

# When Depravity Meets Divinity

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     You're listening to a sermon recorded at Providence Community Church, Truth and Beauty in Community. If you are in the Kansas City area, please consider joining us in person next Sunday.

We meet in Lenexa, Kansas at 10 a.m. every Lord's Day. Until then, we pray that as you open your Bibles, the Lord will open your heart to receive His Word.

Over again this week, I was remembering a period of time in my life, in my family's life, that was extremely difficult.

For a number of years, we would drive into downtown St. Louis from our home on the east side of St. Louis to go to St. Louis Children's Hospital.

Because one of our children had been diagnosed with a really serious disease that took several years to walk through. And of course, a children's hospital like that one, it's sort of one of these flagship hospitals.

[ 1 : 0 5 ]     They go out of their way to make it architecturally beautiful. There's a cultural excellence in the building. Colors are cheerful. Everything is done very well.

The culture is superb. And all of that is sort of hiding what is probably the hardest thing human beings go through.

If you go to any hospital on any given day, you're going to see people going through some really difficult things. But emotionally especially, the things that happen in a children's hospital are unique.

And that's because even as broken as the world is, we still have this sense that that is strange and not good to see children suffering from various diseases.

When I read the gospels, one of the things that's helped it come alive for me, you might try this as well, is to read the gospels through the eyes of Jesus so that when he's going to this place or that place and he's interacting with this person or that person, I try to imagine what it's like for him.

[ 2 : 1 7 ]     What I mean by that is there's only one person who's ever walked the face of the earth who wasn't a native to the brokenness and the sin that all of us have become relatively desensitized to.

There's only one person who's ever walked the face of the earth who walked with man and woman in their original glory. Genesis tells us that this Jesus walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day in the Garden of Eden and saw the crown of his creation and all of their created glory prior to sin.

And now in the gospels, we have the same one who walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day walking in the brokenness post-fall.

And that's really manifested in this text this morning. We'll begin in verse one of John chapter five. After this, there was a feast of the Jews and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep gate, a pool in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades.

[ 3 : 28 ]     What you've got here is essentially what is known as a mikvah bath or a mikvah pool. And this is how people who would go into Jerusalem to worship would be made ceremonially clean.

There were two pools, one higher in elevation than the other. And the upper elevation was a kind of reservoir to allow water to flow into the lower reservoir, the lower pool.

No one was in the upper pool. They were all in the lower pool. The reason for this system was that one of the requirements under the ceremonial law was that the water be living water. That is to say, not stagnant water, that it be flowing water.

And so what would happen is, is that over every once in a while, water would be released from the upper reservoir down to the lower reservoir, thus making it technically living water.

And there the Jews would find ceremonial cleanness as they went to go into the temple. So that's already, you know, an architecturally impressive kind of thing.

[ 4 : 32 ]     But it is, in some sense, this sort of beauty meets brokenness that I'm talking about. It's like it's all this cleverness and ingenuity, and it's actually somewhat beautiful. The city of Jerusalem itself and the temple was somewhat beautiful, but it's all like built around slaying animals.

It's all built around death, right? It's all built around sickness and disease and cleanness and uncleanness. So it's already kind of this image of beauty and brokenness intermingled, I suppose you might say.

And then we get to verse 3, and we really see, again, see this through Jesus' eyes. The one who walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day. Verse 3, in these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, and paralyzed.

One man was there who had been an invalid for 38 years. So what you've got here is the image of the one who walked with Adam and Eve in their perfection, walking with a multitude of invalids, of broken bodies, right?

What would it be like to see as the creator of the human? A human who was meant to be very good, the crown of creation, the ruler and subduer.

[ 5 : 53 ]     Not just the crown of creation, but the king and queen of creation. What would it be like to see who made humans to have such dignity and nobility and glory? To walk amongst a multitude, a multitude of invalids.

Spurgeon once said, Oh, see what sin and sorrows our father, Adam, has left for us. So what we're seeing in this chapter, amongst other things, is something that theologians have referred to as total depravity or the depravity of man.

Now, one misnomer, this is our first point, depravity or the depravity of man. And one misnomer about this doctrine is, is just by looking at it, some think that it refers to this idea that total depravity means that people are as bad as they possibly could be.

