

31.1.21 am Luke 4

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Date: 31 January 2021

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] for the service this evening. The prayer meeting will be on Wednesday at half past seven on Zoom as normal and the youth fellowship again will meet this evening on Zoom as they've been doing over many months now. One final, it's not so much an intimation, it's more a recommendation.

It was brought to me by one of the congregation who heard a suggestion that over the month of February we should perhaps take a moment at 6pm each day starting on the 1st of February and just take a moment or two to bring the nation, the state of the nation before the Lord in prayer.

Maybe as we're sitting down to watch the six o'clock news with that sense of foreboding of what's coming next we could be committing our nation. Once known as the land of the book to the God who who's promised that when we call on his name and when we turn from sin and when we look to him in humility he will hear our prayers and he will heal the land. So these I think are all the intimations.

We're going to begin this service by saying or E&A; will lead us as he sings to God's praise. We won't be singing in the church but you're able to sing in your own homes. So Psalm 103 and from verses 1 to verse 5. Psalm 103 verses 1 to 5.

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.

[1 : 46] He hath bestowed on thee all thine iniquities who doth most graciously forgive, who thy diseases all and pains doth heal and thee relieve, who doth redeem thy life that thou to death mayest not go down, who thee with loving kindness doth and tender mercies crown, who with abundance of good things doth satisfy thy mouth so that even as the eagles age renewed is thy youth. These verses Ian will sing to God's praise now please.

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 all thine iniquities who doth most graciously forgive, who thy diseases all and pains doth heal and thee relieve. Who doth redeem thy life that thou to death mayest not go down, who who thee with loving kindness doth and tender mercies crown, who with abundance of good things doth satisfy thy mouth, so that even as the eagles age renew, it is thy youth.

So that even as the eagles age renew, it is thy youth.

Let's unite our hearts now in prayer. Let's pray together.

[5 : 02] Our heavenly Father, we thank you for this day. We thank you for this gift that you have given to us of a day where we are commanded to stop work and to seek rest in the God who is able to give to us that rest.

We hear the words of Jesus, even as we reflect on that, come to me, all who are weary, all who are burdened, and I will give you rest.

And we ask, Lord, that you would help us, that you would draw near to us, that you would draw near to us as we would seek to come to you. You've promised that when we draw near to you, you will draw near to us.

And, Lord, we know that we come not only to Jesus, but we come to the Father in and through the name and through the finished work of Jesus, a work that our eyes have been opened to see through the power of the Holy Spirit.

So receive us in Christ this morning, we pray, as we gather in the name of Jesus. We ask that you would be near to us.

[6 : 22] We are conscious that only very few of us can meet in this building this morning. And yet you've promised that even when the two or three of us who gather are here, that you are with us in this building.

And we are conscious, Lord, also, that as your people gather in their own homes, in different places, that you are with them as you're with us.

So we ask, Lord, that we would meet with you this morning. We thank you that you're the God who speaks. We thank you for the psalm where we have heard your voice.

We thank you that it speaks to us of the fact that you are the God who is gracious. And we ask, Lord, that our souls would be stirred up within us, that we would bless your name, that we would seek to magnify the Lord Jesus and not ourselves.

We thank you for all the benefits and grace that we receive, that peace with God which passes all understanding, that assurance that our sins are forgiven, our iniquities are graciously forgiven when we come in faith to the Lord Jesus, confessing these sins.

[7 : 46] And we do that even in this moment just now. As we search our hearts with the help of the Holy Spirit, as we think back over the last few days even, our minds go to things that we've said and thoughts that have run through our minds, actions and inactions that speak to us of our sin.

And we know, Lord, that you are grieved when you see that sin within us. But we thank you that in Christ you have made it possible for us to receive that forgiveness. We thank you that he died so that we might be forgiven.

He died to make us good. We thank you that he who was innocent stood in the place of the guilty. He who was sinless took our sin upon himself so that we could be made righteous.

And we pray that we would know the benefit of these gospel truths as we seek to take hold of them by faith this morning. We pray for those who are struggling in this day.

We're always conscious of those who are struggling. We know struggle in our own hearts. And Lord, as you see our own hearts, we pray that you would meet us at the point of our need.

