

An Encouraging Promise

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 23 June 2019

Preacher: Iain T. Campbell

- [0 : 0 0] Now turning back to the chapter that we read, chapter 6 in the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to St. John. And we'll look this morning at verse 37 in that chapter.
- Verse 37. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.
- All right. And we'll look first at why we might not come. Secondly, we will look at why we should come.
- And thirdly, we will look at an encouraging promise. An encouraging promise. And firstly, at why we might not come.
- We can all give a reasons why we ought not to come to Jesus.
- [1 : 1 3] And Jesus himself, Jesus himself in the parable of the Great Supper, gives us a list of excuses that these people who were invited used in order that they would not come to the feast.
- The feast was prepared. They could be guaranteed that the best of food would be on the table. They had to pay nothing.
- The feast was free. But they excused themselves one by one. The first one said, I have bought a piece of land.
- I have got to go and see it. The second one, I have bought five oxen. I have to test them. Prove them. See what they are like.
- See if they are fit. And up to the task. And the third one said, I have just got married. Now the reason that Jesus brings these excuses before us is to reveal to us the ridiculousness of these excuses when you compare them to the offer that was on the table.
- [2 : 3 6] And you are here this morning. And you are being invited by Jesus to come.
- Come to me. And what is on offer? What is he offering to you? He is offering to you forgiveness of sin.
- And as we were reading in the passage, he is offering to you eternal life. And whatever excuses you make up for not coming to him, they will simply look ridiculous and sound ridiculous when you compare them to the offer that is on the table.
- That is on the table. And you see, when people were acquainted, when people were acquainted and familiar with the word of God, their parents, their grandparents, in that generation, most of them were acquainted with the word of God and what used to be the standard excuse used during that generation when they were familiar with the word, the standard excuse that was used was, I am too great a sinner.
- He will not accept me. But now we come into today where we are not so familiar with the word of God.
- [4 : 1 8] We aren't as familiar as our parents, our grandparents were with the word and what is the standard excuse today?
- I am a good person. I do not need Jesus. In other words, Jesus on his cross is for the dregs of humanity those who are thoroughly bad.

It is for thoroughly bad people, for the dregs of humanity, for murderers, thieves, rapists, and so on.

Immoral people. It is not for me. It is not for me. I am not like them.

I have done nothing wrong. Therefore, you can say that you have kept the world, the law of God perfectly.

[5 : 36] You haven't broken the law of God in one part. And you are as perfect according to yourself as Christ himself is.

as Christ himself is. But the amazing thing is this, that if I ask you, are you a sinner?

your answer will probably be yes. I am aware of an imperfection or two in my life.

but I am not a bad sinner. I am not a bad sinner.

You will find millions of sinners in this world, to God. Far worse than I am. Far worse than I am.

[6 : 42] Well, the question is this, do you love God with all of your heart, with all of your mind, with all of your soul, and with all of your strength?

and do you love your neighbor perfectly as you love yourself? For as Jesus reveals on these two commandments, the law hangs.

On these two commandments, the law hangs. Is it not very often that it is those who are closer to us within the family circle or close friends?

Is it not very often these people that we hurt the most? The corruption, the deceit, the greed, the lust for power and so on that we see in our news bulletins that we see played out in our news bulletins, we find these very same things being played out within the family unit, within the community and within our workplaces every day of our lives.

Every day of our lives. Husbands are cruel to their wives. Wives are cruel to their husbands.

[8 : 25] And it does not have to take the form of physical violence although at times we are afraid to say that that is what it is.

But it can take the form of psychological bullying which is just as bad. Parents can psychologically bully their children.

Teachers can psychologically bully their pupils. Employers can psychologically bully their employees. And employees can psychologically bully other employees.

And so on. How often have you and I contrived to assassinate one of her neighbours' characters or one of her workmates' characters behind their backs taking delight in doing so.

Taking delight in doing so. Well, the family unit, the community and the workplace are all very often places of division and places of grey tension.

[9 : 58] Places where you will find grey tension. And very often it is these very places family unit, the community and the workplace that reveal to me and you our imperfections in a way that is not at all comfortable.

In a way that is not at all comfortable. We are all, what does that reveal to each and every one of us? It reveals this to us that we are all without exception sinners in need of salvation.

Sinners in need of salvation. And here you are with the Lord inviting you to come to himself.

To come to him as the answer to your problem. which brings us to the second thing that we have here. Why should we come?

Why should we come? Well, the corruption, the deceit, the greed, the lust for power and everything else that we see brought before us on our news bulletins every evening.

