

Christ's Power in Preaching

2024.08.25 Morning Sermon in **Matthew 11:1–6**

¹Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities. ²And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples ³and said to Him, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?”

⁴Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: ⁵The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. ⁶And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.”

Main idea: Christ, our Prophet, preaches Himself to us to save and sanctify us.

Introduction: how do we know that Jesus is Who He says He is? This is the biggest question of our life. The answer is not just the evidence that we find convincing but the power of Christ that changes us so that we are convince-able.

1. **Jesus saving through preaching. Preaching in their cities** (v1)
 1. Jesus's doing what He Himself has commanded. He sent them through the cities, but promised that He would be coming after them (cf. 10:23).
 2. Jesus still does this by His Spirit (Mt 28:18–20). This is how He came to Ephesus (cf. Eph 2:17, 4:20–21). This is how He comes now to Culleoka (cf. Heb 2:1–4:13, 12:25–29). If you are a believer, this is how He came to you.
 3. Jesus's almighty mercy to take enemies as subjects. Remember what the disciples were being trained to face as they went out preaching. You may need to hear of your own enmity to Him, of your own danger.
2. **Jesus sanctifying through preaching. Preaching to John himself** (v2–5)
 1. Tell/herald to John, v4. Believers, officers/servants still need preaching (v2–3).
 2. Jesus sends John not a yes/no answer but a sermon on Isaiah 35:4–6 and Isaiah 61:1–3 (v5).
 1. What they see is the evidence that Jesus is God (Isa 35).

2. What they hear is the evidence that Jesus is Christ (Isa 61:1–7, 63:1). The hearing, the preaching, is primary: God has become a Man to be the Christ. It is a principle throughout the gospels that the works of Christ are especially a testimony to the words of Christ about Himself.
3. For your sanctification, especially at points of difficulty, what you need is Christ Himself to come near and preach Himself to you. He fulfills His own prayer from John 17:17
3. **Jesus signifies Himself through preaching** (v6)
 1. Christ may not be (certainly isn't!) what we expect. He is Who He is and Whom He proclaims Himself to be. Even as much as we have learned about Him, we are still growing—both into what we already know, and into increased realization about Him and understanding of Him.
 2. He promises a special blessing for those who receive Him on His terms rather than stumbling over Him. Blessedness does not come to those who have “figured Him out” but to those who are submitted to Him as He is, who are submitted to Him as He proclaims Himself to be.

Conclusion: Come to Christ's Word and listen to Him. Be saved and be sanctified, by knowing Him as He is!

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Matthew 11 verses 1-6. These are God's words. Now, it came to pass when Jesus finished commanding his 12 disciples. That he departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities. And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ. He sent two of his disciples and said to him.

Are you the coming one or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said to them. Go and tell John. The things which you hear and see. The blind see and the lame walk. The lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear. The dead are raised up. And, The poor have the gospel.

Preached to And blessed, is he? Who is not offended. Because of me. Amen, the sends this reading of God's inspire attempt an Aaron tort we Rejoice to know that he adds his Blessing. Preaching of it, please be seated.

How do we know? That Jesus is. Who he says he is. This is a question. Heard from People who have grown up in reformed churches. People who? Come to a place similar. Uh, That spiritual condition that Uh, we're thinking about even in the Sabbath School a moment ago. Of.

Just not feeling it as it were. Unable to Feel The Nearness of God, the goodness of God, the reality. Of the gospel, the reality of And there is that response that we were learning. Being reminded that we ought to have. That we turn to him, who gives faith that we turn to him.

Who gives Faith by the use of his means. But then there's another response that you can have. And sometimes it goes disguised as trying to be authentic or trying to be sincere. Uh, some language like that. But what it really is is putting yourself in the place of Demanding evidence.

How do I know that Jesus is who he says he is, that's not how John. Is asking here. He's asking in submission to Christ. He is asking for Christ's own help. Which if you are in that condition now or if you ever come to be in that condition, now, You must ask for Christ's help.

Because the biggest question of your life. Is. Whom does Jesus say that he is? And how can, you know it? Now, Jesus does give evidence of it. His church is evidence of it his word and the preservation of it. And the fact that it continues to be preached is evidence of it.

What he has done in people's lives? Well, attested historical events of his own life. No event in the ancient world. So well attested as the death and Resurrection. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. He gives all those evidences, but the answer. To the question. How do we know that Jesus is who he says he is?

