

# I Believe That Jesus Christ is The Son of God

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[ 0 : 00 ] Welcome to your service this morning, a special welcome to any who may be visiting with us.

Most of you will know that today is the annual Sabbath full prize giving, so the Sunday school will meet as usual with the children going out at the normal time and then at the end of the service you'll come back and rejoin us and the presentation of the prizes will take place. Hopefully when we get to that point we'll explain what will happen. But you're all very welcome and as we come together we come to worship God and we come under the sound of his word and we pray that above all else what we hear from God's word will be blessed to us. We're going to begin by singing to God's praise from Psalm 27. Psalm 27 will read from the beginning of the psalm. The Lord's my light and saving health who shall make me dismayed.

My life strength is the Lord of whom then shall I be afraid. When as mine enemies and foes most wicked passions all to eat my flesh against me rose they stumbled and did fall. Against me though I was in camp my heart yet fearless is. Though war against me rise I will be confident in this.

One thing I of the Lord desired and will seek to obtain that all days of my life I may within God's house remain. That I the beauty of the Lord behold me and admire and that I in his holy place may reverently inquire. For he in his pavilion shall be hid in evil days. In secret of his tent me hide and on a rock me raise.

We're going to sing from verse 3. Psalm 27 from verse 3 for stanza. Against me though an host in camp my heart yet fearless is. Against me though an host in camp my heart yet fearless is.

[ 2 : 47 ] No more war against me rise I will be confident in this. One thing I offer or desire and will seek to obtain that Lord is of my life I may within God's love remaining.

The beauty of the Lord behold me and admire and admire and the giantness holy place may reverently for he in his pavilion shall be hid in evil days. In secret of his tent me send me hide and on a rock me raise. Let us join together in prayer. O Lord of God as we come into your presence with praise upon our lips we ask that you would open the eyes of the eyes of the eyes of the eyes of the eyes of the eyes of our understanding to enable us to see the glory of this God who is the focus of our praise. And we depend upon you of God to open our eyes.

upon your word and upon all who seek to engage with it in whatever way. We know that when we come to your word we never come without prior expectation. Either we come with hunger and thirst after the good things of God or we are indifferent entirely to this word because it is a word that is barren to us, a word from which we have failed to derive any benefits spiritually. There is a mixture of experiences presented to you in this place and we know that and you know it better than we do. We know also that within the sphere of experience of those who profess your name that there are some who have been elevated to the mountaintop by reason of your interaction with them that you have made yourself known to them in a meaningful way that has gladdened their heart and enabled them to rejoice and to be glad. And we give thanks for any such. We also know that there are some who may be down in the valley and in the valley they are sensitive to lack of light and the heaviness of heart that sometimes overtakes us because of our personal circumstances. Some may be dealing with illness, their own illnesses or the illness of loved ones. And we pray for them, whoever they may be or whatever their need is, that they would seek out the face of their God. Because you are their God and we give thanks that they can speak of you, even in the midst of all their experiences as the God who has made himself known to them. And we pray to you that you would minister to them even in the service. We pray for you to make yourself known to all eyes, that the eyes of our understanding might be open to us, that as your word is read, even as we have these words of the psalmist upon our lips, that you would direct our eyes heavenwards. And that we would seek the face of God rather than a word of gaze, so that our eyes do not meet yours, because oftentimes we are ashamed.

And we will turn our face away from God. But you are able to redirect our gaze to yourself. And we pray that as we see you, we see Christ. And as we see Christ, we see you. And in your word, you tell us that he is to be found.

So remember us, each one. Remember all of fellowship here who may not be present because of their own peculiar circumstances. Remember those housebound, hospitalized, those confined to homes for the elderly, those who are cared for by others within their own homes or elsewhere. We pray for those that we know of that are in the hospice.

[ 9 : 52 ] And we pray that your blessing, spiritual blessing, would be in the midst of all their experiences, even the care that is shown to them to alleviate pain.

That that would be something that that would be something that speaks to them of God's goodness. Remember this grieving and the sorrowful. We know that there are some who have been saddened by sudden loss.

And we pray that you would remember those of them that we know and many others that we are unaware of. But we are never unaware of the voice of death because you speak to us so clearly and repeatedly through the death of those who are fellow sojourners with us in the path of life.

So heal the hurts of the afflicted. Thine their wounds we pray. Remember this world in which we live. Sin sick as it is. We give thanks that there is a remedy for the ailments that sin has brought into the world.

And that you are by the hand of the great physician able to minister to these needs. We give thanks for the gospel that speaks of Christ to us. And this nation of ours that has so wantonly walked away from Christ and from his church and from his world and departed in so many different ways from that which is wholesome and nourishing and embraced other things that are less so.

[ 11 : 32 ] In fact more destructive than any can realize. That you would be merciful to us and draw us to yourself. Pouring out your spirit upon us as a generation.

