

# 1.5.22 am

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Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning and a warm welcome to the service this morning. It's good to see some visitors with us and you're especially welcome today. There's tea and coffee after the service if you're able to stay behind not just the visitors but everybody then it would be good to get the chance to enjoy some fellowship together. I'm conscious as well that it's good to see a number but we're conscious there's quite a few missing this morning and we know of some who are isolating at home with COVID so a warm welcome to those who are not in the building but who are watching at a distance and our prayers are for them at this time. The evening service is tonight at six and I'm not taking the service it's Slavic Gospel Association. Derek Maxwell who's been with us a couple of times and Derek I expect will give us a bit of an insight into how things are in Ukraine and how things are in terms of the conflict and how God's people are coping in the midst of all that. So I would really encourage you to come out in the evening. I know there's quite a proportion of those in the morning who don't come out in the evening but it would be really good to see as many as possible about this evening as we are able to hear and then pray for the situation in Ukraine and Russia.

The intimations you've seen on the screen before the service, the ladies Bible study on Monday and Thursday, Little Fishers on Tuesday, Road to Recovery on Tuesday, Prayer Meeting on Wednesday on Zoom and in person. Friday clubs are back on this week and the services next Sunday will God willing be taken by myself. Two more things I think. There's a ladies night this coming Friday night and that will be, there'll be a guest speaker Sharon Dickens who's been here before so be encouraged to come to that if you qualify. And there was a couple more dates for the diary which I failed to note. But maybe Murdo's got them on the screen. There was a men's curry night. Yeah. If you can just maybe flick on for a second. 14th of May men's curry night we're hoping to have and I think there was one more date for the diary and I'm trying to remember what it was for. 21st of May Sunday school trip over to Ness. So you can note these things. You did see some pictures on the screen before the service began as well and that was some pictures of the the connect and the jam kids who went over to the bays stockinish and who had an easter egg hunt. So we had a great day thanks to those who who helped out with that and keep on playing for these wee ones. So I think these are all the intimations and we'll begin this time of worship. Now we're going to sing from the Psalms and we're going to sing

Psalms 51 verses 6 through to verse 13. Behold thou in the inward parts with truth delighted art and wisdom thou shalt make me know within the hidden part. Do thou with hyssop sprinkle me I shall be cleansed so you wash thou me and then I shall be whiter than the snow. Down to the end of verse 13.

The words are on the screen and we'll stand to sing to God's praise. So let's stand to sing. Behold thou in the inward parts with truth delighted art and wisdom thou shalt make me know within the hidden part.

Within the hidden part. Do thou with hyssop sprinkle me I shall be cleansed so.

[ 4 : 20 ] yea, wash thou me and then I shall be whiter than the snow. Of gladness and of joyfulness, make me to hear the voice. the soul of gladness and of joy.

make me to hear the voice. the soul of gladness and of joy. the soul of gladness and of joy.

the soul of gladness and of joy. make me to hear the voice. note and of gladness and of joy. the soul of gladness and of joy. But so these heavy bones wish thou As broken may rejoice All mine iniquities got us Thy fence hide from my sin Create a clear heart for renew Arise with me within Cast me not from thy sight

For take thy Holy Spirit away Restore me thy salvation's joy With thy free spirit me stay Then will I teach thy ways unto Those that transgressors be And those that sinners are Shall then be turned unto thee Let's unite our hearts in prayer

Let's pray Our Heavenly Father we thank you for this day And we thank you for giving us the desire And the health and the strength The opportunity, the freedom To gather in this place And to wait upon the Lord To bring our worship To sing praises to you And we thank you that the way for us is open Not just in the temporal sense In the civil sense But we thank you that the way for us to worship Is open in the spiritual sense Because Jesus is the way And he has opened up the way We sang the words in the psalm As we finished there Of those that transgressors be Those sinners that need to be turned back to God

[ 7 : 57 ] And we don't sing these words looking at other people We sing these words looking at ourselves At our own hearts And we confess As we are helped to through this psalm The reality and the presence of sin In our lives and in our hearts We confess Lord that We are sinners in our nature We are sinners in the things that we do We confess Lord that The things that we want to do We so often leave undone We don't have the power to do it In our own strength And the things that we don't want to do That we recognise are sin We find ourselves straying back into We are people who are weak We are people who are vulnerable to temptation We are people who fall and who fail We are transgressors We are sinners Lord And we confess that with the psalmist

