

Facing Up To Jesus

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[0 : 00] Well, for a wee while we're going to turn back to John chapter 7. In our morning services at the moment we are working our way all the way through John's Gospel.

John's Gospel is an account of Jesus' life, well, really of key parts of his life, focusing especially on Jesus' death on the cross and his resurrection.

But the early chapters talk about Jesus' ministry prior to his crucifixion. For three years he travelled about, he taught, he performed miracles and lots of fascinating things happened.

We're going to spend two Sundays looking at chapter 7, as Ian said, it's a long chapter. So the way we're going to do it is today we're kind of looking at the chapter as a whole and then it'll actually be, I think, three weeks time because I'm away next week and then it's our communion.

We're going to look more closely at the famous words of verse 37 and 38 when Jesus said, if anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

[1 : 01] But this week, as I say, we're just looking more broadly at the whole chapter, but let me just read again, verses 11 to 13 as they are on the screen before you. The Jews were looking for him at the feast saying, where is he?

And there was much muttering about him among the people. While some said he's a good man, others said no, he's leading the people astray. Yet for fear of the Jews, no one spoke openly of him. At the moment we're in the kind of middle section of John's Gospel which runs from chapter 5 through to chapter 10 and through those chapters there's a kind of repeated pattern of mixed responses to Jesus.

So John records various incidents, often recording miracles that Jesus performed, but his main focus is on the big discussions that these miracles prompted. And so if you were to read John 5 through to 10, you read loads and loads of long sections where we record Jesus' conversations with people, discussions about what he's done, who he is and what the implications are.

And there's a lot of mixed responses as we're saying and we're going to look at that a wee bit together today. Chapter 7 is about six months after chapter 6.

[2 : 18] So in chapter 6 we were told at the start of it, you can see it on the screen there, that the Passover was at hand. That's one of the Jewish feasts that happens kind of around April, sometimes end of March, but roughly around April.

That's the start of chapter 6. Chapter 7 we're told that the feast of the booths was at hand and that's pretty much in October. So we're about six months later.

But you can see that there's still the same public reaction to Jesus. Six months earlier Jesus had fed the 5,000 and he'd made the great claim that he is the bread of life that's come down from heaven to give spiritual life, eternal life to all who trust in him.

That prompted a mixed response. Six months later the same issues are there. The public's reaction is mixed. Some people are drawn to him.

Some people are not sure what to make of him and some people are openly hostile towards him.

And again, as we were saying, most of the material presented to us in this chapter is recording conversations where people are trying to figure all of that out.

[3 : 30] Now you read through the chapter and you're absolutely forgiven if you're thinking, man, this seems quite a long way from life in Scotland today. There's Feast of Booths, we don't really know what that is.

But don't worry if you don't know what that is. It's just a festival to celebrate the harvest being taken in. You read about Sabbath, Laws of Moses, all sorts of intricate questions about Jewish religious practices.

And it's so easy to think this is a million miles from what I had to go through last week or what's going to face what I'm going to face in the week ahead. But what I hope we'll see and what I hope we always see when we come to Scripture is the fact that what we have before us is actually incredibly relevant to our lives.

And I think that this chapter is particularly relevant for us when we think about the church's place in society around us, because this chapter is describing exactly the kind of reactions that we still get to Jesus today.

One is confronting us with the reality of who Jesus is. That's what he's doing all the way through the Gospel. And that's a reality that we all have to face up to.

[4 : 46] So our title today is Facing Up to Jesus. And I've chosen that title for two reasons. One, because that is what we all need to do. That's what the chapter is forcing us to do.

But I've also chosen it, and maybe this is silly, but my three headings are all a little bit odd, but they're all to do with your face or your head. Their headings are rolling your eyes, scratching your head, deepening your frown.

And I've chosen these three, because I think these are the three reactions to Jesus that we see in this chapter. They're also the reactions to Jesus that we see in the world around us.

And for all of us, they're also the reaction to Jesus that can sometimes appear in our own hearts.

And that's true of us all, whether you are a Christian, have been one for a long time, whether you're maybe not yet a Christian, maybe you're not sure where you stand before Jesus.

All of us here today, we can at times react to Jesus in all three of these ways, depending on what we're talking about. And so I hope that for every single one of us here, we just go through these headings and go through this chapter with a humility and an openness and an honesty to hear God speaking to us through His Word.

[6 : 06] So first of all, I just want to go through each of these quickly to show you how these manifest themselves in the chapter. So first response to Jesus is people who are rolling their eyes.

