

Jesus, The Only Saviour

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- [0 : 0 0] turn to reflect on what we've read this evening and in that passage in Luke 17, then let's be reminded that Jesus is the only saviour. And we do have times, as we'll see in the points, as we go through these points, we know there are times when even the strongest of believers have times of doubt, doubting Jesus as Lord, doubting Jesus as saviour. Then, as we're reminded in the word of God, as God's word directs our hearts to grasp who Jesus is, then we're reminded that he is the only saviour, the genuine saviour, the real saviour. And indeed, as we see in the evidence of who he is, the loving saviour, as we'll see in the passage as we go through it, Jesus, the only saviour. Because even as we were looking at these various points, even being introduced to them, you may well have realised, even in your own experience, that there are times when the believer doubts. There are times when perhaps you might even doubt your faith in the Lord Jesus, doubt even that Jesus is the only saviour. There may well be circumstances in your life that leads you to even question your own faith in Jesus. Circumstances that perhaps affect you, afflict you. And you ask even as, as the disciples of John, John the Baptist asked of Jesus, is Jesus the only one, the only saviour, the only one to believe in and put your faith and trust in?
- And of course, that lack of assurance, that these times of doubt, this lack of assurance, well, it's been experienced, of course, by many Christians. You can even say, even through the pages of history, even through the experience of many, perhaps even some, maybe you know yourself, sometimes the most able defenders of the faith have been those who have had particular times of doubt, particular times when they even questioned their own faith in the Lord Jesus. Perhaps at times when there have been these dark nights of the soul and you haven't received immediate answers to your particular problem, particular anxieties.
- And you might even have these times of doubt and lacking assurance in the Lord Jesus, a saviour as Lord. And certainly this seems to have been the case with John the Baptist. Because when we first meet John, certainly as an adult in Scripture, we of course meet him first as a baby, but when we first meet John as an adult, well, we meet a confident prophet.
- [3 : 0 3] We meet somebody who speaks with authority about the one who had been promised to come, the Messiah to come. John testifying to the Lord Jesus as Messiah.
- This is John the Baptist who's heralding the coming of the Lord. The same John the Baptist who cried out, after me will come one more powerful than I.
- The same John the Baptist who'd baptized you with water, but he'll baptize you with the Holy Spirit. John recognizing Jesus as the sent one, the promised one, the saviour, the Lord.
- This is the same John the Baptist who at one time triumphantly asserted that the one who comes from above is above all. Recognizing that Jesus had come from heaven to earth, sent from the Father as Lord, as saviour, as redeemer.
- But when we come to this particular point in John's life, we do see a change. Not a permanent change, but a certain change at that particular moment in his life.

[4 : 13] So much so that as we read in Luke 7, that John had sent followers, his followers to Jesus. And John was in prison at this time.

John has sent these followers to go to Jesus with a question. We read there in verse 19. Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?

And certainly this is from John himself, but of course, this is doubt that's seen in somebody who's, well certainly, yes, someone who's truly saved, who's truly saved of the Lord.

Here's somebody who is a believer, yes. But at this moment, a particular moment in his life, he's got a time when he is questioning.

Questioning, questioning Jesus, questioning his following Jesus. And doubting that Jesus truly was the one who had been promised a saviour.

[5 : 14] And so we have to look then at this whole aspect of the doubting believer that we see encapsulated here in John's example. And we do have to obviously look at the context in which John is asking this question, asking these questions.

Because, you know, from Scripture that John is nearing the end of his life. He's been imprisoned. He's been imprisoned by a particularly cruel Herod, one of the Herods, Herod Antipas.

John had spoken against him publicly because of Herods being unfaithful in his marriage. But John has been faithful in his ministry. John's been proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah.

And John has acted as the herald to prepare the way for others to receive Jesus as saviour. And preparing the way for Jesus to come as a saviour.

But as John's in prison, John hears what's happening as far as Jesus' ministry is concerned. He's already heard, as we've seen earlier in Luke 7.