And that is not actually what the meaning of the doctrine is. And that's not what anyone is suggesting. All sinners are capable of doing good things. And through God's restraining common grace, no sinner is entirely freed unless God removes his restraining grace to be as bad as he might be.

Here's a good definition of what total depravity actually means. It's written by a pastor named Bill Sasser. Every human being has been infected and affected by sin in every part of the body, the soul, and the spirit.

[ 7 : 22 ]     The whole or total being has been invaded by sin. Thus, total depravity means that every faculty of man's being, every activity of his life, and every sphere of his existence has been permeated by sin.

So this helps us, I think, in our imagination as we see the one who walked in Eden, walk now amongst these invalids, and indeed walk amongst the earth and see that every aspect of his creation's life has been infected and affected by sin.

And what you see in this chapter is sort of an outline of many of the various ways sin has damaged the human race. And the first one is kind of obvious because it's in verse 3, and that is sin has done great physical damage to the human race.

Again, verse 3, In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, and paralyzed. Now, all of this stuff is on a spectrum. You might be the healthiest one in this room, and I would still tell you your body has been infected and affected by sin.

And the truth is, is that we could just go up the road to Del Mar Gardens or down this way to this community or this way to this community, and we could see this scene replayed over and over again. The same scene Jesus walked amongst is the same scene that will fill all of us at the end of our lives unless we die suddenly in some sort of violent way.

[ 8 : 51 ] Sin has made us physically broken. Some of you know that more than others. We also see, I think this one's really rough. Not only has sin broken us physically, but sin has broken us psychologically.

Look at verse 4. One man was there who had been an invalid for 38 years. Sin doesn't only affect us physically, it affects us psychologically.

You know why he had to ask this man if he wanted to be healed? Because not all people do. The truth is, is that once you encounter some sort of physical calamity or tragedy or frailty, it winds up, if you leverage it right, if you know how to play it right, it winds up causing conditions maybe to be easier on you in some respects.

The right amount of frailty, the right amount of sickness, and the right circumstance gets you a pass when everything is expected of everyone else. There are plenty of people in the world who are addicted to their suffering.

There are plenty of people who truthfully, if they were honest, when Jesus says, would you like to be made well, would have to think about that. And realize that a whole bunch of their identity and a whole bunch of their way of negotiating through the world would be removed from them if their sickness was also removed.

[ 10 : 26 ] This is something, as someone who has suffered from chronic pain since I was a child, I have had to negotiate my entire life. So I know firsthand how this works.

Just the other day, this week, I had some kind of relatively bad, a relatively bad week with my back. And it gets to the point where, you know, you've got these spasms and it just, the way I always describe it is it feels like someone replaced my back with a bag of concrete.

It's just stiff and hard and it just, it's just very painful. Well, this also happened to be the week that one of my children was moving. And so this back pain meant that I was definitely not going to help them move.

Well, what about the next time someone needs help? Maybe the pain isn't quite as bad as I think it is or as bad as I want it to be.

But maybe it's a good enough excuse. Everybody knows this already. That maybe it'll get me out of the next move. Here's the scary thing is, is that the human being is a psychosomatic being.

[ 11 : 32 ] And so it's not always simply that you're consciously invoking your sickness against whatever responsibility you might have. The body can actually make you feel worse as a means of getting out of this or that thing.

The fact that Jesus had to go up to a man who is 38 years lame and say, do you want to be well? Don't miss that.

That means that sin hasn't only affected our bodies, it's affected our minds. The fact that that question needs to be asked shows you how far sin has infected and affected.

And it gets worse. Look at verse 7. Jesus says, do you want to be well? And the man answers at verse 7. So I would say that not only are we infected and affected physically and psychologically, but look at the toll that sin has taken on us socially.

As someone who organizes groups of people, it's kind of one of my jobs. I look at this scene and think, you mean to tell me that for 38 years, no one had helped this man?

[ 12 : 55 ] You mean to tell me that, friends, social scientists use zero-sum thinking. They overuse it as an explanation for everything. They use limited resources as an explanation for everything, the development of history and so on and so forth.

It's far more complex than that. And most things are not zero-sum things. But here you've got one. The idea was the first person to get in the pool after the water is troubled.