[9 : 06] We ask that you would be with those who are anxious, especially as we move into this state of lockdown again, as we are conscious of those who are suffering with this virus and the more violent strain of it in Stornoway.

We commit them to you and we ask that your hand of healing would be upon them. We pray for those who are anxious about this encroaching virus and we pray that you would enable them, that you would enable us to look to you and to trust in you.

We pray for your protection over us and especially those who are most vulnerable, the older people in the congregation, those who are struggling with illnesses at this time, those whose health is in a vulnerable state.

We ask for your protection over them. We pray for the care homes in Harris as well, for Harris House in Leverborough. We pray for your ongoing protection of those in these places that this virus would be driven back.

We pray for those in the NHS who put themselves on the front line and who seek to serve us in health care in this time of crisis.

[10 : 24] We pray, Lord, that you would bless them, that you would protect them and that they would know that your hand is upon them. We pray for those that you're allowed to be in authority at this time.

We pray for the wisdom that we keep on noticing that they do not look to you for. We thank you that we can carry others to you in prayer and we would carry those who you have allowed to be in authority to you in prayer, asking, Lord, that you would look upon them and give to them the wisdom that they need.

And we pray that you would look upon us as a nation and that you would give to us in these difficult times a sense of your presence, a sense of your protection.

But above all, Lord, we pray that you would give to us that spirit of repentance, that in this time of difficult circumstances, we would hear God speak and that we would listen, that we would look to you.

We pray for those who are grieving. We thank you that in this psalm, we were reminded of the fact that you are the God who does not allow us to go down into eternal death because Christ is the resurrection and the life.

[11 : 46] We pray that your comfort would be given to all those who are grieving. And we pray that they and that we may be looking to the Lord Jesus.

We pray for those in the congregation who are sick at this time, especially we think of Ian Davidson, we thank you that there is another course of treatment that he begins next week.

And we ask that it would be effective that he would know your hand upon him. And we pray that he would know your presence with him as we commit to him and shown it to you.

We ask, Lord, that you would be near to them and that they would know the assurance of God with them, that they would know the assurance of the fact that you are the saviour of all who look to you.

We pray for our young people and we ask that you would be close to them at this time, that you would take away any anxiety that they or parents and teachers may feel through this difficult season.

[12 : 47] And we ask, Lord, that they would not drift from you at this time, but that they would draw near to you as we pray each one of us weep. So hear our prayers. Help us to be in the Spirit on the Lord's day.

Enable us, even though these circumstances and this medium is different for us, enable us to know the help of the Holy Spirit and to know that you are close to us.

And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Well, boys and girls, I can't see or hear any of you today, but I believe that you're behind that screen, behind that camera.

So I've got something to show you, but I don't have it in the building with me. It's on a video, so I'm going to stop talking just now and hopefully Stuart will be able to bring the video up so that you can see it.

I don't know.

[14 : 10] Okay, boys and girls, I hope you were able to see that okay. And if you were here, I would ask you, what's that or who's that?

And you know that that's that's Shoros, our dog. And he's got various toys that he likes, but the thing that he likes best was a toy that he was given at Christmas time. It's called the Sloth because it's a teddy sloth.

And he keeps it in his basket. He doesn't like it to go too far away from him. But if you take it and you start to pull it, he will take hold of it and he will not let go.

And so you saw in the video that Shoros and I were having a tug of war to see who could wrestle this sloth into our hands or Shoros and I was going to do it.

And it's the wrestle that I wanted you to see because in the Bible reading that we're going to look at with the older ones this morning, we read about a wrestle. Jesus is in Nazareth, the place that he grew up.

[15 : 18] And he's in the synagogue, the church, and he's preaching. And the congregation that knew him so well, they're all listening and they think what he's saying is just amazing.

They're amazed by the words that he spoke and the way that he spoke and he's speaking about grace. You know what grace is, don't you? God's riches at Christ's expense, God's goodness to us.

And Jesus, he's speaking about how gracious God is. And as they're listening, they're loving this. And it actually looks, we think as we're reading, that these people in Nazareth, they're going to believe in him.

