

# Responding to Jesus

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 11 April 2021

Preacher: Chris Thornton

[ 0 : 00 ] The scripture reading comes from Matthew, chapter 11. Please follow along on the screen, the bulletin, or your own Bible. Starting in verse 1, we read, When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities.

Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?

And Jesus answered them, Go and tell John what you hear and see. The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk.

Lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended.

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John. What did you go out into the wilderness to see?

[ 1 : 08 ] A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing. Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in king's houses.

What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.

Truly I say to you, among those born of women, there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

And if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. But to what shall I compare this generation?

[ 2 : 21 ] It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their playmates. We played the flute for you, and you did not dance. We sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, he has a demon. The son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, look at him, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.

Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds. Then he began to denounce the cities where most of his mighty works had been done, because they did not repent.

Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

But I tell you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven?

[ 3 : 28 ] You will be brought down to Hades. For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I tell you that it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom than for you.

At that time, Jesus declared, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children.

Yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. This is the word of God. Great.

Thank you so much, Karen. And I think let me do some, I'm not that tall. Great.

If you don't know me, my name's Chris. Really excited to see you this morning. Wasn't that an awesome song? Leo and Henrika, man, that was just, that was just an awesome song.

[ 4 : 41 ] That really, particularly really spoke to me. We've had a crazy 24 hours. Our son's just been in the hospital. And, you know, actually when you're, we took him to A&E; and when you're in A&E;, just right next door, there's this, just right opposite, there's this room which has got

resuscitation in progress.

And suddenly just you realize, like you kind of live this comfortable life for a lot of your time, but actually you see there's so much brokenness in the world around us. There's so much of people who need, there's physical resuscitation, but there's also spiritual resurrection that people need in their lives.

And so let me just, before we begin, let me just pray for us and pray that God would really speak to us and open our eyes to see his heart, to be broken with what he is broken with, but also to enjoy him as he wants us to.

So could you just pray with me right now? Father, I thank you that you are the Lord of life, the one who has come to set us free.

Thank you that you have come to bring in your kingdom. Thank you that you're the one who comes to set us free, to liberate us. Thank you that you are the one who wants to change our lives completely.

[ 5 : 59 ] And Father, we just know right at the moment, Lord, in our congregation, there are those who are struggling and suffering. Again, we keep bringing Jacob and Wilson and Gloria and their family to you.

We just keep praying for your mercy there, particularly with just the rounds of chemo that are going on. Lord, would you have mercy? Father, would you be with their family and all those other people in Watermark as well who I know there is sickness that's going around.

I know there's people struggling just with family relationships. Father, would you help us to run to you knowing that you're a faithful father in the midst of this? And Lord, even as we're going to be going out to do loving the city and seeing just different areas of the city maybe we've not seen before, Lord, I pray, open our eyes, break our hearts for what breaks yours so that we might pray as you call us to and love as you call us to and be the people you want us to be.

And Father, we pray as we see today in your word, as we come to see how people are to respond to Jesus, I pray that you would melt our hearts so that we come again like little children who just know that we have an awesome Father who loves to give us good gifts, who is so faithful, who is so compassionate, and yet you are the center of everything.

So I pray speak to us right now. In Jesus' name, amen. Great. So talking of medical things, a week after my daughter was born, so this is just about six weeks ago, we'd gone home and we were just kind of settling into the rhythm of feeding and everything that you do with a newborn baby.

[ 7 : 43 ] And then at 6 p.m., we get this call from our doctor saying, listen, we've just found an abnormality in the test result and you need to get to the hospital immediately because this could be so serious this could be sudden death.

Now that's news which just rocks your world, right? It throws all of your plans out of the window. It doesn't matter what you were doing before. Everything stops and everything's got to change at that point, right?

Now she's fine, by the way. So don't come up afterwards asking like, what's happened? She's fine. But the Gospel of Matthew is what we're going through and been going through over the last few weeks has been telling us news, but of a different kind.

