

The Gospels

September 4, 2022

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ Online Ministry. Services are presented on YouTube, Facebook and our website one week following recording. This week's message is titled The Gospels. Thank you to Paul, Mike Ed, Amy, and Don for being part of the video. The scripture reading is Mark 16:9 to 20.

Welcome, Announcements, Prayer

Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. You too. Great to be with you all today. And I look forward to a good morning of worship together and learning of God's Word and being encouraged and challenged and sent out into the world. A couple announcements as we get underway. Birthdays this week. Jan has a birthday. We will assume it's in the low twenties. Is that a good assumption to make? Dianne is putting together a new church directory. Please email her with any new or changed information. If you would like to be included in that directory. And her email is up on the screen there or ask Adam or I have a sheet, if you want to find me. The community food drive. Mark your calendars for the 17th of September. There is also a web address if you'd like to get more information about that. It's a great program to be involved in and a prayer request. Jenny P's sister Maria passed away suddenly yesterday in the Philippines. So keep Jenny and family in prayers. Let's go to God in prayer.

Dear Lord, thank you for all you've given us and all you've blessed us with. Thank you for today. Lord, thank you for this moment. Thank you for every breath. Thank you for every, every, every, every, every moment as it goes by. It is a true blessing from you. More than life itself, more than every day. I want to thank you for the gift of your son, who you sent for us and who died for us. And. And as a result, we are now part of your family. And that is a blessing beyond compare and blessing we do not deserve. Lord, help us to be grateful of these blessings. Help us be mindful of these blessings. Help us to also be to act like a people who have been blessed in this way. We thank you for all that you have done. Help us have a wonderful day together. Help us worship well, just him. Amen.

Communion

Today, the the theme of worship is the gospel. The gospel. Not fancy stuff. No stuff. Not stuff that really makes it easier for us to come to church and feel better about ourselves. It's the gospel, and that alone should make us feel better about ourselves. You know, when I actually read the passage that Adam sent to me in my text message in this morning, and so I will try to place myself as the first person. who heard the message that Jesus had risen from the dead. And then I place myself and in the disciples who were told by the women who first heard the message that Jesus was risen from the dead and how they felt.

And then how they forth-went through and through Pentecost and that and took The Word to a really an unbelieving can't believe you must been seen out of your mind. Really. This man who crucified Pilate sends him to death. And yet you're telling us that he in fact. Right. Raising the dead. You guys must be drunk! So put yourself in the position even today. Like. Like when you think about it, it's. It's insane, you know? And we can think of a lot of passages. The one that comes to mind that says, well, and Paul says, for for for the message of the cross is foolishness to those who don't believe. But to us is

the saving power of God. That's in very early first Corinthians. I mean, so when you think about, you know, even my own family, they they they know I go to church now and they I'm there. They know they're in my but they the special one brother's coming, but they just think that it doesn't make sense. It's insane. There's other stories and religions that have the same story and they throw everything at me or that's good. That makes you feel good. Meanwhile, their lives are falling apart. But in my life, maybe falling apart. But the glue that holds me together and keeps me standing and the strength of faith and the hope of the gospel is the fact that Jesus went to the cross for my sins.

He went to the cross for our sins, and he died and he resurrected. And we believe it. We believe the story. And that's what gets us through this difficult life. Now what we have, now we own physically or not. But when push comes to shove and it's all stripped away and as you get older, I'm sure you will. I'm learning myself right. Nothing else matters. What counts is the Gospel. Jesus died. Jesus rose for my sins, our sins. And we have the power that of the resurrection that lessens Jesus also inside of us because of that. So what's those kind of thoughts? We can carry on through our week in life and through everything that life throws at us and carry on just like those that have recently and we were to have passed through. We still are here. We we carry on. We have faith that they're with the Lord resting comfortably and we're going to see them again and we're going to get each other there by that's one hope that we all collectively are saved and by and believed in because we believe it's our power, it's the power of world, the world to not take away from us.

