

Jesus makes a promise

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[0 : 00] I have the privilege of being able just to say a few words. For those of you who are here this morning, you would have heard me say that Christmas is all about God sending the right person at the right time for all the right reasons, Jesus.

Jesus is the right person who came at the right time for all the right reasons. And what are those reasons? Well, the reasons are so that we could be accepted by God to move in and to come into a relationship with God that we would not have if it was not for Jesus.

And there are many things in our life that stop us from getting into a relationship with God. And so I asked you the question this morning that you probably know the answer to already, that you get to that stage in your life where you don't want anything done for you.

I've not quite got to that stage in my life for Christmas where I've got to this Christmas and going, I can't think of anything that I want. Because every Christmas I can think of more than enough of what I want and get half the amount or less than that.

But the point is, is that even with God, you may sit here this evening and think, I don't want God to do anything for me. Jesus doesn't seem that important and I don't see any reason why I need Jesus.

[1 : 20] But let's just turn the question on its head and let me ask you, is there anything that God could undo for you? Okay, I'm not asking you what God could do for you, but is there anything that God could undo for you?

And we realised in life there's actually quite a lot actually that God could undo for me. And the way that he does it is quite strange. He simply loves us and loves us and loves us.

Now love is one of those strange things that I don't normally like talking about love a lot or even the squishy kind, but have you ever been sort of so madly deeply in love that you go off your food and you can't think about anything.

You can't do anything. You go to work. You can't do your work. You know, you can't, you get back. You just, you can't tie your shoelaces. You just can't think. Your hair is a mess, but it's a mess anyway.

You know, your clothes, you just don't bother what you look like and you just, you just, your life is just, you're just so deeply, madly in love with a person that you just, you just cannot stop thinking about that person.

[2 : 32] And the only thing to do, I figured this out, the only thing to do when you are that deeply in love with someone is to marry them.

And that is exactly what my wife did with me. Jesus in the New Testament makes a promise to the people that he's going to save by dying on the cross.

And the promise that he makes is, I will never eat this bread again or drink this cup until that day I see you in the kingdom with my father.

Now, it's a very strange promise, but what Jesus is saying by saying, I'll never eat again or never drink again until that day I drink it anew with you in the kingdom, is Jesus basically saying that my love for you is so great that I cannot think about anything else apart from you.

I can't think about eating, I can't think about drinking, I make this promise that I will not eat or drink again until that day I eat it and drink with you in the kingdom of heaven.

[3 : 45] It's such a wonderful promise that God makes to us. He's not saying that he's gone off his food, but what he is saying is that everything else comes second to saving you.

God loves the Father so much, and he loves you so much, that everything else comes second to making you into the good and perfect relationship with God that you are meant to have.

And the way Jesus does it is by removing certain things from our lives. What Jesus does for us is seen by what he undoes in us, by what he removes in our lives, in our thinking, in our actions, in our thoughts, past, present, and even future, and brings us into a right and good relationship with God. And so this raises a couple of things for us that Jesus, when he was explaining to his disciples, put it this way. You may have heard the prayer, Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. But do you remember another bit that Jesus says? He says, pray this, Father God, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

[5 : 09] In other words, the world is not the way God wants it to be. And God is going to change the world by making his will that is in heaven come on earth.

So God isn't just about making you right. God is in the business of making the whole world right. And so if God is going to make the whole world right, what type of people are going to live in a world that's new?

Well, the only type of people that are going to live in a new world are new people. And the way God makes you new is not by throwing you away and starting again with somebody else, but by taking you and removing all the things that you yourself actually want removed.

by taking you and removing all those things that you know you can't remove by yourself, but only God can. So the question is not what can God do for you, but actually, what do you want God to undo for you?

What do you want him to undo for you? I have a good friend and he told me the other day that he actually wants nothing to do with God.

[6 : 25] And we were having a discussion about God, of course. He says, I really want nothing to do with God. And I certainly don't want to turn to God. And I certainly don't want God to have any influence over my life in the here and now.

In other words, I really don't want God's will on earth as it is in heaven. I don't want that. But then he added this, but I do want to go to heaven when I die. Now, you can understand the problem.

Love, by definition, has to be completely free. You can't make someone love you. So I told him this story about have you ever asked a girl out and she said no.

