

## Sent Week 2: What makes the way of Jesus so different?

### Mike's Minutes/Announcements:

We have been having conversations with pastor Bishop Thompson on Facebook live about racial reconciliation and now we are excited to host a unity service with his church, God's Grace Community Church, on Sunday Jan 17th as we work on bridging racial divides and making a dream become reality! You can join us in person or the live stream! There is limited seating for the live service, so make sure to register and save your seat.

### Introduce the series:

As we talked about last week...

Everyone wants a revival, they just want *their* version of a revival.

For most people God moving in their lives means God helping them win their way over someone else's.

How many people pray for revival and mean, "I am in sin. My people are in sin. Forgive me, oh God!"

Let me paint a picture for you.

Remember in Genesis when Cain killed Abel?

Imagine that final scene. I can imagine the Mesopotamian landscape. The day is warm, the sun beating down. There is a firm wind rolling across the landscape. No one is around. Just the two brothers. Cain has rejected charity and something awful is about to enter earth. Cain shoves his brother down, his heart muddled by jealousy and revenge.

Cain grabs a rock and is standing over Abel about to end his life. (Image of Cain over Abel)

Pause on this scene. Apply a little higher-level thinking. Cain wants free from the tension inside of him. He honestly thinks peace is going to come from beating his brother. He doesn't realize the actual pain is in him, not in Abel.

Think on this image again. Cain standing over Abel.

This is the posture of our world and has been since the fall of humanity. Just replace the players. The role of Cain is eventually played by Josephs' brothers, Josephs' brothers become Egypt, Egypt becomes Babylon. The role of Cain becomes Persia... Assyria... Alexander the Great and ultimately the Greco-Roman world. The role of Cain becomes Germanic tribes. The list goes on and on. Even today the image is the same. Cain is standing over Abel, certain his demise will bring peace. It never does. This is what humanity does.

The story of Cain and Abel is an archetypal image of how humans work in this fallen world.

I want to offer another image. Christ on the Cross. (Show the image of Christ on the Cross)

The most powerful human to ever walk the planet comes to this earth and does something totally confusing to humans. He kneels down and takes the role of Abel.

He is a totally different kind of King, a King that hearts full of revenge, hate, jealousy, pride and power will hate.

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Luke 4:14-30

### Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

<sup>14</sup> Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. <sup>15</sup> He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

<sup>16</sup> He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, <sup>17</sup> and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

<sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, <sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

<sup>20</sup> Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. <sup>21</sup> He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." <sup>22</sup> All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

<sup>23</sup> Jesus said to them, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself!' And you will tell me, 'Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.' "

<sup>24</sup> "Truly I tell you," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown." <sup>1</sup>

- Jesus is speaking to his people, a people that have been long persecuted, a people that deeply desire to be delivered from what has made them suffer. They want a knight in shining armor to take out Rome. Instead, they get this hometown miracle worker who keeps the focus on the condition of their hearts. People literally hate this.
- Think about how often people are trying to "fix" how Jesus saves.
  - Peter rebukes Jesus, so Jesus rebukes him back (Matt. 16:22-28).
  - The people try to make Him king (John 16:15).
  - Some scholars even think that Judas' act against Christ was an attempt to push Him into action against Rome. <sup>2</sup>
- Everyone wants a revival, they just want *their* version of a revival.

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<sup>1</sup> [\*The New International Version\*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Lk 4:14–30.

<sup>2</sup> Bolinger, Chris. "Why Did Judas Betray Jesus?" Crosswalk.com. Salem Web Network, July 19, 2019. <https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/bible-study/why-did-judas-betray-jesus.html>.

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- How do we make sure we aren't the ones who miss Christ?
  - If you only see the errors in others, you are in danger.
  - If you identify your beliefs only by comparing them against another human made group, you are in danger.
  - If you find yourself telling God what He needs to do, you are in danger.
  - If you think your inner peace will come by taking out other people, you are in danger.
  - Most importantly, be very aware of the posture of your heart. What are you full of? Humility and grace, anger and pride?

What should we pray for?

- That God would give us a heart of flesh (Ezekiel 36:26). Literally, a soft heart.

What should we practice?

- Confession, non-defensive transparency of your failures and fears to God and other believers. This practice shapes your heart into humility and helps you see the real divine narrative.