Is not just evidence that we find convincing. But the power of Christ that changes So that we are convincible. Because it is Christ by his power. In his word. Christ, who attends the preaching of his word by the power of his He's the one who makes people convincible.

And so, if someone Is in an unconvincible condition. It actually doesn't matter. How much evidence or how good the evidence is. That you present to them. And so, the Lord Jesus presents himself to us just now in these six verses, As the one who works by preaching. He saves.

By preaching. In those cities of Galilee, he sanctifies by preaching. Even sanctifies preachers by preaching. Thanks be to God for his merciful sanctifying work to John, his cousin. The greatest Prophet that ever lived as Jesus is going to call him in next week's passage Lord willing. But one who is still being Sanctified Who is not yet a soul of the just made perfect.

And who in his partially Sanctified State. Like, many of you have moments of difficulty and have moments of Doubt and cry out to the Lord. Jesus wanting to know, I things are different than you had expected. Jesus saves by his preaching and he sanctifies by his preaching. Because he signifies himself.

He communicates to us who he actually is. By his preaching. And so, we'll consider this passage. Those three headings or those three considerations. First in verse 1, that Jesus saves. Through preaching and second in verses two through five that Jesus sanctifies through preaching. And that in both of these, His saving and his sanctifying It Is by a proclaiming of himself.

That Jesus signifies himself through his preaching. And the blessing is for those who receive Jesus, as he proclaims himself to be And not according to their demands, or their desires. Or their expectations. So first, then Jesus saves through preaching. Now, it came to pass when Jesus finished commanding his 12 disciples.

He departed from there to teach and preach in their cities. Jesus did not give them. The last few sermons worth in Matthew chapter 10, giving he did not give them the instructions for their training Mission and instructions that as we have seen included preparation not just for what they were going to experience in the next days and weeks as As they did their as it were internship or their senior project before they're ready to graduate, and they go out and preach the gospel of the Kingdom.

Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven as a hand. As John had preached and is as a summary of Jesus's, preaching, as a whole, is given to us in the god, he didn't just tell them to go do it and then himself, sit back and relax and wait for them to come in so that he could grade the performance as it were.

Now when Jesus Finished commanding them when he finished commanding his 12 disciples. What did he do? He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities. And what a great strengthening. This would have been for them as some of them were in this city over here preaching.

And some of them were in that City over there, preaching and the Lord is giving them some fruit in their Ministry, and he's given them power also. As we heard in chapter 10 to do the signs, that had attended Jesus's own preaching Ministry but then also to know that Jesus is preaching in other cities.

That they are part of this work. That is ultimately a work of Christ, he is the one who is preaching, he is the one who has given them authority. He is the one who has supplied them with the ministry of his Spirit, to perform signs and, uh, for their own encouragement as preachers, not just that others would see the signs and and by the spirits giving them life and Faith, say these are the signs that Jesus is the Christ that he is, the savior that he is God, who has come to save.

But that the disciples themselves Are preaching this word and doing these signs and Jesus is doing it simultaneously, that they would know that it is Christ who has come and attended and helps their preaching. Some of, you know, that Uh, undergraduate school. I well I completed my undergraduate education at an Armenian school where they did not believe.

Uh The Sovereign Grace of God Alone that they believe that God made salvation kind of hypothetically possible. And then that it was up to some combination of the skill, and sincerity of the preacher, and the sincerity and willingness of the hearer That's how possible salvation would become actual salvation.

That was be dreadfully, discouraging In fact, having now experienced for A few decades. My level of sincerity and my level of skill. I am very grateful that none of you are saved or Sanctified. Uh, on account of. And having experienced what people are, like both the unconverted and the partially Sanctified.

I am very grateful that you're being saved, or you're being Sanctified does not dependent upon you. And indeed, this is the last great promise of the Gospel of Matthew. Because Jesus Doing what he himself has commanded, is something that he promises again at the end of this gospel when he says as you go, Going into all the world, make disciples.

Of every nation, baptizing them and teaching them. And then what is the promise that attends them. And surely though I am with you always even to the end of the age. Jesus is still. Going through all the world now by the ministry of his Spirit, attending the preaching of his servants.

