

# (Matthew) Jesus Is the Messiah

by Pat Kenney

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*Jesus is the Messiah, and his genealogy highlights the message of divine grace, calling us to repentance, submission, and living as unto the Lord in all areas of life.*

**Duration:** 48:55

**Scripture:** Matthew 1:1, Matthew 3:2, Matthew 4:17, Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 10:45, Luke 2:52, John 20:31

**Topics:** "Messiah"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the question of 'how can this be?' when faced with the grip of a sinful habit. He emphasizes that God wants to set us free and birth something new in us. The speaker also highlights the importance of repentance and turning to Jesus as our Savior. He encourages listeners to have faith and trust in God's plan for their lives, even when they may not understand how it will happen. The sermon emphasizes the call to be faithful in all areas of life and to honor God in everything we do.

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## Transcript

This past week has revolved around death, it seems. The death of Terry Schiavo and the death of the Pope. And I'm just so grateful this morning that we have life in Jesus Christ.

That we are to look unto Jesus, and not to men. We don't trust men, we trust the author and the finisher of our faith, Jesus Christ. And because of that, we are not a people that have to fear death, as we talked about last Sunday.

Our victory is in Jesus Christ. And I want to encourage you to focus on that. Thank God for the hope that we have in and through Jesus.

It is because of your relationship with Jesus Christ that you're going to heaven. That your sins are forgiven. And judged.

Isn't that a great thing, that our sins have already been judged? Not a one of us could stand before a holy God, if we had to be judged for our sins. We'd be judged, what? Guilty! And we wouldn't be in heaven anymore. But because of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross at Calvary, all of our sins have been forgiven.

All of them. Past. The ones 20 minutes ago.

And we hope not a whole lot ahead. But even in those, Jesus has forgiven us. He went to the cross to forgive us.

So, he is the beginner and the finisher of our faith. And our trust is in him. And may we just be encouraged in that this week.

As you encounter people, they're going to ask you, What do you think about the Shivo case? What do you think about the Pope? What do you think about this? And we can just say, you know what? I'm thinking about Jesus. And Jesus has set me free. And he can set you free too.

I don't think it's our place to get into a big discussion as to the theological positions of the Catholic Church and so forth. This is a time when a lot of those people are mourning. And they're very, very sad.

And we don't have to insult them or anything along those lines. We just need to talk about Jesus. And thank God for what Jesus has done.

And let the joy of the Lord be your strength. And perhaps bring that joy of the Lord into their hearts as well. Amen? All right.

Chapter 1 of Matthew. We're going to be jumping now into the New Testament. Actually, we've been in the New Testament.

We got Old Testament on Wednesday nights. And now we're going back to the beginning of the New Testament. And the Gospel of Matthew is a beautiful bridge from the Old Testament to the New Testament.

In the Gospel of Matthew, with Matthew writing more towards the Jewish student in mind, he's bridging the gap of the Old Testament and the New Testament and explaining how the Old Testament prophecies are fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. And Matthew does this by quoting the Old Testament constantly. Close to 130 different references to the Old Testament in the Gospel of Matthew.

Each of the Gospels present a unique picture of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Mark's Gospel, it shows us Jesus as the suffering servant. In Luke's Gospel, it shows us the humanity of our Lord Jesus.

In John's Gospel, it shows us that Christ is the Son of God. And Matthew, writing to the Jews, zeroes in on Jesus as the Messiah, the King of the Jews. Now, Matthew's approach to the way of salvation is really a call to repentance for entry into the kingdom.

Repent. Turn from your sins. Turn to your Savior.

He calls us to a commitment of oneself to the King as his follower. We are called to be followers of Jesus Christ. Not followers from a distance, but right on his heels, walking together with him.

And so Matthew uses language that relates the rule of Christ to each of our lives. Very personal. And this means that the life of faith, which we're all called to, amen, the life of faith is to recognize Jesus as Lord and ourselves as his subjects.

And that's something Americans don't like to do very much. I mean, just by our Western nature, and combine that with our sin nature. And we don't like anybody to tell us what to do.

Somebody tells us what to do, there's something in us that goes, I don't have to do that. You know, kind of rebel. But as we go through the gospel of Matthew here, we'll see it so clearly that to be a Christian, to be a follower of Jesus means he is Lord and we are his subjects.

I've heard it once said that if Jesus is not Lord of all, he's not Lord at all. I mean, otherwise we're lying. We're not really trusting him as Lord if we take control of our lives and just do everything ourselves.

