

# Jesus Came To Preach

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Date: 06 April 2025

Preacher: Rev. Phil Pickett

[ 0 : 0 0 ] It's a privilege to be with you here this morning. Thank you for the invitation. It's wonderful as I'm back here visiting Louis for a wedding to get to preach in Kalanish in Carloway.

I'll be back with brothers and sisters in Christ. For those of you who haven't met me, my name is Phil Pickett. I was training in Carlway until recently and I'm now the minister in Livingston Free Church.

Well, let me begin with this call to worship from John chapter 6 verses 68, verse 68. Simon Peter says to Jesus, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

And that's the reason we gather together to hear those words of eternal life from Jesus Christ himself, who speaks to us from his word, the Bible. And as we sing, as and as we read and as we hear the word preached, our first item of praise is Psalm 18 verses one to six. Psalm 18 verses one to six.

I'll read the opening verse. The will I love, O Lord, my strength. My fortress is the Lord, my rock and he that doth to me deliverance afford my God, my strength, whom I will trust a buckler unto me, the horn of my salvation and my tower is he.

[ 1 : 24 ]      What a wonderful psalm of reminding us that God is our fortress and our strength. Let's remain seated as we sing God's praise. Psalm 18 verses one to six.

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And so, Lord, we thank you that in all the things that you have made, you declare your glory. We thank you that the creation, as it were, shouts your name and sings your majesty.

And we thank you most of all for creating humanity in your image. Lord, we thank you that in humanity and the people in this room and the people across this island and across this world, it is as if your fingerprints are imprinted on us and you display something of who you are in us.

We thank you for making us in your image to be able to have relationship with you, to know you. And so, Lord, we come this morning confessing that while that was your intention, we have wandered away from you.

[ 6 : 22 ] Each one of us like sheep have gone astray, turning to his own way. Lord, we see in our own hearts. We confess this morning the ways in which we have not honored you as we should, which we have wasted your gifts, forgotten your love.

Lord, we have lived to worship other things, to put ourselves at the center of our lives rather than you, the almighty and awesome God. And so, Lord, we recognize that we have no right on our own to come before you, to praise you your name, to sing, to come before you in prayer, calling you our heavenly Father.

We thank you then that we come, not on our own merits, but we come in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son. And we thank you for the promise in your word that if we confess our sins, you are faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

And so, Lord, we come this morning pleading the blood of Christ, sheltering beneath the cross where he bled and died, taking the punishment for our sins. Lord, we thank you for this simple but profound gospel that Christ died in our place, died in the place of all who would put their trust in him.

And so, Lord, we pray that in each one of us, you would lift our eyes to you, that you would increase our delight in your gospel this morning.

[ 7 : 45 ] You would use this time together in your word to feed us, to teach us, to grow us more like Jesus Christ. Lord, we thank you as we read in the opening verse, that your words are indeed eternal life.

And so we pray that as we read your word, as we sing and hear your word preached, that you would be shaping us, molding us like a potter with clay. By your words, transforming our hearts.

We pray, Lord, that you would, as you promised, change us from having hearts of stone into having hearts of flesh. Make us like the good soil, ready to receive your word.

Lord, we pray this. We pray that your word will go out in power, not only this morning, but throughout the week and throughout our island. Lord, we thank you that your word has the power to bring people from death to life.

Just as Ezekiel spoke to the dry bones and they came up and they had flesh cover them and they started walking. Lord, we know that by the power of your word and your spirit, you can bring people from death to life.

[ 8 : 48 ] From being enemies of Christ to being followers of him. And so we pray that you would do that. We pray that you would be transforming hearts. That as the word goes out, as your people go out in this week, in whatever sphere of work that they're serving you, whether they're in home or in some vocation.

And we pray that you would equip them, that you would give them courage. You'd give them the words to answer, to give an answer for the hope that they have. We ask that through your people that you would be bringing the good news of Jesus to the ears of those around us.

That they would respond in repentance and belief. We thank you for the power of the gospel to save lives. And we pray for everyone in this room especially. For those who are part of this church who can't be here.

We pray that you would uphold them. That you'd strengthen them. Especially those who are facing ill health at the moment. We pray that whether that's mental or physical health, that you'd be with them, comforting them, upholding them.

