

Nicodemus 2

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Preacher: Rev Kenneth Stewart

[0 : 00] Seeking the Lord's blessing, we'll turn again to the second portion of scripture we read.

The Gospel according to John. John 3, chapter 3, and verse 14.

John chapter 3 at verse 14. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up. Now, last Sunday night we saw how this man, Nicodemus, a member of the sect of the Pharisees, came to Christ by night to ask him regarding the things of the kingdom of God.

And we notice that he came sincerely. Although he came in fear by night, nonetheless he came sincerely. And perhaps he represented some other people too amongst the Pharisees who recognized that Christ had come with a mission and with the authority of God himself.

[1 : 52] So he came to speak to him, really as rabbi to rabbi, that Christ would tell him more about God's kingdom. How it would come, how it would appear, how it would manifest itself, so that he would learn more about these things.

And the Lord entered into the discussion by telling Nicodemus immediately that unless he was born again, he could not see the kingdom of God or he could never experience the kingdom or the blessings of the kingdom.

Being born again was indispensable for that. And Nicodemus, of course, was perplexed regarding that statement. What did it mean? I must be born again.

And the Lord Jesus Christ tells him what it means. He must have a spiritual birth. As well as being born of the flesh in this world, he must be born of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit of God, giving him a new life and giving him new principles to live by.

And if he is born of the Spirit, then he will indeed see the blessings of the kingdom of God. Now, Nicodemus is still perplexed at that.

[3 : 05] And he says to him in verse 9, how can these things be? And the Lord again answers him in turn and says, are you a master of Israel and you know not these things?

Is it possible, Nicodemus, that you are a scribe? You teach in the synagogues, you preach every week, and you do not understand that you need to be reborn spiritually to enter into the kingdom of God.

Do you really believe as a teacher of Israel that you can enter into the kingdom of God on your own steam or by your own works? If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

If I have told you, Nicodemus, that you need the Spirit of God to understand the things of God, and that's a mystery to you, then how will you understand if I show you the full way of redemption?

If I speak of my own glory? Or if I tell you the great things that God has done in heaven in order to save men? How will you understand that if you have not yet learned to depend upon the Spirit of God to understand anything?

[4 : 21] Now, although the Lord speaks like that, still he goes on straight away to tell Nicodemus what these heavenly things are.

He goes on to tell Nicodemus what the mystery of the kingdom of God is. And he goes on to tell him, in some ways in a kind of rudimentary way or in a cryptic or hidden way, what the kingdom of God involves, how it is going to be set up and how it is going to be established.

And perhaps the central point of that comes in verse 16, where Christ tells Nicodemus this, For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

This is the first thing that God's kingdom involves. It is a giving on the part of God of his own Son. That is the cornerstone of the kingdom that God gives.

And it is not a Son in the sense of an adopted Son. No, it is an only begotten Son. That is the foundation stone of God's kingdom.

[5 : 47] God gave his only begotten Son. And then again, there's this. When God gave his only begotten Son, he gave him to become a man.

And that again comes through in a kind of hidden way. In verse 14, As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.

Notice, in verse 16, Christ is the only begotten Son of God. In verse 14, He is the Son of Man. What these things are telling us, is that the foundation of God's kingdom, is that God gives his only begotten Son, the Son of God, who will become the Son of Man.

He will become a man. And he will enter into this world as a man, not ceasing to be the Son of God. And when he does that, he will provide salvation for the world. Again, verse 16, God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.

[7 : 15] That is the key. And that is the heart of the matter. God gives his Son. His Son becomes a man. And in becoming man, he will save whosoever believes on his name.

And that is the message that Christ gives to Nicodemus. But there is a little more to it than that. And perhaps the real key, or what would really have come home gradually to Nicodemus, lies in verse 14.

That when God becomes a man, or when the Son of God becomes a Son of Man, something unusual will happen to him. Because as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.

Now you can imagine Nicodemus' reaction to these things. When Christ says to him, that God's only begotten Son will enter the world as a man, and will have an experience that is like the lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness.

Now, Nicodemus expected that God's Messiah, whenever he would come, would be lifted up. And that was a standard expression amongst the Jews, between the two Testaments.

[8 : 49] It was common amongst the Pharisees. It was a common expression for them to use, for the Messiah to be lifted up. They were waiting for their Messiah to come, even as the Jews still are.