We've got to learn to submit to him. Because he's God. And he made us.

And he knows how we tick. And he's got a purpose for us. Predetermined before we ever took our first breath.

We need to submit our lives to his way. Our way, we could line up here for the rest of the morning and give you a testimony on how our way wasn't the way. How our way got in the way of what God wanted to do in our lives.

And once we get out of the way, then the way of the truth and the life begins to empower us in a way that we could never know and never do ourselves. God help us to yield to him. Now, Matthew introduces us to the King first with his genealogy in chapter 1, which in Jewish history was the most natural and essential way to begin the story of a man's life and to prove to Jewish readers and I think skeptics of all nations that Jesus is the Messiah.

The Messiah of our hope. The Messiah of Jewish hope. The Messiah of Gentile hope.

The promised redeemer of all mankind. And so we begin with verse 1. The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, and the son of Abraham. The son of David refers to the royal kingly line.

The son of Abraham refers to the line of promise. The racial line. The line of grace as well.

Matthew begins our Lord's genealogy with Abraham, the man who was called the friend of God, the father of the way of faith, showing that Jesus fulfilled Israel's hopes. Right there at the beginning. Remember in the Old Testament, God promised that through Abraham all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

Genesis 22, 18. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed because you've obeyed my voice. And in the New Testament, in Galatians 3.16, when Paul is quoting that, he makes it very clear that seed, that in your seed was singular.

The word seed there was for that promise. He says in 3.16 of Galatians, Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He does not say and to seeds, plural, as of many, but as of one and to your seed who is Christ.

Abraham was promised that through his seed the Messiah would come. And that was later repeated to David. In 2 Samuel 7.13, the Lord said, He shall build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

That had to go beyond Solomon. Verse 16 of that same chapter, And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.

David understood that the Messiah would come through him. And if a person were to lay claim to be the king of Israel, he would have to prove that he had kingly lineage, a son of Abraham, of Judah, through

David. Now that's an impossibility today, by the way.

No records exist today that any Jew today could trace back. In 70 AD, when the Romans sacked Jerusalem, all the genealogical records of the Jewish people were destroyed. Matthew shows that Jesus is the son of Abraham and David, and thus has the right to claim to the claim of the throne of Israel.

Ron Daniel, another Calvary pastor, said this, The kingly line of David descended to Joseph. Joseph's firstborn son would have the right to sit on David's throne. But God had cursed everyone with that bloodline.

If you remember back in Jeremiah 22, there was one of the kings named Jeconiah, or called Keniah, back there in Jeremiah 22. He was a wicked king, and a curse was pronounced upon him. And there it's predicted, back in Jeremiah, hundreds of years before Christ, that none of Jeconiah's seed would prosper sitting on David's throne.

Had our Lord been the natural son of Joseph, who was descended from Jeconiah, and we see that in this genealogy, then Jesus could never reign in power and righteousness because of that curse. But note this, while Jesus had all legal rights to Joseph's lineage, he did not have the blood of that line. For he was born of a virgin, conceived in her womb by the Holy Spirit.

Does this mean that Jesus is not truly the branch of Jesse and the root of David? No, because you see the gospel of Luke also gives us Jesus' genealogy, but not through his legal line. Luke tells us his biological bloodline, which he had through his mother Mary. You see, Mary's line also descends through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Judah, through Jesse, to David.

But from David, Mary's heritage did not extend through the kingly line of Solomon. Instead, she was a descendant of David's son, Nathan. Thus, according to Jewish law, Jesus could legally inherit the throne while completely avoiding the blood curse on Jeconiah's line.

So it's apparent, from eternity past, that God had the whole thing worked out. He foretold of a specific Messiah who could only be one, and that is Jesus Christ our Lord. And so we see the genealogy given in verse 2. And we're not going to comment real closely on this line.

Just kind of follow it through. And, you know, you can do a lot of study on your own as you go through this. Abraham begat Isaac.

We're studying Abraham right now in Genesis chapter 15. You can join us in that study on Wednesday night, if you so desire. Isaac begat Jacob.

Jacob begat Judah and his brothers. Now, Judah begat Zerah by Tamar. Perez begat Hezron.

Hezron begat Ram. Ram begat Amminadab. Amminadab begat Nashem.

Nashem begat Salmon. Salmon begat Boaz by Rahab. Boaz begat Obed by Ruth.

Obed begat Jesse. And Jesse begat David the king. David the king begat Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah.

