

Why Is Jesus Relevant Today?

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Preacher: Johnny Wong

[0:00] Good morning. It's so good to be with you today. And just as Ellen has said, we were going through the book of Acts. And now we are taking a break. We are taking a little bit of a break to do something new, to do something new.

But just to recap, what have we been learning in the book of Acts? That Jesus ascended to heaven and then he told the disciples to wait. To wait for what?

The Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit descended upon them. And then they built the church. They received power. They received the power to do signs and wonders.

And then they started to establish the church and speak about Jesus. In the last couple of weeks, we've seen Peter and John speak about Jesus.

Speak boldly about Jesus. And as they've encountered, as they have been speaking boldly, they've encountered opposition.

[1:00] Why are you speaking about Jesus? We demand that you no longer speak about Jesus. Give us the reason.

Why are you speaking about Jesus? They've been met with opposition. And this opposition demands a response. Apologetics is a defense of the gospel.

A defense of the truth that we believe in. And so, we're going to be going through a six-part series on some of the most common apologetic questions.

Such as what we're going to go through today. Why is Jesus relevant in our world today? And then there's going to be other topics. Why should we trust the Bible?

Has anybody thought about why we should trust the Bible? Yeah? Anybody looked into it? We're going to look into science and faith. Do they coexist? We're going to look into the meaning of life.

[2:04] We're going to look at how a good God can allow evil. And will heaven be boring? And one person in the Bible was very good at asking questions.

He was a skeptic. He was called Thomas the Doubter. And he was always seeking for the truth. What is truth?

What is real? Give me evidence. And so, we're going to look into this specific question today of why is Jesus relevant? Why is Jesus relevant?

Before we start, I want you to go into pairs or threes and discuss with each other. Why is Jesus relevant? Go into people, get to know your neighbor, twos, threes.

Answer this question. Why is Jesus relevant for you today? Okay? And I want to hear some good answers. All right.

[3:18] Did you guys have a good discussion? Have a good discussion? Did the kids have a good discussion? All right. What are some of your brilliant answers?

I want to point to somebody who had a brilliant answer. We'll hear from them. No? Nobody wants to point? Okay. Ryan had a... Sean pointed out Ryan. All right.

Ryan, share with us. Why is Jesus relevant today? What is something you share? Well, I mean, obviously for believers, it's kind of self-explanatory. I don't need to... I don't need to expand on that. For non-believers? Yeah, for non-believers... So I basically said that Christianity shaped European civilization. And the Europeans kind of exported their ideals to the rest of the world.

And understanding the bases of their civilization is important, even for non-believers today. Okay. Okay. Interesting.

[4:20] Very interesting answer. Very good. All right. Anybody else have an interesting answer? Okay. All right. Jojo, you got pointed out.

Did you want me out? Jesus is still relevant today because he still exists today, I believe. And his death was not the end of him.

He's also resurrected, in which that means that we have hope today. And also he's coming still. So his story is still continuing. Okay.

Very good. Anybody else? Anybody else? No? Do the kids have any good stories? Anybody else? No? Okay. Let's ask. Chris, what about you? It's probably something to do like my man said.

[5:16] If you read the Bible, most of the things that's happening in the world is like, you can actually tell you what happens. Like instructions, it's prophetic, it's like everything. It's like the truth.

Okay. All right. Okay. Very good. Yeah. Yeah. Okay. We're going to look into the passage today, John chapter 14.

And we're going to invite Chris to come and read it for us. Let's give a hand to Chris. Chris has been with us for about a month now. I don't know.

I don't know. I don't know if you remember last time I spoke. I met this guy at the basketball court.

And it just so happened that he is the trainer for one of our GU kids.

And that's just how we met. And then I invited him to church. And he's been seeking after truth and God. And he found God in an incredible way. So let's all stand.

[6:12] We're going to read John chapter 14 together. Chris is going to read it for us. Verse 1 to 6. Okay. Oh, hold it. All right. John chapter 14.

I am the way and the truth and the life. Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in me.

In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take to you myself that where I am, you may be also.

And you know the way to where I am going. Thomas said to him, Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way? Jesus said to him, I am the way and the truth and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me. All right. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for today that we can look into this very important topic of why you're relevant.

