

Jesus of Nazareth - Rejected

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[0 : 0 0] The title of our sermon, Jesus of Nazareth Rejected, and three definite portions of the reading that we had, the beginning of Jesus' ministry, the teaching of Jesus' message, and the rejection of Jesus' mission.

Jesus of Nazareth rejected me. One of the great encouragements of the Christian life for you who are in Christ is that you're not alone.

You're never alone. You're never alone when the stones start being thrown at you because of your faith. You're never alone when you make that stand for truth. You're never alone when you're being rejected for being a Christian.

You're a follower of Jesus. He never leaves you. He never forsakes you. You're not alone because your friend Jesus, because your saviour Jesus, because he's gone before you.

He against whom the verbal stones were cast against. Jesus, he who stood for the truth of his claim of who he is as the eternal son of God.

[1 : 1 7] Jesus was rejected by his townspeople. He was rejected even by his fellow Jewish neighbours. At the start of his ministry, he was rejected.

And at the end of his ministry, he was rejected. And throughout his ministry, he was rejected. Even at the end, you still hear the cries of those who rejected him.

Crucify him. Crucify him. And you're not alone. You're not alone when your family, your friends, your neighbours, your colleagues reject you when you make your stand for Jesus.

Remember what Jesus said, John 15, 18. If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. And as we've already said, as we've already mentioned, that rejection of Jesus was throughout this three-year ministry from beginning to end.

Even as we see that recorded in the Gospels. Even as we see here in Luke's account of Jesus' early ministry. And yes, we are to be encouraged, even as these words will suggest to us, to be encouraged when you are being rejected for being a follower of the Lord Jesus.

[2 : 3 8] But what surely the important message that we gain from our passage this evening is really to marvel.

More than marvel, to worship. To worship the Saviour. To worship him who endured the hatred of men for your sake. Even right at the start of his ministry, near the start of his ministry.

Right throughout his ministry. He was hated. He was rejected. But he faced that rejection. He endured that rejection. In order that he might win for you that great salvation.

Jesus paid the price for your eternal safety. He paid that price so that you would not be rejected by God. He paid that price by his very life and his dying on the cross for you.

And as we turn to the start of Jesus' ministry. These early days of Jesus' ministry. And surely our start, as it were, of this address this evening.

[3 : 44] That we come before him and we give him thanks. We give him praise. We come before him with thanksgiving that he endured what he endured. Even in the rejection of men. He endured that for your sake.

And so let's truly recognize in Jesus his greatness as the suffering servant. Our Lord, our Saviour. Who suffered all for our sakes.

So let's turn firstly then to, or first of all, to the beginning of Jesus' ministry that we read there in verse 14. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee.

And the report about him went out throughout all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues. Glorified by all. Let's just recap what's happened already at the start of Jesus launching into his ministry.

Already Jesus has been anointed by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit has anointed him for the work that Jesus has been given to do. And after that anointing by the Holy Spirit.

[4 : 50] It's the Spirit who leads Jesus into the wilderness to face the temptation of Satan. Jesus has been led by the Spirit to face Satan in the power of the Spirit.

Jesus must go into that wilderness to face that temptation. Because he must go into the fight. He must face his accuser. Face Satan. He must go into that fight.

And not withdraw from the fight. And to show that in his resisting the temptation of the devil. And in that victory there in the wilderness. That victory that points to the ultimate victory of Jesus over sin.

Over Satan. On the cross. So already the Holy Spirit has anointed Jesus. The Spirit has led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. But that's not the end of the matter as far as Jesus' ministry, his works, concerned.

Jesus is going to face further temptations from Satan. And he's going to face further rejection by others. By those whom he came as his own.

[5 : 59] As John tells us. John 1.11. He came to his own. And his own people did not receive him. And that's really where we begin at the start of this chapter.

Chapter 4. Where again we see the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus. Because the spirits empowered Jesus to begin his ministry among people.

Jesus had left Galilee. The Galilee region. To go south. To go to the Jordan. To be baptized. And he'd remained in that part of the country. In that southern part of the country.

As we said. Where he was tempted by the devil. In that Judean wilderness. But after that time of temptation. He returns north. He goes back. North.

To the Galilee area. He goes to that region. Where he's spent the first 30 years. Of his earthly life. And as we read there in verse 14.

[6 : 55] In Galilee. He's already big news. He's been teaching in the local synagogues. And by implication. As the passage suggests.

He's already been performing miracles. At first. There's no rejection. No immediate rejection of Jesus. In fact. We see the opposite. He's been praised.