And they waited for him to come, and to be lifted up by God, to be lifted up on the throne, to be exalted, to have rule over Israel, and finally to have rule over the world.

That was what they expected. That was the Messiah that they waited for. And the Lord says, Nicodemus, not so. The Messiah will be lifted up all right, but not in the way in which you expect him to be lifted up.

His lifting up will not be the lifting up of Solomon, who was on a throne which ascended up by various steps. It won't be the lifting up of David, who sat on an exalted throne.

It will be the lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness. That is the kind of lifting up that the Son of Man or the Son of God will have. But if he's lifted up like that, he will save whoever believes upon him.

[10 : 00] Now, Christ is saying this, that he will be lifted up like the serpent in the wilderness. Now, what exactly does that say to Nicodemus?

And what does it say to ourselves? What does it teach regarding the Savior? Well, let's go back for a moment to Numbers chapter 21 itself.

We read the passage, and I just want to bring one or two thoughts before you from that passage. Now, in Numbers 21, Israel were passing through the wilderness on the way to the promised land. And Edom denied them access into their own territory. So the children of Israel had to go around Edom, deeper into the wilderness.

And as they did that, the people became very, very discouraged. And again, they began to murmur against Moses and against the Lord.

[11 : 06] You can imagine the fierce heat of the Sirocco winds in these places. And the intense thirst that these people would feel in the wilderness. And what's more, they said, we are tired of this manna.

Day in, day out, there is nothing to eat, but this manna that falls upon the ground. Now, the Lord came into their midst in the way of judgment because of their murmuring.

And we're told that he sent fiery serpents among the people. Serpents of fire. The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, and much people of Israel died.

Now, the serpents of fire. I don't think the fire refers to their appearance. I suppose you could take it that way, that they looked like fire, fiery looking serpents.

I think rather it refers to their power, or to their poison, or their bite. These serpents were so venomous, that once they bit a person, that person's time was severely limited.

[12:17] In fact, I would imagine that they were so poisonous, that it was not very long at all, between the bite, and these people falling down dead. And when the venom entered into them, it was like fire.

It was experiencing a burning sensation, as you were caught in the grip of the poison, in the grip of death itself. So the Lord sent these fiery, or serpents of fire, among the people.

Now, that had an effect upon the people. Once many of them began to die, they recognized their own sin. And we're told that they then turned to Moses, and said, We have sinned against the Lord, and against you.

Pray to the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us. And so Moses then, prayed for the people. And when he did so, the Lord said this to Moses, make for yourself, a fiery serpent.

And Moses did that. He fashioned a fiery serpent. And he made it out of brass. God stipulated to him, that this serpent be of bronze, which is what brass actually means, that a serpent of bronze, a brazen serpent.

[13:35] And Moses was commanded to put it on top of a pole, and to raise up that pole in the midst of the camp of Israel. Now you have a vast horde, numbered perhaps in the millions, certainly many hundreds of thousands, of the children of Israel, encamped.

And this serpent was to be raised, obviously in a public, visible place. And it was made of bronze, and it was suspended upon the pole, in the midst of the camp.

And the Lord said to Moses, that if anyone were to look upon this serpent, once he was bitten, then he would be healed. All he had to do was look.

And it happened, if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, then he lived. When he beheld the serpent of brass, then he lived.

Now, it's that that the Lord has in mind, when he says, that the Son of Man must be lifted up. He must be lifted up, like that.

[14:48] And again, let's take the full import of these words. The Lord is not making an obscure allusion. He's not just saying, well, as that was lifted up, so I must be lifted up.

You have to press it, and say, that just as that was lifted up, for a purpose, and for a specific reason, in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, for a similar, or identical purpose, and for an identical reason.

I am like the brazen serpent suspended on top of the pole. Now, I think what that tells Nicodemus, first of all, is this.

Nicodemus, there is a plague in the camp. There is a plague in the camp of Israel. And what is it? Well, it is a plague of sin and destruction.

Now, remember in the morning, we noticed how the serpent, in the Bible, right from Genesis 3, symbolizes the devil, or sin. The two are one. It symbolizes sin.

