

# Jesus Declares Himself In Nazareth

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Date: 23 January 2022

Preacher: Pastor Scott Johnson

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[ 16 : 17 ]    Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 18 : 47 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

So, you're here.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 21 : 16 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 23 : 46 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

And you, 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, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

Some powerful words. And what you've got to remember is, especially in that moment, everybody knows what those words mean. That the Jewish people at that time were hanging on the arrival of the Messiah. They were looking forward to it. It's what they were counting on.

They were living in an oppressed state. They were living under an occupation and they wanted their messianic figure to show up and set them free. They were counting on it. And this passage points to the coming of the Messiah. And so they would have brought up all those feelings.

[ 26 : 11 ] They'd have been sitting there thinking, yeah, we are looking forward to that. Now what's interesting is what happens next because you get this sense of a heavy silence in the room. Okay. It says, then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendants and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. Now this could be for a couple of different reasons. Because most of these folks would have remembered him if Joseph and Mary's boy from down the street. Okay. Now we're not exactly sure based on scripture when the Holy family arrived back in Nazareth. We don't know that. We know that they went to Bethlehem. Jesus was born. They left when he was young, went to Egypt to escape Herod. And then after Herod dies, they go back to Nazareth. We don't have an exact timeline on when they go back. But he spent his formative years there. Everybody agrees with that. So many of the people sitting in the room would have remembered him from Yeh-Bah-Yeh-Hai to being a fully grown man.

Now we also don't know how many people in that room would have remembered the controversy around his birth. There may have been some, but we don't know. But something was clearly going on when he reads this passage that everybody was like, okay. Because you get that sense of there's a freeze there. It's like, huh. And then truth bomb. Because he goes and he sits back down.

And everybody's staring at him. And everybody's wondering what's going on. And he says, today, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.

So, pretty dramatic moment. Because as we said, there's a room full of people who know what those words are about, who know what they are looking forward to, and they're hanging on it in terms of their faith. And here comes Joseph and Mary's kid. And whether they have the background or not, he stands up and says, I'm that guy.

Now what this tells us is Jesus is being true to who he is. He's already done some work. And they're aware that he's done some work. And he's letting people in on the fact that, yeah, I'm the one you've been waiting for. He's not going to sell himself out just because people are uncomfortable. He's not going to sit quietly and let it just pass because it would be easier for him. He speaks his truth.

[ 29 : 21 ] He won't ignore and he won't deny who he is. That's one of the fascinating things about Jesus throughout scripture, is that in many ways he wants people to figure it out because it's a matter of faith. But he never denies who he is. Never denies who he is. And the question that many of us have to sit here and think about is, would we have the courage to live our truth the same way in that same kind of moment? Now granted, of course, none of us is Jesus. But at the same time, as disciples of Jesus living in this world, you are regularly put in moments, put in context, where who you profess to be is going to be on trial. There are going to be times when the world is going to say, do this, or the world is saying, we think you're that. The question is, who will you then profess yourself to be? Not only in terms of what you say, but in how you behave.

Will you speak and live your truth when it gets hard? Because that is something that we all face in our own way, and I'm willing to bet none of us is batting a thousand at it. But that being said, hearing that truth does not absolve us from knowing better and doing better going forward. Because in this world in which we live, where it is so challenging for us from time to time, we need to remember something very clearly. Whether we want to believe it or not, there is a non-believing world that looks at us constantly.

And you probably have people in your life, some of whom may not even know that you're a disciple of Jesus. Some of whom may not even know that you get up on Sunday mornings and come out on days like today because it means that much to you.

And in those moments, however they look in your life, will you say your truth?

Now, what does that really mean? Because we all are dealing with stuff all the time. Friends who get sick.

[ 31 : 57 ] Coworkers who are making particular types of choices, saying types of things. Neighbors, people who cut you off in traffic or jump in front of you in line at the store.

When these situations show up, who do you profess yourself and your Lord to be? Because those are the moments where you get to speak a truth.

A lot of times that non-believing world looks at us and goes, well, what difference does any of this make? Who cares if you get up on Sunday morning and go to church?