So let's go to God in prayer at this time. Thank you, Jesus, for going to the cross for us. Thank you for taking our sins away and giving us the gift of eternal life. For the way Jesus and death for the gifts of God and Jesus Christ. Eternal life is ours to to have and to hold forever as a promise, because we believe in the father. Help us to to encourage each other with these thoughts and to carry on through life. Holding up and keeping the promise and sharing the good news. Because the good news is maybe 2000 years old was just as fresh today as it was to the first year of the news. The Gospel. Thank you, Father. And it's through your son's name we pray. Amen.

Reading

The scripture reading this morning is taken from Mark Chapter 16 verses nine through 20. When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. She went and told those who had been with him, who were mourning and weeping when they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him. They did not believe it. Afterwards, Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. These returns and reported it to the rest. But they did not believe them either. Later, Jesus appeared to 11 as they were eating. He rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen.

He said, Go into all the world, preach the gospel to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved. But whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe in my name. They will drive out demons. They will speak in new tongues. They will pick up snakes with their hands, and they will drink deadly poison. It will not hurt them at all. They will place their hands on the sick and people will get well. After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed His Word by the signs that accompanied it.

Sermon

Good morning, everyone. We are grateful that you're with us today. I want to do something a little bit different today. Instead of preaching a sermon. I like to have somewhat of a I guess you could call it a Bible study, and I hope this would be somewhat helpful. I've been thinking about this for several weeks now, that there have been attempts over the years of somehow combining the Gospels into one instead of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Couldn't we just collaborate? Can't we just put them all together and just say the gospel and combine it? But it never worked. People tried several attempts. I was looking back at some attempts that people made to say, okay, we're going to combine them all, take the best of each book, and it's all going to just be one. But it never worked because each writer is different coming from a different perspective. Just like you and I, the first time we hear the gospel, we might just say, Okay, what's that's pretty good. But then as the years go by, we become part of the Gospel. So I just want to take a look at some scriptures today that just help me any way to understand why there's Matthew, why there's Mark, why there's Luke and why there's John. Each one is truly unique

In Matthew, the theme of Matthew. And if you read Chapter one, you might fall asleep pretty quickly because it's name after name after name after name. But that's what Matthew is attempting to do. He wants to set out Jesus as the focus, but he wants us to understand the genealogy of how it all came to be, right from Adam and Eve all the way through. And it's unique in Matthew. One in verse I think is verse seven. It says that there were 14 generations in all from Abraham to David and 14 generations from David to the exile to Babylon, and 14 generations from the exile to the Christ. Well, wasn't that lucky? No, it's exactly the way Jesus got the Father, God, the Son and God, the Holy Spirit set it up to fulfill the Pentateuch. Matthew begins by saying everything that was written in the past was written for us. And now when Christ comes into the world, it's not just reading Scripture, it's Christ who now lives in each one of us. Many of us remember the first time when we were thinking about really dedicating ourselves to Christ. It was more than just thoughts. It was all of a sudden I, I think I believe in this Jesus. And then going from that to reading a few more scriptures and then watching other people as they grow in their faith and then realizing that Jesus is very much alive and that we read His Scriptures, what he said and what He's done and what he's saying and what he's doing and what will happen.

It's part of us. It's it's a relationship. And one of the reasons why we have these gospels is to help us look at how the writer is saying, here's Jesus, here's how he's going to change your life. So each one is uniquely different. Matthew really follows the genealogy and helps us to understand who Jesus is all about. And so we have in Matthew some of the greatest writings of of all Bible, the Beatitudes.

