

Teachers

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Date: 06 September 2026

Preacher: James Chandler

[0:00] Thank you.

Thank you.

I've spent a week preparing for, without any prompting polls, picked the whole passage. We've read that to the church. I think when you're preparing to speak, you worry about whether what you've got in mind is right.

Sometimes you just get a little reminder right at the back of heaven. Perhaps it is exactly what God has got planned. So, yeah, I know something to do this morning. I don't know about you, but it's been a week of change this week.

See, we've gone from this picture to this picture. Being 62 might be scary. Being a dad of a girl who's out of high school is perhaps even scarier.

[1:42] Yeah, we've been through lots of changes. Maybe we've got a new door. It's a great door. We've also had this change as well. Look, and don't be fooled by this picture.

Max and Isaac have gone back to their classrooms too. So, I mean, is that high school? Max and Isaac are now back at school. And the weather's changed as Paul's alluded to. The heat wave's gone and the hottest summer I've ever passed.

And I guess autumn and winter feel like they are on the way, don't they? And looking at that picture, there's a bit of a week in the back there. We've survived the six-week holidays and the boys are back at school.

Someone said to me this week at work, September always feels like it. It's early for me. And I think that's really true, isn't it? As we've spoken about this morning, the weather changes.

We've gone back to the holidays. We have new routines. We have new school years. We have new teachers. I asked Isaac yesterday. I said to Isaac, how's this general?

[2:49] How's the first week at school come? And what's the new teacher like? And Isaac said, she's all right. She doesn't cure that guess.

That was his glowing reference. She's all right. She does her job, I guess. And then he said, she's not as good as Miss Addison.

She's teaching a lesson. And that really got me thinking after that picture and what I said about great teachers and the important parts of our lives that great teachers can be.

They can teach us lessons we carry forever. They can inspire us. They can challenge us. They can nurture us. And they can prepare us.

I guess teachers can be in many forms, don't they? We've got mums. We've got dads. We've got school teachers.

[3:47] We've got grandparents. We've got sports coaches. We've got people at church. I'm sure every single one of you out there this morning can think of a teacher who has shaped you.

Someone who's taught you something or seen something in you that you didn't necessarily see in yourselves. Now I've got a little video just to illustrate this.

It's completely, I guess, unrelated to my message. Some of you might have seen this before, James, if you will, but I'm in a second. The background here is Ian Wright is a famous footballer. He played for Arsenal. He played for England in the 1990s. Reading a little bit about Ian Wright as I've been watching this video, and this is, I guess, fed into my message, he talks about how he had a really, really tough opportunity.

He talks about having, in his words, an absent father, an abusive stepfather, and living in poverty as a black boy in a tough part of central London.

[4:57] And then this video, which James is going to put on now, if you don't mind, is about a teacher who changed everything for him, and this is him meeting the teacher again.

James is going to put on. James is going to put on.

James is going to put on.

I'm so, um, too old for the time. You know, the quarterback had me. It's not my relationship. What's good? What's up? Come on, baby. Come on, baby. You know, now I'm here. I'm here. I'm here.

[6:36] I'm here.

Well, that was a really interesting video of just how important a teacher can be and how much a teacher can mean to us. Ian Wright, as I've read, I've watched that.

He's got my quotes. He says, looking back, I realised how much of a positive impact that man had on my life. So I guess you see his reaction there. He said, it's amazing what a teacher can do to somebody in their life.

One man, one teacher changed the direction of his whole life. And I guess that's got me thinking this week.

I've been about a teacher. A great teacher who's changed the direction of my life. A teacher who can inspire us today. A teacher whose impact has been felt across thousands of years.

[7:59] And billions. Genuinely billions of lives. You see, Jesus' public ministry only lasted for around three years. He taught in parables, as we spoke about before.

Simple stories with a deeper meaning. Stories only really understood fully by those who leaned in and asked questions and wanted more.