He's been telling us news that Jesus is the king of all creation. He is the one who is bringing God's kingdom in of healing, of restoration, of life, drawing people back to God, transforming them in every single way physically, emotionally, spiritually.

And the response that Jesus has been calling for is to repent and believe and to follow him. And this news, it's easy, particularly if you've been in church for a while and you kind of read these stories, to kind of think of this news a bit like, you know, you hear about some orphan in Guatemala who just got reunited with their family and you think, oh, that's nice, isn't it?

[ 9 : 23 ] But it doesn't always feel like personal news. Personal news which actually is going to reshape entirely your whole of your world. Sometimes it feels like distant news.

But Matthew is coming to us saying, this news is not distant news. The news of who Jesus is is personal news for you and you've got to respond to it.

And so, the book of Matthew is actually structured around five different teaching points, blocks of teaching that Jesus gives, which actually is to correlate onto the five books of Moses in the Old Testament showing that Jesus is the new Moses who's bringing God's word to people.

But if you look on the screen, I don't know if you've got the PowerPoint up there. Maybe we haven't. Yeah? Ah, great. You'll see that actually what we've just been, we're in the second of these and we've just heard how Jesus taught the people, the disciples about mission and he's been sending them out on mission.

And right now it says Jesus had finished instructing his disciples and actually you'll see every one of these blocks of teaching finishes with that kind of phrase due when Jesus had finished these sayings, these parables, these teachings.

[10:39] and what he's done now is he's sending them out and just as Jesus had taught them to go, now what he's doing is he himself is going out preaching and teaching and he's going to show you how people are going to respond to the news that as they are to proclaim it you're going to see responses.

So chapters 11 and 12 are all about how people respond to Jesus, the news of this king in town. And so I want to look in this passage at just three kinds of responses to those who are doubters, to those who are resisters and to those who are believers.

Okay? So that's kind of where we're going. We're going to go through the passage. So the first one, doubters, kind of 2 to 15 verses 2 to 15. So if you've got your bulletin just kind of follow along with me as you go.

So doubters. John the Baptist is the dude. I mean, I call him Jay the Beat because he is just, he's got this no-nonsense preaching style which is like he's calling people to repent in anticipation that God's kingdom, this Messiah figure, is going to just totally change everything.

And there's this atmosphere of expectation in Israel at the time that God's kingdom is coming. and John's message has gone viral and everyone's been coming out to see.

[12:09] And John has been preaching in the light of the prophecy after prophecy in the Old Testament which tells you that when this Messiah comes, oppressive rulers will be removed.

There will be a time of peace and harmony. There will be this restoration. There will be this life. And John has seen Jesus and he's gone, this is the guy. He's gone in John 1, he says, this is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

He said, this is the one who will baptize you not with water but with the Holy Spirit. The one who's going to bring new life and liberation to you.

And he's also going to be the one who's going to judge God's enemies. He's going to burn them like chaff. This is what John's been preaching. This is what he's expecting. But J the bee has got in trouble because Herod Antipas, who is like the chief executive of Galilee, he has gone to Rome to visit his brother and when he's sawing his brother, he met his wife and his wife, his brother's wife was hot and she was bored with Herod's brother and so what happens is she leaves his brother, Herod divorces his wife and they get together and they get married.

And John really condemns him from this. He really says, this is not what you should be doing as a leader in Israel.

[13:48] And if you'd say that to any authoritarian leader, what do you think you're going to get? He gets thrown in prison awaiting execution on death row because that's not the kind of thing you do.

And imagine if you were John the Baptist, you've gone from being the talk of the town to now languishing in the dungeon and you've been expecting God's enemies to be destroyed, but here you are about to be killed by God's enemies.

It's not surprising, I can understand it, that suddenly doubts start creeping in. You start going, is this Jesus really the real deal? I don't know if you've ever had that, have you?

