

Jesus, The Great I Am

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Preacher: Pastor Kenoyer

[0:00] I want you to turn your Bibles this morning to John chapter 8 beginning there in verse 48.

The Jews answered him, Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?

Jesus answered, I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father and you dishonor me. Yet I do not seek my own glory. There is one who seeks it and he is the judge.

Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death. Let's pray.

Father, for us this morning, together as a body of believers, prayer is not something we do out of habit or routine or because it's just the appropriate way to introduce a sermon.

[1:16] We do so because we have confidence in you who answer prayer. And we confess at the same time that we are pretty frail.

Father, we tend to be full of ourselves and our own ambitions and interests. And Father, we recognize that your glory, your word is truly supremely valuable and we are well served to come to you with humility and ask for your help.

That as the psalmist wrote in Psalm 119, verse 18, Open thou mine eyes that I might behold wondrous truths out of thy law. And so we begin with prayer.

There are some here that need to be obedient.

For your people are charged with responsibility in the scriptures of praying that the word of God would have free course. There are some here this morning that need to be obedient.

[2:24] Some who need their hearts encouraged and refreshed. Some who need to be drawn to the cross and to genuine repentance and faith. And some who need to have their hearts lifted up with the love of the Lord Jesus Christ and that their love may grow for him.

All these things flow from the preaching of your word, from the faithful and humble prayers of your people and the work of the Spirit among us.

And so we begin by asking for your help. And we have confidence in your answer. And for Jesus' glory we ask this. Amen.

Well, as we take up our text this morning, I think it's appropriate to kind of frame where we are in the book of John. And I want you to understand that John chapter 8 is a breakover point.

If you are familiar with the four gospels, you know that the four gospels really only cover a very small part of Christ's life. He lived some 30 years.

[3:35] And the truth of the matter is, is that the gospels give us hardly any detail about his birth, none about his adolescence and childhood, etc. And the majority of the time actually focuses on the one week surrounding his crucifixion.

That is particularly true of the synoptic gospels. What we find in John's gospel is that he takes a different tack, and at the center of his gospel is this singular focus of making sure that those who read the gospel understand some fundamental questions.

The question is this, who is Jesus? And what does that mean to me? Interestingly, in the last several weeks, for one, I was out in California with my sister, and then later I had an opportunity to talk with some other individuals.

And in two conversations, though they were in different locations and with radically different individuals, we really came back to kind of the same things. And when I actually had a person ask me, a Baptist pastor, that's always scary, but, you know, ask me, so what's this about all the religions in the world?

I thought that was a died-and-gone-to-heaven opportunity. I really did. And I explained it this way. Even though I grew up in India, my parents were missionaries, and I lived across the street from Muslims, and I had Hindus around the corner, and I had Buddhists where I went to school in the Himalaya Mountains.

[5 : 09] How many of you noticed they said Himalaya, not Himalaya? Just talk to me about that afterwards, okay? But anyway, here we go. There are really only two religions in the world.

Only two. One that proposes mankind may work their way up the ladder by repeated efforts and eventually get it right. And if that idea is true, then Buddhism, or Hinduism in particular, with do-overs.

You know what a do-over is? It's, you know, you die and get another shot at it, another shot, another shot, another shot. It took me a while to figure out in India why, for the most part, people tended not to help the deprived and down.

Here's the reason. Because you're messing with their karma. Do you understand? They're paying off their debt from the past, and when you step in and interfere, guess what they have to do? They have to do it again.

So kind of let them work their way out of this pile. Wow. And so here, two religions, one where men kind of work their way up, and I love asking the question to people, so when you die and God says, why should I let you into heaven, what are you going to say?

[6 : 19] Well, I've been a pretty good person. You're on that, guess what? You're kind of on the works-based idea of kind of working your way up. The other idea is God knowing our desperate inability to save ourselves, about like a drowning man pulling himself out of the water by his hair.

You know, it's like God sent his son to be the sacrifice for my sin, and he, seeing my desperate state, loving me unconditionally, and not because of who I am or ever would be, he sent Jesus to be my Savior.

So in both of these conversations, I had the opportunity of kind of ending off the conversation by saying, because, you know, it's not like the person said, man, I need Jesus right now. What do I do?

I wish that had happened, but it didn't. So it's like, so how does a pastor walk away from some of these conversations? Here's what I did. I said, hey, we've had a great time talking about these things, and can I leave you with something to think about?