That is a generation that is growing up and we are soon to exit this world. That there are those who are young and of immature years.

And we fear for them because of what seems to be in store for them as far as we are able to determine it. But you are able to visit in mercy and pour out your spirit so that a generation would rise up who would come to know the Lord just as others before have done.

So accompany the preaching of the gospel with blessing. Remember those that you have sent out with the word. Those who have ministries to carry out this day within our presbytery and beyond.

We ask Lord that you would remember all such. Remember the vacant congregations. May they soon know that you have provision for them throughout the length and breadth of our nation and beyond.

[ 12 : 52 ] We give thanks for the missionary activity of the church. That you would bless even those who have to labor in very difficult and hard circumstances.

Even in the midst of war. We know that you have people. Men and women that have come to know Christ as their all in all.

And yet they live in circumstances that are dire. Their lives are hanging as it were by a thread. But we give thanks for the security that they have in Christ.

And that even though we would desire peace for them. That the peace they enjoy in him is greater by fire than any that we enjoy in this world apart from them.

We ask that you would bless the nations that are poor. Bring peace. Lasting peace. Remember those who are suffering deprivation through lack of food and lack of sustenance.

[ 13 : 58 ] Whether it is manifested in different ways. Sometimes without temporal mercies being very much any part of their experience.

We ask Lord that you would remember them according to their need. So hear our prayers. Bless those gathering together. Bless the children of the Sunday school as they come to the end of their time.

As Sunday school we pray that you would continue to watch over them. Bless all that they have heard to them. Bless their families, their homes and all that are near and dear to them.

We ask that you would encourage them to yearn for the world of life. That it be their source of encouragement in this world.

Watch over us each one. Pardon sin in Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Well boys and girls before you go out to Sunday school.

[ 15 : 00 ] Today we are going to be looking at the same passage that you are going to be thinking about yourselves. The book of Acts and the story there of Philip, the evangelist as he is sometimes called.

And his encounter. He is led by God to go and speak to a man from Ethiopia.

And he is found by Philip reading his Bible. Which is something that is quite interesting in itself.

He is reading his Bible and yet his problem is that he is not understanding what he is reading in his Bible. So God, in the way God alone can do, he sends somebody to explain to him what he is reading.

And it is quite amazing how God works. Sometimes when he sends his people to help others, he provides an opportunity to them.

[ 16 : 19 ] Sometimes it is an opportunity for the person who is in need to ask the right questions. And sometimes it is the opportunity for the person who is wanting to help to provide them with the right answers.

And this was very much what happened. When Philip came to this person, he found somebody who had a question. And Philip was able to direct him and give him help.

And the question, I suppose, was what? What is it that I am reading? What does it mean? What is it all about?

And I think that is really important. An important question. Because today, as in every other day, when we come, we gather around the Word of God.

You are taught in Sunday school from the Bible. And the question that you should be asking, what is it that the Bible is telling me? What does it say?

[ 17 : 24 ] And help me to understand it. That is important that we know what we are reading. And God helping us to understand it.

But the whole thing, as it works out, Philip was enabled. He was able to sit beside this person and just explain to him what God's Word was all about.

And another remarkable thing about this was he was able to tell him about Jesus. But he wasn't telling him about Jesus from the passages that we would normally read to find something out about Jesus.

Which is, we would go to the Gospels or we would go to the letters of Paul or John. But Philip found this man reading in the Old Testament in the prophecy of Isaiah.

Isaiah. And he helped him understand how Jesus was to be found in that passage that he was reading.

[ 18 : 37 ] And the lesson that we are using here, the words that are used is, he preached unto him Jesus. And he told him the good news about Jesus.

Which helps us understand what preaching is all about. Preaching is telling people the good news about Jesus. And this was the most important thing that Philip could have done for him.

Whatever else he could have done. Whatever else he could have said to him. He could have given him directions to someone else. But this was the best thing that he could do.

He could tell him about Jesus. He could have told him about Jesus from his own experience. He could have told him his testimony. And that would have been very useful.

But no, he told him about Jesus from the Bible. And that's the most important thing. And I think that's something that you have to remember.

[ 19 : 51 ] As you come to the end of your Sunday school term. What is it that you can ask yourself? What did I learn this year?

What did the teachers tell me this year? Well, I learned about Goliath. I learned about David. I learned about Daniel. I learned about some of the miracles that Jesus did.

All of these things have a place. But at the heart of it all is this one person. The person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And the teacher's privilege is to tell you about Jesus. And your privilege is to have Jesus brought to your attention.

And I hope that that's something that you will remember. And that you will say to yourself, Well, what am I going to be doing for the next seven weeks?

[ 20 : 51 ] Soon you'll be on holiday. I hope it's not going to be a holiday from church. So I'd like to see every one of you here. Even if you don't come to Sunday school. Because what I like doing most, although I don't do it in Sunday school, is telling you about Jesus.