But then something changes very quickly and they go from people who look like they're going to believe and who are amazed to people who actually turn against Jesus.

So there's a wrestle that goes on as the sermons preached. There's like a tug of war in their hearts. Jesus is calling him to himself.

[16 : 25] He's saying to them, you can trust me as the Savior, your Savior, but there's a devil who's there that we can't see. And he was working in the hearts of these people as well.

And he was saying, I don't believe in him. Don't believe in him. And he was pulling them in the other direction. And that happened back in Nazareth.

But boys and girls, what I want to say to you is that didn't happen just back then. That still happens today. because we know, certainly I know, that sometimes we can be listening to what Jesus says.

We can be in the Bible and we can feel ourselves coming close to Jesus, being drawn to Jesus, amazed by the words that we're reading, drawn by the grace of God.

we're coming close to Jesus and then something changes. And our minds start wandering onto different things.

[17 : 34] And then we start thinking things like this, hmm, if I become a Christian, maybe my friends will laugh at me. Or we start thinking, if I become a Christian, if I follow Jesus, I might have to give up some things that I really want to do.

And we start thinking things like, well, I do want to become a Christian, but what if I can't keep on going as a Christian? What if I make a big mess of it and make God sad and embarrass everybody?

Oh, I'll leave it today. I'll do it when I'm older. Now, when we're having these thoughts, whether we're boys and girls or whether we're older men and ladies, when we're having these thoughts, who do you think is putting these thoughts in our mind?

Well, I'll tell you who it is. It's the devil. And what I want to say to you and to all of us today is, don't listen to him.

There is that wrestle within our hearts. He's pulling with all he's got to take us away from Jesus. But don't listen to him. You don't have to listen to him because Jesus has beaten him.

[18 : 59] See, the devil wants to hurt us. The devil wants us to miss out on the best life we could ever live here and that's a life where we're living close to Jesus.

And the devil wants us to miss out on the best place we can be in forever. forever. And that's heaven. So don't listen to the devil.

Don't listen to Satan. Don't let him pull you. Trust Jesus as Savior. He's the one who loves you.

How do you know he loves you? Oh, you would tell me if you were here. He went to a cross, didn't he? To pay the price for all our sins so that we could be forgiven, so that we could have peace with God and so that we could come and be forever with Jesus.

So in the wrestle that goes on in our hearts, let's not listen to the devil, let's not allow him to pull us in the wrong direction, but let's listen to Jesus and trust in him.

[20 : 15] We'll pray now. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you that you sent Jesus into this world. We thank you, Lord Jesus, that you came into this world and you loved us so much that you went to a cross to die, to take our sins away, to give us the promise of everlasting life.

And we thank you that in this world when we're trusting in you, there is peace and there's joy and there's contentment, even in hard times like just now.

We thank you that there's contentment when we're, when we have Jesus as that close friend. So we pray for each other, we pray for the boys and girls especially in their homes this morning and as they go to Sunday school and watch the lesson on the screens in a minute.

We pray that they would hear your voice, Lord Jesus, we pray that they would know your presence, we pray that you would keep their minds from going other places, we pray that you would bind the devil, that he wouldn't be able to do anything and that the boys and girls and that the men and women, that all of us, Lord, would be trusting in Jesus and we ask all these things in Jesus' name and for Jesus' sake.

Amen. Thank you boys and girls for listening. We're going to read now from Luke's Gospel. Luke's Gospel and we will read from chapter 4 and from verse 14 through to the end of the chapter.

[22 : 04] Luke's Gospel, chapter 4 and from verse 14 through to the end. The title in my Bible is Jesus Rejected at Nazareth.

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit. This is after the temptation of Jesus that we looked at last Sunday. Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit and news about him spread through the whole countryside.

He talked in their synagogues and everyone praised him. He went to Nazareth where he had been brought up and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue as was his custom.

And he stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it he found the place where it is written The Spirit of the Lord is on me because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind to release the oppressed to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. Then he rolled up the scroll gave it back to the attendant and sat down.

[23 : 18] The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him and he began by saying to them Today the scripture is fulfilled in your hearing. All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips.

