

Who is Jesus? What did he come to do?

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[0 : 00] And I'd like to do it under three headings. First of all, the texts, and then his titles,! And then the times.

So three Ts, you might be able to remember it.! What official roles or official jobs does he have? As we have official roles on earth, like police officer, doctor, teacher, does Jesus have similar official jobs? And then lastly, and more briefly, the timescale of what Jesus does, of his work. And you might be sitting there thinking, well, this is all rather unnecessary, and it sounds as though it's going to be fairly boring. All we need to know is that Jesus loves us. You might be thinking that. And that's not a bad objection. The Apostle Paul talked about the love of Jesus Christ and he said something like this.

[1 : 17] He says, I pray for you, that you, he's talking to some Christians who lived in Ephesus, he was talking to the Ephesian Christians, I pray that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have power to grasp the height and breadth and length and depth of the love of Christ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

And he was saying, I want you to know about the love of God, but he was saying that this is a really big matter, that you need to be rooted and established in love and that you need power if you're going to grasp what this love is because it's so big.

And to know this, it's something that surpasses knowledge. So I would say that even if you said, all we need to know is his love, I would say his love is big.

It's not easy to grasp. And his love is deep. It's not simple. I use the word facile there because that's what I was trying to say.

It is simple in a way, but it's not the sort of simple, easy, oh well that's obvious sort of simple. And his love is rich. It's not undemanding.

[2 : 42] It's actually easy to get the wrong end of the stick about the love of Jesus. So even if you were to say, well all we need to know is the love of Jesus, I would say that is a big thing to want to know.

And the best way to really understand the love of Jesus, I would say, is to do exactly what we're doing, to study, to consider, to reflect, to ponder the person of Christ and the work of Christ.

So even if you were objecting, I'm just going to carry straight on anyway. So let's look at texts. Now if you're good at finding places in the Bible, you might want to chase these up.

But if you're not good at it, don't worry because they're up on the screen and I'm going to read them out anyway. So let's first of all look at some texts in the Bible which say Jesus came to XYZ.

And we'll look and see what they tell us. So my first text is Mark chapter 1 verse 38. So I'm going to find this in my Bible.

[3 : 55] And if you're good at looking things up, you might beat me. If you're not good, don't worry about it. We'll read it anyway.

So Mark 1 verse 38 is a statement of purpose. Jesus replied, Let us go somewhere else to the nearby villages so that I can preach there also.

That is why I have come. It's a statement of purpose, isn't it? Why has he come? Jesus says, I have come to preach. To preach meaning to herald, to proclaim, to tell people good news in a way that perhaps a midwife might tell a dad that he's just become a dad.

That's telling good news. Jesus has come to bring good news, to preach. So that's a statement of purpose, isn't it? Are you with me so far? This is the easy bit.

You are with me so far. Yes. Okay. So now I'm not going to stop there because I put a little arrow to say I think he's come to do more than that. Okay.

[5 : 03] So let's take it on a bit at a time. So one thing he definitely came to do is tell us stuff. So we're to listen to what he says. That would be the logical response.

Now let's look at Mark 10.45 because Jesus says something more. This is a statement of purpose. Mark 10.45 It's in the context of people being jealous of one another.

And Jesus says, this is the way I look at things like this. Verse 45. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Okay. It's a statement of purpose, isn't it? He did not come to be served but to serve. So Jesus has come to do something for us.

[6 : 16] To serve us. And the particular thing which you can spot there the particular service is it says to give his life a ransom for many.

To give his life a ransom for many. So what does this text tell us? It tells us that he's come to serve us. To serve others.

To serve people who actually don't deserve to be served but that's what he's come to do. And he's come to give his life as a ransom. Now what's a ransom?

A ransom is a huge payment or a huge deed to set people free. To set slaves free actually is the usual use of that.

And Jesus says that he's come to pay a huge price to set slaves free. And what's the huge price?

To give it says his life.

[7 : 16] So here's a statement of purpose. He came to preach but he came to serve and to give his life as a ransom. He's referring to his death isn't he?

He came to die. It's a very unusual statement because for most people you would say what's your purpose in life?

Well it's to live to earn this or to get this job or to have a family or whatever it is in life but Jesus is saying I came actually and one of the main points was for me to die in a certain way to achieve a certain effect.

But I think we could say more than that. Please turn to John's Gospel chapter 6. John 6.38 Here again is another statement of purpose.

Please look at this very carefully and notice carefully what it says. I have come down from heaven John 6.38 not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

[8 : 35] So Jesus is saying that he's under orders you could almost say he's been given a job to do the father has a will and he sent Jesus to do what this will is.

And the next verses show the will from two different viewpoints. God's will is a big mysterious thing. We don't understand God's will fully but I would say you could think of it as being on two levels and we'll do the easy level first.