Where the promises of God are what you've read in scripture and then your circumstances just don't seem to align in some way. Maybe you've been praying for healing and really trusting God to heal someone, really expecting it, and then they just seem to get worse.

Or maybe you thought God was going to bring you this provision of a new job and you've got this interview and it all seems to be going well and then suddenly it falls through. And you just wonder, is this for real?

[14:57] You read something in scripture that goes, man, I'm not sure if I can really deal with this. And we begin to question God and this is where John's head space is at the moment.

He's going, is Jesus really the Messiah? Which is why he goes, sends his disciples to go, are you the one who was to come? Or should we expect another?

another? You see, John gives us an amazing lesson in how to deal with doubt and questions. Because what he does, you know, generally I think in the church, we don't deal with doubt and questions very well. We often deal with them in a couple of ways. One, I think we just hide them, right?

You know, we feel ashamed of what other people will think about us, whether they'll reject us. And so we kind of keep it to ourselves. That's the worst thing to do with doubt.

[15:58] That's like having a wound which you just leave and it just gets infected and it becomes more toxic and dangerous. But what does John do here?

John opens up. He shares his doubt. And then he humbly runs to Jesus with them. And he does it through his disciples because obviously he can't do it.

He's in prison. But just think about that. He's got a ton to lose. His whole reputation, his whole ministry is staked on everything he's been saying about this Messiah.

And now he's coming out going, hey guys, I'm not really sure whether it is true or not. That's a lot to lose. He might want to hide that, but he doesn't. He doesn't even just open up to a small group of friends and say, hey, just keep it between yourselves.

No, he runs to Jesus himself because he wants to know the truth from Jesus. And this is amazing because I think if you are a believer or if you're not a believer, I think what he's trying to show us is there is no question or doubt which is off the table.

[17:14] You can open up to others in your community group, to elders, to friends, but he's going to say, don't just stop there with kind of horizontal sharing. No, you've got to run to Jesus as well.

And some of us go, but I can't tell God what I'm really thinking. Don't you think he already knows? The Psalms, as we saw just now, teach us how to bring our doubts to God and to wrestle with him. Doubt is only a disaster when you run away from God, not when you run to God. You see, not running to Jesus with our doubts and our questions because we think he'll be displeased at us is a bit like when you've seen somebody who's just had an emotional breakdown and tears are running down their face and you go to them, are you okay?

And they say, I'm fine. And you go, listen, I know you're not fine, but until you open up, I can't help you. That's why Jesus calls us to run to him.

So that's the first thing. Don't hide. John doesn't hide. The second thing that often we do unhealthily in church is I think when some people express their doubts, then other people just kind of shut them down or just kind of dismiss them or just give cheap answers to them.

[18:38] That often justifies us hiding those doubts. But look at how Jesus responds to these things. Notice he doesn't chastise him. He doesn't say, how can you be such a weak follower?

No, he does three things in the same breath. Okay, this is beautiful. First of all, he actually points him to scripture. He points him to his work and then he honors him.

Here's verse four and six. It says, go and tell John what you hear and see. The blind receive sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them, and blessed is the one who is not offended by me.

Do you see what Jesus is doing? Jesus is actually quoting Isaiah 29, 35 and 61 in one sentence.

He knew his Bible. Okay. And he's also, these are all passages which are about what the spirit anointed Messiah is going to do.

And what he's done at the same breath, he's actually said, now compare what scripture says about the Messiah with what I'm doing. Look at the signs of what I'm doing, the restoration, the healing, the deliverance that I'm doing, what you hear and you see that I'm doing, and trust me, on the basis of what you see that I am doing here, trust me with even the things you don't understand with what's going on right now.

[20:10] You see, he says, blessed is the one who's not offended by me. That means the one who's not stumbled by me, but the one who comes and runs to me and trusts me. And that's what God actually tells each one of us to do.

