

God's chosen Servant

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[0 : 0 0] well why don't we pray as we come to God's word let's pray together yeah Father on a day where the world is I just got a text message saying a boxing day sale come and fill your pockets and fill your world with things the peace of yesterday is gone we're back to the scrambling over the resources of the world to get our little slice of heaven on earth Lord I pray that you would speak to us this morning through your word to give us what will really enrich us in our hearts and in our relationships and in our society at large please speak to us Lord yeah we need your help every time we open your word we're not inclined to want to hear so we need your help to do that and we need your help to understand we need your help to desire what we see in your son and we need your help to put our trust in him and then to follow him so we ask for all these things in Jesus name amen well let's let's tackle an easy topic today given it's boxing day and we're all a bit tired what is the hope for the world oh

I didn't I didn't choose a passage it's I'm gonna give credit to the Holy Spirit that we're up to here in in Matthew's gospel so what is the hope for the world so I admit that we're we're probably not gonna be done by 1030 I'm sorry but let's let's listen in because hope we're coming into a new year hope is a timely topic we've all got hopes and aspirations I want to get into the topic through I suppose a social angle a social lens I think it's been very popular this past year we can put society right the hope for the world is if everyone stays woke have you heard that phrase this year stay woke it means cry out when there's injustice if you see injustice cry out defend the marginalized the minority the prejudice censor cancel stuff racist things sexist things cancel anything that suggests that and if you don't speak up you're part of the problem so if everyone stays woke then socially relationally we'll get rid of injustice if we stay woke now exposing injustice even publicly is

Jesus did it in the passage we looked at last week in the paragraph before the Pharisees were treating a man without mercy a man who was deformed and he was cut off from the temple of God and they had no mercy for him they had mercy for the animals but not for him and he exposes them they're in the synagogue he publicly speaks about that he exposes them so I'm not saying that there's anything wrong with calling out injustice using the means we have but speaking out isn't enough to put society right now at this point I'm a white male who's very privileged in life so what right have I got to say that staying woke isn't the solution let me share what someone deeply inside the woke movement has said so

I was listening to a podcast Africa Brooke is her name she wrote an article online that just went viral I'm not sure if you've heard of it why I am leaving the cult of wokeness so in the podcast she describes what changed her mind so there was this moment where she got a private message from a man and she says it wasn't unkind it wasn't an unkind message at all he was asking if everything she was posting online through Instagram and things and all she was writing and saying is that the best approach that was this guy's question a private message and she says it didn't even cross my mind to have a private conversation my instant thought was how dare you question a black woman in that way so what this is what she did she screenshotted the message and posted it on her Instagram feed and six or seven thousand people within minutes were on her side saying that man was wrong to do that you don't need to educate him on racism that all took about 20 minutes she said and she felt she said she felt validation and affirmation in that moment just a rush of it but then she felt something else immediately after that she had just publicly shamed this guy and she she suddenly felt sick in her stomach she said

I didn't have to deal with him in that moment I dehumanised him I didn't have to process it and search my own thinking about his question should I not have given him the respect he gave me in sending a private reply that was the moment she enormous validation and then suddenly feeling sick for what she did that was the moment that changed and led to her article why I am leaving the cult of wokeness let me read just a paragraph of her article it's she doesn't hold back this is what she says I can no longer be an active participant in any culture or movement that encourages groupthink outrage on demand fear and violence revamped segregation fabricating history cancellations masters accountability self-centeredness normalization of racism towards white people the disempowerment of black people masked as social justice the constant redefining of existing language ignoring self-responsibility constant pathologizing oppressed versus oppressor mentality and the pressure to conform and comply it's exhausting and honestly