[6 : 26] Jesus has commended a Roman soldier, a centurion, a non-Jew. Jesus commended this man for his faith. In fact, great faith. Jesus has raised a young man to life.

Remember last week as we saw this young man who died there in the village of Nain. And John's heard of these things already happening. A centurion commended for his great faith.

A young man healed. And obviously John's puzzled. You can just hear him speaking, hear him thinking almost.

Isn't this the Messiah, the Messiah proclaimed? But the Messiah proclaimed as the one who's going to come in judgment. All I'm hearing is, I'm not hearing of judgment.

I'm hearing of good deeds. Of healing. Of restoring. Of blessing. So that when John hears what's happening in Jesus' ministry, it's certainly not what he expected.

[7 : 28] Because he isn't hearing of judgment. He's not hearing of any pronouncing of judgment from Jesus. Judgment against those who refuse to believe in the Lord Jesus as Messiah.

And those who believe will enter the kingdom. And so it seems this is what's confusing John the Baptist. He's expected to hear of Jesus as judge.

Jesus bringing in immediate judgment. Instead, all he's hearing is Jesus performing works of mercy. And even works of mercy done outside of Judea.

Even to Roman centurions, the so-called hated conquerors. And so what John is hearing is at odds with what he had expected to hear of Jesus.

And we can certainly say that at that moment anyway, he's disillusioned. John's expectation of what Jesus the Messiah must do certainly didn't fit in with what Jesus was doing.

[8 : 39] And so doubts start to rise in his mind. You know, as if to say, I've got it wrong. Someone else must then be the Messiah. I'm confused.

I've heralded this person. I've baptized this man. Was I the wrong one? And so that's the question that's been asked of Jesus.

Are you the one who's to come? Or shall we look for another? And you know, when doubts enter into a believer's mind, doubts about Jesus, so often the case that these doubts enter at a time when your expectations of what Jesus will do for you don't immediately turn out.

They're not realized in your time scale as you expected. You know, times when you want immediate action from the Lord and immediate action isn't forthcoming.

And doubt can enter your mind. And it appears. And it appears that Jesus is unconcerned about your struggles, your pains, your turmoiles.

[9 : 51] And faith can so easily be weakened. You're going through times of personal difficulty. Times of even incredible pain. And there's no immediate healing, no immediate relief.

And you struggle with that. And even with John the Baptist, you might even say of Jesus, are you the only one I can put my trust in? Or should I put my trust in another?

Of course, in many ways, John the Baptist would have been the last person to have doubted Jesus. He would have been the last person you would have thought who would have doubted that Jesus was the promised Christ.

I mean, John has been such a faithful servant of Jesus. As we've said, he'd baptised Jesus. He'd heralded Jesus coming.

He's in prison as a prisoner for Christ. And now he's facing death as a follower of Jesus. Yet he has this particular time of crisis, a particular time of doubt in his life.

[10 : 57] And yes, in the church, in the church that professes the name of Jesus, there will be those whom you might even think are the last people to have these times of doubt, the last people to have times of a lack of assurance in their saving faith in Jesus.

Maybe even some who are worshipping this evening. Maybe some who you might consider to be such strong believers, strong in faith. And yet even at this moment, even being afflicted by these doubts.

Well, if that's the case, then take heart. And listen to the word of Jesus. And look to the Lord Jesus. Look to him. Look to the one who gave himself for you.

Look to the one whom you placed your trust in him when you gave your life to him. And look to him as the only saviour. The only saviour.

The one true saviour. Look to the one who truly is the genuine saviour, as we see in the passage, as we see Luke record for us here. Well, as we see Jesus truly in his grace and his love and the reality of his being the saviour.

[12 : 16] Because you might expect from Jesus, when Jesus heard these disciples of John ask him, you know, are you the one or should we expect another? Are you the one who's to come or should we look for another?

Or when Jesus heard these words, you might expect Jesus to react with some kind of hurt or anger. You know, that anyone, particularly John, John the Baptist, should question his credentials.