I'll talk more about that in a moment. We'll be healed. It's a zero-sum deal. Can you imagine the riotous, competitive, brutally selfish behavior that occurred on the moments when this water was troubled?

Sin isn't just affecting our bodies and our psychology. It's affecting our capacity to be kind. Our capacity to love and put others first and to notice someone who is broken and just needs some help.

Jesus, by the way, he's not desensitized to any of this because he was in the place where none of this was wrong. He sees all of this very sharply.

[ 14 : 05 ] Not only do we see physical and the psychological and the social, but sin affects man religiously. It affects a man's understanding of religion.

Mankind is a fundamentally religious being. Even those who say they are not religious seem to be telling us that religiously. Sin has not only affected like our bodies and our minds and our relationships, but it's affected our relationship or our religion.

Let me give you like two examples of this in the text. And one is really weird. If you happen to be reading from the King James this morning, I don't know why you'd be doing that, but if you are, you're welcome.

Verse four is going to be different for you than for pretty much everybody else. For in the King James, you have the following in verse four. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool and troubled the water.

Whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. Why is that in the King James and not in the ESV?

[ 15 : 17 ] Well, because none of the oldest manuscripts include this. You see, what's interesting about the concern that some might have about the possibility that what the Bible really is, is just a bunch of things handed down and passed through hands and hands and hands and hands and hands and translators.

Is we have just a ridiculous number of manuscripts to compare against one another. And now like science has just made this unfair.

We're able to really clearly see any kind of manuscript variant. And so we know pretty clearly what this is. What's going on here is called marginalia. What is marginalia?

Well, back when people would transcribe by hand, the scribes would occasionally add little notes to the side explaining or commenting on the scriptures.

And we can see very clearly from all the manuscript evidence that at some point someone wrote this as marginalia, a comment on this odd tradition that seems to be happening here.

[ 16 : 18 ] And then later on, someone else included the margin into a later copy. And so that's why the King James has this verse. It doesn't belong in the Bible.

It's not God's inspired word. It's simply a copying error that appeared in the King James. So what does that have to do with the perversion of religion?

Well, let me show you the next bit and you'll maybe see more clearly. Look at verse eight. Man says, yes, I would like to be made well. I don't have anybody to help me get into the pool.

Jesus says, just real quick pause, just a wisdom piece here. When someone needs help, it is not necessary for you to go along with their plan for help.

Sometimes they do need help, but they also need help making the plan that's really going to help them. This is very true of just leadership in general.

[ 17 : 13 ] But just as you encounter people that are broken, they're going to say, if only I had such and such and such, I could be better. And the answer is you probably do need help, but you may not need help in the way that you're saying.

Here, this man's whole solution is built around this, what appears to be a superstition, to be honest with you. That whenever they release the upper reservoir dam to create a stirring, a superstition evolved over time to suggest that, you know, when the water's troubled, you can be healed.

This man needs help, but his solution isn't the right solution. And so Jesus is eager to help him, but not by going along with his plan. One of the reasons why some of us get burnt out in helping people that are broken and hurting is because we think that the two things have to go together.

You know, we think that helping and doing exactly what they ask, that those are linked. The answer is not that. The answer is usually, oh, I absolutely do want to help you.

I'm not convinced that your plan is the best plan. And since I'm the one helping, I'm going to do X, Y, and Z. And at that point, you'll also get a really good read on whether or not you're being played.

[ 18 : 27 ] Anyway, that's an aside. That's bonus content. You can, I'll slide the iPad over for a tip later. Just have one question to ask you. Now, this idea that sin has affected our religion, you see that in this interesting manuscript thing.

Somehow, like someone's comment got twisted into the word at one point. It's happening again, but in the text, look at verse eight.

Jesus said to him, get up, take your bed and walk. And at once the man was healed and he took up his bed and walked. Now that day was the Sabbath. So the Jew said to the man who had been healed, it is the Sabbath and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed.

And we're asking, how has sin affected our religion? And I kind of hinted at it, describing this manuscript thing. But now it comes really clear in this issue.

And that is simply this. These Jewish leaders are confusing a tradition of man with a commandment of God. See, what happens here is that we were just in Exodus.

