

20.7.25 pm

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Preacher: Richard Killer

[0 : 00] Good evening. Welcome to the service this evening. If you're visiting, especially welcome.! We're going to begin this time of worship with a psalm in Gaelic, and we remain seated for this.

! It's Psalm 34, verses 17 to 19. Psalm 34 is a heartfelt declaration of God's goodness and his justice.

And after we've sung this psalm, Callum McKinnon-Mill will come and pray in Gaelic. I'll just read the verses in English for us. The righteous cry unto the Lord, he unto them gives ear, and they out of their troubles all by him delivered are.

The Lord is ever nigh to them, that be of broken spirit. To them he safely doth afford, that are in heart contrite. The troubles that afflict the just in number many be, but yet at length out of them all the Lord doth set him free.

Psalm 34. Psalm 34.

[1:34] Psalm 34.

[illegible]

[20 : 53] To surrender, this is our God, the servant King He calls us now to follow Him To bring our lives as they offer Him Of worship to the Serpent King So let us learn how to serve And in our lives and groan Each other's needs to prepare For it is Christ, the servant King This is our God, the servant King

He calls us now to follow Him To bring our lives as they offer Him Of worship to the Serpent King If you could have your Bibles open To Luke chapter 5 This evening we're going to be considering how the Jewish religious leaders had a very false expectation of the Messiah We'll see that Jesus' actions offended them What actions?

Well, His compassion on sinners His forgiveness of sinners And the way He mixed with sinners It simply didn't match what they thought a Messiah should be like That wasn't kingly enough Powerful enough I suppose it's a bit like going to a tailor to get a new suit And you go and order your suit and you find out the tailor's rubbish And actually he's produced a suit that's got a twisted arm and a shoulder that's in the wrong place And you've paid good money for it So you take the suit home and you decide, well, I'll just have to wear it And you go around all disfigured like that In the church we can sometimes twist and push people into our own preconceived notions of what a Christian or what ministry should be like Instead of actually following Jesus' example So looking at the passage First point this evening is found in verses 12 to 16

And we'll find that the first way that the Messiah wasn't how the religious leaders thought He should be was by the fact that He had compassion on sinners And that's the first point Jesus has compassion on sinners Let's just read the bit concerned While He was in one of the cities there came a man full of leprosy and when He saw Jesus He fell on His face and begged Him Lord, if You will You can make me clean And Jesus stretched out His hand and touched Him saying I will Be clean And immediately the leprosy left Him And He charged Him to tell no one but Go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing as Moses commanded for a proof to them You know, lepers were outcasts They were shunned by society because they had this horrible disfiguring disease disease that would eventually kill them And back then it was thought to stem from sin

You know, if they've got leprosy they must have done something really sinful And it's much like sin separates us from God You know, they were separated from community They had to wear black clothes because they were considered to be dead Wherever they went they had to stay away from people and shout out Unclean!

[25 : 12] Unclean! There were dead men and women walking And it's interesting that in Leviticus 14 God gives detailed instructions on what should be done if someone is cured of leprosy But do you know how many of God's people had been cured of leprosy since Leviticus 14?

Not one Not a single one had been cured And the fact that Naaman who we heard about last week from Kenai the fact that he a Gentile of all people had been cured probably just rubbed salt into the wound for the Jews Back then all the Jews knew that only God could cure leprosy or someone sent by God in his power like the Messiah Only a Messiah would be able to perform this miracle This Messiah that they've been waiting for for so long This Messiah who would eventually release them from the oppression of the Romans And here we have a leper He comes up to Jesus and he says Lord if you will you can make me clean Jesus says I will be clean And for the first time in the Jewish people's history one of their own is cured of leprosy Note that Jesus sending him to the priest in verse 14

That was huge That was a big deal because in Jewish circles it was essentially like sending out a clear signal the Messiah is here And this event would of course have triggered off an official visit from the religious leaders from Jerusalem See that in verse 17 They're there to determine whether Jesus really is this Messiah And so the fact that Jesus healed the leper was it's an amazing miracle Don't get me wrong but if he is the Messiah then it was to be expected that he could perform a miracle like that But his method was certainly not expected Look at verse 13 Jesus touches the leper Now he could have just commanded be clean and that would have done the job and the leper would have been delighted But he goes a step further than that and he touches him

Now that would have drawn gasps from the crowd because this was someone willing to touch someone with a highly contagious disease Someone that would make him ceremonially unclean Why would the Messiah do that?