But we don't see any evidence of that in Jesus. What we do see are Jesus' words.

The words that we read in verses 22 and 23. Words that Jesus addressed that met John's doubts head on. Words that revealed Jesus' great love of sinners.

Words that revealed the credentials of Jesus truly, truly is the promised Christ. The one, the only one we put our faith and trust in.

[13 : 19] Because the one who truly is the saviour, who is the genuine Christ, is the Lord Jesus. And there's no one else to whom you must go to.

Let's hear again the words of Jesus. Be reminded what Jesus is saying that points to him being the only one, the only saviour.

In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits. And on many who are blind he bestowed sight. And he answered them, he answered those whom John sent.

Go and tell John what you've seen and heard. The blind receive their sight. The lame walk. Lepers are cleansed. And the deaf hear. The dead are raised up.

The poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who's not offended by me. What's Jesus saying? He's saying, go tell John.

[14 : 19] Go tell John what you've just heard. Go tell John what eyewitnesses have seen. What they've seen with their own eyes. About the evidence that Jesus truly is the genuine saviour.

That he truly is the promised Christ. And so Jesus is saying, go and tell John what you, John, knew from the Old Testament that was prophesied of the saviour to come.

Go and tell John what John knew from the prophet Isaiah. When Isaiah in prophecy spoke of the one to come. And the eyes of the blind shall be opened.

And the ears of the deaf unstopped. And then shall the lame man leap like a deer. And the tongue of the mute sing for joy. Because John knew these words.

He knew these words of prophecy that Isaiah spoke concerning the saviour to come. Or again in Isaiah 61.

[15 : 19] Where again Isaiah prophesied of the saviour. These words that Jesus would utter on another occasion. The spirit of the Lord God is upon me. Because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted. To proclaim liberty to the captives. The opening of the prison to those who are bound. To proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.

John has been told. Told by Jesus. Look at the evidence. See and hear what was prophesied of me.

As Jesus is saying to John. Look at what's been done. As prophesied in God's word. And see that what God had promised.

Has been fulfilled. Fulfilled in the Lord Jesus. Jesus doing the very works of mercy. That would categorise the saviour. As prophesied in Isaiah.

[16 : 18] Because Jesus had been prophesied to come to. To show forth his love. To show forth his credentials. That Jesus would bring people into his kingdom.

And do so. By his grace and by his love. So John has been met. You might say Jesus is meeting John. Meeting John at the point of his need.

That particular need that John had. At that particular moment. In his confusion. In his puzzlement. And John has been addressed. And addressed in grace.

Addressed in love. And John. Well. Jesus directing this. This. This. This word to Jesus. To reconsider your doubts.

Even. As we read there in verse 23. Blessed is the one who's not offended by me. In other words. Jesus is saying. You're blessed John.

[17 : 13] You John are blessed. You're blessed when you. When you. Rise to follow me. As you did before. These were words that Jesus relayed to John.

Words of encouragement. Words of particular blessing. To John. And certainly words that met John. At the point of his need. You know.

When. When you have times of doubt. And there will be times. There will be particular times. But when you have these moments. These particular moments of doubt. Well.

Turn to God's word. Turn. And listen to what God says to you. Through his word. That word. That meets you. At the point of your need.

So if even at any moment. You're. You're doubting the love of God for you. Well. Turn. Turn to God's word. Listen to. The word of the Lord Jesus. When.

[18 : 08] When Jesus spoke to his disciples. When they were lacking in faith. When Jesus said to them. You have little faith. Why do you doubt? You may well even doubt.

At times. The abiding presence of the Lord. Well. Again. Turn to God's word. Listen to what God says to you. Even when Jesus said to his disciples. Behold.

I am with you always. See. Jesus. Will respond to the doubts of the believer. By his word. And so. Turn to that word.

You have these times of doubt. Turn. And receive. By. By the spirit's enabling. Receive that word. With. With. With faith. And with gratitude. And apply that word in your life.

