

How is God at Work?

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[0 : 0 0] Why don't you grab a Bible, if you have one there, and come with me to John's Gospel. If you've got a pew Bible, that is page 1068, is where we'll get to John chapter 5, as we get back into this series today in John's Gospel.

So, as you're turning there, I'm a historian. I'm not a believer, but I must confess as a historian that the penniless preacher from Nazareth is irrevocably the very centre of history.

Now, what a striking admission. Words penned by a man called H.G. Wells in his book, *A Short History of the World*, that he wrote way back in 1922.

So, he wrote it as he looked out over history, and he observed the impact that this man, Jesus Christ, has had on our world. Jesus, the man whose birth quite literally divides our calendar into B.C. and A.D.

Jesus Christ, the man who *Time Magazine* put at number one in the most 100 significant figures in all of history. Jesus, the man who, around the world today, almost 3 billion people follow him.

[1 : 3 0] Jesus, the man, to quote Mark Twain, rumors of God's death have been greatly exaggerated. And so, as we take this man, Jesus Christ, in today's, we step into John's Gospel.

Here's my question for you. What did he make of him? Here we are in John's Gospel. This first-hand account of Jesus' life written by one of his closest followers.

And here's the question that this man, John, asks us and invites us to go and wrestle with. And we get it right at the end of this Gospel.

John writes this, So here's the invitation that we extend to each other as we come to this Gospel.

If you are here today and you're not a believer, you wouldn't call yourself a Christian, then the invitation is to come and consider Jesus' claims. Hear him out.

[2 : 4 7] Take him in. Consider him for yourself. Is he who he says he is? Right? Let me just put it out there that there's no greater question that you're going to ask yourself in life.

Who is this man, Jesus Christ? And if you are here and you're a Christian, then the invitation is to come and savor him more. Take him in. Take depths. Take angles. To his character.

To his heart. That perhaps you've never seen before. Come at this with an open mind. Come at this expecting. As we turn to God's living and active words. That we would encounter the risen Jesus as he walks off the page.

As we buckle up and we get back in to chapter 5. So here is chapter 5. And here's the question that I have for you then. When was the last time that you met someone new?

Right? Just think about it in your life. When was the last time you met someone new? Right? What was your first line when you met them? Given that it might be in hello or how are you?

[3 : 49] What was your first line that you pitched to them when you met them? You know, I'll let you into a little trade secret. I've got two questions that I go to. Apologies if I've used them on you this morning. Here's number one.

Love to know where you have come from. Right? Where do you live? Right? Where have you come from as you come to Brunsfield? Where have you come from? Where people live? I love finding out that information about people across the city.

Where they've come from. Wonderful to meet people from around the world who've come to Edinburgh. Brilliant to ask that question. Number two. What do you do? I love hearing people's answers to that question.

What do people spend their time doing? Right? How many of us here today? What does tomorrow hold? What are we doing? Are we working? Are we heading into the office?

Are we hitting the library? Are we studying? Are we filling our days with our hobbies? Is a day tomorrow a day with looking after our family? What is it that you are doing tomorrow?

[4 : 49] See, here's what we're going to do as we get into chapter five. We're going to ask God that question. Are you interested to hear that? What is God doing right now? How is God working?

What is on his to-do list? What is top of his agenda? In other words, how is God at work? And the wonderful thing to see is that John 5 gives us the answer.

So what we're going to do is we're just going to read this together now. We're going to go in at verse one of chapter five, and we're going to read right through to verse 18.

And this is God's word today. This is this guy, John, written this down about Jesus and his life. Not just simply a biographical detail. He's written it so that you and I would believe and have life in his name.

So the question is, why has John written this? And here's what he writes. Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda, and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades.

[5 : 59] Here a great number of disabled people used to lie, the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. One who was there had been an invalid for 38 years.

When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, do you want to get well? Sir, the invalid replied, I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred.

While I'm trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me. Then Jesus said to him, get up, pick up your mat and walk. At once the man was cured.

He picked up his mat and walked. The day on which this took place was a Sabbath. And so the Jewish leader said to the man who'd been healed, it is the Sabbath.

The law forbids you to carry your mat. But he replied, the man who made me well said to me, pick up your mat and walk.

[7 : 07] So they asked him, who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk? The man who was healed had no idea who it was. For Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

Later, Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, see, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.

