

This transcribed message has been lightly edited and formatted for the Web site. No attempt has been made, however, to alter the basic extemporaneous delivery style, or to produce a grammatically accurate, publication-ready manuscript.

Teaching: Carlon Tschetter
Series: The Gospel of John
Message: It's A Matter of Time

Transcribed Message
September 14, 2025
John 7:1-13

One of my favorite professors in seminary told us the story of his experience in the first church that he went to be a pastor of. He grew up in California, and he did his undergraduate work at USC. Then he came to Dallas Seminary, and he got his master's in theology at Dallas. He stayed some extra years and got his doctor's degree in theology. Then he went back to California and to UCLA and got his doctor's degree in communication. So, he finally had an opportunity to go to a church, and a rather large church in the Phoenix area invited him to come and be their pastor teacher. And as he told the story, he said, we went there as a family, and he said, within the first year, I managed to shrink the church into half. Hundreds of people left with all kinds of comments about his inability to communicate and to teach. He went through this deep sense of soul-searching and discouragement because he'd had all this training and all this opportunity, and it was a very discouraging time. But here's the part of the story that's important. He stayed true to his calling. He stayed true to his mission. He just continued to preach the Word and teach the Word, believing that's what God was going to ultimately honor. And God blessed his ministry there for many years, and the church grew and, in fact, increased beyond what it was when he initially came.

I thought of that story as I was studying this past week in John 6 and going on into 7, and I couldn't help but think that as you come to the end of that sixth chapter, that in that 66th verse, this is what we read: After this, many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. And remember, as we looked at that last week, we recounted the fact that Jesus, in the face of that, never wavered from His mission and never wavered from His message. He knew what the Father had sent Him to do, and He stayed true to, of course, that calling. So, if you have in John 6, as we work our way through the Gospel of John, if we have in the sixth chapter what could very well be considered the high point of Jesus' ministry from the perspective of John's Gospel, ministering to 15,000 plus people where He fed those people. And

then you come to the end of the chapter, and you're down to 12. 12 people, and one of them is a betrayer. And then, of course, we come to the seventh chapter, and it's a very different picture in one sense, but in another sense, it just shows us again the same resolve of our Lord in the midst of the opposition.

This morning in verses 1 through 13, here's what I want us to see. Proximity to Jesus does not result in salvation. Just being close to Jesus does not equal salvation. Opportunity is there, obviously, but just being close is not enough, is it? We have to, in fact, believe who Jesus is and what He has come to do. We have to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Now, for me, the immediate application, lest we miss something along the way, is being in this place every Sunday morning would be similar to being in close proximity to Jesus in the minds of some. I just simply say to you, being in this place every Sunday does not equate to salvation, nor does stepping into the waters of baptism equate to salvation. You can be in church all of your life and not be a follower of Christ in terms of understanding what the gospel is. You may have been baptized, and you may not really be able to articulate what this gospel is. So, proximity does not equal salvation.

Let's look at the overall context just very quickly, because we want to see three things to really kind of set the stage. We're about at the midway point in the earthly ministry of Christ. In fact, it's very probable from the perspective of John's gospel that we're about six or seven months away from the cross. I remind us of that simply to say, here we're only in the seventh chapter, and there's 21 chapters in which John has told us in the 21st chapter that he's written these things that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing we have life in His name, right? And so now we're in the seventh chapter, and we're about six or seven months from the cross. I just remind us of that again to say this, as we read Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, these are not biographies. These are gospels that are pointing us always to the cross.

Secondly, the resistance is relentless. The resistance is relentless. It started specifically back in chapter 5 and verse 18 when Jesus healed the lame man on the Sabbath. Remember back in that fifth chapter, we noted that the religious leaders said, we have to kill this man. We have to do away with him. He cannot keep doing what he's doing. We're going to lose all the

people from our following. The resistance did not diminish just because Jesus left Jerusalem and Judea. It remained, as we're going to see today, very intense.

Thirdly, Jesus's trust in the Father's plan never wavers. Again, what a good word for us today and every day, right? We should be encouraged to know that whatever it is that life brings our way, hard things, these difficult things, tragic things, there is still the opportunity for us to trust in the Father's plan just as Jesus Himself did.