To. To have your doubts removed. Just as. Jesus was directing John. By his word. By Jesus' word. To remove. These doubts. From John's heart.

[19 : 06] See. John. Wasn't being rebuked. For his doubt. Well. We see that. In. The subsequent verses. Verses. 24 to 28. These. Beautiful words. That.

That Jesus. Spoke. Concerning. Jesus. Compassion. His. His. For. For. For all to hear. That Jesus truly is. The one who forgives sins.

Even forgives our doubts. When we see that Jesus. Was in fact. Commending. John. As the one who. Who. Heralded. His coming. Which we see in these verses.

Jesus. As the loving savior. Because. Jesus. Wants the crowd. Around him. To. To realize. That in fact. John the Baptist. John was a great man.

Despite. That momentary. Weakness. In John's life. Despite. These momentary. Times of doubt. That John. Was still a believer. And still. Beloved of Jesus.

[20 : 05] And still. Regarded by Jesus. As a great prophet. And that love of Jesus. Towards John. Well. It's seen when. In these verses. When. Jesus. Asks the crowd. A number of questions.

Questions. And questions. That really build up. Certainly. Who. John is. Who truly. John. Is. And was. These questions.

That reveal. Not just simply. What Jesus thought of John. And in truth. But these questions. That reveal. The love of the Lord Jesus. To anyone who. Who stumbles.

Even in. In faith. And in. Trusting the Lord Jesus. Questions. What did you go out. Into the wilderness. Into the wilderness. To see. A reed shaken. By the wind.

In other words. Jesus is saying to. To the crowd around him. Because these people. Obviously. Have gone into the wilderness. To hear John. At one point. In their lives. He's saying to them. You didn't go all the way.

[21 : 01] Into the wilderness. Just to. To see something. As common. As a. Common. Piece of reed. Just shaking. In the wind. No. Jesus is saying. You didn't see.

Somebody who could be easily swayed. By the contrary opinions. About Jesus. Jesus is saying. To the crowd. You went to see somebody. Who was preparing.

The way for me. To come as Messiah. As Christ. Who was absolutely convinced. When John was heralding Jesus. That Jesus is. The Christ.

The Messiah. Jesus asks. A further question. When. What then. Did you go out to see. A man dressed. In soft clothing. Behold. Those who are dressed.

In splendid clothing. And live in luxury. Are in king's courts. In other words. Jesus is saying. To the people around him. He didn't go all that way. Into the Judean wilderness.

[21 : 55] Just to see somebody. Who was. Anything. But. The one. The one. Whom God sent. To proclaim. Jesus. The Messiah.

The Son of God. Jesus is saying. You didn't go into the wilderness. You didn't go into the desert. Just for that. You went into the desert.

To see a prophet. In fact. As Jesus says. More than a prophet. A prophet. Appointed by God. To prepare. The way for the Lord. This is John the Baptist.

This is John. You might say. Who is the last. Of the Old Testament prophets. Before Jesus came. This is the prophet. Who was the herald. The prophet.

Who. Who would do. What a herald. Did in these days. Who would announce. The coming of the king. Now that the kings arrive. Well. John.

[22 : 51] Still has that. That greatness. We might say. Somebody whom the world. Might not think is great. But as Jesus says. Of the status. Of John the Baptist. Greater than any other.

Born of woman. You might say this. That John's been raised. By Jesus. To such a high position. Certainly. That Jesus would accord.

For a human being. A mere human being. Jesus already commended. A Roman centurion. For his great faith. Now Jesus is commending. This. This prophet. As a great man.

A great herald. But at one point. In John's life. At one particular point. Yes. John doubted. But that doubting.

In no way. Diminished the status. In Jesus eyes. And yet. And yet. We see a paradox. A paradox. Of the kingdom. Because. In the kingdom.

[23 : 46] Kingdom values. Are so different. To the world's values. And you see that paradox. There. When Jesus says. In verse 28. The end of verse 28. Yet the one. Who's least. In the kingdom of God.