[6 : 45] I have better things to do with my time not to mention it's killing us so that's her opinion do with that what you want we need more than woke we need more than crying out injustice now remember Jesus does cry out injustice at appropriate times but we need more than that to put our society our relationships right and I think this passage today gives us what we need the better way so if not crying out what is our hope for society to keep us together relationally God says Jesus is the hope of the world he's the hope of our world and the experts in the Bible certainly don't agree they don't think so we know in verse 14 if you have your Bibles open Matthew 12 we know in verse 14 the Pharisees have come to their conclusion far from being the hope of the world Jesus has to go their outside in way of being good and important and at peace with God has been exposed by Jesus and either their framework of life has to go or Jesus who's threatening their framework for life has to go and so they're conspiring how do we destroy him

I think Matthew is begging the question of us at this point what about you what's your opinion of Jesus so far we've spent if you've been with us since the 18th of July we've been going through Matthew looking at the person of Jesus and his mission so half a year and then two months last year looking at his birth and all the fulfillment of God's promises I think Matthew is asking us to pause and come to a conclusion at this point verse 14 the Pharisees have come to a conclusion and now he gives this summary statement this is the longest quote in Matthew of the Old Testament Isaiah 42 about Isaiah's suffering servant he's asking us to pause and decide who we think Jesus is what do we see in him by quoting Isaiah 42 he's suggesting if you can't see him as God's chosen servant as Isaiah prophesied you too will decide he's got to go but if you do see him through this lens he will be the hope of your world if you see him as the father sees him so verse 18 this is the father's opinion of Jesus it's the Lord speaking in Isaiah

Isaiah 42 1-4 behold my servant whom I have chosen my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased Pharisees get out of my life the father my soul delights in this servant look at this individual there's no one like him when I look at him I see my beloved so why does the father why does the father's soul delight in him why not just say the father delights in him I don't think working out if God has a soul or not is the point of this this is poetry it's like saying God has an arm to save that's obviously a human expression it's a picture so what does the picture tell us there is a reality there don't get me wrong but it's a picture what's the picture saying of God's soul delighting in Jesus

I like how John Piper puts it I can't say it better so I'm going to quote him surely what God means when he speaks of delighting in Jesus with his soul is that this joy this pleasure is part of his very nature or to put it another way God the father loves the son with a spontaneous pleasure when he beholds the son he sees that which by nature brings forth his most passionate enjoyment Piper goes on to say which means that God the father would be an idolater unless what he saw in his son was the image of his own glory Jesus is God's greatest delight because Jesus is God and the spring of Jesus' life is that he is chosen loved and enjoyed by God the father from that relationship flows everything that he is and does when God sees Jesus spontaneous delight because he sees his own character in his son so what is it about his son that just brings forth delight passionately spontaneously well to work that out we need to work out what one word in here is connecting so verse 17 this was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah the quote in Isaiah is connected to what Jesus was doing what is the this

Matthew wants us to see that this is why God delights in his son what is it two commentators have two different ideas one is in verse where's my notes here verse 15 so many followed him and he healed them all so one option is God delights in him because he's healing them all like we saw with the man with the withered hand he restored him completely he's healing them all not just some all he's getting the victory the justice we're going to look at that word in a bit more detail soon but he's achieving that justice for all he's putting things right so that's one option he healed them all he's putting everything right he's achieving what the servant was set out to achieve the second option is in verse 16 and he ordered them not to make him known he's telling his followers to be silent think about those with power have just decided we need to kill this guy and Jesus aware of this withdrew and tells his followers don't talk about me that is completely different to the way this world works he didn't try and gather an army could you imagine the army he could gather these people owe him their life their child's life he didn't try and get the social power and strip the power from the Pharisees he didn't do that he chose the path of gentle service which he knew would cause his own suffering so does does this does he fulfill what God says about the suffering servant because he's achieving he's putting everything right he's achieving that justice or because he is gentle and lowly and humble suffering if like me