So, let's look at what is really the nature of unbelief in these verses this morning, and the setting comes to us in the first couple of verses, and we look at that together in John chapter 6. After this, Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him. Now, the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand. So, we're just introduced to the setting in these first two verses. John, remember if you've been with us, loves to give us time stamps, and that's what he does here. He starts off the seventh chapter with a time stamp, and he says to us, after this. So, he's wanting us to note that there's something that is of importance in terms of the time, and what we would be wrong in concluding is that chapter 6 ends, and a day or two later, chapter 7 begins. It could read that way, but that's not exactly what happens.

This expression, after this, in fact, is a very generic, kind of indefinite period of time. And we don't have to wonder about what that time frame is because we can figure it out from chapter 6 and then looking at chapter 7 because chapter 6 began, remember, in the fourth verse with John telling us that the events of chapter 6 were taking place around the Passover. So, Passover happens in the spring of the year. Well, then when you come to chapter 7, and he's talking about the events that are going to unfold, well, this is happening at a different time of the year. This is happening now in the fall around the Feast of Booths celebration. When John says, after this, he really wants us to understand if we're reading our text carefully that this is six months later, six months after those events of chapter 6.

The place and the priority fit into this story as well. John mentions two of them, doesn't he, in verse 1. He mentions Galilee and he mentions Judea. Well, Jesus has been ministering in Galilee, that's to the north, and now he mentions also Judea, which is to say to us, this is Jerusalem. You can't see it on the map there, but it says in that verse that Jesus went about,

right? Jesus went about in Galilee. And the way that is worded is it speaks to us of continuous action. Jesus was continuously moving about in this northern region of Galilee where, as we saw in chapter 6, by the Sea of Galilee, the feeding of the 15,000, going over to Capernaum, and the teaching that took place in the synagogue. But now, he goes even farther to the north, and we don't read it here in John's gospel, but in the other gospel accounts, they fill in a little bit more of this six-month period. They tell us Jesus went all the way north to Tyre and Sidon. He went across to Caesarea Philippi. He went to the region of Decapolis.

Somebody has kind of done some figuring out, and Jesus was a walker. About 250 miles of walking in this region likely took place within this six-month period, so it speaks to us of Jesus' ministry. We know again from the other gospels that this was the timeframe in which Jesus fed the 5,000. He did different healings. Remember Caesarea Philippi, Matthew 16, is where Peter makes that incredible declaration when Jesus says, well, who do people say that I am? And they named off all the different prophets that people said He was, and then Jesus said to the disciples, well, who do you say that I am? Remember Peter launches into that wonderful declaration and says, well, you are the Christ, the Son of God. Well, that happens in this six-month period.

Something else very important happens. In Matthew 17, the experience on the Mount of Transfiguration happens. So again, lest we think that these things are a day or two after, there's six months' time in which we read at the end of chapter 6, and we begin in chapter 7. And here's the point that I want you to see. There is a shift in priority that's happening. There's a shift in priority. The place is important, but the shift in priority, I think, is even more important. Jesus is going to move His emphasis and His priority from the masses to the twelve. And so, we have in chapter 6 the largest gathering likely that Jesus ministered to at a single time, 15,000 to 20,000 people, no doubt, to now when we come to chapter 7, he's literally doing personal discipleship. It's like he's in a small group ministry now, right? And so, he leaves the masses, and he turns His attention to his disciples.

Now obviously God uses both. We love it when thousands of people gather to hear the gospel, to hear the teaching of the Word. That's great. But there's also great value in understanding that a lot of what God wants to do in our lives happens in much smaller settings,

one-on-one, small groups. So that's, I think, the picture that we see here. John records for us in two days' time all of this activity with this large group.

And then he says, okay, now here's six months. And the gospel writers say, here's six months in which Jesus was just hanging out with His disciples. Yeah, He interacted with the public, but it was a lot of time just pouring into the life of these 12 men, 11 men, who would change the world literally for Christ.