To run to Jesus with our doubts means that we run to scripture and that we run with comparing the reality of the world, the reality of what's going on with who Jesus really is and what he shows us.

And that's why, actually, if you are wrestling right now with questions, we want to ask you, like, come to us. We'd love to do one-on-one Bible study, either CG leader and elder staff, member of the congregation. We'd love to just walk with you in that.

And allow yourself to wrestle with God's word and allow him to speak to you. But don't just keep it between you. Allow yourself to run to Jesus with all of that and to pray.

Because what he wants you to do, he's not going to answer every single question that you have. That's why he's God and we're not. Because there's always mystery. But he's going to show you. He wants you to see enough of his goodness and his grace so that with the stuff that you can't see right now, you know I've got enough to be able to hold on and to trust him.

[ 21 : 28 ] That's what Jesus is doing with John right here. You see, he points into scripture. He points into his works and what you're seeing him already do in his life.

But the third thing he does, he also honors John. Now, this is amazing. This really is extraordinary. You see, instead of shaming him, he honors his faithfulness.

He goes, what did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? These who wear soft clothing are in king's houses.

What's he saying? He's saying, was he just going out? Was John just like a trendy kind of cultural speaker who just told you what anyone wanted to hear at the time? Was he a kind of guy who was really in it for the money and was kind of a bit of prosperity gospel teacher?

He says, no. He was all the time. He was going against the current. No, he wasn't in it for the lifestyle because, listen, he wore goat's hair. Now, that's not in Berbera's next range of jackets.

[ 22 : 33 ] He wasn't up to that. No, John was a prophet, he says. And he says he's the greatest man who's ever lived. That's pretty, that's a huge commendation.

Now, why? He's not saying that because of his performance in life. He's saying that because he lived to be the witness to who Jesus is, the one who was preparing the way for Jesus.

That is the highest honor you could have. He says, until this point. You see, the Old Testament had said there'd be this Elijah-like, Old Testament prophet-like figure who would come and who would herald the Messiah going to come in and bring his kingdom.

And Jesus says, John is that man. John's that man. And he says, why is John in prison? Well, he says, from the time of John the Baptist until now, there's been violence and people trying to attack the kingdom of God.

And actually, that's what's going on with John right now. The kingdom of God is being attacked by violent men. But that's nothing to do with actually that God has failed in his promises or his plan.

[ 23 : 48 ] Because God is still working his promises. But at the same time, he is honoring John by commending him in front of everybody. You know, and if you go, hey, I wonder, maybe that's just John the Baptist.

That's kind of what God does with him. He's a pretty cool guy. Well, actually, it's exactly what God does with Job in the Old Testament, who has a lot of questions. But at the end, God honors him with his friends.

It's the same that he does with Peter in the New Testament. It's the same he does with every single person who runs genuinely to him, wrestles with him. He will bring you to that place where you can trust him.

And instead of shame, you receive honor. You see, why do we come to Jesus with our doubts? Because if you go anywhere else, you're never 100% sure exactly what the response you're going to get.

But when you come to Jesus, you can be 100% guaranteed at the response you're going to get. It's not going to be condemnation. It's not going to be a private, well, let's just keep this to ourselves.

[ 24 : 55 ] It's going to be the gracious honoring of the King of Kings. Isn't that awesome? Which means this.

If we're disciples of Jesus in Watermark, one of the things about disciples of Jesus is we're to become like him and to be like him. So that Watermark needs to be a place where it's the most open place for people to come with your questions wherever you are.

It needs to be a place where those who are doubting, those who are wrestling, find others to walk alongside you, point you to scripture, point you to Christ, to run to him together and to find that deepening faith as you wrestle.

Do you know, like a lot of people who grow up in Christian homes, many of them go through this crisis of faith, right, where they just start wrestling with stuff. Don't get panicked by that if you're a parent or anything.

We all need to go through wrestling with God. Enable it to, our faith go from just an intellectual idea to a reality where you know that you know that God is good. That's for doubters.