The man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well. So because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute him.

In his defense, Jesus said to them, my father is at work to this very day. And I too am working. For this reason, they tried all the more to kill him.

Not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own father, making himself equal with God.

[8 : 13] God will bless the reading of his word to us as we consider it just now. So how is God working? That's the question.

Well, the answer comes in the context of this encounter that Jesus has with a man who is looking for life in all the wrong places.

Okay, have a look at verse one. All these details that John gives us. You see verse one, it's the feast. Now, perhaps that's the Passover. We can't exactly be sure.

But what we can be sure about is because of any feast, Jerusalem would have been absolutely rammed packed. Now, two things to notice as you take in this man here. Notice the place.

Do you see how Jesus makes his way to this place outside Jerusalem called Bethesda? Now, that name means house of grace. And how fitting because of what happens next.

[9 : 13] And in Bethesda, again, notice all these details. There's a pool. Five colonnades. Now, what's fascinating is that for years, scholars thought this place was the stuff of legend.

But get this, a team of archaeologists discovered it in 1888, and they discovered it exactly as it's described here. Now, I don't know what that does for you as you hear it this morning.

But for me, it massively encourages me. Do you know why? Because historicity is everything. Right?

Apparently, a 2016 survey found that 22% of people in the UK believe that Jesus was a mythical figure. Now, let me just say, if it can be proved that this is the stuff of legend, that none of this stuff actually happened, then for me, and I would suggest for you, the game's over.

Right? There ain't no point in following a fable. No, we believe in facts. What is faith? But trust based on evidence.

[10 : 19] And so facts like this convince me that the Bible stands up to critique. First thing to notice, things like that. Second thing to notice, notice the person.

Okay? Because at this pool, do you see how a number of people have gathered? Like they do every day. Okay? Now, take it in because John describes to us who meets here.

The local legend is that when this pool springs up, and I take it as just like a natural spring, maybe you get in place of Iceland or something, that causes the water to bubble.

Take it something like that. Okay? The legend is that the first person into this pool, when that happens, is healed. Now, just in case you think this is a far off land that we've dipped into here, how could people be so gullible?

Let me just say hundreds of people in our city, every single day, touch the nose of Greyfire's Bobby just down the road, and they touch it for good luck. Every single game that football players, Liverpool players play at Anfield, they step down into the tunnel, and they touch the This Is Anfield sign for good luck.

[11 : 29] Okay? Some of you might say that that happened last week. But before we write this off as superstitious nonsense, we've got to take stock of the fact that superstition is alive and well in our world today.

People looking for meaning in life, looking for purpose, looking for that edge, and they're looking for it in all the wrong places. Superstition is alive just as much today as it was then.

So don't just write this off. Who's at this pool? Do you see? The blind, the lame, the paralyzed. And remember that this is well before the days of hospitals.

This is well before the days of state services. For these people, this is their one shot at getting better. And really it's heartbreaking, is it not, as we see the reality of what life is like for the people by this pool.

And there's a man there who's likely the most desperate of the lot. And again, taking the details that John gives you. He's been an invalid for how many years?

[12 : 37] Do you see it? 38. Now, you do dig in around this life expectancy, in this day, is 40. So you begin to get a sense of what life is like for this man every day.

This is all he knows. And he's probably thought, this is all I'm going to know for the rest of my life. You get the picture. But Jesus, God's come to earth, goes towards this man.

And in so doing, he dignifies and honors him. And marvel at the compassion of Jesus here.

He asks him, do you want to be healed? Jesus asked that. What a question. He says, sir, I've got no one to put me in the pool.

Do you see if someone always legs it there and beats me to it every time it happens, because they've got pals and I haven't. And I need someone to take me in. This man, his eyes are on the pool.

[13 : 41] That's his world. He can't get beyond it. And you can hear the exasperation in his voice as he answers that question. You can hear the frustration. He's clueless and he's hopeless.

And let me just say that that is all of us before Jesus got involved in the mess of our lives. Understand that if you're a Christian here today, you are one not because Jesus turned into some kind of Simon Cowell figure and looked upon us and thought, do you know what?

You've got it. You've got talent. You've got potential. Get that out of your mind. The reason that you and I are Christians is simply because of the mercy of God.

Let us never grow cold of celebrating. And basing our lives on the mercy of Jesus. I heard my friend Andy this week.