Now the event that is at play here. We read in verse 2, now the Feast of Booths was at hand. So when you understand Israel's relationship in their covenant with God, there were of course all the sacrifices, but there were all the feasts. There are seven feasts that they would celebrate together, four in the spring and three in the fall. So now we are in the fall season, and this particular feast is the Feast of Booths. It's the Feast of Tabernacles. Jews still celebrate this today. They will in fact build little booths out of trees and branches as just symbolizing what life was like living in the wilderness, tent life, if you will. And so the Feast of Booths and the Feast of Tabernacles was really a reminder to them of how faithful God had been from the time that they left Egypt all the way to entering the Promised Land.

Josephus, a Jewish historian, tells us that the Feast of Booths and the Feast of Tabernacles was the favorite feast of the masses of people. This was a celebratory time, and so a lot of people looked at this one as one of their favorites. Now, that's the setting.

Look at the suggestion of the brothers in verses 3, 4, and 5. We begin just noting at the beginning of verse 3, So his brothers said to him. Now when we read that, I've got a question. And the first question revolves around who are the brothers of Jesus? Now of course the church at Rome tells us that Jesus didn't have any brothers, that Jesus didn't have any sisters. They in fact put forward the doctrine called the perpetual virginity of Mary. That's simply to say that they believe that Mary and Joseph did not have a normal marriage relationship within the context of a sexual relationship, that Mary remained a virgin all her life, had no children. The Bible simply doesn't teach that.

Here's the point of something like that. What we all want to do all the time is say, does the Bible teach that? Is that in the Bible? You should be asking that all the time. Even as I teach, you should be saying, is that really what the Bible teaches? That's what the Bereans did, right?

They were always raising their hand and saying, is this in the Bible? When we think of that, this is what I want you to see – Jesus had brothers.

When he says, so his brothers said to him, it's the Greek word *adelphoi*, which is the most common word in the Greek language for siblings. And we don't even have to wonder if that's the case, because when we go over to Matthew chapter 13, Matthew names them for us in verse 55. They are saying about Jesus at this particular time, they were astonished, right? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas, are not all his sisters with us? So, they're literally naming the names of Jesus' siblings, brothers and sisters. Mary and Joseph had many children after Jesus was born. I think it's just a snapshot into the humanity of our Lord, right? Jesus interacted and grew up as the oldest brother of all these brothers and sisters.

Now, I imagine most of us have grown up with brothers and sisters. Some many, some maybe not as many. There were seven in my family. I had three older sisters, so hand-me-downs were tough for a while. I felt like the middle child, but I felt like God's call for me was to kind of be the one who would tease all the other children in the family. So, that was a gift that I believe God gave me, and my brothers and sisters didn't always think that was a great gift.

But you talk about the humanity of our Lord. You talk about sanctification. Does sanctification take place in family life? Does sanctification take place with siblings? It does even as adults, doesn't it, as you interact and relate to each other? And so, I think it's just kind of a neat insight to realize, yeah, Jesus grew up with siblings. Now the problem of course for his brothers and sisters was Jesus was perfect, and he never got in trouble from mom and dad. Do you think he ever wanted to tease them? Do you think he ever, you know, Hebrews says that he was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. So even if he did, he never yielded to that.

Now what was their plan? Look at verse three again. So, his brothers said to him, leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world. So here, Jesus' brothers become, as we noted last week, his kind of personal PR team and giving him career advice, unsolicited career advice. Verse three starts off with so, that's

sometimes translated therefore, right? Whenever we see that, we're supposed to say, what is that therefore, there for? And it's there to take us right back to verse two. And it takes right back to verse two.

Why does it take us back to verse two? Because verse two said, the Feast of Booths was at hand. Every male, 13 and older, was obligated under the law to go to Jerusalem for the feast. And so, Jesus' brothers knew that he was obligated to go to Jerusalem to be a part of the celebration and a part of the feast. They had no doubt witnessed what was going on in his life and ministry. I mean, they have an awareness of the fact that people have defected from him and left him, and the crowds have been murmuring about him. And so here is their unsolicited career advice. Jesus, go to Jerusalem. Go to Jerusalem, do some miracles. Let's rebuild this thing. We can get more people to follow you if you'll leave Galilee, this backwater region that's far away from the masses and the crowds. You need to head to Jerusalem where your popularity can rise again.