Praised for his ministry. That's going to change very quickly. As we see there. In the response of the people. There in Nazareth. And as we prepare.

Even to see the reception. That Jesus receives. There in Nazareth. Then we do have to be reminded. Be reminded. And be very wary. Of the fickleness.

The changeableness. Of so many. With respect to Jesus. Remember the parable of the sower. That Jesus would later. Later. Speak of.

- [7 : 52] And he spoke of the many. Who yes. Will receive the good news. With. Certainly at first. With some favour. Without. But without that root. Of saving grace. In their hearts.
- Soon fall away. The snare of the world. The world. That binds so many. And then the message of salvation. And Christ alone. Soon forgotten.
- But at the start of Jesus' ministry. Yes. There were those. We're told. Who glorified him. Worship. Who praised him. As Jesus' ministry progresses. That glorifying of Jesus.
- Becomes a distant response. And it becomes a response of hatred. And a desire to be rid of Jesus. You see that at the beginning of Jesus' ministry.
- And then at the end of Jesus' ministry. As Jesus' ministry closes. Remember when Jesus rides into Jerusalem. And the donkey. There are cries of hallelujah. But then.
- [8 : 51] A week later. The cries. Change from hallelujah. To crucify him. And maybe there's some who. Were listening to the service this evening.
- Or listening in. And maybe you're tempted to fall back. And to turn away from Jesus. Maybe you want to try and find some solace. Even in the current circumstances.
- Solace. Some comfort. In anything other than the Lord Jesus. But no. Your rock is Christ. And don't. Don't listen to these temptations.
- Resist these temptations. To fall away from Jesus. Cling to the rock. That's the Lord Jesus. To the Christ. Who saves.
- And continues to say. Look to him. For your salvation. Don't turn your back on Jesus. And don't turn back. To a world that really has.
- [9 : 46] Has no lasting foundation. What of the reception. That. That synagogue. Congregation. That gave to Jesus. What of. The experience that Jesus.
- Endured there. In Nazareth. Well. Of course. We have to hear again. Jesus words. The words that Jesus spoke. That. That so brought about. That. That reaction. Of rejection. From.
- From the people there. In Nazareth. Let's turn. Let's turn. Out to the teaching. Of Jesus message. And remember. That Jesus is exactly.
- Where his father. The same time. He's exactly. Where. The spirit. Has empowered him. To. To speak. And to teach. And to preach. Where is he.
- He's back in the village. He's back in that. That village. That small town. If you like. Where he'd. Been brought up. Where he'd worked. As a carpenter. In his father's business. Jesus. Being from Nazareth.
- [10 : 41] He was so well known. Back there. In. In. In that synagogue. The people that he was. Speaking to. In that. On that. Sabbath day morning.
- May well have been those. Who he. As a child. Had played with. Had. Had grown up with. And now he's speaking to them. Preaching to them. But in that. Particular. Jewish Sabbath day.
- Well. Jesus returned. To that synagogue. That synagogue. Where. Well. Well. He'd. Worship. He'd worship. When he was growing up. He was regular. We're told that he.
- Is where he was want. To. To worship. Regular in worship. Surely. Even in that. That description. Of Jesus. And his. Regularity. Of worship.
- A lesson. To us all. That we must. As far as we're able. Be regular. In our worship. Before God. Even. In the day. That God has given to us. To. Join together.
- [11 : 36] In worship. That day. Of. Jesus presence. There in Nazareth. That day. That Luke records. For us here. Is a day. That's different. To every other day.

Of. Synagogue. Worship. Because there's Jesus. Yes. He's a visitor. Who's been asked. To. To speak. From a passage. Of scripture. It's a passage.

That Jesus reads. From the passage. From the Old Testament. Isaiah 61. Followed. By a verse. From Isaiah 58. These words. That speak. That refer.

To Jesus. Ministries. As the servant. Of the Lord. Now. Whether that passage. Was pre-selected. By the synagogue. Rulers. Or whether Jesus. Himself. Had.

Particularly. Selected. That passage. That day. We're not told. What we. Can be sure. Of. Is that. That passage. That Jesus. Read from. That passage.

[12 : 30] From the Old Testament. Was chosen. From all eternity. It was chosen. To be read. On that very day. That Jesus. Was there. In that synagogue. In Nazareth. Because it was words.

That Jesus. Read from. That identified him. In his mission. Of salvation. These words. Prophesied. Of Jesus. That spoke. Of the. The Christ. To come. Who.