This is how in the Fulfillment of the promise, at the end of the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew 28, Verse 20 is how Jesus came to Ephesus. You might say. Um, preacher. I've read the gospels through and through, I don't see any time that Jesus came to Ephesus. Well, Jesus did preach at Ephesus.

Ephesians chapter 2. And verse 17 says, and he, well, maybe we should back up to show who that he is. That he might reconcile them. Both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. So that he is the one who has reconciled them to God, that he is, Jesus.

Okay? Now verse 17. And he came and preached, peace, To you who are afar off. And to those who were near. Now, remember, the Ephesians had had the ministry of the Apostle, Paul, for some two and a half to three years, several hours a day in the Of taranus during that it's a little bit similar to The idea of the the Siesta or the the midday nap slash.

Interruption of your daily labor for Maybe carrying out business. And so Uh, they were very well taught. Uh but in in Chapter two, he says Jesus came. Preached peace to you. And then in chapter 4 in verses, 20 to 21 He is correcting those who say that you can be a carnal Christian those who say that.

You can. Believe in the Lord, Jesus. But still walk as unbelievers walk. And he says, but you have not so learned Christ. If indeed you have heard him and have been taught by him. As the truth is in Jesus. So, Jesus, preached at Ephesus. This was how they came to be reconciled to God.

Christ, who had abolished the enmity at his cross? Also came to Ephesus and preached peace with God, in himself through his cross to unbelievers in Ephesus. You said when did that happen? Well, what happened? When he sent those who are making disciples He sent those who were preaching the gospel.

Because it was not merely the servants who preached, but Jesus, who made the promise surely, I will be with, you always even to the end of the age, is that true for the Christian to just know the fellowship of Christ throughout our life? Well, yes it is. But it's also very specifically at the end of Matthew 28, in Jesus's attending upon word and Sacrament in his coming, by his power in his coming, by the ministry of his Spirit, to bless the preaching of the word to bless the use of the sacrifices to exercise, his saving power.

Even now. Uh, the Lord Jesus comes to calyoka. Tennessee. On August 25th 2024. And he addresses a small of comparatively small gathered congregation. And he, he encourages us and warns us in Hebrews chapters 2 through 4, not to neglect this great salvation that is being proclaimed to us and then he picks that back up in chapter 12 of the book of Hebrews and says, don't refuse him who speaks from Heaven.

Yes, there is a preacher on Earth. Yes, there is an assembly on Earth. But just as the Lord Jesus just as is prophesied of the Lord Jesus in Psalm 22 that he will declare God's name to his Brethren. That in the midst of the assembly, he will sing God's praise.

So, is fulfilled in that Sabbath-keeping, that remains that, when we do not forsake the assembling of ourselves but we gather together and we enter Heaven through the new and living way that is the Flesh of Jesus Christ. With our hearts, cleansed from dead works, our consciences cleansed from dead works by the blood of Jesus Christ that it is Jesus Christ himself who addresses us from.

On the earth. Jesus still saves through preaching. If you are a Believer, this is how you were saved. Even if you didn't know, at the time that it was Jesus who was using his word that you were reading and coming by his spirit and preaching himself to you off the page or Jesus by that friend, or that family member or that complete.

Stranger at that, not at all chance, but sovereignly ordained, providential encounter. Jesus, who came to you in the preaching of the word Lord's Day by Lord's day. You growing up in a covenant family and you hearing the words day by day in family, worship and week by week in the congregational assembly, but the way that you were saved Was Jesus came by his spirit and preached himself to you.

So that you would know that Jesus is God, who came to live obediently and die, a toningly for Sinners and that he has risen again on account of having accomplished their justification. If you are a Believer, Jesus saved you. Through preaching. He preached himself to you. In his work.

Now, think about what we have heard the last few weeks. About many of those, in fact, the ordinary natural state of everyone. Until the grace of God changes them until Jesus by his power changes them. That we are in our natural state enemies. By Nature children of Wrath sons of Disobedience.

That Christ dies for for those who are his enemies that God demonstrates his love by Christ's dying. Not for righteous, but for Sinners, Jesus's Mercy. Is to take enemies as subjects. And he does so by exercising an Almighty power. He comes in the preaching of his word. The exercises Almighty power to turn enemies into subjects children of Wrath into the adopted children of the Living God, by there, being united to the only begotten son of God.

