

Levi Loathed and Loved

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[0 : 00] As the boys and girls head to Sunday school, we can turn to God's Word. Turn to God's Word and look the Gospel according to Luke and Chapter 5.

Luke Chapter 5. Luke Chapter 5, that's on page 808 of the Church's Bibles. Luke Chapter 5 on page 808.

Luke Chapter 5. Let's hear the Word of God. On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the Word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret.

And he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of him and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked them to put out a little from the land.

And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch. And Simon answered, Master, we toiled all night and took nothing, but that your word I will let down the nets.

[1 : 16] When they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish and their nets were breaking. They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and to help them.

And they came and filled both the boats so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken. And so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon.

And Jesus said to Simon, Do not be afraid. From now on you will be catching men. And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of epilepsy. When he saw Jesus, he fell down on his face and begged him, Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.

[2 : 16] And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, I will be clean. And immediately the leprosy left him. And they charged him to tell no one, But go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded for a proof to them.

But now even more of a report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of her infirmities. But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.

On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal.

And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed. And they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus. But finding no way to bring him in because of a crowd, they went up onto the roof and let him down with his bed, through the tiles, into the midst before Jesus.

When he saw their faith, he said, Man, your sins are forgiven you. And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, Who is this who speaks blasphemies?

[3 : 32] Who can forgive sin but God alone? When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, Why do you question in your hearts? Which is easier to say, Your sins are forgiven you?

Or to say, Rise and walk? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. He said to the man who was paralyzed, I say to you, Rise, pick up your bed and go home.

And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home glorifying God. And amazement seized them all. And they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, We have seen extraordinary things today.

After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the tax booth. He said to him, Follow me. And leaving everything, he rose and followed him.

And Levi made him a great feast in his house. There was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?

[4 : 46] And Jesus answered them, Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Amen. I give praise to God for his holy and his perfect word. Let's again sing to God's praise. This time singing Scottish Psalter and Psalm 62.

Scottish Psalter on Psalm 62. It's on page 294 of the Psalm books. Psalm 62 on page 294.

Singing from verse 1. Psalm 62 V life. To God's praise.

To God's praise.

[6 : 52] To God's praise.

To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise.

To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise.

To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise.

To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise.

[8 : 10] To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise.

To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise.

To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. To God's praise. So Mark. Chapter 2.

Verse 13. Mark 2. Verse 13. on page 786. Page 786. You can read verses 13 down to verse 17.

Mark 2, verse 13. He went out again beside the sea, and all the crowd was coming to him, and he was teaching them. As he passed by, he saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus, sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, Follow me.

[9 : 25] And he rose and followed him. As he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining of Jesus and disciples, for there were many who followed him. And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners? And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, Those who are well have no need of a position, but those who were sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.

As we said, we're carrying on here in our ongoing study in the book of Mark. And we left last week with the well-known story, not in the last week, weeks ago now, but last time with the well-known story of a man being lowered down through the roof and through the ceiling to be healed by Jesus. But now we see in standard, typical Mark fashion, he doesn't stop anywhere for long. He's moving along again. And the story and the account moved long again.

Jesus is on the move again in verse 13. He went out again beside the sea. All the time, and we'll see this, God willing, quite a while now into the study. It was a long time to go until we see this fully fleshed out for us. But Mark is going somewhere. Every time we see Mark making clear that Jesus is moving, he is moving, he went, he went, he was going. Mark is doing this for a very singular purpose. And we'll see that more in the future. But just now we see Jesus is now walking along the side of the sea again.

He's walking along the side of the sea. We have the encounter we have here in verses 13 down to verse 17. We've seen so far Jesus preaching the gospel, calling his first disciples, healing his people. And now we see Jesus in these verses, he's calling once more. This time he calls in a way that's specific. And he calls in a way we have to be very, very careful to listen to the wording our Savior uses in these verses. Keep doing as we've done so far about, and I say this very respectfully, but being realistic. How often have we sat in church and just speaking to those here who as of yet can't say that Jesus is your Lord. I assure you, we all were in the same boat. Perhaps you're here willingly.

