

# Who is Jesus?

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[0:00] Our scripture readings for today are taken from Isaiah 11 and Matthew 16 verses 13 through 20. Isaiah 11 and Matthew 16 verses 13 through 20.

! There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him.

The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, and his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his heirs hear, but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth, and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth.

And with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.

[1:10] The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fatted calf together, and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze, and the lion shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cobra's den.

They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples, of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious. In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Amath, and from the coastlands of the sea. He will raise a signal for the nations, and will assemble the banish of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The jealousy of Ephraim shall depart, and those who harass Judah shall be cut off.

[2:34] Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah, and Judah shall not harass Ephraim. But they shall swoop down on the shoulder of the Philistines in the west, and together they shall plunder the people of the east.

They shall put out their hand against Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites shall obey them. And the Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the sea of Egypt, and will wave his hand over the river with his scorching breath, and strike it into seven channels, and he will lead people across in sandals.

And there will be a highway from Assyria, from the remnant that remains of his people. And there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt. Matthew 16, verses 13 through 20.

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, Who do people say that the Son of Man is?

And they said, Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He said to them, But who do you say that I am?

[3:47] Simon Peter replied, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered him, Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

And whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. And whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ. Here ends the scripture readings for today. Thank you very much, David. Thank you very much, David.

Thank you very much, David.

[5:31] And when you come upon, you ask them, Who is Jesus? They can give you an answer. And yet I want to submit to you from the outset this morning that much of what is known about Jesus is what we may call a cultural understanding, but not a biblical understanding.

And while many of us this morning can answer this question, who is Jesus biblically, I have no doubt that there are some, whether present or listening or watching online, who cannot answer it biblically.

And for those of us who can't answer it biblically, I want to encourage you that we can never hear this enough because this is so vital. Getting right who Jesus is is a matter of eternity.

There are many people who are worshiping a Jesus that is not the Jesus of the Bible, and thereby they're worshiping an idol.

But Jesus is revealed to us. And that is how we are able to worship him.

[6:47] And so by God's grace this morning, I want us to consider this question from God's word, who is Jesus. And primarily my aim is to help those who don't know or are not clear about who Jesus is to know and to be clear.

Let's take a moment to pray. Father, we bow our hearts in this moment, and we ask that you would come by your spirit.

Would you come in this moment and illumine our hearts and minds that we may behold wonderful things in your word, that you would speak to our hearts in ways that only you can.

Lord, I pray that you would meet each one of us where we find ourselves this morning. And I ask once again, Lord, for your grace and for your spirit to anoint me that I would be faithful to your word and proclaim your word.

To these who are gathered or listening online, would you glorify yourself in the preaching of your word, we pray in Jesus' name.

[8:03] Amen. So who is Jesus? I want to answer this question this morning under two headings, and they are, number one, the human identification of Jesus, and number two, the divine identification of Jesus.

And I plan to leave some time at the end that we can take some questions and answers. So first, the human identification of Jesus.

In Matthew 16, Matthew records a turning point in the ministry of Jesus. It was a critical moment in his ministry that takes place in Matthew 16.

When they were in this region called Caesarea Philippi, Jesus, in verse 13, asked his disciples a question.

He asked them, who do people say that the Son of Man is? This title, Son of Man, is primarily the way that Jesus referred to himself.

[9:16] And so the disciples immediately knew that Jesus was asking a question about himself and not some third party. And what we see from verse 14 is that the disciples were aware of various views that people had about Jesus.

Some thought he was John the Baptist. Some thought he was Elijah. Others thought he was Jeremiah. Some thought he was one of the other prophets. And so in the day of Jesus, generally people held the view that Jesus was a prophet.

And no doubt to them, his ministry was very much like the prophets. It was a powerful ministry.

There were evident signs that God was with him, that God's anointing was upon him, the same way it was with the other prophets like Elijah and Jeremiah.

And so people thought that Jesus was a resurrected Elijah or a resurrected Jeremiah. And 2,000 years later, this is still a vital question.

This is still a very vital question. Who do people say that Jesus is? And if we were to survey people, and no doubt some of you have already heard views about what people say about Jesus today,

some believe he's a prophet like those in Jesus today who thought that he was a prophet.