We pray that for those who are struggling with chronic illness, or maybe terminal illness, that you'd be with them. You'd be with those who are caring for them. May they have their hopes set on Jesus Christ.

[ 10 : 09 ] We thank you that one day Christ will return and make all things new. That death is not the end for those who are trusting in Jesus. So we pray for those as well who have faced death recently or long ago.

Those who are grieving the loss of loved ones. Lord, that we ask that you would be with them. That you would be near to them as they grieve. And that just as Jesus said to Martha outside the tomb of Lazarus, before he came to the tomb of Lazarus, I am the resurrection and the life.

I pray that they would cling to Christ, the one who is life, the one who gives life. The one who gives us life now and hope of life for eternity. Lord, we pray that you would be raising up workers for the harvest field.

We see the vacant congregations across this island, across Scotland. And we pray for this congregation especially. Lord, we ask that you would be providing the right man to be their minister in the near future.

We pray that you would be placing on his heart and placing on the congregation's heart. A similar love that they would, that the right person would be obvious when they come to preach.

[ 11 : 27 ] We pray that you'd be raising up workers for the harvest field across Scotland. We see Jesus' words, true. The harvest is plentiful, but the work is after you.

And so, Lord, we ask that you would be, that from congregations across Scotland, you'd be putting on people's hearts a desire to serve, whether that's in serving in Sunday school or in encouraging and evangelizing people.

And that some you'd lay on their hearts to become ministers of the gospel. We pray that there be many people coming into the Free Church College, that coming out of ETS with a desire to preach the gospel up and down Scotland and across the world.

We thank you for this gospel that saves. And so, Lord, as we come to your word shortly, please speak and encourage us by it. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, I can see two children here.

And so I want to, I'll do, last time I was here, I pulled out a tape measure. I don't know whether you remember this. When I was talking, I was talking, well, I don't know whether you remember the children's talk.

[ 12 : 42 ] You don't need to, it's fine. But I'm going to pull out a tape measure again, because I know you find tape measures interesting. Lots of people like measuring things. Does anyone know, does anyone know what the highest, with the high jump, what's the highest height that someone has jumped?

Does anyone know? Do you think it's higher than one meter? Thumbs up if you think it's higher. Thumbs up? Higher than two meters? Higher than three meters?

Shall I tell you? Okay. So the highest height, so the highest height, the high jump that a man has jumped is 2.45. And the women's world record is 2.1.

So 2.45 meters. I'm going to have to stand up here. That is, that is this high.

Can you imagine jumping over a bar that's this high? That's pretty high. Okay. I've got another record for you. Do you know what the longest distance someone has jumped is?

[ 13 : 48 ] Do you think it's longer than one meter? Thumbs up if you think it's longer than one meter. I bet you can jump one meter. Longer than three meters? Thumbs up?

Longer than four meters? Four meters? Any thumbs up? Longer than five meters? Should I tell you? The world record for the long jump is 8.95 meters.

8.95 meters. I could go out. This only goes three meters long. So I suspect 8.95 meters is... It's probably from the front of those pews.

Probably past the first row of people sitting there. 8.95 meters. That's... That's a crazy distance. I looked at that and I thought, that can't be right. Maybe it's feet, but it is...

Maybe it must be feet. 8.95 meters can't be right. That's far too long, isn't it? Anyway, it's a very, very long way. Who thinks they could jump as far as the world record jump?

[ 14 : 51 ] Do you think you could? When you grow up, maybe. Well, the reason I'm talking about records of how far you can jump and how high you can jump... The high jump was definitely 2.45.

That wasn't 2.45 feet. The reason I'm talking about that is... There's a verse in Romans that talks about a distance. It says... The verse is Romans 3.23.

And it says this... That's like us. If we were to try to jump the world record of the long jump, we would always fall short.

We wouldn't be able to jump that far. No one in this room, unless there's someone who's an amazing athlete, would be able to jump that far. And what the book of Romans is telling us is that God sets a standard.

That in His Word, He tells us how He sets a standard for His law in the kind of life we should live. And that's like a height we should jump. That's like a distance we need to jump.

[ 15 : 50 ] But the thing is, none of us can do it. Even on your best day. Even when you're on your best behavior. Even the people in your life who you think they're a really good person.