Isn't this Joseph's son? They asked. Jesus said to them Surely you will quote this proverb to me Physician, heal yourself.

Do you hear in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum? I tell you the truth he continued No prophet is accepted in this hometown. I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land yet Elijah was not sent to any of them but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon and there were many in Israel with leprosy at the time of Elisha the prophet yet not one of them was cleansed only Naaman the Syrian.

all the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this they got up drove him out of the town and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built in order to throw him down the cliff but he walked right through the crowd and went on his way then he went down to Capernaum a town in Galilee and on the Sabbath began to teach the people they were amazed at his teaching because his message had authority in the synagogue there was a man possessed by a demon an evil spirit he cried out at the top of his voice ha what do you want with us Jesus of Nazareth have you come to destroy us I know who you are the Holy One of God be quiet Jesus said sternly come out of him then the demon threw the man down before them all and came out without injuring him all the people were amazed and said to each other what is this teaching with authority and power he gives orders to evil spirits and they come out and the news about him spread throughout the surrounding area

Jesus left the synagogue and went to the home of Simon now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever and they asked Jesus to help her so he bent over and rebuked the fever and I left her she got up at once and began to wait on them when the sun was setting the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness and laying his hands on each one each one he healed them moreover demons came out of many people shouting you are the son of God but he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak because they knew he was the Christ at daybreak Jesus went out to a solitary place the people were looking for him and when they came to where he was they tried to keep him from leaving them but he said I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also because that is why I was sent and he kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea

[26 : 38] Amen and may God bless that reading of his word to us again we'll pray for a moment heavenly father we thank you for your word we pray now for the help of the Holy Spirit that we would be enabled to see and hear and understand all that's within this passage for us speak into our hearts we pray that they would be stirred up that they would be good ground whereby the gospel can take root and what we pray for ourselves we pray for the children in Sunday school we pray for the churches around us and the churches across the islands the nation and across all nations especially we remember those in the persecuted church as we read reports of atrocities in Nigeria and India and different parts of the world we are conscious Lord that your people are much under attack and we are conscious that we are privileged to be able to have the freedom and the peace where we are able to open your word and listen to your voice so protect your persecuted church and work through the gospel in these places as we know

Lord God that you are and enable us in this day of opportunity to hear and to take hold of the grace of Jesus that is offered to us in the gospel so hear our prayers and help us in this time as we meditate upon your word and we ask this in Jesus name Amen One of the most popular programs on television at present is the show 24 hours in A&E; and most of you have probably seen it it's a program where you are given a snapshot of what a day looks like in a hospital in the accident and the emergency ward and I suppose it gives us insight it helps us to know what it looks like to be a doctor or a nurse or a carer or a medical professional of some kind for a day in that context 24 hours in A&E; well what we have in Luke chapter 4 from verse 14 through to the end is 24 hours in the life of Jesus this is a day that Luke presents to us and it's a full day we see Jesus preaching we see Jesus healing we see him casting out demons and spending time with his disciples we see that in this day there are highs verse 15 as everyone praises him there are lows as everyone his own people from his own hometown they turn violently against him verses 28 to 30 and as we follow the events of this section of this chapter as Luke records them we get a closer look at who Jesus is what he is like and also why he came into this world and that's the question

I want to consider in the time that we have this morning I want us to consider a question of purpose the purpose for which Jesus left heaven to come into this needy world there's various reasons that we can that we can note for why Jesus came into this world there's various reasons that he came and the first point the first reason that Jesus came into this world was he came to declare that he was the savior he came into this world to declare that he was the savior that's the first point and we see that from verse 14 down to down to verse 21 really Jesus returned verse 14 to Galilee in the power of the spirit and news about him spread throughout the whole countryside as he talked in their synagogues everyone praised him so we could say the day gets off to a good start as everybody is praising