[10:46] Some believe that Jesus is a true historical religious leader, a great teacher who came into the world to teach us how to live. And many of them would point to the Sermon on the Mount in particular and say, Jesus came to teach us how to live and how to love.

And if we would just follow what he said, the world would be a much better place. Some see Jesus as a miracle worker, a very extraordinary, powerful man.

Others see him as someone who is the icon of compassion because of his care for the poor and his heart for the needy. And many of them view the death of Jesus as a terrible, senseless tragedy.

Very much like the assassination of John F. Kennedy or Dr. Martin Luther King, that a good man, a man who had been allowed to live a longer life, would have really transformed the world in so many different ways.

There are some who even go as far as to say that Jesus was more than just a man, that he was a God. The Jehovah's Witnesses say that. They say that Jesus was a God, but they do not call him an almighty God, but they say he was God, he was divine in some ways.

[12:17] And what we see immediately is one of the common denominators between people in Jesus' day and people in our day is that they all saw him as a prophet, as a worthy religious leader, as someone who was different.

But they all saw him as a human being. They saw him as a human who was different from us in the ministry that he had, his closest to God, but nonetheless, they saw him as a human being.

And that's understandable. There was nothing about Jesus in terms of the life that he lived and how he carried himself that showed him to be anything other than a man, a good man, but a man nonetheless.

To the naked eye, all those who would see Jesus, they would see him as a man. There was nothing that human ability or human perception could have seen beyond that.

But Jesus' response didn't stop there. Jesus went on after hearing from his disciples what they thought other people were saying about him.

[13:47] In verse 15, Jesus posed a direct question to his disciples and he said to them, but who do you say that I am? And what is obviously clear is that they didn't agree with what the people were saying because if they had, they would have just uttered that right away.

They knew that Jesus wasn't one of the prophets. He certainly wasn't John the Baptist. In fact, two of Jesus' disciples were former disciples of John the Baptist, so they knew for sure divine identification of Jesus.

In verse 16, in answer to the question that Jesus asked him and his fellow disciples, Peter declared, you are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

And in return, Jesus said to Peter, he said to him in verse 17, blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

And it's quite remarkable what Jesus said to Peter. Jesus said, flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And Jesus said it in such a way that he made it clear that it wasn't Peter's own identification that he gave.

[15:12] It wasn't the identification of any other human being who gave that to Peter that Peter was acting upon. He said, what Peter received was divinely received and revealed from the Father to Peter.

This is a very important statement from Jesus because it helps us to see that divine help is needed to see and confess Jesus for who he really is.

And this divine revelation that was given to Peter, whereby he was able to say that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, came from the Father himself.

In other words, the Father revealed to Peter that Jesus was the long-awaited and long-prophesied Messiah of the Old Testament.

The word Christ comes from the Greek word Christos, and it means anointed one. We get the word Messiah from the Hebrew equivalent of that word, which means also anointed one.

[16:29] And in the Old Testament, the Messiah was promised as the one who would come and who would deliver God's people. And we see hints of it

throughout the Old Testament. For example, when Moses said to the children of Israel, he said, there's another prophet who God is going to raise up, like me.

You need to listen to him. But the strongest place, the primary place, where the Messiah, this promised Messiah in the Old Testament comes into view, is in 2 Samuel chapter 7, where the Lord makes a covenant with David and promised him that he was going to raise up one of his offspring, and he was going to establish his kingdom, and his kingdom was going to last forever. And when you look at the language that was used to speak these words to David, it's clear that this son was not an ordinary son, because there's no human being who can actually live forever. There's no human being whose kingdom, whose throne can be guaranteed to last forever. Kingdoms come and go. Kings come and go. But this son of David, the God of the universe, that he would ensure that this son would reign forever. His kingdom would have no end. This was the root of the messianic hope that the Jews carried, that there would be this son of David, this Messiah, who was going to one day come and be their ultimate deliverer.

[18:13] And this is why one of the titles that Jesus received, one of the titles attributed to Jesus was son of David. And it's a very important title because it is a messianic title.

It is a title that points to him being the long-awaited and long-promised Messiah. We see this in the very opening of the New Testament, in the very first verse of the New Testament.