[11 : 18] all that, all of that is revealing to us our own hearts. And when the news brings before me and you somebody who has committed some horrible crime, our first reaction should be there but by the grace so God go I.

What is revealed to me and you on our news bulletins every day is the awfulness of the sin of the human heart and the catastrophe that it has brought about within the world in which we live.

And when you and I put the question to ourselves what is wrong with this world? What is wrong with our world? What has gone wrong with our world? Our stock answer always should be I am.

I am the problem. It's not going to solve the world's problems but at least we're acknowledging that we're problem causers very often more than problem solvers.

And the next question that one can pose is why should I come? And I can answer that question by putting another question.

[12 : 58] Did you ever expect to find the Son of God hanging helplessly on a cross outside the walls of the Holy City?

And we're so familiar with the cross of Christ today that probably your answer would be yes that's what I expect to find. but you know when you take to heart the passion that we are speaking about the one who came from the realms of glory into this world is this the place that we would expect to find him?

No. It would be the last place where you and I would expect to find the Messiah the Son of God.

And when we look when you and I look at his hands and feet nailed to the cross what ought we to see?

We see our own sin nailed to that cross. this is our substitute. He is taking my place and your place.

[14 : 30] And when we ask the question what leaves them hanging there? And you remember the crowd who were around the cross they were mocking you come down come down from the cross and save yourself and then we'll believe in you.

Could he have come down from the cross? Of course he could. This was the person who walked on water the person who stilled the storm restored sight to the blind raised the dead could he have come down from the cross?

Of course he could. So what is leaving him hanging there? It's love for sinners like you and me.

That's what is keeping him there. That's what is keeping him there. For I will say he made him to be sin who knew no sin so that we in him might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 21. For you might understand it better in the way it was in the AV. He who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

[16 : 17] Or even when we go to Isaiah chapter 53 we all like sheep went astray we all turned unto our own ways and what happened?

The Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all. The iniquity of us all. And the cross of Christ reveals the enmity that exists in the heart of humanity against God.

What was the cry of the world? What was the cry of the world when he was here within the world in the flesh? We do not want this man to reign over us.

It is the cry of every unconverted heart. It was the cry of my unconverted heart. Is it still the cry of your heart?

I do not want this man to reign over me. does not the cross of Christ reveal to us the immorality of humanity?

[17 : 40] For what was this cross? It was nothing but the rejection of law. In doing your way with the lawmaker.

Doing your way with the lawmaker. And you see the reason behind it was this. let my will be done and not yours.

Do you not dare God to make choices for me? I will make my own choices. Remember the saviour's cry in the garden, not my will, but yours be done.

And what we have, what we have from the first cry that we looked at, I do not want this man to reign, we do not want this man to reign over us.

To the rejection of law, in the doing away with the lawmaker. And then we finally end up with this, let my will be done and not yours. That was what was behind the cross of Jesus Christ.

[18 : 57] And what is it? It is a bit for freedom by humanity. And yet, it was so wrong.

It was so wrong. We are, through the cross of Jesus Christ, we are more or less saying, I want to be captain of my own soul.

I don't want you, God, to have anything to do with it. we want to be free. But we are so deluded, aren't we?

And when we listen to Jesus himself, what does Jesus say? If the truth sets you free, you shall be free indeed. And when you or I come to acknowledge the truth about ourselves, that we are sinners in need of salvation, we are taking your first steps to what is real freedom, walking in the will of God.

free. And we will not be free until the truth sets us free.

[20 : 30] However, listen to the words coming forth from his lips on the cross. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Luke 23 and verse 34.

The question is, where was God the Father when all of this was going on? Was he standing aloof, watching his son suffering at the hands of wickedness and evil?

No, he was not. And scripture gives us the answer to that. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not counting their trespasses against them.

Not counting their trespasses against them. 2 Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 19. You see the son's plea for forgiveness was based upon this fact.

That through his sufferings the Father's hand of love was reaching out to a humanity who was revealing their enmity against himself through that very cross.

[22 : 00] Through that very cross. so therefore at the cross we have two opposites meeting one with another. The wrath of God against human sin and humanity's enmity against God.

And what happens? Both are reconciled through the sufferings and the death. of Jesus Christ God's sin.

God's son. As we were singing in Psalm 85 truth and mercy meets one with another righteousness and peace kissed mutually.

Kissed mutually. men. Why should you not come? Why should you not come to this Jesus?

And then we come to an encouraging promise. Well, first of all you might put the question. What if I am not included in those whom the Father gives to the Son.

[23 : 24] Well, I'll ask you the question, why should you be excluded? Is it not sinners that the Father gives to the Son?