As we think back over the last few days We even in the silence of this place Before you In the secrecy of our own hearts Lord We confess Where we have fallen And where we have failed We name these sins before you And we pray that these sins would be washed away In and through the blood of Jesus We thank you that we often sing of that fountain of blood There is a fountain filled with blood Drawn from Emmanuel's veins And sinners plunged beneath that flood Lose all their guilty stains So we pray that you would cleanse us Lord As we come before you Wash us in the blood of Jesus And we thank you Father once more For sending your son Jesus into this world To seek and to save sinners like us

We thank you that Jesus lived To meet that perfect standard of holiness And perfection that is required For a holy God We thank you that he did it for us And we thank you that he went to the cross He bore our shame He who knew no sin became sin For us So that we can become righteous And through faith in him So once more Lord We thank you for the cross And once more we thank you for the The resurrection of Jesus On the first day of the week On this day He rose from the grave Showing that the work of salvation was done And showing that all the promises That he made of eternal life Of resurrection life Were true For all who believe So grant to us faith we pray You know our hearts You know each person who is

Sitting here this morning You know and you see those Who are at home And who are watching Who are listening At a distance And we ask that you would give to us faith That you would take away Scepticalism That you would take away Cynicism That you would sweep away doubts And that you would give to us That faith Which is a gift From God Faith that we may take hold Of the truth Of scripture That we may come to Jesus And find the rest And the salvation That he alone can give We pray Lord For those who are In particular need this week We are always conscious Of ourselves And others And the needs that we have We pray Lord For those who are absent Just now Who are struggling with ill health Some who have COVID And who are isolating We pray that The strain

That they endure at this time Would not be too difficult to bear That you would strengthen them Lord That you would protect them And that they would be over This virus soon We thank you That we feel that we are coming out Of what has been a difficult few years We pray that we would Not have learned nothing Through this But that we would Have learned And continue to learn To take shelter in you To trust in you When we see that all around us Is so subject to change And decay So we pray for those Who are at home We pray for those in hospital As well We think of Alice Ann In particular We ask Lord That you would Speed her recovery After surgery We ask that you Would be near to her We pray Father for those Who are grieving We think of the family Of Mary Bell And so many in the community Who will feel That sense of loss And we pray for your comfort For them And for those

[13:00] Who have lost loved ones In past weeks and months We continue to pray That you would grant To them comfort And strength We are aware That for many Life goes back to normal But for those Who have lost Ones who were close to them Nothing is normal And so we pray That you would sustain them That you would help them Pray for those Who have gone from Harris To Lewis To care homes We think of Donald And Mary Having gone to Dineshia And we ask Father That you would be near to them And that you would help them At this time And be with the family And we pray for Our young ones as well Those who are Thinking about The exams coming up Over these next few weeks Give to them Your peace And help them As they study To know The strength of God And help them Help us Lord In every situation Not to worry Not to be anxious But to take An anxiety And to cast it

Upon you We pray for those Who are elderly as well As we pray for the young Those who are housebound Those who feel lonely We thank you That you are with them Always And we pray That they would know Your presence Where they are just now So hear our prayers And continue with us We ask We commit this day to you And we pray for tonight And for Derek Maxwell As he comes to To speak to us About Ukraine And about Russia And about All that's going on At this time We ask that you Would help him That you would give him The words to say And that you would Help us to pray For that situation As we learn more About what's going on In that place So hear our prayers And take away our sin Help us to fix our eyes On Jesus For we pray these things In Jesus name And for his sake Amen Boys and girls There's not many of you Today but if you Want to come out Please If you want to Is it just Lois and Ailey

And Miriam And Jake Okay Oh well The pressure's on you guys Today You can come a wee bit Forward Well Let me tell you I can't see you Ailey Do you want to sneak Round here Just so I can Just so I can see you On this side Of the lid I was in Edinburgh This week past And I want you Just to picture I was staying With a friend of mine To me he's called McGilvery To you he's called Dustboy Because he tends to Come to the holiday clubs And he stays in a block Of flats A bit like the new flats That are up At the school So I think there's Three levels up But just They look very much Like the flats That are in the school So they're just Normal kind of flats Loads of people Clusters of flats All over the place And it looks very much Like a city So I was just walking Up to the flat For the first time On Monday I think it was

And I had my suitcase And I was just Getting organised To get To get in And get settled And As I was approaching The front door There was bins Just off to the right And I looked And I saw something That surprised me What do you think It might have been?