None of us are good enough for God. None of us can reach that standard that God sets in His law. Whether that's jumping the distance or jumping the height. None of us are good enough for God.

And that's really important. That doesn't mean that the people who murder or steal. Or those people who are swearing all the time. Or those things that we might think are really bad.

Well, they fall below the bar. But those people who are normally pretty good. And they come to church on a Sunday. Well, they can jump over the bar. And the bar is, that means they're a Christian.

Well, the Bible says that all of us, on our own, are below the bar. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. There is only one person who has gone over the bar.

[ 16 : 51 ] And that is Jesus Christ. We all fall below the bar. Jesus has gone far above it. The Bible says that He never sinned. He never did anything wrong. He perfectly obeyed God's commands.

And that's why we need Jesus. None of us on our own can come to Jesus. None of us can reach God's standard. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

But because Jesus has not just reached God's standard, but perfectly done everything that God has said to do. Jesus can stand in our place.

He has done the jump for us. So that if we're trusting in Jesus, it's like we're holding on to Jesus. And as He jumps over, we go over with Him. Trusting in Him is like that.

We hold on to Jesus. And we go over with Him. And that because of what He has done, we can be part of God's family. And that's that.

[ 17 : 48 ] So when you next time you think go maybe in PE or on your sports day. Or do you call it PE? I was in Wales when I did my whatever physical education, your sports day or whatever.

When you see people doing a long jump or a high jump, you can remember that this verse in Romans. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. You can remember that none of us can jump high enough or long enough.

But you can remember that Jesus has done it for us. And if we trust in Him, then we can be part of His family. Thank you very much for listening, children. I'm going to pray for you. And then we'll have our next item of praise.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the children you've given to this congregation. Both those who are here and those who normally come regularly to Sunday school. Those who are associated with the congregation. We pray for these children that they would never know a day when they don't follow Jesus.

And they don't love Him. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to continue singing from Psalm 24. Psalm 24. And it's a psalm that really praises God.

[ 18 : 57 ] That Jesus is the one who can enter. Psalm 24. We're going to sing verses 7 to 10. You gates lift up your heads on high. You doors that last for a.

Be lifted up that so the King of glory may enter. But who of glory is this King? The mighty Lord is this. Even the same Lord that great in might and strong in battle is.

We've opened the doors open for Jesus. Because He's the one who's jumped the height and jumped the distance. Let's sing to God's praise. Amen. Make it lift up your heads on high.

Ye doors that last for aye Be lifted up that soul the King Be lifted up that soul the King Of glory and the King The true of glory is the King The mighty Lord is this In that same Lord that great in might

And strong in battle is Ye gates lift up your heads Ye doors that last for aye Be lifted up that soul the King Be lifted up that soul the King Of glory and the King And the King

[ 21 : 48 ] And the King The true is the King And the King The King The King The King Of glory and the King Of glory and the King Of glory and the King Of glory and the King Of glory and the King Of glory and the King Well, our first reading comes from Isaiah chapter 55.

Isaiah chapter 55. We'll read the whole chapter. O everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat.

Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?

Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear and come to me, here, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, for he hath glorified thee.

[ 24 : 15 ] Seek ye the Lord while he may be found. Call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.

And let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth out of my mouth.

The mountains and the hills shall break forth with you into singing, and all the trees in the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn that comes up from the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree, and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign, that shall not be cut off.

God's testimony is most sure and makes the simple wise.

Yea, much fine gold. To be desired now.

With James and John. But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever. And anon they tell him of her. And he came and took her by the hand.

Let us go into the next town. That I might preach there also. For therefore came I forth. And he preached in their synagogues. Throughout all Galilee. And cast out demons. And there came a leper to him.

[ 30 : 39 ] Beseeching him. And kneeling down to him. Saying unto him. If thou wilt. Thou can make me clean. And Jesus moved with compassion. Put forth his hand. And touched him. And saith unto him.

I will be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken. Immediately the leprosy. Departed from him. And he was cleansed. And he straightly charged him.

And forthwith. Sent him away. And saith unto him. See thou say nothing to any man. But go thy way. Show thyself to the priest. And offer for thy cleansing.

Those things which Moses commanded. For a testimony unto them. But he went out. And began to publish it much. And to blaze abroad the matter.