[7:21] May you lead us through the Holy Spirit and guide us. Speak through me and may you speak into our hearts personally as well. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Let's give a hand to Chris for reading the scripture for us. All right. Just a little bit of background. John chapter 14.

They had just completed the last supper. The disciples were with Jesus for their last meal. And Jesus washed their feet.

And Jesus said to them, there's somebody going to betray me. Somebody is going to betray me. And in a little while, I'm going to have to go away.

And this place, you cannot come. And so the disciples were troubled. They're like, what do you mean? You're going to go away and we cannot come. And they were afraid of the Romans or the Jewish council who was against Jesus at that time.

[8:24] And Jesus comforts them in this first verse and says, do not be troubled. Even though I'm saying these things to you, do not be troubled.

And he promises the presence of the father, a reunion with the father. He says, in my father's house, there's many rooms. And it was not uncommon at that time when a couple was going to get married, that the groom would go and prepare a place for the bride.

And only the father would know when the groom would return. He promises his presence that I will come again and I will take you with me so that you will be where I am also.

And that is where Thomas speaks out. And he says very plainly, right? Lord, we do not know where you're going.

How can we know the way? How can we know the way? Thomas, who is always skeptical, seeking evidence, also possesses the qualities of courage, analytical thinking, and the relentless pursuit of truth.

[9:43] He is not just a doubter. He is a man who has sought clarity and true understanding. And how does Jesus respond? Jesus responds by saying this very famous line, I am the truth, the way.

I'm the way, the truth, and the life. And it's interesting because he uses the indefinite article. The way, the truth, and the life.

He doesn't use an indefinite article where he says, I am a way, a truth, and a life. He says, I am the way, right?

I am the goat, right? And when you think of the goat, greatest of all time, there's the debate, right? Jordan, LeBron, Kobe, not me, not James.

Definitely not Joe. I'm joking. The goat, right? When you think of the goat, it's the best player in every sport.

[10:49] And when Jesus is saying he is the way, the truth, and the life, he's not saying, oh, there's another possible way. There's another amazing way to the Father.

No, he's saying he's the way, the only way. We're going to learn about three things today of why Jesus is relevant. Firstly, Jesus is the way in a world of disorder.

Jesus is the way in a world of disorder. Jesus is the truth in the world of deception. Jesus is the life in a world that is dying.

Firstly, we're going to learn about why Jesus is the way in a world of disorder. This world is full of disorder. We look at the current state of our world.

Every day, you just watch the news. There's tension between different countries. There's tension in the Middle East. There's talks of wars, of tariffs.

[11:49] The stock market goes up and down, and there's so much disorder. We don't know what's happening. Just yesterday, in our university group, we're talking about, can I, as a student visa, go into the U.S.?

There's some fears about it. Can I even get a U.S. visa to be a student? There's questions about it. There's uncertainty. There's disorder in this world. There's also economic frailty, inflation, and the debt crisis.

Anybody going to Japan in this month? Because there's apparently this, right, this theory or this prophecy from some Japanese woman that there's supposed to be an earthquake that was supposed to happen yesterday.

I guess she's a false prophet. But she herself claimed that I don't actually know if this is the right date. But there's so much fear, right?

Disorder leads to uncertainty, and certainty leads to fear. And that's why nobody's going to Japan except Gabe here, who raised his hand. Right?

[13:01] Right? And the ultimate cause of disorder is sin. The ultimate cause of disorder is sin. Because God created this world perfectly.

We were in a perfect relationship with God. There was no sin. There was no disease in this world. But then sin entered the world.

Through Adam and Eve, they made a choice. And because of that, disorder entered the world. The first thing is that Jesus overcomes disorder through the cross.

Through the cross, as we see in the next slide. He says, no one comes to the Father except through me. In Acts chapter 4, salvation is found in no one else.

Only in Jesus Christ. In this world that has been polluted, Jesus is the only remedy. Jesus overcomes sin through the cross.

[14:04] He gives us a way out. Even though this world is still polluted, he has begun this process of redeeming us. Of redeeming us.

The second thing we see is that Jesus is the perfect example. Perfect example. And he submits to the Father.