Who. Who. Who. Would free. God's people. From. From. From the bondage. Of sin. Who'd come. To proclaim. Good news. To the poor. Who'd come. To proclaim. Liberty.

To the captives. And. Recovery. Of sight. To the blind. To set that liberty. Those who are oppressed. Proclaim. The year. Of the Lord's favor. And as Jesus.

Reads from that passage. Well. As we were told. The people are transfixed. By his presence. They're astonished. At the manner. Even of his reading. This is.

[13 : 26] See. No ordinary reading. As Jesus. Reads from that passage. In the Old Testament. There's something different. About that reading. Because he's reading. Of himself.

He's reading. With all that emphasis. On himself. That. Yes. Brought about a reaction. From those who heard him. You know. In history. We can often wonder.

Of people who've gone before us. And maybe even. Very significant people. We wonder. What they sounded like. You know. Nowadays. We've got the wonder. Of technology.

That helps us. Even to guess. Or guess with. The fair amount of accuracy. What a person from the past. Sounded like. Some 15 years ago. I think it was. A Japanese.

Forensic scientist. An expert. In acoustics. He claimed. To have recreated. The voice. Of Mona Lisa. The Mona Lisa. Of the painting. Of Leonardo da Vinci.

[14 : 23] Because we have. Certainly recordings. Of famous people. In the 20th century. People in their. Shall we say. Their day-to-day. Sounds. As opposed to their. Their public pronouncements.

What about Jesus' voice? What about Jesus' voice. In his earthly ministry? What of that voice. That spoke with authority. And dignity. And grace.

And power. Are we able to hear. That voice again? Yes. Yes we are. We are able. Because we hear him speak to us. Through his word. We hear his voice.

Directed to us. From his word. It's that same voice. Of authority. And dignity. And grace. And power. That. That this hero. In Nazareth. Heard. And by the.

The enabling. Of the Holy Spirit. We don't just read the words. From scripture. Objectively. We hear. And we listen. In order to worship the Savior.

[15 : 22] And in order to obey his word. Remember what Jesus would later say of himself. Of. And of those who are. Who are his. In. John 10. 27. My sheep. My sheep.

Hear my voice. And I know them. And they follow him. Follow me. Are you hearing. The voice. Of Jesus. Speak to you today. Are you hearing his voice.

In order to follow him. Do you recognize. That voice. That. Yes. That speaks. With all the authority. Of God. And with the dignity. Of the majesty. Of Jesus.

And with the grace. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you hear that voice. That speaks to you. In the power of his holiness. Do you hear that voice. Speaking to your. To your very heart. Telling you. Who Jesus is. That Jesus is the anointed one. That he's come to free you. From the shackles of your sin. That he's come to open your eyes.

[16:17] To. To see him as. Truly as Lord and Savior. It's that voice. That calls you to himself. He's come to set you free. From that sin.

That so. That so. That so oppressed you. In your life. Don't you hear him speak to you. Even now. Telling you who he is. And that. He alone. He alone is able to save you.

From your sins. Well if you're hearing that voice. That voice speaking to your heart. Follow him. Follow the direction of that voice. Follow the one who's speaking to you.

Even now. Follow him. Receive him. As Lord. And Savior. And hear him. As he calls you again. As he utters his words of grace towards you.

And don't be like those in the synagogue. Yes. Who heard Jesus' voice. Who's heard him speak. But in hearing him speak. Hearing the words that he uttered. Didn't receive him.

[17:13] But rejected him. And not just rejected him. Sought to remove him from their presence. Even. That putting him to death. So what of the.

Rejection of Jesus. And. In Jesus' mission of salvation. We read from verse. 21. And Jesus began to say to them. Today the scripture has been fulfilled.

In your hearing. And all spoke well of him. And marveled. And were astonished. At the gracious words. That were coming from his mouth. And they said. Is not this Joseph's son?

In that. Little town. In a little synagogue. Was a backwater. Nazareth was a backwater. Of the Roman Empire.

In that little place. The earth. Shattering. World changing words. Were. Were being pronounced by Jesus. Jesus. The savior of the world.

[18:10] And what had been prophesied. By Isaiah. Many hundreds of years. Before Jesus. Coming to earth. These words. That Jesus speaks. These words were being fulfilled.

Even. In the presence of those. Who heard them. These local people. In Nazareth. These people. Had been given. For a. A great privilege. In. In hearing.