You know a good Jew back then a good Torah abiding Jew the last thing he'd want to be would be ceremonially unclean But I mean they did everything they could to avoid that situation But Jesus in this situation touches the leper Studies found out by Harvard University that were carried out in a Romanian orphanage found that neglected babies who were very rarely touched in the orphanage they grew up to be really quiet really silent and stunted they didn't grow properly and develop physically or mentally showing the immense power of touch touch touch especially for someone like the leper who quite possibly hadn't had human touch for years and years was Jesus' way of conveying compassion and care on that man he didn't need to touch him

[29 : 06] Jesus bridged a heart to heart connection just showing that no one is beyond his grace even the most unclean person and no doubt the religious leaders would have wondered why would a messiah do this what's the point but Jesus' priorities were not their priorities aren't you glad that Jesus' priorities are different that he is so compassionate let's move on to the second point which is found in verses 17 to 26 here we see the second reason that the Jewish leaders thought that this was the wrong messiah we find that Jesus forgives sinners read the passage on one of those days as he was teaching Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there who would come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from

Jerusalem and the power of the Lord was with him to heal and behold some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus but finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus and when he saw their faith he said man your sins are forgiven you and the scribes and the Pharisees began to question saying who is this who speaks blasphemies who can forgive sin but God alone when Jesus perceived their thoughts he answered them which is easy why do you question in your hearts which is easier to say your sins are forgiven you or to say rise and walk but that you may know that the son of man has authority on earth to forgive sin he said to the man who was paralyzed I say to you rise pick up your bed and go home and immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he'd been lying on and went home glorifying

God and amazement seized them all and they glorified God and were filled with awe saying we've seen extraordinary things today so Jesus forgives sinners here we've got this paralyzed man and his friends are trying to lower him through the roof so that he can reach Jesus and we've got the religious leaders there there to inspect whether Jesus is this real prospective messiah and they're expecting a messianic miracle perhaps one like is mentioned in Isaiah 35 where the messiah will heal the lame and so that's what they're expecting but what Jesus gives them is quite different Jesus says man your sins are forgiven you furious they immediately accuse him of blasphemy it's a crime that's punishable by death as only God is able to forgive sins and Jesus responds with that famous quote which is easier to say your sins are forgiven you or to say rise and walk how would you answer that question if Jesus said that to you personally which is easier apparently in Mexico if you go there as a Brit you've got to be a bit careful because if you take a shower and use a tap the one that's marked

H is actually cold and the one that's marked C for Caliente is hot so you can get a bit of a surprise and expectations can mislead need and the friends here were expecting a physical healing and so were the religious leaders that's what they expected but Jesus gave forgiveness of sin you see Jesus sees beyond the temporal physical need of the man and he sees deeper than that and he addresses that man's greatest need first his soul's need for forgiveness of sin but which is easier for Jesus what's the answer to that question I guess the answer depends on who you think Jesus is now I've often wondered about this question and thought which is easier in a sense it's easier to say your sins are forgiven because you're saying something that no one can prove how can anyone see if someone's sins are forgiven but that's not what we're talking about here because if

Jesus is God it's certainly easier to forgive to heal physically all it took for God to do that was a word one word and he's healed but forgiving sin that was much more costly that cost Jesus his life so these religious leaders were offended by this so-called wrong theology that Jesus had but aren't you glad that Jesus meets our deepest need despite of the cost and lastly we'll move on to the last section which is 27 to 32 and this is our third point on why Jesus didn't meet expectations as the Messiah he didn't meet these expectations because he mixed with sinners Jesus mixes with sinners let's look at the passage after this he went out and saw a tax collector named