Perhaps you're here to tick off a box. Perhaps you're here to keep someone else happy. Either way, we are thankful you're here and we love that you're here. Perhaps you're here because you want to know more about Jesus. Whatever reason you're here, if nothing else in the next 20 minutes, half hour or so, this is the takeaway point. This is where we're heading towards at the end of the sermon. I don't really mind how much of me you listen to. I don't really mind. Obviously I want you to listen to as much as you can, but my goal is not to show you how much I know. My goal every single Lord's Day and every single Thursday, every single time we open Scripture is to show you what the Lord is saying to you through his word. If nothing else, please listen just now. The whole point of this account is to show us that Jesus calls everyone everywhere. Jesus, as aware, has no preference. He has no certain type of person that he calls to follow him.

[12 : 59] From the highest and the richest, we'll see that in the future weeks, to the very lowliest, as it were, those who the world sees as worth nothing. And that's what we have today. And seeing our account today from Levi, Levi was a man who was nothing to the world, who meant nothing, who was literally the lowest of the low, who was hated. And we'll see why in a second. But nothing else today, leave being reminded, perhaps hearing for the first time or listening for the first time. Jesus does not call certain types of people. He calls sinners to follow him. He calls sinners to join him. And the good news and the bad news, but also the good news is that, my friends, you and I are sinners. However we might view ourselves or think of ourselves, we're many things, husbands and wives and fathers and good at business and so on, so on, so on, so on. But you and I are joined to the fact we are sinners. And Jesus comes to call sinners to himself. So poor Levi, we can look at this section. There are three very broad headings. First of all, seeing bad company, then seeing the bad question, and then seeing thirdly, bad people. So bad company, a bad question, and bad people. First of all, bad company, verses 13 down to verse 15, just very broadly.

Jesus spends time in so-called bad company. We see that again and again throughout this book, throughout all the Gospels, Jesus spent a lot of time with people who those around him wouldn't go near. The tax collectors, the beggars, those leprosy, the prostitutes, the hated, the lowest of the low. And here we find poor Levi. He went outside the sea, verse 13, all the crowd was coming to him. He was teaching them. Verse 14, as he, yes, Jesus passed by, passed by the tax booth, he saw Levi, son of a faeus, sitting at the tax booth. This might be a reminder for most of us, but it's good for us to be reminded.

What is Levi doing here? Well, he's here at the tax booth. And we think of, of Levi perhaps being a tax man in today's understanding. And in some senses, he was. The tax collectors worked for the Romans, of course. The Romans at this point are occupying. This land is theirs. We have thoroughly and totally occupied. And they have tax collectors. And here he is beside the sea. We can assume that he was there to tax the fishermen or to tax the traders as they came in from the sea. Either way, Levi is here as a tax collector. Well, fair enough. You know, tax collectors and taxes perhaps aren't that popular today, but it's not the worst job there is. And to be fair, the Romans, for their day and for a conquering kingdom, were quite fair, actually, in their tax system. They were quite fair in how they taxed the people that they conquered, because the Romans were good at conquering. They knew if you taxed a people too much, the people would be less happy with you conquering them and they would revolt more. So the

Romans were quite fair, actually, in how they governed their people, at least in the financial sense. So what's the problem? Why are we saying that the tax collectors were hated? It wasn't because of their job. It wasn't because of the taxes the Romans asked them to collect. They were hated because they cheated and swindled their own people. Every, say penny, every denarii, every bit of gold the Romans requested from the people. These Jewish born, local born tax collectors would add their own fees onto it, their own commission. They were paid by a commission and the Romans let them choose their own commission levels. So in short, each tax collector could be as dishonest as they wanted to be. They could charge the locals, the fishermen, the traders, they could charge their own fellow people whatever they wanted. Now the people revolted against the tax collectors, they'd be imprisoned or worse. So really the tax collectors had a free reign. These were people who were born in the area, born in the villages, who worked for for the conquering people. They were traitors to their people politically. They were traitors to their people in that they stole fortunes from them. They were hated. They were shunned from society, shunned often from their own families and shunned, we also know historically, from the synagogues. If you worked as a tax collector, you could enter the synagogue but you couldn't take part in anything. You had no part in Jewish life, no official part. You were on the outer edges, you were hated and politically and socially, perhaps rightfully so. You're a traitor to your people, who robbed your people and who gave yourself a pretty lavish lifestyle by robbing your fellow citizens to pay the invading armies.

