

Bringing Sons to Glory

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[0 : 0 0] to Scotland. I grew up in a Presbyterian church, in some ways not dissimilar to this. I came to a personal faith myself, trusting in Christ about aged 18, just when I went to university.

I pursued a career in civil engineering for a while and worked in that for eight years when God began to stir our hearts and call us to the work of Faith Mission and so that brought us to Edinburgh.

We've been in Edinburgh now studying and working for the past seven years. If I wasn't here this morning I would be in Holyrood Evangelical Church in the city of Edinburgh where my wife and four children will be this morning. Some of you might remember from a previous generation the name of James Philip. He was the minister in Holyrood Church in Edinburgh and so he's dead now, his widow is there but that's where we worship usually. But it's lovely to be with you and to bring God's word to you. It would be helpful, I think, if you had your Bible open at Hebrews chapter 2 in these verses.

It was fitting that he for whom and by whom all things exist in bringing many sons to glory where it begins. One of the organisations that I was part of when I was growing up was the Boys Brigade.

The Boys Brigade, part of their programme is marching and in the middle section of that, the junior section, if anybody was ever involved in a BB, we would do figure marching which is where boys line up in a line and the leader, usually the tallest boy or the oldest boy or somebody that can set a good pace anyway, sets the direction that everyone that's in single file behind him will go and when they're putting on a marching performance, he would march around the hall and do a figure of eight and all sorts of turns and positions and movements. But if you were standing on the stage looking down at it, you would think that he was cutting a path through the hallway and everyone else was following after him.

[2 : 1 5] You get the same sort of an illustration when you think of sheep in a field and if there's a fence or a hedge and one of the sheep creates a fresh opening out of the field, all of the rest of the sheep will follow one, cuts a path and the other and the others simply follow as sheep by their nature do.

And one of the key images in this passage that we're looking at this morning is of Jesus cutting a path, is of Jesus creating a way where there was no way. Jesus is presented as what's sometimes translated as the author or the captain. The idea is of a pioneer, of a hero, someone coming and cutting a path or creating a way where there was no way. And this little phrase that begins our reading gives the whole intention of it that he would bring many sons to glory. The scriptures often use the masculine, but it's simply bringing many people to glory. And that's the sort of main thrust of what I want to look at today. There are three Old Testament quotations there in verses 12 and 13. If you've one of these pew Bibles, they'll be kind of set apart in a different text. And those three Old Testament quotations chart this movement that Jesus is on. The first one says, I will tell of your name to my brothers in the midst of the congregation. I will sing your praise. And it's like giving a view to us of what Jesus said to the Father before he left heaven. It's stating his intention. I will tell of your name to my brothers. In the midst of the congregation, I will sing your praise. It's like taking us back in time to see what Jesus' intention was and what was the agreement between him and the Father when they were together before Jesus came to earth. And then the second of these quotations shows us that he's coming down.

I will tell of your name to my brothers. When I'm down there, I'll tell them about you. And then the second one, it says, I will put my trust in him. And it just explains to us what Jesus' attitude had to be.

As he was on the earth doing the work that he had come to do, I will trust the Lord's plan. I will trust the Father's intention for these few years that I'm here. Jesus had to leave the glory, the otherness, the perfection of heaven, and come into this world. And it was messy. And he was taking on human form. He was born into a poor family. He had to work for a while as a carpenter. He was misunderstood by his parents and more so maybe by his siblings. And he had to make the journey ultimately through many trials and tribulations in life. And then finally he would walk up Calvary's hill as we read of it later on and to die. And in all of that, Jesus is saying, I will trust in him. So beginning from heaven, I will tell of your name to my brothers. When he's on earth,

I will trust in God's plan. And then the last of it is to make the movement from earth back to glory. Behold, I and the children God has given me. He came down alone. In many ways he lived a lonely life, but in doing so he was telling about the Father and he was explaining the gospel and revealing who he was.