Telling these old people about Jesus. Because you're never too young. And you're never too old. To be told about Jesus. And to come to know him so well.

That you'll be able to put your trust in him. Well, I hope that you'll remember that. And that the teachers will remember it. How privileged they are. In being able to tell you about this Jesus.

We're going to sing now as you go out. Some verses from Psalm 107. We're singing from the beginning of the psalm. Psalm 107.

Praise God for he is good. For still his mercy's lasting be. Let God's redeemed say so. Whom he from the enemy's hand did free.

[ 21 : 56 ] And gathered them out of the lands from north, south, east and west. They strayed in deserts pathless way. No city found to rest. For thirst and hunger in them faints their soul.

When straits them press, they cry unto the Lord. And he then frees from their distress. We're going to sing to verse 9. Praise God for he is good.

For still his mercy's lasting be. Amen. Praise God for he is good.

For still his mercy is lasting be. Let God's redeemed say so.

For still his mercy is lasting be. For still his mercy is lasting be. For still his mercy is lasting be. And gather them out of the lands From north, south, east and west.

[ 23 : 11 ] This maiden deserts pathless way. No city far to rest.

For sandshedben, Or shall some firm is resting be.

their distress. They most only now is to walk the brightest he can guide that they might to a city go where in the might die O that men to the Lord forgive grace for his goodness pain and for his works of wonder done unto the sons of men

For he that day Pour th mends ten I'm going to read from the book of Acts, on chapter 8, and we'll take up the reading at verse 26.

The book of Acts, chapter 8, verse 26. And the angel of the Lord spoke unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

[ 26 : 23 ] And he arose and went, and behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning and sitting in his chariot, reading Esaias the prophet.

Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this.

He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away.

And who shall declare his generation? For his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this, of himself or of some other man.

[ 27 : 41 ] Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water.

And the eunuch said, See, here is water. Waiteth hundredmeet to be baptised. And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest.

And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptised him.

And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, but the eunuch saw him no more. And he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found as soft as, and passing through, he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.

Amen. And the Lord had his blessing to a reading of his word. I'm going to sing now Psalm 87. Psalm 87. I'm going to sing the whole psalm.

[ 28 : 51 ] Psalm 87.

Psalm 87. The whole psalm to God's place. Upon the hills of holiness, He, His foundation, sits. Upon the hills of holiness, He, His foundation, sits.

God more than Jacob's dwellings are, He, His foundation, sits. He, His foundation, sits.

He, His foundation, sits. Things glorious are said of Thee, Thee, Thee, City of the Lord, Rehab and be but I to those that know me will record.

Behold him, Titus, and with it the land of Palestine.

[ 30 : 43 ] And likewise in Ethiopia, this man was born there.

And it, O Zion, shall be said, this man and that man there was born.

And he at Christmas time himself shall salvation.

When God the people rise to count that this man born was there.

There be a sing-a play and all my wellsprings in the air.

[ 32 : 09 ] As I said to the children, we're going to turn to this passage that we read together from the book of Acts, chapter 8. And we're going to just think of a number of things that may spring to mind from the way that Philip presents the gospel to this man of Ethiopia.

We can read again verse 37. And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

I think more than ever, I would say that I'm convinced that the salvation of any individual soul is something that's entirely dependent upon God's Spirit.

It is a miracle of God's grace. A miraculous work. It won't happen in any other way than God being involved in it.

[ 33 : 42 ] And I'm not saying that to empty our own activity of its need.

We all need as Christians to bear testimony to our experience of salvation. We need as Christians to be able to explain how we experience salvation.

But if it doesn't involve us going back to the experience of being brought face to face with our own inability, and our own inability being overtaken or being met by the power of God, by the ability of God, then we're doing a disservice to it.

We need to come to the Scripture and think more than anything I think in this week of how much we need to remember that what we believe, we need to go back to the Bible to explain why we believe it.

The Bible is the source of the substance of what we believe. And while the temptation is always to explain things in the light of personal experience, and of course the experience that we have if we are Christians, needs to come into it because it's the fruit of what the Bible has brought to bear by way of effect upon our lives.

[ 35 : 34 ] But we need to get back to the Bible. We need to explain things in light of what the Bible is saying. And at the heart of our experience of coming to faith is the Word of God in the hands of the Holy Spirit.

And it's this Word presenting Christ to us. If we look at what Paul says, just for example, in Ephesians 2, it's a chapter I suppose that we turn to very often, but Paul says in chapter 2, By grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in.

And in the first chapter, Paul repeatedly brings the reader back to God's presence and God's involvement in their experiences of what the Christian faith is and what it results in, in the experience of those who have come to faith.

Now that verse we quoted from Ephesians, I think it's, nothing could be plainer than what it says. It's just a statement of fact.

And I think people excuse their own lack of faith or lack of response to the Bible, saying it's too difficult, I can't understand it, it's complex, it's too mysterious.