It's a big wide open Question That one That would take us Till twelve o'clock I'll give you a clue It was an animal Any guesses? Lois?

[16:37] A rat Not a rat Not a rat Ailey? A mouse Not a mouse It's good guesses But I wouldn't have been Surprised to see These things But not a rat Not a mouse Any other guesses?

Jake? A fox How did you get that? So early on Have you and Michael Been in training? A fox Have you ever seen a fox?

My mum has Your mum has In Essex In Essex Yeah I've never seen a fox I've never seen a fox In my life before But as I was walking Towards the flats I was looking And I was thinking That's a big fat cat Going towards the bin And I got a bit closer And I looked And I thought That's no cat There he is There he is On the screen Look And that's probably Almost the actual Size of the thing It was massive Huge big fox I was approaching The flat I actually started Googling Do foxes Attack humans?

That's how big it was Well they're not It was in Edinburgh And so a big fox And as I got closer To the front door It kind of looked up To me It didn't look too bothered I think I had a more Bothered look on my face Than the fox did And then it just Wandered off Casually So I went Into the flat And I said to McGilvery I said You never believe What I saw At your front door Massive big fox He says Oh yeah They're always here Raiding the bins Causing a mess If anything's left out The foxes are in And they're in about it And they're Making a mess So McGilvery McGilvery said Yeah You have to You have to Watch out for the foxes Now Can you guys Remember a song In Sunday school The older ones Might have to answer Maybe the really older ones Might want to answer This question

Can you remember A song from Sunday school That was about a fox Remember it Who's like a fox The devil Can we get a verse Of it Gordon please The devil Is a sly old fox If I could Catch him I'd put him in a box Lock the door Throw away the key For all the Tricks He's played on me See the devil Is a bit like a Sneaky Sneaky Sly fox And just like The fox Is making a mess All over the bins And making a mess Around the flats The devil Wants to make a mess In our hearts Doesn't he He wants to Cause trouble He wants to Do damage And he wants

[ 19 : 45 ] To tempt us And there can be Lots of things We can be tempted To do We might Start to get Annoyed one day We might be Tempted to start Swearing He'll put words In our heads Say go on Say it Or we might Feel our Temperature Is rising And our Fists start To clench In our House And our Sister's Getting close And we Think If I Just With my Wallet I'd feel A lot Better We're Getting Tempted Or it Might be You know We're Sitting With a Device And our Granny Or our Senna Or our Mum Or our Dad Have said I don't Want you Looking On YouTube There's All that Rubbish That's On there And you Think Nobody's Watching Maybe I Could Just Have a We Search And you You're Tempted to Watch Something On YouTube That you Know you Shouldn't Be Or it Might be Tempted You might Be tempted To not Do things

That you Should be You sit Down with Your Bible For a We While And then All these Thoughts are Coming into Your head And the Phone's Pinging And you Think I'll do It later And the Devil was Behind all These kind Of things Sneaking And Sly Work To try And get Us to Move away From Jesus That's just A few Of his Tricks So we Have to Keep A watch Out on The devil But we Have to Keep our Eyes Fixed On Jesus You know There's a Verse in The Bible It's in Song of Solomon Verse 15 Of chapter 2 And it Says Catch the Foxes For us The little Foxes That spoil The vineyards And you Know We're Not Strong Enough Ourselves To catch The devil And to Beat the Devil But tell

Me this Who Is strong Enough To beat The devil You can All see It Nice and Loud God Yeah Who Came to This World To destroy The works Of the devil To beat The devil Jesus Did And where Did he Go To finish The devil Off To the Cross That's right At the Cross Jesus He beat The devil And he Promises That if we Keep our Eyes on Him If we Trust him We stay Close to Him He will Protect Us And even Sometimes Just when I As I Finish Just now Even Sometimes Sometimes we're Tempted And we Know we Shouldn't Do Something And we End up Doing It And we Think what A mess I've Made Now What do We do Then When the Devil Tempts Us and We Make a Mess What do