In so much that Jesus could not. No more openly enter the city. But was without. In desert places. And they came to him. From every quarter. Well this morning.

[ 31 : 36 ] We're in Mark's gospel. And the very first verse. In Mark's gospel. Tells us. Read this. The beginning of the gospel. Of Jesus Christ. The son of God.

And that's Mark's title. As it were. For the gospel. He's saying that. This is a book. Of good news. All about Jesus Christ. He's reminding us. That the heart of Christianity. Isn't a list of rules.

Or a set of beliefs. But it's a person. Christianity is all about Christ. Jesus Christ. And what matters most then. Is how we respond. To him. Mark's big claim.

If you were to be reading. If we had been reading. From verse one. Is that backed up. By Old Testament prophecy. And even the father. Speaking and affirming. From heaven. Is that Jesus really is.

Good news to the world. Because he's the Christ. He's the long awaited. King that God promised to send. Who would make all things right. Who would save God's people. Now those are clearly big claims.

[ 32 : 34 ] But throughout Mark's gospel. He says. I'm not just going to tell you. I'm going to show you. Earlier on in the chapter. Mark shows the authority. Of Jesus' words. As first he calls the disciples.

And immediately they come. And follow him. Then he speaks. And drives out. Demons from a demon possessed man. In the synagogue. And straight away. They're out. He teaches in the synagogue.

And people realize. That he's not teaching. Like any rabbi. He's teaching as one. Who has authority. Himself. Our passage this morning. Begins. Straight after that episode.

And in verse 29. Jesus has left the synagogue. And he goes straight into the house. Of Simon and Andrew. Two of the fishermen. He's called. Earlier on. And what follows.

I read a little bit further. We're going to read. Look at mainly verses 29 to 39. But what follows there. Is a day in the life of Jesus. And a 24 hour window.

[ 33 : 31 ] Into Jesus' life. And I want us to see three things. From that. We get a kind of summary. Of Jesus' mission. We see the desperate need. That faced Jesus. And that still faces us today.

And in the midst of that. We see Jesus' priority. Where he chooses. To focus his effort. His time. And we see Jesus' heart. And that priority. And that heart.

Are two things. That we as a church. Should also share. So first then. The need that Jesus sees. We first see. That we are in desperate.

Need. Of healing. So. Verse 30. We see that Simon's mother-in-law. Is ill with fever. And immediately. Jesus is told. As soon as he goes into the house. He's told about her.

Jesus has only just healed. The demon possessed man. And now he's barely through the door. When Simon and Andrew. Tell him. About their. Their mother-in-law. Who is sick. That word immediately.

[ 34 : 29 ] Comes up many times. In Mark's gospel. 41 times. 11 of which. Are just in this first chapter. And they're used to just. Bring the pace of the events. To show how all these.

Urgencies. How the urgency. That is facing Jesus. Simon's mother-in-law. Is clearly unwell. Because. That's the first thing. The brothers say. As Jesus goes into the house.

But Jesus is completely unfazed. He goes up to her. Takes her by the hand. Fever leaves her. And she began to serve them. You can tell. This is miraculous. She doesn't take a few. Hours. To recover her health.

Straight away. She has enough health. To go about serving them. Probably cooking a meal. For them. And it's no less exceptional.

Than some of Jesus. Most well-known miracles. Whether that's. Feeding the 5,000. Opening the eyes of the blind. Raising the dead. But this is a very personal story. These are.

[ 35 : 23 ] Jesus' disciples. This is someone. Very close to them. And it's. And we can tell. That Mark is including this. From eyewitness accounts. This is something that only. Only the disciples would have known.

This wasn't a big public healing. This was just in the house. It was something that was precious. To Simon Peter. To Andrew. Because it was their mother-in-law. So Simon Peter. Who's giving Mark.

All this information. Simon Peter's the eyewitness. Behind Mark's gospel. He's telling Mark. You've got to include this. This was important. It's a humble miracle. But it comes. It becomes the first.

Of many. In that day. At evening. At sunset. We're told. That they brought to him. All who were sick. And oppressed. By demons. The whole city. Is literally. Gathering at the door.

And so Jesus. Heals many. Who have various diseases. Casts out demons. All around him. And that. That note. When the. At evening. Verse 32.

