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Let's begin with prayer.

Our gracious God our heavenly Father how we thank you. Praise you. For even. Your comment by a common grace. We who are evil know how to give good gifts to our children. And it is even among. Us sinful people. It is. Oh, and unnatural. For one not to care.

About his children. And you have shown for us, the ultimate care. And giving your son for us while we were still sinners. He died for us. We thank you. For the way that you displayed, that love. In every way. For every need. Let me pray. Oh lord that as you stir off our hearts towards you, To love you who have made us for yourself to love you.

They have redeemed us for yourself. That you would shape and us the heart that is in christ. Treasures, others who are Made in your image and especially those. Whom you have united to christ by the indwelling. The work of your spirit who has now and welcome. And so, we pray that As you give us to see what jesus is like.

Towards sinners and towards centers him, he has redeeming That you would give us a similar heart and similar mind. And stir us up to that. Service of one, another, not only in spiritual things, But attending to every need. Oh, lord. Help us for. We lack even much of that which is a natural affection.

For our family, for our Uh, brother for our neighbor. And we look to you. To restore us to the last Adam. Our lord jesus. So bless his word to us, by your spirit. Who gave that word? We ask it in his name, amen. So really you could make study of all of the gospels,

And when i say all of them, i don't mean all four. I mean, the whole of each one of the four To consider. Jesus has comforting and relieving ministry. We Looked especially at the summary statements of his character and how that was Intended as a pattern for us. Uh, last lord's day, we're going to look Especially at his own teaching for us.

To be those who. Steward, what the Lord has given us, well and especially Who love others? As a Demonstration of the fact that god has given us to know him. As our creator and as our redeemer and to love him who first loved us. So, we'll see. Lord, helping us and sparing us to one another.

Uh, His teaching on those things and next week's portion, but this week, We're really just taking a look at how the character of christ as one. Who lowers himself? To be a servant is expressed in his service of others, his care for them, his comfort towards them. And indeed, we're taking a fairly.

Uh, large section from The early part. Of luke. In particular, because There's going to be a. Um, A special focus by the time we get to, Uh, the end of The portion in luke 7 there. Where jesus? Jesus's answer. To john's disciples, john the Baptizer or as we enjoy calling him, john the presbyterian.

Less than anyone make any denominational mistakes with his? Commonly used historical name. Um, But he, at one point. As wondering if this is what kingdom experience is going to be like, and yes getting imprisoned. And Eventually getting your head chopped off, although obviously that hadn't happened yet. For John.

Uh, is what kingdom experiences often. Like he wants to know if Jesus is the King. If Jesus is. Indeed the God, man. Which is a very interesting because John himself had been the great proclaimer. Uh, that Jesus was those things and Jesus's answer is. To. Uh, suddenly in, in one moment, do a condensed demonstration of the way that he has been acting, what the things that he has been doing.

The previous few chapters. And basically, to quote from Isaiah And, And tell John that isn't it? That is sufficient identification for who he is. And for what he is, like, Uh, this of course for for us who want to be conformed to Christ. Who want to make display. That he is who he says he is and that he has genuinely redeemed us.

Then. We see the the purpose of Christ's miracles in identifying him. And we want to be conformed to his character as well, which will get into when we consider his teaching and then, when we consider his church as the continuation, Of his work on earth. Which we have been doing in the book of Acts for some time.

So, I'm chosen to stick with Luke's since we're Going to go from Luke, especially. Into Acts. But we could see these things in many places in the gospels. I don't know why I decided to jump in three verses later. We'll start in verse 17 and Luke 5. Uh, now it happened on a certain day as he was teaching there.

There were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by who had come out of every town of Galilee Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present to heal them. Then behold men brought on a bed, a man who was paralyzed whom they sought to bring in and lay before him.

And when they could not find how they might bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with his bed through the tiling into the mixed before Jesus. When he saw their faith. He said to them, Man. Your sins are. Forgiven, you And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason.

Saying, who is this? Who speaks blasphemies, who can forgive sins, but God alone Uh, now remember What we? Like, I don't think it was in. The deacon training lesson, although, we are going to have it. In the next passage in Luke in Luke 6. Remember that the Lord Jesus in his In his care for us and attending to us.

He attends to the poor because we are all. No, that must have been in in this class. That we're thinking about that, we are all poor. The first thing that happens in someone when the Lord is converting him or one of the first things, is he realizes that he's poor in spirit that he has nothing.