[35 : 01] Levi sitting at the tax booth and he said to him follow me and leaving everything he rose and followed him and Levi made him a great feast in his house and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them and the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples saying why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners Jesus answered them those who are well have no need of a physician but those who are sick I've not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance so here we see the Jewish religious leaders are not happy that a prospective messiah is eating with people that they would quite simply consider to be scum of the earth in that culture if you ate with someone it was the same thing as saying that you accepted them and so Jesus was basically saying I accept these people these are my friends and then Jesus in verse 31 reminds them of his priorities he says

I've not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance you can't easily call sinners to repentance if you're at arm's length from them but here Jesus is right in their midst right among them a Sunday school teacher once asked the children she said children what must you do to obtain forgiveness of sin and there was a long pause and finally a boy at the back piped up sin and he's right isn't he you can't receive forgiveness of sin unless you've sinned and the bible's clear we're all sinners no exceptions Billy Graham who's perhaps the greatest preacher and evangelist of the last century said this hell is not an idea a figment of the imagination or the setting for a horror movie it is the hideous reality that awaits those who refuse to let

God come into their lives and make them new creations filled with his forgiveness and love consider this multitudes do not flinch when they condemn to hell people such as Osama Bin Laden Adolf Hitler or Cambodia's Pol Pot their accusers don't hesitate to suggest that certain people who've stepped over the line of what they consider to be evil will land in hell once they finish their life on earth but in the next breath many will say I do not believe that God would send good people to hell and herein lies the problem we see ourselves as good and refuse to see that we too harbour wickedness within as the Bible says the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked and in this passage here Jesus very clearly shocks the Pharisees I think by showing that there's no good and bad people there are no good and bad people just those who are sinners and know they're sinners and those who don't people who know they're sinners and those who don't we're all sinners needing rescue you're a sinner this evening

I'm a sinner we all need rescuing and this is a message for those of us who have been rescued we're to get it out there urgently Jesus commissions us right at the end of this book end of Luke and says repentance for the forgiveness of sin should be proclaimed in Jesus name to all nations we're called to bring sinners to repentance to point them to the Lord Jesus the only one who can forgive them the command has been given very clearly but are we listening are we you know this isn't just a nice history lesson that we're reading here or a bedtime story I'm not going to end this by saying and they all lived happily ever after this is God's word for you this evening and it's personally relevant for you each single person here tonight we've seen here that Jesus went beyond expectations he could have just healed the leper but he touched him he could have just healed the paralytic but he forgave his sins he could have just called

Levi but he chose to mix with him and his friends question is are we following Jesus example or are we bowing to other people's expectations sorrows you know I don't normally think it's a good idea to give an illustration of someone that we know but given that he's not here anymore Gordon came to mind as I was preparing this sermon and he would hate the fact that I've included him in this as an illustration so don't tell him please but for someone who's not that far from retirement age again don't tell him I said that but someone that age to openly answer the call to ministry and step out in faith is quite remarkable I mean it spoke volumes to me I was quite stunned and encouraged actually easy you deserve a good retirement just put your feet up Gordon and it's all too easy for us to think well that's me

[40 : 34] I've done my bit I'm just going to put my feet up but is that truly the case can any of us say that as we've considered this evening if we're to be Christ like we shouldn't unquestionably be doing what society demands of us should we I'm not talking about answering a call to being a minister or going to be a missionary in a far off country I mean those are great if you feel called absolutely go for it there are other things sometimes it's just answering the Holy Spirit's prompt when he prompts you to whatsapp that friend who's drifting away from the Lord to invite them for coffee even though it might be a little bit awkward going that bit beyond what's expected perhaps it's deciding to spend more time with your grandchildren because that way they'll be able to see what it's like for a Christian to live their life going that extra mile sometimes it's having the courage to lovingly confront someone that you've been praying for for ages just to say look where are you spiritually not putting up with the status quo not sticking with what's comfortable these things are not easy no one says they are but truly following