So as we can imagine, Levi was not a popular person. Here he is taxing, perhaps fishermen, taxing the normal people of his day and adding on exorbitant expenses on top of that, robbing his own fellow people, robbing his own cultural family members. He was an outcast, unwanted.

[19 : 08] An embarrassment to his family, an embarrassment to his own culture, an embarrassment to his own society, unwanted, uncared for, and probably pretty much hated. Pretty much hated.

Verse 14, as Jesus passed by, as he passed by, he saw Levi the tax collector. He saw Levi the tax collector and he called out to him. He said to him, follow me. Go back to that in a second.

So Jesus spent time of tax collectors, but it gets worse here. Verse 15, as Jesus goes to Levi's house, we see that at the end of verse 15, there are many who followed him, many who, many tax collectors, many sinners. Jesus reclines. In verse 15, Jesus spends time with those who are just the lowest of the low.

The lowest of the low. The sinners. The untouchables. Quite literally the untouchables. Those of the good, proper Pharisees. The good, high up teachers of the law wouldn't even look at you.

Many of them wouldn't even look at a woman. Never mind a tax collector, a sinner. They were too good for that. Too high up for that. If you're a woman, if you're a sinner, a tax collector, they had no time for you.

[20 : 40] You were below them. Their whole life they spent seeing themselves as something special and the rest of you as absolutely nothing. Unless you followed the laws as they did, you were worthless, meaningless, pointless.

Where do we find Jesus? He's having dinner. Having a feast, we saw in Luke. He's having food. Spending time with the worthless, with the hated. But again, there's no wasted words in scripture.

Verse 15. As Jesus, as he reclined at table. We think of Jesus perhaps sitting around a table. That's beautiful enough.

But think of how they sat. Think of how they dined in this day. They didn't just sit as we sit on chairs. They would recline. They would lounge. They would kind of lie on one side with her elbow under them and eat the food.

And the person you're eating with would recline beside you. It's beautiful. It's intimate. It's close. You'd almost be embracing a person you're having food with.

[21 : 47] That was the culture of the day. That's how they did it. So Jesus isn't just in the same room as sinners, as outcasts, as tax collectors.

He's reclining beside them. He's lying down beside them, having this food beside them. A close connection to these evil, awful, hopeless, pointless, outcasts of people.

Tax collectors and sinners. The Pharisees and scribes wouldn't even look at these people and hear our saviour Jesus.

He sits with them. He eats his food beside them. He talks with them. He spends time with them. Jesus, we see here, is the friend of sinners.

There's nothing new we're saying today. But hear it once more. Jesus is truly the friend of sinners. In verses 13 and verse 15, show that to us.

[22 : 51] He is the friend of sinners. He is the friend of the outcast, of the unlovable. He is the friend of the ones who have made a mess of their lives.

Who think there is no help for them, no hope for them. He is the friend of the people who feel like nothing. Who feel like they have no worth in life, no point in life.

Whether that's because of their own actions, perhaps it is their own actions. Levi was an outcast because of his own choices. He chose to rob his own people blind.

And because of that, he was an outcast. There's others, I'm sure, with Jesus that day, who were outcasts because of diseases. We saw that in our reading. The paralytics was leprosy. They couldn't control that.

It wasn't their fault. But yet, they were outcast. Uncared for, pointless, meaningless people. Jesus is a friend of the outcast.

[23 : 52] He's a friend of sinners. Again, I'm getting to know more of our faces. And I get to know some more of your stories. And as time goes on, as I get to see more of you out and about, I'll get to know you even more.