To offer God or to offer others that in him. Is only death and sin. And in God is only is all the life and goodness. And, It is uh, it is At that point, that we are especially ready to see that. We are the targets of Jesus's ministry. Because he didn't come to heal the well but the sick he didn't come To help.

The rich, but the poor He did not come to fill in the gap for those who were almost good enough for God. As. We are tempted to think of ourselves. And as the scribes and Pharisees. Uh, thought of themselves. But they definitely did not recognize who Jesus was that?

Jesus is god, and that they are the ones who need the healing verse 7. And so they are object to jesus is seeing their faith and he, he sees not one paralytic. He sees. A paralytic and friends, all of whom are spiritually. Our lives. Spiritually dead. Spiritually needing. It's not like the The the well people on the roof.

We're letting down the one who was needy. In front of jesus. They were all needy. And that's what jesus sees. Because he says, when he sees their faith verse 20, He says to them, man, your sins. Are forgiven you. Here. They are hoping in christ hoping for forgiveness. This guy's biggest problem is not that he cannot walk.

It's that he cannot live. He doesn't have life in christ and he needs the words of christ. And the walking impediment was a big deal. Because he needed to be able to get to jesus to hear the words of jesus to believe in jesus to be forgiven of his sins.

There are. Scribes and pharisees. From every city in israel. It says. But, They are not coming in faith. To be forgiven. To be healed. And this is healing that all of us need. This is why. Um, This is why when you hear about, Uh, churches where there are so called healings.

And they think that their superior, you may pity them. Because every true church where the gospel is preached and believed Where people are made righteous before god in christ and forgiven of their sins. Where these justified ones are transformed. Life-changing life-consuming transformation. Into the character of the christian has redeemed them.

That is the healing of christianity. And what the lord jesus did for the physical condition out of the same love and pity. Compassion. Sorry petty is not a word that we use in the same way. Now, out of the same love and compassion in which he was bringing forgiveness of sins and spiritual life.

Those external healings were a An indicator of what he is doing. As god, who is god alone. And so, they ask that question, who can forgive sins, but God alone, jesus perceives their thoughts He answers and says to them. Why are you reasoning in your hearts? Which is easier to say your sins are forgiven you or to say rise up and walk.

And of course it's a play on words. It's actually Um, It's actually much more difficult to say your sins are forgiven you. The, your sins are forgiven me statement is going to cost him the cross. By the time that he has that he has done, But that's, which is easier to get away with saying.

Because they can't see if the sins are forgiven. But they can see if the guy gets up and walks or not. This is why faith healers never heal. Amputations

But that you may know that the son of man has power on earth to forgive sins. He said to the man who is paralyzed. I say to you arise, take up your bed. And go to your house. Immediately he rose up before them. Took up what had he had been lying on and departed to go to his own house?

Glorifying god. There is A compassion. For spiritual condition. That also manifested itself in compassion for earthly condition. And that's meant that jesus was willing. To go to the lollies. Um, The. Oh, What was the word? Oh, thank god. I remembered it without using her name wouldn't want to. Deplorables.

Such as we are. Such as we all know ourselves to be But the lord jesus was willing to. To go to those who were deplorable. Because the gospel is for deplorable people. Not that being

deplorable. Is okay. In a moral sense. But that is what Jesus is saving people from Um, and all of our sin.

Is that way? So that's exactly where. Look now goes. In as he's carried along, by the spirit to give his account. After these things, he went out saw tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And he said to him, follow me. So he left all rose up and followed him.

Then Levi gave him a great feast in his own house and there were a great number. Of tax collectors and others who sat down with them? And their scribes and the Pharisees complained against his disciples saying, why do you eat and drink? With tax collectors and sinners. And the answer to that is because There are none of these non-sinners of which you speak with them to eat and drink.

But I want you to notice something. About the interests of Christ and the interests of his disciple. They go to sinners because that is to whom Christ goes. The sinners are not. Uh, initially the inner circle, they They are not here. Brought in among the 12 And yet Jesus is willing to go to them with the gospel to go to them, not as those who are.

Okay. Jesus does not accept you just the way you are. Jesus, accepts you despite the way you are because he is the solution to how you are. And that is why there is no one who is beyond the scope or beyond being a target either for spiritual ministry or Deaconal ministry.