And in particular, I'm thinking about Jesus's brother in verses one to 10. Strictly speaking, these brothers would have been Jesus's half-brothers, the children of Mary and Joseph.

You'll remember that Jesus was born when Mary and Joseph were still engaged. But Mary and Joseph then got married and they went on to have, or Jesus was conceived rather when they were engaged.

But after Jesus was born, they went on to have more children, all of whom would have been younger than Jesus. In verses one to four, we see that they come to Jesus and they're like, you know, you should go back to Judea.

So they're in the north in Galilee and they're saying, you should go back to Judea, which is the area around Jerusalem. That's really where the focal point of the nation was. And you should do your works openly so everyone can see what you're doing.

[7 : 08] Now, at first glance, it seems, oh, that sounds quite positive. They seem to be wanting Jesus to go and show himself. But John tells us the real story in verse five.

You can see it there. They said, not even his brothers believed in him. And so their motivation in what they say in verses one to four is not that they have faith in him.

At this point, they don't believe him. And in a way, you can maybe understand that they've grown up with Jesus. He now seems to be making these huge claims and a huge crowd seems to follow him. And maybe understandably, they're a bit shocked, a bit skeptical, a bit unsure. Now, maybe in these verses, they're just genuinely seeking proof.

They're like, you know, Jesus, you should go and show what you're doing to other people. My own feeling is that they're actually a bit more cynical.

[8 : 04] And it sounds to me as though this is almost more like a kind of slightly sarcastic challenge. And they're almost rolling their eyes at this big brother who started making these huge claims.

Now, the fascinating thing is that later, these brothers did come to believe in Jesus. In fact, if you flick through to the end of the New Testament, you've got a letter written by James and a letter written by Jude.

And they were both half brothers of Jesus. At the moment, though, they don't believe in him.

They're definitely not following him. They're not looking to him as their savior.

And it's quite possible that at this stage, they're just rolling their eyes. Second, scratching your head. This is what we see as we read through the main part of the chapter.

Jesus initially refuses to go to Jerusalem. He doesn't go up to the feast on his brother's terms. But a few days later, he does indeed go up. And that may have been Jesus' plan all along.

[9 : 08] Some commentators suggest that in the intervening time between verses nine and ten, Jesus received some indication from God that he should go up. That's quite possible.

It doesn't really matter either way. The key point is that he's not going on his brother's terms. He's not responding, not rising to their cynical challenge.

When he gets to Jerusalem, he's already causing a stir because people are looking for him. And they remember what he did six months earlier when he fed the 5,000. They remember that before that he had healed somebody on the Sabbath and there was all sorts of discussion around him.

But opinion is divided. Some think that he's good. Some think that he is leading people astray. You can see that there. He's a good man. Some say others know he's leading the people astray.

And you then go on in verses 14 to 20. I won't read it out, but you've got this fascinating description of how people are amazed at his teaching and yet at the same time they're like, you know, are you mad?

[10 : 13] You know, they're saying, you have, who's seeking to kill you? Are you mad? You've got a demon. It's just a really mixed response to Jesus.

Within that controversy, if you dig into what's been said here, you can see that there's a lot of confusion about the religious expectations that people had regarding the Messiah.

Now, that's a very important word in terms of the New Testament, the word Messiah. It's a Hebrew word. The Greek equivalent is the word Christ, and it means anointed one.

And basically what this was was the Old Testament said somebody was going to come to be Savior. In the Old Testament, in the Hebrew of the Old Testament, the word is Messiah in the Greek of the New, the word is Christ.

But it's the same thing, the one that they're waiting for. And so they had all these expectations, but there's confusion in what they're saying. You can see that if you compare verses 27 and 42.

[11 : 17] So they're saying they're waiting for the Christ to appear, but they're saying, but when he comes, no one should know where he comes from, but we know where he comes from. So they're like, okay, well, he can't be the Messiah because it doesn't fit my expectations.

But later on in verse 44, they say, oh, no, the Messiah is supposed to come from Bethlehem, but we know that he's not from Bethlehem because he lives in Galilee, which is where he had just come down from.

So you can see the confusion being built. Some are saying, oh, we shouldn't know where the Messiah comes from, but we know that he comes from Galilee. And then they say, oh, no, no, no, we do know where the Messiah comes from, but it's not Galilee, it's Bethlehem. And for both of these reasons, they are rejecting the idea that Jesus is the Messiah.