It's not any different than today. I mean, if someone said to you, I want to be in the movies. Where should I go? Well, we would say, go to Hollywood. I mean, I wouldn't say that to him, but that's where you'd go, right? You'd go to Hollywood if you want to be in the movies. If somebody says, I want a career in music, we'd say, well, go to Nashville. All musicians are hanging out all over the place in Nashville. You want to be in acting? Yeah, go to Broadway, New York City. I mean, all those corollaries, right? And so, this is the same exact thing that they're suggesting here. They're saying to him, if you are going to be a success, then you need to head to Jerusalem where the crowds are.

Here's what I want you just to think about. And we're going to see more about the brothers in just a minute, but they're basically giving him the advice of what? The advice of the world, aren't they? They're saying, you know, when you think about how to measure success, what is the model of success that we're striving after? Well, we look oftentimes, unfortunately, to the world, don't we? And I think sadly, in many ways, the church in America has looked to the world for how it operates and functions, its methodology, its approach. We have a lot of slick marketing, and we have a lot of celebrity pastors. We have a lot of measures of success that just mirror the world. And you have a hard time figuring out what is the basis, what's the

difference between the way the church operates and functions and the way the world operates and functions? There should be a very clear distinction. Our whole sense of leadership and our model should be very different. There's no sense of self-promotion in all that goes with the world, and yet here are the brothers.

Just think with me for a moment about this. What do you suppose their motive is? This is a little tricky, so this is just some thoughts, right? Because we don't know. We aren't told exactly what their motivation is. We're given some insight. But do you think on the one hand, they may just be frustrated? They may just be frustrated with the fact that what has happened to Jesus, their brother, is that His following has faded away and has left Him. Maybe there's a sense of just being fickle. You know, they're looking for the wow factor from Him as well, and they're just not seeing it at this point. They want to have that back. Maybe they're having a hard time processing the hard things that He has said to the crowd as well. Maybe, maybe there's a little bit of sarcasm. Maybe there's a little bit of jealousy. You know, Jesus, you want to be popular, don't you? Jesus, you want everybody to know you, don't You? Well, we don't know.

We're not told exactly but look at this. Look at what we are told. We are told the condition of their hearts. Look at verse 5. For not even His brothers believed in Him. For not even His brothers believed in Him. This really makes the point of our big idea. To be in close proximity to Jesus does not equal salvation. These brothers and sisters literally grew up with Jesus. They saw the Son of God live out a godly life in front of them every day of their lives. They couldn't have been any closer physically to the Savior than they were. And yet here is the condition of their heart. It's a picture to us of what the Bible says about the condition of the human heart that is captured by unbelief.

Again, we can be in a Christian home. We can have godly parents. We can be in church every Sunday and every Wednesday and maybe another time as well. We can experience baptism. We can take communion. We can go through all the motions the people around us are going through and we can be lost as can be. Our heart can be untouched by the gospel. So here is the picture for us and maybe, maybe, just maybe you find yourself in that circumstance.

But here's two other things I want you to see. In Mark chapter 3, Mark gives us a little further insight into how the family viewed Jesus because remember in that scene in Mark 3 when there was a large gathering and there were healings going on. The text tells us that his family came to extract him out of that situation. And they say, we think he has lost his mind. We think he's lost touch with reality. He thinks he's somebody that he's not. And that just gives us a further insight into how they viewed their brother and how they viewed the Lord at that point in their life.

And again, maybe some of you are in a family situation where you have believing family members or unbelieving family members and they can't figure you out. They don't know what's happened to you. You've come to Christ, you've responded to the gospel, you're doing all that you can to grow in your walk with God and they look at you and they're trying to figure out what in the world has happened to you. And that's very possible, right? And you just live your life faithfully for Christ.

But here's the best part. The best part is in Acts 1, we know that his brothers and his family ultimately believed. For instance, James, his brother, becomes the head of the church of Jerusalem and he writes the book of James. We'll reference it in just a moment. His brother Judas, or what we would rather normally know him as Jude, becomes a leader in the church and writes the book of Jude. Ultimately, they do believe, they do come to understand that he's the Christ.