[14 : 24] I don't see why it can't be both in fact I would go further and say it's got to be both because both are in this quote and both are necessary for Jesus to achieve that total healing he needs to suffer so let's take a closer look at this shall we let's go into what God sees of Jesus and let's see if our souls produce that spontaneous passionate delight in him that little bit more so justice I think when we hear that word we automatically think legal justice social justice but the word justice has a much bigger meaning in the Old Testament and in Isaiah in Isaiah we find three main meanings so I've got this from Barry Webb who used to be an Old Testament lecturer at Moore College there's three meanings of justice so the first meaning of justice in the Old Testament and in Isaiah in particular is that justice is the order that God gave to the universe when he made everything everything had its place everything had its purpose so justice pictures that everything was in order until sin stuffed up that order the second thing that justice pictures is that the lies in this world and the lies particularly about God are replaced by truth a true understanding of God in particular that the Lord is the Lord of history not anything else nothing else is in control not idols no other false gods justice means no the Lord is Lord of history and people acknowledging that so God created everything he is the Lord of history the third meaning of justice is about putting the relationship right between God's people and God it's making peace it's maintaining that peace between people and God that's a pretty big mission if you stop and think about it

Barry Webb describes he summarises it this way the mission of the servant is a gigantic one it is nothing less than to put God's plan for his people into full effect and to make the truth about the Lord Israel's God known everywhere especially the fact that he alone is the sovereign creator and Lord of history that's a big mission that's his goal like I struggle to put my garden in order weeds just keep popping up I tried to use the weed mat and a month later there's weeds again I can't even get my garden in order God tells the servant go fix everything that's a huge mission go put the whole world right to do that the servant must deal with the disfiguring effects of sin and the curse and we get a glimpse of that with the man with the withered hand every Jew understood that sin either directly or indirectly is the cause of curse he must deal with the root problem our lack of worship of the one true

God so have we as we've gone through Matthews have we seen the miracles properly like the paralyzed man his paralysis could only be healed if the root problem was dealt with the sin that distorted the total restoration the foretaste of what we're looking forward to everything including our bodies being put right so is this the picture of hope that we have everything being put right not just social justice but includes that but putting our character right that we see God as the creator and Lord of our life gladly serving him because of his love for us putting our relationship back and from there putting our relationship back with one another expressing the love and the servant heartedness of the son is that our hope for the world or do we have a

I don't know let me use boxing day do we have a boxing day idea of hope let's just outside in let's put everything on the outside back in order or do we love what we see here the second reason why God so delights in his son is because of how he will achieve this notice that in verse 19 to 20 we're told two things that he won't do so we're mainly told what he won't do and then we're also told one thing he will do he's not going to quarrel or cry aloud nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets and a bruised reed he will not break a smouldering wick he will not quench so first he's not going to cry aloud in the streets again let me just remind us that that can't be literal he was just in the synagogue saying this is wrong what you're doing so it can't be literal but he knows that those with power want to destroy him and he doesn't play their game he doesn't try and get the social power back he doesn't fight fire with fire he withdraws he tells his followers not to fight for him he chooses not to have the power that this world calls power instead he chooses to be destroyed he chooses the path of suffering he chooses to quietly get on with helping those who want help he chooses not to have the power just quiet people want help if you want help

I'll help you but he knows that that's going to be a path of suffering what's even more powerful than merely crying out for injustice I think more powerful is someone who is so secure in themselves because they know the father's love for them that they choose a painful path of getting on with serving quietly rather than trying to be in control and have the power knowing it's going to hurt there's only one man who ever did this fully and God delights in him just can we pause and go what difference would it make to your family right now what difference would it make to our church family even your own heart what difference would it make to Newcastle and the world if people acted like this not having the control not having the power but choosing to love knowing it's going to hurt would that make a difference

[22 : 09] I think it would make all the difference in the world wouldn't it second thing he won't snuff out a smouldering wick some might be here very aware of their failings some may not have felt emotionally close to God for weeks months years I'm not sure in those seasons of life if you're like me you convince yourself that God has given up on you I would give up on me this world rides people off it snuffs people out so quickly doesn't it you do one thing and someone can cut off relationship one failing one different opinion and maybe again that failure does deserve that person to be snuffed out maybe it was serious we had three candles on our dinner table the other night trying to be