So God's will part A and part B part B first verse 40 for my father's will is that everyone who looks to the son and believes in him shall have eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day.

So this is the job that God has given to Jesus to do so that everyone who looks to him meaning to say looks with a look of faith you know oh Lord I'm looking to you everybody who looks to him and believes in him shall have eternal life.

So it's Jesus' job to make sure that happens and it's Jesus' job to raise that person on the last day.

So if you have looked to Jesus if you have believed in him Jesus has the task of making sure that you are raised on the last day that's his job and I would say that this is the will of the father it's the revealed will and this is the job he's given Jesus to do to save everyone who looks to him or believes in him so that's part B of what the will of the father is and we can say that very clearly so if you are sitting here this morning and you think I need to be raised on the last day I want eternal life then it's very simple you simply look to and believe in

[10 : 51] Jesus and then it's his job to make sure all that happens let's look at the first reference to the will which is in verse 39 so I went forward a verse I've jumped back a verse this is the will of him who sent me that I shall lose none of all he has given me but raise them at the last day it's a very similar statement but it's a little bit different so the one we looked at first said us looking Jesus raising that was the sequence this one says if you take it to pieces what's the first thing that happens the father gives people to Jesus the first thing that happens is the father gives people to Jesus the second thing that happens is that Jesus keeps them safe and the third thing that happens is he raises them on the last day this is my father's will

I shall lose none of all that he has given me but raise them up at the last day and I would suggest to you that this aspect of God's will is more mysterious because we don't know who he's given we don't know who the father has given to Jesus Jesus knows but we don't know there's something hidden about that the idea that the father gives Jesus saves keeps and raises them up at the last day I would say that that is a mysterious hidden will and that we could say from this that Jesus is tasked by the father with saving these people does that make sense from those verses but I think we can go further than that let's look at some more verses let's look at John chapter 10 verse 18 which touches on something that we haven't yet said

John 10 18 where Jesus says in verse 17 the reason my father loves me is that I lay down my life only to take it up again no one takes it from me but I lay it down of my own accord I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again this command I have received from my father so Jesus says I have received!

a command from my father he said this is the job I want you to do this is the work I want you to accomplish and he this time says it in two parts to lay down my life and to take it up again so that's an aspect we haven't noted yet not only to make a sacrifice on the cross but be raised from the dead so Jesus has been given the command to die and to take his life up again and to rise from the dead but we can go further let's nip back to John chapter 5 and see another task that's been given to Jesus John 5 22 so don't worry if you can't find it but

I'll read it out John 5 22 Jesus says the father judges no one but has entrusted all judgment to the son that all may honour the son just as they honour the father and in chapter 5 verse 27 Jesus says he has given him authority to judge because he is the son of man do not be amazed at this a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear Jesus voice and come out those who have done good will rise to live those who have done evil will rise to be condemned so here is more about what the tasks!

[15 : 23] raise the dead on the last day and to judge those who have it says done good will rise to live those who have done evil will rise to be condemned and there will be a judgment and Jesus is the judge that's part of his work and those who have trusted their lives to him and therefore have lived a changed life he will give eternal life and those who have shied away from him ignored him and therefore their lives are untouched will be condemned that's what it says that's the work of Jesus but I can say there's more Colossians chapter 1 verse 19 Colossians 1 verse 19 for which is what

Aaron read to us for God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him and through him to reconcile this is through Jesus to reconcile to himself all things whether things on earth or things in heaven making peace through his blood shed on the cross this is saying even more isn't it because it is to reconcile!

this is the work of Jesus to reconcile all things on earth and in heaven making peace by the blood of his!

cross so how much is left out? Answer nothing this is the work of Jesus Christ as it takes in not only people but stars planets!

hills! oceans! Spiritual beings! Everything that there is in heaven and on earth which is at the moment in disorder and to bring it all back in an orderly and harmonious way to reconcile to himself all things and to produce an ordered harmonious cosmos a new world and that's what Jesus was achieving by his death on the cross can we go further well we could go half a millimetre further by saying by quoting 1 Corinthians 15 24 in which the work of Jesus is put like this then the end will come when he hands over the kingdom to

[18 : 24] God the father after he has destroyed all dominion authority and power for he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet the last enemy to be destroyed is death for he put everything under his feet when it says everything has been put under him it's clear it does not include God himself who put everything under Christ when he has done made subject to him who put everything under him so that God may be all in all and that is again to state that the work of Jesus Christ is not completed until Jesus has ruled over this world of history and made all things new cast out all that is evil and remade a cosmos where everything is put back in order and where

God himself is fully and gloriously central and then it says God may be all in all and when we got to that point I don't think there's any more to add and we have sort of gone step by step through all the range of the texts that say the tasks that Jesus has been given to do and as you can see it's actually more than you thought it was it goes further than you think it does and it all hinges on the

cross of Jesus Christ so let me ask you before I go on seeing as this is what the texts are saying which side of his work are you so seeing as Jesus has got this huge work of saving of preaching of dying for people of rising and in the end of remaking the whole world is that something that you would say wow