We do For us We just Ask God To wash Away Our sins Like the Psalm that We were Just singing The man Who wrote The psalm He made A big Mess But he Didn't Say oh I can't Come back To God He came To God And he Said please Forgive My sin And clean Up the Mess And make Me right With you Again We can Never end Up in So big A mess That there's Not a Way back To God And so We just Come and We ask Him Because of All that Jesus has Done We can Be forgiven So let's Let's pray Now and ask God for Help Lord God We thank You that You love Us and We thank You that You have Promised that When we Come to You in Prayer you Hear our Prayers and You help Us We thank You that You've told Us the Truth about This world As well and The fact that There is a Devil Who wants To do Us damage

We thank you That you That you tell You tell us That because You love Us and We thank you Lord Jesus That you came To this world To beat the Devil we thank You that on The cross on That place that The devil thought He had won You actually Won you Defeated him And you Defeated death And you Broke the Power of Sin And we Thank you That when We simply Ask you From our Hearts Please Forgive me Please Wash away My sin And please Protect me From the Devil's Crafty schemes You promise That you Will do That So we Pray that You would Do that In our Lives In our Hearts Today And every Day And we Pray this In Jesus Name Amen Thank you Boys and Girls for For listening You Well we're Going to Sing now And we'll Sing Mission Praise 51 Be thou My Vision Be thou

[ 24 : 55 ] My Vision O Lord Of My Heart Not Be All Else To Me Save That Thou Art Thou My Best God By Day Or By Night Waking Or Sleeping Thy Presence My Light Be Thou My Wrist Thou Thou My True Word I Ever With Thou With Me Lord Thou My Great Father I Thou Thou Thou In Me Dwelling

I With Thou You Be Thou my battle, shield sword for the fight.

Be Thou my dignity, Thou my delight. Thou my soul's shelter, Thou my high tower.

Praise Thou me at work, O power of my God. Richest I lead, not for unempty grace.

Thou mine inheritance, now and always. Thou art the holy first in my heart.

[ 27 : 00 ] I, King of heaven, my treasure, the heart. I, King of heaven, after victory won.

May I reach heaven's joy, O bright and sun. Heart of my own heart, whatever be called.

Still be my vision, O ruler of all. Okay boys and girls, if you head through to Sunday school.

Finley's not too sure. He's heard how amazing the sermons are. He wants to stay. We're going to read now from God's word.

Luke chapter 20. Luke chapter 20.

[ 28 : 26 ] We will read from verse 1. One day, as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple courts and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, together with the elders, came up to him.

Tell us by what authority you are doing these things, they said. Who gave you this authority? He replied, I will also ask you a question. Tell me, John's baptism, was it from heaven or from men?

They discussed it among themselves and said, if we say from heaven, he will ask, why didn't you believe in him? But if we say from men, all the people will stone us because they are persuaded that John was a prophet.

So they answered, we don't know where it was from. Jesus said, neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. He went on to tell the people this parable.

A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time. At harvest time, he sent a servant to the tenants so that they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard.

[ 29 : 35 ] But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty handed. He sent another servant, but that one they also beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty handed. He sent a third and they wounded him and threw him out.

Then the owner of the vineyard said, what shall I do? I will send my son whom I love. Perhaps they will respect him. But when the tenants saw him, they talked the matter over.

This is the heir, they said. Let's kill him and the inheritance will be ours. So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them?

He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. When the people heard this, they said, may this never be. Jesus looked directly at them and asked, then what is the meaning of that which is written?

The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone. Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed.

[ 30 : 39 ] The teachers of the law and the chief priests looked for a way to arrest him immediately because they knew he had spoken this parable against them.

But they were afraid of the people. Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us. We're going to sing again now in Gaelic. The first two stanzas of Psalm 95.

I'll read it in English. So come, let us sing to the Lord. Come, let us, everyone, a joyful noise make to the rock of our salvation. Let us before his presence come with praise and thankful voice.

Let us sing psalms to him with grace and make a joyful noise. We'll sing these verses on the screen to God's praise.

And we sing in Gaelic and remain seated to sing in Gaelic. Let us sing in Gaelic.

[ 32 : 02 ] Let us sing in Gaelic.

Let us sing in Gaelic.

Let us sing in Gaelic.

Let us sing in Gaelic. Let us sing in Gaelic.