He submits to the Father. When Jesus came into this world, all that he did was aligned with the Father. Was aligned with the Father.

His plan was to do the will of the Father. To save humanity and to share his love. And when we are aligned with God, we are blessed.

Right? We are blessed. It's like hitting that sweet spot in a tennis racket. We're hitting the sweet spot. And the thing is, if we do not live in the sweet spot that God has intended for us.

[15:08] To love him, to know him. Something feels out of sync. Right? Have you ever, as you guys are going through different decisions in your life.

And you've made a decision that seems not in the sweet spot where God has called you. You feel uncomfortable. You feel like there's disorder in your life.

We were at an Alpha weekend with some of the students. And we were praying for them. You know, that God would be with them and give them strength.

And the Holy Spirit would empower them. And as we were praying for students, interestingly, a lady came up to me. And I was like, Johnny, God has a message for you.

And I want to pray for you. And I was shocked at that time because we were all praying for the students. Imagine like a hundred students in this room. And all the mentors are just praying for them. But then this lady comes up to me and says, I have a message for you.

[16:14] And the message is, keep doing what you're doing. You're right where God wants you to be. And that's what Jesus is the perfect example of.

He was the perfect example of living in line with the will of the Father. He gives us that perfect example of how to depend on the Father.

To love others. To be humble. To be a servant. To wash the disciples' feet. To forgive and give mercy.

He gave the perfect example of compassion. He saw the crowd like sheep without a shepherd. And he had compassion upon them. He had righteousness and integrity.

And ultimately, it was his sacrificial love that gives us the perfect example. He lived in alignment with the Father's will.

[17:16] And that is why he's relevant. Because he gives us the perfect example of how to live in alignment with the Lord. The next thing is, Jesus promises peace amongst disorder.

Next slide. Yes. So the power of the cross. The perfect example with purpose. In alignment with the Lord. And Jesus is relevant because he promises peace in this world.

That is so seeking peace. He says, peace I leave with you. Peace I give you.

I give you a peace that the world cannot give. Peace comes through trusting in Jesus. That he died for us on that cross. And ultimately, it's not just peace on this earth.

But peace with God that leads to eternity. Even in the midst of our sufferings in this world that has been polluted and in disorder.

[18:27] There we can find peace because of what Jesus brings. Peace in the midst of disorder.

I was talking with one of our business owners in our church. And during COVID, it was a really hard time. Right? There was really little money coming in.

And he didn't know when his next client would be. Who would be. And he was talking to me. And he was like, yeah, I don't know, man. There's so much uncertainty in terms of my business right now.

And as a business owner, the buck stops with you. Everything stops with you. Like Stanford knows. You know, he's an AI guy. And he's running his own company.

Everything stops with you. And there was so much pressure. But he told me at the end of the day, he has peace. Because he trusts that God is with him.

[19:31] Jesus is leading him and guiding him. When James tore his Achilles. And there's just so much uncertainty.

He tore his Achilles, lost a leg, gained a child. I don't know which is tougher, Micah or Achilles. He had a sense of peace with him.

A peace that is beyond this world. And he was a great example of how to live in alignment with the Father. And even though walking with the Father might include different trials and sufferings in this world, he walked in peace.

And he was a great example for us of gathering strength from the Lord and peace from the Lord.

Did anybody watch the NBA finals?

Game seven? Within a couple minutes, there was a shock. Tyrese Halliburton tore his Achilles in the most important game of his life.

[20:38] And we all saw it. The same thing. Rolling on the ground. There was a pop. There was a pop.

Everybody saw it. And he was rolling on the ground. And we all knew. Could this be? And it was. Devastating. And yet, in the midst of this, Tyrese Halliburton released a statement.

I don't know how to explain it other than shock. Words cannot express the pain of this letdown. The frustration is unfathomable. This makes no sense.

At 25, I've already learned that God never gives us more than we can handle. I know I'll come out on the other side of this.

A better man and a better player. And honestly, right now, torn Achilles and all, I don't regret it. I'll do it again. And after all that, to fight for this city and for my brothers.

[21:42] For the chance to do something special. Even in the midst of the peak. Game seven. Championship on the line.