The savior. Speak to them. They were hearing. The one who had come. To. To open blind eyes. And. Unstopped. Deaf years. And. Set the prisoners.

Free. From sin's oppression. They'd heard Jesus. Speak of himself. From the words of scripture. What of the response. What of the response. To Jesus.

By these hearers. Well. At first. We're told. They marvel. They're astonished. Astonished. At what Jesus was saying. And how he spoke of himself. They recognized.

[19:06] This man. This teacher. As Joseph's son. The carpenter's son. This man. Who. Who'd plied his trade. There in that village. That little town. For probably.

Almost 20 years. And now. He's speaking. In a way. That they'd never heard him. Speak before. And they're astonished. And.

They'd heard Jesus. They'd heard of Jesus. Fame. Elsewhere. In the. In the Galilee area. And now. They're hearing. Of Jesus. For themselves. But notice.

It's only. Marvelling. It's only. Astonishment. There's only. A reaction. Of amazement. Is this. Really. Joseph's son. You know.

As if to say. This man's not. A trained teacher. In a synagogue. He's not. One of our. Teaching class. This is a man. Who's worked. With his hands. All his.

- [20 : 00] All his years. And he's now. Speaking with. With grace. And authority. That. That seems so. Disconnected. To his manual work. But remember.
- Astonishment. Won't save anybody. Because Jesus. Has. He's proclaimed. Here. Today. At that present time. Today. Salvation. Was near. Jesus.
- Had come to win. Salvation. For his people. The good news. The great news. Was given. Astonishment. Was the initial response. To that good news.
- Someone. Here tonight. You're marveling. At Jesus. Words. You're amazed. Even at Jesus. Teaching. Amazed. At the love of Jesus. Even at the grace of Jesus.
- Astonishment. Won't save you. Amazement. Won't save you. Only faith. In the Lord. Jesus Christ. Only a humble submission.
- [20 : 57] To the Lord Jesus. Only that. Will bring you near to him. Only your trust. In the Lord Jesus. Alone for salvation. Will. Will reveal a heart.
- That truly desires. Jesus. Come into your life. And for you. To call on him. Lord. Come into my life. And be my savior. You see.
- The people there. In Nazareth. They hadn't come. To see Jesus. In fulfillment. Of Isaiah's words. This was the Jesus. Whom they thought. They knew. Wasn't the Jesus.
- The son of God. Whom they must know. But Jesus knew. Jesus knew. Their hard hearts. He knew. Their hard hearted. Attitude to him. And so.
- Immediately. He addresses them. Where they are. In their hearts. I mean. They'd heard of his mighty works. They'd heard of his miracles. Conducted elsewhere.
- [21 : 53] In Capernaum. In Galilee. And they wanted the same. To be done. In their own presence. And you can hear. Them thinking. If he says. Who he is. He claims.
- To be. Who he claims. To be. If he's. Physician like. And healing others. Well let's see him. Do the same here. In other words. Prove yourself.
- Physician. Heal yourself. Prove yourself. Well. This is the crucial point. Jesus will only perform mighty works. He'll only perform mighty works.
- Where there's faith. And there was not that faith there in Nazareth. And so Jesus immediately tells these faithless people there. Those who are looking at him.
- Wondering at him. Tells these faithless people. That because of their faithlessness. He'll do what. Revere prophets of old did.
- [22 : 51] He'll go. Elsewhere. He'll go to. Spread the good news. Of the gospel. To others. To the Gentiles. To non-Jewish people. Yes. He'll continue to speak to those of us.
- Those Jews. There in Israel. But he'll go to the Gentiles. Just as. Elijah went to that widow there. And. In the territory we now know is Lebanon. He went to that.
- To widow there. As Elisha went to. To another. Yes. The needs in these days. In Israel were real needs. Just as the needs in Nazareth were real needs.
- But Jesus will go. Elsewhere. He'll go. To those who. Have faith in him. Who've been gifted that faith. He'll go to those who welcome him. As the son of God.
- As the Messiah. Him. And there's a very. Real. Warning. For us. Even in these words. You see. If Jesus isn't received by faith.
- [23 : 49] If he's regarded at best. With amazement. But no further. Then Jesus is going to go elsewhere. He's going to send his preachers. His teachers.
- His witnesses. His servants. He's going to send them elsewhere. I was reminded of that. Just a few days ago. On Tuesday evening. I was listening to a missionary.

Speak about his experience. In Turkey. Turkey. A land now. That has just a tiny number. Of believers. In a tiny number of places.

