

# Jesus Outlines His Teaching

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[ 0 : 00 ] Come Holy Ghost, our souls inspire and lighten with celestial fire. Father, we ask that you would pour out the Holy Spirit upon us with might and power and deep conviction, that we might, Father, know that Jesus is Savior and Lord, that we might trust him more, that we might be willing, Father, to be in your presence and receive from you so that we can follow you in ever greater depths of who we are.

And in the full extent of our life. And so, Father, only your Holy Spirit can help us to do these things. And so we ask that the Holy Spirit would move.

And we ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. Last week I began talking about Mark's Gospel.

We're going to be looking at chapter 1, verses 14 to 20. And I said that it's a very common thing for people to say that the Bible is filled with contradictions. And often this is...

People think this in particular when they look at the Gospels. And I shared one particular way to look at it. And I want to share a bit of a different way to look at it this morning. Yesterday I was watching online a lecture that had been given about seven years ago on C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien.

[ 1 : 23 ] And part of the lecture was to... The person giving the lecture wanted to summarize basically key themes in the life of... In the writings of C.S. Lewis. And he wanted to summarize the key themes of the writings of J.R.R. Tolkien.

And then he was going to sort of compare and contrast them a little bit. Now, one of the things about that particular lecture, which he said, was that there's lots of different ways to summarize some of the themes in C.S. Lewis's writings.

And, you know, partly it would be whether you wanted to have seven themes or nine themes or two themes or one theme. But there's different sort of ways to put all the things together if you're a communicator. You're trying to communicate all the books, all the things that C.S. Lewis wrote in his fiction, especially in his fiction, but also in his other writings.

There'd be different ways to summarize them. And I mention this because if you read the four different Gospels, you'll see that there's different ways that Jesus...

That each of the writers try to have a time early on in the book where they summarize or have Jesus summarize how he's... what it is that he's going to be saying and what he is that he's going to be doing. And they all look a little bit different.

[ 2 : 33 ] But that doesn't really matter because just as in this particular lecture that three different C.S. Lewis scholars could get up and summarize his writings and sort of put them together in a bit of a different way to help communicate it.

Like as long as one of the Gospels summaries isn't God hates you and another one is that God loves you, well then that's fine. That would be a big contradiction.

We'd really have to deal with it. If one summary of Jesus' teaching was you should eat as much as you want, drink as much as you want because tomorrow you're going to die and your life is meaningless, and another summary is completely different, then that would be a problem.

But if one person wants to summarize it with more a bit of a, you know, very, very short or others a bit longer, that's just... I mean, it might very well have been that many, many times throughout Jesus' ministry he would try to summarize to his disciples different ways for them to understand things.

For instance, in John's Gospel it seems as if a lot of the summary of Jesus' teaching is around the theme of light and around the theme of life. And if you go look throughout John's Gospel, all that keeps coming up.

[ 3 : 38 ] It's just sort of the way that Jesus sometimes talked. Today we're going to look at one of the ways that Jesus summarizes his message, or outlines his message.

So if you turn in your Bibles to Mark chapter 1, first of all we'll look at the summary, and then we'll look at sort of the first Jesus story, where Jesus... I guess we've already looked at one with the baptism and the temptation, but the story that comes immediately after it.

And here's how it goes. We'll just read through it so it's familiar to you before we try to unpack it a bit. Now after this, John... Verse 14. Now after this...

After John was... Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the Gospel of God. And just sort of pause there for a second, just so you sort of understand what's going on.

There's two primary Johns that are mentioned in the New Testament.

And one of the things is that in the Gospels often they'll just use John, John, John, John, John, all the way through. And you need to know the context to try to figure out which one of the two it's talking about.

[ 4 : 40 ] Because in fact we have one John and then later on we have a different John it's talking about. This John is John the Baptist, who by the way, I didn't mention this last week, but historians know that John the Baptist actually existed.