Remember what the disciples were being trained to face as they went out to preaching? Now Jesus. Comes and he tells you the bad news. Like you did to the Apostle Paul. You remember, on the way to Damascus. Paul thought he was the greatest friend God had on Earth. And Jesus comes and he preaches himself.

To Saul of Tarsus. Heading to Damascus to round up Christians and have them executed. As he had evidently desired and approved of the death of Stephen and others. And Jesus comes and he knocks them down and he says, Paul well he says Saul Saul, why are you persecuting me?

And he says, who are you Lord? He says, I am Jesus. Whom you are persecuting.

And perhaps some of you have had that experience. Thinking that you were good, that you were decent that you were upright that your church going folk. And you didn't realize that you were still in a state of enmity towards God. You didn't see sin as a rejection of the Creator, a denying of his glory.

You thought that you were just making some mistakes or doing some wrong things but you were generally good and you made up for it and for the things that were bad, uh God was uh was nice and sweet. The the way that someone, who just sweeps things under the rugs, Under the rug is nice and sweet and you operate it that way for a time and then God came to you.

Jesus himself came to you in the preaching of his word and he said no, every one of your sins. Every sinful thought every sinful, desire. Every sinful emotion. There's a despising of the Glorious. God the Holy One before. Whom the the burning Angels, hide their faces. Jesus came. And He made you know that you were his enemy.

Didn't even realize. And then he preached to you, that he is the one. Who dies for his enemies. He's the one who saves. Enemies. You may need to. Perhaps, even this morning. Jesus, announcing to us. That he is the savior of those who are his enemies. The savior of those who have despised his glory, that he himself, is the Living, God, the Creator.

Who became a man. Well, Jesus saves through preaching. We see him. Going on that same Mission. Uh, in verse 1, that he had sent Disciples on. But Jesus also sanctifies through preaching. Verse 2, John heard in prison about the works of Christ. And perhaps. Um, this particular context. He hears, not only that, Jesus is preaching and that Jesus is doing these works but that the Disciples of Jesus are qualitatively different than the Disciples of John.

Because, Jesus's disciples. Now are also preaching and Jesus disciples. Now are also doing these works, and he starts to wonder, Is is Jesus as much as I believe him to be God. The son, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. If now, there are these others whom he is sending out that are doing the same as he is, he one among them?

And is there actually one even greater than he who is coming? John is in prison and so it's easy for him to to start doubting. Perhaps he did not expect to be imprisoned. For preaching to Herod that he was an enemy of God that he shouldn't take his brother's wife.

That he needed to repent before the wrath of God Came Upon him and consumed him. Perhaps he didn't expect to end up in prison. So, John here is in prison about the works of Christ and he sends two of his disciples. And he says to Jesus, by these disciples.

Are you the coming one or do we look for another? It's a binary question. It's Sort of like a yes or no question. Are you the coming one? Yes. Or is it? No. And we look for another But Jesus doesn't send them. Uh this true or false? Yes or no, binary answer.

Jesus sends them with a sermon. From the book of Isaiah. Jesus answered and said to them, go and tell and the word foretell is actually related to our word. For evangelize to evangelize is to be an angel to be a messenger, to be a Herald, to be a preacher of the good news, the Gospel of Jesus Christ here.

He uses not the, the good the prefix for good, but the the prefix for returning, but return to John heralding, this to him return to John preaching, this to him. Go and tell John the things which you hear and see. The blind see. And the lame walk. The lepers are cleansed and the dead here, the dead are raised up.

He's quoting from. Or paraphrasing from Isaiah 35. With which John would have been very familiar and Jesus's Jesus is giving him not just an explanation for himself but he is giving him an explanation for why even his disciples. Now, even his Apostles are doing these Mighty Works, As they preach.

Isaiah 35. Beginning in verse 4, say to those who are fearful hearted be strong and do not fear, behold your God will come with vengeance with the recompense of God. He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

The lame shall leap like a deer and the tongue of the dumb shall sing for Waters, shall burst forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Jesus's first answer. Is for them to go and to preach to John what a blessing. These Disciples of John to whom John had preached Christ.

He had preached Christ to them. But now John as he was in a moment of Doubt, and a moment of discouragement, he's he's not Perfected yet. He's not yet in the Kingdom. That is

to say he's not yet glorified. To use the language that way as we'll Jesus, using that the language that way in the next passage.