It's not so much a teaching as Henri Nouwen says, it is a pronouncement. And if that's confusing, let me just kind of read this again. Now, when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on the mountainside and sat down and his disciples came to him and he began to teach them. He began to teach his disciples, even though they were following Jesus saw Jesus heard Jesus witnessed miracles that Jesus made. The disciples started to learn that this was going to be a personal gospel. And for all of us, the same gospel that Peter believed is the gospel that we believe after all these generations, and hopefully for the next generations to come, people will believe the same. And he says to us and Henry now and says, You are blessed. So now when the when he saw the crowds, he went up on the mountainside and sat down and the disciples came to him and he began to teach them, saying, you are blessed. Blessed are the

poor in spirit. In other words, they're not arrogant. For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. See, that's not just history. That's Jesus saying to us, pure and spirit, yours is the kingdom of heaven, right on earth. And you're blessed when you mourn because you'll be comforted. And you're when you're meek, you will inherit the earth. It's not being bravado. It's not just putting ourselves out there, but it's going around doing the will and the work of Jesus. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst to know more about Jesus and the Gospel. Blessed are the merciful, those who come alongside people who are hurting and blessed are the peacemakers, you know, just those people that can come in to a rancorous situation. And after a few minutes, everything's kind of smooth again. Everything's all right. There's just peace that's come upon us. And don't worry, when people criticize you, insult you, persecute you. Jesus had that experience, too.

So what I'm saying is we look at the Gospels. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John have a particular theme, and yet each one is just a little bit different. And Mark has what is often called the messianic secret. And for me, this is one of the truly interesting parts of the gospel, the messianic secret is the fact that Jesus was the Messiah and he would do something profound and people would come to Jesus and say, Are you the Messiah? Are you really the one that was coming into the world? And Jesus tells us, Don't tell anybody. Don't don't tell anybody about this. Because I want them to know that the gospel is not some kind of salvation only for me, but it's a salvation for all people. And there's a cost to this salvation. And it's it's the messianic secret is Jesus did not want to be made king of the entire world by force. I mean, let's face it, there were people that saw Jesus do miracles. They heard what he was saying. And they said, You are the Christ. Let's get rid of all government and put Christ on this road. No, that's not what he was about. He wasn't into politics. He was about the Beatitudes helping, serving, coming into the world where people's hearts are broken and coming alongside them, praying with them.

So just take a look at a couple of these examples of this messianic secret in Mark Chapter three. And there are many, but in Mark Chapter three, beginning in verse seven, it says this Jesus withdrew with his disciples to a lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed. And when they heard all he was doing, many people came to him from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea and the regions across the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon. In other words, there were a lot of people coming from different places because of the crowd. He told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him to keep the people from crowding him, for he had healed many so that those with diseases were pushing for word to touch him. And whenever the evil spirits saw him, even the evil spirits fell down before him and cried out, You are the Son of God. But Jesus gave even those spirits strict orders not to tell anyone who He was. Seems so strange. Why wouldn't Jesus? Why wouldn't Jesus want to be illuminated in front of everybody? Why wouldn't why wouldn't Jesus say, yes, I am the Messiah? And I think one of the reasons for that was they misunderstood. People thought that if he's the Messiah and we're in cahoots with him, we're going to be wealthy. We're going to be healthy. We're going to live forever. It's all about us. That's not what Jesus was about. In fact, the people found it so strange that Jesus went into places that were poor, people who were lonely, people who were hurting, people who didn't understand. He seemed to he seemed to favor that. Group of people. Who were lost and lonely and hurting. And the interesting part of the gospel is that's exactly the way it is today. We can be happy and healthy in our own relationships and we can do all kinds of things. But we really need to rely on the love and the grace of Jesus Christ and his teaching every single day.

Because there will come times when we don't have answers. Why did this happen? Why did that happen? Why is this happening? But Jesus comes alongside us, maybe not always giving us the answers, but just being there. In Mark, chapter three. Listen to this. Verse seven Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed when when they heard what he was doing, many people came to him from Jerusalem and in a variety of variety of other places. And this is for he had healed many so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch him whenever the evil spirit saw him. They fell down before him and they cried out, You are the son of the God. You are the son of God. I read that several times today and spoken about it twice today that Jesus is the Son of God and He breaks in to our world on occasion, especially when it's needed.