This is the identity given to Jesus. Matthew 1.1 opens by calling Jesus the son of David in the genealogy.

He is the son of David. Later in Matthew 9, Matthew records Jesus encountering two blind men who followed him.

It's a most profound and encouraging story. Two blind men crying after Jesus, have mercy on us, son of David.

[19:16] Have mercy on us, son of David. Blind, never saw Jesus, never saw the miracles he performed. And they were going after him.

Son of David, have mercy on us. How did they know that? How did they know that Jesus was the son of David?

How did they know that Jesus was the long-promised and awaited Messiah? They couldn't see him. They didn't see the miracles.

They didn't know that he healed anybody. And yet they persisted and they cried out after him, son of David, have mercy on us.

And Jesus healed them. The reason they knew is because the father revealed it to them. The only way that anyone knows that Jesus is the Messiah with conviction of soul is that the father reveals it to them.

[20:25] Later in Matthew 12, Jesus healed a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute. Blind and mute.

And the man was able to see and speak. And Matthew tells us that the people who were gathered there, who saw what happened, were all amazed.

And they asked, could this be the son of David? Could this be the son of David? They, like all the good Jews, had this messianic hope.

They were looking for the Messiah to come. They were expecting the Messiah to come. And they see this undeniable miracle, this man who's blind, this man who's mute.

And they ask, could this be the son of David? Now think about that. You have these two blind men, never saw Jesus, never saw his miracles.

[21:33] And they run after him with conviction. knowing in their soul that this is the Messiah and he can heal me. And yet, you have these people who are able to see, who are able to talk, and yet, even after seeing an undeniable miracle, they can only ask, could this be the son of David?

It's quite a contrast. They questioned rather than believed.

And I want to submit to you this one, the reason they questioned rather than believed is that the identity of Jesus as Messiah is divinely revealed so that the physically blind can receive the

revelation even when those who can see the evidence of notable miracles that only the Messiah can do remain unconvinced because God had not revealed it to them.

One more example. In Matthew 15, verses 21 to 28, there's a Canaanite woman that Jesus encountered. and this woman is one of the arch enemies of Israel.

She is cut off from the people of God and the promises of God. She's a Gentile. And she came out to Jesus when he came into the region of Tyre and Sidon and she was crying out, have mercy on me, O son of David.

[23:23] My daughter is severely oppressed by a demon. How did this Gentile woman, this Canaanite, come to know that Jesus was the son of David and to know with such conviction of soul that she would cry out to him and say, do this for me.

She'd go up to him and say, you know, I wonder if you know she. She was convinced in her soul that Jesus was the son of David and that he could free her daughter from demonic oppression. How did she know? She knows. She knew the only way that anyone else would know. The Father revealed it to her.

While the Jews, by and large, were not convinced that Jesus was the Messiah. We're back to Jesus' response to Peter, his interesting response where he says to Peter, flesh and blood has not revealed this to you that I'm the Christ, the son of the living God.

Peter, why did Jesus feel it necessary to say that to Peter? Why did Jesus feel it necessary to tell Peter, Peter, what you just said wasn't based on your own ability to know, understanding, or what somebody else told you?

[24:58] And the reason I ask this is because, and I must say this intrigued me as I studied this particular passage. There's an account in John chapter 1 where John identified Jesus as the Lamb of God.

And when he did, two of John's disciples stopped following John and they started following Jesus and one of them is Andrew. Andrew is the brother of Simon Peter and here's what it says in John 1 starting in verse 40.

One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, we have found the Messiah, which means Christ. He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, you are Simon, the son of John. You shall be called Cephas, which means Peter.

So Andrew identified Jesus as the Messiah and told Peter that Jesus was the Messiah. So how is it that when Peter says Jesus was the Messiah, that Jesus said flesh and blood did not reveal that to you?

[26:23] That was revealed to you by my father who is in heaven. Didn't Andrew tell Peter, we found the Messiah. As I pondered this, I wondered, why didn't Andrew answer when Jesus said, who do you say that I am?

Because on the face of it, it seems like they were stumped to really give an answer and it wasn't until the Spirit revealed to Peter who Jesus was that an answer came forward.