He still needs to be Sanctified more and what does he need for his sanctification? He needs Jesus. To attend to him through the preaching of his word. And so these disciples who had been the beneficiaries of so many sermons in which John had preached Christ to them are now sent by Jesus to preach Christ to John.

To say, this is what he says. He identifies himself as not just the Christ. He identifies himself as God. From Isaiah 35. God who has come to his people? This is why those who are his Apostles can do work. Because as God, he is able. To give them to do these Miracles.

They do these Miracles not as Um, Demonstrations of themselves. But as evidence that the one who has come, Not the many who have come but that the one who has come is God himself. And so, He gives them to see evidence that Jesus is God, in parallel in another gospel.

It says that Jesus while they were there, immediately did a bunch of these works. So that they could see it so that they would have as it were the raw material of what they witnessed in conjunction with Jesus paraphrasing from Isaiah 35. And referring to Isaiah 35 and they could come and preach to John in prison.

Yes. You're in prison John but you were right about Jesus. In fact, he's not just the Christ, we know and probably John had known and had preached this to them as well. But how often have you who have known things about Christ and yet you're not able to, to grasp and grip or rather be grasped and gripped by what, you know, about Jesus and what you need is for Jesus to come in his word even as you are hearing now and he proclaims to you from Isaiah 35.

And he proclaims to you from Matthew 11, that he is, God your creator. The one who made this hope whole world and everything in it, the one in whom you live and move and have your being that he is the one who became this, man, he is the one who walked this Earth and preached these things and sent disciples then.

To atone for your sins and he rose again from the dead on account of having finished doing that. And he ascended into heaven, that he might pour out his spirit and he now, by his Spirit helps preachers. Not just that he helps them do the preaching. And not just that he helps you do the hearing.

But he comes by his power and he works by Sovereign Grace in, you to make you alive and to believe and he works by Sovereign Grace in you to strengthen you. When you doubt To comfort. You and encourage you when you're discouraged that Jesus doesn't just save through preaching.

He doesn't just bring you to justifying Faith through which you are forgiven for his sake. But he also sanctifies through preaching. He grows you, he makes you holier, he increases your faith. He gives you from his life and from his power. Through his Blessing upon the preaching of his word.

And so the first part of the sermon that he gives them is well actually it's the second part but we have identified it first Or he names it first is that he has got But the second part of the sermon and actually, the first part that he commands, Notice the command in verse 4, Go and tell John the things which you hear and see.

And so in the command, he makes the hearing primary even though in the explanation in verse 5. It's the seeing that goes first. In the order of the chronology. And so the blind sea, the lame

walk. The lepers are cleansed. The deaf here, the dead are raised. And now, The end of verse 5, and the poor.

Have the gospel preached to them. And this, of course, is not just those who are of less Earthly means than others. We know what Jesus means by poor. We spent much time on it at the beginning of chapter five and indeed all of us are poor before the Living.

God, this is why we have to repent for the Kingdom of Heaven, as a hand, because we are penniless before God spiritually. Because we are all in utter poverty, abject poverty. We have no spiritual riches in ourselves. We must have even the nature of our mind changed. That's what that word repent.

Uh, meant, which is why we went with the older be converted, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, uh, to, to think about it and translate it. The. Those who have no righteousness in themselves at all. Are hearing the good news. The poor have the gospel preached to them.

There's good news for those who have nothing good in themselves. Because all of the goodness of God is in Christ. For all whoever believe in him. And now he's quoting from Isaiah 61. And he is definitely identifying himself. Now, not only as God which he does from Isaiah, 35, but as the Christ, From Isaiah 61.

The spirit of Yahweh is upon me because Yahweh has anointed me to preach Good, Tidings to the poor. And he says, you go back and you preach to John. That Jesus your cousin in the flesh. Is the Living God from all eternity, Isaiah 35. And he who is the Living, God became your cousin.

According to the flesh. Because he is the son of David. He is the servant, he is the He is the speaker in Isaiah 61 who says the spirit of the Lord Yahweh is upon me because Yahweh anointed me to preach Good Tidings to the poor. He has sent me to heal, the Brokenhearted to Proclaim Liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison Those who are bound.