I'm in on that he's my savior and if that's what he's doing I'm totally up for it are you aligned with it or not aligned with it would you say this morning this comes as a complete shock I had no idea that Jesus had such large purposes and to be honest I'm adrift I'm not part of that at all this is going to leave!

me out or is it actually something that you're against that in a very polite way you've said to Jesus I'm actually not interested in your way of doing things I'm not actually interested in who you are or what you came to do you just carry on without me which is really a way of saying I'm actually against you and I ask you to ponder whether it is a wise choice to set yourself adrift from or against this person with this work and this agenda are you in other words a glad beneficiary or are you a baffled bystander this is the work of Jesus Christ let's move on and look at his titles so that was the texts let's look at his official title so you know what an official title is official title is prime minister or mayor or chief surgeon or neighborhood inspector and you can make a difference between the person and the job you can make that difference so the prime minister isn't always going to be David Cameron you might find that disappointment or you might find it a relief but you can differentiate between the name of the person and the job they have to do and for example our neighborhood inspector used to be Gareth Davis who came to our men's breakfast once and it's now Brian McCarthy so you've got two different people but they do the same job now are there any official jobs that Jesus is given to do and if you think about it well let's think about it so I'm going to enlist your help so here's one anybody help on this here's a job that Jesus is being given to do it's G something something D no no no no steady on Ross yes good shepherd good shepherd I am the good shepherd and the good shepherd I didn't do the letters right the good shepherd has a job to do [23 : 35] I'm the good shepherd and I care for the sheep lay down my life for the sheep here's another title that was from John 10 here's another title the L something something B of G something D that's an easy one and then there's something that follows on after that thank you very much Terry the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world okay that's a title for Jesus gives a job with a job description here's Revelation 5 5 B R something something C H of D something V something D yeah branch of David I cheated slightly because it actually says the root and stem of David but it that's the branch of

David so where the where David was the king of Israel you know that the royal family of Israel and it got chopped off but it grows back again and he's the branch of David and this king anybody like to say what this king does and it involves an iron rod he rules with a rod of iron doesn't he and well here's a simple one Hebrews 1 verse 2 he is the s something son yeah god spoke to us in times past in different ways through the prophets but now he has spoken to us by his son who is the heir of all things and the express image of his character so you might say well that that's not a role that's that's just who he is it's probably true Hebrews 8 verse 1 says that

Jesus is this person H I something something P something da da da da with a T at the end anybody a high priest we have such a high priest such a high priest anybody tell us what the the job that part of the job that is referenced there is we have such a high priest who meets our need I think it says doesn't it mediator yep yep he in that section he does gifts and sacrifices so he makes sacrifices let's put that John 1 49 is what I quoted at the beginning what Nathaniel said you are the king of Israel and there's a long one here this is

John 3 29 Jesus says he is the bridegroom that was very quick bridegroom what does the bridegroom come to do what is the work of the bridegroom take his bride yes that's right he comes to from heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride so he comes to to find his bride and to carry her off and to smarten her up and make her beautiful and marry her yeah there's the bridegroom the bride is the church yeah 1 1 he is the word of God John 1 1 and in Mark 6 4 he says that he's this because he's not accepted in his hometown a prophet and a prophet is never accepted in his hometown the more you think about it the more of those titles you could come up with

I mean I don't know how many I've got there 8 10 12 I put some more down he's the temple builder destroy this temple and I will raise it again in three days he's the poor out of the spirit the one he came to baptize with the spirit he's the destroyer of the works of the devil he came to destroy the

works of the devil we know who you are you're the holy one of God have you come to destroy us he's the suffering servant we esteemed him smitten stricken by God and afflicted but he was bruised for our iniquities he was wounded for our transgressions he's the suffering servant psalm 22 he's just the innocent sufferer who seems to suffer for no reason at all and you could go on and on and on and on like that and they're all descriptions of aspects and the richness of Jesus

[28 : 43] Christ and I know exactly what you're thinking now I know exactly what you're thinking you are thinking here's a picture of you thinking it there's a picture of you thinking it you're thinking aha you're thinking you're thinking munus triplex that's what you're thinking well you would think that if you were Calvin or if you're one of the church fathers so the munus triplex is Latin for the threefold office of Christ the threefold official job that he's been given to do and this is the theory that you'll remember it because it was in Latin that you can boil down all the previous three all the previous multiple titles you can boil them down to three and the three that the early church fathers came up with and at the time of the reformation