A tiny number of churches. Yet it's that same area. Where seven churches. Were addressed by God. There in the book of Revelation. It's the same area.

Where the apostle Paul came from. The same area. Where Paul spent. So much of his missionary journeys. And now. That same area. The light of the gospel.

[24 : 44] Hardly flickering. And we can't be complacent. You know. Just because the gospel torch. Has shone in a particular place. Just because. The burning bush.

Has been present. In a particular area. Of our land. Even parts of our land. That we can become so complacent at. In the remaining of the. Preaching of the word.

We can't be complacent. Just because. That gospel torch. Is shone in a particular place. Doesn't mean to say that. That it's going to continue. To shine there. So.

We've got to be on our guard. And continue to shine. For Jesus. Where Jesus has placed you. And continue to follow him. Where Jesus. Is sending you.

Be his witnesses. Where Jesus has placed you. And we pray. Truly pray. That wherever you're. Worshipping from this evening. Even here in our own.

[25 : 39] Particular localities. That the gospel torch. Won't be extinguished. In our own land. And elsewhere. Whether we're. Speaking of West Lothian.

Or whatever part of the country. You're worshipping from this evening. And we pray too. That yes. That Jesus. Will not be rejected. Even in our own land.

As he was rejected. In Nazareth. As we read there. In verses 28 to 30. When they heard these things. All in the synagogue. Were filled with wrath.

And they rose up. And drove him. Out of the town. And brought him. To the brow of the hill. In which their town was built. So that they could throw him. Down the cliff. But passing through their midst.

He went away. Or have we seen. Marvel. Soon turns to wrath. From speaking well of Jesus. There's now a determination.

[26 : 34] To be rid of him. And to put him to death. That's what we mentioned at the start. That's the fickle nature of the heart. That's not going to receive Jesus. But will reject him.

And want nothing to do with him. I pray there's nobody listening this evening. Or watching on this evening. For whom your heart. Really wants nothing more to do with Jesus.

You'd rather put him to one side. You'd rather live without him. You'd rather silence that voice. That's been speaking to you. For maybe days, weeks, months, years.

Jesus won't be silenced. I mean, there in Nazareth. His time hadn't come for him to give his life. Jesus had entered enemy territory.

And Jesus would continue in enemy territory. Until his hour came for him to be crucified. And you and I. We are in enemy territory. And continue in that territory.

[27 : 34] And continue to shine for him. And be his witnesses. God has sent us. There's one more thing to say before we finish. And it's the very last words that we read from our passage.

Passing through their midst. He went away. He went away. This is the Savior. The Savior we know of. And who was associated with Nazareth.

Jesus of Nazareth. He went away from Nazareth. I think these are some of the most chilling words that we read in Scripture. He went away.

We pray. We plead that Jesus of Nazareth will not go away from our midst. Or go away from any gospel congregation. That Jesus won't go away from our midst.

But remain. We pray that his presence by his Spirit will continue with us. And so instead of hearing these words that Jesus went away.

[28 : 35] That we pray that Lord remain with us. Stay with us Lord Jesus. Remain Lord Jesus. Remain with us. Remain even with our land. Until that time you come in person.

When you come from heaven to earth. When you return in all your glory. When you return to bring your people into the new Jerusalem. Where your people will remain with you.

And you remain with them. Never to go away from them. And so we pray that the Lord Jesus will not go away from us. But that we'll have that eternal prospect.

Of the eternal abiding presence of our Lord with us. And that we'll know and that you'll know that presence of the Lord Jesus with you. And that you won't reject him.

That you'll continue to serve him. Continue to follow him. Continue to know him as your Lord and Savior. As you walk the journey that God has given for you.

[29 : 32] In the land that God has placed you. In the service that God has given you. And so may we know him. Jesus our Savior. Yes, Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus. The one who came from heaven to earth. To live amongst us. To die for us. Give his life. For the sake of many. Amen.

And let us pray. Our Lord. Our God. Our Heavenly Father. We rejoice. In your word. We rejoice. That Jesus.

Is the one who came. To open him. To see Jesus. In all his glory. In all his goodness. In all his grace. We thank you, Lord.

That you have unstopped our ears. To hear the voice of Jesus speak to us in love. And that you have freed your people. From the dominion of sin. Lord, hear us.

[30 : 28] As we continue before you in worship. Continue, Lord, to be with us. Help us, Lord, even as we. We close with the words from your word. That we sing to your glory.

Continue with us now, Lord. We pray. And we pray these things. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. I am. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.