

# A Name Full of Meaning

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Preacher: Rev James Maciver

[ 0 : 00 ] We're going to begin our worship singing in Psalm 98. Psalm number 98 from the Sing Psalms version, that's on page 129. The tune is Peterson, we're singing verses 1 to 6.

O sing a new song to the Lord, for wonders he has done. His right hand and his holy arm the victory have won. The Lord declared his saving work and made it to be known. To all the nations of the world, his righteousness is shown.

Page 129 on the Psalm books, and it's Psalm 98, verses 1 to 6. The Lord declared his saving work and made it to be known.

To all the nations of the world, his righteousness is shown. His steadfast love and faithfulness, he has remembered well.

The covenant, he made with them the house of Israel.

[ 1 : 47 ] And all the nations of the earth have seen what God has done.

Our God who brings deliverance by his right hand alone. Acclaim the Lord of all the earth, shout loudly and rejoice.

Make music and be jubilant to him, lift up your voice.

With heart make music to the Lord, with heart his praises sing. With trumpet and with heart rejoice before the Lord, the King.

Let's join together briefly for a word of prayer before the children go through. Almighty God, we thank you today that we come gathered in your name.

[ 3 : 07 ] The name that is above every name. The name of the Lord. We pray today, Lord, for your blessing as we gather. And for your blessing upon this day which is so special to your people.

A day that you have set apart from the time of creation. So that it will be a day kept holy to the Lord. Lord, we ask your blessing today to be with our young people. Bless the children here today, O Lord.

Grant them your blessing as they once again come to meet together. And come to enjoy the teaching of your word delivered to them. We pray for them. We pray that you would keep them safe in the world.

We pray that you would, Lord, keep them safe from all the evil that is in the world. And from the way in which so many influences are brought to be upon young lives.

To lead them away from the things of God. Establish them in your truth, we pray. And continue to bless them. Be with us now and pardon our sin for Jesus' sake.

[ 4 : 05 ] Amen. Okay, children. I was going to say to you just now. 400 years from now.

500 years from now even. This church will have a certain number of people. And then I would tell you the names of each one of those.

500 years from now that will be sitting in this church. Would you believe that? Would you find that easy to believe? No, of course you wouldn't. How do we know how many people will be here?

500 years from now. How do we even know there will be a building here? 500 years from now. But 500 years before Jesus was born.

The prophet Zechariah. One of the books you find in the Old Testament. Near the end of the Old Testament. Prophet Zechariah wrote these words. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

[ 5 : 02 ] Daughter of Zion was a name for the church in the Old Testament. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion. Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your king is coming to you.

Righteous and having salvation is he. Humble and mounted on a donkey. And when Jesus, shortly before he went to the cross to die the death, he died on the cross.

Matthew chapter 21 tells us that he was on the way to the cross, on the way to Jerusalem. And that he gave instructions to the disciples, to two of them, to go into the village to find a donkey and a

colt.

A young donkey. And to take that and say the Lord needs them. And it says this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet saying, Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king is coming to you.

Humble and mounted on a donkey. And on a colt the foal of a beast of burden. And the disciples went and did as Jesus told them. And they found it exactly like that.

[ 6 : 10 ] Now isn't that amazing? Five hundred years before Jesus did that, the prophet Zechariah told that that would happen. He spoke about that event.

He spoke about it in such detail as fitted exactly with what actually happened five hundred years later. Why am I saying that? Because the coming of Jesus was prophesied throughout the Old Testament years.

God gave his prophets information about one who was to come to be the savior of his people. And today we can come to the Bible.

And as we look at these details in the Bible, that's one of the things we have as evidence. This is actually God's word. Who else could have actually predicted and told about the coming of Jesus so accurately before he actually came?

Five hundred years before he came. But God himself. And was God who told Zechariah. Now I know in your Sunday school classes just now you're going to be looking at some prophecies in the Old Testament about Jesus.