[ 36 : 18 ] When the sun. Is setting. Isn't just. Isn't just. A narrative detail. To help us. Imagine we're there. It shows the urgency. Ever since. Verse 21.

When Jesus is teaching. In the synagogue. It's the Sabbath. And. People had seen. Jesus power. He casts out demons. While he's teaching. In.

The synagogue. And. And the people know. The people know. That. That Jesus can heal. But they don't want to go. To the house.

Yet. Because it's the Sabbath. And the Sabbath. For the Jews. Ended. When the sun set. So you can imagine them. Waiting for the sun to set. You can imagine people. At their houses. They've got a.

They've got one eye. On Simon and Andrew's door. They've maybe. Limbered up. And they've got their. They've got their. Sick relatives. And they're looking at the other people. Across the street.

[ 37 : 13 ] Eyeing them up. Seeing who's going to race. Who's going to be first. At the door. Getting ready to bring. Everyone to Jesus. To heal him. I mean. Just imagine. If you knew that someone could heal. Every single disease.



You can imagine that. If you knew that. Someone in the hospital. There in Stornoway. Could heal. Every single thing. In just an instant. You can imagine. The traffic jam of cars. That would be heading there.

The moment. People have got that news. Well that's the case. Everyone's waiting. For the sun to set. Ready to race towards. Simon and Andrew's house. Ready.

To have Jesus. Heal them. And it really is everyone. Verse 32. We're told. That. They brought. All who were sick.

And demon possessed. Literally. The whole city. Is gathering at the door. People on crutches. Dragging themselves along. The blind. Being led. People being carried. Who can't walk. It's a whole.

[ 38 : 08 ] Catalogue of suffering. Parents. And children. Friends. Supporting friends. This desperate. Need. Of healing. And I don't just need to describe it to you.

As I said. You know that need. You'll know that need. From your own life. From loved ones. Who you're caring for. Who you know. Are suffering. And struggling. Through really. Tough times.

Of physical illness. Chronic. Pain. All these kinds of things. You'll know. The need. The. You'll know. How broken. Our world is.

How so often. The things that take up. Most of our time. And most of our. Mental energy. Are these stresses. And worries. And pains. And strains. From living in a world.

Where. Our bodies are broken. Our bodies aren't what they should be. And we see. We hear of suffering. So often. We're. We. We're caring for someone.

[ 39 : 05 ] Or we hear about. Someone who is. Suffering. We hear about someone. Who's recently passed away. And we see that this is a world. That is in desperate need of healing. Especially now with.

Access to. To news across the world. We see. Disasters. Like in. Myanmar recently. Thousands of people. Being killed. This is a world that.

Is in desperate need. Of healing. So I don't think we can. Criticize. The people who are. Racing towards the door. Asking for Jesus. To heal their loved ones.

One of the most compelling things. About the Bible. I think. Is that. It's a book about. Real life. This isn't. People. We can. It's understandable. That even though people. Have just heard.

You know. We can say. In a synagogue. They've just heard. The best. Bible teaching. They've ever heard. But yet. They. They know. Know. That they also need. They have loved ones. Who also need.

[ 40 : 00 ] Physical healing. And so they want. Jesus. To heal them. There's so much. We could say. On the topic. Of suffering. That there. Isn't time for.

But what we see. In the midst of this. Is where Jesus. His priorities. Lie. Because in the midst of this. After having. Healed everyone. Or having healed.

Many people. Jesus then goes. To a solitary place. We're told. In verse. Verse 35. And that brings us. To our second point. That Jesus has come. To preach. To our greatest.

Need. Jesus doesn't often. We don't often hear. In verse. In Mark's gospel. A single. Priority. Jesus saying. This is why I have come.

But verse 38. Is one of them. Jesus said. Let us go to the next towns. That I might preach there. For that is why I have come. Jesus is telling us. This is why I have come to earth.

[ 40 : 57 ] In order to preach. That is his priority. To preach. To the greatest need. Even after an evening. Full of healing. Jesus. We are told in verse 35.

5. He rises early in the morning. And while it's dark. Presumably. So people don't see him. He goes to the desert. To pray. In solitude. And what we need to understand here.

Is that Jesus is facing. A crisis. As I said. We don't often hear Jesus saying. This is why I have come. There's only three times. That Jesus says it. There's this verse here.