But I'll be here 10 years. The Lord gives us 20 years, 30 years perhaps, before I keep on going. I can be here until I retire. And I won't know your stories. I won't know really who you are.

Who you are behind closed doors, as it were. I don't know just now how you feel. Dear friends, and those who as of yet can't call Jesus your saviour. Do you feel that you have just made too much of a mess of your life?

You've just made such a disaster of things. You've burnt just too many bridges. You've gone perhaps just too far away from God.

You think, you know, my own actions, I've made a mess of things. My thoughts, I've made a mess of things. I'm not very well liked in my own family perhaps. I'm not very well liked in my community perhaps. I just don't feel like I'm worth very much.

[24 : 58] We'll look at these verses once more and see Jesus, the friend of the outcast. Jesus, friend of the worthless person. Jesus, the friend of the one who is a sinner.

Because with Jesus, there is no one who is worthless. There is no one who is beyond help. With Jesus, we see there is real eternal worth in all his precious, precious people.

Jesus is the one friend of the outcast. He's also the one whose sinners follow.

At the end of verse 15, many others followed him. We come here week by week and praise the Lord for this chance to come here.

But the question is, why are you here? Why are you here? It's a genuine question. Not a direct question. Why are you here? Are you here because you think you should be? Well, praise the Lord, you are here.

[25 : 57] Or are you here because you know, you know you need a saviour? And in Jesus, you have the only answer. In Jesus, you find the only hope of that saviour.

Jesus is a friend of sinners. Come to him this day. Ask him that he would be your friend, your Lord, your saviour. It feels so childish, doesn't it? It feels so simple. But we see in the scripture that a childlike faith, a simple faith, that says to God, I have messed up.

I have sinned. I am a sinner. I need you to save me, to rescue me, to call me your own. That is the prayer God answers. So Jesus spends time with bad company, with the so-called sinners and outcasts, because Jesus is a friend of sinners.

We then see in verse 16 that as he spends time with these people, the scribes and the Pharisees, the teachers and the religious experts of the day, they ask a bad question.

Verse 16, quite briefly. The scribes and the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?

[27 : 09] They're always watching, aren't they? They're always watching Jesus. They spend their whole time watching and following him, seeing what he says, what he does.

Who's he talking to now? What's he saying now? What blasphemies is this man saying now? What evil is this man teaching now? How badly is this man healing these people now?

And we see time and time and time again, these so-called religious leaders, they saw everything, they heard everything, they saw the physical healings of Jesus performed in front of them, they saw miraculous things take place, and yet, what happens?

Nothing. They hear the words of the living God, spoken from the second person of the Godhead in front of them. Jesus is talking to them again and again.

They see and will see even more incredible signs and miracles in front of them. All for what? For nothing. They see it all, they hear it all, and all they can do is accuse him.

[28 : 29] They ignore what we've just seen. They saw at the start of chapter 2, this man who couldn't walk, get up, take his bed and walk home.

At the end of chapter 1, they saw a man with leprosy, leprosy, be healed right in front of them. And it means nothing to them.

Often, often folks will say, and friends will say, you know, I actually might believe in the Bible. I actually might believe in what you believe in. I actually might believe some of this book. I actually might believe in Jesus, if only I could see it for myself.

If only I was there, and I saw Jesus doing the things he did. If only Jesus would show himself to me, would give me a miracle in my life. Again and again in Scripture, we see Jesus showing miracles to people all around him.

And again and again, for all the evidence, all the facts, and the tangible, they could talk to these healed people, they could see the miracles take place in front of them.

[29 : 34] But it means nothing to them. Dear friends, you are, this very day, hearing the words of Jesus.

He is speaking to you, not through me. But he's speaking to you through his word right now. And if you won't listen to him in your word, in his word, if you won't listen to him just now, I assure you, you wouldn't have heard him anymore, if he's before you just now in person.

That's the solemn truth. The Pharisees saw it all, they heard it all, it made no impact on their lives whatsoever. It led them to accusing him, what is this man doing?