[ 7 : 22 ] And one of the things that that shows us, not just that prophecy I've read in Zechariah, but other prophecies like Isaiah 53, which is probably the most detailed and the longest prophecy about Jesus and his death, tells us how special this person and these events really were.

They were prophesied of long, long before they happened. They happened exactly as these prophets said. And that shows us today how special not only the event, but this person is.

How special he is to his church in every age. And how special he is to ourselves as well. And what makes Jesus special, we're going to be looking at this in the sermon today, is that he came into the world to be our Savior.

To save us from our sins. And all of that was so special to God that he gave these prophets information hundreds of years before it happened, because it's special to him as well.

That we come and place our trust in Jesus. That we come and take him as our Savior. And so today, it doesn't matter what age we're at, but this always will be the case.

[ 8 : 41 ] That Jesus is the most special person who ever lived, who exists today, and that you could ever possibly know. He is so special that that happened according to God's Word hundreds of years before.

So I hope he's your Savior today, and that he's special to you as well, and to me. I'm going to say the Lord's Prayer now. You'll find it on your sheets. Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen. Now we're going to sing some more verses this time.

We're singing Psalm 103. Psalm 103 in the Scottish Psalter. The tune is Kilmarnock. And verses 1 to 5. That's on page 369.

[ 9 : 55 ] O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord, and all that in me is, be stirred up his holy name to magnify and bless. Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God, and not forgetful be of all his gracious benefits he hath bestowed on thee.

And you can see from the opening words of the psalm here how the psalmist was stirring up his soul. And that's something we should do as well. Before we come to sing the words of the psalms that we're singing, we should look into our souls and we should seek to have our souls really stirred up before and during singing such wonderful words as these.

To give thanks to God for all his gracious benefits. So Psalm 103 and verses 1 to 5. Again, we'll stand to sing. Amen. O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord, and all that in me is, be stirred up his holy name to magnify and bless.

Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God, and not forgetful be of all his gracious benefits he hath been showed on thee.

All fine and equity who doth most graciously forgive who thine diseases fall and pains doth ill and ill believe.

[ 12 : 11 ] He doth redeem thy life that thou to death mayst not go down.

To thee with loving kindness doth and tender mercy shroud, who with abundance and solve good things thus satisfy thy mouth.

So that ye last the eagles' age renew it is thy youth.

Let's now turn to read God's word. We're reading today in the Gospel of Matthew and chapter 1. I'm going to read through the whole of chapter 1, which has a lot of Hebrew names in it, but it's there for our reading. So Matthew, chapter 1, from the beginning.

[ 13 : 36 ] The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez, and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nashon, and Nashon the father of Salmon, and Solomon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David, the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

And after the deportation to Babylon, Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matan, Matan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David were 14 generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon, 14 generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ, 14 generations.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

[ 15 : 59 ] And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet.

Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us. When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him.

He took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus. Amen, and may God bless again our reading of his word.

Let's again call upon him in prayer. O Lord, our gracious God, we thank you for all the evidence we have in your word, of your own existence and of your works, and of the wonder of your arrangement of the course of history.

[ 17 : 20 ] We thank you, O Lord, today that your word brings us, infallibly, that record that we have read, that has been carefully recorded down through the years.

We bless you, O Lord, that that itself is a testimony to the way in which we should regard your word as inspired by your Holy Spirit. We thank you today that we have this great record of your word in its entirety for our benefit.

We bless you, O Lord, for the way that it reveals to us so much about you, so much that we could never find out for ourselves, that it reveals to us your great attributes, your works of redemption, the way in which you have dealt with your people down through the centuries, the way in which you continue to be a God to your people, even to us today.

We thank you, too, for all that your word reveals is yet to take place, and for the events that will mark the end of the age of the coming of the Lord. We thank you, Lord, that these things are recorded for us, for our benefit, that we might believe, and that we might come believingly to worship you today.

We thank you, too, for all that your word tells us about ourselves, our need of a Savior, our sinfulness, our rebellion against you, our reluctance, and all that is true of us by nature, as we find ourselves, Lord, seeking to live independently of God.