There's chapter 6 verse 46. Where Jesus. The question is. Who will Jesus reveal himself to? The crowds. Or to just his disciples. And then there's. Chapter 14 verse 35.

In Gethsemane. When Jesus is facing the horror of the cross. He might say. In these moments of. Of choice. In these moments of crisis.

[ 41 : 54 ] Not a crisis. Because Jesus is anything flawed about him. But there's. This is a chart. This is a time. Will Jesus. Like in Gethsemane. Will Jesus. Pursue a ministry of healing people.

Or will he pursue teaching. At the cross. In Gethsemane. Will he go to the cross or not. Well here we see Jesus. Choice. He says. I've come to preach.

There's a desperate need all around. Jesus could spend all his time. Being a travelling healer. But he says. I've come to preach. This is why I have come.

It's almost. This. This is. An important lesson. Jesus. Is. Could be a travelling healer. But he chooses that.

The most important thing. The priority of his mission. Is to meet people's. Greatest need. Which is their spiritual need. Meanwhile. The disciples of course.

[ 42 : 49 ] Are wondering. Where is Jesus. They're searching for him. They don't understand. What Jesus is doing. For them. They think. Well surely. The most important thing. That Jesus can be doing.

Is healing all these people. The word we're told. For them. That they. Are going after him. Is literally. That they're trying to hunt him down. Verse 36.

When they're searching for him. They're trying to hunt him down. Simon Peter's hospital house. Is full of people. Coming once more. To hear. To get healed. And they're like. Well where's the doctor. Verse 37.

Carries a bit of exasperation. All people. Are looking for you. Don't you see the need Jesus. Don't you see the need. All around. Maybe we think that. Maybe we look at all of the hurt.

We see all the suffering. We think well. Jesus. Don't you see the need. Don't you see. Why. Why isn't God. Just healing people. Of their physical illness. Right now.

[ 43 : 47 ] Don't you see the need. That's the question. That Simon is coming to Jesus with. But Jesus says. No. Let's go to the next house. That I may preach there also. For that is why.

I came. We shouldn't be. Surprised. That Jesus said this. Earlier on. In chapter one. Verse 15. Jesus announces his mission.

Saying the time is fulfilled. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent. And believe. The gospel. If the kingdom of God. Is the promise of God's people.

God's people. In God's place. Under his rule. And blessing. If it's the place. Where suffering and evil. Are cast out. Well then. How can a sinful people. Like you and me.

Be part of God's family. Be part of God's kingdom. God's kingdom. How on earth. Can people who. Have sins against God. Who as we. Confessed our sins earlier. How can people who.

[ 44 : 43 ] Naturally rebelled against God. Be part. Of God's family. Be part of the perfect kingdom of God. Well the answer is. They need sins forgiven. However well they are.

Even if they're healed. And in perfectly good health. That. They still can't come in. And that's why our greatest need. Is not to be physically healed. But to be spiritually healed.

That's why Jesus has come. To preach. That's why that's his. His priority. We need our sins forgiven. And that's why Jesus has come. And we might think.

Surely the kindest thing. That Jesus can do. Is to go to Capernaum. And heal all these people. But there's in a sense. That would be like Jesus. If you get a vase of flowers.

And they're cut flowers. And they're put in the vase. They'll last for a few days. And you could put some flower food in there. And I don't know what's in that stuff. But they'll last a few more days.

[ 45 : 41 ] Well Jesus going and healing people. Is just like putting some flower food. Into a vase of cut flowers. They might last a little bit longer. But ultimately the problem with those flowers. Is that they're going to wilt.

They're dying. They've been cut from their stems. And that's the problem with all of us. By nature we are cut off from the God of life. Jesus says.

I am the vine. You are the branches. Well if we're not attached to Jesus. We are branches that are detached. We're like flowers. We're by nature dying. What we need. Our greatest need.

Is to be grafted back into Jesus. And so that's why Jesus has come to preach. That's why he's come to preach. The good news of the gospel. To tell people. Repent and believe.

The kingdom of God has come. Our greatest need. Is to come back to Jesus. Not to just have. Be physically healed. Now before we get to applying that.