What is he doing? Eating with tax collectors and sinners. You can hear just the horror and the disgust in their question. What is he doing?

This man who calls himself a rabbi, this man who calls himself a teacher, what is he doing? Wasting his time with these low-life sinners, disgusting people.

[30 : 38] They've heard the gospel, they've seen the miracles, they've seen and heard all that Jesus claims to be and yet, they don't believe. They don't believe.

They don't quite get who Jesus is. Why? Because their own self-righteousness it's amazing here and it's horrifying. Their own self-righteousness is so high, it's so thick, it's so strong that it's blinding them from what we're seeing quite literally in front of them.

And there's no joy in seeing this but it has to be said, we're no different. We're no different. We wouldn't call ourselves scribes or fallacies.

We don't walk around in our flowing robes perhaps. But you have sat here and we've all sat here week after week perhaps and year after year and some here for tens of years and you've heard the gospel.

Different ministers have come and ministers have gone and we've all said the same thing to you perhaps in different ways but all the same message, the same Jesus we bring, the same gospel we bring, different styles perhaps, different emphasis perhaps, but we're all doing the same job.

[31 : 56] It says before, a new minister, a new ministry, I can't save you. I can pound the streets and I fully intend to visit every single homeless village ten times over.

It's good. It's beneficial. It won't save you. You can do every study and every technical work in the scripture and work through chapters and books and studies till the day I retire.

I won't save you. Unless you come to Jesus yourself and with respect, and I must say it, but with respect, let go of your own self-righteousness.

Let go of that reality that yes, I need Jesus but I want him on my terms. Yes, I know I probably need saving but I'll be saved when it's my time to be saved.

after X amount of years or in this way or if the Lord doesn't do it this way then I won't listen to him. Whatever excuses you're using, whatever mindset you have, and they are excuses, aren't they?

[32 : 58] And you can sit here perhaps week after week and you hear the gospel and you think, yes, I probably do believe this but there's this and there's this and there's this reason and that reason why I don't quite give my life to Jesus yet.

I'm waiting for this to happen first or for this situation to take place first. I'm waiting to feel this certain way first. Dear friends, do not be like the Pharisees. They saw everything, they heard everything yet they remained unchanged.

Don't wait for miracles. Don't wait for the flashes from heaven to come and to wake you in the night with words from on high. You have the Lord's word in front of you just now.

You have it at home, I'm sure. It's online. Google it. Listen to it. Read it. Sing it. Whatever works for you but be in the word and see yourself that Jesus is a friend of sinners and Jesus is for you and for me even this very moment.

Jesus, friend of sinners. That brings us very briefly onto the last thing we have here. Bad company, a bad question and finally bad people.

[34 : 10] Verses 14 and verse 17. Bad people. Verse 14. What does Jesus say to this evil, ruthless, traitor of a man as he sits there extorting his fellow citizens?

As he passed by he saw Levi and he said to him, follow me. follow me. Follow me. There's nothing wasted in scripture.

Who does Jesus see? Who does Jesus see? As he passed by he saw Levi, the son of Ophiis. he saw Levi.

Not the scum there taking our money. Not that traitor destroying our nation. Not that man who's betrayed his family and his friends and his culture and his heritage.

Not that man who works for the Romans who ruined our lives. All these things are perhaps true of Levi. Levi. But Jesus sees Levi. Levi. I've always known as Matthew.

[35 : 17] This is not for this now. There's no time. Here's some homework for you. Homework I won't check on. One day, all the homework I've given you in the last two months, one day I won't check up on that homework. I promise you. But not just now. Matthew 9.

Matthew 9. And verse 9. That's your homework. Matthew 9 and verse 9. When Matthew gives the account of this man, he calls Levi a different name.

He calls him Matthew. And the thinking is in the early church fathers and the early church and most of the commoners and whom I am to disagree would say that Levi is actually Matthew, the man who wrote the account, the Gospel of Matthew.