Torn Achilles. You don't know whether you're going to play the same way in the future. You don't know if you're going to play next season. He knows that God is with him. He has learned that God never gives us more than we can handle. Jesus offers us a peace that this world cannot give.

The second thing we're going to look at is, Jesus is the truth in a world of deception. Jesus is the truth in the world of deception. What is the current state of our world?

We're currently fact-checking, right? When we see a reel, we're like, is this real? Is this trade real? Right?

[22:40] I mean, NBA trade, not like financial trade. Students keep sending me reels. And I have to see, you know, is this AI or is this not? Right?

We're constantly checking. And honestly, in our life, we're constantly checking for the truth. Are we doing the right things at work? Is our boss pleased with us?

We're trying to find the truth. You know, are we pleased? Is our parents pleased with us? Is our son doing the right things? Right? The parents are trying to find, you know, find the truth.

Right? In our life groups, are our members growing? We're constantly trying to find the truth.

Pastors, we're trying to find the truth. How can we help the congregation to grow?

How can we disciple people to grow in love? In this world, we are constantly seeking after the truth. There's, I don't know if you've seen this in the last couple months, but now they can take your photo and your voice.

[23:48] And you can wake up and you can be saying whatever AI wants to say. Can you imagine your face being on the face of the news? Right?

With AI, it's going to get harder and harder to know what is the truth. Damien could be on the news next day saying things that he's never said before.

Because it's AI generated. We are seeking after truth and we need truth more than ever in this world of deception. Jesus is relevant because he says that he is truth itself.

Truth is not just an idea or a moral principle. It is a person. Jesus is the perfect revelation of God.

What does it mean that Jesus is truth itself?

He reveals the character of God. You have seen me. You have seen the father. Believe also in me as you have believed in the father.

[24:56] Jesus is God incarnate. God amongst us. He reflects the father. Jesus is God incarnate.

Just as Micah perfectly reflects Pastor James. Jesus is not just the teacher of truth.

He is the truth itself. To know him is to know God. To walk in the light. And to be freed from the lies of this world.

Jesus says that he is the true light. And those that walk with him will also walk in the light. Jesus is the truth that reveals God.

And that is why he is so relevant to us today. Without Jesus we can't truly know God. Because Jesus is the way and the truth in which we know get to know God.

[25:56] The second thing is Jesus gives us discernment through. Sorry. Jesus exposes the lies. Who is the father of lies?

Who is the father of lies? The devil is the father of lies. Right? And that is why he's given us the word. So that we can have it for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in all righteousness. Jesus has set us free from the lies of the devil. He is a liar and the father of lies. In the Garden of Eden. How did he persuade Adam and Eve?

How did he persuade Adam and Eve to eat that fruit? What did he say? You will not surely die. You will not surely die. Right?

Did God really say this? He makes you question God. Question the truth. And instead leaves you with lies and deception.

[27:07] You will not die. But your eyes will be opened. And you will become like God. Instead, Jesus gives us the Holy Spirit.

And through the Holy Spirit, he gives us discernment. The Holy Spirit is to be our counselor. And I will go away. And I will give you another counselor.

A counselor that will be with you forever. He is the spirit of? The spirit of truth. And that truth will set us free. As we are reading the word today, we are depending on the Holy Spirit to guide us.

To be our counsel. To enlighten us of the mysteries of God's word. As we are going through everyday different decisions, we are allowing the Holy Spirit to counsel us.

In our different directions. Is this the job I should take? Is this the school I should go to? We are given the Holy Spirit.

[28 : 14] So that we can discern the truth. So three things. Why is Jesus relevant? Because he is truth itself. He reflects the Father. He reveals the Father to us.

He exposes the lies of Satan. And he gives us the Holy Spirit. He gives us the Holy Spirit. The last thing.

Is that Jesus is the life in a world that is dying. Jesus is the life in a world that is dying. The current state of our world.

We see more and more moral decay. Right is wrong. Wrong is right. The normalization of sex outside of marriage. Adultery. Moral decay.

We see that more and more. Do you know how many abortions there are according to the World Health Organization each year? Induced abortions?

[29 : 14] 73 million. 73 million lives. Before you were born, I knew you in your mother's womb.