[ 18 : 52 ] We thank you for the provision that you have made for us through Jesus Christ, that in him you have sent a Savior to us, one who is now Lord of all, crowned in heaven.

We bless you that, in accordance with your own will and your own word, he came and took to himself the sin of his people and died the death that we deserved.

We thank you today, Lord, that the victory remains with you, and that through him you have come to accomplish that triumph over death which is so evident in him.

O Lord, bless your word to us, we pray today. May your Holy Spirit take it and lay it upon our hearts. May our minds newly be enlightened. May we come, O Lord, anew to marvel at the grace and the mercy that has provided this for us.

May we come to worship you with our hearts, truly lifted up like the psalmist was, to be stirred up, to magnify and praise the Lord. Bless us then, we pray today as a congregation.

[ 19 : 58 ] Bless us in the week ahead and all the activities that we anticipate by your will. We ask, O Lord, that you would be with us in all of these activities, in all the services of worship, times of prayer.

We pray that you would be present in them all to bless, that we may come, Lord, both adults and children alike to benefit from the gospel and from the service of those who teach us and those who lead us in these activities.

We ask your blessing, Lord, to be with all today who cannot be present with us. Remember them where they are, at home or in hospital or in care homes. We thank you that they are able to, most of them able to participate in watching the service and feeling to be part of it themselves as they find it live streamed into their homes.

And, O Lord, we give thanks for that facility and we pray that as it is used so that you would bless it, O Lord, not only in our own locality but wherever else people come to hear the gospel through the services held here and in many other places.

We ask that your kingdom will advance. We pray that your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And we ask, O Lord, as we find ourselves coming so soon towards the end of another year, we pray that you would grant us not only thankful hearts but dependent hearts.

[ 21 : 23 ] For it is truly in you we live and move and have our being. We cannot live without you. Lord, we need you at every step of our way through life. Bless today those who are ill, those who are experiencing various types of illness, of body or mind.

We commend them to you and ask that you bless any treatment they receive, O Lord, from those who are skilled in your kindness to carry out these skills when we require them.

Bless those too who today mourn the passing of loved ones. Again, Lord, in this coming week, we anticipate having funeral services connected to us as a congregation. We pray, O Lord, that you bless those who mourn.

We pray that you would comfort them. We pray that the visitation of death itself might prove to be a means of blessing to them. Lord, we know that you are able to take even out of the darkest experiences the light of your truth and the light of salvation.

And we pray that all of our experiences in life, whatever they may be of whatever type, may lead us to yourself and may come to be a means by which your blessing reaches into our lives.

[ 22 : 36 ] Remember the world in which we live, Lord, with all its troubles. Lord, we know as we hear and see so much on our news. We know that the world is full of warfare, violence, hatred, death.

We know that these, Lord, are the result of our sin and fallenness. We pray that as a Savior has already come into this world and given His life to the death of the cross and risen from the dead, Lord, that the message of the gospel would truly come to penetrate hearts throughout the world who at this moment are closed to you or follow other types of beliefs and ideologies that can never bring us salvation.

Be merciful to us, we pray. Throughout the whole world, let your glory spread abroad throughout the world. Let your people, O Lord, be encouraged in you even as we find so many reasons why we could be discouraged.

Nevertheless, help us, Lord, we pray, to keep looking to you and to look to Jesus, the author and finisher of the faith of His people. Bless us then now, we pray here in our prayer.

Forgive our many sins and cleanse us for Jesus' sake. Amen. I'm going to sing once again to God's praise. This time we're singing in Psalm 40. Psalm 40 and sing Psalms, page 51.

[ 24 : 02 ] The tune is rocking him. And we're singing verses 5 to 10. Words again that are prophetic about the Lord and the Lord's coming, about the incarnation, the Son of God being born into the world in our human nature.

So we'll sing from verse 5. The Lord's coming. The Lord's coming. How many and how great they are. Your plans for us are far beyond our power to number or declare.