Andy works for a Christian organization called the FIEC, the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches. And I heard him share this week about how he became a Christian. Right?

[14 : 50] Brought up in a non-Christian family. Youngest of six kids. Everything that being the youngest brought with it. And in his own words, his whole family life, his whole upbringing was dominated by alcohol and addiction.

Until one day he said a group of Christians came to my school. And they told me about Jesus. And in that moment, the mustard seed faith began to move the mountain.

And he said, my life changed because I simply believed in the message. Friends, none of us were looking for Jesus. None of us were looking for him. But just like this man, he sought us out and he saved us.

And Jesus says to the man, do you see? He says, get up, take up your bed and walk. And I love the silence at that point because you can imagine that those roundabout hearing thinking, what on earth?

But John tells us at verse 9, he spells it out again. He didn't just say it happens. Do you see how he spells it out again? He was healed. He picked up his mat and he walked.

[16 : 05] And just like God spoke creation into existence, out of nothing, ex nihilo, as theologians would say, he spoke and things came into being by the power of his word.

Here is Jesus, God in the flesh, at it again. He speaks and bones and marrow and muscle and tendons and ligaments do his bidding.

They dance to his voice. The creator has come to be with the creature. Now, in the context of John, this is the fourth sign. Okay, these public miracles that John tells us about, verifiably shows us to back up the credibility of Jesus and the things that he's writing, but also so that we would listen to the spiritual truths that follow.

That's what a sign is. It always reminds me of every time I go over the Royal Mile and I see people taking pictures. The one that makes me laugh is when people are taking pictures of the sign to the castle.

But tell him when the castle is right there. And that's exactly what John is doing with his signs. Just don't look at the sign.

[17 : 26] Marvel at the sign. But do you know what? See what the sign is pointing you to. They're pointing us to something, these signs. So the question is, right, logically, what is the spiritual truth that we're meant to understand from this sign?

Well, that moves us from a man who's looking for life in all the wrong places to verse 10, a group who are understanding a day in all the wrong ways. Do you see how this miracle, it doesn't go down a treat with everyone?

Okay, verse 9, and here's the clue. What day of the week does Jesus do this miracle on? Do you see in the text, he does it on the Sabbath.

I mean, and we get it repeated there. Same thing at verse 16, same thing at verse 18. So the miracle itself ain't the red rag to the bull. It's the day that Jesus is doing this on that gets the religious leaders absolutely livid.

Now to get why that's such a big deal to them, and why it's so significant in the context of what John is trying to tell us, we've got to get God's design for the Sabbath. And to get it, we've got to travel all the way back to the first book of the Bible called Genesis, right?

[18 : 45] Genesis just meaning beginnings. And we've got to go to chapters 1 and 2. So this is what you'll find if you turn on this later and go to chapters 1 and 2. You'll find God creates the world in six days.

Okay, day and night, land and sea, animals and humans. There's a wonderful symmetry to how God has made it. And after all that he's done, God declares it to be very good, right?

Particularly with the design of human beings. Distinct from everything else, made in the image of God. And that's who you are today, regardless of how well you think your life is going.

That stamp of God is on you. Pinnacle. God creates human beings. Everything before it's good. God makes human beings. It's very good.

Creature and creator are at one in the Garden of Eden. And on the seventh day, God, and here's the word, he rested. He rested.

[19 : 50] Not as in he put his feet up with a good book. Not like he got tired and fancied a cup of harlicks before bed. No, that's me.

That's you. Okay? We get weary. We get tired. We need to down tools and rest. That's not God. Right? He is not just a better version of us.

He is completely unique. He does not need, he does not slumber or sleep. He does not get tired or weary. No, for God to rest, think of it like this.

This is like a master artist finishing their work and then standing back and basking in the glory and joy of what they've made.

It's perfect. And what's interesting is this seventh day, as you read it in Genesis, there's no end to it.

[20 : 50] It's tantalizing as you read it there. It doesn't end. Even when human sin and rebellion against God intrudes into this perfect scene at Genesis 3 and like a child going mad with a paintbrush and a pot of black paint, takes it all over the scene.

Tantalizingly, the seventh day reads almost as unfinished business. Almost like God is leaving the invite open for anyone to come in and join him in enjoying his Sabbath rest.