Well, yeah, sure, you know. I said, why don't you read the Gospel of John, and as you're reading the Gospel of John, just ask yourself two questions.

[7 : 28] Who is Jesus? And what does that mean to me? And that question is particularly poignant. It's very central to what we're going to study this morning, because here at John chapter 8, remember I said we're kind of at a turnover, a turning point.

Prior to John chapter 8, Jesus has continued a fairly public ministry that has gotten more aggressive in making it clear to people who He is.

And, as you have heard me say, when the truth is out there, people are on the spot of saying yes or no to God, and that's what happened. As Jesus made His messianic and saving work clear, people came to the point of saying yes or no.

And John 8 is a turning point. He stops working so much in the public eye and begins to invest more and more energy in working towards the cross and ministering to His disciples.

Interestingly enough, as we were closing off these conversations that I referenced, I had one of them say to me, well, you know, I really do believe that all religions are the same.

[8 : 46] Now, I'm on the spot. What do I say with that? And I said, well, you know, I have to tell you, if I read the Bible, I have to come to a conclusion of either Jesus is a pathological liar or He's telling the truth.

Because what Jesus said is, I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no one comes to the Father but by Me. And so either Jesus was a liar and a deceiver or what He had to say about who He was and what He'd come to do was to be believed or rejected.

And so as we work our way through this passage this morning, beginning there in John 8, verse 48, one of the things that I want you to be thinking about is this central question, who is Jesus and what does that mean to me?

And I'm going to take the parts of this passage and break them down into two little pieces. I'm going to let you kind of follow along with me and if you want to, you could actually put a little tick mark by verse 48.

This is the Jews kind of reacting to Jesus. You could put another little tick mark by verse 52 and you could put a little tick mark by verse 57.

[10 : 03] So you've got to get an outline. We see the one side that looks at Jesus and has the idea that He is not the Son of God and the one who is the Savior of the world.

So we're going to work our way through this passage and I want you to understand ahead of time how the outline is going to flow. Being that we start in verse 48, I guess we could begin this way of saying the question is this, was Jesus a wicked deceiver and a liar?

In verse 48, the Jews answered Him, are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon? And when they said that, I want you to understand that they were responding to the ongoing logic that Jesus had been engaging in since the beginning of chapter 8.

It actually goes back in chapter 6 where He came out and made it clear I am the bread of life. And then in chapter 8 in particular, He said, I am the light of the world. Later, in that same context, He made it clear to them that those who did not believe in Him were destined to an eternity in hell because of their rejection of the offer that He made of the gospel and salvation through that.

And so here they were. The Jews had tried to trap Jesus with various logical arguments. They had actually sent some to arrest Him. This had not worked out. Not worked out well at all.

[11 : 25] And so their closing statements were kind of a sarcastic and what they thought was a supremely insulting statement to Jesus.

Now, I'm not inclined to get into the political season. You know that. But I'm always impressed by the fact that when people don't have much to say, they are reduced to throwing barbs at one another.

How many of you understand what I'm saying? In the absence of logic, insult will do. And so here's what the Jews did. They were not being very successful at dealing with Jesus' popularity.

They were not being successful at dealing with Jesus' winsome ministry and gospel presentation that He was the one who'd come to save people from their sins. And so they decided, let's go with the absolute knockout insult for any average Jewish male.

We will call Him a Samaritan and we'll accuse Him of being filled with demons. Somebody's like, ah, you can't say that about me.

[12:29] You can see it going on. And Jesus goes, yeah, really? Is that all you got? Well, you look here and they threw it. And by the way, you do have to understand that Jesus had kind of egged them on a little bit.

You understand that, don't you? He had referred to them as not being part of Abraham's children. And He'd actually gone so far in verse 44 to say that they were the children of Satan.

And you can understand that things were getting pretty heated. And so they threw this at Jesus and they thought, wow, this is going to do it. But what happened? You look there in verse 49, Jesus answered, I do not have a demon, but I honor my father and you dishonor me.

I want you to understand that at the core of the tension between Jesus and the religious leaders was this question of whether or not their system of faith was worthy of trust.

The Jewish leaders had the idea that the way in which you got to heaven is one, it really helped to be a Jew. And number two, you had to keep a whole grocery list of laws. One of the biggies was really don't mess with the Sabbath.