You did not ask that calves or goats be brought a sacrifice for sin, but you have opened up my ears. You did not seek burnt offering. Then I declared, Lord, I have come.

It's written of me in the scroll. I want to do your will, my God. Your law is in my heart and soul. Down to verse 10. The wonders you have done, O Lord.

The wonders you have done, O Lord. How many and how great they are.

[ 25 : 17 ] Your plans for us are far beyond our power to number or declare.

You did not ask that calves or goats be brought a sacrifice for sin, but you have opened up my ears. You did not seek burnt offering. Then I declared, Lord, I have come.

It's written of me in the scroll. I want to do your will, my God.

Your law is in my heart and soul. In the assembly, when it met your justice, I proclaimed abroad.

[ 27 : 05 ] I did not see you, Lord. You know all else about me, Lord.

I did not hide within my heart your saving grace and righteousness.

In the assembly, I proclaim your steadfast love and faithfulness.

Well, let's turn together for a short time to Matthew chapter 1. Matthew chapter 1. We can read again from verse 20.

Matthew chapter 1. Matthew chapter 2.

[ 28 : 30 ] He says, Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. Well, as you know, very often throughout the Bible, you find that names have significance. And names, especially in the Old Testament, contain elements of God's own truth in them. Sometimes they were just reminders to the people at the time, such as in the prophecy of Hosea. But words that contain el or ya, which are names or shortened names for God, you'll find there's a significance in these names because they carry a certain meaning of things that have to do with God. For example, the word Elijah, the prophet,

Elijah, el-a-ya means my God is Yahweh or Jehovah. And so that obviously fitted into his own ministry at the time, where he was called by God to be a prophet, to seek to call the people back to God from their disobedience, from their idolatry. My God is Yahweh, fitted his mission. The word Joshua in the Old Testament means Yahweh or Jehovah saves or is Savior. And that's really the Old Testament equivalent of the word Jesus. Jesus is the Aramaic for Joshua. And so the same thing applies in that instance as well. The word meaning Yahweh or God, the Lord saves. And when you come to verse 21 here in Matthew chapter 1, she will bear a son, you will call his name Jesus. Following on from the Old Testament, Joshua, the Lord saves. This child was to be called Jesus. And Joseph was told not only what to name the child, but why he was to be called Jesus, but why he was to be called Jesus. What was going to be the significance of his name? What was going to be the meaning of his name? Why was it to be important? Why was it to be called Jesus? For he said he will save his people from their sins. And there you see the content of the name, if you like, Joshua, Jesus, Yeshua. It is salvation or the Lord saves.

You will call his name Jesus. You will call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. Three things, really, to look at from this verse today. First of all, Jesus the Savior.

Secondly, Jesus the only Savior. And thirdly, although it's not in the verse, it's important nevertheless to us, not only is Jesus the Savior and Jesus the only Savior, Jesus is the returning Savior Savior or will be the returning Savior when he returns as promised in the Scriptures.

So first of all, Jesus the Savior. You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. Jesus came into the world specifically to deal with sin, to deal with our sins, to deal with all that

the Bible. All that the Bible calls sin in different ways throughout the Bible. In fact, in Romans chapter 8, where Paul is dealing with the importance of Christ coming into the world, one of the things he says there is that he came for sin. Romans 8 and verse 3, what the law could not do weakened by the flesh? God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin. [ 32 : 30 ] He condemned sin in the flesh. And these three words there are important. He came into the world for sin and for sin. It was to deal with sin. It was to grapple with sin. It was to overcome sin.

It was to deal with us as sinners that Jesus came into the world. Ephesians chapter 2, you well know that I'm sure, tells us that we are dead in trespasses and sins as we come into the world, as we're born into the world, as we are by native human beings. We are sinful human beings. We're fallen human beings.

We come into the world as those who are already under the condemnation of God because of our sin and sinfulness, of rebellion against Him. So, we need rescued from that condition. We need rescued from our position as sinners. That's why Jesus came to deal with sin. 1 Timothy 1.15, this is a faithful saying, says Paul, and worthy of all acceptance that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.