Where the world is very good. And God weaves a reminder of this day into the weekly life cycle of his people.

After he saves them from Egypt and he gives them the law that this is how you are to live as my distinct people. Part of that is this weekly cycle.

That they'd work for six days. And on the seventh day. God commanded them to stop. Down tools.

[22 : 11] And enjoy a day that was refreshingly different from the others. Now four quick things about this day. And hang with me because this is going to find a beautiful climax when we come to the end.

Okay. What was God's heart for this day? Four quick things. It was a day. And here's a big word for you. Sanctification. Okay. It was a day. Big word in the Bible that means God has set apart something for himself.

Okay. That God's people were to remember that we're not just like everyone else. We're his special possession. And we remember that as we observe this day. Day of sanctification. They are set apart.

And it was a day of dedication. For them to focus on who the Lord is. It was a day of celebration. Okay. As they take in that he's not just our God.

He is our God. And he's wonderful. And he's rescued us. And he's saved us. And it was a day. And get this one. Of anticipation. Every time this day rolled around.

[23 : 18] It acted as a little reminder in their lives. That this is not the final destination for you. God has taken us home.

And this day is for God's people. To remember that this is not our forever home. So people in my generation are always saying. You buying your forever home.

No such thing. This isn't our forever home. God has taken us home to the promised land. And this is what this day helps them remember. That one day we're going to be with him.

And we're going to delight in him. And know him fully and forever. I love that last one. For the human heart. They get so easily bogged.

Down with the anxieties. And the worries of this world. Do you see how the Sabbath was God's good gift. To them. One day in the week.

[24 : 18] Where God had said. I want you to stop. And I want you to lift your heads. And I want you to take in. The bigger picture. That's the Sabbath.

Now. Just in case your minds have gone there already. Let me just say that we can't draw a straight line. Or as my American friends would say.

A straight shot. Okay. You cannot draw a straight line. Between the Sabbath. Which was a Saturday. And what Christians do today. As they gather.

On a Sunday. Okay. Sunday is just the day. That the church has historically met on. Because it was the day. When Jesus rose from the dead. And every day we gather.

Every week we gather on a Sunday. That's what we're doing. We're standing in the line. Of generations. Who've done this. And doing this around the world. That this is the day. This is the day.

[25 : 12] When he rose from the dead. The Sabbath. Is an old covenant. Different thing. And yet. When we see God's heart.

In creating the Sabbath. And his heart. And love for his weary people. To know who they are. And know who he is. Once a week. Do you see how these principles.

Are wonderfully applicable. You know. It's one of the most widely swallowed. Yet dreadfully shallow lines. That our world sells us today.

That you and I need to look. Inside ourselves. To find out who we really are. Now I don't know about you.

But here's why that terrifies me often. Because I look in here. And I don't like the person I am in here. The Bible's.

[26 : 13] Portrait of the human condition. Is that outside isn't the problem. Inside is the problem. And inside doesn't contain the solution.

Inside shows us. The problem. And it was Glenn Harrison. Who's a professor of psychiatry. Down at Bristol University. Read it this week.

He once. He did a study really recently. When he got people to say. Those kind of self-help statements. That are so prevalent. In our culture today. And say them to themselves. For 20 minutes.

At the beginning of each day. You are loved. You are important. You are beautiful. And report how it made them feel. And apparently people with high self-esteem.

Reported a minimal. To negligent increase. In how they felt. But people who started the day. With low self-esteem. Said those things to themselves. And reported a decrease.

[27 : 12] Interesting isn't it? And equally our culture today. Encourages us to find our identity. In what we do. Right? So when someone asks you. What life is like right now.

And to sum it up in one word. What's the word beginning would be. That we always go to. Busy. We're busy. Because in our culture today.

We equate busyness. With importance. Right? I remember I worked in the first office. I worked at Charlotte's Gray. And our working lunch. Was a badge of honor. Who are you?

If you're not working over your lunch hour. It's what our hearts get often drawn to. Isn't it? The snare of compare. An entire world that offers us shallow.

Definitions of what it is to be a human being. And knowing the human heart. It's almost as if the Sabbath. Is God saying to his people. Don't look inside of you.

[28 : 08] To find out who you really are. Here is a day. Where I want you to look outside of yourself. To understand who you really are. You know I'm loving a book right now.