[13:45] And how many of you realize that Jesus kind of specialized on Sunday or on Sabbath healings, right? It's like, remember they said, can you do it any other day? And I was like, please, no.

And Jesus kept on letting them know that the Sabbath was not all about their rules and plans. And really, coming back, what the Jewish leaders had put together was a works-based faith.

faith. They believed that they were going to get to heaven because they were doing the right things. And by the way, that is the predominant faith of everyone.

Everyone. Whether a person is a professing believer or a person is an atheist, at the end of the day, they think it's going to turn out okay because at the heart of it, they think they're pretty decent people.

Now, I would be the first to admit that everybody could be worse with practice. But the fact of the matter is the heart is a dark and deceitful place. And when Jesus made it clear to the Jewish spiritual leaders of Israel that their faith in their works, religion, was not going to accomplish what they hoped, they became incensed.

[15:01] They hated the logic of what He presented. Incidentally, it was rooted in the Old Testament scriptures and what God had to say about the heart of man. And so, here we are today sitting under the teaching of the Word of God and really having to wrestle with the same attitudes that the Jewish religious leaders were dealing with.

Am I trusting this morning in my own abilities and my own goodness to be the remedy for the darkness of my own heart? Put it another way, are you sitting here trusting in your own efforts to save you?

And that's a question every one of us need to answer. Am I really confident at the end of the day that my increased education or my increased effort and a little more self-help, I'll get there. I'm not what I should be but give me time, it's okay.

Here's the problem. When you start with bad code or to use a mathematical principle that I am always very uncomfortable with but if you don't copy the problem right when the teacher writes it on the board and you take it home and you've got some of the pieces wrong in the way you copied it, how many times does it take before you get it right?

Forever. Here's the reason. If you don't get the information right to start with, you can't come out with the right conclusion and the truth of the matter is the scripture says that the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked who can know it.

[16:37] The heart that I have and the heart that you have is a place that is marked by darkness and deceit and sin. I'm not as bad as I could be with practice but I cannot save myself and Jesus made that true undeniably clear to the Jewish leaders.

So the practical question for you at this moment is do I believe, do I believe that my sin is a serious problem or do I believe that I can solve my problem with my own efforts and my energy?

As we work through the remainder of the passage you will notice that Jesus didn't back away from the truth of their need and interestingly enough as he continued to make his ministry and his calling clear what happened is they hardened their heart.

Will you listen to me? There is a distinct disadvantage to sitting under the teaching of the gospel when a person refuses to hear what God has to say.

Why is that? The more light you are given the more responsible you are for the facts. And gospel teaching helps you come to grips with the fact I can't solve my problem myself.

[18:01] I need Jesus to be the one that helps me. And so as you sit here this morning I appeal to you that you don't behave like the Jewish hearers did who said hey I don't want to hear what you have to say and I'm going to accuse you with the most vile name I conceivably can because I want you to step off the message that you have.

So when you say no to the light I want you to hear this things grow darker in your life. Don't risk that. You look here in the passage in verse 48 the Jews answered you got a demon you're Samaritan.

Verse 52 the Jews said to him now we know that you have a demon because Jesus said hey those that believe in me are not going to die. Abraham died I mean that was trump for a Jew do you understand everything kind mention Abraham's name it's like that's good that's good you got Abraham in the picture that's good and Jesus said you believe in me you're not going to die well Abraham died the prophets died blah blah blah and Jesus says let's get this clear.

the life that you live in the physical sense is going to bring you to the grave but those who trust in Jesus are not going to die.

So let's kind of step into that a little bit more and ask you a practical question as you work your way through this is Jesus your hope and your confidence for all of eternity. I want you to put your finger if you would on John chapter 8 verse 51 look at that it says this truly truly I say to you if anyone keeps my word he will never see death never see death.

[19:41] Now let me ask you a question if you had been if you had been writing that verse and you weren't invited to do that so just kind of buy what's there right but if you had been writing that verse would you have written it the way Jesus quoted it or would you rather have said anyone who believes in me shall never see death.

which would you prefer? Whoever keeps my word or whoever believes in me. How many of you would prefer just hey I believe I believe you know it's like I believe.

Why did Jesus say keeps? Listen to me. It's fairly easy to profess belief. It's another thing to show the evidence of the transforming power of the gospel in behavior that is radically different than the way you used to be.