And then he said, of whom I am chief. But that's specifically why he came. Some people would say, why do you have to mention sin? Why do you people always have to mention at Christmastime a time of joy and happiness and celebration and all that sort of stuff? Why do you have... Surely that's really spoiling the whole thing about the Christmas story. Why do you have to bring sin into it? Why do you have to emphasize sin as you're doing? And does that not spoil the Christmas story? Does that not... Is that something you should just leave out for a few weeks at least of the year? Well, this is the Christmas story. There is no Christmas story without taking account of sin. Your sin and my sin. Human sin.

It doesn't spoil the Christmas story. It is, in fact, the Christmas story. Why can we sing joy to the world? As one of our Christmas carols, why can we sing joy to the world? Well, because sin has been dealt with, the Lord has come. As we mentioned in Zechariah chapter 9 and verse 9, the king comes riding upon this donkey. The king has arrived. The king has come into this world, and he's come into this world specifically to deal with sin. That's what his name signifies. He will save his people from their sins. And however much we may be accused of being rather negative and gloomy and dull by emphasizing sin, we're only doing what the Bible does. We're only doing what the Bible itself sets out for us. There is no meaning to the name Jesus if you detach it from the concept of sin. He came to deal with sin. He came to actually take the sin of his people to himself and therefore die the death that they deserved. You will call his name Jesus. He will save his people from their sins. And that's the next thing. Jesus, the Savior, is a Savior because he saves his people from their sins. And these words are also important. It doesn't tell us here that he came into the world to make salvation probable or to make salvation possible or to have a potential for salvation. He came to save, and that's what he does. He didn't come into the world in such a way that would just help us to educate ourselves, if you like, out of our position as sinners and somehow achieve salvation or get rid of sin and overcome sin. He came into the world to save us from our sins, to deliver us, to rescue us from our sins. Because when you think of sin in the way that the Bible teaches us, sin is more than just a concept in some sort of ideological sense. Sin carries guilt, carries defilement, carries power. And when Jesus came into the world to save his people from their sins, it's to save them from all of these aspects of sin and others we could mention. He came to save us from the guilt of sin so that it would no longer lie on our record.

[ 36 : 55 ] And so the record in the presence of God would not have condemned at the bottom of it, but saved. Of course, you need to come and know Jesus for yourself before that is true of us personally.

But he came to save us from our sins, from the guilt of sin. Sin also defiles us. God sees us as polluted by sin, in need of being spiritually washed. We are morally defiled and polluted. It doesn't seem like that to us as we look at ourselves till God opens our eyes. That's why we find it so often in the gospel that from the gospel being declared to us. We have a reaction to that sinner that says, well, I don't see myself really in that sort of defiled condition. I think I'm quite upright. I think I'm quite a decent person. I don't see my need of being washed. I don't see my need of, I don't feel guilty. I don't feel unwashed. I don't feel dirty in that sense. Well, this is what God is telling us. His eye, that purest eye of God, looks upon us in our sinfulness and says, you need washed.

You need to be cleansed from your condition. And the power of sin holds us until Jesus breaks it. So, in all of these aspects of sin and our sinfulness, the name of Jesus, the name Jesus, has a bearing upon all of that. He came into the world, He was born into the world to save His people from their sins, to save us out of our sins, to deliver us from our sins, to rescue us from our sins and our sinfulness. But you notice, it's their sins.

Sin is not something that's abstract. Sin is not something that exists as a concept outside of our persons. Yes, you might describe sin as if it were personified, and the Bible does that.

[ 39 : 05 ] But it never actually suggests for a moment to us that we can really look at sin properly as if it's just outside of ourselves, and Jesus came to deal with something that's very important, that God finds offensive, but it's detached from me. It's not. It's you and I who are sinners. He came so that He would save His people from their sins, their sins, their personal sins. That means me, the sinner, you, the sinner, every one of us, the sinner. He came to save us from our sins. And that means Jesus is for you.