Let us sing in Gaelic. Let us sing in Gaelic. Let us sing in Gaelic. Let us sing in Gaelic. Salamu Gah Salamu Gah Salamu Gah Salamu Gah Salamu Gah Salamu Gah Salamu Gah Well if you could open your Bibles now please in Luke chapter 20 and we'll pray as we come back to God's word Heavenly Father we thank you for this passage that we have read and we pray now for the help of the Holy Spirit as we study it. We do not have eyes to see that are natural, we don't have ears to hear, we don't have hearts that are responsive to your word because we are fallen but we pray that through the intervention, the work of the Holy Spirit, our eyes would be opened, our ears would be unblocked our hearts would be stirred take away every distraction we pray, help us to listen help us to hear, help us to respond in a way that brings glory to your name and salvation to our souls we pray for the young ones those who are through in the other room just now and many more who are at home or away on holiday this weekend and we ask that you would bless them wherever they are, that they would grow up to know you to trust you, we pray on for the the babies those who are in the creche and those who are here and those who are at home as well we thank you again for the safe delivery of little

[ 36 : 09 ] Evelyn and we pray your blessing on her and your blessing upon Isabel and we pray for all the the young ones that we have prayed for we thank you for them and for the answer that they are to prayer and we pray on for your protection on the young children that we have not yet met who are within the world bless them and protect them we pray and be with the mumps that you would look after them through this time so hear our prayers help us Lord and be with all other congregations who meet close to us or far from us wherever the word of God is preached faithfully where Christ crucified and risen is proclaimed be at work Lord we pray building your church and we ask this in Jesus name Amen there's a few here probably there's more than a few here who have retired some in recent years some in not so recent years there are others who are approaching retirement some who are approaching the end of a job who have been in a particular place for a while and when we come to the end of our work in life whether it's retirement or whether it's the end of one job and preparing for another on the last day or the last few days things tend to wind down you know the intensity levels that may have been there in the the sort of cut and thrust of your working life they can they can kind of drop a little and for many people the last day at work or even the last day at school it's not really a a working day you know it's a day where you go in but there's cake and there's tea and there's coffee and there's maybe speeches and parties it's a the last day is often a day for taking it easy and although Luke doesn't tell us in this chapter when we take Luke 20 alongside the other parallel gospel accounts

I'm not going to give you the workings of this just now but when we look at this day in comparison with the other gospel records it's clear that this day is actually the last day for Jesus to be in the temple courts for a number of days he's been preaching and teaching and many many times in the past he has been in the temple courts but you could say that this was Jesus last working day in the temple courts so what do we see him do do we see cake and coffee and taking it easy well we don't what we see Jesus doing is we see him working and that's the first point we see here the work of Jesus three points in the time that we have hopefully there's the work of Jesus and then there's questions for Jesus that are fired at him and then if we have time we'll look at the the answer of Jesus so first of all the work of Jesus look at verse 1 one day as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple courts and preaching the gospel this is Jesus last day this one particular day and we see Jesus he is teaching the people in the temple courts and he is preaching the gospel now if we rewind from Jesus last day in the temple courts to Jesus at age 12 in Luke chapter 2 we are given a picture of what Jesus was doing we know the birth of Jesus we have an account of that we don't know very much beyond that but then there's this episode when Jesus is age 12 and it's recorded for us in Luke chapter 2

Jesus has visited Jerusalem with his parents for the festival of the Passover but there's a problem and the parents of Jesus Mary and Joseph they recognise all of a sudden that Jesus is missing so there's panic we can imagine and we're told in Luke chapter 2 what happened next so I'll just read this you don't need to go there just now but it says in verse 43 of Luke chapter 2 when they had finished the days as they returned the boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem and Joseph and his mother Mary Joseph and his mother did not know it but supposing him to have been in the company they went a day's journey and sought him among their relatives and acquaintances so we have this big crowd who are making their way back home they assume Jesus is in the crowd but he's not in the crowd so when they did not find them verse 45 they returned to Jerusalem seeking him now so it was after three days they found him in the temple sitting in the midst of the teachers both listening to them and asking them questions and all who heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers so when they saw him they were amazed and his mother said to him son why have you done this to us look your father and I have sought you anxiously and Jesus said to them why did you seek me did you not know that I must be about my father's business so before Jesus public ministry even began we find him in Jerusalem in his father's house in the temple courts and he's about his father's business he's working and now as we fast forward some 21 years later in the final days of Jesus life things have gone full circle and Jesus is once more in Jerusalem in his father's house about his father's business and he's working he's teaching the people the bible he's preaching the gospel literally what he's doing is he is announcing the good news that he had lived for us that perfect life and that he would soon die for us on the cross and that he would rise from the dead so that we could be saved