[ 19 : 34 ] You remember, God says, on six days you shall do your work and on the seventh day you shall rest. Over time, nothing wrong with this. Wise theological, hopefully they're wise, spiritual and theological leaders looked at that and said, well, what is work?

What does work mean? What does it mean to work? And they developed a secondary set of interpretations on what defines work. So now they have some definitions of what defines work.

They see this man carrying his mat and they like, you're violating the definition of work. You're violating God's word and so on. You see what's going on. You see, this is how sin affects us in a religious sense.

It conflates truth, God's word, with tradition, which in best case scenarios is someone's best effort to interpret the truth.

So what's going on here is these dudes, these religious leaders are conflating God's command not to work with this man carrying his mat.

[ 20 : 36 ] And of course, this man's not violating the commandment at all. It's actually really not working. He's just going home from 38 years of being crippled.

What you'll have in these kind of instances is you'll have someone who is so confused about the difference between God's word and the tradition that they miss God's work happening in a way that doesn't exactly line up with their expectations.

So they had come up with this definition. And by the way, nine times out of 10, I don't know how often they saw guys walking around with their beds on Saturdays on a Sabbath.

I don't know how often this happened. Nine times out of 10, they would have been right that the guy was doing work. That's why tradition is helpful. Interpreting truth is helpful.

Coming up with definitions for words we find in God's word is helpful. But what happens with sin is we confuse the pure revelation of God with the interpretation of man.

[ 21 : 45 ] And that's more of a feature of certain religions and certain denominations than others. And that was really one of the main reasons why there was the Protestant Reformation.

was that this issue had reached a certain threshold that was just essentially at that point intolerable. And the Protestants said, no, we've got, we can't do this any longer.

We've got to have a set of solas, one of which being sola scriptura. This is the word of God. That is the tradition. We value the tradition, but we do not equate it with the word.

So that's sort of an outline of how much sin is messed with us. We can't even get like religion right. It's kind of rough out here, guys.

Once you take over the glaze of your desensitized eyes and, you know, the cataracts, you look at the world through Jesus's eyes. It's like, man, even the thing that's supposed to handle sin, your religion, it's messed up too.

[ 22 : 44 ] So that's the first point, the depravity of man. The second point is, is the divinity of the Messiah. The divinity of the Messiah. The guys want to know, man healed, who told you to pick up your mat and walk?

And the guy doesn't know. At least that's what he says. He doesn't know. Look at verse 11. But he answered them, the man who healed me, that man said to me, take up your bed and walk.

They asked, who is this man who said to you, take up your bed and walk? Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn. And there was a crowd in the place. Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, see, you are well.

Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you. There's two ways of taking this. The one is, is that his sin, his sickness was actually a judgment for some sin he had committed.

Or Jesus is saying, like, there are worse things that could happen to you as a consequence of sin than this. Something like that. He says, you're well.

[ 23 : 47 ] Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you. The man went away and told the Jews that if it was Jesus who had told the Jews that it was Jesus who healed him. And this is why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath.

Now, lock in on this phrase, doing these things. Remember how John, we're going to look at this verse later, but John in chapter 20 says, Jesus did many things. I've only recorded a small number of them.

And these things I've written so that you may believe. Doing these things implies that Jesus, there's a pattern developing here. This is not the first time that Jesus had stepped on Sabbath rules, is the way I read that.

But they're mad at Jesus because he is doing these kinds of things on the Sabbath. Now, one of the things I'd like to point out here is that it took me a long time of reading the Gospels to see this, but Jesus is not blameless here.

Not in the sense of, you know, Jesus is looking for a fight. He is not going out of his way to avoid controversy. Let's put it that way.

[ 24 : 54 ] All Jesus had to do, if his goal was to heal people and to help people, all he had to do was do a nice Monday through Sunday through Friday routine, right?

He could heal people any day of those weeks. Why does he keep healing people on the Sabbath? What's going on there? Well, look what he says in the next verse.

Verse 17. My father is working until now, and I am working. Now, this little phrase, my father is working until now, and I am working, is kind of one of these places that gives me, you know, as an expositor, job security.

