

Lie: Jesus May Not be Willing to Save You

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[0:00] I think the point of our worship right there was to say that being a Christian is the best thing in the world. I don't know if he's willing to save me.

Well, as we have opportunity on these afternoons, we've been looking at lies to keep you lost. Satan's lies to keep you lost.

Lies to keep you broken, guilty, undone, and going to hell. Lies to keep you there.

And one of his favorite and one of his oldest lies is this. Jesus might be able to save you, but who knows if he's willing to save you.

He might be able to save you, but he's not willing to save you. So if you go to him and you put all your weight on him, he might hold you and he might not hold you. Who's to say? We're not quite sure.

[1:20] He could if he wanted to, but that's not to say that he would, that he'd be willing to. So with that question in mind, I'd invite you to turn to Luke chapter 5 in your Bibles.

Luke chapter 5, and we're going to look at verse 12 and following. Luke chapter 5, verse 12. And it's in Luke 5 that we see our first point this morning or this afternoon.

It's a simple story with a big lesson. Simple story with a big lesson. So let's read it, verses 12 through 16. We'll stop there.

There's two things, you notice, to this man's request. There's willingness and there's ability. The man was sure of Jesus' ability.

You can make me clean. But the question was, was Jesus going to be willing? The question was the willingness. And so was Jesus willing to heal this man of leprosy?

[2:52] He was. He was. He was willing. Lord, if you're willing, you can make me clean. I am willing. Be clean. And immediately the leprosy left him.

There's no delay. There was no doubt. Jesus said yes immediately. Now that's a very simple story with a very important lesson. Jesus is willing.

And he's willing to save sinners. Now unless anyone thinks that, well, this man has leprosy. We're not talking about sin. We're talking about leprosy.

And he's innocent. And I'm not. I'm a sinner. I'm a sinner. So it's not the same.

Well, first I would say that this man isn't innocent either. For all have sinned, including this man. So he's not worthy of Jesus healing him for any reason.

[3:49] And furthermore, the leprosy in the Bible was a God-ordained picture of sin. It was a God-ordained picture of sin going all the way back to the Old Testament.

We don't have and we don't need to go back and look at all the passages from the Old Testament. But starting back in Leviticus, starting back in the tabernacle, God drew this picture.

Sin is like leprosy. Leprosy is like sin. So if you have leprosy, you cannot come near me, God says. You cannot come into my sanctuary.

You have to stay away from the temple. Now the point wasn't to pick on lepers. The point was to paint this picture to show us that leprosy is like sin.

Now, just bring that into this story. Bring that Old Testament background into Luke chapter 5. And you very well could simply say this. That Lord, if you are willing, you can save me from sin.

[4:52] I am willing. Be saved. Jesus dealt with uncleanness just like that. There's no hoops to jump through. There's nothing to do.

Jesus doesn't say, well, if you really mean it, you'll do this and that or something else. He doesn't look at him first and say, well, I don't know. I don't know if I'm willing. I don't know if I feel like it. I don't know if I want to. If you're willing, I am willing. So it's a simple story with a big lesson. And it's that simple.

It's just the simple story that drives a stake through the heart of Satan's lie that says, well, he might be able to. But who knows if he's willing to save me.

So what is Satan attacking with that lie? What is he going at? What is he hanging his hopes on with that lie? Well, he's attacking Jesus' goodness.

[5:54] He's not attacking Jesus' power or Jesus' ability. He's attacking Jesus' goodness, kindness, God's kindness. It's the very same lie that he told in the garden.

It was what's going on behind the scenes in the garden. Did God really mean to do you good? Is he really telling you the whole truth? Is he really keeping you from something good?

I think he is, Satan says. How can he be good if he won't give you that fruit too? Now, no one will ever come to Jesus unless this lie has been dealt with.

This lie that Jesus is not only able, but he is willing to save sinners. He's not a reluctant savior, but a willing and ready savior.

So Satan will keep you in your leprosy. He will keep you in your pig pen. He will keep you in your sin. On the road to hell, he'll keep you there. And you'll stay there as long as you think that Jesus is not willing to save you.

[6:58] Now, his heart, Jesus' heart is not slow to receive sinners. We're slow to get up out of our filth and our pig pen.

But he's not slow in throwing his arms around us and welcoming us, is he? It's that lie. It's that lie. God may be able to help, but who knows if he will help.

It's that same lie that makes Christians doubt in trials. So this lie isn't just something that unbelievers struggle with and believe.

It's something that Christians struggle with. It makes Christians reluctant to pray. It keeps the lost lost, and it keeps Christians weak and sad and not leaning on Jesus.