Jesus is for me. Jesus as Savior, as His name contains that great message, that great meaning. Jesus is for sinners. That means He's for you, and it means He's for me. So that's why we need Him, to have Him for ourselves. The fact that He came to save sinners, and that is a fact. It will not save me if I don't come to Him, and if I don't receive Him. It will not save me if I don't put my trust in Him, if I don't hand over my life to Him, if I don't repent of my sin before God, if I don't seek to actually come and have the righteousness of Jesus applied to my life. The fact that I know He came into the world to save sinners is not going to save me if I haven't myself taken this Jesus as my Savior. So there's the great question today for you. You know that Jesus came into the world to save His people from their sins.

But is He your Savior? Have you received Him? Have you put your trust in Him? Is He just still a name to you? Or is He the most precious name in the world because He's your own Savior too? He will save His people from their sins. Not only Jesus the Savior, but Jesus the only Savior as well. It's implied, it's maybe not specified in the verse, but it's certainly specified elsewhere in the Bible. In fact, this really just follows on from what you have in the Old Testament. Jesus, of course, is God, Emmanuel, God with us, as Matthew here records. And go back to the likes of Isaiah chapter 43, for example, where the Lord says, I, I am the Lord. Before me no God was formed, nor shall there be any after me. I, I am the Lord, and besides me there is no Savior.

I am He. There is none who can deliver from my hand. I work and who can turn it back. You see, there's the exclusiveness of God, not only as God, but as Savior. And God having come in the flesh, in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ, this is what it's saying to us today, there is salvation in none other. Remember in Acts chapter 4, how in the challenge to Peter and the apostles, by what name have you done this? This man who was healed, you recall how that was in Acts chapter 4, and at verse 7 especially, where Peter replied, here is the challenge to Peter.

Peter, on the next day, the rulers gathered and they said, by what power or by what name did you do this? And Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said, rulers of the people and elders, let it be known to you that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by him, this man is standing before you well.

[ 43 : 10 ] This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone, and there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. See, Peter is again divulging the meaning or the name of Jesus to be exclusively the name applied to the Savior, that there is salvation in no one else. That's just in line with what Jesus himself said. In John chapter 14, for example, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me. Or again, you can find similar in 1 Timothy chapter 2, verse 5, there is but one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. He is exclusively the Savior. He alone is the Savior. And of course, the church, as it went out with the gospel in the days of the apostle, and they then came into contact with the pagan nations around them as the gospel penetrated into these nations that you find in the book of Acts described, these great cities and places that were filled with pagan practices, with idolatry. This is something the apostles had to keep coming back to and insisting upon. And when you read, for example, in Acts 17 about Athens crammed full of idols, this is something they kept bringing up and needed to bring up, that there is salvation in no one else. But Jesus alone is the Savior. He alone is God saving. Now that's important today for us in our multi-faith society as well. Because you well know

that around you there are all these kinds of ideologies and views and faiths so-called, where you find equality and tolerance and all of these things emphasized, and indeed emphasized to the point where Jesus is no longer regarded as exclusively the Savior if He's regarded as a Savior at all. And we're accused very often of being somewhat arrogant, intolerant even if we say that there is salvation in no one else but in Jesus, that He is exclusively the Savior of sinners. If you try and insist on that, you'll get this reaction all too often. That's surely being very intolerant. That's being somewhat ignorant. Why should you actually insist on that when there are so many other views and when you should actually have tolerance towards other views? Well, what is tolerance? What is tolerance for the Christian who insists that Jesus is alone the Savior? What kind of meaning do you give to the word tolerance? Well, not the kind of meaning the world gives it all too often. Being tolerant is accepting other people's views that they have a right to hold without necessarily accepting the views themselves.

I can accept quite frankly, quite easily the right, the liberty of a Muslim to hold the views that they have. I have no intention of accepting them as the truth because the truth is in Jesus alone.