Now, the people in verse 27 are very wrong because the people in verse 42 are half right, that the Old Testament did prophesy that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem.

But of course, that's where Jesus was born. He just didn't grow up there. He was born in Bethlehem, but as a child went to Nazareth in Galilee. Key point is that they're all scratching their heads about Jesus.

[12 : 23] They're like, we don't know what to make of him. And a lot of the confusion arises from the fact that Jesus didn't fit their expectations.

So people are rolling their eyes, people are scratching their heads. Some people are deepening their frown. You see that at the end of the chapter where you see the actions of the religious leaders.

They send officers to arrest Jesus. And you've got this tension building up in these chapters where the religious leaders are becoming more and more hostile to Jesus.

And now it's at the tipping point where they're like, arrest him. Turns out the officers return empty handed. They were like, nobody speaks like this man. So they didn't arrest him. The Pharisees are furious.

You see that at the end they're saying, why didn't you bring this man? Have you also been deceived? And at the very end, one of the Pharisees, Nicodemus, who seems to be much more sympathetic towards Jesus, he just asks what sounds like an innocent question.

[13 : 22] Should we not give him a hearing first? And they jump down his throat and they accuse him of being a Galilean as well. So the opposition's intensifying.

Related towards Jesus is increasing, their frown is getting deeper and deeper. So that's why I chose those three headings. I think they sum up the kind of responses to Jesus that we have in this chapter.

What I want us to think about for the last wee while together is that we see all these responses today.

And we see them in the world around us and we see them in our own hearts as well. And I think it's really important for us to just honestly think these three together.

And as I said, this applies to all of us, whether we are sure and convinced that we are committed followers of Jesus or whether we're maybe not yet sure where we stand.

[14 : 21] We can do all of these things. And I think it's important to think that through together. So let's go through them one by one, rolling our eyes. This is a very common reaction to Jesus today.

He's ancient history. He lived 2,000 years ago. The Bible seems way out of date. Even going to church on a Sunday, that's kind of a weird thing to do in 2023 in Scotland.

And it all just seems a bit kind of like odd and quirky. And it's so easy to dismiss Jesus with a roll of the eyes today.

And there's lots of reasons why that can happen. I'm going to just give you three categories to think about. People roll their eyes at the Gospel because of the Bible's metaphysical claims.

So I don't know if I'm going to fit this word in, but I'm going to just write it there. Metaphysical claims. When we talk about metaphysics, we're talking about the big, big questions of ultimate reality, of history, of matter, of time, of all that kind of stuff.

[15 : 27] So metaphysics, bigger than physics, like the big, big, big, big, big, massive questions of life and truth of time and of eternity.

The Gospel claims that the metaphysical reality, the metaphysical absolute of all reality is God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And from God comes everything else. He is the source and explanation of everything. He is the metaphysical absolute of all reality. People look at that claim today and they kind of roll their eyes and think, that can't be right.

People also roll their eyes at the Gospel's historical claims. So you read through John's Gospel, even the last couple of chapters, we've read about 5,000 or more people being fed through a multiplication of loaves and bread.

We've read about Jesus walking on water. Earlier on we read about him turning water into wine. And people look at that and they're like, that doesn't happen.

[16 : 34] And for hundreds of years you've had people who will say, oh yes, I'll accept some of Jesus' teaching. But a historical record of the miraculous, they just roll their eyes and say, no, that's not right either.

And then the third category in which this happens is in terms of the Gospel's ethical claims. So the Gospel makes lots of ethical claims that throughout the course of its history has been difficult and offensive for people to accept.

And we see that again today, it's depending on what the society emphasizes depends on which ethical claims the Gospel people struggle with. But the Gospel makes lots of ethical claims.

Things that the Gospel would say are right and wrong, that we should do, that we shouldn't do. So Gospel will say, don't retaliate if somebody annoys you.

The Gospel will say, give away at least a tenth of what you earn to people who are in need. The Gospel will say, only sleep with the person that you're married to.

[17 : 39] The Gospel will say, freely forgive somebody when they do you wrong. And these kind of gospels, these kind of ethical expectations in the Gospel stand in contrast, very often will stand in contrast to what the world around us will think of as normal and acceptable.

And when someone like me stands up and makes these ethical claims, people are tempted to just roll their eyes because it's different to the way the rest of the world thinks.

Now I want us just to sort of recognize that maybe that's how some of you feel yourselves.