Is greater. Than he. Greater than John. Who did Jesus. Refer to. When he spoke. Of his coming. The evidence. Of his coming.

As Messiah. As the Christ. He spoke of those. Who are. Considered least. Least. In the eyes of the world. The poor. The blind. The lame.

The dumb. The sick. Me. You. In other words. Those whom. Jesus had come. To bring into the kingdom. Of God.

Jesus saying. You're greater than John. In other words. Well. The kingdom has come. The kingdom of. Of. Of. Of. God has come. Jesus has. Brought in that kingdom.

[24 : 42] That eternal kingdom. He's come. The promise has been fulfilled. And. In Jesus coming. As a new status. A new status.

For all. Who are his. Jesus came. To give himself. For sinners. And Jesus. Has raised. Sinners. For whom.

Jesus died. He's raised. Your status. To that. Of a. An heir. And joint heir. With the Lord Jesus. And his kingdom. So. Jesus. Has raised. The status.

Of those who are his. And it's a standing. That's. Of course. Greater than even. Even. Any other prophet. Even the greatest. Of prophets. You see.

To be in the kingdom. Of God. Is. Far greater. Than even being. The greatest. Of prophets. Being the kingdom. Of God. Is greater. Than. Being even.

- [25 : 36] The greatest. Of. Of men. And women. And. Surely. Then. These words. That Jesus said. Of John. Should give. You and me. Hope. Encouragement. Strength.
- Even. When. When. Others. Consider. Us. So little. And insignificant. Inconsequential. Even. When. We are. The littlest. In the kingdom.
- Even. Little. In faith. Or. Little. Even. In. Influence. Or ability. And Jesus. Regards. You. As great. Great. Because of the greatness.
- Of his work. For you. Great. Because of his great love. For you. Because of what Jesus. Did. And. In that great. Act of mercy. Towards you. It's all because.
- You have a loving saviour. That saviour. The Lord Jesus. Who gave himself. In love. For you. To raise you. To raise you. To that status.
- [26 : 29] Of being. Being found. In the kingdom. Of God. So what. We're seeing here. In Jesus. Words to John. We can apply. Of course. To. To ourselves.
- But. What we're seeing here. Is really something. Truly wonderful. Something wonderful. About Jesus. See. Jesus began.
- His earthly ministry. He began. When he was heralded. By John. When. John baptized him. And John. Prepared Jesus. For his ministry. Jesus himself.
- Of course. Endured a particular. Time of. Of tempting. Remember when. Jesus was tempted. By the devil. As we'll. See recorded. Elsewhere in scripture. For. For 40 days. Jesus. And.
- Now he's. Facing. The doubting. Of. The very person. Who. Who'd. Baptized him. Who'd. Heralded him. Now. Did Jesus. Hesitate. In his ministry.
- [27 : 27] Did the doubts. Of one man. Make Jesus. Stumble. And even begin. To. To doubt himself. And of course. Absolutely not. Absolutely not.
- Jesus. Didn't doubt. His own. Ministry. He didn't doubt. Himself. Even when the devil. Tempted him. We read in. Hebrews 4. 5. That Jesus.
- Was tempted. In every way. Just as we are. Yet without sin. Not once. Did Jesus. Actually doubt. His own ministry. Jesus. Didn't ask.
- Am I the one. Or is there. Is there another. Jesus knew. That he is. The only begotten. Son of God. Jesus knew. That he had his.
- His father's love. And he knew that. He had the anointing. Of the Holy Spirit. He knew that. It was his mission. His mission. As Messiah. To bring in the kingdom. For lost sinners.
- [28 : 22] Such as yourself. Such as myself. Because of his love. Because of his great love. For sinners. Such as ourselves. See that love.
- Took Jesus. From heaven to earth. That love. Saved you. That love. Keeps. Saving you. And that love. Is directed. To all.
- Who believe in you. That love. Directed. Even to those. Who. In momentary times. Of doubt. They're afflicted. With that time. Of doubt. You mentioned.
- The prophet Isaiah. In several occasions. Well. We come back to him. As he speaks of this. This. The wonder. Of God's love. For sinners. Even when we are. Afflicted.
- With times of doubt. We did in Isaiah 42. Verse 3. A bruised reed. He will not break. And a smouldering wick. He will not snuff out. And that.
- [29 : 17] Certainly. In that time. In prison. John May well have been that. That reed. That was swaying in the wind. But. At the same time. He was that bruised reed. That God would not break.
- And. Any of you. Who are. Broken reeds. Feel. Maybe the. The pain of doubt. Look to Jesus. You know.