That's another interesting study, looking at the four women that are mentioned here in the genealogy. And that was very, very uncommon in the listing of any Jewish genealogy. It was not kosher to mention the

women in the genealogy.

But here we've got Tamar and Rahab and Ruth and Bathsheba. One commentator said, the presence of these four women in the lineage of the king emphasizes a genealogy of grace. We note that all four of these women were aliens, Gentiles.

Three of the four were suspected of adultery. Including these women in the lineage of Christ highlights the message of divine grace. God forgave and accepted persons in the lineage of Christ whose history was clouded, men and women.

The fact that these particular women are named makes clear that God in grace does not discriminate against persons because of their past mistakes. And I don't know how many of you have ever said this or had it heard said to you, but I'm too bad. I could never be a Christian.

I've made too many mistakes. I've sinned too hard. I saw a guy at breakfast this morning.

And as I was getting up to leave breakfast, there were three or four guys sitting at the breakfast bar. And the language had gotten kind of low and the subject matter had gotten even lower. And as I went up to the cash register, I kind of looked at the gal and looked over at them and said, well, I know a few guys that need prayer this morning.

And I was smiling as I said it. And the guy sitting next to me, he said, well, I don't think prayer would ever work for me. He said that.

And I said back to him, I said, well, you know, you never really know. God is very powerful. I said I was a piece of work and God got a hold of me.

And that's how I left it as I walked out. But God can do amazing things with pieces of work like us. Sinners like us, who at one time people may have looked at us and go, they're going to be a Christian? Come on.

But God does the impossible. We serve a God of the impossible. You might think it's impossible because of your background.

But background was never an impossibility to God. And we see that illustrated as we go through this genealogy. John Corson said, what does this say to me theologically? It says the stage is already set for the Lord to do a new thing.

He said, my kingdom is a kingdom of heaven, not the kingdom of the nation of Israel. It's much broader than Israel, as we see with these Gentiles included in the genealogy. It's a whole new thing.

The Lord says in his word, behold, I make all things new. But you know what it says to us personally? Let these words never pass from our lips again. The Lord can't use me because I have sinned greatly.

I've let down my family responsibilities. I've messed up my family, like Tamar could have been accused of doing with her trickery and her deception. Oh, but he couldn't use me, you might say, because I have a bad reputation.

Remember Rahab, the harlot. Your reputation isn't any worse than hers. Corson says, I don't care who you are or where you've been.

If you're willing to say, I'm throwing my lot in with the Lord and join Rahab in this genealogy, he'll use you and the Lord Jesus will be birthed in you and shine forth through you and through your life. It is possible. The Pharisees might stick up their noses and say, how can this be? Let them know this.

He does all things new. And he's included people like Rahab along with people like you and me. In fact, the gospels tell us that Jesus is the friend of sinners.

So whatever kind of sinner you were, or maybe even are today, that can change through Jesus Christ. You might not be able to change it. And in fact, you can't change it.

You can't change it. There's only one who can take away the stain of sin, and that's Jesus Christ. But you need to know that he died on the cross and rose from the grave for you, not just for those religious folk.

Remember Jesus said, I didn't come to save the righteous, but to save sinners. And it's interesting. I was reading one comment.

I think Warren Wiersbe said it. He said, and by the way, there were no righteous at that time. There were those that thought they were righteous, but there was none that were truly righteous before a holy God.

That could only happen through the sacrifice of the Messiah, where their sins could be totally washed away. And because our sins have been totally washed away, we can now have fellowship with the one true God. We can be joint heirs with Jesus Christ of heaven.

We belong to the Lord now. And all through the scripture we're exhorted, now let's walk that way. That's why we gather together week after week.

That's why we study the word book by book, chapter by chapter, verse by verse. Because we want to grow in our faith. We want to be the people that God has called us to be.

Feed us, Lord, this morning. Amen. So, we continue on with the list.

Solomon begot Rehoboam. Rehoboam begot Abijah. Abijah begot Asa.

And these are all the kings of it. These are the kings that we find as you go through the book of 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles. This is the descent of the kings that came through David and Solomon and ruled in the southern kingdom of Judah.

So, Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Ammon, Josiah, and then we came to Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon. After they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and then Zerubbabel, and Abiud, and Eliakim, and Azor, and Zadok, and Achim, and Eliud, and Eleazar, and Mithon, and Jacob, and Jacob begot Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. Very specifically pointed out.