I think what Jesus was doing by addressing Peter in this way, by saying to Peter, flesh and blood is not revealed to you, but my father who is in heaven, I think he is helping us to see, certainly helping Peter to see, that the head knowledge or what we call an academic understanding that a lot of us have from our study in school about Jesus and the Gospels, that that kind of identification is not what brings us to knowing Jesus for who he really is.

It seems that Jesus obviously is making a distinction between the information that Peter was given by Andrew that we found the Messiah was very different from what the father did when the father revealed to him that this is the Messiah.

And I think part of the reason is that the Jews and even Jesus' own disciples, they had different understandings about who the Messiah was that what scripture actually reveals.

[28:29] To see Jesus as the Messiah as he truly is, when Peter said, you are the Christ, you're the son of the living God, that was something that he confessed based on the father revealing that to him and not the information that he had gotten from Andrew, which no doubt was rooted in the general understanding of Messiah and the general hope of Messiah, that he is just going to come, defeat the Romans, and he is going to give us a place of prominence.

I think by this time, Peter is getting from the father himself a revelation of Jesus and the Messiah that he truly is.

he is not just a human mighty man who is going to deliver the people of God, but no, he is the son of God, he is the second person of the Trinity, he is God come down in human flesh, that's the Messiah, and that's the Messiah whom the father revealed to Peter.

I think Jesus is helping us to see that knowing his true identity is not a matter of personal intelligence, it's not a matter of personal goodness and anything innate to us, it is a matter of grace, it is a matter of what the father does in revealing Jesus as he truly is, revealing him in all of his glory, that he is the Christ, he is God who's come down, he is the son of God.

In verse 18, Jesus declares that he would build his church and his called out, this is called out once, and he would build the church on this rock, on this revelation of who he is, that he is the Messiah, that he is the son of the living God, and that hell's gates will not prevail against the church.

[30:39] And we see the authority of Jesus wrapped up in this, that he has a church. And when you read the New Testament in particular, you'll see that the church is also referred to as the church of God.

And this is the church of God, and this is also the church of God of the father, is also the church of God the son. And we see Jesus saying that the church, he's going to build his church on this revelation of who he is.

And hell's gates will not prevail against the church. And that's not based on anything to do with us, that's based on the promise that Jesus gives that hell's gates will not prevail against the church.

He ensures that no demonic force can and will ever be able to destroy his church. But this is more than just when Jesus says that he's going to build the church on this revelation of who he is, it's more than just that knowledge or that bit of data, it is also on what he came to do and what he would actually do, and that is to purchase a people for his own possession by giving his very life.

in verse 19, Jesus also shows himself as the Messiah King over the kingdom of heaven, very different from the church, he's already talking about establishing the church, but he's talking about the kingdom of heaven, and truth be told, we come into the kingdom of heaven before we ever belong to a local church.

[32:24] And here's what Jesus does, again, showing his authority as the Messiah King over the kingdom of heaven, he says to Peter, I'm going to give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven.

He's demonstrating his sovereign authority by giving Peter this unique role to play in opening the kingdom to both Jews and Gentiles, and we see that Peter played this role in the book of Acts.

In Acts chapter 2, for example, on the day of Pentecost, Peter was the one who preached, and when he preached, Jews and adherents to Judaism were saved, they were translated out of the kingdom of darkness, they came into the kingdom of God's dear son.

And then later in Acts chapter 10, Peter is the one to whom the Lord revealed that God does not show distinction between people, that Gentiles are heirs to the kingdom of God just like Jews.

And he gave Peter this vision three times to say, don't call unclean what I have called clean. And he commissions Peter to go to preach to Cornelius' household.

[33:39] And Peter preaches to them, and the kingdom of heaven was opened to the Gentiles, just as it was to the Jews. The same manifestations.

Supernatural gifts took place in Cornelius' house just as they did on the day of Pentecost. We also see in verse 19, Jesus again showing his divine authority by giving Peter authority to represent heaven on earth.

And the authority that he gave to Peter is referred to as the ability to bind and to loose, which we also see later in Matthew 18, and verse 18 was also given to the disciples as well.

And there's a lot of debate around what that actually means, but I think for our purposes this morning, we can simply say that it is that Jesus granted to Peter, and later to the apostles in Matthew 18, the ability to represent heaven on earth, that heaven stood with them as they carried out their mission.

heaven. At the end of his own ministry, in Luke 24, Jesus made it very clear that he was the Messiah.