Of course, the the actual ministry, without the spiritual, Is to be even worse than the spiritual without the diagonal. Uh to minister to a man's body. And not minister to his soul is to deny the great reason for ministering to him materially which is that he is an eternal soul made in the image of God.

That's why we do the one. Uh, but the two go together and it is also an error. Uh, to minister only. In the means of grace, only. With the word that addresses, the spiritual. Poverty. But the scribes and the Pharisees complain against his disciples. As if to say, Well, you should have been able to guess that your master wasn't for real.

When he was willing to hang out with sinners. But how was it that they came to have this great feast? With tax collectors and centers with those who are considered the, the moral low lives. Well, it was because the Lord Jesus had actually just saved one of them. And, He didn't, it's not like, They just went and targeted.

All of the worst sinners in the society. It was because he had just saved one of those. You just saved, Levi. And those were his friends. So you see the Uh, the Lord Jesus. Uh, targeting the lowly having. That. Compassion. That is primarily spiritual but also demonstrated in. Uh, compassion.

For material need. And, Uh the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ, then his identity. As God who saves. Being displayed in alleviating. Uh, what only he can. Um, now he hasn't given to us, like he gave to the apostles, the signs of an apostle. But he has given to us the message of an apostle.

And he has given to us. That love, which we will. Continue to see both in his teaching ministry during his The three years of his earthly ministry. And, Sorry, good. And then in the working out of the apostolic ministry and then the church as it transitions from Are the age of the apostles?

And Lord willing, we will continue to see that especially when we come into. The pastoral epistles material. And so the Lord Jesus doesn't just demonstrate this but he addresses he

doesn't dress to do things to comfort them, but he addresses them with his words to comfort them, he addresses us.

With his words. We go forward into the next passage on your outline there. Luke 6, 20 through 26 and you'll recognize You'll recognize the Beatitudes, but you'll recognize them in luke combined with woes. Blessed. Are you poor blessed? Are you who hunger? Bluster, you who weave? Blessed, are you in men hate you?

But woe to you who are rich low to you. Who are full? Wow to you, who laugh? Low to you when all men. Speak well of you. The lord jesus cares. For a suffering people. But he also has A suffering people. The servants should not expect to fare better than their master.

And one of the ways that diaconal ministry and the church attending to one another in our need, and in our suffering. And walking through that together, one of the ways that that shows the identity of christ does not only in his lordship and his love in the fact that he is God, who saves and that he is compassionate.

But also in his suffering. In his lowliness. In his having a joy set before him. That none of the temporary pleasures of earth. Can compare to. And so, when we suffer together, And when we, when we find that the fellowship of the church is found more in our neediness Then, in our wealth.

And this is often happened. And times of poverty and famine and plague and persecution. When the church has known the fellowship of her savior more, in those things than in the In the pleasant and prosperous times. And not just fellowship with him, but fellowship with one another Many of you have found this.

The lord gave you something very difficult to walk through for a season. And those who loved you for the lord, jesus is sake. We're willing to be inconvenience to set, aside their lives to sacrifice time to sacrifice well. To be with you in that, in a way, that is inexplicable apart from christ.

Well. Almost, you know, those who Are trying to win brownie points unto heaven. Also, sometimes do things like that as you know, acts of Religious heroism. Um but that that's another dreadful evil. But many of you have experienced the, the Christ produce version of that, And when you think about the greatest fellowship that you have had, the the most intimate times in your experience of christ's church and christ's people, there are really two things.

That stand out and, and the mind and memory of most believers. Is this peculiar times in the worship of god? When god came near by his word and his spirit, brought it home to hearts and minds together in an intimacy with god that when it's shared in the congregation As a closeness to it.

That imitates the closeness of the glorified saints in heaven. And the other. Is that intimacy that the glorified saints in heaven? Have ceased to have with one another. Because they are no longer sharing in the sufferings of christ and sharing in the sufferings with one another. And, Uh, The lord jesus comes and he speaks comfort to his people and he's constantly speaking comfort to us.

Because in this world, we will have trouble. Through many tribulations. We must enter the kingdom of god. Everyone who desires to live a godly life in christ, jesus will suffer persecution. And so jesus speaks comfort to us. He says, blessed, are you poor for yours as the kingdom of god?

Blessed, are you hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed. Are usually week now for you shall laugh. Blessed for you in men hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and cast out your name, as evil for the son of man's sake, rejoice in that day and leap for joy for indeed, your reward is great in heaven.