[ 26 : 07 ] Let's come on to resisters. Okay, secondly. And this is going down from verses 16 to 24. See, resisters have seen the kind of things that Jesus has been talking about.

They've seen the miracles. They've heard the teaching. But unlike doubters who have questions but they're open for Jesus to speak to them, resisters are hardened.

You see, they willfully, repeatedly ignore and resist Jesus. What does he say? Verse 16, he says, to what shall I compare this generation? Notice it's a generation, not just a few individuals.

This is a whole culture within the villages that Jesus is going to. And he says, they're like fickle children sitting in the marketplace. And it doesn't matter how you bring the gospel to them.

You can bring it kind of John the Baptist style, like turn or burn, self-denial, like neither eating nor drinking, he says. Or you can do it Jesus style, like a party of grace, eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners.

[ 27 : 24 ] It says it doesn't matter which way you do it. They're like a deaf grandfather. You know, it doesn't matter if you speak softly and sweetly or loudly and seriously. They're just not listening to you. And Jesus says that this is serious.

You know, I've got a friend who I've had a ton of conversations with him about the gospel, about Christianity. Christianity. And he said to me, you know, I think Christianity is the most plausible religion in the world.

I mean, it just makes total sense. Like it just changes people. It gives people purpose, hope, meaning it just answers like so many questions. It just makes like total sense in almost every way. And I said to him, and he said, but I don't believe in Jesus. And I went, wait, help me out with that a little bit. And, you know, he came back with some things and I pushed him a little bit and he said, okay, let me just be honest with you.

The reason I don't want to become a Christian is because if I truly trusted in Jesus, I have to change my life. And I'm quite comfortable the way I am and it seems scary to do that, so I don't really want to.

[ 28 : 35 ] I appreciated his honesty because that's the truth. That's a resister to you. You see, and Jesus says to a culture like this, whoa, doom.

That's like going, ayah, Chorazin. Ayah, Bethsaida. It's whoa. It's like this deep cry of pain, a deep cry of lament, and a deep cry of threat all in the same words.

It's right from your heart. You know, when Isaiah sees God, he goes, woe is me for I am ruined. He's like going, I'm screwed. That's kind of what it means. Like judgment's coming upon me. Now for Jesus to say that, you've got to begin to sit up and take notice.

Because think about it. Jesus is the most compassionate person who's ever lived. He's the one who weeps over the harassed and the helpless. He's the one who's that friend of tax collectors and sinners.

[ 29 : 39 ] He reaches out to the brokenhearted. He reaches out to the outcasts. He draws in people from every background. He is gentle and lowly. He's the most gracious person in the entire universe.

So when Jesus says, whoa, you've got to go, whoa, this is serious.

You see, our culture doesn't like the idea of judgment. Except, you know, because it sounds harsh. Except when you see like atrocities like in Rwanda, Myanmar, the rape in Nanjing or sex trafficking or all these horrific injustices.

Then people go, when is God going to put an end to this? Like, this is evil. This is wrong. Why? Because deep down, we actually really want judgment.

We want the world to be put to rights. We want God's kingdom to heal and restore. And God says he will do that.

[ 30 : 51 ] And there will be a day of judgment where he will come and both bring an end to injustice and bring a life of healing and freedom.

And, you know, the basis of that judgment will not be based on our performance. Because, as Isaiah said, if it was based on any of our performance, we'd all be screwed, if I can say that. But it will be based on how you responded to Jesus. It will be based on him. Because he is the center of God's plan of redemption. And if in this life you say, I don't want you, Jesus, then Jesus, at the day of judgment, will turn around and say, then you won't get me or my father.

Because I and the father are one. You know, this is hard. But it's scripture. You know, one Thessalonians says, resistors will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might.

He's saying, if you don't get Jesus, you're cutting yourself off from the source of life itself. You know, God's presence is like the sun shining.