We've been. Considering. In our morning services. Certain aspects of God's character. The Lord who provides. Last week. The Lord who heals. And the Lord is the one.

Who heals. Who heals you. Who heals you of your doubt. Who restores you. And. The same Lord who. Will open your eyes. To see. To see him in all his glory.

To see the one. And the only one. Who you put your faith in. And whom you are to put your faith in. Both now. And forever. He is the only one.

[30 : 14] To trust. And to give your life to. In the passages that we've been following. In Luke 7. Well we've already seen how Jesus met the needs of that centurion.

And his servant who was very very sick. And whom Jesus healed. Jesus healed by his word. We saw the faith of the centurion.

That Jesus so commended. And. We've seen how Jesus met the needs of a. A widow and her son. The son whom Jesus raised to life.

Again. By his word of power. We've seen how Jesus. Meets people at the point of their need. How he. How he heals. How he restores. How he brings newness of life.

Now again. We've seen Jesus meeting someone. At the point of their need. We've seen how Jesus has met the needs of a. A doubting prophet. A prophet who doubted that Jesus was.

[31 : 16] The promised Messiah. The promised Christ. But we've seen how Jesus spoke. To that prophet. To John the Baptist. How he spoke. Not words of hatred.

Not words of rebuke. But words of love. And Jesus. Giving these words to John. To encourage him. So that John might be deepened in his faith.

So that he truly would. Even in these dying days. That John had there. Before his. His horrible execution. That John would. Would know that Jesus truly is.

Lord. And Savior. Savior. Jesus spoke. These words of comfort. And encouragement. Even to that doubting. Doubting prophet. And this is the same Savior.

Who meets you. At the point of your need. This morning we learned. Of the Lord who provides. We saw that. In the. In the experience.

[32 : 11] Of the Israelites. There in the desert. We. Heard the promise of God. Saying that he will provide. For his people. Even in their. Particular time of need. Well.

We know. From. From what we've seen this evening. That this is the same Lord. Who provides. Who does supply. Every need of years. And does so.

According to. To his riches. In the Lord Jesus Christ. So. Is your particular need. To be reassured. In faith. In the Lord Jesus.

Well. Take heart. And come to him. And yes. Plead his word. Plead his word of comfort. Plead that word. Allow Jesus to. To speak. To your heart. Speak to your soul.

Hear him. Say to you. That. That he is the one. That he loves you. He has loved you. With that everlasting love. That you are his. And that he is yours forever.

[33 : 10] Hear him. Speak to you. With these. Words of truth. And having heard. Go in your way rejoicing. And know that he is.

The only saviour. Your saviour. And that you're safe in him. Eternally. Why? Because. Because of his great love for you. Because he is. The only saviour.

Amen. And let us pray. Our Lord. Our God. Our Heavenly Father. We give you thanks. That your word assures.

Your word comforts. Your word brings healing. Even to hearts. That are so mangled. And in fear. And doubt. And lacking assurance.

That Lord. We give you praise. That you are the one who heals. You are the one who provides. You are the one. Who gives to your people. That grace.

[34 : 07] That love. That mercy. So Lord. Hear us. As we continue. Before you in worship. May you truly bless all. Who have gathered in your name. This. This afternoon service.

May you bless them. And keep them. And make your face. To shine upon them. Pray this in Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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