Jesus and receiving the word that he that he preaches happily but there's trouble ahead for Jesus he went verse 16 to Nazareth where he had been brought up and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue as was his custom and he stood up to read the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him unrolling it he found the place where it is written the spirit of the Lord is on me because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor he has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind to release the oppressed to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour then he rolled up the scroll he gave it back to the attendant and sat down that was the custom then they stood to read the scroll that was given to them and then the preacher would sit down and that was the signal he was about to start preaching they would sit down to preach the eyes verse 20 of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him and he began by saying to them today the scripture is fulfilled in your hearing so we have this first scene really in this day in the life of Jesus and we see

Jesus and he's in the synagogue in Nazareth and what is he doing well he's preaching and you ask the question why do preachers preach well preachers preach or preachers should preach so that people will see Jesus that's what's in the text above my head here a reminder for you a reminder for me that those who are watching those who are tuning in they're not here to look at me and listen to me we want to see Jesus that's the purpose of preaching and Jesus here having read this section in Isaiah 61 a passage that was well known to the scholars to be about the coming Messiah the Savior having read that passage Jesus he says as all eyes are fastened on him he says this scripture is fulfilled in me he's declaring that he was the

[33 : 41] Messiah he was the Savior he tells them verse 18 that the spirit of God was upon him and we glance back to the previous chapter we see that Jesus baptism remember as Jesus is baptized by John the spirit falls on him like a dove the father speaks Jesus ministry was anointed with the oil of the Holy Spirit and Jesus declares to them in this sermon that he is the one who gives freedom from sin's oppression he is the one who is able to give spiritual sight for the blind he is the one who came to bring the Lord's grace and favour to undeserving sinners so in short Jesus sermon has one point and that point is this he says I am the saviour and I want to note just a couple of things here about what

Jesus read and preached and first of all note one of the things that Jesus said he spoke quoting Isaiah and in verse 19 he quotes Isaiah when he writes about the year of the Lord's favour now that's a reference to what was known as the year of Jubilee I haven't got time to go into that this morning but every 50 years the year of Jubilee came around you can read about it in Leviticus 25 and during that year of the Lord's favour the year of Jubilee slaves were set free property was handed back to its owners debts were cancelled it was truly a year of grace it was truly a year of the Lord's favour and Jesus was saying I have come this is the time whereby God's grace and favour and salvation will be given to those who believe in me that is what

Jesus said as he spoke about the year of the Lord's favour and note also something that Jesus didn't say in this sermon because in quoting the passage from Isaiah if you went back and looked at that passage you'd note that Jesus he leaves out a line from Isaiah chapter 61 verse 2 about judgment so he quotes the vast majority of that section but he leaves out the section about judgment and we ask the question well why did he do that and the answer was because this was not the time for judgment it's not because Jesus lacked courage and didn't want to talk about judgment he loved these people enough to tell them the truth about judgment but this was not the time for judgment Jesus did not come into this world to bring judgment and condemnation as we're reminded of in John 3 17 Jesus came to offer salvation and

Jesus was declaring himself to be the saviour and that was true for the people of Nazareth back in that day and that remains true for the people of North Harris in this day the amazing grace of God the salvation from the lostness of sin that we need the spiritual sight and life that we lack it's found only in Jesus it's found only in trusting in him as saviour so that's the first point why did Jesus come well he came to declare that he was the saviour the second point is he came to be despised and rejected he came to be despised and rejected because that's what we see happening here it begins well in verse 22 in

Nazareth all spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips and this is quite a strange thing when we think about it initially because what we have first of all is a congregation who are sitting listening to Jesus and they're happy listening to Jesus they're amazed at how he preached they were used in that context to rabbis quoting other rabbis quoting other rabbis rabbis they were used to rabbis speaking in dry scholarly tones making reference to ancient historical documents it was more of a lecture than a sermon but Jesus when he spoke he spoke with a compelling power and authority that came from within him he was quoting nobody else he was speaking

[39 : 11] God's word and the gracious words that flowed from him seemed to be pulling them in but then in the second half of verse 22 we see that there's a sudden change in Nazareth and they begin to resist Jesus isn't this Joseph's son they asked now what's happening here well what's happening here is that unbelief is beginning to rise up and fight against Jesus Spurgeon wrote a wee book likely it was a sermon he preached that was published and it's entitled The Greatest Fight in the World He's talking about the fight for a soul and it was happening in