Because it takes a lot of digging to understand what's going on here. When you read this at first, and you don't read like all the other things you have to read to understand this, it's like, okay, thank you. What's going on?

Here's what's going on. The same guys who decided the mat rule, same kind of guys anyway, also just talked about something else. And I think they reached a true conclusion.

[ 25 : 59 ] And that was, you know, we're supposed to rest on the Sabbath, but how does God rest on the Sabbath if he maintains the world? And the answer was, is that God and creation rested in a particular way from a particular kind of creation.

But that generally speaking, God doesn't rest on the Sabbath. He works. He maintains and upholds the universe by the word of his power. I mean, if you think about it, there's a lot of stuff going on right now.

Thank you, God. You're still working. I feel it. It's still beating. Thank you, Lord. He's managing all the same things he's always managed and so forth. And so rightly, the Jews in the tradition decided this really interesting thing.

There's one person who's allowed to work on the Sabbath. And he works so we can rest. And that's Yahweh. Now, does that open a new layer of why Jesus keeps doing things on the Sabbath?

He's picking a fight. Over and over again, Jesus does this. He's always a little transgressive. Not transgressive of the actual law, but transgressive of the commandments of men, the interpretations.

[ 27 : 13 ] And he's always doing it in a way that leads some people to say, see how anti-traditional Jesus is. Like, well, that's not what's going on at all. What he's doing when he's talking to a Samaritan woman, when he's around an unclean person, when he tells the Pharisee Nicodemus that he's got a lot to learn, when he heals on the Sabbath, when he uses water jars used for purification to make wine, what he's doing when he's cleansing the temple.

And this is, you can see what he's doing because it works. What he's doing is he's enticing the leaders to ask one simple question. Who do you think you are?

Why is Jesus healing on the Sabbath and not on Monday? Why is Jesus talking to a Samaritan woman? Why is he touching the leper? Why is he doing all the things they've told him not to do, told all the Jews not to do, to entice them to ask, and they ask constantly, who do you think you are?

And he's doing that because he wants to tell them who he is. And who he is is God. That's what he wants them to know. So when he's healing this dude on the Sabbath and causing him to take up his mat, walk and go home.

By the way, even back then, a mat was not a big deal. He could have just left it there. It was just straw. It's not Tempur-Pedic or anything, you know. What he's doing is he's creating a stir that provokes the religious authorities to ask, why are you doing this?

[ 28 : 46 ] Under what authority are you doing this? Who do you think you are? He does the exact same thing in John 9 and 10. I don't know how I'm going to preach that because it's not that far away and I've already told you. But anyway, he does the exact same thing.

Healing on the Sabbath terminates in the statement, John 10, 30, I and the Father are one. What he's doing in verse 17 is, my Father is working and so am I.

He's aligning himself in a way that I would describe as ontological way with the Father. He says stuff like this. I can't do anything my Father doesn't do.

Not I don't want to. Let's be clear about one thing. This is not Jesus being a good son. See, I have a good son and we want a lot of the same things in life.

We have a lot of the same priorities. And we do some things the same, but we do a lot of things different. And we have very different plans for achieving some of the same things. He loves me.

[ 29 : 44 ] I love him. He's generally submissive and so on and so forth. He's a good son. I hopefully I'm a good father. We have a close relationship in that respect, but he can do what he wants to do.

He has his own will. But in this passage, Jesus says he does not. He says, I can only do what the Father is doing.

I can only do what the Father is doing. Again, in verse 30, I can do nothing on my own. This isn't a close relationship. This is the same person, the same being, the same essence.

And this is doubled down again in John 10, 30. I and the Father are one. So what Jesus is doing in doing all these slightly transgressive things is he's asking, he's forcing them to ask, who do you think you are?

So that he can say, I am God. He's revealing a doctrine that everybody struggles to understand, namely the Trinity. Let's just talk about the Trinity really quickly.

[ 30 : 49 ] Let's just use a one sentence definition for the Trinity. And it's that the Trinity is foundational Christian belief that God is one being who exists in three persons.

I want to be super clear about this because one of the things happening now, and it's happened probably the last 40 years in particular, is this idea that Jesus never claimed to be God.

Oh, no, absolutely. He did claim to be God. And he claimed to be God with such clarity that each time he made this statement, those in charge of killing people who thought they were God tried to kill him.