You see how the language changes there in verse 16 to show that he was not from the bloodline of Joseph, but rather through Mary. And so all the generations from Abraham to David, 14 generations, from David to the captivity in Babylon, 14 generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are 14 generations. Matthew breaks the lineage up into three sections.

First was the time of the patriarchs from Abraham to David, and if you know your Old Testament in that period, it was not a pretty picture. The immorality and the sin of the nation, the sin that the nation was involved in, especially during the time of the judges. And then from the monarchy, from David to their deportation in Babylon, again, not a pretty picture.

We see their rebellion finally bringing the judgment of God upon them and the destruction of Jerusalem and carrying them away to captivity in Babylon. I think of all of those kings that descended from David up to the captivity in Babylon. There was only five, I believe, that were truly godly kings.

The rest of them gave themselves over to all of the false idol worship of the Canaanite peoples that inhabited that land before they came in. And then lastly, the deportation to Babylon up to the birth of Jesus. Again, a period of time filled with apostasy.

And what's the point of all of that? Again, I think we see the grace of God at work even during some of the darkest periods of history to bring forth the Messiah. And you see the hand of God through all of the genealogies from all the way, and when you get to Luke's Gospel, all the way from Adam to Christ, God had his hand upon those lineages. Now, as we... You know, it's just important to remember that God's work in history is not limited by human failures or sins, and he works through ordinary people.

God had a purpose and a plan. And even though there were human beings involved in that plan, God still saw that his purpose would be accomplished. And just as God used all kinds of people to bring his Son into the world, he uses all kinds of people today to accomplish his will.

And God wants to use you and me. And that's amazing grace, no matter which way you slice it. God wants to use each and every one of us.

Let us today say, Lord, use me. Lord, work in my life. I yield it to you.

Have your way in me. Use me for your glory and for your purposes. Teach me your way, Lord, that I might walk in your path.

I want to grow in my love for you, Lord. And I want your love to flow more and more and more out of my life till the day I take my last breath here and I take my next one in that new body that you created for me in heaven. You know, why waste our time on things that don't profit, the things that don't have an eternal impact, that aren't going to make a difference for righteousness and other people's lives? We need to be sold out for Jesus Christ.

Now, that doesn't mean you all stop, you know, you all quit your jobs and put on a white robe and you're all just... God said you're the salt of the earth. And all of us have been planted at different places in the earth. We've got different jobs, different responsibilities.

All of us are called to be faithful in what God has given us to do and to honor him in all that God has given us to do. And thus we find that we all have mission fields all around us. How many of you might be in education? Any of you here involved in education? What a mission field, right, you guys? All around you.

How about any of you involved in the trades? The construction trades. Boy, is that a mission field. How many of you are involved domestically, like your housewives? You know, and your job is your family.

Boy, what a mission field your family is and your kids are. And what does God call us in all of those things? He calls us to be faithful and to love him and to honor him and to grow in him because those are our mission fields. And there's much to be done and many to be reached.

We need to live our lives as unto the Lord in all of those fields. And I pray that that would be the cry of your heart today. Recognize God does want to use you.

And if he is Lord of your life and you are subject to him, then you can be certain that he will use you. Now, as we continue our study of Matthew, we focus in the last part on the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. And as we do, I hope you'll take a look at your own heart and examine the work of God in your own life today.

Verse 18. Now, the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. After his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

Pretty radical. In those days, girls were often married by the age of 14 or 15. Often engagements took place by the arrangement of their parents when the children were quite young.

About a year before the actual marriage took place, a second period called the espousal or the betrothal period took place. It was a year of waiting, preparing, courting, and keeping themselves from each other. There was no sexual involvement.

This was a sacred period. It had to be kept pure. It could only be broken by a divorce.

They were legally bound to each other, but not consummated yet. During this period, in Mary and Joseph's relationship, Mary was found to be with child, but not by Joseph. Luke's gospel gives us greater detail here.

In Luke 1, verse 26. Now in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth. That would be the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.

Elizabeth was the mother of John the Baptist. To a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you.

Blessed are you among women. But when she saw him, she was troubled at this saying, no kidding, and considered what manner of greeting this was. And then the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God, and behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a son and shall call his name Jesus.

He will be great and will be called the son of the highest. Not the son of Joseph, the son of the highest. And the Lord God will give him the throne of his father, David.

Going all the way back. And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever. And of his kingdom there will be no end.

