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Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 0 0] Good morning. A warm welcome to the service this morning. And those who are visiting with us, it's good to see a few and you're especially welcome if you're able to stay behind for tea and coffee and feel at ease doing that, you're very welcome too. A few intimations just to highlight the evening service at six, six o'clock tonight as we continue the second half of Esther chapter two. And in the course of the week, various things as usual, ladies, fellowship on Monday, Little Fish is on Tuesday, Road to Recovery Tuesday night, prayer meeting on Wednesday. And hopefully we'll be back in the building this Wednesday and the weather will not be as fierce as it was last Wednesday evening. So we'll have the prayer meeting in the church and also on Zoom on Wednesday evening. Jam and Rooted and Connect for the young folks will not be on this coming Friday, whether it be the holiday weekend. And the service is next Sunday. The morning service will be conducted by myself, God willing, and the evening service, the Reverend Innes McSween of Smithton Church. And you've seen on the screen, the Smithton congregation, the YF, are having a weekend away at Scalladale. And they hope to come to the service here on Sunday. And they have asked if we would be kind enough to give them lunch and to put them up in the afternoon here. So if you're able to help with the lunch, there's a sheet at the front door. And if you could fill in the blanks, that would be great. It's hoped to be able to provide them lunch. And then in the evening service, they'll be with us again. And Innes McSween will preach.

So these, I think, are all the intimations. And we'll begin now this time of worship. I should say as well, a welcome to those who are online. We can't see you, but we know that there are some people who are still online. And it's good for us still to be able to come together to worship God.

The first praise is on the screen. It's not in the book. And we sing of the mercy of God. What love could remember, no wrongs we have done. Omniscient, all-knowing, he counts not their sum.

Thrown into a sea without bottom or shore. Our sins, they are many. His mercy is more. So we stand to sing to God's praise in just a moment. God's praise in just a moment.

God's praise in just a moment.

[3 : 2 7] Thebridge Because The ■, Lord. We sing to God. Theaking■■. And we act in just a moment. The law says, for not to be able to change the truth. But weirking it and that the Flip-Phone 2 is two hundred years, one hundred years, both areabeth.

Now our sins, they are many. His mercy is more. Praise the Lord.

The law, His mercy is more. Stronger than darkness, new every morn Our sins they are many, His mercy is more What riches of kindness He lavished on us His blood was the payment, His life was the cost We stood beneath a debt we could never afford Our sins they are many, His mercy is more Praise the Lord, His mercy is more Stronger than darkness, new every morn Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

His mercy is more His mercy is more Stronger than darkness, new every morn Our sins they are many, His mercy is more Let's unite our hearts in prayer, let's pray Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this new day, this new morning And as we have sang there in that hymn of the new morn We are conscious And thankful for the fact that you are the God who is merciful The God who is gracious The God who teaches us to cry out Lord have mercy on me, son of David

Have mercy on me, a sinner And we thank you that that's a cry that we have been taught In past weeks as we've studied your word It's a cry that you hear and that you answer When we come to you seeking to tell you that we are worthy in ourselves When we come on the basis of what we think are good works And what we think is religious merit We know that our prayers are not heard Like the Pharisee we are told we are not justified We thank you that when we come to you in humility Acknowledging that we are sinners Seeking your mercy We thank you that that mercy is shown to us New every morning is your grace New every morning is your mercy shown to us And so we simply cry out for that As we gather together in the name of Jesus We pray that you would show to us mercy

[6 : 55] As we are conscious of our sin As we think about the things that we have done The things that we have said As we think about the times that we should have spent in your presence Where we have been distracted And when we have been focused on other things We know that we sin The things that we do and the things that we don't do We say with the Apostle Paul The good that I want to do, I don't do And the evil I don't want to do I do it again and again Who will rescue me from this body of sin?

And we echo these words But we thank you that we have the answer In the Gospel There is rescue There is salvation In and through Jesus And all that he did for us In going to that cross We think of the darkness That fell over the whole land That spoke of our sin We think of the sufferings That Jesus had to endure Sufferings that we cannot really even Begin to understand We think of the cry Of Jesus from the cross My God My God Why have you forsaken me?

