lord at this point, when he attends the synagogue, he is invited to lead the worship.

And the question is, why would he be asked? He was a relative stranger, and yet, when he is in the synagogue, he is invited to read.

And then when he does read, he sits down, and we are told about the form of worship, that when that happened, you look at me standing in the pulpit, and if I stand, you are expecting me to preach, or to carry out some kind of formal act of worship by standing.

But in the situation of the Lord, the person who sat down would preach sitting down. The reading would be from a standing position, and then sitting down, and as you read through this passage, you would see, every eye was upon the Lord waiting for him to speak, because that was what they expected him to do.

Now, the questions that are asked about this particular passage is that, when the Lord spoke, he read two passages of the scripture, or the quotation that we have are quotations from the prophecies of Isaiah 1, Isaiah 61, and another passage from another part, chapter 58 and verse 6.

[49 : 12] Now, the question that is asked about these passages, did the Lord himself choose the passages, or were these passages that were chosen for him?

Now, because of the early stage at which the synagogue form of worship was, in its development, that some suggested there was a fixed liturgy, that they would follow a set pattern, so that whoever was conducting the worship would one Sabbath day read one passage, and the following Sabbath day there would be another passage.

Now, whether that question is a relevant question, is that to yourself, I suppose. Because of the Spirit's presence, because of the Spirit endearing the Lord, he could either fill the mouth of the Lord with the relevant passages that were conforming to his particular ministry and calling, or the Spirit who governs all the affairs of men, as God governs all the affairs of men, it would fall neatly into place that this was the passage that was to be read anyway.

But I think, when we read what was said, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach the deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, and so on.

Now, what it speaks of is what was true of the Lord. He came into Galilee, and he was endowed with the Spirit.

[51 : 23] That is the introduction that we have. When Jesus reads the passage, the passage that he reads is speaking of that very endowment.

The very fact that God has anointed him to preach the gospel, to declare the saving interest that God has in this world.

And one thing that we glean from the New Testament scriptures is that the Son was equipped by the Father to do that very thing.

It's important. God means us to understand it. God means us to believe it. God means us to appreciate what was happening. Remember, when Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, what happened?

Well, as well as the baptism, we are told that that dove came down from heaven and landed on the head of the Lord.

[52 : 35] It was a physical manifestation of a spiritual reality. That God was, through this imagery, through this typology, through this very clear, marked, visual representation, telling us, This man that John has anointed with water, I am anointing him with the Spirit.

And I am anointing him with the Spirit because of the role that he will occupy as the preacher of righteousness. Now, the thing is, those who heard Jesus speak, those who heard him read these words, understood from him that he was talking about the anointing of the Messiah.

That the coming Messiah was the subject martyr that was contained in this passage. And they understood that to be the case.

Let me quote to you the words of Dr. Kennedy, a Scottish divine from a past generation. He says this, The Lord wielding divine authority thus seals him whom he anoints.

He thus attests his commission as mediator to do his great work for the God dead. What an attestation, a sealing this, the fullness of the Holy Ghost.

[54 : 16] And that's what we're confronted with in this passage. A repetitive emphasis on the provision that God has given or is making for his Son.

The Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit, endowing him, anointing him, equipping him for the ministry that he is to embrace and the purpose for which God has sent him.

In John chapter 3 we read, He whom God has sent speaks the words of God. For God, he says, gives not the Spirit by measure unto him.

God does not give the Spirit by measure unto him. In other words, there is no limit placed upon the provision that God has made for his Son, the one who is to be the mediator between God and man.

The one who is appointed to the office of the Saviour and Redeemer of the lost. Now, the second thing that I want us to notice is that what we understand him to preach, he preaches with a certainty.

[55 : 52] You know, the Spirit is without question present there. He is present. He is allowing the Lord to convey the truth by means of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, because of our knowledge of the Scripture, because of our understanding of how things developed and is experienced, it would be easy enough for us to forget the fact that Jesus was, at one point, a virtual celebrity.

People heard about Jesus. People were told about Jesus. People were impressed by what they heard.

They heard of his miracle working. They heard of his presence and his power and all the wonders that accompanied his work.

And if we read through this passage, that is something that is clearly before us. For example, in verse 15, we are told, he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

[57 : 19] In verse 22, all bear him witness and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. In verse 32, they were astonished at his doctrine.

There is clearly evidence there that they were aware of the kind of person that he was and that there was a knowledge of him that had impressed them.

Now, when he spoke, he spoke, impressively. I think you would say that. You read how, when he spoke, that the people were clearly agog.

The eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And they were waiting for him to speak.

They were waiting to hear what he had to say. And I've often wondered at the preaching of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[58 : 37] I'm sure you have as well. He taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes. We read elsewhere. They were captive, held captive by the way that he spoke and what he had to say.