And Matthew means gift of God. And we see that often in Scripture. When Jesus saves someone, he gives them a new name. Levi was once a tax collector. Matthew in the Gospel calls him Matthew, the gift of God.

This man who once took gifts for himself, who once extorted his people, is now called the gift of God. Jesus says to him, follow me.

[36 : 23] He calls out to Levi as a man who deserved nothing more than wrath, but a man who Jesus sees as Levi, who calls him by his name and says, Levi, follow me.

Jesus calls his people by name. From before time itself, he knew you, he saw you, he set his heart to come and save his people. Part of his perfect, eternal plan.

You might feel nameless, you might feel unknown. Even in your own life, you might feel at times as if there is no point and no purpose to you. the Saviour knows the name of his people.

He calls you by name. And the question has to be asked, do you know this day that's calling? Do you know that calling? Follow me.

Are you sitting here just now and you're ignoring that calling? You've perhaps done a great job of ignoring it for months or years perhaps or tens of years, worryingly enough.

[37 : 27] Jesus calls saying, follow me. Simple gospel. How many times have you heard this passage? The gospel remains.

Jesus calls out to you today, to you, follow me. If the evil, and he was perhaps an evil man, if a traitorous tax collector can listen to the call of Jesus, if this man who was hated by the whole nation of people can listen to the call of Jesus, if this man who was so evil can be called by Jesus, the call was good for him, the call applied to him, the call to get in all his treachery and robbing and evil, then how much more is that call good for you?

You haven't lived the life perhaps of this man. Perhaps you have. Perhaps your life has been just as evil as this man's life. Perhaps it hasn't. That's the gospel glorious good news, isn't it?

That if you can identify with this man and is evil or if you can't, the gospel is still for you. The gospel call is still for you to follow him, to follow me, to follow Jesus.

Follow me. Levi heard that call and we saw and we read in Luke, he gave up everything he had to follow Jesus. He heard the call and he drops it all.

[39 : 03] All the years of wealth and fortune and fame, well not fame but of fortune and infamy, it's all gone. He follows Jesus. Bad people.

A bad person is saved quite simply in verses 13 and 14 and as Jesus then talks to more bad people in verse 17 and this we end, we see Jesus give this glorious simple summary of what the gospel actually is and who the gospel is for.

It's been challenged by the Pharisees and the scribes and when Jesus heard it, of course, they challenged the disciples, of course. They're too scared to challenge Jesus.

They're too scared to go near to Jesus because Jesus is beside the sinners and the tax collectors. So the Pharisees challenged the disciples and Jesus hears the challenges we read and Jesus says to these scribes and Pharisees, those who are well have no need of a physician, a doctor but those who are sick, what is the gospel?

I came not to call the righteous but sinners. Not to call the righteous but sinners. We complicate the gospel to our shame, to my shame but we complicate the gospel.

[40 : 31] We add arms and legs where scripture does not add them. After we're saved, after you're saved, there's lots to learn. Of course there is. We're all learning at all times and you'll learn until your dying days and then in glory we'll be learning forever, I'm sure.

As good as glory is. But the gospel is simple. The gospel is not know this first, then come to Jesus. Act this way first, then come to Jesus.

Think this way, do this thing, then come to Jesus. We saw this in the last Lord's Day in the morning. We looked at a legalism. A legalism where it's Jesus plus something else.

It's either Jesus in his own or it's a false gospel. A false gospel. Dear friends, we are sick. Sin has made us all sick.

Whereas no one is righteous, no not one. Scripture tells us that. We are all sick. You might not feel it, you might not think you are, but you are. Me with you.

[41 : 37] What's the difference between the Christian and the non-Christian here today? We said this before and we'll say that again. What's the difference between a Christian and a non-Christian here today? Do Christians act more holy?

Do we look like Christians? What makes us Christians? What saves us? It's what we admit to being sick.

I've admitted to being sick to our Savior. We admitted we are sinners who need healing, who need saving. He listens to us, he heals us, he saves us. He has come to call the sick.