Josephus, a Jewish historian, who was writing at roughly the time of the early church. He has a variety of stories about John the Baptist. So historians know there really was a true John the Baptist.

And in fact a lot of what is said in the Gospels is also said in this Jewish, non-Christian Jewish historian. So John the Baptist is arrested.

And later on there's going to be a time in Mark's Gospel it sort of goes back and looks retroactively at what happens to John the Baptist. But after John's arrested Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the Gospel of God.

Just another thing here, two other little things. The first one is going into Galilee. This doesn't sort of mean very much to us and we sort of have very, very fond, romantic Christian thoughts about Galilee.

[ 5 : 45 ] But if you wanted to become good to have you here. If you wanted to become famous so what's going on when he says Galilee? What you need to do is put yourself in the... Because this is very important.

It reveals a lot about Jesus. If you met somebody at church and they said, by the way, I really think I'm going to be like the next... I'm going to be the next Dwayne Johnson.

I'm going to be the next The Rock. Or I'm going to be, you know, the next Tom Cruise or something like that. I think I really have a future in movies. And you say, well, I mean, you might think that's sort of a weird thing to say.

But then if they say, and so I've decided I'm going to move to South Porcupine to pursue my career. And you'd go, what? Like nobody goes to South Porcupine if they want to be a famous Hollywood actor.

You'd say, well, they should be moving to L.A. or New York City or maybe Toronto or Vancouver, but not South Porcupine. Galilee is an unimportant area.

[ 6 : 52 ] It's a completely and utterly unimportant area. It's not where you go if you want to become famous. It's not where you go if you want to make an impact. I mean, really, if God wanted to make a big impact, you'd say he should have sent somebody to Rome.

If not Rome, maybe Alexandria or maybe Ephesus. And if not one of those places, at least it should be Jerusalem, but not Galilee. That's the sticks. That's the South Porcupine, which I think is a suburb of Sudbury, by the way.

So in case you're wondering where it is. So that's a very significant thing. Here we have that the gospel opens with Jesus as the Son of God, that all of the Old Testament is being fulfilled.

And then you see when we're going to get talking about Jesus' teaching and ministry that he's not going to Jerusalem, he's not going to Rome, he's not going to Alexandria, he goes to Galilee, which is a mixed area of Jewish and non-Jewish people, and it's definitely not a very important place.

So once again, you look at it, it says, after John the Baptist was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God. And what that means is that there's, we'll unpack it more in a moment, that God has good news.

[ 8 : 05 ] The source of the good news is God. And this is what Jesus says, verse 15, and saying, the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the gospel.

And we're going to circle back in a moment, but it's a very, very sort of a, like, if you're studying the gospel for yourself, one of the things that you can ask yourself all the time is, how is this particular story showing that the time is fulfilled, or does it show repentance, or does it show something about the kingdom of God, or does it show something about the gospel, or about what it means to believe. But Jesus here gives a bit of a simple outline of how you understand the rest of the book. How, in a sense, Mark has put it in, the words of Jesus to help you understand the rest of the book.

And just one thing before we move on from that is that the word time is very significant. The Greek, which is what this is written in, there are two principal words that are used for time.

One is chronos, and one is kairos. I'm probably not pronouncing them correctly. And chronos means one dang thing after another. It's like a lot of your work days.

[ 9 : 25 ] You know, it starts with this, then it does this, then you do this, then you do this, then you do this, then you do this, then you do this, then you do this, then you can unplug, and time is your own. It's just chronos. It's one thing after another.

The other word, kairos, isn't the same at all. It talks about time being significant. It talks about significant time, time that in a sense is thick with meaning, with purpose.

Like, if you think about it, in our culture, there's this constant struggle at a high end of philosophy of seriousness is this understanding that basically all there is is chronos.

There's just one thing after another, after another, after another. But at a more popular level, there is this sense that there must be some type of meaning to life. There must be some sense or purpose to life.