So absolutely, he did. You know, every week, just about what I try to do as I'm doing sermon prep is I try to pray through a particular kind of person who would maybe need something in this text that I could see.

And I just can't really preach without imagining a type of person. I don't typically think of individuals, but just like a person with a certain kind of problem, something like that. That's how I've always worked through God's word.

[ 31 : 57 ] And for this week, for me, I developed a great burden for certain kinds of stubborn monotheists like Jews, Muslims, and Jehovah's Witnesses.

Who believe that Jesus was something other than God of very God. So I want to address them directly because I know I have some friends that are those things and they listen to the sermon sometimes.

And I want to, before I do that, when you're in a conversation with a Jehovah's Witness or a Muslim or a Jew and the issue of Jesus's divinity comes up, I would go straight to John 5. But I thought of a, it's a dumb little VBS way to remember this.

John 5 and then 10 for your second conversation. John 5 and 10. And you'll wind up in two of the classic places where Jesus actually does attest very clearly to his divinity.

John 5 and John 10. So I want to speak to those who honestly look at this claim that Jesus is making, that he is God, and say, that does not fit with my understanding of one God.

[ 33 : 06 ] I just want to warn you that that presupposition, that in order for something to be true, you must understand it, is, you know, the game of chutes and ladders, and there's like these chutes.

Some of them go all the way to the bottom. The Bible is very clear about this, including the Old Testament, that those who lean on their own understanding are not headed to a good place.

The insistence that you understand something in order to believe it completely, to understand something completely in order to believe it, is the chute that goes all the way down to the very bottom.

And it's really an elevation of your own sense of your own intellect. You really think your brain ought to be the judge of what's true?

You really think that fundamentally? Friends, here's the way that I would say this to my friends who keep looking at this claim that Jesus is making, say, but it's just one God, there's one God.

[ 34 : 16 ] But, listen, friend, if God was small enough for your brain to fully understand, he would not be big enough to save you. If God was small enough for my brain to fully understand, he wouldn't be big enough to save me.

The truth is, is that understanding isn't actually the aim in this particular case. Look at verse 20. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing, and greater works than these will he show him, not so that you may understand, but so that you may marvel.

The word marvel in the Greek means to be astonished, to be confused, to be surprised. I'll just tell you, whether you're a Jew, a Muslim, a Jehovah's Witness, or just a weird half Christian right now.

You understanding ain't the goal. You standing amazed is the goal.

You being astonished, you being confused. Behold, what manner of love is this, that we should become children of God. Astonishment is the goal, not simple understanding.

[ 35 : 41 ] So I just want to say to my friends who are of what you might call the rigid monotheist persuasion, the Jews, the Muslims, the Jehovah's Witnesses, I want you to just understand me and speak directly to you.

Jesus Christ is God of very God, and that evidence is in and long established. He is greater than Abraham.

He is greater than Jacob. He is greater than Moses. He is greater than David. And not just greater, but he is the object of their worship.

If you refuse to worship Jesus Christ, you are no friend of Abraham, because Abraham worships Jesus Christ. If you refuse to worship Jesus Christ, you are no friend of Moses, because Moses worships Jesus Christ.

Look at verse 21. For as the father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the son gives life to whom he will. For the father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the son.

[ 36 : 56 ] I don't say any of this with joy or glibness. But friends who don't believe in Jesus, who claim Judaism or Islam or Jehovah's Witness.

The Bible says that it's appointed once for a man to die and then appear before the judgment. And I'm telling you right now who your judge will be.

You will not be judged by Allah or you will not be judged by a Talmudic perversion of Yahweh. You will stand before Jesus Christ.

Who comes to judge the quick and the dead. And he will separate the sheep from the goats. Not on account of ethnicity. But on account of what he and the Christian message has said for two millennia.

There is no other name under heaven and earth by which men may be saved. That's just the way it's going to be. The basis of that judgment will be whether or not you believed in him.

[ 38 : 12 ] And you may object even in that moment. I'm not sure that will be possible, but you may try. But I want you to see one more thing in your imagination.

Abraham, Moses, and David will look on approvingly as you are sent into eternal judgment. The evidence is in.