I think you have to agree that that was the case. That initially, they were anticipating that this person was a standout person.

That he had something to say and they wanted to be there to hear it. And the third thing is that he spoke with clarity.

You know, they appreciated who he was. But at the same time, who he was contradicted what they wanted to understand about him.

I think when you read this experience they had, you know, there is undeniably the power of the Spirit present.

- [59 : 57] I don't know if we fully appreciate that. Christ was equipped with the Spirit. Christ was endowed with the Spirit.
- His words were spiritual words. And this is where it created a conflict in their minds.
- Because at one level, what they had heard above him, and what he said, appeared to be, you know, it corresponded.
- It was what they expected. But behind it all was this thought, is this not Joseph's son? You know, the message was a message that was powerful.
- The words were words that were spiritual. But the source was a source that they were not comfortable with.
- [61 : 01] Because of the knowledge that they had of him. He was returning to his own people. He was returning to Nazareth. He was returning to a people who knew the family.
- And they knew the scripture. And the scripture seemed to contradict what their eyes were telling.
- So Jesus, when he spoke, he spoke with power. He spoke with the knowledge that God had endowed him with.
- That was spiritual knowledge that he possessed as God himself. But here, as the God-man, he was proclaiming the truth of God in a powerful way.
- And they understood exactly what he had to say. Jesus spoke from the scripture and he applied the scripture to them.
- [62 : 03] There was no doubting what Jesus was saying. The words of the scripture that he declared were words that they understood to apply to the Messiah.
- The one that they were waiting to come. The one that God was going to send into their midst. They understood his word to be saying exactly that.
- But he went beyond what they expected. By saying, this is the fulfillment of the word. I am the one who fulfills the word.
- The Messiah that you know to be speaking of. I am he. I am the one of whom these words speak. Now, that was their problem.
- It wasn't that what Jesus was not, what he was saying was not plain. That was not something that they could understand. They could understand it too well.
- [63 : 10] But because they could understand it, it flew in the face of their own desire to understand the word in a different way.
- And it does not in that sense accord with what they wanted the word to say. You know, in one sense they were happy.
- You can put yourself in their shoes. They were happy with an image of the Messiah that would come into their midst and save them from the enemy that was Rome.
- And grant to them liberty and victory over that enemy. And they were happy with the notion of a temporal king.
- And they were quite happy to follow that king wherever he would lead. But what Jesus had to say was not what they wanted to hear.
- [64 : 11] I'll quote the words of Bishop Ryle. Messiah's kingdom at his first coming was to be a spiritual kingdom over hearts.
- His victories were not to be over worldly enemies, but over sin. His redemption was not to be from the power of Rome, but from the power of the devil and the world.
- And that kind of thinking was not in accord with the thinking of those who heard him preach the word.

That did not leave them comfortable to speak about sin, to speak about enmity that was directed against God, rather than enmity that was directed against themselves as those who were struggling with the heal of Rome.

And in many respects this is the problem that many have with the gospel to this day.

[65 : 27] There are many things the gospel says that we are quite happy to accept. There are many things the Bible may speak of.

And as long as we accept them in ways that are not in conflict with what we are or what we are doing, then everything is on good or everything is quite comfortable.

But when the word conflicts with our behaviour or our lifestyle or our relationship with God, however meaningless it is in reality, then we are not comfortable with what the word has to say.

When Jesus was speaking to them about the acceptable year of the Lord, he was speaking about the imminence of the judgment that the world was to expect.

And people, you know, when he explains it further, he says, he speaks about how, what happened in Elijah's day and Elisha's day, how God spoke to the world at that point.

[67 : 03] And spoke to those who were Gentiles and who received blessing as Gentiles before those who were God's appointed chosen people were overlooked.

That was anathema. That was wrong. And they did not want to entertain it. And that's what we find as a response to the gospel.

You know, when you think about what the gospel has to say, we're happy enough for the gospel to be preached in our hearing, for us even to be present as it is preached, as long as it does not become personal to ourselves, as long as it does not challenge ourselves, as long as it doesn't point the finger of blame anywhere in our direction, that doesn't disturb our comfort zone, as long as where we are is not disturbed by the word.

Then, preach away. Declare the word if you must, but point the finger somewhere else. Now, what happened with the Lord Jesus was this, the gospel that he taught, the word that he brought, highlighted God's sovereignty in salvation, highlighted the need that there was for the sinner to repent, the need that there was for people to experience salvation by God's hand alone and not by theirs.

And that was not what conformed to their thinking. What we find is the spirit that comes to the surface very quickly.