[ 37 : 29 ] Well, sometimes they might use that, even you might use that as an excuse. But really, where it matters, it's not because of the complexity of the statement that difficulty is found, but rather in your own unwillingness to submit to that word as to what it says to you.

If the word says to you, you need faith, then you have to find out where that faith comes from, what it is, what it means, how it is to be understood.

And usually, the unwillingness to do that lies at the heart of the problem. Now, what we, what we want to look at, just by looking at this example, we are given of an encounter between two individuals, one presenting the gospel, and the other having the gospel presented to him.

And, one thing becomes abundantly obvious, is that this person's coming to make that profession, which we quoted last, he is only able to make that profession of faith in Christ by reason of the help that is given to him by God's Spirit.

The instrumentality, the usefulness, the way that Philip is used by God to apply the gospel to him, to open the gospel out to understanding, is a necessary part of it.

[ 39 : 24 ] But, God is seen at the beginning, God is seen throughout, and God is the focus of the confession of faith that is there. So, I want to begin with a simple statement, and it's so simple, whether you agree with it or not, it's not really the problem.

But, the salvation is for everyone, let me put it like that. salvation is for everyone. And, the reason I'm saying salvation is for everyone is that the Bible tells us plainly that our condition, our status, our plight is that we are sinners in need of our saviour.

It says it in different ways, and it says it in a multiplicity of ways, sin, and they all come to the same point. We are lost, and we need to be saved from our lostness.

And the only passion that the Bible points us to, to be a saviour to us, is the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ. We need to be saved from the effect of our sin.

Whatever that sin is, whether it is gross sin, whether it is many sins, it doesn't matter. We read in the Bible, and the shorter Catechism teaches us every sin deserves the wrath and curse of God.

[ 41 : 00 ] Every sin, one sin, many sins. God's displeasure is seen in the way the Bible describes our predicament.

Now, we live in a generation that suggests to us that, you know, sin is old heart, it's not really something that is relevant to our society, our generation, we're a step beyond that.

This was all right, some would even say it's a medieval thing, it's something that belongs in a former existence, that is no longer relevant.

and very often, because of the nature of society, the answer to the predicament of sin is first and foremost to pretend it's not there, or to denude the Bible's teaching on sin of its meaning, and to suggest that there are other things that we are eyewitness to in the world that needs to have a non-biblical terminology to explain it.

The terminology of the Bible is old heart, it's no longer something that is relevant, and it's certainly no longer something that is widely understood.

[ 42 : 40 ] So, the Bible's use of the word sin is something that is not really appreciated. But, the underlying malaise, the underlying predicament that affects society, still remains.

Even if you take out the terminology, if you dismiss it as not being relevant, and pretend it's something that we've got over and got past, the very things that the Bible describes to you that are the consequences of sin in the individual life and in the life of corporate society are still there.

They are still affecting what we do and how we do it and why we do it, where it takes us and the consequences of what happens once we get there. while society, and it's probably a cop-out for me to say that just to simplify matters, if, if, that's just to say that if there's a general agreement on the part of society that this is how things are, but, forgive the generalisation, but, my reasoning is this, that when the world round about us looks at the things that are wrong in the world, and they find these wrong things, and they see these effects upon society that must come, that are from some source, or some cause, things, and they have no answer for these things, and yet, the starting point is to say, well, it's just nature, it's just the way things are, now, the Bible provides an answer, it's the way things are, because sin is a broken world, sin is the consequence of the breach that came between the creator God and the creature man that was formed in his image, the consequences of that breach is seen in the breakdowns that you see around you in the world, the Bible gives you the answer, and dismiss the Bible, and dismiss the answer at your peril, choose the explanations that the world gives you, and you don't solve the problem, you don't heal the hurt, you don't bind up the wounds that are there because of sin, that's the thing, and one thing that you see as a possible healing for the predicament that the world is presented with is well, we live in a materialistic society, and we see wealth being at the heart of the answer to many of these problems.

If only I had more wealth, if I only had more ability to ease the hurt by doing what I'm not able to do because I don't have the resources, then a lot of these pain experiences would go away.

but that's only one answer, and maybe not be the answer of many people, but it's not the right answer. The possession of wealth does not take away the sorrows and the sadnesses and the griefs that many people suffer.

[ 46 : 44 ] the possession of material things do not do away with the effects of sin. And those who think that that is the case, their thinking is wrong, and all they have to do is look at their own society of those who are materially well-off to think that, well, the problems are still the problems that they had before, they had wealth, if they grew up with wealth, if they are of the landed society and they belong, that wealth was always there.

You examine the broken lives, you examine the griefs and the struggles, and those who have gone down the road because of their trying to reconcile their unhappiness with the things that they have that should make them happy, but don't.

And that's it. It's just the effect of sin is pervasive. Now, their conclusions, some of them would be, religion is for those who are not wealthy.