[15:59] And Nicodemus is told here, that sin is raging, throughout the camp of Israel. Or to put it another way, mankind are affected, by a plague of fiery serpents.

And we have all been bitten by them. Sin is raging, in our lives, in our communities, in the world. Sin is at work. And the devil, the serpent, is biting, and putting his fangs, into you, and into me.

So much so, that the poison of sin, is raging, through our veins. It's coursing, through our veins. Every single one of us, is bitten, or infected, like this.

And he first, put his fangs, into Adam, and Eve, when he said, you shall be as gods, knowing good, and evil. And as I said, on Thursday night, that was the great promise, that he made, to Eve.

As God said, you shall not eat, of the tree. Well, God said, you shall not eat, of the tree, because he does not, wish you to be like himself. God wishes, to keep you, under his control.

[17:08] But I tell you, that if you, eat of that tree, of the knowledge, of good and evil, you, Eve and Adam, shall be as gods, yourselves, knowing good and evil. No longer, will you have to accept, what God says, but you will be raised, yourselves, to the point, where you can choose, what to do, and what not to do.

You shall be masters, of your own destiny. And from that moment, pride entered, into the heart of man. A pride, that has never left. A pride, with which you were born, and with which I was born. The pride, that sits on my heart, that will look after myself, that won't be subject to God, that is rebellious, against him, that tramples his law, underfoot, that wants to live, just as I want to live, that pleases myself, that is the sin, that courses, through my veins.

It will not acknowledge God, and it will not have God, to be king, over me. And because of this, raging poison, I have no fellowship, with God, no fellowship, with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And what is the result, of that plague? Well, one after another, in the camp of Israel, they dropped down dead. And what is the result, of sin?

[18 : 30] Well, the wages of sin, is death. And the gift of God, is eternal life. Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away, of his own lust, and enticed.

And when lust, has conceived, it brings forth sin. And sin, when it is finished, brings forth death. It's as though, sin has a ministry, to fulfill.

It's got a mission, to accomplish. The devil took it, into our experience, to accomplish, an end for himself. To kill us, to destroy us, to break us, to make us, as nothing.

And that sin, will have its way, with us. Until it has left us, as broken, empty vessels. Forever without God, and forever, without hope.

That is sin. When it is finished, it brings forth, death. Sin is unnatural. Death is unnatural. It ought never, to have been.

[19 : 35] A man's soul, ought never, to have been severed, from his body. God made the two one, and the two, to be one forever. But because of sin, death comes in, and body and soul, are severed, one from another.

And when you look, at a dead person, the first thing, you should say, is unnatural. That ought, never to have been. Man's face, ought never, to look like that.

To have the coldness, of stone, and to have the death, of something, that is bereft, of the presence of God. That never, ought to be so. It is a plague.

It has come in, from the outside. It belongs, to the realm, of the devil. But we are held, captive by him, at his will. And that is what Christ, is telling Nicodemus, you must be born again, because you are flesh bound, you are sin bound, and you are under the wrath, and condemnation, of God.

Now, some of you, may be, quite happy, and quite content, in that state. You are just living like that, without God, without hope.

[20 : 45] But some of you, like the Israelites, might have begun, to cry to God, to take these serpents, or to take this poison, away from me.

Deliver me, save me. Just as the Israelites, turned to Moses, and said, take these serpents, away. And Moses prayed, to the Lord, for the people.

Now, the important thing, for us to understand, is this, that there is, a healing, and there is a way back. The fact that, we are born sinners, doesn't mean, that we need to die, in the captivity of sin. It doesn't mean, that at all. God, provides, a way out. And the first thing, we can notice, from this serpent, in the wilderness, is that God, provides it.

It's God, who devised it. God said, to Moses, make a fiery serpent, and set it, upon the pole.

[21 : 53] And just as, Moses made the tabernacle, as God commanded him, so I believe, he made this serpent, exactly as God, commanded it. God said, make a fiery serpent.

And only this, would avail. Nothing else, but this. Now is that not true, with Christ himself, being lifted up?

Who provided that? Who devised that, as a scheme of salvation, from sin? God, so loved the world, that he, gave, his only begotten son, that whosoever, believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.

For God, sent his son, into the world, that the world, through him, might be saved. God, devised it. God, planned it. God, sent his son. God, gave, his son. And is that not, taken into the words, of our text itself?