[6 : 10] And then, the exciting bit, behold, I and the children God has given me. It's like a view after all of this is finished. Jesus is saying, I came down, I trusted the Lord, and the Lord has given me children. It's like Jesus is saying, I'm no longer alone in this. I have taken children. I have received disciples and followers and those who trust in me who are my children. And these are fellows who will sing the Lord's praise. And so it just gives you a little chart of this passage. It's like a, in mathematical terms, it's a parabola. It's to come almost in a big U shape from glory to earth, do something significant on earth, and then rescue some people, take hold of a group out of humanity, and return again to glory as the main sort of flow of this passage. So keep that in mind as we, as we think about this and think about what is being said here. I want to think mostly about the work that Jesus has to do as he's trusting the Lord, as he's on earth, what has he come to do.

You'll notice in those next few verses in what we read, 14 and 15, it speaks of bondage, slavery, death. These types of words, kind of prison language. I will deliver from the power of death, deliver those who through fear of death have been in lifelong slavery.

What is going on here? Well, how I have come to try and understand this is like, is where humanity is shut up in a prison cell, where humanity is shut up in a room.

And being shut up in this room, they're fearful of death. So they're enslaved, and the only reasonable outcome is death. Why is this? Well, we have sinned, and we were created by God, and we were created to honor and worship him. But we have failed to do that. You know that. We have lived for ourselves rather than living for God. We have not even done well according to our own standards, never mind his.

And this means that we are what the Bible describes as sinners. And we have been doing this since we were children, and we're powerless to stop doing it. But the problem is that the consequences, the consequences of this failure to honor the one that made us, this failure to be those, to be humankind that worship the Lord means that we're sinful, and we'll have to pay, we'll have to suffer the consequences of our failure. And so for this reason, we're like those that are shut up in a room, in a waiting room, with only one reasonable outcome, and that is that we have to die in consequence for all that we have done. And it also mentions the devil in this passage. He has a role in this. He is like, in the room with us. And he feeds us, be it. He knows that we're sinful. And he has lured us into that.

[10 : 10] And he feeds us. He speaks to us through a worldly system all around about us. And he gives us little options for sin. And we run to it every time. But he's a shameful devil too, because not only does he feed us with bait and lure us into sin. But then he takes on a different guise in this room. And he comes around the other side of us. And then he stands like an angel of light. And he accuses us. He says to us, you're just a failure. I've set up all these little traps and you've fallen into them. You've fallen into every single one of them. And you'll never get out of here. Because you're just a sinner.

And you can't even stop sinning. And you're locked up and you'll be locked up forever. And so that's the dire, horrible situation that's described here that humanity is in.

If I left you there, that would only depress you. But our situation is like that. Our situation is dire. It's hell-like. We're trapped. Because we sin. All we manage to do is to accrue a debt of sin that we cannot pay. And we have this sinful nature that we're powerless to stop pleasing ourselves, worshipping ourselves, and not honouring the Lord. But, verse 14, he partook of the same things.

He became human. Coming, you see this parabola, coming into our room, if you like. Into our space. Into our world.

world. He partook of the same things that through his death he might destroy the one who has the power of death. He, Jesus, comes. You know the gospel. You've heard the gospel many times. But he comes and lives a sinless life, yeah?

[12 : 47] And by the giving of his life, he's able to pay the liberation fee, the exit fee, for all others. You see, every time we, if we even tried to go to the exit door of this room that we're enslaved in, we would be met by Satan, we would be met by Satan, who would be able to reel out to us all of our sins and say, you have no means to pay this.

But what Jesus does is that he comes into our world. He lives a sinless, perfect life. And he is able to go to the exit door. And he is able to create a pathway out because he has no sin.

He lives a sinless life. He's able to pay the exit fee. Psalm 49 says, truly no man can ransom another. But then Jesus explains in Mark 10, 45, the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

He came into our world to do what was necessary to pave a way out of our world and out of the bondage that we have put ourselves in through our sin and the debt that hangs over our head.

He came to give his life for ours, to pay the price. And the second, there's another image in here of Jesus, not just as a liberator, but Jesus as a high priest.

[14 : 17] And that, verse 17, explains what he has to do when he's paying the price. What he's doing, he became a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

And in that word, you realize what he was doing in offering a sinless life. He was offering a life to recompense, to pay back the debt that was owed against our sinful life.

So, in place of our sinful life, he gives his perfect life. We who should have suffered the wrath of God for our sin and our feelings.

He takes that on the cross. Propitiation includes these two things of paying the price of sin and taking the wrath of God for sin.

But, of course, you know all that. You've heard it before. And a crucial component here is simply that he became flesh and blood.