Nazareth in that synagogue on that day and likely it's happening in the hearts of some who may be watching or listening in here or wherever you are today do you hear the call of Jesus as scripture is read as messages are preached you feel the drawing power of the grace of Jesus but then as you move in the direction of Jesus there's an inner resistance that seems to build and creates a resistance to submitting to Christ it's as if the brakes go on it happened in Nazareth likely it's happening here and

Jesus could see it happening Jesus said to them verse 23 surely you will quote this proverb to me physician heal yourself do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum I tell you the truth Jesus continued no prophet is accepted in his hometown I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land yet Elijah was not sent to any of them but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon and there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet yet not one of them was cleansed only Naaman the Syrian now what's Jesus saying there well essentially what he's saying is that the unbelief that he saw in the hearts of that congregation there in Nazareth that unbelief would not be blessed see the people in

Nazareth they'd heard what Jesus did in Capernaum they'd heard about the healings they'd heard about all these amazing gracious things that had been done and they're saying we want this for ourselves that's why we invited you here Jesus says to them without faith there's no blessing and when you determine not to believe even though you are the people I grew up with even though you are those whom I love from my own home time even though you are people who have had such great privileges and opportunities Jesus says to them I'm going to be moving on from you just as Elijah moved on to Zarephath and you can read about that in 1st Kings 17 and Elisha moved on to Syria you can read about that in 2

Kings 5 we can't go there today and what we see here is a tragedy because these people in Nazareth they were so privileged they had so many reasons to believe in the Lord and to recognize the Messiah Sir George Adam Smith commentator he says he makes the point that the history of Israel stretched out before the watchers eye in Nazareth even the geography spoke to them of God and his grace there was the plain of Estremon where Gideon had won his victories there was Shunem where Elisha had lived there was Carmel where Elijah had fought his epic battle with the prophets of Baal that was all in front of their eyes they could see it these places where God had moved so mightily and we could add to Smith's comments and say not only do they have the evidence of the geography where God had moved in the past but they had in the present

[44 : 29] God the son with them and for thirty years of their lives the sinless son of God had rubbed shoulders with them and still they did not believe in him and it's a warning to us we apply this to ourselves we can have huge privileges we can be those who are brought up in Christian homes we can know our Bibles we can have been told Bible stories from the time that we were in Sunday school we can have seen Jesus in the lives of faithful people over many years and still be lost you know I often hear people say as a kind of defense to non belief they'll say things like well the reason

I don't believe is because I see hypocrisy in the lives of Christians I know Christians some in your congregation even and I know how they behave I know what they say I know how they act I know how they react and because of them because of you because of the hypocrisy I may see in your life they may say I am not going to believe it's a common defense that those who don't believe will use but think about this in Nazareth for three decades of Jesus life he lived with them as a child they saw him as a teenager growing up he was with them as a man in the center of the community a carpenter a tradesman he would have been known and he never sinned not once they could not say we saw hypocrisy in his life because there was no trace of it and yet the people of

Nazareth still did not believe in Jesus it's a tragedy it shows how stubborn and how devilish unbelief can be J.C.

Ryle says they they could find no fault in his sermon they could point to no inconsistency in his past life but because the preacher had dwelt among them thirty years and his face and voice and appearance was familiar to them they would not receive his doctrine they said to one another is not this Joseph's son and it was the tone with which they said it they didn't say is this Joseph's son we always knew there was something different about him and now we understand he's the Messiah he's the saviour now it makes sense they didn't say that what they said was is this Joseph's son who is he to speak to us this way we will not have him rule over us and Jesus when he was despised in this way when he was rejected like this he moved on as

Elisha had moved on as Elijah moved on from the people of Israel Jesus he moves on from Nazareth and just for the record he never went back you can go through all the gospels and you can see that he never returned there not once for Nazareth this was their last chance and that's a serious sobering truth for us to take on board there is such a thing as a last chance there are times when Jesus is passing by and he comes close to us and he gives us opportunity to believe in him and to receive his blessing but if we reject him as they did in Nazareth if we despise the gospel offer that comes to us in the power of the Holy Spirit sometimes