Written by a woman in the States. Called Jen Wilkin. A wonderful author. Who's right at the heart of women's ministry. Over in the States. Wonderful book that she's written. Called In His Image.

And if you're looking for something devotional. Maybe to mix it up in your own lives. Can I recommend this really short. And accessible book. And she writes this. And that struck me the other day. When we were thinking about this whole idea.

Of why we're living as Christians. She writes this. The church must be. A bastion of patience. As the rest of the world.

Chases the next new thing. Every eight seconds. Or less. And in the previous contact chapter. She's been talking about how. The goldfish is a better attention span.

[29 : 05] Than we do. Today. Right. We must be those. Who turn our eyes. Towards the long view. And she's absolutely right.

That here is this day. That God has created for his people. To not get bogged down. Because if he hadn't commanded them to do it. What would they be doing? They would just be working. And keep on going. And he said. Here's a day. Where I want you to remember.

The long view. But you see. What's happened. And this comes to the surface. In John chapter 5. Is that over time. The day of rest.

Has become the day of test. The religious leaders. Were so focused on people. Not doing work. That do you know.

They come up with 39 tests. To help establish. If something is work. Or not. Right. And the lawyer inside me. Kind of loves that. But I think in a context.

[30 : 04] It's a bad thing. Right. Do you know. If you did one stitch. On a bit of clothing. That was fine. But if you did two stitches. You were in violation. Of the Sabbath. Likewise.

Wringing out a wet garment. Out. Totally missed. You see it. Totally missed. The wood from the trees. And when you consider. That one of those 39 tests.

Was to do with carrying. You get why. When they question. The healed man. At verse 11. And he says. The man who healed me. Told me to do this.

You can understand. Why the Sabbath police. Go back to the officer. Put Jesus's face. Right on the dartboard. Can't you? Who does he think he is? Making a mockery. Of everything that we stand for.

And Jesus says. Verse 17. My father. Is working. Now it's logical. Right? Clearly on the Sabbath.

[31 : 01] God is still working. God is still keeping the world spinning. He's still giving us breath. Every minute. If he took his foot off of the gas. Believe me.

We'd know. Okay. The sun would fall from the sky. Gravity would cease. No. Jesus is saying. My father is working. And so am I. So he's raising himself.

Above. What is going on. And why are they after him? And we're going to see more of this next week. Because what is he claiming? He's claiming to be equal. With God.

So how is Jesus working? And here's the brilliant bit. Brothers and sisters. Be heartened by this. How is he working? He's working to make a way.

For people like this man. People like you. People like me. With no hope. And no future. He's making a way.

[31 : 58] For us to come into and enjoy. God's. Sabbath. Rest. Everything that that day represented.

Everything that that day pointed to. Fulfilled. In Jesus Christ. Come. To make it a spiritual reality. For his people.

Now how? Because of where this gospel ends. He goes to the cross. Dying in our place. For our sin.

If you're struggling with guilt here today. Know that his death on the cross. Is totally sufficient for your salvation. There is nothing that you and I need to do.

To add to what he's done. It's not like a mobile phone. Pay as you go. Back in the day. When you used to pay money to top it up. Doesn't work like that. What he has done. Is totally sufficient.

[32 : 58] Our future is absolutely secure. Because he lives. But friends. In him. Do you see how we have been set apart.

As holy. And that's who you are here today. If your faith is in him. And set apart as holy. Right with God. Forgiven. Adopted.

In him. With his spirit inside of us. Transforming us. Putting Jesus' stamp all over us. We dedicate ourselves to his word. And to his rule. In him we celebrate.

Because we don't just know about God. We know God. And in him we anticipate. The future of being with God.

In his very good creation. The new heavens. And the new earth. Where we. Where our God. Dwells. With us.

[33 : 55] I was there in my quiet times this morning. Revelation 21. I love this scene. Brothers and sisters. Have you ever considered. That there's coming a day. Because of Jesus. That you will have cried your last tear.

And what does it say? It doesn't say. In the new heavens. And the new earth. There's just no tears. Right. It says. God himself will wipe away every tear. Never really thought about that before. Speaking of God's intimate knowledge.

Of his people. And his creation. God himself will wipe away. Every tear. And make it all right. The former things will have passed away.

And the new things because of King Jesus will have come. And that's your future. And on that note. Do you see how this man here. And what happens to him. Is a wonderful foretaste.