And we know that he was forsaken He was despised He was rejected He was crucified So that we Need not ever be forsaken So that we Could be shown mercy And find grace In our time Of need So hear our prayers Lord And accept us in Christ We pray Give us Eyes to see our need And give us eyes to see Jesus as Saviour We pray Lord For each other And those who are not here as well As we unite our hearts We are always conscious of need Within us and around us And we pray for those Who are grieving this morning We continue to pray For those who are struggling With that sense of loss And we carry them to you And ask Lord That you would give to them Your comfort We pray for Kenny And for the Gunn family We pray for Angus Alec And Grisalda

And Cammie And Catherine And the wider family We ask Lord For your comfort for them We pray for George Here as well Dr Craig Having lost his mother In the last few days And with the prospect Of a funeral This week We pray That you the God Of all comfort Would lay hands of comfort On all who grieve And we thank you Once more Lord For the hope Of the gospel That those Who die in Christ Are promised Resurrection life We pray for those Who are sick At this time For those In hospital As well And whether In home Struggling with COVID As we know some are Or whether in hospital As we Think of those Like Hannah We pray for Hannah This morning We ask Lord That as she waits For scans This week And as she Receives treatment That the treatment Would be effective We pray that you Would give wisdom To the doctors And the nurses Who are caring for her

And we pray that you Would continue to Sustain Hannah We thank you For her brightness For her cheerfulness For the readiness With which She trusts you Even having said If this is what God has Determined I will Have to go through This week We thank you That she is willing And your strength To face that So we pray for her For her healing For her recovery And for her to know Your grace And your strength We pray on for those Who battle With addictions We see many And there are many More that we don't see Who battle Behind closed doors And we ask Lord For your strength For your help You are the God Who is able to Break chains That no one else Can break And so we pray Lord for them We ask now That you would Continue with us In this day We pray that we Would be In the spirit On the Lord's day And we pray that As your word is read

[11 : 14] And as we think About it That we would hear Your voice And that we would Respond to the call Of Jesus to follow And we pray all these Things in Jesus name And for his sake Amen Boys and girls Would you like to Come out please How are you all today Good Good I'm standing back A wee bit here Because I know The microphone Doesn't hear me If I stand Too far forward When you go to Sunday school today We're going to read From the Bible We're going to read From Luke chapter 18 You can move forward A wee bit As I'm standing Slightly back You come forward A little bit So we're going to be

Reading from Luke chapter 18 And in Luke chapter 18 We meet a man You can ask your folks About him at lunchtime Maybe Or your grannies Or whoever And we're going to Meet a man And he was told Something that I'm sure Some of you have been Told once or twice Before Do you know what He was told Shhh I wasn't being rude Michael That's what he was told He was told Shhh Shhh Shhh Shhh Shhh Shhh Have you ever been Told to shush Put your hand up If you've been told To shush I was told To shush Quite a lot When I was A little boy And I'm still Told to shush Quite often As well And When do you get Told to shush Michael You think about it Fraser When you're being noisy

And other people And other people Are trying to talk Someone will say Someone will say Michael Shhh Shhh Um Do you know the story Let me do a test here Do you know the story In the bible Of the man Who was told To shush Put your hand up If you think You know the story Any ideas Okay I'll start to give you A few clues This man He was Blind It wasn't that story With the mud In the face In Luke 18 But he was blind And One day He was sitting At the side of the road Because he was blind And he didn't have a job And he didn't have money And so what they would do Is they would sit At the side of the road And they would They would ask for some money If they were struggling With something like being blind And he was sitting One day at the side of the road And He was hearing the crowd Talking And the crowd Were saying

They were saying something Do you know what they were saying They were saying Jesus Of Nazareth Is passing by And so this blind man What do you think he did?

Put your hand up If you think You know what he did John Roddy You were first up This might be a different story But did he come through the roof? He didn't come through the roof No?

[14 : 46] That's another story Yeah That's the guy that's injured That's the guy that's injured Yeah Callum? Did you come through Did he come up Forward to the space?