Which is a challenge for us this morning, isn't it? But Jesus also taught with really bold, big, clear statements. Direct commands and life-shaking truths.

And as I've been preparing for this morning, I've been thinking about what lessons does Jesus give us through the Bible. What lessons does he want to teach us perhaps this morning?

And I've not really focused on a specific passage in the Bible. These are big teachings, I guess, that span the whole of the Gospels. And whether that's too big or not, we'll see.

[9:05] Really big idea. A really simple idea. Is that Jesus teaches us to love. He teaches us, as we've spoken about already, to love God fully and love other people deeply.

Jesus talks about love as his master teaching. He actually calls it his greatest commandment.

So what did Jesus have to say about love? And these are Jesus' words, because they're quite a lot better than my words. He said you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.

This is the first and greatest commandment. He said a second is equally important.

Love your neighbour as yourself. He also says in John chapter 15, what do you look like, Matt?

Love each other in the same way as I have loved you.

[10:27] And he goes on to say, Matthew, I say love your enemies. You see, Jesus teaches us to love everyone.

Jesus' teaching is really simple, and I'm going to strip some words away from that to show you just how simple it is. Because if I press this button and take some words away, Jesus teaches us to love the Lord your God, love your neighbour, love each other, and love your enemies.

And I think that means love everyone. And as I've been preparing, why should we love like this?

It's because of this verse. But he also said, for God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only son so that everyone, if he believes in him, will not perish, but have eternal life.

You see, we should love because he first loved us. So Jesus teaches us to love, but he also teaches us about the kingdom of God.

[11:44] As we've already spoken about this morning. Jesus teaches and talks about the kingdom of God more than any other topic.

And it comes with a really, really simple message, which we've spoken about and read as a church this morning. The simple message is seek the kingdom of God above all else.

You see, seeking the kingdom of God is really, really simple at heart. But it's not always easy to do, is it? It's about living a God-centred life under God's rule, by God's values, with God's priorities at the centre of everything you do.

That means justice instead of selfishness. It means mercy instead of revenge. It means humility instead of pride. It means trust instead of anxiety.

It means love instead of hate. By doing this, we move closer to God step by step and show others exactly how his kingdom looks like.

[13:01] To teach about the kingdom of God, Jesus used a really simple parable. I'm going to show this on screen in a second. The cultural relevance, I guess, that people should be aware of before I show those passages.

At the time Jesus was speaking, there weren't banks. The homes were pretty easy to break into. So if you had something valuable, it was really, really common to bury it under ground.

I guess they also had the Roman rule, there were the problem taken in the ground as well. So burying things under ground was really common. And if you found some treasure in a field, or someone else's, you weren't legally allowed to take it.

But by buying the field, you legally owned the field, but the treasure sank, and you became a rightful owner. And a treasure found. Again, these are Jesus' words around the mind.

He says, The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure that a man discovered hidden in the field. In his excitement, he did it again, and sold everything he owned to get enough money to borrow the field.

[14:10] There's a whole message that we've heard about that for us. And I'm not going to try and do that. There are three really quick points on that.

One, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, is discovered, not earned. It says that in the second line. The kingdom of heaven is discovered, not earned.

The kingdom is often hidden. It isn't immediately obvious to everyone, is it? Its true value is only really recognized by those who seek it, but it's not. It's discovered, not earned.

The man sells everything he's got to buy the field that he knows the treasure's in. But he does that in excitement. Notice that. He gives up everything he has joyfully, not begrudgingly, because he knows that he's gaining something that is infinite, more valuable, and more valuable than anything else he has.

The other bit, really quickly, I want to try out of that passage, or this passage, it's a brilliant one. The decision is moved between the man, doesn't it?

[15:18] The man sees the real value of the treasure, and he has a decision what he does about it. And he decides to immediately change the course of his life, and sell everything he has, because if he sells, the treasure's built, and order everything else, he willingly gives up everything to gain the treasure.