You know so many passages that Jesus might have sent them back with. To preach to his cousin. His servant his subject. Has adopted brother in Union with him through faith. To John, who is in prison. He chooses for preaching himself as Christ. The verse that. Heals, the brokenhearted. Or that he uses his preaching.

To heal. The brokenhearted. He uses his preaching to Proclaim Liberty to the captives. He uses his preaching to open the prison. Open up for the opening of the prison. To those who are bound. You hear what he's saying to John? You might remain in Harrod's dungeon. The chains May remain on your legs.

The bars May remain closed. You might not come out except to have your head cut off. But Christ, who is Jesus, who is God, and Jesus, who is the Christ? Gives you a comfort and a liberty and a release that cannot be taken from you? Indeed. Partialness. The incompleteness.

Of John's sanctification would be resolved. With one stroke of the blade. His head is cut off to be. Brought to Um, Uh, Salome Uh, to be served on a platter as a reward for The dancing. John would no longer have any doubts. He would no longer have any discouragements.

He would no longer be an imperfectly Sanctified Saint on Earth. He would be the soul of a just one. Who had been perfected? And so, what they hear is evidence, that Jesus is the Christ. He's the one who has proclaimed the acceptable year of Yahweh. He is this glorious King that we heard about just a few weeks ago when we took the, the break to hear preached from the

beginning of Isaiah 63 and you remember the King coming on the horizon and at first he's just far enough away that all they can kind of tell is that he's kingly and he's been in a battle.

And they asked the question, who is this? And the first part of his answer was what? I who speak in righteousness. Jesus is a preacher. He is. Through his the preaching of his word, he sanctifies. Through the preaching of his word. For your sanctification, especially at points of difficulty.

What you need is Christ himself. To come near to you and to preach himself to you. And yes he does this by the reading of his word and in secret Worship in personal devotions. Yes, he does this in family worship, but he also and especially does this in the public Worship.

And so, if you are ever discouraged, if you are ever in a time of spiritual difficulty, or in circumstances that are testing and trying your faith, don't absent yourself. Don't, uh, don't. Some less regular or, or frequent, or in the attendance to worship or less attentive to the preaching of the gospel and the worship come and cry out.

Ask your elders asked those others whom the Lord has given to you to pray that he would come near you in the preaching of his word and would speak to you address you by his spirit and Proclaim himself to you in his word because that's what you need for your sanctification.

Need for battling against that sin. That you have just fallen into. Again, that's what you need for overcoming your anxiety, and your discouragement. That's what you need for the restoring of that. Love that you had at first, when your love has grown cold. That's what you need for the stirring up of your Zeal for God to be glorified, and for sinful men to be redeemed.

Your love for lost, souls to be stirred back up because, you know, you because At one point you had love for them that you knew was coming for Christ. And now if if that love has waned, you are rightly concerned. That that which had come from Christ at first in earnestness, for the souls of lost men has diminished Well, how do you get restored?

How do you get Sanctified? How do you get stirred back up? Whether an affection or Zeal? It is by the Lord. Preaching himself to you. From his word. You see Jesus? Fulfills his own prayer. John 17 and he's praying for. His people, he's about to be betrayed. And he prays among other things.

To his father sanctify them by your truth. Your word is truth. And as Jesus, who comes, And he applies his word to you, by his Spirit. And he sanctifies you. By his truth. Jesus saves through preaching Jesus sanctifies through preaching. And he does so because he signifies himself through preaching.

And blessed, is he? Who is not offended. Because of me. Who is not made to stumble. Because of me. You know, Christ. Is not what we expect. Oh the more, you know, rightly from his word and the more your expectations are formed by his word, the more he'll be what you expect.

But who Jesus is isn't determined by your expectations. Who Jesus is, is determined by the reality of who he is. And who Jesus is? Is not just demonstrated in history, but is proclaimed to you in his word. So, he is who he is, and he is whom he proclaims himself to be.

Which means? That if you come to Jesus with expectations that are from you, Or from instruction that you have received, that wasn't Quite as precisely according to scripture as it ought to have been. Or from your mishearing or misunderstanding that which you have read or

heard, That there will be times and ways in which Jesus may even be the opposite of what you expect.

But even if your Doctrine has been sound for a long time, you are never going to exhaust. Who Jesus is? You are never going to exhaust. Whom he proclaims himself to be in his word. And so we are still growing. We are still growing into what we already know.