No it wasn't He didn't come through the roof Not that one One more guess Michael Walked by Well Jesus was walking by And this blind man He heard that Jesus was walking by And so He shouted out And he Really shouted out He shouted out Jesus Son of David Have mercy On me Son of David Was a It was like a kind of secret Phrase that meant Saviour Jesus Saviour He said Have mercy on me That's what he shouted out And have mercy Is another way of saying Please Forgive my sins And do you know what the people In the crowd said?

Shhh Let me hear it The people in the crowd Said to this man As he was shouting Shhh Oh no Shhh And what do you think Happened next?

God Jesus came And Not Delivated And blinded him Okay Okay yeah We'll take it step by step We won't get all the way To the end So Jesus Well He shouted out And the crowd said Shhh And do you think The man then said Sorry about that I was making a noise I'm sorry about that I'll just be quiet And I'll sit down here No No Even like It says in the Bible You don't see it Very clearly in our In our Bible But In the The first time it was written The word means that He He cried out He roared Jesus Son of David I'll be blowing the microphones Have mercy on me And Jesus He heard him And he came to him And what do you think Happened next Do you want him You can go right to the end

With that What do you think He was blind And what did Jesus do for him Well He healed him He healed him He healed him He made him see Now here's the question Do you think It was a good thing That this blind man Wouldn't be shushed Sometimes if somebody Says to us Like our mum or dad Shh If we keep on talking It's not a good thing Is it But When Jesus Was there And the man Wanted to see Jesus And the crowd said Shushed Do you think It was a good thing That you wouldn't be shushed It was a good thing Wasn't it Because He had faith in Jesus He wouldn't be shushed And Jesus healed him Because he kept on crying out And what I want to say To you boys and girls Listen Listen to this What I want to say to you Is don't let anyone Shush you

[17 : 55] When it comes to Jesus You can be shushed About lots of other things But if you want to speak To Jesus Do you want Jesus To take away your sin Don't let anyone Shush you Because some people Will say You go to church And stuff Don't worry about all that Till later on That's for old people Shh About all that stuff Don't let them Shush you Or you might be thinking I need to pray And I need to ask Jesus To take my sin away And then you see something On the television Or you hear something And you think I'll do it later Don't leave it till later Like the blind man Cry out to Jesus today Jesus have mercy on me Take away my sin And be my saviour So let's pray And let's speak to God now So let's close our eyes And be still for a minute

And let's pray Lord Jesus We thank you that Just as you were passing by That road Many years ago We thank you that you Are passing by Here today You're with us That's your promise We thank you that When we cry out Like the blind man did Have mercy on me We thank you that When we ask For your forgiveness When we ask You to help us When you ask us When we ask you To save us You hear our prayers And you answer us So help all the boys And girls The young ones And the older ones As well To come to you Help us to cry out to you Not to be put off By what other people say Not to be shooshed By this world But to come to you And to have the eyes Of our hearts opened So hear our prayers And help us That we ask In Jesus name

Amen We're going to sing now We're going to sing About the cross The place that we are saved The place where our sins Can be taken away Is the cross That's where Jesus died To take our sin away So we're going to sing now About the power of the cross O to see the dawn Of the darkest day Christ on the road To Calvary Tied by sinful men Torn and beaten men

Nailed to a cross of wood This the power of the cross Christ became Sent for us Took the blame Order at least And forgiven at the cross O to see the pain Written on your face Bearing the awesome Weight of sin Every bitter thought Every huddy Coral in your grunt This the power of the cross Took the blame, bore the wrath we sat forgiven at the cross.

[22 : 33] Now the daylight flees, now the ground beneath, quakes as its maker, busts its head.
Curtain torn in two, dead are raised to life, finish the victory cry.

This the power of the cross, Christ became sin for us.

Took the blame, bore the wrath we sat forgiven at the cross.

Oh, to see my name written in the wounds, for through your suffering I am free.

[23 : 46] Death is trust today, life is mine today. One through your selfless love.

This the power of the cross. Son of God, sing for us.