[49 : 10] God moves on and sometimes he never returns to the life of that person there's no more opportunities that's why it says in the psalm that I know I quote so often psalm 95 today if you hear his voice do not harden your heart because that's what they were doing in Nazareth that's why Paul said in 2 Corinthians 6 2 I tell you now is the time of God's favour now is the day of salvation they didn't want to hear it in Nazareth verse 28 all the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this they got up drove him out of the town and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built in order to throw him down the cliff but he walked right through the crowd and went on his way the rejection that

Jesus endured it was a violent rejection wasn't a polite rejection they didn't fold their arms and look away they didn't have a snooze during the sermon it was a violent rejection they wanted to kill him nobody was falling asleep that day they were furious they wanted to take his life but that wasn't going to happen remember what Jesus said in John 10 verse 18 he said no one takes my life from me but I lay it down of my own accord I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again this was not the time for Jesus to die so Jesus in this majestic supernatural way he walks through this crowd and it seems they can't touch him

Jesus came to this world knowing that this is the way it would be this was no surprise to him this was not something that took him unawares Jesus came to this world knowing that he would be despised and rejected by men to what it says in Isaiah 53 he came knowing that he would be a man of sorrows that he would be familiar with suffering and we see the beginnings of this in Nazareth where he's rejected by his own people and yet soon Jesus knew that his own people would cry out once more with that diabolical rejection as they shouted in unison crucify him crucify him

Jesus came to be despised he came to be rejected next point Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil 1 John 3 8 we're given a very clear answer to the question why did Jesus come it says in that verse the reason the son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work and we see that here Jesus goes to Capernaum verse 31 a town in Galilee and the Sabbath began to teach the people they were amazed at his teaching because his message had authority in the synagogue there was a man possessed by a demon an evil spirit he cried out at the top of his voice ha what do you have want with us Jesus of Nazareth have you come to destroy us I know who you are the holy one of God so there's this disturbance in the synagogue as Jesus preaches in Capernaum this man there's this outburst

St. Ferguson asks an interesting question in relation to this section he asks the question I wonder how long this man had been going to church I wonder how many weeks or months or years this man had been sitting in these pews and sitting listening to sermons and being absolutely undisturbed not hearing the voice of Jesus not sensing the presence of Jesus and yes as soon as the voice of Jesus is heard as soon as the presence of God is known there's a disturbance as the devil rises up or his minions rise up and then we have Jesus' response be quiet said Jesus sternly come out of him then the demon threw the man down before them all that shows something of the intent of Satan he wants to throw us down but the man comes to

[54 : 49] Jesus the demon threw the man down before them all and came out without injuring him and that shows the work of Jesus devil wants to destroy Jesus wants to protect all the people were amazed and said to each other what is this teaching with authority and power he gives orders to evil spirits and they come out and the news about him spread throughout the surrounding area Martin Luther says here at the outset of our Lord's ministry a savior he is summoning the prince of hell onto the field of battle and giving him notice of his eventual downfall we see that from the temptation of Jesus onwards Jesus calls Satan onto the field and he gives him his notice that he is about to fall ultimately and in the gospels as Satan and these demons come under attack we see clash after clash they recognized

Jesus they knew that he was the Messiah and yet they knew that they were no match for Jesus Milne the commentator says Jesus had bound the strong man Satan in the desert he had bound the strong man Satan in the desert encounter on the eve of his ministry let's look for now Jesus is destroying his minions these encounters with the demons are like skirmishes on the way to the last battle of Gethsemane and the cross when Jesus would finally cast out the prince of darkness why did Jesus come well he came to destroy the works of the devil and I think we should take the comfort of that for ourselves in application because there are times when we know that sense of disturbance in our lives there are times when we are aware that the enemy is attacking us sometimes even in our sleep even in our dreams we can be conscious that Satan is trying to disturb us but the good news is there is a savior and he is stronger than the devil and he came to destroy the works of the devil and we are safe we are secure when we are trusting in him point four we're almost done