We are encouraged to try to find some meaning or make our lives more meaningful. And this is sort of embedded in the very, very language of the text. And what it's saying is that the kairos is fulfilled.

[ 10 : 28 ] Now, this also is important in another way. And this has to do with trying to understand how the different Gospels can put together. One of the things that you might not notice when you read the Gospels is that there's actually very few time markers.

You know how in the newspapers sometimes there may be a terrorist attack or some other big event that goes on. And so they talk about it but then maybe they'll have somebody who gives you a little bit of a timeline for it.

That at this time this happened sometimes with a map. You know, they were here at this moment then they were here, here, here, here. And there's a brief description so you can get a bit of a sense of what happened one thing after another.

And that in a sense is all kronos. They're all trying to get the timeline right. What happened, then what happened, then what happened, then what happened, then what happened. But one of the things about the Gospels is that they're not very interested in kronos.

They're interested in kairos. They're interested in meaning and significance. And so one of the things then is that a lot of times, like if you look at it, look again at how it goes from verse 15 to verse 16.

[ 11 : 41 ] In verse 15 it says the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the Gospel. Then the very next verse is passing alongside the Sea of Galilee. Well, so some of you say, and by the way, if you read academic commentaries, they pull their hair out at this type of stuff because it's as if a lot of academics in the modern academy, when they write things, they're addicted to kronos.

They're addicted to trying to figure out when one thing happens and then another thing and then another thing and then another thing. They love that. And so they'd say to themselves, well, is Mark saying that this happened like immediately after this or did it happen like six months later or three months later?

And the different Gospels will sometimes put some of these things in different places and people assume that because it goes from one thing to the next in the story that Mark is trying to write something from the perspective of kronos, of one thing happening after another.

But they're not really interested in that as much. They're interested in meaning. They're interested in significance. Like, if you went back in time, they'd probably say, oh yeah, okay, well, sure.

And then, you know, you'd get Peter and James and Andrew and John and they could all sit together and say, no, no, that happened on this date and then that and that. They could tell you

that. They're not trying to mess with your head. But even the way it begins is we're interested in meaning.

[13:04] And so sometimes what they do is they connect different stories that aren't necessarily one thing after another in time and then they go to another few things but they're trying to show us how things are linked in terms of you getting a sense.

Here's another way to explain it. Those of you who like reading mystery novels where there's a murder, one of the things that happens in a mystery novel when there's a murder, so, you know, they have the dead body and some of the detectives and the police officers sort of examining the body and the crime scene and others go and start trying to figure out a little bit about who the person was.

And that's actually literally what they're doing. They're trying to figure out who is this person. And so often what happens in that part of the novel or that part of the movie is they start asking questions because they want to get a feel of who the person is, right?

Who is this woman whose body we've just found who's been murdered because we want to find the murderer? And so they just start to ask a little bit, well, tell us about the person. You know, like, does she have a boyfriend?

Does she work out? Like, you know, what's her job? How does she spend her time? Like, what's she like as a person? But then at some point in time they start to say, oh, okay, now, okay, that's interesting.

[14:21] So she's like this and she's like this, like this. Okay, but what about the chronos? And then all of a sudden they go in and they try to get the little time details right. But first what they want to do is they want to get a sense of the person. And that's what Mark, that's what all of the apostles, all of the gospel writers are doing.

They're trying to give you a sense of the person and the meaning and significance of what's going on. So, back to verse 15, the time is fulfilled, kairos.

There really is, there is in fact the possibility, you know, we all know that people can ruin their lives. And some of us here today might actually be sort of sitting here and on one level amidst the rubble of their lives. I remember when I was training to be a minister, there was a, one of the people I had to talk with was a person who was in a drug rehabilitation program, a halfway house.

And it's always sort of struck me. It's been one of those conversations that stuck with me for all of these years, all of these decades. And he'd lived his entire life in such a way that, you know, because of his addiction he'd stolen from family, stolen from friends, lied to family, lied to friends, lied to people who tried to help him.