I think one of the things that's a detriment to the evangelical church today is there are a whole lot of people scampering around saying I believe and they're acting like the average unregenerate unsaved person and there's no difference whatever in their life.

Jesus said let me tell you something. Here's how you know you got the real deal. There's something happening in your life. It's interesting.

[21:05] A couple weeks ago I was sitting at the table with three wonderful people I had the opportunity to eat supper with and we're in a conversation and all three of them were profoundly unhappy.

I mean we're talking about people that had education up to the point that I was kind of sitting there with degree envy. It's like wow I'm impressed.

But the thing I kept as we were just kind of so how do you like your job? I work with turkeys. And I just kept on going on. These were unhappy people. I mean really unhappy.

And finally you know low life sitting there in his jeans and t-shirt and that's California so you understand. I said I feel sorry.

I'm sad that you're so unhappy. And they looked at me and I was like well are you happy? I said I love doing what I do.

[22:06] What do you do? Here's my answer. I said I'm a broken person. Who gets to talk to broken people about the only one who can fix their heart.

Do you follow that? I love that. And here is Jesus saying something profound.

Look at the passage. Truly truly I say to you if anyone keeps my word he will never see death.

I'm a professional funeral doer. How many of you understand what I just said? I'm a pastor. I've done funerals. In fact the truth of the matter is the first professional act I ever performed was to do a funeral.

My father-in-law thought that I should be a pastor before I thought that I should be a pastor. pastor and he invited me to go to a graveside in New Jersey and be part of the funeral service at the graveside.

[23:15] I'm froze to death. It was like January and it's like what am I doing out here? No someday someday you're going to be doing this. I don't think so. But you know what?

I'm a professional funeral doer. I mean and I've got to tell you something. Listen to me. I love funerals. I absolutely love funerals because I have a captive audience that is obligated to sit and listen to what I have to say for a couple minutes.

And I never preach about the person that's dead. Do you know why that is? Because they don't care. I'm all about letting the people who are still in the path of dying know about how to get it right.

And so here we are. Jesus says to them, hey, the one who believes in me will never see death. And what he was talking about was not the issue of physical death because we know for a fact that people die.

They die every day. Every one of us here are going to be ground temperature one of the days unless Jesus comes back. It's just a fact. And so you look here and here is Jesus.

[24:23] He's speaking about the issue of not seeing death and their immediate response is verse 52. Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died as did the prophets. And yet you say, 52, if anyone keeps my word, what?

You're not going to die. Now listen to the response that Jesus gives. In verse 54 he says, if I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my father who glorifies me of whom you say he is our God.

Now follow with me so that you understand what is happening here. Jesus has made a profound and indicting statement to them. You are going to die in your sins.

He said that three times earlier in John 8. And I got to tell you that was pretty offensive. People who were greatly confident in their own status as, hey, I'm doing the best I can.

In fact, I'm doing better than he is. I mean, what do you mean I'm not going to make it? Jesus was profoundly offensive to them and they kept on pushing back at it and here he says, listen, let me tell you something.

[25 : 33] I'm not in this to glorify myself. And what was he saying? He was saying that the father was the one who was glorifying him. How was God glorifying Jesus? Ask yourself the question.

How was God glorifying Jesus? Let me help you understand that for one, God was glorifying Jesus by the fact that Jesus had the full measure of the Spirit and everything he said came from the prompting and the enabling and the power of the Spirit of God.

Remember one of the recurring things that people said about Jesus? You never heard anybody talk like him. You never heard anybody. Man, he could preach your socks off to use the phrase. That guy brought fire from heaven.

Remember when they sent people to arrest Jesus? I mean, these were professional arresters. And they came to deal with Jesus. They kind of had it. All right, bud, you grab him on the left arm and I'm going to grab him on the right and we're going to march him right in there to the Sanhedrin and he's toast.

And all they did was they listened to him preach the word of God and what happened? Walked out of there as a kind of overawed and fanatic. And they came back to the Jewish leaders and they said, you never heard anything like this.

[26 : 47] I mean, that guy preached like, wow. How do you do that in power of the spirit? Something else. Do you understand that he did miracles that were real miracles?

Jesus was the original fact-checking opportunity. What I mean by that is one of the things that happens every now and then is we have quote-unquote, you know, these fancy miracles at these big rallies, you know, kind of stuff.