[ 32 : 12 ] And the rays are like all the good gifts we enjoy in this world. You know, you think of sex. You think of food. You think of laughter. You think of the beach. You think of friendship and kindness.

And all those beautiful things that we enjoy in this world. The Bible says, those are the rays which come from the sun. And God and Jesus is the sun. And, you know, the reason why, actually, we can all enjoy the sun right now is because of God's common grace, his gracious gift to each one of us, whether we are believers or not, so that we will see his goodness and we will turn and repent and tumble to him.

And, you know, woe says, if we seek to blot out the sun in our lives right now, we don't want God. God will remove his sun from the sky and you'll be left with darkness. That's a scary thought, right? It's a scary thought. But he gives us the time right now.

Why? Because he doesn't want anyone to perish. He wants everyone and he's saying, wake up. The sun is setting. Repent. Come back to me today. That's the message.

[ 33 : 27 ] And Jesus here isn't talking to non-religious people. This is the really scary part. Jesus is talking to three very religious towns.

Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. Capernaum, who thought that religion, the equivalent of going to church or praying or even believing in God and being moral, could actually save them. And he says, no, it won't. It won't. What saves you is trusting in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. That's what saves you. And he says, and this is the really hard part.

He says, the three wickedest pagan cities in the Old Testament, Tyre, Sidon, sorry, Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom. Even they, that's kind of like going the Nazis, ISIS, the Khmer Rouge.

They're going to get a lighter deal on judgment day than you guys, you religious communities who knew the message, but you resisted it.

[ 34 : 33 ] So that means when we hear the gospel, it's dangerous because we need to respond to it. But this message isn't for people who are doubting. It's not, if you're going, okay, I'm not sure whether I'm really saved.

Maybe I'm coming under judgment. Or if that's your heart, then you're probably not one of the resistors. Jesus is just calling you to run to him now. A resistor doesn't even care about that. But right now, there may be some people here who are in that category.

And so Jesus is going to say to you, do you listen to sermon after sermon, but think it's about everybody else and not about you? He's going to say, is your faith just boxed into maybe some kind of religious ritual coming on Sunday?

But the rest of your life, your priorities, your sexuality, your money, you don't want Jesus to lay any hands on that. He's going to say, do you think you're going to be saved just because you're a good person?

Then he'll say, hear the warning of woe from Jesus. Wake up. Now is the chance to repent. That's the hard part that Jesus, you know, sometimes we think Jesus is just compassionate.

[ 35 : 40 ] He can also be hard. But he's both. Because he loves us. But if right now there are those of us who have loved ones and we really feel this message.

Because we have loved ones who are resistant. And we've been praying for a long time and going, is there hope? That this message can feel scary, right? What it should do, it should lead us onto our knees to pray and to not give up praying.

Why? Because there's a great hope in this passage too. This is my third point. It's to believe us. Do you know where Peter, Andrew, and Philip, the disciples, came from?

They came from Bethsaida. John 1 tells us that. We know that actually verse 1 of this passage tells that Jesus went into their towns, the towns of the disciples, to preach and teach.

And Jesus also made Capernaum his home base for ministry. So it's likely that many of the other disciples actually came from these same towns as well. Which is extraordinary.

[ 36 : 46 ] Because what that shows you, in the middle of this hardened, resistant culture, God can break through into people's lives and draw them to himself and bring salvation. Isn't that amazing?

And here's what Jesus says is the response for those who come to him. He says this. And this is verse 25. I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children.

Yes, Father, for such was your gracious, pleasing will. Who is he talking to? He's talking about his disciples.

And do you know what he calls them? He calls them little children. He doesn't just call them children. You notice he called them little children. That is actually really unflattering for a load of macho fishermen.

Right? But what is he saying? He's saying his kingdom doesn't operate the way our kingdoms do. He doesn't work the way we do.

[ 37 : 57 ] Let me show you a picture. This is my daughter, Elodie. How many of you would entrust your investment portfolio to her?