Religion is really something that the poor go to, the people who don't have our resources that they resort to. do. I'm not saying everybody there will say that.

I'm not even thinking that they have any cause to even reflect on religion as something that is in society.



[ 48 : 25 ] but I probably, I suspect that there are some who would think that the churches are really for those who don't have the pleasures that they do.

They have sought out something through organized religion that they don't need.

and I suppose the truth of the matter is that the numbers speak for themselves. Very few people who are wealthy find reason to spend time in any form of organized religion.

And I think statistics will hold that up, but it's probably not something that's relevant today. But we have a problem, I have a problem with this, that we see the diminishing influence of organized religion on society.

And we would argue there, possibly by looking at that, that religion is no longer relevant. And the problem with that conclusion is that you are not really understanding what religion is all about.

[ 49 : 49 ] This man, just come back to this, going off on a tangent there, but this man was wealthy. He was the chancellor of the exchequer, if you like, of the queen of Ethiopia.

Not only did he handle her resources, he probably had many resources of his own. So he was not lacking in wealth. wealth. And yet the possession of wealth did not stop him looking into his Bible and trying to find answers to problems that he understood that he had.

How he understood these problems, where the understanding that things were not right came from. We believe God had a hand in it, but his wealth was not the answer as far as he was concerned.

many people who have thought that the wealth that they possessed would ultimately lead to their problems being resolved, they've discovered otherwise.

They're no different to this man. And this man went elsewhere to seek to address the need that he understood that he had.

[ 51 : 02 ] And he saw it in the Bible. He saw it in the Word of God. Now, as I said, there are those who would say yes, that would probably be the course of action that would be followed by those who are not wealthy.

But that's not a legitimate conclusion to arrive at. It was strange this week I was listening to comments on our glorious football team.

Well, they were glorious when they left to go to Germany. But this was said, by a commentator looking at the thousands of supporters that followed them into Germany, they were on a pilgrimage.

They were on a pilgrimage to Germany. And I was saying, you know, these people who used that language probably didn't understand what they were saying.

people are on the people. But the fact is that sport is the organized religion of our generation. That's the religion of many today, whether it's on the football field or watching it or whatever sport they follow.

[ 52 : 17 ] And this was something that is true about so many. the religion that they follow or they choose is not the religion that will take them to Christ.

This man chose to go to his Bible and examine the Bible and yet it wasn't his religiosity that was the answer. He found the Bible and he read the Bible and he couldn't understand the Bible.

He needed something more than the Bible was able to bring to his attention because he needed light on the word that he was reading. He needed help to understand what it was saying to him.

The Bible is telling us very often that there are many people there who are almost persuaded to be Christians. There are many people that are spoken of that are not far from the kingdom of God.

There are many people if you read the start of this chapter you'll find a person there called Simon Magus who believed we are told. But at the same time Peter condemns him because his heart was not right with God.

[ 53 : 32 ] He was a religious person. He was interested in religion. He was interested in the things of God but only as far as it suited himself and it stopped short of Christ.

And that's a warning to us all that our religion if it is not Christ centred if it does not take us to the person of Christ Jesus then we will find that our religion does not serve us well and certainly did not serve him well.

Some people are not happy to say that Simon was an unbeliever because of his confession. But I'm not sure I think it might be Calvin one of the older commentators who says you'll know from what he did not do that his religion was not the right religion because when it came to the point he could not pray for himself.

He had to ask Peter to pray for him. He had to ask somebody else to pray for him. He couldn't do it for himself. His relationship to God was built on something other than what was genuine.

The Ethiopian was not a convert. He was a seeker and he saw the Lord through the scripture. He did the right thing and he did the right thing in persevering and he did the right thing in going to somebody who would explain to him what the scripture that he read was.

[ 55 : 04 ] Somebody has said there are some people who know too much and they cannot be taught anything. And he said that includes ministers.

What did he mean by that? I'm sure ministers are of that category, especially this one. No, that's not right. Every one of us can learn more.

And if our learning has stopped short of us knowing Christ for ourselves, then we're in a dangerous place. Head knowledge is not good enough.

We need to come to heart knowledge. church. And the Ethiopian probably, you know, he was a religious man. He'd gone to Jerusalem to worship. He was searching the scriptures diligently, but he needed to find out what the scripture was telling him about Jesus so that he would believe it for himself.

We'll have to bring this to an end, but just bring this thought before you. what did Jesus do when he was presented with two walking on the road to a maize?

[ 56 : 22 ] And they were broken hearted, they were downcast, their hearts were in their boots. What did he do? He took them to the Bible and he explained to them what the Bible said about himself.

He began with Moses and the prophets and he expounded unto them all the scripture, the things concerning himself.

That's what Jesus did. This is what Philip does. He brings the scripture and he looks for Christ in the scripture.

Now the fact that the point at which we've read here, the confession that the man makes involves baptism in baptism, you wonder how did he get to that?