Because for some folks, they have that vague conception of a God out there that's nice and fun, and they can buy into that. But what difference does it make? There are some folks who get up and go to church, and they will do their thing, and they have a lot of friends.

But when they're outside of the church, what difference does it make? And then there are those. Those who can tell you a story.

[ 33 : 04 ] Whether their story was a big, dramatic moment in which something changed for them, and they understood the love of God in their life in a new way. Or maybe it's just been simply their awakening over many, many years to the fact that, yes, God loves me and loves me enough that Jesus did these things for me, and I have to give my heart to him.

And saying that and knowing that makes them make different choices, makes them speak and live a truth when the world shows up and says, are you going to choose the world or are you going to choose Christ?

Because that's what this is about. If it means nothing, it shows. If it matters to you, it shows.

And the hard part for us is to make sure that we at least are aware of that. Because it's one thing to, quote, believe it.

But if you believe it, can you really say you believe it if you never live like you believe it? If you never make the choices, if you never speak the words, if you never do the things that look like Jesus in the world?

[ 34 : 28 ] Because that's the difference it's supposed to make. So for us, when you see that friend who is struggling because they're taking care of a loved one at home, how can you be loved in their life?

How can you offer them real support, real encouragement, real help? When you know that there's someone who's a neighbor who's maybe lost someone in their life.

Can you speak a word of encouragement? Can you speak a word of joy? Can you speak a word of comfort into their moment that lets them know there is another way? Not beating them over the head with evangelism, but actually living a life of love that can be transformational.

When there is need, deep compelling need, not just big disasters like hurricanes, but folk who we know are hungry. Can you put your money, your time, your energy where your professed faith is?

Will you speak and live your truth when it's challenging? Because as we will see next week, it gets challenging.

[ 35 : 59 ] And it can be a whole lot more challenging to be a disciple of Jesus in this world than it is to wear Steelers jerseys to the Ralph. But that being said, if we don't stand out in some kind of way, if we just go along and look like everybody else, the question hangs, what difference has it made for you?

And the thing is, we know we serve a God who makes a difference. We know that God has touched our lives. We know that we are redeemed by the blood of Christ and we know that he has overcome the world.

And so do we move in this world in a way that shows we get that? Because when we do, especially in times like now, when so much is weighing so heavily, when people are so deeply divided, when people are so deeply anxious, when there is so much stress and concern and worry, will we speak and be a word for people that is transformational?

And if you think, well, I don't know that I can do that, listen to Jesus himself. Listen to Jesus himself. Because he already gave you the words.

The spirit of the Lord is upon me. Now, you ain't Jesus. But that very same spirit, the spirit that descended upon him at his baptism, the spirit that moved in the disciples at Pentecost, is the very same spirit that lives in you.

[ 37 : 41 ] And so, yes, you can. That you have exactly all you need to do exactly what God wants you to do, because that's who God is.

So can you trust that? Will you rely on that? Will you stand in that when it's time to stand up? Because we know that the world is different when the people of God speak up and stand up.

It's just up to us to do it. We know we've all had our moments, and I could tell you my stories of it, when I've simply been too afraid to be the disciple I know God wants me to be.

But you know the saying. You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start now and change the ending.

So be who God has called you to be. Speak and live your truth, and watch God transform your world.

[ 38 : 46 ] Amen? And amen. Loving and gracious God, we thank you that you are who you are, that you work in the ways that you have, and that you have been willing to live and speak your truth so courageously and lovingly at all times.

Let us rest in that power that you have given us via your Holy Spirit to be able to do the same, to be difference makers, to be people who spread and share love and truth in ways that allow all your children, those who don't yet understand, to come to you and know.

Because we know what you have done for us. We know the difference you have made. So let us hold you high and let others come and see, because as the world beats us down and tries to put different things and names on us, let us speak your truth as to who you see us as, as to who we know you to be, and to the days and the ways in which are coming.

Because you have loved us so greatly, so totally, and you have changed us, changed us, so that we can live a little more like you, love a little more like you, and be a little more like you all the time.

Thank you for your grace that makes a difference in us. Amen. As we consider God's grace and know the ways in which we have experienced it, one of the most powerful ways we know our God is with us is to experience the gift of Holy Communion.