For in like manner, their fathers did to the prophets. He's not saying, Blessed, are you in these things? Because you'll, you know, There will be better times. Right. God works all things together for good, does not mean your present painful circumstances will be traded for For better earthly circumstances.

And so you come through one set of painful, earthly circumstances, and then that You know, there's some resolution to that and you come into a season of earthly pleasantness and you say aha, you see all things work together for good. No. They work together. For the good, the great good, the good at the end of psalm 73 for me, good is to be near you.

The good that says whom have i in heaven, but you and there's nothing else on earth. I'd Nothing a desire. Apart from you on earth. And so, when he says, Uh blustery, poor for yours as the kingdom. That's something that. Uh, poverty in this world does not accomplish. It's talking about an eternal wealth.

For those who know themselves always to be poor in this world. We are always poor. In this world. Blessed, are you who hunger now? For you shall be filled. It's not like seven years of famine and then seven years of feasting, he's talking about a filling. That we actually have to be completely sanctified to enjoy.

Because so so long as you and i have remaining sin, we fill up on rubbish and we're not as hungry as we ought to be. But, The one to whom god has given that hunger for himself that wants to be done with sin. So i'll be satisfied with him.

That hunger, he's already given you. As part of a work that actually ends. With having all of our self-satisfaction, all of our wealth satisfaction, all of our fun satisfaction stripped So that we will be satisfied entirely. In him. Busting you, who eat now for, you shall laugh? It's not saying, you know, Funerals are rough but there will be weddings too.

He's talking about the infinite uninhibited joy. Of glory of the wedding supper of the lamb. And so, There is a recognition that this is, this is a world of one. And as we say, the lord, jesus is all that we need and abundant for what we need. We come alongside one another and share the wants.

Together. And so the lord jesus speaks comfort to us. That is the comfort in him. That's why in your ministry to others. They're ought always to be that pointing to christ that delight in christ. Yeah. Oh, it's so nice of you to do that. I feel badly about it.

Feel badly about it. I have everything in christ and you if your christian you have everything in christ, Now, i got to share this suffering with you. We have this in fellowship with jesus. Thank you for the opportunity. We won't get to do this in glory. I'm so glad.

That we could do this together. And, To have that view, which is difficult for a church. That lives in a place in a time in which Earthly prosperity is the order of the day. To to find Christ as all our riches and to enjoy suffering with one another. It's rare enough among us that When someone has physical disability, or Or find find financial want.

Uh, we're embarrassed of it. And we, we think that You know, i will do as much as i can for myself and only if i completely run out of other options. I'll finally go and tell the deacons Whereas, Our lack and our suffering. Is a limited time offer. This is the last chance we have.

To share in it together. And to remember that, Uh, christ speaks comfort. To those who recognize. That. The country that we have been promised as a heavenly country. Uh, you know. It wasn't keen and that Abraham was looking forward to hebrews. 11 tells us And, you know, go ahead and Where, Make america great again caps.

But america is in heaven. And it's not the heavenly country. And suffering together is part of recognizing. That there is a full satisfaction. There is a full laughing. Um, there is a full joy. Coming. Well, to you who are rich for you have received consolation woe to you, who are full For you shall hunger?

Woe to you. Who laugh now? For you shall mourn and bleep. Wow, to you in all men speak, well of you. For so there did their fathers to the False. Profits. Right. So there's The, the comforting. Uh, the acidol ministry of the lord was not designed. To give. Heaven on earth.

It was not designed. To give. Full healing of the body. Or. Um, The quality of wealth outcome. Or any of those things that is the opposite. Is designed to communicate. That earth is not heaven and it is not meant to be. But he who is heaven, has come And we count him as our heaven together.

And therefore, we care. Uh, together as he cares for us. And then, Uh, chapter 7.

When you concluded his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum, and a certain centurion servant to his dear to him was sick and ready to die. When he heard about jesus, he sent elders of the jews to him. Pleading with him to come and heal his servant.

When they came to jesus, they begged him earnestly saying that the one for whom he should do. This was deserving For he loves our nation and his built a synagogue. Well, blessed are the undeserving. Thankfully the man knows that about himself even if they did not know that about him.

Verse 6. Then jesus went with them. And when he was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him saying to him. Lords do not trouble yourself. For, i am not worthy. That you should enter under my roof. Therefore, i did not even think myself worthy to come to you.