Water love, water cost. We stand forgiven at the cross.

Okay boys and girls, if you head to Sunday school. And we can turn in our Bibles to Luke chapter 18 please.

Luke chapter 18.

[25 : 19] And we read from verse 18 to the end of the chapter. A certain ruler asked Jesus, good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?

Why do you call me good? Jesus answered. No one is good except God alone. You know the commandments. Do not commit adultery. Do not murder. Do not steal. Do not give false testimony.

Honor your father and mother. All these I have kept since I was a boy, he said. When Jesus heard this, he said to him, you still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven.

Then come follow me. When he heard this, he became very sad because he was a man of great wealth. Jesus looked at him and said how hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God.

Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. Those who heard this asked, who then can be saved?

[26 : 27] Jesus replied, what is impossible with men is possible with God. Peter said to him, we have left all we had to follow you. I tell you the truth, Jesus said to them.

No one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and in the age to come eternal life.

Jesus took the 12 aside and told them, we are going up to Jerusalem and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be turned over to the Gentiles.

They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him. On the third day, he will rise again. The disciples did not understand any of this.

Its meaning was hidden from them and they did not know what he was talking about. As Jesus had preached, Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard the crowd going by, he asked what was happening.

[27 : 31] They told him, Jesus of Nazareth is passing by. He called out, Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me. Those who led the way rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, son of David, have mercy on me.

Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, what do you want me to do for you? Lord, I want to see, he replied.

Jesus said to him, receive your sight, your faith has healed you. Immediately, he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.

Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us. We're going to sing again now in Gaelic 2 stanzas of verse 27. Psalm 27, verses 7 and 8.

I'll read the verses in English. These two verses, and we sing in Gaelic and remain seated to sing.

[28 : 49] Let's sing in Gaelic 2 stanzas of verse 27.

Psalm 27, verses 8 and 8.

Psalm 27, verses 8 and 8.

Psalm 27, verses 8 and 8.

Psalm 27, verses 8 and 8.

[31 : 19] Psalm 27, verses 8 and 8.

Psalm 27, verses 8 and 8.

As we head back to Luke 18, let's pray for a moment. Our Heavenly Father, we pray for your help now for the help of the Holy Spirit.

As we meditate upon these words. Give us insight. Give us insight. Give us understanding. enable us, Lord, let's pray for the Lord. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

that we pray for the Lord. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. that we would be seeking the salvation, the healing that Jesus alone can give.

[32 : 55] So help us, Lord, we pray. We pray for the children as well as we hear them in the Sunday school, that their hearts would be open, that they would be trusting in Jesus from the early years.

And we pray for the churches around us here. And especially we pray for the church, the continuing in Northden this morning, as a new chapter in ministry begins there.

We pray for the Reverend Clark, who begins this period in ministry in Northden. And we ask, Lord, that you would bless him and bless that congregation as they seek to worship you.

So hear our prayers and help us, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. If you could have your Bibles open at Luke chapter 18.

I want to just kind of hit play again and move straight into it. We started this last Sunday morning.

[33 : 53] We didn't get very far. I hit pause quite early. So early the Sunday school hadn't even got half their lesson done. So they complained the sermon was too short. Blame them if it's longer today.

But I want to just carry on from where we left off last Sunday. We were thinking along the lines of the fact that things are not always the way they seem to be in the first place.

Sometimes we know in life the people who look happiest actually can be pretty sad inside. Sometimes we can observe that the people who seem to be the most confident and who shout the loudest can actually be quite nervous and insecure.

Things are not always the way they at first seem to be. And that was the train of thought we were on as we were traveling through Luke chapter 18. And I want to just continue on that this morning.

We see in verse 18 to verse 23 the rich man who was poor. It's the first point. The rich man who was poor. And then we step on a little.

[35 : 03] We come to the section on the cross where we learn that the impossible salvation becomes possible. And then we hear the disciples speaking to Jesus about all that they've left behind.

And we can think about in verse 28 to 30 the poor men who were rich. They were poor in this world's terms but they were rich in reality eternally.