Maybe whether it's the metaphysical claims, the historical ones, the ethical ones, maybe that is part of you that thinks, no, not sure about that, and you're tempted to roll your eyes.

Maybe you might think it's just a wee bit far-fetched. I'm not saying that, if that's true, I'm not saying that to have a go at you at all. I'm just trying to just say that that's something that people can feel. Maybe though it's the other side of the coin, maybe you'd say, well I would never roll my eyes at Christianity.

[18 : 50] I've got far too much respect for Christianity to do that. But maybe when it comes to the metaphysical, historical and ethical claims of the Gospel, maybe you slightly cringe.

And that's definitely something that can happen to us as Christians because you imagine talking to a colleague tomorrow and you start talking about faith in God, you start talking about historically, historical miracles that took place in the life of Jesus.

You start talking about the ethical claims of the Gospel and you think, oh, you kind of cringe a wee bit because you know it's so different to the way that they think.

And whether you roll your eyes kind of in slight distaste or whether you cringe because you think, oh, both of those are actually coming from the same mindset.

They're coming from the mindset that thinks that the claims of the Gospel are so big. You think, I just can't be confident in them.

[19 : 50] I can't really be sure of this. I'm not totally convinced. Now if that's true, if that's true, what I think will help is to remember two very important things.

The first thing I want to highlight is that the claims of the Gospel are not outrageous at all.

And that's something that at what level they are. I mean, they're amazing claims, but they're not intellectually ridiculous or outrageous at all.

At all. They are sensible, coherent, logical claims. But for them to be sensible, coherent and logical, you've got to keep those three categories together.

You've got to keep the metaphysical claims of the Gospel and the historical ones and the ethical ones connected. Now what do I mean by that? Well, the metaphysical claim of the Gospel is that God is the absolute of all reality.

[20 : 53] He is the explanation for everything. He's the creator of all that is. He is the one who has the power and the resources and the strength and the intellectual ability to create an utterly magnificent universe.

He's the one who is the source of all the order and coherence and beauty that we see in the laws of nature around us. We have this magnificently functioning universe from the galaxies orbiting to a tiny flower germinating from a seed.

It's all incredible. And God is the creator of all of that. But if he's the creator of all of that with the power and the wisdom and the resources to institute all of that, he is also logically completely capable of interrupting those laws of nature and of doing something miraculous when he wants to. Of course he can. Of course he can. And he can also, as our creator, set the ethical standard for human behavior.

We're made by him. We're made for him. And if he is the metaphysical absolute of all reality, then of course he can tell us what's right or wrong.

[22 : 08] That's obvious. Of course he's able to do that. In other words, if you accept the metaphysical claims of Christianity, then the historical claims and the ethical claims immediately become perfectly rational, absolutely permissible and beautifully logical.

That means that there's nothing to roll our eyes at and nothing to cringe about because it all makes sense.

And the second thing to say off the back of that is we would actually go further as Christians. We wouldn't just say God gives us a logical, coherent explanation for the universe.

We would also say nothing else does. And it's only through the Gospel that you have a worldview that has metaphysical, historical, and ethical coherence and robustness.

Now why do we make that claim? We make that claim because if you go to your metaphysical reality, your metaphysical explanation for all reality, and you think, okay, what is the explanation for the universe?

[23 : 24] What's the next explanation for everything? If you make that, forcious, if you make that chance, if you make that nothing, how the heck do you have an ethical framework to tell you what's right or wrong?

And how can you look at history and find any meaning at all? The Gospel gives us such a beautiful, amazing, intellectually satisfying worldview.

And Jesus emphasizes all of that in this chapter. He speaks about how he has come from God, how he's going to God, how he is the one through whom God is being revealed.

And if Jesus is the one who's come from God, if he is the one through whom all things are made, it would be crazy if he couldn't do miracles. It would be ridiculous if he didn't tell us how to behave.

So you don't need to roll your eyes, you don't need to cringe. What Jesus gives us is absolutely outstanding. So that's rolling our eyes.

[24 : 37] We can think about that a wee bit more later in the day. So time's marching on. I won't be as long with the other ones. Scratching our head, this is probably the more common one though.

We don't tend to think about the big questions of metaphysics, history or ethics, but sometimes we go through life and we're like, why is God doing this?

Why has that happened? Why does it have to be like this? And that can happen a lot so as we read the Bible, we see things happening in the world, we experience things in our own lives, and we find ourselves scratching our head thinking, I don't understand this, what's going on?