[35:04] And he also made it very clear what the Messiah's role was, what his primary purpose was. And here's what Luke records Jesus as saying to his disciples in Luke 24 as he was preparing to ascend back to heaven.

Then he said to them, These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures and said to them, Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead.

And that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations beginning at Jerusalem.

This is Jesus, this is his own testimony about who he was as the Messiah, what he came to do as the Messiah. He said the Christ, the Messiah, should suffer on the third day and rise again.

[36:17] And through him, through his name, repentance and forgiveness of sins was to be proclaimed to all the nations beginning at Jerusalem.

The revelation that Peter received, we see that even after Peter received this revelation from the Father that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God.

The part that Peter could not fathom was that Jesus would die. Notice in verse 21, we didn't read this, but it says in verse 21, from that time, this is why it's a turning point in the ministry of Jesus, from that time, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed.

And on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and Peter said, not so. This is the one who just received the revelation that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. But he didn't understand that part of the mission of Jesus being the Christ, the Son of the living God, entailed that he would lay down his life, that he would be crucified, and that he would rise again.

Because it was only through the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ that repentance and forgiveness of sins would be available to all people and would then be able to be proclaimed to all people.

[38:02] That is the basis upon which men and women are able to come into a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. But Peter didn't grasp that.

He did not understand. Indeed, the other disciples did not understand a Messiah who had come to suffer as well as to reign.

In Isaiah 11, the first passage that was read this morning, we have a prophetic vision of the Messiah. We have a prophetic vision of his character and his righteous rule that he would bring. And the context of this vision that Isaiah gives is that the Lord was speaking through the prophet Isaiah to the people of God who had gone under his judgment.

They were under his judgment. They had gone into captivity. And the Lord promised them that although David's kingdom had been decimated, it had come down to nothing more than what looks like a stump.

[39:17] The stump of a great tree that had been cut down. He was saying to them, although this is a hopeless thing, this seemingly hopeless stump, he says I'm going to do something with it.

I'm going to raise up another king whom he refers to as the shoot coming from the stump of Jesse, using prophetic language.

And it becomes very clear in verse 2 that this is an individual who is being prophesied, the shoot coming up out of the stump of Jesse.

And he says in verse 2 that the spirit of the Lord will rest upon him in a sevenfold way, meaning the spirit would rest upon him with perfection. And in verses 3 to 5 he tells us that this king would be a righteous judge, he would be delighted in the fear of the Lord, and he would not be judging the way things appear, but the way things truly are.

And then from verse 6 onwards we see these rich metaphors where Isaiah prophesies that through this king, through this Messiah, the curse will be removed.

[40:32] The curse will be removed from the earth, resulting in a restoration of Edenic conditions. It'll be like the Garden of Eden again. Every aspect of the curse will be removed through this one who will come from the stump of Jesse.

this one who would come at a time when it seems like all hope was lost and there was no hope to hold on to. And he tells us in this vision as well that the nations would come to this Messiah and the scattered people of God will be gathered and they would be restored.

Isaiah prophesied these words some 700 years before Jesus the Messiah was born. Jesus is not a new character who was introduced in the New Testament.

Many people kind of think that that's the way it was. Like Jesus came on the scene in the New Testament. No brothers and sisters. He came as the long promised Messiah of the Old Testament and the long promised Messiah was God the Son himself who would come down and take on human flesh.

Not a novelty of the New Testament. He was proclaimed and prophesied from Old and the Old Testament. So let me ask you this morning what is your answer to the question who is Jesus?

[42:18] And is your answer from a human perspective? Is it very similar to what many others would say that Jesus is a prophet or some good teacher?

Is it based on what you may have learned studying for BJs and GCE religious studies? Is it based on head knowledge that you've acquired along the way?

Or is it based on divine perspective? Is it based on the grace of God opening your eyes and opening your heart to believe with conviction of soul that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God?

And I believe there's a way that we could know the answer to that question without even answering it as a particular question. I think we can know the answer to that question by evaluating the effect of the knowledge of Jesus that we have upon our life.