[ 46 : 37 ] So that's tolerance. But tolerance is redefined in our society so often as every view, whether it's religious or moral or secular or whatever, is of equal validity and can equally be said to be the truth. If it's the truth for you, then it's the truth and it's as good as any other kind of truth.

Well, that's not what the Bible is saying. While you have to be tolerant in the sense that I've mentioned, it doesn't mean that the Christian standpoint, our insistence that Jesus is alone the Savior, it doesn't mean that you actually give that up in such a way as to place any other so-called Savior on an equal footing. That isn't tolerance at all. And it's the same when you come to equality and all these other words. Tolerance is not insisting that all views are actually true and on the same level of truth. And we're also told you have to make the gospel relevant.

You have to make the gospel relevant to the age in which we live in our age, in our society as it is today. Well, what does that mean? Is making the gospel relevant, taking out all the bits that people don't like, so that you're removing that which people find offensive, and then some over earth think that you've got something left that you can meaningfully actually set before people and say, well, that's going to be enough for you. If you follow that, you'll be all right.

Of course it isn't. You can't actually come to the Bible or to the gospel and say, well, you know, people are not going to find that nowadays very happy with you presenting Jesus as the only Savior. So you've got to actually take out the bits that really, in the Bible, that actually deal with them exclusively as the Savior to make this gospel relevant to today's world.

You've simply got to do that sort of thing. Well, making the gospel relevant is not removing the bits people don't like. Relevance is not making the gospel fit the ideology of the world. That's not making it relevant. As a matter of fact, you don't make the gospel relevant anyway. The gospel is relevant. The gospel is always relevant because it's the gospel that presents Jesus exclusively as the Savior of sinners. That makes it relevant.

[ 49 : 10 ] And it will always be relevant as the gospel of Christ, as the gospel of salvation. We don't have to make it relevant. We have to certainly watch how we present it. We have to do that with tact, with love, with patience, believably, all of those things. But it's not up to us to make it relevant.

God has already made it relevant because of what the gospel is and because of the need of sinners is what it is. You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

There is no other Savior but Jesus because there is no one else qualified to be so. There is no one else qualified to be the Savior of sinners apart from Jesus himself. He has all the qualifications. He has all the elements, the attributes. Everything that's needed for salvation is already there in him, which is why the apostles could so confidently go out and say, there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved but the name of Jesus. You shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. It's a gospel for today's world.

It's a gospel that's relevant to today's world because it's a gospel that contains Jesus, the exclusive Savior, the almighty Savior, the holy Savior, the loving Savior, the authoritative Savior, everything you can say about him as an attribute or quality is his as the Savior. And we need no other because everything there in him is provided already. Isn't that why you are concerned that he is your Savior? Why should you look anywhere else for the need of your soul when everything you need is already in Jesus? Why should you listen to any other ideology that calls into question the reliability of the Bible, of the gospel? Why should you listen to the voice that tells you you can't possibly be serious when you're saying that all of these other world religions and secularism and everything else that

people hold dear, that you're going to actually place this ahead of them? Well, why not?  
[ 51 : 52 ] If this is what God has provided, as it is, why should you look anywhere else? Why should any other point of view be equivalent to the gospel in which Jesus is the Savior?

You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. Jesus is the Savior. Jesus is the Savior, and finally, Jesus is the returning Savior. It's not in the text, as I've said at the beginning, but we're just taking Jesus, the person, as the Savior in the sense in which he is yet to return to this world at the last day. He is the returning Savior. That's the Savior we expect. It seems that there was an old Christian tradition where on the first day of Advent, the days coming leading up to Christmas, but on the first day of Advent, a church focused on not only the first coming of Christ, but also the second coming of Christ. And something perhaps we've lost from our thoughts, that that's really something that we need to think of at Advent time. Advent means Christ's coming, but Christ has a second coming. He will return at the end of the age. He will return as the judge of the world.