And that's why verse 12 poses a very, very real question for us all when it comes to the Gospel.

You think, is Jesus good?

Or is he going to leave me astray? Now that can apply to the big questions of life, so all the stuff we've talked about a moment ago. Yeah, okay, I do think Christianity is good and I do believe what it says and that is the faith that I follow.

[25 : 52] Or you might have doubts, you might think, well I don't know if the Bible's true, did the resurrection really happen? Is the Gospel good news? There's these big questions that we all have and if you do ever have questions about that stuff, please talk to me.

We're always happy to chat that through and I have to work through doubts and questions in my own mind at times as well, so always happy to chat like that.

So it does apply to the big questions of life, but I think this whole question, is Jesus good or is Jesus going to leave me astray? It manifests itself much more frequently in the day to day decisions that we all face in our lives.

So you're at work this week and you have the opportunity to do something that will really benefit you, but it will involve being dishonest.

So you think, oh, this would really get me somewhere, but it means being dishonest.

[26 : 59] So you think, okay, Jesus is ethical standard and the opportunity to do really well, is Jesus good or is he going to lead me astray?

Following him going to slightly muck things up, will he lead me astray? Same when you face like someone hurts you, frustrates you, do you bite back, do you get revenge or do you do like Jesus instead and actually forgive those who've hurt you?

Do you, you're going out at the weekend, do you think, right, I'm going to stop short before I have one, two, many drinks, oh, I just carry on and go along with the crowd.

Is Jesus good? Is he leading me astray? And these kind of questions confront us all the time. And really, they're the choice between listening to Jesus or ignoring him.

And in those moments, it's so easy in that kind of split second to kind of scratch your head and think, should I follow Jesus, should I not? And this applies to all of us. This is not a kind of Christians never do this question.

[28 : 08] As Christians, we do this. We face those kind of decisions and often we think we know best. So often in my life, I've faced that kind of split second scratch of the head and I thought to myself, oh, I'll do my thing.

I'll do what I think is best and you kind of hope that Jesus isn't watching you, even though you know fine that he is. Why does that happen? Why do we face that dilemma between really following Jesus every single day or just kind of being tempted to ignore him at times?

Well, I think one of the biggest causes is what we saw in this chapter. People have the wrong expectations of Jesus. And this is something that I think is really important for us to think about.

Our expectations of Jesus have got to be accurate. So there's loads of ways. I've got a few examples here, but I'm running out of time, which is really frustrating. So I'll just pick out a couple. Sometimes we want Jesus to give us what we think is good for us. And so that can happen in loads of ways, whether it's the person that you really like and you hope that you'll get to go out with them and marry them, whether it's the job that you really, really want, whether it's being able to have the house that you've just dreamed of, whether it's being able to be part of the friend group that you

really respect, whether it's to get good grades in school or to be able to go down the path that you want.

[29 : 32] We tend to think, like, this would be so good. But often it doesn't happen. And you think, why are you doing that, Jesus?

Why is that? Why are you not letting this thing happen in my life that to me seems so good? We expect Jesus to give us what we think will be good for us when in reality, Jesus has come to give us what He knows is good for us.

And those two things will sometimes be the same thing, but sometimes not. So sometimes what we think is good and what Jesus thinks is good will be the same thing. That's wonderful. Sometimes what we think is good and what Jesus thinks is good are different.

That's hard. But He knows best. And let me pick one more. Sometimes we want Jesus to meet our immediate needs.

So we're like, oh, there's so much going on in my life. There's so much happening this week. There's so much that needs to be sorted. And that's whether it's with ourselves or family or friends. We want just kind of almost like immediate needs.

[30 : 42] Just this, I need help with this right now. I need help with this decision. I need you to carry me through this. And so often Jesus will do that. That's one of the amazing things about being a Christian that Jesus does help us with day to day immediate needs.

But Jesus is far, far more concerned with our eternal needs. And while, yes, He absolutely will help you through Monday tomorrow, He is more concerned about your welfare for eternity.

And how He deals with us will be shaped by that more than it will be shaped by what's on our minds immediately. There's lots of other things to say at the front of the time.

That's terrible. The key thing I want to think about here really comes down to that word there, that word good. Like I'm just scribbling on it really.

It's looking terrible. He is a good man. I want you to really, really think about that phrase.

[31 : 51] Jesus is utterly impeccably, immutably good.