Now look in verses 6 through 10 at the instruction of our Lord. The instruction of our Lord, and it begins with what time is it? Verse 6, Jesus said to them, my time has not yet come, but your time is always here. Now we saw something a little bit like that. Remember back in the second chapter when Jesus was at that celebration, the wedding celebration, they ran out of wine, right? And his mom comes to him and says, hey, they've run out of wine, do something. And Jesus says, mom, my hour has not yet come. My hour has not yet come. And of course, he's pointing and looking forward to the cross, and she's wanting him to do something demonstrative and something miraculous, perhaps. And of course, he ultimately does it, but he reminds her that he's on a different timetable than she is.

The exact same thing is happening here. His brothers say to him they want him to go to Jerusalem, right? So, when we look at that and we see that sixth verse, Jesus said to them, my time has not yet come, but your time is always here. Within the Greek language, there are different words for time. There's the word *chronos*, chronology. Chronology just simply means sequence, right? We have yesterday, we have today, we have tomorrow. That'd be *chronos*. But this is not *chronos*. This is the word *kairos*, and *kairos* has to do with a specific time. It has to do not with a chronology, but it has to do with a suitable time, a right time. So, we could paraphrase this like this. Jesus says, I live by God's time, not man's. That's kind of what he's saying.

It's very similar to what we see in Galatians chapter four. Remember in Galatians four, Paul says, when the fullness of time was come, *kairos*. When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law. Not so much that He sent Him chronologically, but of course, there was the right time, but the suitable time, the right time for the Savior to come into the world. Here it is. It's looking to the cross.

Now look at this hard word in verse seven. The world cannot hate you. Jesus says this to His brothers. The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil. We saw in chapter six, if you were with us, some hard things that Jesus taught. But here's the deal. This setting, He's teaching some hard things to not just the masses, to not strangers, if you will. He's saying these things to His brothers. He's saying this to His family. And the implication of what He says to His brothers is simply this, the world doesn't hate you. The world doesn't hate you. It's clear that the world doesn't hate you. Why? Why doesn't the world hate you? Because you belong to it. You belong to it. You're part of it. You fit right in. It's an interesting thing to say, isn't it? That His brothers belong to the world. The world doesn't hate them because of that.

When he says that he testifies. I testify because I testify about it that its works are evil. To testify is to give evidence of something, irrefutable evidence of something. The world, Jesus says, is evil. The world will hate you. You don't testify to the world because you're becoming like the world. Just takes us again, doesn't it, to Paul's well-known statement in Romans 12, don't be conformed to the world. Jesus is going to say later in the Upper Room Discourse this

very same thing. If you are living in the world and the world and you are walking in harmony with each other and walking step by step, then the world doesn't hate you. If you say things like marriage is between a man and a woman, and you say things like God's created two genders, male and female, and you say things like all life is precious to God from the moment of conception to the end of life that God alone is sovereign over, then the world's going to hate you. We see that. We saw that this past week. Those are the messages and the kinds of things that will cause the world to be vile and evil in response.

And yet here, our Lord says this. It reminds me of His statement in John chapter 3 and verse 19. Listen: and this is the judgment, the light has come into the world and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out by God.

You know what James is going to say, his brother, later in James chapter 4. Listen to this, you adulterous people, do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. James got it, didn't he? He remembered exactly what happened in this experience, no doubt, and he wrote of it under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Now let's look quickly at verses 8 through 10, this is not a contradiction. You go up to the feast, he says to them, I am not going up to this feast for my time has not yet fully come. After saying this, he remained in Galilee, but after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly but in private. Now critics of the Bible look at this and say, okay, right here it is, we just have an absolute contradiction. Jesus said, I'm not going to the feast, and then two verses later he says, I'm going to the feast. So, what are we going to do with this?

Well, the key to understanding it, of course, is to go back again to verse 6 and to realize that when he said in verse 6 about his time not being at that moment, remember that was *kairos* time, it was not the right time in terms of the significance of the event. Jesus is not saying, I'll never go to Jerusalem, I'll never ever go to the feast. He's not saying that. He's saying, I'm not going to go when you want me to go. I'm not going to go how you want me to go. They

wanted him to go publicly. They wanted him to come almost as he will later in the triumphal entry, but that wasn't time for that. He's saying to them, I'm not going now, but I'm going to go. And most often what would happen is whole families would gather together, and they would go very publicly, very celebratory all the way to Jerusalem. Jesus doesn't do that. I'm going, but I'm going to go on God's timetable.