[ 46 : 39 ] There is a nuance. Because. The next thing that Jesus does in the passage. He doesn't just keep preaching. Does he? Because this is real life. And Jesus is compassionate.

He's not heartless. And so we see. In verse 45. We don't have time to look at this story. Of the leper in detail. But Jesus comes to the leper.

First of all. In verse 40 to 45. Then to the paralytic. And then later in chapter 3. A man with a withered hand. For someone whose priority is preaching. Jesus still does an awful lot.

Of healing. Why does he keep healing? That just brings us to our third point. Jesus is filled. With compassion. Really this is. A brief point for clarity.

Jesus keeps healing people. Because he's compassionate. And we cannot detach the mission of God. From the character of God. Jesus isn't some heartless robot.

[ 47 : 38 ] Who is programmed. To a task. And that's all he's going to do. Yes. Jesus' primary mission. His priority. Is. To preach the gospel. That people might believe.

And have their sins forgiven. But he's not just going to march through people. And ignore the suffering. On either side. Again and again. On the way to the cross. Yes. Jesus' mission is to go to the cross.

But on the way to the cross. Jesus stops. And he heals people. You might remember. As Jesus is going. There's a. There's a woman who's been bleeding for 12 years. And she touches Jesus.

And he stops. He doesn't need to. But he stops for her. And he speaks to her. We see. We're seeing in Jesus. We're seeing the heart of our compassionate God.

One commentator puts it this way. Healing is not the plan. But pity is essential. For the character of God. We have a compassionate God. That isn't just a Jesus trait.

[ 48 : 35 ] That is. The God of. That we see across the scriptures. One of the most. Quoted. The most quoted verse in the Old Testament. Is God. Describing his character to Moses.

He says. The Lord. The Lord. Compassionate and gracious. Slow to anger. And abounding in steadfast love. God. That is our God. His priority is to preach. But he stops.

And he heals. He doesn't ignore the cries. Of his suffering creatures. Just several implications from those points then. Jesus' priority is to preach.

His heart is compassionate. Some implications for us. First of all. Social concern is important. But it's not our priority. Day by day.

As we walk through this world. We're going to see desperate need all around us. We see people who are struggling with addictions. We see people who are suffering with chronic pain.

[ 49 : 32 ] With people who have illness. Who are waiting for a diagnosis. Who maybe have been waiting for weeks. Months or even years. Is to find out why their body isn't working as it should. We see people in their last years of their life.

And their bodies breaking down. And it's a terribly discouraging thing. Seeing their body wasting away. And that's not something we can walk past.

And we're told to love our neighbour as ourselves. And so we need to meet that need. But the most loving thing that we can do. Is what Jesus did. Is he came and preached the gospel.

We can share the gospel with people. We can speak of Jesus. We don't come only speaking words. We care for people's physical needs as well. But we have to remember. That we have to speak words.

Because Jesus spoke words. Jesus spoke. And he preached. And he called people to him. And we point people to Jesus. And we call people to Jesus.

[ 50 : 33 ] We live in a world. Of global connections. We don't. As I said. We don't just see need around us. We see need across the world. There's more need. It's an overwhelming amount of need.

More need that we can meet. And so it's helpful to see. In 1 Timothy. He talks about our primary. Our primary sphere of ministry.

Is to our family. To those immediately around us. And then we go outwards. But even in all of that. Our primary focus. Is to tell people the gospel.

We must share Jesus' compassion. But our priority. Must be Jesus' priority. There's a. And as we speak. The best thing that we can do.

Is point people to Jesus' words. The best thing we can do. Is put the Bible in people's hands. Because Jesus' words. Are the words of eternal life. With the words we.

[ 51 : 27 ] Opened our service with. Jesus has. Jesus speaks with authority. And people drop their nets. And follow him. And he continues to speak. With that authority. From his word today.

As the Bible is read. As people pick it up. And read it. Their lives have changed. There's been. In Livingston. Where I'm ministering right now. There are four. Boys in S4.

Who have been coming along. To church. And their story is that. They heard someone speak. At their school. And then one of them. Looked online. He heard some YouTube videos.

About. About Christianity. And then he picked up a Bible. And started reading. That he says over the past. Six seven months. He's become a Christian. God's word has the power. To change people's lives.