And then in Mark chapter five, there's something called the Messianic Secret. What? He'll do something powerful, and then he'll tell people not to tell anyone about it because they were going to make him king by force. So in Mark chapter five, it says in verse 35, what Jesus was still speaking. Some men came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. Your daughter is dead. And they said, Why bother the teacher anymore? They thought that Jesus could heal. But now that the child is dead, there's no way that Jesus could heal that. Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, Don't be afraid. Just believe. And that's a statement that's true today. Sometimes life can get horrific. Don't be afraid. Just believe. He did not let anyone follow him. Except Peter, James and John, the brother of James. And when they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion with the people crying and wailing. And he went in and said, Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead, but asleep. But they laughed at Jesus. I could be wrong, but I think that's the only time in Scripture that says that Jesus was laughed at. I think there were times when Jesus and His disciples laughed out loud together. But this is the first time, I think the only time where they laughed at Jesus. And after Jesus put them all out. Those people who laughed at him. He took the child's father and mother and the disciples were with him and went in where the child was. And he took her by the hand and said, Little girl, I say to you, Get up. And immediately the girl stood up and walked around. She was 12 years old. And this as this was completely astonishing. And he gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this and told them, give that young girl something to eat.

And this is in many ways a look forward for us. Many of us have lost loved ones, but Jesus reminds us, we will see them again. Paul talks about it. Jesus talks about it. Peter talks about it. That a one time, one time in our future we'll be part of it. One time we will be together with our loved ones again. A new heaven and a new Earth. No more pain, no more sorrow, no more crying as Jesus said many times in the past. It's something that we look forward to. We're going to meet relatives that we didn't know, and we're going to see God face to face. We're going to talk to him and he's going to talk to us. Can we wait for that? Sometimes life is so overwhelming that we say, Can you please hurry this up? And then we look at children and grandchildren and say, Oh, they need to live. To let them grow. Let them know. Maybe one of those. One of these children will just change the world because Jesus has helped change their life and ours as well.

So in Mark, there's this cool story. After six days, Jesus took Peter, James and John with them and led them up on this mountain and they were all alone. And he was transfigured before them. The joy I can think of that is, excuse me if you think this is not right, but there's no there was a show years ago in the sixties called Star Trek, and they'd get into that room where they would beam down, beam up or beam down and they would be transfigured and then gone on to another planet. I have no idea if that was going to happen to us or not. I don't know. I guess we'll know when we find out. But it's the coolest

thing that takes place that Peter James and John or Jesus up there and they're all transfigured and they appeared before them, Elijah and Moses, who are talking with Jesus as if it was a normal thing. And Peter said to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah. He didn't know what to say because he was so frightened. Then a cloud appeared and enveloped them and a voice came from the cloud. A voice came from the cloud. It's God's voice. This is my son, whom I love. Listen to him, exclamation point. Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus. And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders, not to tell anyone what they had seen until the son of man had been risen from the dead. Why not tell people? And I think one of the reasons why he didn't want to tell anyone, because they would come and make him king by force or political king by force. And that's not what Jesus was about. Jesus came to show us who God is, who the Holy Spirit is. Jesus shows us through the Word of God who is. And this is the reason why Jesus says these things. And all throughout this, especially in Mark's gospel, it's the continuous statement of Don't tell anyone, don't tell anyone, don't tell anyone. And he gave them strict orders not to tell anyone.