The increase of mental health situations. In 2023, SCMP did a study that youth suicides were among the highest in the developed world.

Right here in our Hong Kong. In our Hong Kong city. In 2023, suicides almost tripled in 10 years. 32 cases in 2023. We have students that sometimes message me and said, oh, somebody, I think, jumped from the school.

Or from their apartment building. And I'm like, are you okay? And I'm like, yeah. He's like, yeah, this has happened before. This should not be the norm. This should not be the norm.

[30 : 20] Our world is dying. The moral decay. The mental health issues. Is a reflection of our dying world.

Jesus is relevant because we were created for a spiritual relationship. A spiritual life. We were discussing yesterday in our university group.

What is the difference between animals and us? God gives us life. You know, God gives animals life. We have breath. They have breath. What is the difference?

The difference is we were made in his image. We were made in God's image. We were created for our relationship with God. God. Pascal says we were. We have a God shaped vacuum in our hearts.

And we try to fill it with all these different things. Right? Money. Power. Sex. And these things ultimately do not satisfy. Because we were created.

[31 : 25] For a perfect spiritual relationship with the Lord. And we saw that Adam and Eve had a relationship. A personal relationship with the Lord. They were talking with the Lord.

And so Jesus is relevant. Because he is the answer. To restoring that spiritual relationship. And he did that on the cross. He did that on the cross.

The next thing is. Jesus created us. For an eternal life. Without Christ. We are spiritually dead. In Ephesians chapter 2 verse 1.

We are spiritually dead. Dead in our trespasses and sins. But yet Jesus has conquered death. Once and for all. And he resurrected.

To prove that he is greater than death. He has overcome and conquered death. And now he gives us. The resurrected life. In John chapter 17.

[32 : 26] It says this. And this is eternal life. That they may know you. The true. The one and only true God. And Jesus Christ. Whom you have sent.

To know Jesus. Is to have eternal life. Only Jesus. Offers eternal life. In this world. Does Trump offer eternal life?

No. He offers a gold card. But this gold card. Will not get you into heaven. Right? It might get you in the United States. But it will not get you into heaven. Nobody else.

Offers eternal life. Confucius offers. Suggestions. On how to live a better life. Buddha. Buddha. Offered suggestions. On how to live a better life.

But none of them. Promised eternal life. And especially nobody. Is like Jesus. Because he. Only he lives.

[33 : 31] He died. And he rose from the dead. He's the resurrected life. No one comes to the father. Except through Jesus. Confucius died.

Buddha died. Gandhi died. But Jesus. Lives. Still. And because he lives. We have hope. We have life.

Eternal life. And lastly. We have the abundant life. Jesus says this. He came that we might have life.

And have it to the full. What does it mean? When Jesus says that. I have come. That they may have life.

And have it to the full. Jesus doesn't want us to merely exist. Or survive. Jesus wants us to have the full life.

[34:33] And that means to live. In joy. And in purpose. In a relationship with the Lord. We were reading Psalm 23.

Yesterday. And in the last section. It says that the Lord provides. A table before me. In the presence of my enemies. He anoints my head with oil.

And my cup overflows. This is a perfect example. Of what it means. To live the full life. The full life. He prepares a table. He prepares a table. We can always go home. And have a meal. His providence. He anoints me. He gives me purpose. And establishes me.

With his family. I'm rooted. And founded in his family. I'm a child of God. And my cup overflows. He blesses me. With prosperity. That is the full life.

[35:34] It doesn't mean that we have all the material possessions. He doesn't promise that. But he promises true joy. True peace. True love. True love. And that is.

Lived out. Through faith. In him. Lived out. Through faith. In him. I'll give an example.

Of a full life. I'll give an example. Of a full life. Um. Every job. That I've been given. Has been from the Lord.

Every job. When I was in university. In my fourth year. I was leading a Bible study. And one of the new students came in. And he was just in his first year. I got to know him. Maybe a couple weeks. And he was like.

Johnny. You're in your fourth year. What are you going to do? What are you going to do? We've all been there. Right? After university. Some of us. Or just out of high school. Right to jobs. Thinking. What do we do?

[36:36] What do we do? And I'm like. I don't know. Maybe I'll find a job. Maybe I'll. You know. Go and. Study my masters. And he's like. Johnny.

