

Matthew 1:1-18

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 07 December 2014

Preacher: Paul Levy

[0 : 00] Amen. Noah thinks it's a boy.

Ellie thinks it's a girl. But we're at that stage of choosing names. There's a bit of disagreement. We are not of one mind.

And so somebody thinks of a name, one of us thinks of a name, and they say, well, that reminds me of such and such. Right, we can't have that name. And names are funny things, aren't they? I love names that are puns.

There's a great article on the BBC. I think it's the best article on the internet. You can Google it.

Where it's all people that have got names which are puns.

So, stand still. And hazelnut. And things like this. You're going to be thinking about them for the rest of us soon. But I love names that are puns.

[1 : 19] She won't mind me saying it, but when Penny Chew came to the church, it was a glorious day. And there's a real randomness, isn't there, in how we get our names?

In the old days, and still in parts of the world, people have one name. They've just got one name.

So you've just one name. David. John.

But because of the growth in population, a surname was added, wasn't it? So you might be David, but you were John's son. And so you became David Johnson. If you were Tom's son, you would become David Thompson.

If you were the son of a blacksmith, you would take the name Smith. Or if you were the son of a cook, then you became David Cook. If you were the son of a baker, you would take the name David Baker.

And then, added to that, isn't it? And they take on some kind of attribute. Long. Or short. Or white. Or brown.

[2 : 26] But names in the Bible aren't like that. There's not the kind of randomness that we've got. Names in the Bible are given deliberately. So let's just go back briefly to Numbers chapter 13.

Numbers chapter 13.

And the names are more remarkable. Look with me at Numbers chapter 13. I'm going to read from verse 4.

These are the names. Charles Spicer, 2 Spire, 2 Spire, 2 Cain, and 10 were bad, 2 were good. So it's a long list of names.

These were their names. From the tribe of Reuben. Shabua. The son of Zachor. The son of Simeon. Shaphat. The son of Hori. The tribe of Jude. Caleb. The son of Japhne. From the tribe of Issachar.

Igal. The son of Joseph. From the tribe of Ephraim. Hosea. The son of Nun. From the tribe of Benjamin. Palte. The son of Raphun. From the tribe of Zebulun. Gadiel. The son of Sodhi. From the tribe of Joseph.

[3 : 25] That is from the tribe of Manasseh. Gadiel. The son of Susi. From the tribe of Dan. Amiel.

The son of Gamali. From the tribe of Asher. Seth and the son of Michael from the tribe of Natalie Nabu, the son of Vopsi the tribe of Gad Gowl, the son of Mahi these were the names of the men whom Joseph sent to spy on the land and Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun Joshua you see that long listening one spy from each of the tribes of Israel and we see don't we verse 8 that the man from the tribe of Ephraim was Hoshea, son of Nun but then you look at verse 16 and he has a name change he renames him Joshua and so you have the two faithful spies you have Caleb and Joshua Caleb from Judah and verse 8 Joshua from Ephraim now I know a few people a few kids called Caleb or Joshua, they're quite popular but you do not meet people called

Shemua, Shaphat Eagle, Oshea Paul D, Galileo those sorts of names of the unfaithful spies I don't know about any of them but here's Joshua who was Oshea the son of Nun from the tribe of Ephraim and Caleb now come with me again to Matthew chapter 1 and here we are introduced to the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ which Rachel read for us Hebrew Messiah Christ is Greek and Mary is pledged we are told verse 18 can you see that she is pledged she is betrothed to Joseph she's pledged to be married to Joseph there are three stages of marriage in Judaism first there was engagement engagement it was like a kind of private matter it was worked out between families and then there was the public announcement of that engagement which is called the betrothal and they really didn't belong to each other then at that point but they didn't live with each other they were betrothed they belonged to each other but they didn't live with one another and in order to break that betrothal you needed a divorce and then finally there was this marriage ceremony in which the couple come together and they bear children they consummate the marriage now notice the problem is in verse 18 isn't it

Mary is pregnant in the betrothal stage so she wouldn't have been together with her husband she wouldn't have been living together with her husband they would not be one in the biblical sense but she is pregnant by the Holy Spirit which means she is a virgin and she is pregnant isn't she verse 19 Joseph has every right to expose her she could be stoned as an adulteress in those days but he is a righteous man and he determines that he will divorce her quietly but in his sleep in verse 20 an angel comes in a dream and says Joseph son of David from the line of David from the lineage of the royal king do not fear to take Mary as your wife for that which is conceived in her is from the holy spread and so we say don't we in the apostles creed

I believe in Jesus Christ God's only son who was born in Virgin Mary there's a great moment in presbytery right at the end of the meeting on Friday where the moderator was a great guy was proposing that we have that in the churches we would say in a certain part of the service in a baptismal service we would say the apostles creed exactly without changing any of the words which you would have thought we would all agree to it turns out there are four different versions of the apostles creed that I've seen churches use and so we're all going to agree to say the words of the apostles creed exactly without changing any of the words just the ones that we use it's bizarre absolutely bizarre anyway you didn't want to know that verse 21 where it told me she will give birth to a son she will give birth to a son did you notice that she'll give birth to a son not your son she'll give birth to a son not your son but she will give birth to a son and you are to give him the name Jesus so it's not random his name is a lack of dead so he has his name because it is a clear command and Jesus has chosen this name and those of you who know your Bibles at all will know that