And hopefully we'll finish off with a blind man who could see. But we'll see where time gets us. But first of all just to recap because I can see quite a number who are here this week who weren't here last week.

There's the rich man who was poor. And it's a well known story. Verse 18 to verse 23 if you've got a Bible in front of you.

We see a man there who seems to have it all in terms of this world. He has money. He has reputation. He's popular. He's religiously credible.

[36 : 04] He's rich in lots of ways as the world looks at him. But the twist in this story is that at heart level, at the level that we can't see, he was poor.

He doesn't have Jesus. He refuses to follow Jesus. And so in his heart there's poverty.

And so we see as the story comes to an end in verse 23, we see a rich man who walks away with all his riches. But he remains poor.

Because he walks away from Jesus. And even though he has all his riches, he's sad. He walks away from Jesus sad. And let me just say, there are many people who walk out that door every Sunday.

And the door of many churches in different places every Sunday. And they walk outside. Walking away from Jesus. You know, we sit in the pews or we sit in the chairs.

[37 : 19] And it's good that we do. But the chairs don't save us. The church building doesn't save us. In the church building, as the Bible is opened, we hopefully hear the call of Jesus.

Saying, come to me. Trust me. But the truth is, Jesus will not force you or I to follow him. He's given us free will.

He hasn't programmed us to be robots who must follow. No, he says this in the message of the Bible. I love you. I left heaven to come to this earth for you.

I laid down my life. I went to a cross to save you. From soul sadness.

I came to offer you the free riches of eternal life. If you'll hear the call to follow me. But equally it's clear in the message of the Bible.

[38 : 35] That if we will not follow. If we want to remain poor. In time. And for eternity. If we want to find ourselves locked out of heaven.

If we want to forfeit the inheritance of eternal life that's offered to us. It's your choice.

You know, God says to us. If that's the way you're going to go. Thy will be done. C.S. Lewis put it very succinctly. He said.

There are only two kinds of people in the end. Those who say to God. Thy will be done. And who trust him. And those to whom God says in the end.

Thy will be done. All. That are in hell. Says Lewis. Choose it. And on that day.

[39 : 42] In that passage that we've read. We see a rich young ruler. And he chooses hell over heaven. He comes so close to Jesus.

But he determines to choose hell over heaven. He determines to choose the passing riches of this world. Over the eternal riches.

That are in Christ Jesus. The rich man who was poor. Second point. The impossible becomes possible. And we can picture this rich man.

And he's walking away from Jesus. And he's sad. And Jesus then turns to his disciples. And he reinforces the truth to his disciples.

That eternal life. Salvation. It's not something that we can buy or earn. The rich man. He looked like the ideal candidate.

[40 : 44] For a disciple of Jesus. He was highly religious. Not just a church goer. But he was a boss. You could say in the church. A ruler. He had authority.

He had office. Within the church. He was young. He was energetic. He has zeal. As he approaches Jesus. There's so many things going for him.

And people were thinking. Well if anybody. Anyone can be saved. It's this man. That's what the Christ were thinking.

That's what the man was thinking. As he came to Jesus. He's just saying to Jesus. Tell me what to do. So I can get this eternal life. That I can see in you. Just tell me what to do.

And Jesus says to him. It's not about what you do. It's not about how much money you have. It's not about your reputation. In fact it's not about you at all. It's about trusting me.

[41 : 49] And Jesus made that clear to the disciples. That the reason this rich man. Found himself locked out of eternal life.

Was because he didn't believe that Jesus was the son of God. The reason this rich man. Is not saved. Is because he would not confess the sin of idolatry.

He loved his money more than he loved Christ. He wanted his money. He wanted his reputation. More than he wanted a life of following Jesus.

Jesus says you're going that way. I'm calling you this way. You need to repent. You need to change direction. You need to drop your idols. And you can be saved.

But he won't do it. So he wasn't saved. Jesus looked at him. Verse 24. And we're told elsewhere.

[42 : 52] He looked at him. And he loved him. And he said how rich. How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God. Verse 24. Indeed verse 25. It's easier for.