I guess the question for us is, would we willingly give up everything we have to gain the kingdom of God? Because I think that's a real challenge this morning. So what I alluded to, the kingdom of God, I've studied this, a little bit, because at one point, I was going to talk about it.

The kingdom of God is quite a big subject for the Bible. As I say, Jesus teaches on the more than anything else. I think the kingdom of God is not just the same sermon. There's probably a whole series that we could do about the kingdom of God, and the other thing that Jesus teaches about it. So what do I want you to remember this morning? I want you to remember that the kingdom of God is discovered. We should happily and excite people of everything we have to gain the gift.

And we each have a decision like the man, so whether we are willing to do that. But remember the passage of Paul that took us through this morning as a church.

[16:48] The most important message Jesus teaches is the kingdom of God. Seek the kingdom of God above all else. Not just seek the kingdom of God.

Seek the kingdom of God above all else. So Jesus, this is my last point in the clip today. Jesus teaches us to love. He teaches us to seek the kingdom of God above all else.

And he teaches throughout the Bible about the importance of discipleship. We talk about the disciples, and I must think about the disciples as the people in the Bible.

But the deep-shoulding definition of a disciple is simply a person who believes in the ideas of a leader and tries to live according to the cross.

A person who believes in the ideas of a leader and tries to live according to the cross. Throughout the Bible, Jesus has a really cleaner core idea about discipleship. He tells them we shouldn't just believe in it, but we should imitate it.

[17:50] Jesus repeatedly calls people to follow him, to learn, obey, and be transformed. Not admire him, not agree with him, follow him.

Again, Jesus' words on this are very simple and far more powerful than anything that I could talk about. He says, you must turn from the selfish ways, take up your cross, and be follow him.

In John, chapter 13, Jesus suggests which was you feeding his disciples. The job of the lowest servant in the house. He says, I have given you an example to follow.

Do as I have done to you. The message is really clear, I think. Don't just listen to what I'm saying. Do what I do.

And then he goes on to say, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to remain all the commands I have given.

[19:10] Another really simple but powerful lesson that Jesus teaches the importance of discipleship. And in the context of being a Jesus follower, he has been surrendering your old life serving others and living like Jesus and helping others to follow him too.

You see, just like Ian Wright in the video about Mr. Kiddin, and just like each and all of you this morning, we're invited this morning to learn from Jesus, the great teacher.

A teacher who teaches us to love, to seek the kingdom of God above all else, to follow his example, and to help others follow him too.

Four really simple, powerful messages. great teachers. In closing, I want to leave you with absolutely no doubt this morning, great teachers can change the directions of lives through the lessons they teach.

And hopefully, in a few short minutes, you've picked up that Jesus was definitely a great teacher.

But don't miss this, he was so much more than just a teacher.

[20:49] You see, he went to the cross as well as a sinless man, beaten, punished, tortured for everything that you and I have ever done wrong.

You see, the teacher didn't just explain love, he demonstrated it. The teacher didn't just talk about the kingdom of God.

He opened the door to it. The teacher didn't just call us to follow, he carried our sins that we can follow.

The teacher teacher didn't just give lessons, he gave his life. And that is how Jesus changes the direction of our lives.

Not through words alone, but through his ultimate sacrifice on that cross. He didn't just teach the way, he made the way.

[22:00] Lord, we just come before you and thank you that we can meet here. Open your word and take simple lessons from the Bible that we can learn about.

Lord, we thank you that 2,000 years later, more than 2,000 years later, the lessons that you taught still as relevant today as they were at that time.

Lord, we've spoken really simply this morning about the four things that you want from us. And

Lord, we just thank you for everything that you did on that cross.

It's beyond our comprehension, just the pain and the suffering that you took for each and everything that we do. Lord, as we go into this week, help us to love, help us to seek the kingdom of God for all else.

Help us to follow you and help us, help others to follow you too. Ask all these things in Jesus' name.

[23:17] Amen.