We can know whether the knowledge we have about Jesus and who he is and his identity is merely human knowledge or it is divinely given knowledge.

[43:47] Because brothers and sisters, what is very clear is divinely given knowledge that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, results in a transformation in our lives.

Because it is a part of the process that God uses to bring us the saving faith. Our lives cannot remain the same.

Our lives cannot remain untransformed if we come to this conviction as revealed by God the Father, that Jesus Christ is the Messiah and that he is the Son of the living God.

I want to direct your attention to the concluding words of Jesus in this passage that I believe underscores this particular point. Starting in verse 24, then Jesus told his disciples, if anyone would come after me, if anyone would come after me, in other words, if anyone who has received the knowledge of who I am and they will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.

For whoever will save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life?

[45:21] Or what will a man give in return for his life? For the son of man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his father and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

And friends, I want to say to us this morning that if your knowledge of Jesus has not resulted in you following him, seeking his will for your life rather than pursuing your own, you do not truly know who Jesus is.

When we truly know who Jesus is, he is worthy of following. He is worthy of laying our lives down and following him. He is worthy of us living for him.

and so it's more than what we would say with our lips this morning, it is what our lives would say. Would our lives say that we have come to encounter this one in a real and a personal way who is the Messiah?

The long awaited Savior King whom God promised that he is going to send into the world. And through his name, repentance and the forgiveness of sins will be proclaimed so that men and women can be reconciled to God.

[47:07] Friends, if our lives don't show the evidence of that, if our lives don't show the transformation of that, I submit to us this morning, that the Jesus we know is just based on general knowledge, but not based on a divine revelation, it is only through divine revelation that we will live a transformed life as evidence of it.

God and so if you are following Jesus this morning, seeking to serve him, seeking to do his will, I pray that you would marvel afresh that the only reason you're doing that is because God the Father revealed to you that Jesus Christ is the Messiah.

He is the Son of the Living God. He is the pearl of greatest price. Jesus. And that's why you are following and you are serving him.

And I say one more thing, none of us, I believe this morning, would like to face a situation where we are told to recant our faith in Jesus or die.

Now, I don't think any of us would like to face that, but here's what I know. those of us to whom the Father has revealed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, that that is so transformational in our soul that we say that as a matter of conviction, that if we were to face that situation, I believe that God will give us grace to be able to say, Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, because we didn't just get that from studying our Bibles to take an exam.

[49:11] We didn't just get that by casually hearing it spoken in church. No, we got it because the Father revealed that to our soul. And we say that as a matter of conviction.

the Apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians chapter 12, he says, no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Spirit of God.

Paul clearly is not saying no one can utter those words because anyone who's able to talk can utter the words, Jesus is Lord. That's not what he's saying. What he's saying is no one can say with conviction of soul, Jesus is Lord, Jesus is Messiah, Jesus is the Savior King, Jesus is the one that God has sent into the world through whom forgiveness of sins will be available.

with the conviction of soul, except by the Holy Spirit. Only the Holy Spirit brings us to that place.

And so if you have come to know the Lord Jesus, he has been revealed to you by the Father, marveled afresh this morning at the grace of God.

[50:38] You found the pearl of greatest price. But if you are here this morning and you cannot say with conviction of soul, you would acknowledge that your life indicates that you really are not fully persuaded that Jesus is the Christ, he is the Son of the living God, that he is one who is worthy to be followed and worthy to lay down your life for.

If that's where you are this morning, I say to you, cry out to the Lord, ask the Lord, Lord, open my eyes that I might see, that I may see Jesus in his glory and his beauty and his worth, that I would follow him and that I would serve him.

Let's pray. Oh, Father, we are so grateful this morning that you're not only sent your Son into this world, but in mercy and grace you have revealed him.

In mercy and grace you have made it possible for him to be known. Lord, we rejoice in the grace of God that has come to us that we have had him revealed to us and we are able to declare him as Lord and declare him as Savior.

Father, I pray that you would help us to marvel at the grace of God that's made that possible for us. And for those who this morning would acknowledge in the depths of their soul with honesty that they don't have a true revelation of who you are.

[52:33] It has not resulted in the transformation of their lives. Oh, Father, have mercy on them this morning. And would you open their eyes and enable them to see who Jesus truly is.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.