Jesus is proclaiming that in the temple courts on his last working day and I think we should just note here the diligence and the consistency with which Jesus worked in his service of his father and in the preaching of the gospel because this is a work that every follower of Jesus is called to do it's not just my work and the work of a few if we have heard and believed the good news about Jesus we're called to share that wherever we are you know in whatever job or whatever place we are located we may have a task to do in terms of our manual labor or our office duties but all of us who are believers are called within that context to share the news about Jesus to tell people that we are great sinners but there is a great saviour who calls them and that's something that is very easy to do at the beginning when we've just come to faith when we've just realised that we are sinners and we've just felt the weight of our sin being lifted when we've just seen the cross and understood all that Jesus did for us when we've just believed and just been saved and we're full of the joy of the

Lord no one can shut our mouths we're out and about we're telling people this amazing news that we have been given the faith to take hold of it's easy to do that at the beginning but we're called to keep going we're called to stay consistent we're called in our Christian lives to finish strong to keep working to the end as Jesus did so let me ask you the question as I must ask the question of myself are you still sharing the gospel of Jesus when did you last tell someone about Jesus when did you last take an opportunity that you were given to tell people about the great sin that we wrestle with and the great salvation that's freely offered in Christ when I was preparing this



[ 46 : 13 ] I couldn't help but think about Ina who through her Christian life was so bright and so open and so willing to tell people about Jesus and when she went to the hospital she said I'm going there because I've got a job to do I'm going there as a missionary and everyone who walks in that door of my hospital ward I will tell about Jesus and she did to the end and we see the work of Jesus in her so the work of Jesus is the first point and the second point we come to is questions for Jesus we see this menacing group of suited people approaching Jesus and they bring their questions and when we think about questions probably the most watched political broadcast in the week is prime minister's questions where the leader of the country is put on the stand and has to answer the questions that are fired at him or fired at her depending on who's in power and you can learn a lot about a person when they are under that kind of scrutiny you watch a politician a prime minister a counsellor whoever and they're on the stand in the hustings you can learn a lot about a person when they're responding to questions under that kind of pressure and you could say the temple the house of

God here became the studio it became the stand upon which Jesus faced the questions of his accusers and we read about it in verses 1 and 2 the chief priests and the teachers of the law together with the elders came up to him these are the powerful religious people and they have their questions verse 2 tell us by what authority you are doing these things who gave you this authority so their question is about the authority of Jesus and the things that Jesus has been doing and they fire this question at Jesus and I want to just hit pause there for a second and ask the question first of all is it right to bring questions to God is it right to bring questions to

Jesus and the answer is sometimes it is if you were to flick through the Psalter and just do a search for how many questions there are you'll see that there are many many questions earnest intense real questions that the psalmist had for God and put into these psalms as he sought to come to know God these are right questions things or think about Nicodemus he was a Pharisee he was regarded as one of the best theologians of that time he's been watching Jesus he's been listening to Jesus he has an interest he's been drawn towards Jesus but he has questions and in John 3 we've got a record of how he brought these questions to Jesus or think about the disciples they weren't always the sharpest tools in the box they didn't always get it first time when

Jesus told them something they were a bit like me in a maths class you have to be told over and over and over again the disciples they had questions and they took their questions to Jesus which has proved to be a real blessing to us think about Thomas if Thomas hadn't asked Jesus the question in John 14 Lord we don't know where you're going so how can we know the way if he hadn't asked that question we wouldn't have John 14 verse 6 where Jesus says I am the way and the truth and the life no one comes to the father except through me so the point is that there are some questions that we can take to Jesus there are some questions that we must take to Jesus when we're struggling to understand when we're wrestling with doubts when we're looking for more faith when we are struggling it's right to take our questions to Jesus not to bottle them up not to file them away but we take them in prayer back to