Calvin really went to town on this is to say you can boil those down to three prophet and priest and king it's not a bad idea the prophet comes to reveal God and show us his way of salvation which fits in with what Jesus said I've come to preach and a prophet is not accepted in his hometown and he is the word of God and the priest is the one who makes sacrifice and provision for sin so that covers an awful lot of ground there and the king is the anointed one who comes to subdue first of all he subdues us because we're rebellious and we're like kids having a tantrum that go off all over the place and roll on the floor in Sainsbury's and Jesus grabs hold of us and sorts us out and subdues us first of all and then when we're his people and we've come to our right mind he protects us so in his kingly power he's our deliverer and he defends us which would fit in with the idea of losing none and he vanquishes his and our enemies so prophet priest and king and it certainly does cover an awful lot of ground and

I would say this about the threefold office of christ if you read reform theology you get a huge this is the way it's treated but and so I'm referencing that is it taught in the bible well I'd say pretty much pretty much yes Jesus is certainly the high priest he's certainly the king he's referred to as a prophet with some tweaks on that is it a useful idea to help us well I think definitely it is so if you go away thinking I never thought of that Jesus as my prophet priest and king that's worth thinking about and it is worth thinking about however I'm going to say is it complete and water tight and I'd say probably not because where do you put temple builder where do you put pourer out of the spirit and it does say he's the lamb so you're going to have to say he's the priest who offers the lamb who is also himself so it gets a little bit complicated and if

I was being really critical I would say it's a little bit over tidy and some theologians can take that on I think well beyond its sell by date really but it's not you know it's worth taking with us isn't it Jesus prophet priest and king but he's not three saviors it's one work one salvation culminating in a new world a new cosmos for God let me just say we're inclined to think that Jesus' work is all about us and I have to say he does more for us than we have possibly deserve and it is totally amazing but it isn't all about us it's all about God and God deserves to have a new world and God deserves to be put back in his proper place as he should and that's the work that God has given

Jesus to do and I would say that these titles give us a very rich and deep insight insight into the work of Christ and the Hebrews says consider him and we could do far worse couldn't we consider him think about him think about what he's come to do think about all those ways it's described third point time it's important to bring in that there is a time sequence to what Jesus does did and will do the work of Jesus is not all done at once and please understand me it's true that his work is now not completely finished or I put not completely done although the price is paid and the labour is finished remember

[34 : 26] Jesus said on the cross accomplished mission accomplished so let's look at the time so I've got a timeline going along here let's think of the things that Jesus accomplished step by step so the first thing that we have as it sort of affects us is that he came to earth and if you want a long name for it it's the incarnation he became flesh and then during his time on earth he became obedient and he learnt obedience so he had a period of humbling and he had a period of suffering of which the most intense focus was the cross so the graph if you like I've drawn a sort of graph which comes down down down down and at the cross it goes off the scale because we may not know we cannot tell what pain he had to bear but we believe it was for us he hung and suffered there so he came down and his work took that stage and then following this we have the graph

going up so

I've made it impossible for me to move the piece of paper to see this properly so I have to do that there's the resurrection where Jesus comes alive from the dead but that's not all there is the ascension where Jesus physical body leaves this part of creation to be in the presence of God there is his enthronement at which Jesus pours out the Holy Spirit seated at the right hand of God he now pours out what you see and hear and he is currently in heaven ruling during this period of history and during this period of history things go ballistic in terms of the gospel so there's a whoosh of the gospel going out to all the nations and he's extending his kingdom and at the end of that period there will be his coming and at his coming he will bring salvation to his people and judgment to those who are not his people and then there will be an even bigger whoosh as all things are made new and there is a new heaven and a new earth so you see there's a timescale here doesn't all happen at once and the timescale and the sequence is important

Jesus himself said to his disciples because they were disillusioned because it hadn't all happened at once didn't the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory that's the way there's a sequence to it so we notice that this is a time of grace this is a time when Jesus is patiently holding back on judgment and saying now's the time for you to come now's the time for you to come and sort out with me the issue of your sins the issue of who runs your life the issue of what your life's all about and where you're going now's the time to sort that out in future there will be a day when it's too late now's the window of opportunity please take it and I note for example also that all the way through that graph he was king all the way through please don't think he becomes king only when he's enthroned he's recognized as king but when he died on the cross he was a king on the cross he was doing on the cross what a king would do for his people he was defending us he was purchasing us he was rescuing us he was a king on the cross and let me say that just as surely as he's done all the other things he's been asked to do he will come and complete his work he will come every eye will see him he will return bring in the day of judgment and make all things new you might not have known that or you might not have even thought about it that's one of the things Jesus tells us so we've looked at a lot of stuff but I want to say for you if you're a believer it was a lot of stuff but it's good stuff isn't it tells us about a really great saviour who does more for us and has done more and will do more than we quite grasped it enriches us it makes us glad it does us good and let me say if you're not a believer if you're not a person of faith let me just put the question like this if this is true where on earth does it leave you we're going to sing together number 306 those Thank you.