And so it's not just lost people that need to hear this truth, to believe the truth. It's us, brothers and sisters. We need to remember that God is not only able, he is willing.

[8:04] Jesus is not only able, he is willing. See, the lie makes God out to be arbitrary, willy-nilly. Sometimes he helps you, sometimes he doesn't. Who knows what God will do?

Sometimes he cares, sometimes he doesn't. Who can know? He's able, but on any given day, he might not be willing. So it's not just the lost that need to hear this.

It's every Christian. It's Christians as well. Now, we have six truths, six remedies to correct this lie. Six beams of light out of our Savior's heart that shows us that this is not, this is just an utter and complete lie. And so meditate on these things.

Think about these things this week. Think about them. Meditate on them until the Holy Spirit convinces you that these things are true. So here's six remedies to Satan's lie.

[9:01] Number one. So remember, here's the lie. Jesus is able to, but he's not willing to save you. So number one. Jesus' great journey to save sinners shows that he's willing to save them.

Jesus' great journey to save sinners shows that he's willing to save them. Jesus came to earth to save sinners. He came to save sinners.

He came on a great journey from heaven to earth to save sinners. Matthew 9, 13. I didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. So why did you come all this way, Jesus?

Why did you come from heaven to earth to save sinners? The whole point of him coming was to call sinners to repentance. Not the righteous, sinners.

1 Timothy 1, 15. Here's a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the worst, Paul says.

[10:07] So why did you come all this way, Jesus? To save sinners. Bad sinners? Yes, the worst sinners. Come to save them.

So Satan's lie that Jesus isn't willing, it doesn't make sense. It doesn't make sense. It doesn't fit in with everything that we know about Jesus.

So suppose that I had a certain car that I wanted to buy. And this car is only available in California for whatever reason. And so I have to, if I really want this car, I have to travel to California.

And I really want the car. So I purchase a ticket. I go through the airport and the security and the hassle of all of that. And I, you know, cramp myself into that little seat.

And I fly all the way to California to buy this car. Now, put yourself into the shoes of a salesman who sees me and knows what I've been doing to get this car.

[11:07] Put yourself into that salesman's shoes. How would you feel about the possibility of making a sale that day? You're thinking, I've got this in the bag.

This guy is just waiting for someone to sell him a car. Now, would you say, well, I know he can, but I don't know if he's willing. He came all this way.

I came all the way to California to buy this car. Now, you would say, I've got the sale in the bag.

He's willing. He's ready. Let's make the sale. Now, Jesus came from highest heaven to the world to save sinners.

That says he's willing. So look at Jesus. Look at Jesus' heart and ask yourself, why am I not saved? Why am I not saved? Who's to blame here? Who's not willing? Number two. His willing humiliation shows he's willing to save sinners.

[12:13] His willing humiliation shows he's willing to save sinners. So coming to, from heaven to earth, he took off the robes of glory.

He hid those things. He became a man. He was God, but he made himself nothing, taking upon himself the very form of the servant, the very nature of a servant, and he humbled himself.

That passage in Philippians is important to show, see who's doing the humbling. He is. He didn't become a man because he had to.

He made himself nothing. He humbled himself. He did this to himself. He put aside the crown and the joy and the glory of heaven in order to become a man, in order to save sinners.

He did all of that in order that he could save sinners. And so it wouldn't make any sense to do all of that, to humble himself, just to turn around, and then when a sinner comes, to refuse him and to deny him and to say, no, I'm not willing.

[13:30] If he's willing to do that, then he's going to be willing to receive sinners. So the lie doesn't make sense. It turns Jesus into some sort of schizophrenic.

He wants one thing, but he says no to the very same thing in another second. No, he's willing. He's willing. Number three, he went to the cross willingly.

Surely that says he's not only able to save sinners, but he's willing to save them. You don't fight through an ocean of blood and pain and wrath.

You don't sail through a sea of trouble and grief and misery that sinners might be pardoned and forgiven and justified just to deny them when they come for those things, just to deny a sinner when he comes for pardon.

Jesus faced the shame and the agony and he faced the hell of the cross that sinners might be reconciled, saved, justified, pardoned.

[14:34] And so again, look at Jesus' heart. This is a great beam of light showing us that he is willing to save. He's saying, I am ready to save sinners.

If you come, I am ready. I'm willing. Number four, look at who he sends into the world. Look at who he sends into the world and the message that they carry.

Who did Jesus send into the world after his ascension? Were they judges with swords or were they heralds with good news? Well, I don't carry a sword and I don't judge and condemn any man.