Jesus but the chief priests and the teachers of the law they didn't have these kind of questions and we're told at the end of Luke 19 that they actually have no intention of believing in Jesus they're not asking questions in order to believe they have no intention of believing in Jesus they're building a case against Jesus we're told at the end of Luke 19 verse 47 and 48 the chief priests the teachers of the law and the leaders of the people were trying to kill him yet they could not find any way to do it because all the people were hanging on Jesus words so the religious leaders they preached everybody came now when they preach everybody leaves and when Jesus preaches everybody comes and so the religious leaders are tearing their hair out no one's listening to them anymore everyone's hanging on the words of Jesus so in verse 1 it says they came up to

[ 52 : 32 ] Jesus there's a kind of menace in that they swagger up to Jesus there's no reverence in their approach and they attack Jesus with their questions verse 2 tell us by what authority are you doing these things they said who gave you this authority and we get the impression even in these two verses they're not looking for faith to believe they're looking for reasons not to believe they're not trying to understand who Jesus is they're trying to dispute the identity of Jesus they're trying to undermine the authority of Jesus so Jesus replies verse 3 I will also ask you a question tell me

John's baptism baptism is just another word for ministry John's baptism John's ministry was it from heaven or from men and so they go away in a huddle and it says in verse 5 they discussed it among themselves and said if we say from heaven he will ask why didn't you believe him and they're in trouble but if we say from men all the people will stone us because they're persuaded that John was a prophet so they're in a catch 22 here they've come with their smart question Jesus has responded and now they don't know where to go with it so they answered very reluctantly we imagine we don't know where it was from they're kind of humiliated and the crowds are probably smacking because these smart aleck theologians have at last been silenced at last if I did admit they don't know we don't know where it was from

Jesus said neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things you know we've seen so many political leaders crumble under questioning we've seen so many people on the witness stand crumble under questioning but Jesus has no difficulty Jesus has no struggle with their smart questions they come with a trick question to Jesus they're trying to incriminate Jesus but Jesus in his response and the question that he poses just demonstrates that their wisdom is no match it's not even near the wisdom of Jesus and they can't stand against Jesus and so they have to back down and go back to their corner so what effect does that have are they humbled do they do they stop doubting and believe do they do they submit to Jesus and acknowledge what obviously they can see that the fact that that Jesus ministry like

John's ministry was from heaven and not from men are they going to admit that are they going to close the case against Jesus quit their questions stop rebelling and believe so we hope they're going to do that what we see is that they're they're just all the more determined to resist Jesus and the point in application is don't be like them I mean these religious people we're not going to go on to point three for your encouragement but these religious people they knew their Bible so well they had seen so much of Jesus power they were privileged people but they would not believe not they could not they would not believe and so they just keep on coming with their questions conscience and there are some here like that some in

Harris like that some in the congregation like that who know so much of the Bible people and who have heard so much about Jesus through parents and grandparents and school teachers and Sunday school teachers you've got so much of a knowledge of the gospel there are some here there are some you're probably watching at a distance who have had so many years of opportunity and yet still you're asking questions question after question after question after question not because you want to believe but because there are some who just want reasons not to believe there are some who are not looking for a bridge in order to reach

[ 58 : 45 ] Jesus but you're asking questions in order to create a barrier that will justify the distance that you want to remain from Jesus and as we look at the religious leaders here in their class with Jesus I want to just simply say don't be like them be like Nicodemus we're not told he was here but in all likelihood he was on the edge of this crowd because he was Israel's teacher he moved in this circle and I think well I know because we're told that for Nicodemus this was the week that he openly repented he stopped asking

Jesus preached the gospel message in the temple courts and then went from the temple courts to the cross to do the work of salvation to die on a cross to make it possible for us to be saved eternally we see the religious leaders in their swaggering approach of Jesus we see the cynicism we see the determination not to believe and we pray that there would be none here or none listening who are in that place and if there are some in that place we pray that this would be the day that they repent as Nicodemus did and believe and find the assurance of salvation to hear our prayers help us to believe give to us the gift of salvation we pray in Jesus name amen we'll deal with the final point maybe on

Cleanse me from its guilt and power Not the labor's of my hands And fulfill thy lost demands Good might still nor as my goal Good might tears forever flow All your sin could not at all Thou wast safe and thou alone Nothing in thy hand I pray Simply to thy cross I cling May it come to thee for rest

[illegible]