[15:40] Just, he had made his life a complete and utter ruin. And he said, it's, you don't know what it's like when you have free time and you leave the house and you come to a corner and it makes absolutely no difference to you or anybody else whether you turn left or right.

You have nowhere to go, no one to see, nothing to do. So the Bible here isn't saying that each individual is guaranteed that their life has meaning.

It is possible to miss out on the meaning of life. It's possible that your life is a tragedy. But what the Bible is saying with this word kairos is that in fact there is a meaning that does exist and part of the good news is that whatever it is that's gone on in your life and you might, from a human point of view, your life might be in fact just rubbles and shards and ruins of what you've made of it.

But that there is good news that in Jesus, no matter what has gone on in your life, that your life can begin again in a sense, that there can be meaning and purpose in your life.

I've jumped way ahead. The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is hand. Repent and believe in the gospel. Now we have the very first story that Mark chooses to put right after it.

[17:07] He says, Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, Jesus saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting it in into the sea for they were fishermen. Now just for those of you who aren't that familiar with the Bible, Simon is later on renamed and Jesus gives him a new name and that new name is Peter.

So most people are familiar with the apostle Peter if they're a bit familiar with the gospel story. And so this person, Simon, who will be renamed as Peter later on, he's the same one if you go and you look in your Bibles and you see 1 and 2 Peter, he's the one who wrote that.

And in fact, in much of the early church it was believed that when you're reading Mark's gospel, you're really reading Peter's gospel. that Mark was Peter's friend, his young confidant, his young

disciple, and that Mark hung around with Peter and basically when you're reading Mark's gospel, you're reading Peter's gospel.

So in some ways, Peter puts himself in the story right here and Andrew's his brother. And Jesus said, verse 17, Jesus says to them, follow me and I will make you become fishers of men and women.

And this has evangelistic overtones and that's what my blog is about. I'm not going to say anything about it in my sermon, but if you're curious about that, you can read the blog that I wrote this week. And immediately they left their nets and followed him.

[18:30] So you just notice that bit. Jesus comes up to them. He says, follow me and I will make you become fishers of men and women. The heart of it is to follow me. And immediately, verse 18, they left their nets and followed him.

And going on a little farther, he saw James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. Now just pause here for a second. There's three different James in the New Testament.

It's easy to get them confused. This James is the first of the twelve apostles. Well, the first apostle of the twelve apostles to die, of course, is Judas, who betrays Jesus and commits suicide.

But the first of the twelve apostles who die as a martyr, they die maintaining saying that Jesus had died, was buried, that the body was gone, that they didn't steal the body, that nobody stole the body, and that they saw Jesus risen from the dead.

And the very, very first one to die for that is this James who's mentioned here. After the death and resurrection of Jesus, James is to become one of the most important people in the Jerusalem church, and he becomes the first of the apostles to be martyred.

[19:45] And going on a little, verse 19 again, going on a little further, he saw James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. And John is the same one who wrote the gospel of John, first and second and third John, and the book of Revelation.

And by most people's understanding, he was the only one of the eleven non-betraying apostles who didn't die a martyr's death.

So it's very interesting, his brother is the first to die a martyr's death, and John is the only one who didn't die a martyr's death, but he died in exile. In a sense, he was sent to the equivalent of Australia back in those days, how the British Empire used to send some of their criminals to Australia.

He died in that case, once again, maintaining who Jesus was. Verse 20, and immediately he called them and they left their net, they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.

If you, Claire, could switch back up to verse 15. Here it is, the summary, the outline of Jesus' teaching. The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand.

[20:58] Repent and believe in the gospel. So we'll look at it a little bit from the backwards going, from the end going to the beginning. gospel just means good news.