If you think you can deserve the love of Jesus, if you think you can somehow impress him, then you have no idea what the gospel truly is. He has come to call the sick. He has come to call sinners.

If you don't come to him in that mindset, in that spirit, and say, Jesus, I am sick, I am a sinner, and because of that as a case, I want you, I ask you, I plead with you to please save me.

[42 : 37] If you don't come in that mindset, you will never know a salvation. That's because of your own unrighteousness, because of your own self-righteousness.

But if you come honestly to the Lord and say, Lord, yeah, I am, I am sick, yeah, I have sinned, I have done and said and thought things against your holy nature, and so on and so on.

But actually, I trust what your word tells of me. I trust that you are a God who is merciful, a saviour who is good, a saviour who has promised, he has come to save the sick, and I know I'm a sick person.

He promises to hear that prayer. He has come to save the sick. Dear friends, that it's you, it's me. He's come to call sinners, the weak, the proud, the so-called good, the so-called bad.

He's come to call those within free church background, an FP background, church school background, whatever your story may be. He is the God, the saviour, the king, that's come to call sinners, to follow him, to follow him, to be called one of his own.

[43 : 57] When he calls you, when he calls you, he keeps you. When he calls you, he keeps you, you think, I can never be a Christian. I want to be, but I can never be a Christian because I'm embarrassed of myself.

What if I bring dishonour to the faith? What if I mess things up? What if I go so wrong as a Christian? You're called to follow him, and to serve him, and everything else you will learn in time, I assure you.

And yes, do you know what? You will go wrong. You will mess things up. I'll give you a Christian before you. I'll give you a minister and elder up here. We are sinners, but sinners who are saved by grace.

Come and follow him today. Come and know the one who calls sinners to himself, who's come not to call the healthy, but the sick, to call them, to save them, to love them, and to keep them.

It's about our heads now, a word of prayer. Lord God, we thank you, Lord, for the gift of your word. We ask that we leave this place having been impacted by that word, leave this place having grown not just in our love, but also in our knowledge, Lord, of it.

[45 : 13] We pray, Lord, today for your people here, Lord, for those of us here who know you and who love you, help us to be encouraged that we have a reminder that you call all sorts of people. Help us to be mindful as we go out of the gospel, to give the gospel freely to all, to those who we think will never respond to it, to those we think are too far gone for it, to those that we might think don't deserve it, Lord.

To our shame, we often think these things, perhaps. Lord, confess now that the gospel is for all, for all who will hear it. Lord, help us to be faithful witnesses. We pray once more for our friends here today who as of yet cannot say that they know you, Lord, that your word would speak to them today, that they would know that you are calling them even now.

Lord, we would ask you to soften their hearts and break down their barriers, that call would follow them home into this new week and they would not be able to ignore it for much longer. Lord, we come to sing our final item of praise.

We thank you, Lord, for the one who leads us today. We thank you, Lord, for those who lead in the sung worship, for all the talent you've given them, for the willing heart you've given them to lead the sung praise.

Help us, Lord, to do so of hearts and minds set on you. all these things in and through and for Christ. In his precious name's sake. Amen. Let's turn to sing.

[46 : 34] Conclusion in God's word. We can sing from Sing Psalms. Sing Psalms and Psalm 36. Sing Psalms and Psalm 36.

Sing Psalms and Psalm 36. It's on page 44 of the psalm books. Sing Psalms, Psalm 36 on page 44.

We can sing just verses 5 down to verse 9. Psalm 36 verses 5 to 9. Your steadfast love is great, O Lord, it reaches heaven high. Your faithfulness is wonderful, extending to the sky.

Psalm 36 verses 5 to 9. To God's praise. you na chronisch and ph Rim you know where you need to Andre you you it you you extend into the sky.

Your righteousness is dedicated by confidence I not see.

[48 : 14] Your justice is like ocean that full kind and appear.

A precious is your heart and priceless and peace.

O thy love shall tell you the shadow of your ears.

The peace will end your heart and from trips of your heart and the souls of your life is the heart.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you now and forevermore. Amen. Thank you.