[15 : 27] You see, humanity in this box, there's plenty of people in the box, plenty of people in the world. Plenty of good people, but none perfect. None sinless.

Humanity didn't have a person who could be a propitiatory sacrifice. Humanity didn't have a sinless life. Had no one who could go to the exit gate from our world and stand righteous.

Romans 3.9 says, Jew and Gentile alike are all under sin. There was no one sinless. No other like-for-like sacrifice could be found. Francis Alexander, who wrote the hymn, There is a green hill far away.

He captured it well. He said there was no other good enough to pay the price of sin. He only. He only could unlock the gates of heaven and let us in.

So he had to be like us. He had to be human so as he could be a like-for-like sacrifice. So as his life could be seen in place of our lives.

[16 : 38] This letter was first written to folks in first century Rome. Jesus came into their world to pay the price for their sin.

To pave a way out for them. But the same thing applies to someone in Burvis in Scotland in 2019.

He became a human for us too. He died a death that we would have to die. To pave a way out for us.

I love this little illustration or this little picture that I was trying to make to the children. Verse 16 says, Surely it's not angels he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham.

What is translated help here is literally takes hold of. And you can imagine an army rescue operation. Someone being lowered in a helicopter.

[17 : 39] Taking hold of one or two people. And just lifting them. Rescuing them. From their situation. The same word translated help or taking hold of is used in Hebrews 8 and 9.

It says, I took them by the hand. To bring them out of the land of Egypt. That's why Jesus has come on this parabola.

From glory. To earth. And back to glory. With many sons. Many brothers. Many people. A whole church.

He comes to take hold of us. He comes to lay hold of us by the hand, as it were. To rescue us.

To liberate us. To pay what is necessary on our behalf. And then to take us into his church and on to glory. Those of us that are parents know this image quite well.

[18 : 40] Our little children. Get themselves into all sorts of trouble, don't they? And they could be in a fight. They could be in danger. They could be about to bounce off the side of the trampoline or whatever.

We come along and we just take them by the hand. Or we sometimes take them by the scruff of the neck. And lay hold of them. And take them to a safe place.

That's what Jesus is doing. He's coming from glory to earth. Into our world. To lay hold of us. And to... That we would lay hold of him.

And go with him. Why? Why is all this happening? Well, as these verses begin, it says, It was fitting for whom and by whom all things exist.

In bringing many sons to glory. Why did he bother? Why did he bother with the gospel? Why did he bother rescuing anyone? Well, for his glory.

[19 : 45] That there might be a congregation of people. That there might be a church on earth. And the fullness of the church in glory.

To sing his praise. We who realize that we're shut up in a prison cell. We who realize that we have a debt of sin that we could never pay.

We who realize, we who begin to realize, That we're enslaved to selfish desires that we cannot break. And once we begin to realize that, And once we begin to realize that the only freedom, That the only redemption, That the only ransom, That the only salvation that is possible, Is found in Jesus.

Once we come to realize that, And once we begin to lay hold of Jesus and trust in him, We will sing his praise, For the rest of our days on earth, And we will sing his praise, For all eternity, All the way to glory, We will sing his praise, All the time that we're in glory, Never ending.

We will sing his praise, Because we realize, That if it was not for him, We could not get out of the box. We could not get out of our sinful condition.

[21 : 04] Who will be rescued? Will everybody be rescued? Or will only some be rescued? Who will be rescued?

And I'm working towards a finish. Not everybody will be rescued, no. Not everybody cares that Jesus come to do what he has done.

And who are those who will be rescued? Well, those he helps are what are described here as the offspring of Abraham. Who are these people? Abraham's children are those who do what Abraham did.

And what is Abraham famous for doing? Well, he was the father of the faith. And he was the one who believed God. And so the children of Abraham are not the ethnic Jews, Who are ethnically descended from Abraham.

No, the children of Abraham are those who bear the marks of what Abraham is famous for. And Abraham is famous for hearing what God said, And believing it.

[22 : 14] The real and continuing children of Abraham, The children of Abraham in Barvis today, Are those who, like Abraham, Hear from God, And believe it.

Read the word of God and believe what it says. Hear the preached word and believe what is being preached. And the wonderful thing is that there's a liberation here from death.