It was a common word in the ancient world. It was often used to announce the birth of a new, or that a new emperor had taken a throne, or that some, Rome had won some mighty victory, and it would be, there would be a herald who would go out and proclaim to everyone this particular good news. And that's what this word means. And this actually is one of those things that we can't remember enough that it says good news. It doesn't say good advice, it doesn't say good rituals, it doesn't say good therapy, it doesn't say good, you know, good yoga, like, good diet, like, it doesn't, it's not rules, it's what, it's the very thing, one of the very things that makes Christianity different from all other religions, is that all other religions, these are the rituals you need to follow, these are the practices you need to follow, this is the, these, this is the yoga that you need to follow, this is the diet you need to follow, this is the dress that you need to have, and that's, in a sense, you know, Buddhism will say something different than, different types of Buddhism will say different things and will be a little bit different from Hinduism, which will be a little bit different from Islam, which will be different from Judaism, and which will be different to different ways that Christians have tried to turn the gospel as if it's not about news but about rules, and the advice and the commands and the therapies and all will all be very, very different, but they all have this pattern of, they're saying these are the things that you need to do, you need to pray this way, you need to dress this way, you need to spend your time this way, you need to spend your money this way, you need to do this, and if you do these things, then God will accept you, you need to do these things if you're going to have the

right type of kids, you're going to have the right type of marriage, you're going to have the right type of job, like even in our own society.

Our society might say that they've rejected religion and spirituality, but what they've rejected is just they might have rejected the triune God, but they're completely and utterly addicted to advice and to rules.

Wear your mask. Wear your mask this particular way. Get your vaccines. This is how you invest this way if you want to make a lot of money. Listen to my advice about how to have a better marriage.

[ 23 : 29 ] Listen to my advice about how to have a less stress-free life. We're completely and utterly surrounded all of the time by people telling us what to do. And frankly, there's different times in our life when we're really, you know, people and the diet's really working and the weight's going off, and you say, whoa, and they like it.

But at some point in time, doesn't it just get tired? Don't you just get tired? I mean, that's what happens to everybody.

They cheat or they just give up. You see somebody and they've lost the pounds and they're really happy about it. And then either one of two types of things.

I was just talking to a fellow that, I just had a long talk with a fellow the other day, and he had a daughter who was sort of quite overweight, and then she lost a lot of weight.

She really got down on diets and on positive thinking and exercise. She lost a ton of weight.

[ 24 : 33 ] But now she lives in terror that she's going to fall off of that and put the weight on. Like she literally lives in deep fear of it.

She literally is struggling regularly with bulimia. I don't know if I pronounced that correctly. Because she gives up. She just gets so tired and she just wants to eat.

And then she feels terrified that she's going to put the weight on. And so she makes herself throw up. And with that, all of the feelings of despair, and in some cases it goes along with cutting to numb the pain.

And so in a world which is addicted to having people tell you what to do, Jesus shows up and says, I have news for you.

And how you have to understand this news, years ago when my kids were all young, I was never very good at telling my kids stories, but occasionally they wanted me to tell them a story that I would make up out of my own head.

[ 25 : 45 ] And usually it would just be, I would take some movie theme or some other type of thing and I'd plagiarize it terribly and put their names into it or something like that. Maybe as an animal or maybe as a person.

And so what I would do is, okay, I'll tell you a story, I'll tell you a story. But sometimes what I would do is I would tell you, I would tell them a Bible story just from my memory. And every time I did that, I'd always tell them, okay, I'm telling you a true story.

This is a true story. All the other stories I'd tell you weren't true. This is a true story. And then I would tell them a story about, you know, whatever, something in the New Testament, something about Jesus. So what is going on here is that, remember Mark, most of the early church thought that when you're reading Mark, you're hearing Peter speak.

And Peter died a martyr's death, maintaining the truth of what he said. And Matthew, who wrote the Gospel of Matthew, he died a martyr's death because he maintained that what he'd written was true.

And it would be a lie if he said that it was wrong. And he died because this was true. And so what Mark has Jesus saying is, I want to tell you good news.