But say the word and my servant will be healed. For i also am a man placed under authority having soldiers under me. And i say to one go, and he goes into another come, and he comes and to my servant do this, and he doesn't When jesus heard these things, he marveled at him and turned around and said to the crowd, that followed him.

I say to you, i have not found such great faith, not even in israel. Those who were sent returning to the house. Found the servant. Well. Who had been sick? And so the lord's. Ministry again. Aiming at the unworthy. And the demonstration of his authority. Verse 11. Now, it happened.

The day after that, he went into a city called name. And many of his disciples went to him in a large crowd. And when he came near, the gate of the city, behold the dead man was being carried out. The only son of his mother And she was a widow.

Which meant she has no husband. She has no son. She has No one to care for her at all. A large crowd from the city was with her. When the lord saw her, he had compassion on her and he said to her, do not weep He came and touched the open coffin.

And those are those who carried him, stood still, Jesus had just intentionally ceremony defiled himself. Shocking. And he said, young, man, i say to you arise. So he who is dead set up. Began to speak. And he presented him to his mother. Then fear came upon all and they glorified god sang.

A great prophet has risen up among us. And god has visited his people. And this report about him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region. Then the disciples of john reported to him, concerning all these things. And john calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to jesus saying, Are you the coming one or do we look for another?

When the men had come to him, they said, John the baptist. Has said, uh, sent us to you saying, Are you the coming one or do we look for another? And that very hour, he cured many Of infirmities afflictions and evil spirits. And to many blind, he gave sight.

Jesus answered and said to them. Go and tell john the things you have seen and heard. The blind see. The lame walk. Lepers are cleansed. Death here. The dead are raised. The poor. Have the gospel. Preached to the. And blessed as he Who is not offended. Because of me.

And so he is identifying himself. By his jackal works. Took a lot of time in the middle on some application, but it'll just Uh, read to you. From isaiah, 61 and isaiah 35. What jesus is saying about himself? In his earthly diagonal ministry. Isaiah 61, the spirit of the lord yahweh is upon me.

Because he always has anointed me to preach good, tidings to the poor. He has sent me to heal the broken hearted To proclaim liberty. To the captives. And the opening of the prison. To those who are bound. And then chapter 35. Versus four through six. Say to those who are fearful hearted.

Be strong. Do not fear. The hold your god will come with vengeance. With the recompense of god, he will come and save you. And the eyes of the blind shall be opened. And the deer ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap. Like a deer.

And the tongue of the dumb. Shall sing. For water, shall burst forth and the wilderness. And streams. In the desert. The lord, jesus has come. For those who are sick and for those who are wounded for those who are poor, And we are those. This is how we see things according to spiritual condition, And there are Earthly material, physical effects of this being a world of sin and misery.

And when the church, Proclaims a message of comfort to those who are spiritually. Poor. Matching it with a ministry of compassion and suffering, both within the church. And then if the lord has so blessed us. Uh, that that all of the, the material suffering in the church has been alleviated, then we can extend that even into the world.

As we remind them. That it is not their material suffering. That is their great suffering. It is not their material poverty. Or illness that is their great poverty or illness that these things are in the world because of our spiritual condition. And that the lord jesus is one who comes.

And he speaks comfort. Oftentimes, i'm afraid even when we think about the gospel ministry. It sounds more like look at all these. Well, people and come among us and we can teach you how to be as wonderful as we are too. This is of course a great mistake with respect to our thin

with respect to the sanctification that remains with respect to the actual joy of the christian who is one, who is lowly even in spiritual things.

He's not saying Uh, we're in the same place as you are. But we are saying, we are still very needy and the Lord speaks comfort to us. But the spiritual ministry and the material ministry within the church. Therefore to go hand in hand. Just as they did in the lord jesus's.

Earthly ministry, those two things went hand in hand. Let's pray.

Our father in heaven. Pray that you would. Take this time of teaching and of hearing. And you had bless it to us. That this glimpse that we have had of christ and his compassion in spiritual things and the relation of sin to misery and the desire then. Uh, to alleviate.

That. Um, That sin and that misery. That you would give us to meditate upon the lord jesus, as we see and consider him in the scriptures that you would make ourselves to know Not only our poverty in ourselves but the wealth that we have in him. And lord help that help us that that would work its way out into how we deal.

Uh, with the earthly circumstances that our brothers and sisters find themselves in. And that our neighbors find themselves in We ask it in jesus name, amen.