Jesus never is J.C. Ryle said a single day in hell will be worse than a whole life spent carrying the cross so I'll be following Jesus example going above and beyond what's expected of us carrying that cross on a daily basis I don't know about you but that's certainly a challenge for me or maybe up until now you've been one of the people that's had these fixed expectations and it's very easy to be like the religious leaders trying to bend and twist others to a preconceived view of what you think Christians or ministry should be like following what you think is comfortable and easy and relaxing and not risky it's very easy for us to all fall into that trap you know if you go to a fish market in Japan they obviously sell lots of fish but they also sell crabs and the crabs are for sale usually in these big barrels and there's no lid on the barrel the crabs can do whatever they want and these are big crabs with big thingies you look at it and think why don't they put a lid on that what's going on the truth is that if one of them tries to escape the others will grab it and pull it back in and we can be like that in church can't we

I think sometimes maybe even not realising we're doing it change and uncertainty risk they're not comfortable pleasant things to have in church but Jesus calls us to do things that are unsafe sometimes things that are outside of our comfort zone are we actively encouraging people to step out in faith even if it's uncomfortable for them or for us that's the question or like those crabs are we just pulling them back in for their own good supposedly I'm just going to close with a very sobering quote from Charles Spurgeon Charles Spurgeon says this if sinners be damned at least let them leap to hell over our bodies if they will perish let them perish with our arms about their knees let no one go there unwarned and unprayed for that's quite a thought isn't it brothers and sisters we need to step out in faith we need to love the unlovely we need to point people to the

Lord because we're in a spiritual war and it's not safe wars are not safe places but when we look back on this time from eternity all of this will have been worthwhile let's pray Father God thank you so much for the Lord Jesus thank you that he left the glory of heaven and came to earth to die for sinners such as us just because he loved us and thank you Lord that if we turn from sin and repentance to you and follow you we can be saved and Lord this is the simplest message in the world but so many people choose to block their ears to it please Lord unblock the ears of everyone here tonight and Lord please help us to follow Jesus to live as he would live to love as he would love to serve as he we served and Lord even if that means we have to go outside of our comfort zone please help us to just loosen that grip that we have on the world

Lord help us to be full of hope for the future that you have in store for us so that when life is tough that we can look ahead to the promise of a new heavens and a new earth place where we'll be with you forever we pray this in Jesus name Amen we're going to close with mission praise 385 and one of the beauties of being asked to preach is that I actually get to choose a hymn every now and again so this is one of my favorites Jesus the name high over all it's all about proclaiming the name of Jesus and I really like the last verse in this hymn where it says happy if with my latest breath I may but gasp his name preach him to all and cry in death behold the lamb it just reminds me that over many many centuries and millennia there have been believers before us who have been kingdom minded right up until their last breath!

[47 : 06] said that's me I'm retired from evangelism and often these people would say they're most fruitful right at their final years and times that people might have dismissed them as being past it that's when the Lord has really blessed their ministry so let's be encouraged by that and we'll stand and sing this wonderful hymn together to close Jesus the name I over all in hell or earth or sky angels and men before it fall and devils fear and flower devils fear and fly

Jesus the name to sinners dear the name to sinners fear it scatters all their guilty fear it turns their hell to end tombs their hell to end!

Jesus the prisoners enter space and prison Satan's hurt of winter strengthless souls he speaks life life to death life into the death!

that the world might taste can see the riches of his grace the arms of love that compass
me would all mankind embrace would all mankind embrace his only righteousness I show
his saving truth proclaim tis all my business here we go to guide the hope the land to
guide the hope the land happy if with my latest prayer

I make a gospel name preach into all and die in death behold the land behold the land
love love love love love love love let me close with the benediction from the end of
numbers chapter 6 the lord bless you and keep you the lord make his face to shine upon
you and be gracious to you the lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace
amen thank you