To bring them from death. To life. That's what people most need. And that would be that. Even if that boy had been a paraplegic. His greatest need would still.

[ 52 : 21 ] Not be to have all his limbs working. But to know Jesus. As individuals. What we need. If we're not trusting Jesus. Is to know Jesus.

And what we need. What you need greater. Than having full restored health. Is to have restored relationship. With your maker. And your creator. Who loves you. What your friends need.

What your parents need. What your children most need. Or grandchildren. Is to know Jesus. Let me ask you. What are your priorities. For your children or grandchildren. What is your greatest prayer for them.

That they would grow up. Being comfortable. Or successful. Or happy. That they would. I don't know. Build their own house. Have all of the Lewis dream.

Have their own house. A nice new build. They would have. They would get married. They'd have kids. They'd. Feel happy in that way. Or is it that. Despite everything.

[ 53 : 19 ] That they would know Jesus. And have relationship with him. That is Jesus's priority. To meet people's spiritual need. And know Jesus.

May that be our need as well. That's what needs to shape. The priorities of every single church. That's what needs to shape. Both the leadership. And the church. And the whole congregation.

That's why preaching. Is so central. And must be central. To a congregation's life. Because it's. It's the hearing of God's word. That transforms.

God's people. That's the priority of Jesus's word. But even as we speak Jesus's words. We must be compassionate. That's why throughout the gospels.

And then. And then through the letters of Paul. He talks about speaking the truth in love. We speak the gospel. We speak it to real people. Real people who have real needs. Who are suffering. There are lots of.

[ 54 : 18 ] Good things that we can do. With our time and energy. But the best thing that we can do. Is what Jesus did. And we can. Preach.

As he said. And that word. That word preaching. Isn't just quite. Only. Isn't just. Speaking about. Those who are standing up. Like I am. I am preaching. It's speaking about saying.

Speaking the gospel. Speaking. About Jesus. Maybe a question you can think about. Talk about. As you have lunch today. As you. As you rest this afternoon. Is what's that going to look like.

For us as a church. To make Jesus's priorities. Our priorities. To put. To put. Meeting people's. Spiritual needs. Speaking the gospel.

As the priority. For the church. Maybe that's. Sending a text to someone. A verse that struck you. Encouraging them. Maybe it's as you pick up the phone.

[ 55 : 14 ] To chat to someone. Maybe if you have. You always at ten o'clock. On Tuesday. Phone this person. Or maybe. As you phone them on that day. You tell them something. You've been reading. You encourage them. Something from God's word.

May Jesus's priorities. Shape our priorities. Just to conclude then. What we need at every level. As individuals. Church family. As leaders in the church. Is to have a heart like Jesus.

That's compassionate. For those around us. And a voice like Jesus. We need a heart that beats. With compassion and love. For others. And we need voices. To speak Jesus's words.

Because people's greatest need. Is to be saved. Let's pray. Heavenly Father. We thank you for your word.

These words of life. And we pray that. Your priority. Christ's priority. Will be our priority. That we would. As we see people. We would see them. For their greatest need.

[ 56 : 13 ]    Souls that are lost. Without you. And we pray that. If there's anyone here. This morning. Who doesn't. Know you. As their Lord and Savior. You would turn their hearts. To Jesus. And that in.

Joy. They would repent. And believe in you. Please. Bless this congregation. Now in Jesus name. Amen. Our closing psalm.

Is Psalm 67. Psalm 67. Lord bless and pity us.

Shine on us. With thy faith. That the earth. Thy way. And nations all. May know. Thy saving grace. Let's sing. To God's praise. Lord bless.

And pity us. Shine on us. With thy face.

[ 57 : 19 ]    Let people pray.

Let people pray. Praise Thee, Lord. Let people hold Thee praise.

O let the nations be glad in songs their voice.

Praise Thee, Lord. Let the nations be glad in songs their voices raise.

Thee, Lord. Let the nations be glad in songs their voices raise.

[ 58 : 42 ]    Praise Thee, Lord. Let them praise Thee, both great and small.

The earth, the fruit shall yield. Our God shall bless the saints.

The earth shall bless the saints. The earth shall yield.

The earth shall yield. The earth shall yield. The earth shall yield. The earth shall yield.

The earth shall yield. Amen. Amen. Amen.