He was a little bit shy, but, you know, I knew that a girl had said no to him more than once. I knew I was on to a winner. And I said, so you're chasing this girl. You love her.

You shower her with gifts. You want to do all that you can for her to show her that you're going to be around, that you're just, come on, I'll take you out. We'll go here. We'll go there. And she turns around and says to you the words that are like a knife to your heart.

[7 : 28] I like you, but just as a friend. And I said to him, can you make her love you?

He says, well, no, of course I can. So I said, here's the problem. God loves you so much that he won't force you into a relationship in this life.

But because his love is so free, he won't force you into a relationship with him when you die. You see, he thought that he could not have a relationship with God in this life and have one with him in the next.

But God's love is completely free. God can't make you love him. But the way that he gets your attention is by completely loving you and loving you and loving you. And then your heart begins to change.

And the only way to experience and see the love of God is to take a good look at Jesus Christ. But here's the thing. If you don't want to receive God's love now, God won't force you to receive it when you get into the next life.

[8 : 34] If you don't want to receive God's love now, as I said to him, if you don't want to be with God now, God certainly isn't going to force you into a relationship with him when you die.

So this idea that you don't want God now, but you want heaven later, just isn't going to happen because love, by definition, is free. Love can't make you do anything.

But what is there so aggressive or so objectionable or so bad about a God who loves you like that? About a God who gives you his son not to expose you, but to remove from you the very things that you want removed from your own life and to bring you into the type of relationship that you really want, one that you're never going to be let down, one where you're never going to be forsaken, one where you've always got a shoulder to cry and you've always got someone to go to.

You've always got someone who's stronger and better and more thoughtful and wiser and smarter than you are. Who would turn down a kind of relationship like that?

[9 : 45] I mean, what is it that can be rejected about a God who loves you in such a way that he doesn't force you into a relationship with him but will never give up calling you to come to Jesus?

So I began with a question and that question was not what can God do for you but actually what do you want God to undo for you?

Because the things that stop us getting into a relationship with God are the things that need undoing. And one of the biggest things that need undoing in anybody's life is sin.

And sin is this. It's saying no to God. On that definition, I'm a pretty good sinner even though I'm saved. But I still say no to God and it is a struggle because God's will has been done on earth and in my life and it's a struggle.

It's hard. But I know that the God who's doing it loves me. And the God who wants to change your life, it'll be hard. It'll be difficult.

[10 : 56] But he does it completely out of love. That's his motive. His motive to change you is one out of love. His motive to make you the person that you really are is one out of love.

See, I believe deep down that every single one of you in here know that you're more than what you really are sat here. I know it. And the reason I know it is because the Bible tells me.

And you know deep in your heart that even some people around you just don't get you. Even they don't see who you really are. And you find it hard to convince other people and sometimes you find it hard to convince yourselves that you know deep down you're not who you are on the outside.

And there's only one person who really knows that better than anybody else and it's God. And God is the one who sent Jesus to make you that person and to keep you as that person.

The person who you know deep down you really are. And the reason that person is not getting out is because sin holds us in chains. Bondage. Tight.

[12 : 01] Bound. To sin. And unfortunately death. And the only way to escape that kind of prison. prison. And you've got to remember not all prisons have bars.

Some prisons are thoughts. Some prisons are feelings. Some prisons are just the way that life has treated you. And the only way of escape is in Christ Jesus.

And so the call is simple. You need to come to the right person for the right reasons at this time.

You need to come to the right person for the right reasons at this time.

And that person is Jesus. The one who has come to seek and to save you who are lost. Lost from God.

And he has come to bring you home. He has come to bring you back to the place where you were always intended to be. And so the call to you this evening is simple.

[13 : 07] Turn to Jesus. follow him. Turn to him. Follow him. Trust him. For he has done for you what you cannot do for yourself.

And I'll finish with this. It's really quite interesting if you ever pick up a Bible. It actually tells us that God has already made peace with the world and my job is to go and tell you about it. So listen.

God has already made peace with you. He did it by sending his son Jesus to die on the cross. Now it's your turn. With a God who's already made peace for you.

For you now to turn in peace to him. Amen. Amen. God. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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

[14 : 07] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.