You want a job? I'll get you one tomorrow. And I'm like. Who is this guy? Right? Who is this guy? Who's going to get me a job tomorrow? I'm in my fourth year. University of Toronto.

Economics and philosophy. I mean. My GPA wasn't. You know. 4.0 or anything. I mean. Why is this guy giving me a job tomorrow? And I didn't think any of it. Anything of it. Because I just got to know him.

And he calls me up two weeks later. And he says. Johnny. My dad's willing to take a chance on you. And I'm like. What does your dad do?

That's the first thing he says. My dad's willing to take a chance on you. I'm like. Okay. What does he do? I mean. Is he Trump? Or is he. Am I working at Trump Tower? You know.

[37:33] Like. What's happening? So he runs a financial company. And he does reports for all the major banks in Canada. All the major banks in Canada. And so. You know. I dress up nice.

I have my resume prepared. And I'm ready for the interview. And I go in. And he's like. Johnny. This is my company. This is what you'll be doing.

This is one of your colleagues. He'll show you what you'll be doing. After you've seen what you'll be doing. Come back. And we'll discuss. If you want this job. You can have it.

It wasn't an interview. It was an introduction. It was an introduction. And so.

I worked part time. In my fourth year. And when I graduated. I worked full time. For two years. In the financial company. I know. I'm not. I don't look like a financial guy. Right? Like. This guy. He looks like he's poor.

[38:27] He doesn't know what he's doing. You know. Like. Just waste money on shoes. Right? I mean. These shoes are worth a lot. Don't make fun of me. They're worth a lot. If you don't know.

Anyways. The point is. If we live. In alignment. With the father. He provides us things.

Beyond what we can think. Or imagine. Even in the midst. Of our suffering. The Lord will provide. Peace for us. Even when we.

Have all this. Economic. Disorder. And. Insecurity. Jesus. Is our way. The truth.

And the life. And that is why he's relevant. Nobody else in this world. Promises. A way to the father.

[39:26] Eternal life. To the father. Only him. And so as we welcome. The worship team back up.

We're going to take some time. To respond. Let's just bow down our heads. And connect with the father. Today.

As you're seeking. God. Maybe you're here. At church. For the first time. For. The hundredth time. The thousandth time. But you don't know.

Jesus. Jesus is knocking. On the door of your heart today. And he wants.

To have a personal relationship with you. Jesus is relevant. Because he is alive today. And he's knocking. On the door of your heart.

[40 : 25] And he wants a personal relationship with you. He wants to.

Eat with you. He wants to. Offer you. Eternal life. To be your Lord.

And savior. He's knocking on the door of your heart. Is there anybody here today. Who wants to receive Jesus.

As their way. Their life. And their truth. Jesus died on the cross.

Once and for all time. So that our sins. Would be taken away. And so that we.

[41 : 26] Could have a personal relationship. With the father. Is there anybody here today. That wants to receive Jesus.

As their Lord and savior. As their Lord and savior. Would you raise your hand. And we're going to pray together. Father. In this world.

Where there is. So much uncertainty. Jesus offers. Peace. True peace.

This is the world. That cannot give. He wants to be your peace. Is there anybody. Raise your hand.

We would love to pray with you. To ask Jesus. To be your Lord and savior. Is anybody here today.

Any kids want to.

[42 : 30] Ask Jesus into their life. To be their Lord and savior. Savior. With childlike faith. We're going to say a prayer together.

To ask Jesus into our life. And. Repeat after me. Dear Jesus.

Repeat after me. Dear Jesus. I thank you. For creating us. To have a relationship with you.

Forgive me of my sin. I've gone my own way. I thank you. That you died on the cross.

For my sins. Once and for all time. And on the third day. You rose again. To conquer death.

[43 : 37] And sin. Jesus. Now I invite you. Into my life. To be the way.

The truth. And the life. To be my Lord and savior. I commit my life to you.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. Let us stand and respond to our living Lord. Heavenly Father, we thank you.

We look to you, the author of our salvation. Bless us as we go, that we can be a blessing to others, to share the good news of Jesus, what he's done in and through our life.

In Christ's name we pray, amen.