Jesus is God. Believe in Jesus and be saved. So to summarize where we've come so far, we've seen that total depravity affects the whole man.

Even down to his own religion. A man's own religion might lie to him about the way to salvation. All the way to the judgment. And we've seen the divinity of Christ.

Why is Jesus picking on these guys? Why isn't he just healing people the day after the Sabbath? It is provoking them to ask the question they ask consistently. Who do you think you are?

[ 39 : 13 ] And we see who that is. We see that Jesus claims to be not only the Messiah, but God of very God. And this leaves us with our third point, which is we all have a decision to make.

C.S. Lewis is known for his trilemma. Dealing with this very particular thing in the book, Mere Christianity. And he says this, I'm trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about him.

I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. This is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher.

He would either be a lunatic on the level of a man who says he's a poached egg, or else he would be a devil of hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was and is the son of God, or else a madman or something worse.

You can shut him up for a fool. You can spit at him and kill him as a demon. Or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. Let us not come.

[ 40 : 27 ] Let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open for us. He has never intended to leave that open for us.

John 5, 22, For the Father judges no one, Jesus says, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. And whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. And he does not come into judgment. But has passed from death to life.

You see this word life all over the book of John. New life, eternal life, abundant life. Life, life, life. Almost in every chapter. What's he talking about?

We'll go back to the first point. This idea that sin has affected our bodies and our minds and our relationships and our religion. What Jesus is proposing and offering is to progressively undo all the damage sin has done to you as a human being.

[ 41 : 42 ] And to keep working until he can present you before himself without any wrinkle, blemish, or flaw. What Jesus is proposing when he offers you eternal life is to make you into the glorious thing you were created and designed to be.

A king or queen of creation. What he's proposing is to systematically, over time, undo all of the fall for you.

And so when I say that the third point is a decision to make or the decision, it really is like the decision. What exactly is the decision?

We'll go back to verse six. You need to make the decision. Each one of you here and each one listening at home, you need to make the decision. Jesus asked in verse six.

Do you want to be healed? The great curse reverser has arrived. God himself took on flesh.

[ 42 : 47 ] His name is Jesus. And he came to undo all the damage inflicted upon you. Do you want to be healed?

If you want to be healed, you just simply must believe that Jesus Christ is God. That he came to offer himself for your sins. And that he rose from the third day. You need to believe that he's in charge.

Always has been. And that up until now, you've done a great disservice both to yourself, to him, and to your friends in your life by not following the one who made you. You need to just surrender and say, yes, I am greatly infected and affected by sin.

In all my parts. In all my ways. Lord Jesus, would you come and progressively undo all of this great damage so that I can be presented to you in eternity free from all of this baggage.

So I definitely plead with those who are not yet Christians. Friends, do not be presumptuous upon the God who gives you heartbeats that he'll give you enough to postpone this decision.

[ 44 : 06 ] Christ is here. He loves you. He's offered himself up for you. Accept him. That's the decision to make. Do you want to be well?

If you do, the great physician of your souls is here. But I also recognize that like most of the people here have made that decision. Praise God. And I want to give you three pieces of application as we close out.

The first one is if you do have a conversation with someone who is a Jew or a Muslim or Jehovah's Witness, I would recommend reading John 5. And I would recommend remembering the short version of C.S. Lewis's trilemma, liar or lunatic or Lord.

Those are the three options, but pick one. Number two, more personally, I know many of you who do love Jesus are really getting impatient as you wait for him to undo the curse in your own whatever.

[ 45:10 ] I'm so wrought with negative things all the time. I wish I could get that figured out. I wish I could learn to love the people that I really do want to love better. Wish that I could see him rightly.

If you're a follower of Jesus Christ, you won't be in judgment. You'll be in joy and you'll experience a level of joy and freedom. That the Bible says is actually literally incomprehensible.

For the first time your whole life, you'll be able to feel what it's like not to have sin weighing you in your world down. For communion, I just continue in the text to John 25.

And he has given him authority to execute judgment because he is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this. For an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out.

They chose Jesus. If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, would you come and partake of this example, this memorial, this evidence that God is good and that his steadfast love endures forever?

[47:19] He will deliver you. Come. And the