[ 40 : 41 ] Let's open our hearts as we come to the Lord's table this morning. The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. Lift up your hearts. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

It is right and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, the Creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets. Who looked for the day when justice would roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

When nation would not lift up sword against nation, and neither would they study war anymore. And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn.

[ 41 : 47 ] Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Holy are you, and blessed is your Son, Jesus Christ. Your Spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind.

To set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people. He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners.

By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

At his ascension, you exalted him to sit and reign with you at your right hand. And on the night in which he gave himself up for us, Jesus took bread, gave thanks to you, he broke the bread, and he gave it to his disciples, and he said, take and eat, for this is my body, which is given for you.

[ 43 : 13 ] Do this in remembrance of me. And when the supper was over, he took the cup, and gave thanks to you, and he gave it to his disciples, and he said, drink from this, all of you, for this is my blood, sign of the new covenant, which is poured out for you, and for many, for the forgiveness of sins.

Every time that you drink it, do this in remembrance of me. And so, in remembrance of these, your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves, in praise and thanksgiving, as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, gathered here, and on these gifts of bread, and cup. Make them be for us, the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world, the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry, to all the world, that we may be, that we may feast, at his heavenly banquet, when Christ comes in final victory.

Through your son, Jesus Christ, in your Holy Spirit, and in your Holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.

[ 44 : 43 ] Amen. And let's pray together the prayer, that Jesus taught us to pray. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those, who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen. For those who are serving today, please join us in front.

Amen. cond chart. Amen. Hi, God following us in front.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[ 46 : 33 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

The table is prepared and our Lord beckons. Understand that our table is open. All are welcome. Truly all are welcome.

As God has opened this table to all. Because it's about who Jesus is. And not what we think we deserve. So we ask you to come down by the center aisle.

Receive your elements in the front and exit by the side. There's a gluten free station on the far end of the sanctuary here. If you prefer that. If you would also like prepared elements. Or prepackaged elements.

They can be handed to you by one of your servers. But we ask that you receive it. Because communion is a gift from God to you. Please come as the spirit moves. Obserping and Wildlife is a gift from God.

[ 48 : 50 ] Happy to be here. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[ 52 : 37 ] Amen. Amen. There's a line in our closing song that says, the joy of the Lord is our strength.

And it's that strength to stand in the truth, to live out the truth, and the reason to praise. And the reason that we do stand and praise and glorify a God that is holy.

So I'm hoping that the Holy Spirit, because it's always the Holy Spirit's movement that we respond to. And I'm hoping for quite a few of us that response will be maybe to raise our hands today.

And not just because the song says so. So I invite you to stand as we sing our closing song, Holy is the Lord. Amen.

That's just that we're okay for you. We pray for you. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[ 53 : 35 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. We bow down and worship Him now. How great, how awesome is He.

And together we sing. Everyone sing. Holy is the Lord God Almighty.

The earth is filled with His glory. Holy is the Lord God Almighty.

The earth is filled with His glory. The earth is filled with His glory. We stand and lift up our hands.

[ 54 : 40 ] For the joy of the Lord is our strength. We bow down and worship Him now.

How great, how awesome is He. And together we sing. And everyone sing.

Holy is the Lord God Almighty. The earth is filled with His glory.

Holy is the Lord God Almighty. The earth is filled with His glory.

The earth is filled with His glory. It's rising up all around. It's the end of love.

[ 55 : 37 ] The Lord's renown. It's rising up all around. It's the end of love. The Lord's renown.

And together we sing. Everyone sing. Holy is the Lord God Almighty.

Holy is the Lord.

Amen. The Spirit of the Lord is upon you.

Yes, you. No matter how it feels, but remember that power, that holiness, that gifting. The Spirit of the Lord is upon you to do the things that God wants done in the world.

[ 57 : 02 ] Trust that and go and speak your truth in His name. Now in the name of God, our Creator and King. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and our Savior.

In the name of the Holy Spirit, our Counselor and our Sustainer. May God bless us now as we leave to love and serve God and all God's children. Amen. Amen.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.