And do you really believe that? And like our claim, our claim in the Gospel is that He is. He really, really is.

And that means He won't always fit my expectations and your expectations. There's tons of things that's happened in my life as a Christian. I kind of thought, why did that have to happen? Because it didn't seem to make sense to me. But still, I trust that He really is a good man.

In fact, He's more than that. He is a good God. But you've got to think about that. And if you really think that He's good, then He is absolutely worth following.

But I really want you to think about that very, very carefully. Last of all, we can respond to Jesus by deepening our frown.

[32 : 55] A pen's locking up. There we go. Now, that again can happen in a couple of different ways.

I don't think anybody here is as hostile as the Pharisees. I know that. But it's still true that even as Christians, or as not-yet-Christians, we can respond to Jesus with a frown.

Two examples of how this can happen. One is, again, echoing what we've been saying. We can respond to Jesus with a frown in terms of our philosophy. So our exploration of life, our framework for ethics, our view of history.

These are all intellectual questions that we have to think about. And for some people, they're like, no, I'm not accepting the claims of the Gospel. And to many people, the Gospel is offensive.

And they're just like, no. And they kind of respond to Jesus with a frown at a philosophical level. That absolutely happens. But for us, that's not the big issue, I don't think.

[33 : 57] I think the most common issue is that our frown is shaped by what we experience.

So something happens in life that just hurts. And it leaves you bruised and broken.

But something happens in church and you get hurt in the very place where you thought you were going to get looked after.

Or maybe someone you know or you work with, someone in your family who outwardly claims to be a Christian and yet they've done something horrible to you.

And all of that just really hurts. And because of what you've experienced, you kind of see the wounds in your heart and it leaves you feeling disillusioned, frustrated, annoyed.

[34 : 59] And you think, I don't know why that's happened. And you respond by deepening your frown towards Jesus and thinking, he doesn't care about me or I don't think I can trust him.

And experience can do that to us. And for people who are maybe not yet Christians, that can be the reason why you are not yet a Christian.

Where you're like, no, I'm still too hurt. But even as Christians, it can lead us to a kind of life of faith that's just more like about duty and guilt and like, well, you know, and we're kind of just...

Other than being full of joy, we're kind of full of frowns. It's very, very easy to react like that. And I think the key thing we have got to ask is that, you know, are we thinking that the representative of Jesus who hurt us is actually Jesus?

Because if we are thinking that, then that's a mistake. If we are looking at the person who's hurt us and thinking, well, they were like that, therefore Jesus is like that. That is not true. That comes back to what I've seen about how he is good.

[36 : 16] And when we as Christians hurt people or treat people badly, we are not reflecting Jesus, we are letting Jesus down.

Because he is so good. And so as the time is running out, oh, man. So we can respond by deepening our frown. Last thing I want to say about all of this is this.

In this chapter, in everything that I'm trying to say, we're trying to emphasize the fact that these kind of reactions are unjustified. And you know, we shouldn't do them. But there's one person who's justified in doing all of these things.

One person is justified in rolling his eyes, scratching his head, and deepening his frown. But that's not about looking to Jesus, because the person who's justified in doing this is Jesus.

And he'd be justified in doing it when he looks at us. So Jesus can look at me and he'd be justified in rolling his eyes. Because would he see Thomas making the same mistakes a hundred times in his life and doing stupid stuff that he knows he's going to regret?

[37 : 17] Yes. And he'd have every reason to roll his eyes. Jesus can look at me and scratch his head and be like, Thomas, why are you doing that? Why are you thinking that? Why are you not listening? And just scratching his head at my repeated stupidity.

He'd have every reason to do that. And Jesus can look at me and see mistakes in my life and the way that I've hurt other people, the way that I've been foolish, and he could justifiably deepen his frown.

Jesus has every reason to roll his eyes at me, to scratch his head at me, to deepen his frown at me. And he doesn't do it.

He doesn't do it. That he died for me and he died for you so that you can be saved.

And that is why the gospel is so amazing. That even though he's got every reason to hold so much against us, he doesn't do it.

[38 : 18] And instead he lays down his life so that all who trust in him might be saved. And if you can see that, and if you do put your trust in Jesus, then instead of rolling your eyes, you will open your mouth and say, wow.

Instead of scratching your head, you'll be nodding your head, saying, yes, this is where it makes sense. And instead of a deep frown, you will have tears of joy because knowing Jesus is just that amazing.

Amen. Let's pray. Amen.