Jesus is the Greek name of the Hebrew equivalent Joshua what does Joshua mean Joshua means God saves and Joshua leads the people into the land of Canaan and so therefore Joshua is seen as this saviour figure and now Jesus comes Jesus which is Joshua in Hebrew and Jesus is that name in Greek and his name means that God will save in fact his name says verse 21 he will save his people from their sins so there's a pun there isn't there do you see the pun in the name I love puns with names you shall call his name God saves for he shall save he shall save his people from their sins we know don't we in the Old Testament that God is the God who saves there's the promises that he himself will redeem Israel for all their sins but now we are told that God has come down in this little baby this anointed one and he's going to bring salvation to his people verse 21 the child is the anointed of God to save the people of God and so the one thing that you can expect in this church is you can expect in this church

[9 : 49] Easter servants at Christmas time I hope you don't complain about that we preach about the death and the resurrection of Jesus at Christmas because here we are told aren't we that this baby in Bethlehem has come in order to do what look what it says he has come in order to die he has come in order to rise he has come in order to save and who has he come to save he has come to save his people from their sins and that is what God determined and that's what Jesus would do now what does it mean to save this year it's been horrific Black Friday never heard of Black Friday before and then something called Cyber Monday you know what that is and what was so special about Black Friday and about Cyber Monday well they were about saving money weren't they it was all about if you buy on Black Friday you save this last couple of years we have made the change to Lidl why do we all like Lidl because Lidl saves Lidl saves Black Friday saves Lidl saves Jesus saves in fact if you go to the M4 when I was a little boy you get to Brick Ferry just past Fortal and on the

brick wall on this kind of big cliff it's kind of top of the valley there would be written on the rock in white writing Jesus saves and then Swansea we're in the first division of that point about two weeks somebody wrote underneath it Jesus saves Di Davis for Swansea schoolkeeper Jesus saves Di Davis doesn't now what's the difference what is the difference Black Friday saves Lidl saves Di Davis doesn't save Jesus saves what does it mean to you tonight that Jesus saves he saves from the Roman rulers he's political savior

Jesus saves from poverty he's an economic liberator is he no now look what it says he will save his people from their biggest problem and my biggest problem is sin my sin and your biggest problem is your sin so we think about the Lord's supper it brings you back to reality what is your great problem it's your sin and mine isn't it and that's why Jesus come it's the wonderful thing that he has come to be a savior from sin well I must face a God and you must face a God who is both just and who is holy and I have a record of sin which stands against me and this verse 21 tells me that you shall give him the name Jesus for he shall rescue his people from their sins now how does

Jesus rescue you from your sins I think the vast majority of people if they have any understanding at all would say this he does it by showing us how we can live he does it by showing us how we can live on Sundays no sometimes on the afternoons when I want to put a piece of quiet I let him watch the Bible beginners videos I don't know if you've ever seen them they are a work of genius for parents 25 minutes Adrian is writing that down and so we put on the prodigal son story the story began Jesus went around teaching people to be good did he is that alright in other words if you live the right way you will save and rescue yourself Jesus went around teaching people to be good no he didn't that if you live in a certain way if you're trustworthy and you're honest and you're faithful then somehow that will make yourself right with

God but that isn't what we believe that isn't what Christians believe do we believe that Jesus came to save and the way he saves me is to show me how I can live in a way that pleases!

[14:17] God well no he doesn't do that because you can't live in a way that pleases God you can't live the way that Jesus lived can you? there's no good me trying I simply cannot cannot save myself by living in a particular way if I look at you that is the case that Jesus didn't have to go to the cross to die in order to save you there is no power in trying to live morally I cannot save myself that way he do you see that he will save his people from their sins verse 21 that's what he's about he will stand me in a right relationship with God he will transform my marriage he will transform and put me in a right relationship with my children and he will put me in a right relationship with you all through his work on the cross how does he do it how does he rescue me from that which drags me down my sinful record that I cannot shake off but this passage doesn't tell us does it but the gospel of

Matthew does let's figure out in Matthew 20 verse 28 and it's a wonderful verse it tells you about how he saved Matthew chapter 20 verse 28 all the references are in Matthew 20 28 Jesus' most frequent way of describing himself is that of the son of man he says that even as the son of man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many let's think about that he gives like a ransom for many in other words you and I are in bondage to our sin and Jesus lays down his life to set me free from sin in other words