And, you know, what happens is in 24 hours, 48 hours, people come back and check and see, really, did they get healed, etc.? And da-da-da. And they were always around behind Jesus kind of checking to see whether there was clear evidence of him really doing the miracles.

We're going to get to that in John 9, by the way. Remember a man born blind? They're all about checking to see whether or not Jesus really could heal. And there was undeniable power that he healed.

In fact, it was so undeniable that remember after he raised Lazarus from the dead, what did they think was their best option for dealing with the evidence of Lazarus? What was it? Kill him!

[27 : 56] If you don't like the messenger, kill the messenger, right? Okay, so here we are. How did God affirm and glorify Christ? By enabling him to perform miracles.

But one other thing. God glorified Christ by seeing to it that hundreds and thousands of years before Christ showed up on the scene, there were repeated prophetic statements about the ministry of the coming Messiah, and Jesus fulfilled every one of them.

In fact, one of the things that you find over and over again in the Scripture, it says, he did this to fulfill Old Testament prophecy. So I want you to look here at verse 51 and kind of lock your heart in on this.

Those who believe in Jesus will never see death. That's interesting. Those who believe in Jesus will never see death. What does that mean?

It's not physical death because we know for one, Jesus was going to die on the cross. We know for another that ever since Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, human existence has been marked by the sorrow and the reality of death.

[29 : 10] I want you to understand that what Jesus was talking about was the fact that those who have faith in Christ and His finished work upon the cross do not see death the same way the unbeliever sees death.

Now, when you hear a statement like that, a logical follow-up is, can you prove it? I want you to turn in your Bibles to Revelation chapter 21. Revelation chapter 21 is the way the book ends.

And listen to what it says in Revelation chapter 21, verse 8 and then verse 14. But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the, what?

What's the word? Second death. Second death. Look again, if you will, at verse 14. And the wall, I'm sorry, verse 14.

Suffice it to say that 8 will do it unless Tom can save me and find where it says second death twice. Because it does say it. We'll move on. Okay?

[30 : 33] The point is this, is that there is a death that we die physically, but there is a death that unbelievers die spiritually. How is that? For one thing, death is separation.

In simple terms, it's the separation. And ultimately, the unbeliever will be separated from God and not just kind of separated into, you know, kind of absence from God.

It is separation into eternal suffering that is very real and undeniable in the Scriptures. The sinner's death will usher him forever into eternal judgment.

The sinner's death will separate him forever from the joys of fellowship with God. And so that brings us kind of here to the closing lines of this chapter and the final point that you want to consider.

You go back there to verse 51, if you will, again in John chapter 8. And here's what Jesus said. He said there in verse 51, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.

[31 : 37] What Jesus was saying is those who keep his word and who believe in him will not die a spiritual death and suffer the eternal absence from God the Father.

You will be in the presence of God and enjoy his company forever. I've got to tell you this morning as I went into the office, touched on the computer screen, just touched the keyboard, bang, there came up the picture of my family, my dad and my mom.

You know the first thought I had? My first thought is, dad, I'm seeing you again. That's what I thought. First thought was, I'm seeing you again. I have no fear of dying.

And the reason I have no fear of dying is not because I'm deceiving myself, but because I have confidence in the finished work of Christ. And I know that I will not suffer the second death, not because I have been a good person all of my life, because I came to the point of recognizing the absolute moral bankruptcy of my soul and confessing, I am a sinner justly condemned before a holy God, and I believe Jesus came to pay the penalty for my sins.

Now, I like the way this argument plays out here. If you look at it, you find here that as Jesus made this issue of not dying clear, the Jews kind of responded and look at their closing argument in verse 57.

[33 : 01] Jews said to him, you are not yet 50 years old, and have you seen Abraham? Remember he said, Abraham rejoiced to see my day. Now, that's a very interesting statement.

What does it tell us? Abraham looked forward to the coming of the Savior. That's what it's saying. Abraham rejoiced.

Hey, how many of you sitting here this morning, as muddy and as difficult as your life is, are looking forward to the day that Jesus comes back? That is a characteristic of a believer.

It says this in 1 John chapter 3, they that have this hope purify themselves even as he is pure. What drives you forward? It is an understanding that the day is coming that Tim Kenoyer is going to be in the presence of Christ.