So I want to move on to the Gospel of Luke, one of my favorite writers of the New Testament, because Luke was this person who invited people to come to the Kingdom of God and that all throughout Luke's gospel, it's this this idea of welcoming people will come from the east and the west, in the north and the south, and they will take their places at the Feast of the Kingdom of God. When you read the Gospel of Luke, it's all about eating and drinking, going to a party, welcoming, leaving one place, going to another place, sharing all having this wonderful time together. It is a prelude to the Kingdom of God says Jesus sends them out in the 70 to return with joy and saying, Even the demons respond to us when we tell them to leave, they leave. But then in Luke Chapter 14, there's something called the Great Banquet in verse 29 of Chapter 13, it says, People will come from the east and the west and the north and the south, and they will take their places at the Feast of the Kingdom of God. So if you want to follow and I know I'm kind of going back and forth, we know this story, but it's a profound story based on everything that we've said. There is the parable of the Great Banquet, and this is found in Luke Chapter 14. And I'm going to start reading in verse 15 when one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, Blessed is the person who will eat at the feast in the Kingdom of God. Jesus replied. A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests at the time of the banquet. He sent his servant to tell those who had been invited Come for everything is now ready. But they all began to make excuses. I want to stop. There is a great banquet waiting for all of us. It's called the Heavenly Banquet. We're all invited. Well, thank you, Jesus. But I'm kind of busy, and life's just kind of overwhelming. You know, I'll kind of pass on that. I think you'd be out of your mind to say so. It's the great banquet where everyone is invited.

Don't we know that? Don't we remember Jesus saying in John 3:16 for God so loved a few people, no God so loved the world that he gave His one and only son. Here's the banquet. Another way of saying it. All throughout the teachings of Jesus, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It's a continual invitation to come to Christ. And part of coming to Christ is in celebrating the great banquet, the heavenly feast, bringing more and more people together. But it's pretty easy to say, Well, maybe another time can't really do it. I don't think there's one person in this room that would ever say no. If Jesus said, Come to me. No, no, no, no. I am too busy. Can't really do that. No, no. That's not who we are, because we know that part of Jesus lives in each one of us. And so he tells the stories over and over and over again

of a great banquet. Everything is now ready. But yes, there are people who may make excuses at those times, but we have a welcome that Jesus brings to us.

So let me conclude by probably the most familiar scripture in all of the Bible in John chapter three, talking about for God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life for God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world. Whoever believes in him is not condemned. It's this continual invitation of Jesus. You may want to do what I've been doing this past week and that is consciously being aware of the presence of Jesus in my life. Or your life. Simple things like getting up in the morning and thinking, Oh, Jesus is with me and going to work, driving in the car and not just thinking about Jesus, but talking to him, talking to learning Jesus. How was your day? Jesus, we're looking forward to seeing you someday. Can you imagine looking into his eyes, which we will one day and saying, Oh, you're the one who brought me peace. You're the one who pours out love into our hearts. And Jesus will say, Yeah, I did that, but I want you to know this is H.S. -- Holy Spirit. He did a lot of work in your life. He's poured himself out into your life. And I just picture us in heaven where Jesus is walking on one side and the Holy Spirit is walking on the other side. And they say, Here He is, Lord God, Father of all mankind. He created you. He knew the exact time and place in which you would live. And here he is. He wants to spend time with you. Are we welcoming enough to invite Jesus into us, into our hearts on a daily basis, knowing that you're never alone, even for one breath. Amen.

Song Leader

Now, when we get the reading from Don each week about the sermon that he's going to preach. Well we have to sort of if we're planning the service, we sort of have to guess as to what's going to happen in the sermon. And Don never really disappoints us because he, he preaches from the word and the song we're going to sing now. It, it talks about Ezekiel and Elijah and Moses and David. And then the last part of the the first verse that says, and we are labourers in the vineyard declaring the word of the Lord, we are. Part of. The gospel message, all of us, every day. Because what these people did is recorded in Scripture as an on-going process of which we participate in. So thank you, Don, for reminding us of this great privilege and honor that we have to be part of the gospel message. So let's sing about this as we draw our meeting to a close. Let's stand. Please.

Closing Prayer

Thank you, Don. Let's close today in prayer and encourage each other in our week. Dear Lord, thank you for everything you've done for us. Thank you for this opportunity to be together, to worship together, to be encouraged, to be reminded of your words, to be reminded of your gospel and of the different ways we can approach it. Lord, help us to leave this place, to go through our week, encouraged in. You reminded of our place in your family and of our inclusion in your work. Lord, we thank you for all that you are. We thank you for all that you have done for us. All you are doing and all you continue to do. May we be sure in you, Jesus name. Amen.

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