How many of you would actually give her a job in the company or wherever you work? Probably not many. Why? Because she's weak. She can't even hold her head up.

Can't even hold her hand up by herself. She's dependent. She's significant in many ways. She's inadequate. She can't do very much. You know, this is who God says he loves to reveal his kingdom to.

People who are weak, insignificant, inadequate, fragile, incapable. And Jesus actually says that's what we're all like if we're going to admit it.

Some of us think we are the wise and understanding in this passage. Why? Because we're actually, a lot of us, we're really quite smart. Guys, really capable. You can do a lot of stuff, great education, all those kind of things.

[ 39 : 09 ] But even if you know your Bible so well, you know Christianity like the back of your hand. You know, that can be dangerous. Because it stops us from being like little children. And it's little children who get the kingdom of God's presence coming to us.

You know, when we start going, yeah, I can do this by myself. It's like my daughter going, hey, I can get food by myself. You know, I don't need you guys.

And you know, that's not a great place to be, right? With what's going to happen, she's going to die. But some of us, right now, we're feeling weak.

Maybe we've just been out of community for so long. Maybe you're just feeling dry spiritually.

Maybe you're just feeling like you've stagnated. Maybe you're feeling fragile. Maybe you're feeling like, I don't know what's going on.

Maybe you're feeling overwhelmed with all the things that are happening in your world. Do you recognize that right now where you are, that can be a great place to be if you recognize that?

[ 40 : 13 ] If you recognize that you are just a little child and you desperately need Jesus. Because, you know, when we run to Jesus, whether you're a doubter, whether you're a resistor, or wherever you are right now, do you know what Jesus says he's going to do?

When we cry out for more of his presence in our lives and we're desperate for it, we're not just kind of, oh, it's okay. This is fine news for me. No, this is news that you know you need right now, that there is a Savior who has compassion on you.

Do you know what happens? Just like when my daughter cries for food, my wife doesn't go, ah, sort yourself out. She doesn't go, grow up, will you?

You're six weeks old. She doesn't do any of that. She delights to bring her presence and to satisfy her. Jesus wants to start a revival in Watermark.

Did you know that? He wants to start actually today in our hearts. But he won't be able to do anything, if I can put it like that. I mean, God can do anything.

[ 41 : 26 ] But he chooses not to do things with people who are unwilling to come as little children. For people who think they're okay.

But he loves, he's his gracious will when we come to him as little children, going, Jesus, I need you right now. I come with all my questions.

I come with all my issues. I come dry. I come needing you. And you know, right now is the time where God wants to saturate us with his presence. Do you want that?

Do you want to respond to Jesus like that? Some of us, we need to go, God, I'm not in a great place right now. My heart is hard. I just feel all over the place.

My motivation is pretty low. You need to just come and be real with God right now about that. Come and revive my heart. Because Jesus says, and it's the last thing. He says, the person who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater even than John the Baptist.

[ 42 : 32 ] Do you know why? Because we live in a post-cross, post-resurrection age of the spirit of God. Where we can come face to face and experience God's presence in a way that John the Baptist never could.

We can know Jesus in a way that John the Baptist never did. So do we want to this morning? I want us to just stop and pray for a second.

I'm going to invite the communion stewards to come up. But what I'd like you to do is actually just to take stock of where you are right now. I actually want us to pray.

And you may pray silently if you want to. But actually, if anyone wants to pray out loud and to just come and cry to God with wherever you are.

Asking for more of him. Asking to see Jesus for who he really is. Asking that his kingdom, that restoration place, would come and start being at work in our hearts and our lives.

[ 43 : 44 ] So take a minute just to actually honestly go, where am I? Where am I with Jesus? How am I responding to him today? And I want you to just do business with God right now.

For more of Jesus? And I want you to just do business with God. Yes. I don't know. Whatever. I'll just thank God. I want you to do business with God. Did you say, what does God right now?