There are many things, you know about, Jesus Christ and you experience it in your life, and there's that disconnect. Because you still have and we still have expectations of of heart towards him and experience of him that aren't even. According to what we know from the Bible. So when we discover him to be, as he says he is rather than what we had secretly, To be like, or desired him to be towards us.

There's a difficulty and he says blessed. Are you, if you don't stumble, when he doesn't end up being exactly like, you had wanted him to be. But we're not just growing into what we already know. We're also growing in increased realization about him and understanding of him from his word.

We're still learning. We're still growing. And there are going to be implications of that for your life. And applications of that to your life. Now, when you get surprised or when things are difficult, especially if you had held fiercely to a particular idea and he's chipped away at it from, you know, a thousand different verses and suddenly it seems like every sermon you hear and every book you read and every Station you have with another believer is chipping away at this thing that that you had held to for so long.

And he comes and he says, There's a blessing for you. If you don't stumble, When Jesus comes and he opens. Himself. Do you proclaims himself to you from his word and it's different than you had. So thought. So, intensely thought Blessed. As he who is not offended because of me.

Oh, John. You might have had some particular expectations of what it would look like in the short term. And your expectations haven't been fulfilled. Herod didn't get converted. And you didn't Escape his grasp. And now you're in his dungeon. But blessed, is he? Who doesn't stumble? When he discovers the truth about Christ, more fully, more accurately, more closely applied to your life.

Jesus promises, a special blessing for those who receive him on his terms. Rather than stumbling over him. You know, some just have Well. Unregenerate state, or maybe. In the stubborn resistance of a great amount of remaining flesh. They? Uh, have a great difficulty. Receiving Jesus on his own terms.

And so he comes and he Uh, he doesn't just give a sharp rebuke. He gives this promise a blessing. It is to use the Um, the common idiom here, the carrot, not the stick. He could say cursed, as he Who has offended at me. That would be true. But do you see the kindness of Christ, wooing?

He's saying don't demand. That I fulfill your terms don't demand that I be like you wanted me to be like, don't demand that I prove myself to you in the way that you thought would prove who I am. No here is who I am from my word and blessed.

Are you if instead of demanding that I would be on your terms? You would receive Christ on his terms as he proclaims himself. Blessed. As Who is not offended because of me. Is he blessedness does not come to those who have figured him out. Let alone to those who have finally been satisfied that he really is the Christ.

No blessing comes to them. Who have submitted to him as he is. Who have submitted to? Who Jesus is the way Jesus gives himself to you the way Jesus proclaims himself to you. He says, stop doubting. Stop resisting. Here he is, proclaiming himself to you as God proclaiming himself to you as Christ proclaiming himself to you as the savior of Sinners proclaiming himself to you as the sanctifier of saints.

He says, blessed, are you And rather than stumbling. On account of that, you receive what he says. You trust in him for your salvation. You grow in your faith and you grow in your Holiness. By the power of His word. Oh dear hearer. Beloved congregation. Come to Christ by his word.

And listen to him. Independence upon him, who helps you and works by his power, by his spirit in you. Have the Lord, Jesus sanctify. You And if you have not come to him from for the Forgiveness of your sins, you've not been made right with God, come to him now and be saved by him.

His preaching does both, he comes and attends both by his Spirit uses both in his Almighty power. But in each of them, he does. So By proclaiming himself to you as he is. And blessed, is he? Who is not offended. Because of him. Amen. We thank you. Lord Jesus.

That you are pleased to use the foolishness of preaching. Not using the eloquence of. Or the intelligent. Intelligence of those who hear. But by the same power, in which you said, let there be light And you created light in all the created. That you come and make the light of the knowledge of the glory of God to shine.

In Hearts where there was only Darkness before. And you make the light of the knowledge of that Glory. To shine in the face of Jesus Christ. We thank you, Lord, Jesus that you have given your face to us. Not by portraits. But by preaching, Not by seeing, but by hearing, But we confess that there is still so much unbelief and doubt.

Belonging to our original nature. And remaining even in those who have a new nature, come and help us. Come in your power, come by your spirit. Come and bless the preaching of your word. And make us to know you more truly and more fully. And to live more fully, according to that knowledge.

For we ask it even in your own name, our God, our savior. Sanctifier. Our Prophet. Our Lord Jesus Christ. And your people in this place. Say, Amen.