Christmassy and one of the candles was just struggling the wax was just smothering it and dinner was there it was getting cold I was getting impatient I knew I had another candle I just want to swap it let's get on with eating Jesus won't treat you like that he will never treat you like that you're struggling oh well I'll try with someone else he will never do that that's not his character we think it is because we think he's like the rest of the world like us but he's not and that's why the father delights in him he will never treat you like that I tried to picture what type of person is the bruised reed that's just ready to snap or the smouldering wick that it's barely even producing smoke let's just start again like who is that person I think it's all of us isn't it unless you think you're the hope of your world if you think you're that arrogant that you can put your world right if you're not thinking that way then isn't it all of us aren't we aware of how our love for

God is just faltering even within a day you can start the day yes I want to live for God by the end of the day you're smouldering that fire that love for others can just be quenched by discouragement or fear or knowing your own failure I think we're all the bruised reed and the smouldering wick and he will never snuff us out he won't do that he is gentle he invites us again and again to draw near to him he is like oxygen just draw near to him he will reproduce that fire for God that fire for one another so he won't cry aloud to try and get the power he won't snuff out but he will proclaim justice verse 18 he will authoritatively proclaim what is really the case let me draw on what we've heard in

Matthew to try and picture what this means I think the leper heard it when Jesus said I am willing be clean and he touched him and he was healed he heard that proclamation of justice I am willing to have mercy be clean and he believed it the paralyzed man heard it take heart my son your sins are forgiven however guilty you feel he has proclaimed justice over us your sins are forgiven the tax collectors and sinners heard it I came not to call the righteous but sinners and they ate and drank with him but so many in those cities who saw the miracles didn't hear it the Pharisees didn't hear it and

Jesus says woe to you his resurrection from the dead his suffering in our place proclaims justice to all who will listen and believe him all your sin is forgiven you do have peace with God I am the first fruits of the resurrection you will rise with me the whole world will be resurrected I'll put society right his resurrection proclaims all of that it's done sin is dealt with but he achieved it by not crying aloud but choosing to suffer and serve if you put your hope in in Jesus this one that the father delights in sin I believe this word is saying to us that

[27 : 56] God's delight can be ours because God sees us so bound up with his son if we put our hope in him for our world for the world he sees us so bound up with him that his victory becomes our victory his proclamation of truth is truth sin is forgiven and God can say over my life over your life my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased not because of what you have done but because of his victory on your behalf who cares about six or seven thousand people tweeting in response that you're right saying that they love you if you've got the father of all saying my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased because of what my son has done for you everything is right between us you will rise again so let me just finish with a few questions how much does your soul delight in him how much

I suppose do you want your soul to delight in him more can you see what the father sees in him is the vision of putting the whole world right by first putting your heart right with God is that the hope that you have that you want or do you want just all the external stuff does the way he achieves it delight your soul does it impress you is it attractive to you that he doesn't cry aloud but knowing it's going to hurt he chooses to serve is that attractive to you because if it is we'll want to be like him if we're not like him as much as we say it's attractive then we're not fully believing it yet so how much so how much I'm not but if it hasn't yet then keep looking at him see what the father sees but those who do delight in him how much does it he is the hope of the world he is the hope of our world so let's let's follow him let's be like him more and more will you pray with me let's pray father

I pray for each of us that you would draw us closer and closer to your son open our eyes more and more and more as we understand your word more as well as we see your character embodied in the lives of one another in the church lord I pray that you draw each of us closer to you delighting in your son that we might follow in his steps lord I pray that the power and stability of Jesus life might be ours as well that we might know your your proclamation that you have spoken over us that we are your beloved with whom your soul is well pleased not because of what we have done but because of what your son has achieved on our behalf lord help us to believe that more and more when sin is just making us feel ashamed help us to believe your proclamation over us when we're discouraged when we're fearful help us to believe that you are the hope of the world help us to have confidence that you will get the victory in the end help us to look to the resurrection

I pray this in Jesus name Amen don Not