Now here's what I want you to consider, I want you to ponder this truth. In that sixth chapter, we spent a couple of Sundays talking about the sovereignty of God and how God is sovereign over all the details of life, and how Jesus said nobody comes to the Father unless he's drawn. It is a prompting and a work of a pursuing, initiating God that results in your salvation. God is the one who calls you. He's the one who opens your heart. He's the one who is going to bring you to understand the gospel. That's the sovereignty of God.

Now consider this. Jesus is facing this situation of whether he should go to Jerusalem or not. He knows that God the Father is sovereign over all the details of life. Why didn't he just say, yeah, I'm going to go with you guys. I know when I get to Jerusalem that I'm going to die at some point. It's been determined before the world was created, in eternity past, in the councils of the Godhead, this great and glorious plan of redemption was put into place. Jesus would come to this earth, he would go at one point to Jerusalem, and he would be killed by the religious leaders. Well, why didn't Jesus just say, yeah, I'll go with you guys. You know, *que sera sera*, whatever will be will be. It's just fatalism, isn't it? It's going to happen, it's going to happen. If I go, I go, and if it does, it does. He doesn't do that. What does he do?

What does he show us? He shows us the side, simply, of human responsibility and wisdom, doesn't he? He shows us that there is within this working out of the plan of God, not only the sovereignty of God, but the responsibility that we have with the understanding that we have to act wisely in light of the decisions that we make. I think it's a beautiful picture of how Jesus balances that out.

Now, this last thing, the questions of the crowd. This will be a good lead-in for our study next Sunday, so let me just comment on these verses. Verse 11, the Jews were looking for him at the feast and saying, where is he? We've seen this phrase before, the Jews. This is a reference not to ethnic Jews as it is earlier in the second verse, but it's the religious leaders that

are looking for Jesus. They knew under the law that Jesus was required to be in Jerusalem. They knew he would keep the law. They knew he would be there at some point, and so they're asking, where is he? He's going to be here.

But here's what I want you to understand. The way that they use this word is very disrespectful. It's almost like they're saying, if we were to paraphrase this, it would be to say, where is that guy? That's what the language is communicating. Where is that guy? Where is this Jesus guy? Just a total statement of disrespect. Verse 12 and 13, and there was much muttering about him among the people, while some said, he is a good man. Others said, no, he is leading the people astray, yet for fear of the Jews, no one spoke openly of him.

So, two things. What were people saying about him? Who is he? Well, he's a good man. He's a good man. No, he's not. He's an evil man. He's a deceiver. And isn't it interesting? Here we are over 2,000 years later, and this is still the pressing question of the time, isn't it? Who is Jesus? Who is Jesus? They were asking it in the first century. People are asking it today.

What do we take away? Christ brings clarity in the midst of confusion. I say to you, that's what truth does. Truth brings clarity. Whether we receive it or not, that's on us. But truth brings clarity in the midst of confusion.

That's why God sent His Son into the world, to declare this truth of the gospel, to bring clarity in the midst of confusion. And we are to live out the same. We're to speak the truth, and we're to live the truth. And I say to you as we close, the most important truth we can live, and the most important truth we can declare, is the truth of the gospel.

My friend, this morning, the gospel, that word just simply means good news, and the good news starts with bad news. And the bad news is that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. You, me, everybody in this room has sinned and fallen short of God's glory. The other part of the bad news is that sin always brings death. Sin always brings separation. The good news is God sent His Son, Jesus.

He died on a cross for my sin and yours. And the good news continues to say to us, all we have to do, is all we have to do is believe that what Jesus did was enough. God's not asking us to do all kinds of other things for Him than to simply believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Let's pray. Father God, we pray by your Spirit, you will open hearts to this glorious gospel, even this morning. Father, we thank you for these that are going to be baptized, who have made that declaration of their faith and their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Father, we pray that you will do that in each heart, each life this morning, of those who have never put their faith in Christ. Lord, open their eyes to this glorious gospel, this glorious truth, that grace alone, by faith alone, in Christ alone, results in eternal life and the forgiveness of our sins. In Jesus' name, amen.