[23 : 00] As Moses lifted up the serpent, even so, must, the son of man, be lifted up. Why, must he? Who decreed, the necessity?

Why is it a necessity? Because God, ordained it. That's why it's a necessity. There is no other escape, no other way of salvation, and God, puts the plan, into operation.

Was it possible, for him to have chosen, another plan? No, it was not, with reverence. It was not possible. There was only one way, and God, put it into operation.

Why? Because he so, loved the world. That is why. That is the reason given. God, so, loved, the world, that he put this plan, into operation.

He loved it. What did he love? The world. The world. And that doesn't mean, the world, quantitatively, quantitatively, but the world, qualitatively.

[24 : 05] It's a word, that means, he loved this thing, the world. The world, lying in darkness, in wickedness, and in sin, God, loved that.

So much so, that he sent, his only begotten son, into that world. He devised it. He executed it. And that is a marvelous thing, for us to behold, and to hear, that God did it.

And God put the plan, into operation. And in this wilderness, where the serpent, bites our souls, God sent, his son, to save us.

God provided it. And if you follow that plan, and if you embrace it, you shall be saved. Now, this plan that God provided, was, a mysterious one.

It involves, a serpent, made, of, bronze. Now, how does this serpent, made of bronze, relate, at all, to Christ, upon the cross?

[25 : 18] And I think people, generally, have a difficulty, with this. How can Christ, be symbolized, in any way, by a serpent, upon a pole?

Well, let's take it, bit by bit. In the first place, let's understand, that what the serpent, really symbolizes, is actually, sin.

Sin. But, this sin, or sins, are, for some reason, suspended, upon, a pole.

Or, upon, some kind of, wooden shaft, of some kind. The serpent, is suspended, upon that. Now, what does that convey?

Well, it conveys, the idea, of cursing. Cursing. And, there are two things, I think, that bring this, before us, very vividly.

[26 : 20] In the first place, the serpent, is made of bronze. Now, bronze, as well, has a particular, significance, in the scriptures. Bronze, speaks, of the judgment, of God.

It speaks, of condemnation. For example, in Jeremiah, we have this expression, that, when you pray, the heavens, shall be as brass, or as bronze.

Now, that means, that when you pray, up to heaven, the heavens, instead of being open, in such a way, that God is hearing, and receiving your prayers, it means, that the heavens, are closed.

The heavens, are like bronze. It means, that all you can see, is the judgment, of God, in heaven. That God, is condemning you, or God, is looking down, upon you, with disfavor.

The heavens, are as bronze. Let me take, another example, for you. And this one, is from Revelation. The book of the Revelation, in chapter 1. Where John, sees, the exalted Christ.

[27 : 24] He sees, his hair, white as wool. His eyes, like a flame of fire. He sees, a sharp, two-edged sword, proceeding, out of his mouth. He sees him, girt, with a robe, right down to his feet.

And then, he tells us, that he sees, the feet of the Savior, like bronze, blazing with fire, in a fiery furnace.

Now, you remember, that, Christ is so, often spoken of, as having, his feet, as it were, on the neck, of his enemies.

Very often, when people were warring, in the Old Testament times, or in ancient times, when one king, conquered another, there was a symbolic act, of the king, putting his foot, upon the neck, of the one, that was vanquished.

It was a sign, of victory, and of triumph. And sometimes, in the Old Testament, we find, the Messiah, pictured for us, for example, Psalm 110, as one who will stand, upon the neck, of his enemies.

[28 : 32] He will be triumphant, and he will be victorious. Now, that's what's brought, before us, by his feet, being as bronze. If you are, under his feet, then you are, judged by him.

You are, defeated by him. You are, vanquished. You are, under the judgment, of the sun. And, it's an active, kind of punishment, because it was, a burning bronze, as though it was, in a fiery furnace.

Or, to be under, the judgment, of Christ, is a severe thing. It is a burning thing. It is a terrible thing, to be under, the bronze feet, of the exalted, Lord, and Savior.

And here, the serpent, that is suspended, upon a pole, is bronze. That tells us, that this sin, is somehow, judged.

Or, it's under, condemnation. It is under, the wrath, of God. Or, something else too. It is suspended, upon a pole.