He delivers all those who, through fear of death, Were subject to lifelong slavery. You see, if you were to realize, If you once realized that you're a sinner, If you once realized that your sin is going to require your death, You will fear death, surely, For the rest of your days, Because you realize that one day I'm going to have to die, To pay for my sin.

Death is a frightful thing. But, how does he deliver us from the fear of death? Well, all of this that I've been saying. If his death is counted against ours, If his life is counted against ours, Then, we don't need to fear death, Because it's but a threshold, Into eternity.

He has paved a way, That we might follow. And of course, Yeah.

[23 : 53] Elizabeth Elliot, Who was a missionary in South America, She lost her husband, Who was also a missionary when he was just a young man, But Elizabeth continued to tell the South American people, About the Lord Jesus for the rest of her life, And she tells of an occasion in the jungles of South America, When she and her Indian guide were traveling a primitive path, Her trail suddenly dropped down into a ravine, She's with this Indian guide, And the only means to cross was a fallen tree, And the Indian guide, No bother to him, He just jumped nimbly up onto the tree, And started to walk across, To cross the ravine, And Elliot confesses, That she was mortified at the prospect of falling, And she hesitated, And her guide looked back, And saw her, And perceiving her apprehension, He came back across, He held out his hand, He grasped hers, And he led her safely across the tree, To the far side of the ravine, The stability of one who had obvious mastery,

Of the situation, Gave her the needed confidence, The needed confidence, To go across with him, To go across with him, We, Humanity is shut up in a box, Under a weight of sin, That we cannot get off of our head, With our only reasonable expectation, Is to go out into eternity, And suffer the wrath of God, As the consequences, For our own failure, To worship the Lord truly, But, The wonderful message of Hebrews chapter 2, And the wonderful message of the scriptures, Is, That the Lord Jesus Christ, Who was once in glory, Has come down into this earth, Has died on a cross, To set us free, And we who are the children of Abraham, Would trust in what he has done,

And we would be found amongst the people, That he calls brothers, It's a wonderful thing, Sometimes, With this I finish, Sometimes, I listen to City of Light songs, Modern songwriters, But with some, Quite special lyrics, And one of them says this, By grace I am redeemed, By grace I am restored, And now I freely walk, Into the arms of Christ my Lord, Your grace that leads this sinner home, If it was not for the grace, Of the Lord Jesus Christ, I would be forever shut up in a box, In a waiting room, Waiting for the wrath of God, But he came in kindness, Into my world, And created a pathway, That I could be free, And now I sing the song of righteousness, By blood, And not by merit, Let's pray,

Our Father, We thank you for the Lord Jesus Christ, We thank you for all that he has done for us, I don't suppose we'll ever fully grasp it, But we know this much, That without the Lord Jesus, We are forever condemned, And so our Father, Father, We thank you that he took condemnation, He took the wrath of God, He gave his life to pay, What we could never pay, Little chorus we sometimes sang as children, He paid a debt he did not owe, I owed a debt I could not pay, I needed someone, To take my sins away, Father, We praise you, For all that you have done for us, Help us Lord, To be the children of Abraham, To be those who believe, In the Lord Jesus Christ, And are saved, Father, For whatever,

Form the rest of our day takes, We pray that you would keep, These thoughts before us, Once in condemnation, But not needing to stay there, Because the Lord Jesus has paved a way out, If we will trust, In him, We love you, In Jesus name, Amen, Well as we finish, We sing, The words from Psalm 40, Which, Continue along a similar theme, I waited for the Lord my God, He took me from a fearful pit, I have talked of a box today, The psalmist speaks of a pit, And verse 3 just helps us to, Think on what it is to be a Christian, Singing this new song in our mouth, That the Lord is our, Our boast, Our confidence, Someone will start us,

[29 : 02] I'm sure, In Psalm 40, 1 to 4, And that's page 259, On this psalter, I waited for the Lord, Lord my God, And patiently did bear, At length to me, He did incline my voice, And try to hear, He took me from the fearful pit, And from the miry clay, And on a rock,

He set my feet, He put a new song in my heart, A cause to magnify, Then he shall see it, And shall fear, And on the Lord rely, O blessed is the man, Whose trust upon the Lord relies, Respecting not the proud,

Nor such, As turn aside to lies, May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, And the love of God, And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, Now and evermore, Amen.