How did he arrive at the need for baptism? Well obviously in Philip's exposition he explains to him all the role of Christ, the fact that Christ died for our sins and that his blood was the means by which our sins were to be washed away.

[ 57 : 36 ] And baptism is the symbol that speaks to us. this is the sacrament that we had last Sunday that spoke to us of the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ signified and sealed by the application of water.

And in Philip's sermon, in Philip's evangelism, he must have managed to include all that information. But what we find is that this man came to a confession.

And it's a different confession to Simon make us. He confessed with his mouth and he confessed with his heart, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

And this is something he had to do for himself. This is something nobody else could do for him. You know, we often read about revival of religion and in some occasions, some different revivals are different experience.

sometimes there was mass hysteria and many people expressed interest in Christ collectively. And that might be a manifestation of a certain sort.

[ 58 : 49 ] But doubtless whether there were many that made known their interest, that interest had to be a personal one. It had to be something that was true of them, that they had come to know Christ for themselves, which is what must be true of you, whoever you are.

You must know Christ for yourself. Somebody else knowing Christ is not good enough for you. The fact that you've got a godly and a wise minister won't help you.

The fact that you've got godly and wise parents or grandparents or sisters or brothers will not help you. Your knowledge must be a personal knowledge and your faith must be a faith that is your own, that rests upon and receives Christ for yourself.

I came across a sermon in the collection of sermons that John McSween preached. And one thought that I came across there was, you know the words at the end of Matthew 11.

There, the invitation is extended, come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

[ 60 : 12 ] And McSween says very very interestingly that the rest of trust and confidence is in that coming to Christ.

Resting and being confident in your own self in what Christ has done for sinners and that you need to have the confidence and the belief in that for yourself and for no one else.

Well I hope that you'll understand this wonderful work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit leading Philip to this person.

The Spirit opening the mouth of one person to ask a question and the other person to give an answer to the question. That's one thing I desire for myself that the Lord would put some people in my path that would have a desire to know more about Christ.

I want that. I want that more than anything else that people would feel free to come and speak to me about the Lord. But then if not more that I would know the right thing to say.

[ 61 : 32 ] That I would be able to answer the question that they have that burns within them so that I won't put them off. I won't misdirect them.

I'll point them to Christ, the only living saviour of sinners. May God bless to us this word. I'm going to sing now to God's praise.

We're going to sing from Psalm 68. Psalm 68 at verse 18. Thou hast, O Lord, most glorious ascended up on high, and in triumph victorious led captive captivity.

We'll sing to verse 20. Thou hast, O Lord, most glorious ascended up upon high, and in triumph victorious, blessing has played captive, captive, captivity.

Thou hast received us. Thou hast received ■■■■■■ takes for men, for such a just intent of prevailing awe, King chapter 3 and above Cause of God.

[ 63 : 10 ] Ye for them that taught the Lord, in midst of them might dwell.

Blessed be the Lord who is to us, of our salvation God.  
Who daily with this benefits has plenteously done, Lord.  
He of salvation is the God, who is our God most strong.  
And unto God the Lord from death, we wish us to belong.

[ 64 : 32 ] Amen. Appreciated and rewarded.

Usually at our prize giving, we invite one of the older, I'm not sure, I have to watch what I see.

We have an invitation given to one of the congregation who's been around a while. I'm not going to say how long ago.

But usually that's the case. But today it's slightly different. We've got Donald MacLeod from Stornoway with us. He's sitting there very embarrassed.

And when he's working out in his head, whether he's in this category of ancient and decrepit people. He is. He was in my own year in school.

[ 65 : 55 ] So we're the same age. So what does that say about me? He looks a lot older than I do. But that's something that's obvious to you all, I'm sure.

That's not why he's here. He's here for a number of reasons. But we thought it would be a good thing to invite him along.

Now Donald has been involved in education for a long time. As a teacher and then working in administration. And then the church saw an opportunity to use him in several guises.

He was involved in this. Involved, I suppose, still in free church camps. He was involved until recently in safeguarding training and policy implementation.

Something that's very important in modern church. And I think presently, unless he's been given the sack, is the clerk to the training of the ministry committee.

[ 67 : 06 ] I don't know. That's probably, it's a board of ministry now. They change names to make them sound more impressive. But they do the same thing. They teach the current batch of students who are preparing for ministry.

And Donald's on that committee in a very important role. But his interest in young people has always been there. And his involvement with camps is something that's still ongoing.

And we're pleased that Ian McKeever thought. He doesn't think often. His brain doesn't often work in very productive ways. But he came up with this idea to invite Donald.

And we're pleased that he did that. And I'm going to invite Donald to come forward. And his first duty will be to present the prizes to the children.

So if you come down and sit beside Donald. And then I'm going to hand everything over to me.

[ 68 : 12 ] Well folks, it's good to see you. It's even better to have Donald here. It's a relief to you and to me that I don't have to articulate very much today. Just to contradict the minister a little bit.