And that keeps a guard on my tongue. By the way, my tongue without any practice can be an absolute cesspool. It is a reminder of the work of Christ in my life and my interest in pleasing him that has slowly changed first my heart, then my tongue.

[34 : 08] And you look here and Jesus says, the Jews said, well, you're not even 50 years old. And look at verse 58. Jesus said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, and this is, remember they loved saying Samaritan, demon?

This is Jesus with a full forehand slap across the face of the unbelieving Jews. Before Abraham was, what's the next word?

I am. Well, what does that bring to your Jewish mind? Remember? Back in Exodus, poor old Moses chasing sheep around the backside of the wilderness, and God comes to him and says, Moses, you are going to go back to the land of Egypt and you're going to lead my people out.

You're going to deliver them from the bondage that they're in. And Moses says, yeah, all right, why don't you send somebody else? No, no, burning bush and all that. And so Moses, all right, says, okay, when I go back there, they're going to say, who sent you?

And God says, well, here, get this. My name is I am. The self-existent. The self-consuming.

[35 : 26] All. Everything that you can imagine, God is that. And God says to Moses, you tell them that I am is sending you.

And here is Jesus. If there was anything that those Jews knew, it was the book of Exodus and the call of Moses. And Jesus says, let me tell you something.

Before Abraham was, I am. Who has the right to tell you that you may have everlasting life despite the darkness of your heart?

Who has the right to promise that he will raise you from the grave? Who has the right to assure you that you're going to spend heaven in his presence? Who has the right to be able to guarantee to you that with your conversion, you will enjoy the enabling of the spirit of God that you, listen to me carefully, you don't have to stay the slave to your own passions and your own self-centered, unhappy focus.

The only one who can make such an unbelievable guarantee is the one who is the I am. Let me close by coming back to where we started.

[36 : 55] At the heart of the gospel of John is this one recurring thought that I think it's appropriate to think.

Who is Jesus? And what's that mean to me? Who is Jesus? And what's that mean to me? Who is Jesus? And what does that mean to me?

And I want to tell you this morning as you listen to the preaching of the word of God, I want you to recognize this, the scriptures are undeniable clear. The Bible answer is right in front of you.

Jesus is the Lord and the judge of the whole earth, and he is the only one who can save sinners. So a question you have to ask yourself is this, am I a sinner who has come to the point of recognizing the moral bankruptcy and the darkness of their own soul?

Or do I need, let's stop just for a minute so you understand me, do I need more empirical evidence? How many of you understand what I mean by empirical evidence? Huh? Do I need anything else to convince me that I'm a skunk?

[38 : 07] I mean, your friend's been telling you, but you know, you may not believe them. Okay? Gospel truth begins by helping us understand there is a holy God, and someday I will stand before him and give an account for my life.

Will I offer to him my absolute lame excuses? Will I offer to him my incomplete and half-hearted efforts?

Or will I come to him broken and contrite and say, I stand justly condemned, but I believe you and your infinite grace and love were willing to put your own son on the cross for my sins.

And the Bible puts it this way. Whosoever believes in him, what? Shall not perish but have everlasting life.

There's another part that I like. Whosoever believes in him shall not be ashamed. Hmm. Can I tell you, as Christians, we have the power of God to work in us so that we don't have to be ashamed.

[39 : 43] And by the way, when we live lives that please Christ, we become powerful, effective witnesses. Isn't that right? People ask us, how come you're not so unhappy and moody and just full of yourself?

Well, I don't want to take credit for that, because I'm not the hero in my story. Jesus found me as a broken and bankrupt, miserable, unwholesome person.

And I came in brokenness and said, I'm a mess and I can't solve my problem. But I believe Jesus died for me and he died for you.

And the scriptures make it abundantly clear that all those who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. So the decision is, is what are you going to do with who Jesus is?

He is the Savior and he will be your judge. Let's close in prayer. Gracious Father, this morning as we consider the authority and the supremacy of your word, we are very thankful that Jesus is the one who is the center of the gospel story.

[41 : 11] Jesus is the one who is the hope of sinners. Jesus is the one who steps beyond the shallow pride and arrogance of our spirit and helps us see that apart from his complete forgiveness and the payment of his life upon the cross, we have no hope.

And this morning we delight in the sweetness of the gospel that gives believers joy and unbelievers hope.

Lift up Jesus among us this morning in your precious name. Amen. Amen.