Luke clearly understood this to be the fulfillment of the promises of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah. Back in Isaiah chapter 9, you've heard it before, verse 6. Again, hundreds of years before Jesus was born. For unto us a child is born, Isaiah 9, 6. Unto us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Wonderful... A lot of people... What a wonderful child.

Counselor. A lot of people are wise, but nobody can do the third one. Mighty God.

Mighty God. Everlasting Father. Prince of Peace.

And of the increase of his government and peace, there will be no end. And we're testimony to that 2,000 years later. Upon the throne of David and over his kingdom to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever, the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Augsburger notes this. He says, The Holy Spirit, the same divine creative agent who brooded over chaos and brought order at the dawn of creation morning, who acted in the creation of the first man and the first woman, was the divine agent who ushered the life of the eternal Christ into the body of Mary for the miracle of the ages known as the Incarnation. Thus, the God who created man in the beginning from nothing, who created woman from man without the agency of man or woman, now created Jesus of Nazareth through Mary without the agency of a man.

If you believe God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing, it is no problem for you to believe that in the Virgin Mary's womb became the Son of God. That's what the scriptures declare. And so Mary said to the angel back in Luke 1.34, How can this be since I do not know a man? Very normal reaction from a 14 or 15-year-old girl whose marriage hadn't been consummated yet.

How will this be? And the angel said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you. The power of the highest will overshadow you. Therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

How many of you ask that question, I wonder, How can this be? Concerning how God might be wanting and what God might be wanting to birth in your lives. Have you ever thought that concerning the work God is desiring to do in your life, the new life that God has for you, how can this be? I mean, you hear me preaching up here week after week and no doubt some things are stirred in you, but a lot of times you go out of here, I don't know how that's going to happen. He's talking about the mission field.

He's talking about us doing this and doing that. How can this be? Did any of you ever ask that question? How about freedom from the grips of sinful habits? We talked about that extensively last week. How can this be? When you're caught in the grip of a sinful habit.

It's almost impossible in your thinking to think of you free from that habit. And you would say that, how can this be? God is saying, I want to set you free. I want to birth something brand new in you.

Bible says, if anyone is in Christ, he's a new creation. The old things are passed away, behold, all things become new. How can this be? Some of us at one time going to church regularly.

How can this be? I mean, we treasured our Sundays and our Wednesday nights and Thursday nights and Monday nights. And we always had different things filled in and we wondered, how could this be? Telling others about Jesus. How can this be? Tithing and giving sacrificially.

You might look at your budget and go, how can this be? Going to the mission field. How can this be? When Jesus and his calling is birthed within us, folks, our fleshly reaction is often, how can this be? But as Luke's gospel goes on and the angel is responding to Mary, he says in verse 37, for with God, nothing will be impossible. With God, nothing will be impossible.

What was Mary's response? I pray it's the response we have too. She said, behold the maid servant of the Lord, let it be to me according to your word. Let it be to me according to your word.

Not according to how I feel. Not according to my emotions. Nor even according to my abilities.

But Lord, let it be done to me. Let it be done in me according to your word. What do you want to do in my life, Lord? Let it be according to your word.

And that's what God would ask us to pray this morning. As we're preparing to come on up to the communion table this morning. And we're going to take these elements, this bread, this cup of juice, reminding us of the body and the blood of Jesus Christ that was given for us.

That we might be his children. That we might be called by his name. That we might be his servants.

That we might follow him wherever he would lead us. As we take those elements this morning, I pray that we could truly from the depths of our hearts say, Lord, I don't know how it can be, but I know you're God. I know you can do the impossible.

And whatever you want to do in my life, let it be done to me according to your word. I want to be who you want me to be, Lord. I want to follow you.

And I pray that we would have that same response and that encouragement to one another, to others. You know, sometimes when God really gets a hold of somebody, their friends, rather than encouraging them, they kind of mock them. They go, whoa, aren't you spiritual? Who made you so high and mighty? You know, God is telling us in these next couple of verses in Matthew's gospel what Joseph's reaction was to all of this.

And I think it's important for us to look at that, don't you? And we can learn from that how to react. How do we react to God working in someone close to us, in a good friend, in a spouse, in a child? How do we react to God working in those around us? Let's look at verse 19. Then Joseph, her husband, being a just man and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly by publicly exposing her and declaring that he was not responsible for her pregnancy, would subject Mary under the law of being stoned to death.

Joseph didn't want to make her a public example, but just divorce her and put her away privately. According to the law, he could do that. Joseph was a man of integrity and faith.