[29 : 34] Now, you remember, the words in Deuteronomy, cursed, is he, that hangs, upon a tree. Cursed, is he, that hangs, upon, a tree.

Now, when Christ, says, the son of man, must be lifted, up, as the serpent, was in the wilderness. Is that not telling us, that he, will take that place, the place, where he is suspended, and so, cursed. He is in the place, of suspension, of rejection, where he is, anathematized, under the wrath, and under the curse, of God.

In other words, sin, is going to be punished, it's going to be judged, but it's going to be judged, in a person. It must be judged, in a person, because it can't be judged, in the abstract.

[30 : 42] How are you going to judge, sin in the abstract? How are you going to take, a sin itself, and punish it? You cannot punish, a sin, without punishing it, in a person.

It is only a person, or a thing, that can be punished. You cannot punish, an abstract thing, like sin. And so, sin must be taken, and it must be put, upon someone.

Who? Well, the son of man, must be lifted up, like the serpent, in the wilderness. Ah yes, my friend, God will judge sin, and he will condemn it, but always, in a person.

And who is he, condemning it here, in the wilderness? He's condemning it, in the person, of his own son. God gave his son, to become the son of man, and as the son of man, he becomes a sin bearer.

That's what he becomes. And is that not, what Peter tells us, when he says this, 1 Peter chapter 2, who his own self, bear our sins, in his own body, to the tree.

[31 : 59] There's the curse again. Who his own self, personally, bear our sins, in his own body, to the tree.

He went to it, and he was suspended on it, with our sins upon him. And this identification, between Christ, and the sins of his people, was so close, the two in many ways, became so identified, and so intertwined, that Paul can say this, he hath made him, to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made, the righteousness of God, in him.

He made him, to be sin for us. Most of you will be aware, that in Gaelic, that is softened a little bit. It says in Gaelic, that he was made, a sin offering, e per stferki.

Now that is true, but in the original, it is stronger than that. The word is just, sin on its own. He made him, to be, sin for us, who knew, no sin, in his own life, he didn't know it, but he became it.

That we should become, the righteousness of God, in him. In other words, sins are judged, in the person, of the son.

[33 : 32] That is the truth, of the gospel. That is the most, wonderful thing, that ever happened, in the history, of the universe. God gave his son, to be cursed, upon a cross.

Cursed is he, that hangs, upon a tree. Now when I said, a moment ago, that sin, can only be judged, in a person, I mean that. It can never be judged, apart from a person.

It must be judged, in a person. In other words, unless your sins, are on Christ's back, they'll be on your own back. That is what I mean.

Unless they have been, punished in him, they'll be punished, in you. And there is no one else, upon whom, you can offload them.

There is absolutely, no one else, who can stand, in your place, and be a sin bearer, for you. Or a punishment bearer, for you. Except the Lord, Jesus Christ.

[34 : 34] And friends, if you don't have him, you'll stand, for yourself, on the day of judgment. And how can you, stand in that day? I saw the small, and the great, stand before, the judgment seat, of Christ.

And the books, were opened, in that day. And then the kings, and the great men, of the earth, and the free men, and the slaves, asked God, that the hills, might fall on them, and that the mountains, might cover them.

For the great, and terrible day, of his wrath, has come, and who shall be able, to stand? Revelation chapter 6. All that we could have, but just a glimpse, of that, what it means, to stand before God, with our sins, still on our back.

How different, compared to, standing before God, with our sins, dealt with, on someone else's back. Dealt with, by the sin, bearer.

Now, my friends, that's the way, it must be. And Nicodemus, came to an understanding, of this. I have no doubt, of that. Nicodemus, came to an understanding, of it.

[35 : 45] Remember last week, I said that, we have three mentions, of Nicodemus, in the gospel. And each time, he's got more light. The first time, he's weak, and inquiring.

Second time, he's standing up, for Christ, in the Sanhedrin, and he's saying, why are you judging him, before giving him, a proper hearing? The third time, you find him, what's he doing?

He's taking, the body of Christ, and he's embalming, it in spices. Now, it's often, it's often said, and I'll agree with it myself, that in some respects, that shows a lack of faith.

In other words, maybe he didn't understand, the resurrection, of the body. Well, be that as it may, whose faith is so great, that he encompasses everything. What I want to notice, is this thing.