Of the reality which will be true for every single one of us one day. What is John saying? Jesus is not just shaking up the Sabbath. Jesus is the Sabbath.

[34 : 59] And he's working so that people the world over would know the rest. The rest. And how does that strike you today in our busy world that never stops? In our world where we feel like we never match up.

In our world where imposter syndrome is a thing. How does it strike you that he offers us rest? Because this is what Jesus is doing with his days.

This is how God is at work. And so the question just as we close. Having seen God's heart.

I guess the question for us as people is. Do we share his heart? Do we share his heart? And maybe to drill this down as we close.

And to go slightly off piste. Here's what I'd love you to do. I'd love you to get out of your mobile phone. Go and do it. Just entertain me. This is why I brought mine up here as well.

[36 : 09] And if you've got it there. Go to the alarm feature. And you're all thinking where on earth is he going with this?

And here's a challenge for us as we respond to this this morning. And give you the context for it. So I had breakfast with my good friend Gordon a few weeks back.

We dropped the kids at school. Our kids are at school together. He's a fellow pastor. And we head around from Liberty Primary School around to Cameron's Home. We go to Greg's. Getting breakfast at Greg's. £2.65 I think for a break and roll in a coffee.

Right? Steal. So we go there for breakfast. And after we'd finished the conversation. We're just chatting to one another. So once we finish breakfast. We're getting deeper into the conversation.

And all of a sudden this phone goes off. Okay? And he takes it. And it's not a phone call. It's his alarm. And I look at my watch.

[37 : 10] And here's the weird thing. Now when I set alarms. I don't know about you. But I normally set them for round times. Yeah? Right? 7. 7. 7.30. That kind of thing.

Do you know what time his alarm went off at? 9.38. So he'd set it to go at 9.38 in the morning and in the evening.

And I said to him, Gordon, what is all that about? And he said this to me. He said it reminds him to stop in the moment. And pray. Because 9.38 helps him remember.

Matthew 9.38. Okay? Where Jesus says, pray that the Lord of the harvest would send out more laborers to work in his harvest field. So the prayer that he stops and prays morning and evening every day just for 30 seconds or so.

Is that God would raise up more people to go and work in this world. And so he said, you want to do it? And so we stop and we quickly pray. But I remember being struck by that gospel intentionality.

[38 : 12] Now I think this passage calls us to do exactly the same thing when we think about how God is at work in the world today. So here's the challenge. You've got it there. Let's set our alarms for 5.17.

Okay? Now you can, don't do the morning. You can just do the evening. Okay? I'll let you off. But every time it goes off, here's what I want us to do. Firstly, rejoice, brothers and sisters.

5.17. Rejoice that Jesus loves us. And he came looking for us. And he saved us. Not because of who we are, but simply because of who he is.

And praise him and take great heart that we are beneficiaries of his heart for his father's work. And do it at 5.17 every day this week. And secondly, first thing, rejoice.

Secondly, just raise. Right? Let's raise our eyes to whatever's going on in our lives at 5.17. Okay? Maybe some of us are on the commute home. Maybe some of us are trying to do the dinner.

[39 : 12] Maybe some of us are still at work. Why not just pause for 30 seconds. Take in what's going on around you. And just pray for the people who are around about you in that moment. Because we don't believe in a God of chances.

We worship a God who's sovereign and in control of all things. And whose heart we've seen right here. That the peoples of the world would come to know the rest that Jesus offers. Jesus says this.

My father is always at work to this very day. And I too am working. Let's pray, will we? And so Lord, we thank you for this morning.

And for John's gospel. That we have it in our language. That we can pick up and read our Bibles. And understand who you are. And we can marvel at your heart for people like us.

Hopeless and clueless like this man in John chapter 5. And your desire that we would have life in your son Jesus. So Father, I pray for those of us here today who don't know him.

[40 : 20] Maybe they've never heard about him before. Maybe they've never understood why it's such a big deal. Father, may today be the day when they put their trust in Jesus.

And Father, for those of us here today who are following him. May this glimpse of his heart today. Who he is. Oh Father, may it cause our souls to greatly rejoice.

And join you in what you're doing. So Father, thank you just for your outrageous, unmerited, abundant love for us, your people. And we pray all of these things in his worthy name.

Amen.