[69 : 10] And that is the most surprising thing, I suppose. How you see there a congregation of people, a God, drinking in everything he has to say, and, you know, saying to themselves, what a man, what a preacher, what a message.

And then all of a sudden, when that message turns into themselves, what spirit comes to the surface? What do they want to do?

They want to take him out to the brow of a hill and throw him off the edge. They want to kill this servant of God that they had acknowledged as such that short time previously.

In verse 28, the people who were saying in the synagogue when they heard these things were filled with wrath and rose up and thrust them out of the city.

You're not like that, of course. We're not like that. If the preaching of the gospel points the finger anywhere in our direction and says, you sin, you sin.

[70 : 34] I'm talking about your sin, not somebody else's. Your heart. Your inaction. Your actions.

And pointing in the direction of it. And the preacher is not the one who's doing that. The word of God is the word that is doing that. I don't believe that the preacher of the gospel has any right to preach anything other than what God has given them to preach.

They have no right to preach anything else. They have no warrant to preach anything else. But when they do preach the word of Christ, the word of God, it should not be a surprise to us if some of those who are hearers of that word, whatever the source or whoever the person is who's proclaiming the word, if that person is the focus of enmity and ire.

I was reading an account of one of the revivals somewhere anyway.

It doesn't matter. The revival of religion can come and can go. But there was a gathering for prayers prior to revival fully breaking out. And they were met with a purpose to pray for revival.

[72 : 10] And as they prayed, they weren't really feeling that they were getting anywhere. Until one person stood up and said very pointedly that the barrier to that revival was nowhere, if not in their own heart.

And that was a very pointed remark. A very sore point, in fact. You were speaking.

The person was, he wasn't, I don't think he was in a sense, discounting himself from the blame that he was attributing to the situation they were in.

But rather he was recognizing that this is what God's word does. It identifies what needs to be put right.

It identifies the sin that we need to take to God and repent of them, turn from them and embrace the forgiveness that God has for us. And the reaction of the people here was a reaction that is still replicated throughout the world today.

[73 : 37] Throughout our communities, throughout our nation. No one wants to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. And the same enmity towards Christ is in the world and will be in the world.

And even though we are told this person, the Lord Jesus Christ, who greater than he, was the preacher of the gospel.

Not just the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ. Endowed with the spirit of God. Preaching the word of God. Expounding the word of God. Bringing to the attention of all hearers the truth that needed to be listened to.

And yet, the reaction was one of hostility. Bitterness. The desire to destroy from the face of this planet the one by whom this message came.

And is that not the way it is still? Well, the truth is this, and you need to remember it. Jesus Christ is the alone savior of sinners. His word to us, a word of life.

[74 : 48] When he convicts us, it is with a view to converting us. When he brings home to us our sin, it is with a view to making us understand that our sins, if they remain as they are, would be a barrier to our eternal salvation.

May Christ Jesus, through the ministry of his word, convict us and convert us and bring us to our knees before him. While he is still speaking to us in mercy, let us pray.

Lord God, we thank you for your word of life. Whoever you have entrusted to deliver it. We pray that we would remind ourselves of any spirit that is seen as if it is in opposition to the gospel, that there is something wrong, not with the message, but with the passion to whom the message is delivered.

We pray for deliverance from such rancor and from such negativity in our hearts. Cleanse from sin, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Our closing psalm is Psalm 45.

Psalm 45 and we are singing from the first version of the psalm. We are going to sing verses 3 to 6. Psalm 45, the first version of verse 3.

[76 : 16] Oh, thou that art a mighty one. Thy sword geared on thy thigh, even with thy glory excellent. Thy glory excellent and with thy majesty.

For meekness, truth and righteousness in state ride prosperously. And thy right hand shall be instructed things that fearful be. Thine arrows sharply pierce the heart of the enemies of the king.

And under thy subjection the people down to bed. Forever and forever is, O God, thy throne of might. The scepter of thy kingdom is a scepter.

That is right. Psalm 45, the first verse in 3 to 6. O thou that art the mighty one. O thou that art the mighty one.

Thy sword, O thou that art the mighty one. Thy thy thy. Be with thy glory excellent.

[77 : 33] And with thy majesty. For meekness, truth and righteousness. For meekness, truth and righteousness.

And still, right cross, trust and righteousness. And still, right cross, trust and free. Thy thy right hand shall be.

As thy right hand shall be. As thy right hand shall be. In things that fear for thee.

Thine arrows sharply pierce the heart.

Of the enemies of the King And under high subjection The people day to bring Forever and forever is O God, thy throne of might The sector of thy kingdom is

[79 : 47] O God, thy throne of might May the grace, may the grace, may the peace be God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit Rest and abide with you all now and always Amen