There, that body was, on top of the cross. You couldn't have, a sure sign, to a Jew, of being under, God's condemnation, than to be suspended, upon a tree.

[36 : 47] That was a mark, of someone, who was a curse. What does Nicodemus, think of that body? He takes it, and he wraps it, in spices. Because he loves, that body.

And if that body, was cursed, well, Nicodemus knows, there was a purpose, for that curse.

Nicodemus knows, that this was a man, sent by God. He knows that.

And he has come, to believe in this man, as the savior of sinners. And he loves that body, and that's why, he wraps it in spices. He has faith, in the man, who became a curse.

And I would pray, that you would come, to have faith, in the man, who became a curse. That he can save, your soul. He can deliver you, from whatever thing, is holding you, in bondage. He can save you, from your sin, from ruin, and desolation.

And bring you, into eternal fellowship, with himself. Nicodemus, came to know it. The wind blew, in Nicodemus. The spirit came, and he was born again, by the power of God.

[37 : 46] And may that, become true, of yourself. The last thing, I want to notice, about this serpent, on a pole, is this. Not just, was it provided, by God, just as Christ was.

And not just, was it mysterious, as Christ's death, was mysterious, cursed, to save. But this, it was made effective, by faith.

Made effective, by faith. Everyone, who looketh upon it, God said to Moses, everyone, who looketh upon it, shall, live.

Now, for myself, I don't know, but, for myself, I don't feel, we should take that, absolutely, literally.

Or put it this way, I don't think, we should take it, in its most simple sense.

As though, just glancing at it, was enough, to save you. Because, I think that the, serpent, was probably placed, where everybody, could see it.

[38 : 49] It was probably placed, where everybody, could see it. I think, what it means, is this, that, if you looked upon it, believing, or expectantly, you should be saved.

That's what I think, looking at it means. In other words, Moses, if they accept this, as my cure, provided for them, and if they look at it like that, as my work for them, then indeed, they will be healed.

Now, you may wish to take issue with that, but, that's how I understand, the expression, looking upon it anyway. Now, that would require, this, first of all, that it be, visible.

And, I've no doubt, that that's why, for one reason, it was suspended, upon a pole, or suspended, upon some, wooden shaft, of some kind. It would be raised, not just to say, here is a bronze, cursed thing, but here it is, in the midst of the camp, and you, look at it.

It must be, a public place, where the old could see it, the young could see it, the people at the edge, of the camp, could see it. Everyone, wherever he was, could look at the pole, as the thing, that God had provided, in order to save them, from the curse, of the serpent.

[40 : 11] And then, of course, that required, I think also, as I mentioned, just a look of faith, believing it to be, an effective cure, from God, humbling yourself, to rely on it, and to take it, as what would give you life.

Now, is that not true, with Christ? Is that not true, with Christ? As Moses, lifted him up, so must the son of man, be lifted up. First of all, he must be visible.

How can you hear, without a preacher? And how can they preach, except they be sent, of God?

How can the Lord, save us, except we hear of him?

Except we see him? Unless we listen, to the gospel? Unless we receive it? Must Christ, not be made visible? Did he not say, in John chapter 12, verse 32, I, if I be lifted up, will draw, all men, unto me?

And that means, not just that, he must be crucified, but that he must be, raised up, and placarded, before men. He must be displayed, proclaimed, and I think, that's signified, by this, that the cross, itself, is on a hill, a hill, called, Golgotha.

[41 : 35] Where? Outside, Jerusalem. Where was Jerusalem, built? On a hill, itself. on Mount Zion, sits Jerusalem. And in many respects, that was the center of the world.

I don't mean, of course, in the sense in which the old maps, showed it. Of course, the maps in the Middle Ages, showed Jerusalem, to be at the center of the world. Now that may have been wrong, geographically, but it was sure right, spiritually.

Jerusalem was, the center of the world. And here, in that center, on Mount Zion, on a hill, in Mount Zion, on the hill, called Golgotha, suspended upon a cross, Jesus Christ, is proclaimed.

And let that forever, be a reminder to you, and to me, that we are to placard, or to portray, or to speak of Christ, to a world, that is lying, in wickedness, caught, in the hot fever, of sin.

And I think, Paul brings that before us, in Galatians, chapter 3, and verse 1. That was how Paul, himself lived. To display, the Lord Jesus Christ.