[ 27 : 05 ] And part of the good news is that it's not more advice. It's not more therapy. It's not more rituals. It's not putting more heavy burdens on you. Because you see, that's the problem with advice, isn't it?

The advice doesn't feel very heavy when you're very good at following it. But when you start to mess up in following, it just feels heavier and heavier and heavier. And it makes you feel more and more guilty and more ashamed and more like a failure.

Because somehow or another, either you did it and it wasn't working, or you just got tired of it, or you worry that you'll stop doing it.

And then you'd be like that dad who was telling me about his daughter who lost the weight and now she's terrified of putting the weight back on again. and it's just messing up her life.

And so Jesus says, the good news is about me. And the good news is that in a world where you have to justify yourself, you have to make your family proud, you have to make your mom and dad proud by your accomplishments, you have to make yourself proud, you have to have friends, and you have to have the money, and you have to have whatever it is that our culture, you know, you have to follow the right rituals, you have to do all of this.

[ 28 : 31 ] And in a world that is always telling you of all of the things you have to do, I have this profound good news for you, is that I came to die for you because I love you.

And that, that's, you see, that's, that's the good news, is that you can't justify yourself, you can't be good enough for a holy God.

Even the attempt to be good enough for a holy God, I mean, often what eats people up is that inside themselves they know that that's not true. that they, they're very good at putting on a good face, and they're very good at, at looking the part, but at night they can't sleep.

And they're maybe bolstering the way they want to appear to the world with, with drugs or some other type of thing to numb. And, and they, they worry that they're going to get caught out.

They, they worry that people will figure out they don't belong. that they're not really like that if you saw beneath the mask and you saw it beneath the face and you saw it beneath the facade, that, that inside there you'd see that there's this stuff just boiling and rumbling and cracking and falling apart and you're desperately trying to hold it together.

[ 30 : 01 ] either, either that or you, you just become so completely and utterly dead to all of those things within yourself, just so completely narcissistic and filled with pride.

But, but when you do that it, it means you can't love people. It, it means you can't just be vulnerable and let another person into your life and, and if, if you just always are just holding together and keeping that pride to, to keep your life together then, I mean, that never works well with loving another person because you end up feeling indifferent to them and, or you're not really sensing what's going on in them because you're just always looking into yourself to try to hold yourself together and it, it seems as if there's just these two different things and, and neither of them really work, they all work in the short run but they don't work in the long run that either, either you're trying to numb and you're worried about people actually piercing into you and getting to know who you really are and realizing that you're not as successful, you're not as kind, you're not as nice, you're not as gentle or, or else you hold on to all that stuff with pride but then that makes you numb to other people so why is it that all you can do is either numb yourself or numb yourself with other people and that's life and in a life like that

Jesus comes and says I have good news, I know every single thing about you, I know everything about you, this is why it's so significant that it's the son of God, I, I, I'm closer to you than your very breath, I, I know the dreams you have at night that you don't remember when you wake up, I know the nightmares that you have, I know how many fronts and faces that you have and I know how you can shift from one front to another front to another front to another front, I know your secret drinking, I know your cutting, I know your bulimia, I know, I know all of that about you, I know every single thing about you and knowing every single thing about you, I've never stopped loving you, I mean the one thing we can truly say, not just because it's therapeutic moral, moralism, is that for every human being there has never been a time in their life that they have been unloved by the triune God,

I mean they, they might, you might go to your grave not knowing, not wanting that to be true or ignoring it or just throwing it away but in fact, Jesus knew every single thing about you and he knows every single thing about your future and yet knowing all of those things, his response was, I will go to them.

God, the son of God, knowing every single thing about you and seeing everything there is about you, seeing the different ways you either use your pride to hold yourself together and use your masks or, and the ways you sort of either hold yourself together so perfectly that now you can't love because you're numb to other people and he sees everything about you and says, I will go to them, that's what he says, I will go to them and he comes to us and the news is that he sets aside his glory and his splendor and his prerogatives of God he takes into himself our human nature and as I talked about last week a little bit he identifies with us as human beings.