And I think we'll ask Donald first just to give us a little flavor of camps. And the benefits of such. As Kai rightly says, Donald wears a lot of hats.

And he has a lot of experience within our church. And I'm just going to invite Donald to lead us a little bit to talk about camps. And then we'll devolve upon him the duty of presenting the prizes to the children.

And they have been very circumspect thus far. So we don't want to push that too hard. So we'll try and keep this short and sweet. Donald.

Thank you. Thank you for your welcome. Yes, we were in school together a long time ago. And we probably look about the same age. But I think I might have it on the hair front.

[ 69 : 14 ] Never mind. We can speak about that afterwards. It's my pleasure and privilege to be here today. And it's great to see so many young people from the community and from the church.

And you've got no idea how for older folks like me and your minister, it takes an encouragement to continually see. Because that's the future. That's the future of the church. And really heartened to see your behavior and everything.

It's just great for me and as the distance, you know, all these young folks and older, younger people in the audience as well. So it's quite a dangerous place to stand between a group of young people and their prizes and all these exciting bags.

So I don't know many times I've said, keep it brief, but I've got the message. So I won't be able. It's my question. There is a responsibility for future youth camps. This summer we're running 10 camps across Scotland and to England as well.

We have over 300 young people coming along from ages P5 to P6. That's very exciting and it's a big burden at the same time.

[ 70 : 18 ] And we seek your prayers that these 200 young people would get to camp and come back safely. Because when you have them away together like that, it's really quite something to think about.

The longest travelled young person will do 543 miles from their home to camp one way and then come back another 543 miles.

The feedback we get from young people is they love it. They have a great time. It's about fun. It's about friendship. But most of all, as you can imagine, this is future youth camps.

It's about teaching them more about God and Jesus. And there's a full programme of teaching while you're at camp where you learn more. One of the biggest benefits I think I see of camps is you make networks and you meet other young people.

A father was telling me he was his teenage son of the island. Went to a new city where he actually knew no one apart from his camp contacts.

[ 71 : 17 ] And that father was saying, I'm very clear that it's down to his camp contacts. That means that he's very involved in church in that city and has friends to go out with and knows lots of other people.

So there's so many benefits. To run the camps, we have 127 adults who are volunteering to either drive or to cook or to leave at the camp.

And I really speak to players as well that all these 130 people make it to camp this summer because it's a logistical nightmare. So the camp that you've been supporting, and I was so impressed to hear about that, is one of the Concrete camps.

Concrete says south of Inverness. And there'll be a bunch of young people, a lot of them from this island, between P5 and P7 going there for a week in the middle of the summer. The leader, Myrtle Campbell, is the minister of the environment.

And we're looking forward to seeing them at camp. I get a great job. I get to visit most of the camps just for a half a day or so. And to see how they're getting on. I visited them before that time they were at Landmark.

[ 72 : 24 ] And having a great time, the money that you've raised means that it's going to be easier for that camp to have a few wee treats and also to do a few wee extra things. I'd like to thank you on behalf of that camp for the money that you've collected for them.

We really, really do appreciate that. So let's hope that through time you'll see your names and see calendars coming through or surrounding villages on the booking forms for camps.

Because it's not long until you'll be in that practical P5 and then on through to S5, S6. So thank you very much for this chance to speak to you.

I hope I was speaking up. That was just a business. So I'd like to thank John Fowley on behalf of the congregation personally for giving that message.

As a participant myself many years ago, as a camper, I can endorse what you say. I thoroughly enjoyed it, although I was a bit green. Probably still am. But I enjoyed camp.

[ 73 : 21 ] I'd recommend it to the young folks here. And also later in life, I had the privilege, like we heard today, of being a leader at a camp. And that was a great opportunity too.

I wouldn't describe it as a holiday, but it was nevertheless good fun. So I think just to as well convey on behalf of the Sabbath school, the support that we've received, particularly with the Jarish collection this year, by happy providence, we started collecting, probably at the start of the year, we distributed Jarish at the door.

And there's been a great uplift in that. And it was only later in the year that we heard of the sort of vision that churches throughout the island would support camps prayerfully and financially, if that were possible.

So, as I say, by happy providence, we've now gathered in most of the Jarish. And I think this is worthy of, we round of applause, we've raised thus far 524 pounds and 66 pence, which for our congregation, I think is tremendous.

And even last night, I got another donation of 20 pounds from a lady esteemed in our congregation. So we can't attend, that means. And I know it's two extra jars today at the door.

[ 74 : 49 ] So I'm going to hand the cheque over to Donald. And I think, as I say, I think it's worthy of a round of applause. Thank you. As Donald said, the camp we're supporting, it's run by one of our own island ministers, Reverend Murdoch Campbell.