[42 : 42] And he says this, to the Galatians, O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, or literally, who put the evil eye on you, that you should not, obey the truth, before whose eyes, Jesus Christ, has been evidently, set forth, and crucified among you.

And that word, evidently set forth, means the word, I used a minute ago, placarded. As though Paul is saying, I came, he says, and placarded Christ, among you.

And he says, that was before your eyes, and you saw him, in the gospel, and you believed him.

What has bewitched you now, that you have given way, to another spirit, he says. But Christ, was placarded, and when he was placarded, he was believed in.

Just as Paul also says, in Romans, that Christ, was set forth, as a propitiation, for our sins. And that word again, set forth, means to be put, in a public place.

A public place. This was not done, in a corner. This was done, in the open. Because it's for you, for every single, one of you, this message is.

[43 : 56] Believe, in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. You cannot say, it's a hidden Christ. You must confess, that he is lifted up, that he is visible. Visible to you, and so you must, believe in him.

Ah, but you say, what does it mean, for me to look at him? What does it mean, for me to look at him? I feel I have looked at him. And I feel I've listened, but I still feel, I am not saved.

Well, to look at Christ, means, this, first of all, that you receive him, there, as God's provision, for sin.

That's the first thing. That you give a hearty, amen to that, in your heart. That you believe, that God, so loved the world, that he gave his, only begotten son.

That's what you believe, that that man crucified, 2000 years ago, was the son of God. Do you believe that? Oh, you say, I believe that all my life. I say to you, do you believe it?

[45 : 02] Do you really believe it? That Jesus of Nazareth, crucified under the Romans, was the only begotten son of God, who created the world, created the universe, created your soul.

You must believe it, that he was sent by God, into this world. And then again, you must believe this, that when he was crucified, it was no accident, but that it was purposeful.

And he died there, as a bronze serpent, in the sense that, in him, sin was judged. In him, sin was dealt with.

In other words, you must look at him, as a sacrifice. God's sacrifice, for sin. That is how you must, look at him and say, yes, O Lord, it is thy son, sacrificed, for sins.

And then again, there is this, you must look at him, as someone, who deals, with your own, sins, on that cross.

[46 : 10] You must look at him, like that. You must look at him, as someone, who will deal, with your own sins. Wipe them out, wipe your slate clean.

You must look at him, like that. And look at him, in such a way, that accepts him, as giving you, everlasting life.

As having that power, in his hand, for God, so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever, believeth on him, should not perish, but have, everlasting life.

Look at him, like that, the life giver, the Messiah, who gives me, life. No, my friends, do you look, at him, like that?

Do you look, at him like that? Or is it possible, like last week, you are looking, at him like that, and you just, do not fully, realize it? The wind bloweth, where it listeth.

[47 : 12] How many, there could be, how many, I think there are, within this house, tonight, who are looking, at Jesus of Nazareth, just like that, and do not have, the full assurance, or full persuasion, of it?

I ask you again, is he beautiful? Is he a tractor? Is he a savior? Is he the son of God, to you? Is he the sacrifice?

Is he the giver, and bringer, of eternal life? Are you drawn, to that? Are you moved, by that? Can you put your, yay and amen, to that? Ah, well then, why?

As I said, last week, are you still looking, for your birth certificate? Will you not be content, with the fact, that you breathe, with the fact, that you breathe, look to me, all ye, ends of the earth, and be ye, saved.

That, is how we are to look, at the son of God, he did the work, and did the work, on our behalf. So as Moses, lifted up the serpent, in the wilderness, even so, must the son of man, be lifted up.

[48 : 18] Now, when he finished, talking to Nicodemus, I suspect, that Nicodemus, was a changed man. It's very difficult, for us sometimes, to identify, when a person, becomes a changed man.

That's really, what I've been saying. What took him out, in any case, at night time, to see the Lord? It was some kind, of stirring in his soul. But by the time, the Lord had finished, speaking to him, I suspect, Nicodemus, was a changed man.

That the Lord, blessed him, or certainly, shortly afterwards, the Lord blessed, these things to him. And he received, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the saviour, of his own soul.

And will you not, come to that same Christ, that you yourselves, might have the same blessing, eternal life, which shall never end.