[ 33 : 27 ] He lives amongst us and knows what it's like on the inside as well about what it's like to be a human being and experiences the temptations that we experience only rather than succumbing to them and giving in to them he is able to withstand the temptation until the temptation

has lost all of its power that in a sense he knows the depth of your human experience as well as he knows the depth of your sin and who you really are down to the very very core of who you are deeper than you will ever know yourself until you die and appear before the face of God and he reveals it to you and knowing all of this he still loves you and the good news is that he loves you so much that he he dies in your place and that what you see upon his life is you're seeing the perfect life you're going to see in the different miracles you're going to see a man who can walk on water if a man could walk on water how could that man ever allow himself to die you're going to see

Jesus raise dead people to life and if Jesus is able to raise dead people to life then how could he ever die upon the cross and you're going to see Jesus be able to control the wind and the waves and you say to yourself if Jesus can control the wind and the waves how is it that he would ever die upon the cross and you're going to see Jesus have profound insight into human beings and you'd say to yourself if he has profound insight into human beings does that mean he has a profound insight into me but if that's the case why would he die for me you see because the whole gospel is going to continue to reveal who Jesus is and reveal who he is leaving it as the only way to understand why it is that he dies upon the cross is because he loves you and not the you that you like to put as a face but right underneath everything in terms of who you really are and the depths of who you are and the secrets of who you are not only the secrets that you're ashamed of but your secret glories and the secret longings and yearnings that he knows you and still he dies for you and in his death upon the cross what you see is that he is going to take your place it's as if he says George George if I was just to show everybody in this room all of the thoughts that went through your mind in the last week and the things that you've done and the things that you've said and your emotional responses to how you've reacted to things you've heard and if I was to put those all up in front of everyone they would wonder why you could still be a priest and the fact of the matter is I might be worse than a lot of you but he could do that for every single one of you and put it up on the screen and we would just be horrified there would be no crack too small for us to crawl into because we would never be able to look another person in the eye again ever again for the rest of our lives we would be so completely and utterly humiliated and Jesus says to me and to you you can't withstand that and so

George I'm going to offer you this exchange this is the news I'm going to offer you this exchange if you put your hand in mine if you hear me when I call you to follow me and you turn from all the things that you've been following and you turn to me and you believe this news that I will die for you and I will make you right with God and I will never leave you and I will never forsake you and I that I will take you into myself and take you into my person and I I will George I will I'll make this trade it's as if all of the things that you are and all of the things that you have done you take my hand George and when you take my hand it all all of that goes to me and all all of the punishment that people would think I deserve and all of the shame that they think I would have and I will take that all on me and I will die in your place and George not only will

I die in your place but when you put your hand in mine and I I take your hand not only is in a sense all of those secrets and all that shame does that get laid on me and I bear the consequences of that and if and that's why you see when if I if you were to know all of those things about me there'd be no crack too tiny for me to go into to hide from you and that's why later on in the Bible it will talk about how Jesus tastes all there is to taste of death he goes into that tiny crack for you in his death upon the cross but when you put your hand in Jesus this is the news I who have never sinned I who have enjoyed unbroken fellowship with the Father I who am the beloved son I the one that God the Father has just said with you I am well pleased I will take your sin and shame upon myself and me being the beloved that will clothe you that will stand for you

[ 39 : 07 ] I will take your place and you see that's the news that's the news that's the news of what Jesus who he is and what he's done and what he's accomplished that's the news and the news isn't just sort of news that you can now say well George that's alright George that's alright for you but the wonder of the gospel is and that's why the next story is so important and if you're either here and listening in or if you're here and listening in is that Jesus is calling you you see that's the there is no person so bad there is no person so broken there is no person so much a failure there is no person so filled with shame that Jesus doesn't love them and that