It's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. Than for a rich man. To enter the kingdom of God. And we can ask the question.

The scholars ask the question. What did Jesus mean. When he said it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. Than for a rich man. A rich person. To enter into the kingdom of God.

And the scholars get themselves into a right state. Trying to work out what Jesus meant. They spill much ink. Talking about various theories. As to what Jesus meant.

When he said this strange phrase. Some of the scholars. They talk about a gate. That gave access to Jerusalem. And it was called the needle's eye. That was the name of the gate. It's quite a narrow gate.

[43 : 49] So you could get through it as a man. But it would be difficult to squeeze a camel through there. So the scholars say. Well. Jesus is probably talking about this gate. This narrow gate.

That's hard to access. And the scholars are saying. Well. Jesus is probably saying. It's not as easy as you think to be saved.

But more likely. Jesus was just talking about a camel. And a needle. Not some obscure gate. In some dark alley in Jerusalem.

I think Jesus was just talking about a camel. And a needle. Is it possible to get a camel. Through the eye of a needle. Well as Shawnee said to us. With great enthusiasm. Last weekend.

It's impossible. And the point is. It's just as impossible. For us to save ourselves.

[44 : 49] Through the riches. Of our good work. And our religion. We need to see that. It is impossible. For you and I.

To save ourselves. Through any. Religious riches. We might think we accumulate. It's impossible. It's impossible. For us to save ourselves.

Through. Some. Vast. Bank of good works. That we might try hard. To build up. It's not enough. If that's what our.

Hope of salvation is. We need to hear these words from Jesus. Impossible. People. Wonderful. My second mens ■, today. t. It's not enough. and this lesson seems to have come as a shock to those who are listening on that day, and so those, verse 26, who heard this, asked this question, who then can be saved?

If that man can't be saved, who's such a good, clean, living guy, who can be saved? And maybe there's someone here who's asking that question this morning.

[46 : 02] Maybe until you started coming to church, you thought you were saved. You've always tried to be a good person.

And that's where your hope was. But if you're honest, like the rich man, you've never really believed in Jesus.

Maybe there's someone here or there's someone at a distance watching and you try hard to be nice. You try and go through the religious forms, but you've never really been convinced about who Jesus is.

You've never asked Jesus to be your savior. You've never asked him to forgive your sins. Because you thought you could kind of save yourself by being nice. And now what we're hearing is Jesus saying very plainly to us, you cannot save yourself.

In fact, maybe someone here this morning is hearing Jesus saying very plainly and directly and personally to you, you are not saved. And maybe you're asking what the crowds were asking, who can be saved?

[47 : 25] How can I be saved? So how does Jesus respond to that question? Well, verse 27 tells us, Jesus replied, what is impossible with men or with people is possible with God.

So here's the question. How did God make it possible for us to be saved?

How did God make what was impossible possible? How did he make it possible for sinners who would be locked out of heaven to find a way into heaven?

And the answer is through Jesus. Through the sufferings of Jesus. Through the cross of Jesus.

And Jesus points the disciples to the cross as they're trying to figure all this out and put it all together. Jesus, verse 31, took the 12 aside and told them, we are going up to Jerusalem.

[48 : 40] They've been traveling to Jerusalem since chapter 9 it is. And they've met all these people on the way. And Jesus reminds them, we're en route, remember.

We're going to Jerusalem. And everything that's written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him, and kill him.

That's what we're heading for, says Jesus. And on the third day, he will rise again. See, it's through the life and the death and the resurrection of Jesus that what was impossible for man, salvation, has been made possible with God for those who believe.

to be saved. See, to be saved, what the rich man wanted, to have the inheritance of eternal life.

It's not about our good name and our good reputation. It's about the name of Jesus. it's not about our good works, which are stained with all kinds of pride and sin.

[50 : 12] It's about the perfect finished work of Jesus. It's all about the cross. It's why week by week, we keep looking to the same place.

It's why we keep on looking to the cross. That's why we keep on saying about the cross, because that's the place where our being saved was made possible.

That's where the impossible was made possible. Oh, to see the dawn of the darkest day.