Jesus came to drive back disease and we see these two encounters here in verses 38 to verse 41 Jesus he goes into the home of Simon Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever verse 38 that was a medical term high fever it was a life-threatening fever they asked Jesus to help her so he bent over her showing his authority and rebuked the fever and it left her she got up at once and began to wait on them do you notice that again the immediacy the fullness of the healing she doesn't have to go on a week's worth of antibiotics she doesn't have any post-viral fatigue she is instantly well and able to prepare lunch such as the power of Christ so we see that on the small scale as Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law he drives back disease and then we see on the larger scale verse 40 and 41 the sun setting people are brought to

Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness and laying his hands on each one notice that laying his hands on each one he healed them Jesus doesn't say I haven't got time for all these swathes of people he doesn't give a generic word he takes every one of them to him he lays his hands on each one so that they will feel the compassion of Jesus and that they will know that sense of power and authority as Jesus drives back these diseases and demons and we might say well that was then what does that have to do with us today what's the bearing on our lives and I think I would want to say in application well Jesus has lost none of his ancient power still he is able to heal the body he is able to heal the heart of those who come to him and we know it's true that Jesus does not always give physical medical healing in this world for some the Lord determines not to leave them in this sad and sick world but take them home to heaven and when we look in the window of heaven what do we see well we see a place where there is no disease there's no sickness there's no fevers there's no demon possession there's no death because

Christ is there he is king and he has driven every trace of the fall every work of Satan out forever the final thing why did Jesus come while he came to declare good news at daybreak verse 42 Jesus went out to a solitary place the people were looking for him and when they came to where he was they tried to keep him from leaving them but he said I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also because that's why I was sent and he kept on preaching in the synagogues in Judea after all the activity of the previous day Jesus must have been absolutely physically exhausted and yet the following morning we see these people the crowds they're looking for

[61 : 24] Jesus again there's more healings to be done there's more exorcisms required but as they come looking for him they can't find him where is he they're asking the answer is he was in prayer there's a story told from I think it's the world war one era and it was a meeting a staff meeting that was about to begin in that military context and everyone was present except marshal foch the commander in chief and they couldn't start without him so another officer who knew him well said just hang on a moment I think I know where I might be able to find him so he went wandering off out of the view of the troops and sure enough in a ruined chapel just out of view this great soldier this commander in chief was kneeling humbly before the lord in prayer and when he was interrupted and told it was time his response was that he said before

I meet men I must first meet God and that's how we find Jesus at daybreak we see God the son before he meets men on that day he meets with his father in prayer and that's a pattern it's a priority for for us to to follow and then Jesus having met with his father he explains to the disciples to the crowds that the primary reason he came to this world was not to deal with the physical and the medical breakdowns of our body but rather he came to deal with the eternal needs of our heart he came to declare the good news that he was the saviour and the question

I want to finish with is simply this is he your saviour are you trusting him we'll pray our heavenly father we thank you for we thank you for your son and for allowing us to see and hear and watch the movements of God the son in this world and we thank you that still Jesus works and moves amongst us in the power of the Holy Spirit as the word is read we pray that we would not be like those in Nazareth who rejected Jesus we pray that we would not be like so many of the crowds who sought only to receive blessings but we're not willing to believe and to bow before Christ enable us we pray to be those who submit who bow and who trust in the

Lord Jesus we pray that we would know that assurance that he is our saviour the one who took away our sin the one who has promised to give us eternal life and the one who walks with us through time and takes us safely into eternity and we pray all these things in Jesus name amen we're going to finish by singing or you will sing that well-known hymn man of sorrows what a name for the son of God who came ruined sinners to proclaim hallelujah what a saviour man of sorrows man of sorrows name for the son of

God who came ruined sinners to reclaim hallelujah what a saviour bidding shame and scoffing rude in my place condemned he stood sealed my pardon with his blood hallelujah what a saviour guilty violent helpless we spotless lamb of God was he full atonement can it be hallelujah what a saviour lifted lifted up was he to die it is finished was his cry now in heaven exalted high hallelujah what a saviour saviour when he comes our glorious king all his ransomed home to bring then

[67 : 35] I knew this song will sing hallelujah what a saviour saviour and now may the grace of our lord jesus christ and the love of god the father and the fellowship of god the holy spirit be with us all both now and forever more amen