Jesus isn't calling you to follow him and be his disciple there's no one and that's the news listen to myself I'm not good enough to tell you that all I can do is tell you this is what Jesus says right here that's what gospel means it comes from God himself and so what does it mean it means you turn

repent doesn't mean necessarily feeling anything it just means you hear him call and rather than ignoring his voice ignoring his voice I know when I became a Christian it was as if I knew that Jesus was calling me and was calling me and calling me and I kept not wanting to hear him and I finally turned to him and believe doesn't necessarily believe as a person word just believe that Jesus is who he says he is and that he wants to do that for you and for me and that he justifies me he makes me right with

God he knows everything about and still he does it and for me to believe and trust that and put my hand in his and then I learned to follow him but I learned to follow him in the context of the fact that everything he knows everything he knows everything he has done everything he has done it all he knows the all about me and he has done the all for me and that when I trust him he I don't know everything about him but I trust him and as I follow him he makes he helps me to understand more of who he is and he helps me to understand more of who I am he helps me to follow him I just want to say one thing in closing for those of you who've grown up in Christian houses and don't know that there's been ever a specific time time and has nothing to do with there being a specific time some of us can tell you a time when there was a specific time some of you know the story the horse and his boy in the

Narnia Chronicles and in the book the horse and his boy there's a kid who knows he's going to be the heir or thinks he's going to be the heir and he knows from the very moment that he's born that he's going to be the heir and it's this other boy who grows up in a very servant type of situation and the servant situation has to come to a point in time when he understands that he's the son of the king but the boy who grows up as the son of the king always knows that he's the son of the king and just part of his struggle is learning out of life to learn to be the son of the king and you see the point of all of this is the good news is that every Christian parent's hope and prayer is that your child will never have a time that they don't know Jesus and want to follow him and you don't have to have a moment you just have to know what we do in church what we do around the

Lord's supper in a sense every Sunday when we gather what we're doing in a sense is renewing our commitment to Jesus not becoming Christians again but renewing when we have the Lord's supper in a sense what we're doing is it's it's as if we're remembering once again that Jesus died for me that Jesus rose for me he knows everything about and every Sunday when we have communion that's in a sense what we're doing we're saying Jesus some weeks I've had a good week some weeks I've had a really really really really really really bad week and I am so glad that you have forgiven me and that you're the one who's made me right with God but I come here and I receive from you and I once again say Jesus I will follow you it is worth it to follow you it is worth it to follow you no matter what people say no matter what our culture might say and

[ 44 : 33 ] I father you know how I might be afraid to let people know that I follow you but it is so worth it Jesus to follow you because you died on the cross for me I invite you to stand just bow our heads in prayer Jesus we give you thanks and praise that you are God the son of God we give you thanks and praise that you know every single thing about us from the moment of our conception to the moment of our death that you know us down to our very depths that you know everything there is to know about us and we give you thanks and praise that even though you know every single thing there is to know about us that still you love us and you loved us so much that you wanted to come and save us and rescue us and that you rescued us at great cost to yourself we give you thanks and praise that you are willing to in a sense make a trade exchange with me and each person here that all of our wrong and all of our rubble and all of our shame and all of who we are that you are willing to take that upon yourself and bear the consequences of it for us that you would offer to clothe us with your status as being beloved beloved of the father and father we know that we are worthy of that we know that this is just sheer unmerited grace love mercy and goodness that you would do something like that for us and we give you thanks and praise for the news that that is who you are that that is what you've done and that you've done it for ordinary people like us and so father we thank you for this and once again as we gather on a

Sunday and gather to remember Jesus' death upon the cross we recommit to you father we recommit to Jesus he is our savior he is my savior he is my lord and once again I commit myself to him I commit myself to you Jesus lead me and guide me and I will follow you and we will follow you and I ask this in the name of Jesus God's son and our savior and all God's people said amen