Christ on the road to Calvary, that's where he was now. And he would be tried by sinful men, as he said, torn and beaten in his flesh.

Then nailed to a cross of wood. But this is the power of the cross. Christ became sin for us.

[51 : 18] He took the blame. He bore the wrath, God's punishment. And yet we stand forgiven at the cross, if we will go there.

If we will believe. If we will humble ourselves, let go of the riches that we think are riches, and take hold of Christ.

The impossible becomes possible. The third point is the poor men who were rich. And to see this, we're stepping back.

We fast forwarded for a second. Now we're stepping back to verse 28. So, the disciples see a rich man walking away from Jesus sad.

He's not willing to pay the price. He's not willing to endure the cost of following Jesus. Jesus. And then, Peter characteristically speaks up. And Peter says to Jesus, we have left all we had to follow you.

[52 : 30] Jesus says, I tell you the truth. We should probably see the contrast before I go on here. Peter says, we've left everything to follow you. But Peter hadn't left anything compared to what Jesus was leaving.

Jesus left glory to save us. Jesus became poor to save us.

What does the hymn say? You laid aside your majesty, gave up everything for me, suffered at the hands of those you had created. That's what he left behind.

That's what he endured. But Peter, and we love him for his outspokenness, he said to Jesus, we've left all we had to follow you. And the truth is, he had, kind of.

Peter and various other disciples had a good going fishing business. And Jesus says to him, leave behind your boats, leave behind your nets, follow me. And they did.

[53 : 38] And Levi, Matthew, left behind a very lucrative career in tax collecting. He would have made a fortune. But he left it behind to follow Jesus.

And Luke, the guy who's writing this gospel, he'd left behind a career in medicine to follow Jesus. Not a disciple, but as the one who's being inspired to write this gospel.

So they had left a lot behind to follow Jesus. They'd left a lot of stuff. And I suppose in terms of this world's economy, they were now poor.

They had been rich. Now they were quite poor. But in real terms, they were rich. And Jesus made that promise.

Jesus says, I tell you the truth, no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and in the age to come eternal life.

[54 : 49] Jesus says to them, you might be poor in this world's economy, but I promise you you're rich and you will be rich.

And even in their experience as disciples, they had tasted something of that richness. They'd been in an isolated place on one day, they had no lunch, they had nothing to eat.

And a wee boy produces a mini-sized packed lunch and Jesus, in this miracle of creation, he reproduces this lunch to feed a banquet of thousands.

Jesus always made sure they had enough. They were never really poor. And in terms of their fellowship with each other, it was rich.

They were brothers. And in terms of the experiences of life that they had as they followed Jesus, they were rich.

[55 : 55] They were far from bored. They were far from living in suburbia in a predictable, boring life. They were all over the place. They were experiencing miracles.

They were in danger. They were going through all kinds of rich experiences as they followed Jesus. And Jesus had promised them that and Jesus promised them even more than that.

He says, in the age to come, you will have eternal life. What that rich man thirsted for but would not taste, Jesus says to the disciples, you will have that.

Let me promise you that. Jesus gives them the promise of the riches of eternal life, riches that will not fade or spoil as they follow Jesus.

We know one of them actually wasn't following Jesus even though he was in the group. But for those who were trusting, for those who were following Jesus, this is the promise that he made.

[57 : 05] Yes, they were poor men in terms of this world. Their credit checks would not work out. But they were rich.

And one thing that we learn here is that Jesus will never shortchange you. Most people who don't follow Jesus refuse to follow him because they think they'll be worse off following Jesus.

You know, there's that perception, I'll be richer, I'll be happier if I can keep on doing all the things that I want to do. I don't want to stop drinking seven pints on a Friday night.

I don't want to stop drinking three bottles of wine all in the one shot. I don't want to stop going to the pub when everything is kicking off. I don't want to stop watching some of the things I've started watching on Netflix.

I don't want to be in a prayer meeting on a Wednesday night. I don't want to have to come back out on a Sunday evening. Life is going to be so much poorer if I follow Jesus.