And are you not a sinner? Are you not a sinner? As Jesus himself says, I have not come to call the righteous, but I have come to call sinners to repentance.

Those who think they are righteous, those who think they are good people, you have not come to call them. They have come to call sinners to repentance. And as long as you carry on thinking that you're a good person, and that you do not need the cross of Christ, it's for thoroughly bad people, for the dregs of humanity well, you are putting a barrier before yourself that prevents you from coming to the Lord.

The other side of the coin, if you continue to think that you're too great a sinner to come to the Lord, you are setting an obstacle before yourself that hinders you from coming to the Lord.

The first is based on pride. The second flows from false humility. Thinking that you're a good person is simply based on pride.

[25 : 05] Saying that you're a great sinner is simply based on false humility. We are asked, as we were talking about last week, we are asked to believe in a person that we do not see, which flies in the face of the culture that we were born into and brought up in.

And that culture demands of me and you to be rational in our thinking. To believe in nothing but what we see, taste and handle.

And here we are asked to believe in a person that we do not see. And yet, it is not the very accusation that he levels at the Jews of his own day.

In verse 36, the verse before this one, the verse that we are looking at. It is not the accusation that he levels at them.

You have seen me and yet do not believe. They had seen him. In the flesh. They had seen his miracles.

[26 : 19] They had seen him feeding the five thousand. With a couple of loaves and a couple of fishes. They had seen him restoring sight to the blind.

Cleansing the labor. Raising the dead to life. They had seen all that. And that is his accusation.

You have seen me. And yet do not believe. And as we were looking at last week. Faith does not come by sight. Faith comes by hearing.

Hearing the word of God. Hearing the word of God. Hearing the word of God. And this faith. This trust. This commitment of one's life to Jesus. It does not grow in a vacuum.

It does not grow in a vacuum. It comes from diligent reading. It comes from diligent reading of the scriptures. Being under the preaching of the word of God.

[27 : 22] And prayer. And prayer. Pleading with God. And prayer. Pleading with God. Pleading with Christ. That he would reveal himself to you.

There is no doubt. But down through the ages. There has been such a thing as instant conversions. People who are unfamiliar with scripture. But in the norm.

This faith does not grow in a vacuum. And I would beg of you. When you are reading the scriptures. Listen to what you are reading.

Listen to it. It's very important. And it's a very difficult discipline. To exercise. It's very important to listen.

I had known. I was reading the scriptures. Before I ever came to meet Christ. And this very gospel. That I am reading. That we took this verse from.

[28 : 26] The gospel of John. I thought it was nothing. But rubbish. Because I wasn't understanding. Of what. That I was reading in the gospel of John.

I could follow the other gospels. But not this one. I was struggling with it. And I thought. I came to the conclusion. It was a load of nonsense.

John. Must have. I would come. Came to the conclusion. That John must have lost his mind. When he was writing this. I couldn't make heads or tails of it. And yet. When I was converted.

It was the very gospel. Through which God spoke to me. The very one. That I wasn't understanding. So don't. Don't be afraid.

If you're not understanding. The word of God. If you don't have a great understanding. Of it. But search it. And read it. And be under the preaching. Of the word.

[29 : 24] And be diligent. In prayer. Seeking the Lord. To show his face to you. Because this faith. Very often. In the norm. It doesn't grow. In a vacuum. And the promise.

The promise. That is given to you. At the end of this verse. Whoever comes to me. I will never cast out. It's a pure gospel promise.

And the duty required. It's a pure gospel duty. To come to God's son. Jesus Christ. You see. The Greek puts a double emphasis on this.

If you. If we are reading it in the Greek. Puts a double emphasis on it. I will never. No. I will never.

Cast you out. And should not the beauty of his character. And the love behind his once and for all sacrifice.

[30 : 19] Draw you to him. Should not our sense of need. Should not your sense of need. And my sense of need. And should not the peril.

That we are placing your lives in. The longer we go on living without him. Should not that drive us. To Jesus. Yes. Yes.

We have every reason to fear that he will not accept us. Every reason to fear that he will not accept us. When we consider our sinfulness.

Our deceitfulness. When we consider our hesitancy in coming to him. Then he would be right to shut the door in our face.

Would he not? But he chases away these fears. With this promise. That he will never do it. He will never do it. He will not despise you.

[31 : 19] Because you are deceitful. Because you are deceitful. Or because I am deceitful. And he will not reject us because we are sinful.

That's what we find in this promise. However you come to him. As long as you come to him. He will never cast you out.

He will not shut the door in your face. So my friend come. Come. And I promise you this. You will never look back.

You will never look back. Be blessed to us. These few thoughts. Let us pray.