Jesus offers to God a perfect life at every point where I am disobedient he is obedient and yet he gives his perfect life up to God on the cross and he dies a death which he didn't deserve because he never sinned but he dies a death as my substitute and he offers to God a perfect life on my behalf and by living that perfect life for me and dying that death for me Jesus offers to God if I can put it like this a ransom to set me free from my sin record and does God accept it well to right he does how do you know well he raises Jesus from the dead doesn't he which is his guarantee which is his warranty that he's accepted the life and death of Jesus as being a redemptive life and death he gives his life for me the innocent for the undiscerning but flip over a few more pages just to Matthew 26 they're words which we know really well aren't they Matthew 26 as we take the sacrament of communion later Chris will read these words or other versions of these words that we find in the New Testament Matthew 26 and verse 28 Jesus says as he takes the cup he says for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins for the forgiveness of sins my forgiveness he says is freely available it's free to me forgiveness but it's very costly to God because it involved the very blood of God's own son you see Jesus offers a perfect life to God there is a substitution that takes place his death is a substitutionary death accepted by God and shown by his resurrection from the dead he stands in my place on the cross it is the cross that I deserve and you deserve but he did not deserve it and he dies on that cross for me one last

reference

Matthew 11 28 Matthew 11 28 they are wonderfully comforting words Matthew 11 28 come to me that's Jesus speaking come to me come to me all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I'm gentle and lowly in heart and you will find rest in your sins for my yoke is easy and my burden is light come to me you have given him the name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins and his resurrection well wonderfully it's not at the end of the story is it that's not the end of the story he is sent he goes back to heaven and he is seated at the right hand of God and from there he pours out his Holy

[20 : 09] Spirit on his people and now the Holy Spirit lives within us and leads us in the battle against the sin nature in the fight and the Holy Spirit brings forth in our lives the fruit of the Spirit but you've got to notice the order no Holy Spirit without the work of Jesus no fruit of the Holy Spirit no walking in honesty and patience and love without the Holy Spirit so without the work of Jesus there is no Holy Spirit I'm not saying the Holy Spirit didn't exist I'm not saying the Holy Spirit didn't work in the Old Testament of course I'm not saying that but in our experience no work of Christ no Holy Spirit without the Holy Spirit there is no fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives therefore this is my point you've got to have the work of

Jesus Christ as basic and trust in that work and through that work I am forgiven and through Jesus Christ work on the cross I receive the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit who lives in me and leads me in the battle against sin not to trifle and not to play around with sin David Brighard was the first missionary to the American Indians in North America and he was asked this when you go to those savages do you preach the morality he said I never preach morality I preach Jesus Christ and him crucified and transformed morality follows as the sure and inevitable fruit one after another but to preach morality you are preaching an impossibility that will only frustrate people he will bring salvation come to him come to the Lord

Jesus come trusting in his work on the cross and you will be saved and you will be forgiven and you will be given his Holy Spirit and your life will be transformed I think that's a massive danger isn't it that actually we think well being nice being kind speaking in really generic terms about God's love without ever telling them the message of the crucified God of Jesus Christ and him crucified we are teaching them morality we preach Jesus Christ and him crucified we tell them of a suffering saviour and they come to faith in a suffering saviour and the Holy Spirit he works in their lives and they are transformed and they are changed and they bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit and they begin to live more lives but you've got to get the order right haven't you the danger for us is we teach our children and the young people isn't it be good be good that's a good thing but we want their hearts changed don't we we want them to know

Jesus Christ that inclusive light and through that you know the word let me ask you two questions it's brief tonight are you one of his people are you one of his people have you come to him is your trust and your reliance in him and not in you not in you to earn your way somehow there but in him because God sent him to be the saviour call him Jesus Joshua for he shall save his people from their sins the second question is this I worry that very often I have preached the incarnation of Jesus Christ as if it's only a message for outsiders it's such a great evangelistic opportunity that we forget as believers to feed on the incarnation and so the second question is this I think Jesus saves his people from their sins so the question that we've got to ask is is the

Holy Spirit leading you and I not to dabble in sin but to continually turn away from it because God sent Jesus to be a saviour from sin giving him the name Jesus Joshua for he is that Christ the messiah and he has come to save his people from their sins Jesus name above all names beautiful saviour glorious lord Emmanuel God is with us blessed redeemer living word Jesus Jesus he has come to save us from our sins look at the last hymn before we sing it well it's not the last hymn before communion and for those who are observant you'll know that we sang it last Sunday morning now we normally don't repeat songs for months is normally my rule but we're going to sing it tonight part of you because it's so so good so look at verse 3 there are 10 descriptions of the [25 : 54] Lord Jesus in verse 3 of 299 it's number 299 it's written by John Newton it's the same guy that wrote amazing grace number 299 so the 10 descriptions Jesus my shepherd brother that is right John Newton actually wrote husband it's really interesting isn't it husband bride of Christ Jesus my shepherd husband friend my prophet priest and king my Lord my life my way my end 10 things except the praise I bring but look at the first verse how sweet the name of Jesus sons in a believer's year it soothes our sorrows heals our wounds and drives away our fear

I wonder whether Jesus has done that for you tonight because he can do that tonight as he comes to the table has he soothed your sorrows you've got them haven't you every single one of us has got them you've got those disappointments and griefs in life have you come to him and let him soothe your sorrows what about those wounds they're so deep and they're so hurtful aren't they and yet if you come to him he will heal and what about our fear those anxieties that we live with those worries that we have that we never ever seem to get hold of have we come to him and we have them drive had him drive away you shall call his name jesus joshua not o shay but joshua for he shall save his people from their sins let's pray