He took this turn of events before the Lord and pondered about what to do. He did not want to just react with his feelings, but truly wanted to do the right and honorable and loving thing, and he needed God's perspective. He needed God's wisdom.

But now divine confirmation of the story Mary had given him comes. Verse 20 tells us, But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

For he will save his people from their sins. I'm glad Joseph waited on the Lord. You shall call his name Jesus.

Jesus is a Greek name for the Hebrew Joshua or Yahweh Shua, which means Jehovah has become our salvation. We're told here that, For he shall save his people from their sins. Through Jesus Christ alone we have salvation.

Acts 4.12 tells us, Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven whereby men can be saved. No other name under heaven given. Among men by which we must be saved.

In John 3.36, Jesus said, He who believes in the Son has eternal life, S-O-N. And he who does not believe in the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. Jesus said in John 14.6, you know it, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me. In 1 John 5.11, And this is the testimony that God has given us, eternal life. And this life is in his Son.

And he who has the Son has life. And he who does not have the Son does not have life. Jesus' purpose in coming and his mission was to save sinners.

Luke 19.10 says, For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. How can this be? How can I have this certain hope? How can I know I am no longer condemned by God? How can I have a true eternal perspective? The answer, simply, only through Jesus. Only through Jesus.

And verse 22 tells us, So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophets, saying, Behold, the virgin shall be with child. Isaiah 7.14, quoting there. And bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel.

Which is translated, God with us. In the beginning was the Word. John 1.1. And the Word was with God.

And the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him.

And without him nothing was made that was made. In him was life. And the life was the light of man.

And the light shines in the darkness. And the darkness didn't comprehend it. John 1.14. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And so Joseph has this angel speaking to him and confirming what was going on in Mary. And then verse 24 says, Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her, that is, did not know her intimately, sexually, till she had brought forth her firstborn son.

And he called his name Jesus. He obeyed the Lord. And he rejoiced in the work that God was doing in his wife, even though he would no doubt have to face ridicule, scorn, perhaps embarrassment down the road, even though he knew that Mary would have to bear the public ridicule.

And as we go through the Gospels, we find that there were times when the Pharisees even lashed out at Mary, because evidently by that time it was knowledge that Joseph was not the father. But God's word clearly tells us who was the father and who is the father. Jesus, born miraculously of the Holy Spirit, to do what? To be the perfect human intermediary.

There's one mediator between God and man, the Bible tells us, and that's Jesus. It's not the church. It's not your pastors.

It's not any other clergy. It's Jesus. And through Jesus Christ, you can have life and have that life so much more abundantly that God has planned for you.

Do you dare to say this morning, be it done to me, Lord, according to your word? How can this be? Through Jesus, it can be. And God can do a new, fresh work in your life today. And I pray you would open your heart to him and allow him to do that work.

I'd like to have the pastors and the worship team come on back up this morning. And we're going to invite you to come on up to the tables here in just a moment and to partake of the cup and the bread. And as you do, we would invite you to pray.

Of course, I would ask you to be praying even right now before you come on up. If you have never asked Jesus Christ into your heart as your Lord and Savior and the forgiver of your sins, I would encourage you to do that right now. Right now, say, Lord, I'm a sinner and I can't save myself.

Lord, would you forgive me? I believe you died on the cross and rose again that all of my sin could be forgiven and washed away. I believe you are God. Take over in my life.

I surrender and yield my life to you. And if you honestly pray that, God will meet you this morning. You'll be born again this morning.

You can partake of your true first communion this morning because you're now a child of him. You're not a child of God because you're an American. You're not a child of God because your parents were Presbyterians or Baptists or Catholics.

You're a child of God because of faith in Jesus Christ. If your trust is in Jesus as the one who died and rose again for you, then that's where new life comes. As you come to the table this morning, may you come with an attitude of prayer, an attitude of humility to God's purposes in your life.

Lord, I want to get out of the way and I want you to work in me, please. Take over in my life. As I take this bread, as I drink this cup, Lord, I do it in remembrance of you.

I remember what you did for me and how you suffered for me, how you sacrificed yourself for me that I might have life. Lord, help me not to be so selfish, so stubborn, so intent on doing it my way. When you were Almighty God and you could have dissolved this earth in a word and yet you went to the cross and you bore that pain beyond what anything I have ever experienced and you bore it being perfectly sinless and holy for someone so defiled by sin as I was.

Oh, Lord, help me not to have a puffed-up heart and attitude. God, I want to be who you want me to be.

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/7/SID7250.mp3>

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