Jesus sent pastors and preachers and apostles and teachers as ambassadors. Ambassadors. 2 Corinthians 5, 19 and 20. He has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. So we're his ambassadors.

[15:42] And what is the message that our king puts in our mouths and tells us to tell? To everyone. What does he want us to say? It's be reconciled to God. The king's arms and hands are wide open.

And so we entreat and we woo. We say again and again, be reconciled to God. We don't say it one time. We say it many times until he comes.

And so you have to ask yourself, if you aren't saved, why not? Why not? If you're doubting God's goodness and his willingness to help, you have to ask why.

Why aren't you reconciled? Why are you doubting God's goodness? Satan's lie makes no sense. If we had a sword in our hand and we were breathing out threats and we were chopping off heads, then you would have a reason to be afraid of our God and say, well, I don't want anything to do with him.

But God's word to you is free grace. Salvation for the taking. The door is open. Enter while there's room. Number five, listen to Jesus' complaints.

[17:01] Listen to how Jesus complains, as it were. Does he complain and say, why do you bother me? Does he ever say, why are you here? Why are you keep asking me for help?

Do a homework assignment and look up that passage where it says, Jesus said no to the person who was asking for help. How does Jesus complain?

John 540, you refuse to come to me to have life. Jesus doesn't complain that they come to him to be saved. He complains that they don't come to him to be saved.

He's more willing to save the sinners than the sinners are willing to be saved. Listen to his complaint. Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you. How I have longed to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. But you were not willing. I've longed.

[17:57] I've reached out my arms. I've said, come, gather in, come in. But you were not willing. So you doubt God's goodness.

You doubt Christ's willingness. And yet he stands and says, why are you still out there? Come on in. Come under my wings and I'll save you. Jesus doesn't complain that people come to him to be saved.

He complains because they stay away from him. Number six, last. Listen to Jesus rejoicing. Look at how Jesus rejoices.

You can read again and again Luke 15. And you should. Again and again, Luke 15. Lost sheep found and the man rejoices.

Lost coin found and the man rejoices. Lost son found and the man rejoices. Jesus is saying, that's me.

[19:00] And if he rejoices to receive returning sons, doesn't that say he's willing? He's willing to help. He's willing to save. He's full of grace. See, when the father in the story saw the son a long way off, he ran to him and threw his arms around him.

Now you notice that father saw that son when he was a long way off. That means he had been looking. He'd been looking on the horizon all the time. When will the son of mine return?

So he's scanning the horizon and now he rejoiced when his prodigal son returned. See, Jesus is not only able, he is willing. And he's not only willing, it's his joy to save all those who come to him.

So even in his willingness, there's no reluctance. It's full of joy. So Satan's lie is utterly stupid because who would ever deny themselves joy?

Who would not be willing to make himself happy? Who would not be willing to do something that brings joy to himself? See, Jesus receiving and welcoming and pardoning sinners brings him joy.

[20:16] So why aren't you saved? Why do we doubt Jesus' goodness? Why do you doubt God's love for you?

Satan's lie is illogical. It doesn't make any sense. The truth is that Jesus came from heaven to earth and he came from the earth to the cross.

He came from heaven to experience hell to save sinners. The whole story was the purpose of saving those who would come to him.

And now he sends his ambassadors into the earth and they shout, salvation, full and free, free grace for anyone who comes. And then he complains that men won't come.

But when they do, he rejoices. And so what are you waiting for? Why are you doubting? Get up and get going to Jesus.

[21:16] Let's pray. Heavenly Father, forgive us for thinking or not thinking about you as we ought. Forgive us for forgetting how willing you are and how full of grace you are and how you take the steps in order to save us.

And you do save. And you're willing to receive all who come to you. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for all that you did on our behalf. Will you help us to remember those things and to think and understand you through those things.

That we would not make you out to be something different than what you have presented and showed yourself to be in the gospel. help us not to make a God in our own image and in our own imagination, but look at the gospel and see your heart and the kind of God that you are.

So please, rescue us from our own vain imaginations. Rescue us from our own unbelief. Rescue us from that place of darkness that we naturally dwell in.

And bring us into the light, every single one of us. for us who are Christians, thank you for opening our eyes that we saw that you love us. You love us despite of all of our sin and our failure.

[22:40] You love us in order to make us holy like you. I pray that you would open the eyes of the lost here that they might see that it's entirely on them.

That they are away from you and they are lost. not because you aren't willing, but because they haven't been willing. Break them free and rescue them, I pray.

It's in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.