He will return visibly and in glory to judge the world and to bring his people home to heaven. In other words, Jesus' birth begins the new age. It's not the end of the new age when Jesus is born, or even when Jesus dies and rises from the dead and is ascended to heaven, goes to sit at the right hand of God, exalted. That's not the end of the new age. The new age begins with his birth, and the new age will be completed with its return, with the second coming of Jesus. That's why throughout the New Testament you find the apostles and others so excited about the return of Jesus, the prospect of the King coming back, and the King coming back in His glory. Think of Philippians chapter 3, there in verses 20, around verse 20 there. Our citizenship or place of citizenship is in heaven, the apostle says, from which we eagerly expect a Savior who is Christ. We're eagerly expecting a Savior. He's already come, but we're expecting Him to return, and we're expecting Him to return to take His people home. He will transform the body of our humiliation to be like the body of His own glory. These verses go on to say. And then Philippians 2 verse 10 will be a reality. What does

Philippians 2 verse 10 say? It talks about Jesus being exalted by God the Father, raised Him from the dead, and exalted Him to glory. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. That will be a reality when this Savior returns. The Savior who saves, the Savior who's the only Savior, the Savior who will return as the Scripture promises. Then that will be brought to pass. Every knee shall bow, every tongue shall confess, reluctantly or willingly, that He is Lord and Lord of all. We sing these words, don't we, very often at Christmas time? Who is He in yonder stall? The carol or the hymn has that verse. Well, what does it say? Who is He in yonder stall? At whose feet the shepherds fall? Who is He in deep distress, fasting in the wilderness?

Tis the Lord, oh wondrous story. Tis the Lord, the King of glory. At His feet we humbly fall. Crown Him, crown Him, Lord of all. Have you done that?

[ 56 : 33 ] Have you crowned Him, in your heart, in your life? This Savior, this exclusive Savior, this returning Savior. Crown Him, crown Him, Lord of all. Let's pray.

Our gracious God, you have provided for us salvation in your Son. You have provided us with a Savior who alone is adequate and endowed to be our Savior. And Lord, we thank you today that you came into this world, not only in accordance with ancient prophecies, but also by your own will and purpose.

We thank you for your willingness, of which we sang, O Lord, in the psalm, when you said, Now I come. I come to do your will, O my God. We thank you today, O Lord, for the accomplishment of all that you came to do in this world. We thank you, Lord, in anticipation of your coming again.

May we be ready against that coming. May we have you crowned in our hearts already. May we anticipate that second coming of the Lord as the judge of all the earth. Lord, enable us, we pray, by your grace and through faith in your name, to anticipate that expectantly, eagerly and excitedly, rather than with dread. Hear us, we pray, for your glory's sake. Amen.

We're going to sing now in conclusion Psalm 118. That's in the Scottish Psalter, page 399. From verse 24 down to the end of the psalm, which speaks about the one who came to save us and God who made light to arise, all of which are fulfilled through the coming and the death of Jesus.

[ 58 : 48 ] This is the day God made. In it will joy triumphantly. Save now, I pray thee, Lord. I pray, send now prosperity. Blessed is he in God's great name that cometh us to save. We from the house which to the Lord pertains, you blessed have. The Tunis, Prince Edward, Ireland. This is the day

God made.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Remember the Lord? Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. I pray thee, Lord, I pray, send out prosperity.

[60:04] Blessed is he in God's great name that cometh us to save.

We from the house which to the Lord pertains you, blessed have.

Pertains you, blessed have. Pertains you, blessed have.

We from the house which to the Lord pertains you, blessed have.

God is the Lord who unto us hath made light to our eyes.

[61:04] Bind ye unto the altar's hearts, with hath the sacrifice.

With hath the sacrifice, with hath the sacrifice.

Bind ye unto the altar's hearts, with hath the sacrifice.

Thou art my God, I'll be exiled. My God, I will be praised.

Give thanks to God for it is good. His mercy lasts always.

[62:06] His mercy lasts always. His mercy lasts always.

Yes, I do not for he is good. His mercy lasts always.

After the benediction, if you allow me please to go to the main door, I'll greet you there. Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you now and evermore.

Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.