And on Thursday, we're having a prayer meeting given over to prayerfully supporting that endeavour. And all that's associated with it. And while I'm conveying thanks as well, as is customary and as is appropriate, I'd like to pass on the thanks to the Cuxession for supporting our Sunday school and the Deacons Court for the practical provisions associated with that.

The congregation for their support. Parents, clearly, for bringing their children to the Sunday school. Teachers as well sometimes get overlooked.

The teachers put in the front-end effort and I know have the interests of the children almost at their heart and in the principles of what they teach.

And lastly, but by no means least, the pupils themselves. The kids have to have recognition for their hard work and for their application throughout the year and for being attentive and showing that they are learning, I believe, and hearing of the good news, even as Philip explained the scripture to that Ethiopian and a seed was launched near in his heart.

[ 76 : 25 ] That's our prayer and desire for our youngsters too. We had our outing, which is sort of the culmination of our term last Saturday and through God's goodness we enjoyed, I think we enjoyed, a thoroughly nice day over noon and I think we have a duty to thank God for preserving us and giving us opportunity to meet together and it is edifying to see the children here today at the end of the term having an acknowledgement of all their ends.

And I think with that we'll make a restart on handing out the prizes. So I'll ask Donald, as I read out the names, I'll ask him to give the gift bags and the certificates out to the children as I call their names forward.

So we'll start with Rory McKay. If I can ask Rory to come forward to receive his gift and his certificate. Thank you. So, you know the drill now.

We're going to go with Isla Cloud. Thank you. Next up we have Johnny Graham.

Moment you've been waiting for us. And I'm a colleague. And we don't need the engineers to work out.

[ 78 : 15 ] We have Callum James McHenry. Okay, we'll move on to the next class.

So if I can ask Ellie J. McKay to come up. You can see if he has certificates. I'm a manager. 10-11.

Next we have Anna Wijaldewald. E■■■.

New■■■■ student Jacinry. dsjielin kulapens■■ka ki■■ineman. And your honor is to welcomeTime Deaf spoke to others to know and to the next class. I'm ready walking with the police stand. We're going to call it Katrina Pausel. Unfortunately, we don't realize that that is today, but nevertheless, we'll get him his prize and his certificate.

Next, we have Archie Mackay. And then, Amal Fahannan.

[ 79 : 21 ] James McFadden.

Ryan Carter. Next, we have Piole.

Shemus Adolf. And Shory Mackay.

For the next 10th, we have Adam McFadden to come up.

Please. And I guess what? And I guess what? And Shory.

[ 80 : 47 ] Mariela B. And last but not least, we have Sarah McFadden.

Now, before Sarah sits down, Sarah's been prepping this for at least a week.

She's going to present something too long. Reverend Shory. So, thank you for having us a mark of thanks for him being here today and still willingly delivering his talk and giving the gifts over.

So, thank you Sarah. Thank you, Sarah. So, that you'd be pleased to know is it. So, I'll hand back to Reverend Shory. Reverend Shory. Thank you, Ian. Special thank you to all the Sunday school teachers who do take time to prepare lessons and to deliver them.

It's much appreciated. And I'm very impressed by the young people. They did much, much better behave than I was when I was a youth. So, well done. We're going to conclude with singing the words of Psalm 23. And then, you're all invited from the Sunday school to all the Sunday school teachers who do take time to prepare lessons and to deliver them.

[ 81 : 54 ] It's much appreciated. And I'm very impressed by the young people. They did much, much better behave than I was when I was a youth.

So, well done. We're going to conclude with singing the words of Psalm 23. And then, you're all invited for tea.

Choose next door. And please stay forward. So, we're going to sing the words of the familiar Psalm 23.

The Lord's my shepherd, I not want. He makes me down to lie in pasture screen. He leadeth me to quiet waters by. My soul he doth restore again.

And me to walk doth me within the paths of righteousness even far. So, name's sake. The whole of the Psalm to God's with the Lord's my shepherd, I not want.

[ 82 : 54 ] The Lord's my shepherd, I not want.

He makes me down to lie in pasture screen.

When he leadeth me, the quiet waters by.

My soul he doth restore again.

And me to walk doth me within the paths of righteousness.

[ 84 : 01 ] In God's own in sea. Ye though I walk in death darkly.

Yet, where will I fear, how near? For thy heart with me and thy wrath.

Has God become more still. My table I have been shed.

In presence of thy voice. My head the dust with all the night.

And my cup overflows. And my cup overflows. Goodness and mercy on my life.

[ 85 : 36 ] All my life shall surely fall for me.

And in the earth forevermore my dwelling place shall be.

Close it. Lord of God, we give thanks for the opportunity to meet us. We have done to mark the occasion of Sunday school's activities over the year.

And we pray that you would bless this to all involved and to our congregation in particular. We pray for your blessing and provision that is made for us now.

And may we eat and drink to your glory. And now may grace, mercy and peace from God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest and abide with you all now and always. Amen.

[ 86 : 46 ] Amen. Amen.