[58 : 26] That's the perception. But that's a lie. It's a devil's lie. The devil will always tell you and I Jesus is not enough.

And even when those who are Christians, when we are wrestling with temptation, when we are falling and failing and we are at a crossroads and we know we can go one way and sin and another way and obey Christ, the reason that we go the wrong way is because the devil is telling us, Jesus is not enough.

You need to taste this. You need to see this. You need to touch this. Jesus is not enough. But the truth is, Jesus is always more than enough.

in fact, Jesus is the only one who can give us wholesome, satisfying richness of life that we taste here and then we know eternally.

Some of you have heard this story. I'll finish with it. We're not going to go on our fourth point. The story of Lachlan Mackenzie, the minister in Loch Caron.

[60 : 03] I wasn't able to check it out, so you can ask Dan Madig the correct record. He's borrowed the book. But Lachlan Mackenzie was a minister in Loch Caron and he was known as the happy man.

He was trusting Christ and the happiness, the joy of Jesus was seen so evidently in him. there was one story in the book that is written about him and there was a father and a son who were working a long day down at the shore.

I don't know was the father mending his nets or was he working on the boat or whatever. But he was down on the shore from dawn till dusk and a son was with him in quotes helping, getting in the way, doing this, doing that, doing the next thing.

And at the end of the day they headed back from the shore to the house. And the little boy, before he left the shore, he had been collecting shells and he had two handfuls of shells.

He's absolutely starving. So they're heading for the home and the dad says I'm just going to call in past the minister's house on the way home, which I'm sure made the boy's heart sink.

[61 : 17] But they went there anyway, knocked on the door, Lachlan McKenzie came to the door and he was chatting away to the father and doing whatever it was they had to do. And he could see the wee boy was agitated and he could see the wee boy was cold and probably hungry.

So he said to him, are you hungry lad? Yes, he says. He says, you hang on there a second. And McKenzie went off into the house, into the kitchen.

Two big slabs of bread, big layer of butter, ladled on the jam, slapped it together. And he goes back to the door and he hands it to the boy and he says, there you go.

And the wee boy standing there at the door, two handfuls of shells, starving. He looks at the shells he's been collecting, he looks at the sandwich, he looks at the shells, he looks at the sandwich.

He can't have them both, drops the shells, takes the sandwich and he's satisfied. And McKenzie says, if only the people of Loch Karin had your sense.

[62 : 29] I wonder if some of us today have to drop some shells. some of us may have to drop some shells if we are to take hold of Christ.

And the devil will be whispering, keep the shells. There's so much value in the shells. The shells will satisfy you, but they won't.

And so Jesus says this in the gospel, drop the shells. take hold of me. You might be poor in terms of this world, because this world loves shells.

But there is riches as we follow Jesus that we taste in time, and we know eternally. Let's pray.

our heavenly father, we thank you for the offer of the gospel. We thank you for the offer of your son.

[63 : 38] For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, so that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Enable us, Lord, we pray, not to be clutching the empty shells of this world, not to be hanging on to this world's riches, which is so passing and so fading.

Enable us, all we pray, to take hold of Jesus, and to know that richness of experience that comes from following him, that richness that we just taste here and know eternally.

So give us eyes to see, we pray, ears to hear, and hearts that will be responsive, that we would take hold of Christ, that we would cry out, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll close to, we'll sing to close the words of the hymn Amazing Grace, which would have fitted very well with the last, if I managed to go to the last point, you'd have seen why I chose it, because I didn't.

[65 : 00] You're perplexed now, but it's a lovely hymn, and we'll sing it to God's praise. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amazing grace, thou sweetest sound, God save a wretch like me.

I once was lost, but now I'm found, was blind, But now I see T'was grace that taught my heart to fear And grace my fears relieved How precious did that grace appear The hour I first believed Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come T'as grace hath brought me safe thus far

And grace will lead me home When we've been there ten thousand years Bright shining at
the sun We've no less dares to sing God's grace Than when we've first begun And now
may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ And the love of God the Father And the fellowship
of God the Holy Spirit Be with us all now and forevermore Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen
Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen

Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen