

28.11.21 am

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Date: 28 November 2021

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] And it's good to have a few visitors with us this morning as well from different places, some as far away as America, some closer than Inverness. And it's good to have you, it's good to have us all together able to worship God this morning.

The intimations I think will have been on the screen just before the service began, but I'll just run through a few of these. First to remind you that the service tonight is a Gaelic service, and that will be at 6 and that will be conducted by Hamish Taylor, Mr Hamish Taylor.

The Ladies Fellowship tomorrow night, Little Fishers Tuesday, Road to Recovery Tuesday. You can see the details for all that. Just be reminded week by week and encouraged to go to these.

And then the prayer meeting is in the building again on Wednesday with the Zoom link. And I expect to be away from Wednesday through to Friday.

This week, so the prayer meeting will be taken by Stuart King this week. So be encouraged to come along to that. The Kids Clubs, morning guys. The Kids Clubs are back on this Friday.

[1 : 10] Jam, Connect and Rooted. So you can take note of that. And the service is next Sunday. The morning service will be conducted by the Reverend Mark McLeod from Leverborough. And I'm taking the evening service there and then taking the evening service here.

Sorry. Start that again. Next Sunday morning, the service at 11 will be taken by the Reverend Mark McLeod from Leverborough. We're doing a pulpit swap in the morning. I'm going over to Leverborough.

And the evening service, hopefully I'll take myself here. So I'll be encouraged to come to these services. Connect Club are looking for those who will contribute to the Western Isles Volunteer Centre Light Up a Life Initiative.

To that end, they'd appreciate any donation. Small gifts suitable for a man or woman aged over 50 years, such as scarves, hats, gloves, toiletries and non-perishable food. And you can see the box out in the foyer.

And if you're able to make a donation towards that, that would be great. Two more intimations. One you can see about the church magazine there. And the second one is about safeguarding.

[2 : 16] And you can just note these and respond as appropriate. The final thing I think to say is just a thank you to those who attended and those who helped with the congregational meal last night, the Thanksgiving meal.

It was good to have a good number there. I know not everybody's able to get out at this time when we missed you, those who weren't able to come out. But we had a good evening and we're thankful for all those who made that possible.

So these, I think, are all the notices. We're going to start this time of worship singing to God's praise. The words on the screen, Mission Praise 296.

I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus, the Nazarene. I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus, the Nazarene.

And wonder how He could love me, a sinner condemned and clean. How marvelous, how wonderful, and my song shall ever be.

[3 : 41] How marvelous, how wonderful is my Savior's love for me. For me it was in the garden, He prayed not my will but Thine.

He had no tears for His own face, but sweat drops of blood for mine. How marvelous, how wonderful, and my song shall ever be.

How marvelous, how wonderful is my Savior's love for me. In pity, angels beheld Him, and came from the world of heights.

To comfort Him in the sorrows He bore for my soul that night. How marvelous, how marvelous, how wonderful is my Savior's love for me.

He took my sins and my sorrows. He took my sins and my sorrows. He made them His very own.

He bore the burden to counsel me, and suffered and died alone.

[5 : 25] How marvelous, how wonderful, and my song shall ever be.

How marvelous, how wonderful is my Savior's love for me. When with their uncertain glory His face I at last shall see.

It will be my joy through the ages to sing of His love for me. How marvelous, how marvelous, how wonderful is my Savior's love for me.

Let's unite our hearts in prayer together.

Let's pray. Let's pray. Almighty God, we thank you that this morning you have enabled us to come into this place, the house of God.

[6 : 48] Lord, we thank you that you have given us that desire, that opportunity, that will to bow in your presence, to be still, and to know that you are God and that you are with us.

And we thank you that you are the God who has made yourself known to us. We thank you that we are not in a state of ignorance about who you are.

But we praise you, Lord, that you have shown yourself to us. And as we look around on the beauty of this day, we see these reflections of your glory and your majesty and your love towards us.

We thank you that this world is not gray. It's not bland. But we live in a world and we live in a part of this world where there is such beauty and such majesty.

And we recognize, Lord, that this was not something that you had to do. But in your love, you have put us in an environment where there is so many reasons to be thankful.

[7 : 56] And we thank you for your word that we're able to gather this morning and to open a book whereby the word of God has spoken to us.

We thank you that the Holy Spirit took hold of men many, many years ago and inspired them to write these words of scripture.

And we recognize, Lord, that this is your word, not ours. We, week by week, don't go to a library and pick out a selection of books, but we come back to the same book.

Because you are the one who speaks to us through scripture. But above all, Lord, we thank you for the word made flesh for Jesus, your son, our savior.

The one who is the visible image of the invisible God. We thank you for Jesus who shows to us the vastness of your love and your grace and your patience and your mercy.

[9 : 05] And we pray, Lord, that we would know the presence of Christ this morning in this place. We sang the words of that hymn, I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus in Nazarene.

And we thank you that that's your promise, Lord Jesus, that we're two or three gathering your name. You will be with us. And so we pray that we would know the blessing of your presence.

We thank you, Lord Jesus, for all that you did to make it possible for us to be saved. We read the words in that hymn so many times of all that you did for us.

I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus, the Nazarene, and wonder how he could love me, a sinner condemned unclean. How marvelous, how wonderful, and my song shall ever be.

How marvelous, how wonderful is my savior's love for me. Help us, Lord, each one of us to know the reality of that love for us.

[10 : 09] Help us not to feel distant from you. Help us not to read scripture as if it was some remote book that was disconnected from our lives.

Help us to see that in the garden, on the cross, through the suffering and into the triumph of resurrection. Lord, you did it for us.

And may we respond in faith by asking you to be our savior and our Lord. We pray, Lord, for those who are struggling this morning.

Those who would desire to be with us, but who are kept at home because they are wrestling with illness or recovery.

We thank you especially of Anthony, who we prayed for through the course of this week, who went so suddenly into hospital last weekend. We thank you that he's home now, that he's recovering.

[11 : 09] We pray that you would increase his strength and that he would know your presence as likely he watches at home just now. Uphold him and the family at this time, we pray.

And for others, Lord, who haven't been to hospital, but who've been struggling over past weeks, even months, with different ailments. We name them in the quietness of our own hearts. And we ask, Lord, that you would meet them at the point of their need. We thank you that you care for us. We thank you that we can come to you and we can carry others to you, knowing that you will hear and answer our prayers.

Lord, we thank you for your sustaining grace. We thank you that even as we look back over this last week, there have been anxieties, there have been struggles and trouble. That we may have feared and wrestled over.

And we know your hand upon us and your care of us. And we thank you, Lord. We thank you for all that you continue to do for us in your grace. We pray that you would uphold us as we look forward.

[12:17] We know not what lies ahead. And even as we hear the news, we hear the threats of more restrictions. And we hear the stories of new variants of COVID.

We pray that we wouldn't know any of that here. We pray that you would protect us, Lord, as you have protected us so far. We thank you that those who have contracted COVID have recovered well, some with us even this morning.

And we ask, Lord, that you would continue to watch over us and guard us and give us wisdom, Lord. And give wisdom to our leaders as well. We are so conscious they will not ask for it of you. But we ask, Lord, on their behalf that you would give to them wisdom. And as a country, draw us back to yourself. So hear our prayers. Take away our sin.

And cause us to fix our eyes on Jesus. For we pray these things in his name and for his sake.

Amen. Boys and girls, would you like to come out, please? How's everyone today?

[13:41] Good, good. Well, I've got something to show you this morning. We're going to do something a little bit different this morning. I think. We'll see how it goes in the next few minutes.

But I've got something to show you, first of all. And I want you to tell me what you see. For those who might be watching at home.

Okay. There's one or two boys here in the back row. See that? Okay.

That's not actually water. It's nothing sinister. But it's not water. It's fizzy juice. Yeah. So that's the first thing you've observed. There's something in the cup.

It's fizzy juice. Yeah. What else can you... Tell me more about this thing that you're looking at.

Henry? It's quite a big cup. Yeah? Yeah.

[14:43] Okay. Keep going. It's a pink cup. Yeah. You haven't got to the heart of what I'm looking for yet. Keep going. Do you want to?

You can drink out of it. Yes? Keep it going. Pardon? It sizzles. It sizzles. The pot. It's cold.

Yeah. The fizzy stuff sizzles. Yeah? Okay. Fraser? Makes us have energy. Makes us have energy.

Yeah? Okay. Johnny? Plastic cup. Plastic cup. Yeah? Katie? It gets filled up. It gets filled up. We're getting closer now. Did you hear that?

Did you hear that? It's get... What did you say exactly? It gets filled up. It gets filled up. So a cup that gets filled up. Katrina? Is it reusable? Is it reusable?

[15:37] Yes. You can wash it. Michael? Michael? You can reuse it. Yeah. Okay. Emily?

Pardon? It's got lemonade in it. Yeah. John? It's half full. It's half full.

It's half full. My wife very helpfully said. She was kind of... I could hear that kind of move on, move on. How much is in it? But do you want to know? He was on the case already. It's how much?

It's half... Tell me again exactly what you said. It's half full. It's half full. Fractions. No, we're not doing fractions. That's something to be thankful for.

We're not doing fractions. But I think that's very important. So let's get this point, everyone. What Michael said... What Jono said there was very important. Because what he said was...

[16:38] It's half... It's half full. And Angus Alec, when he looked at it... Where is he? He's at the back there. He actually said, It's more than half full.

Probably, yeah. It's slightly more than half full. But, you know, there's other people... And how might they describe this cup? One, two. They might... There's some people who might look at this cup... Imagine you were sitting at your table last night for the meal.

And you're really thirsty. And somebody came along... And they were pouring stuff in the cup. And they poured the lemonade in the cup. And you were really thirsty. You might say...

Hey, that's half empty. That can go all the way filled up to there. But you didn't say that. You said, that's half full. And I think that's how God wants us to look at life.

Some people... Some people are described in this world as glass half empty people. And that's the kind of person who will say...

[17 : 42] Oh, everybody's got more than me. Oh, the people have got more money than me. They've got a bigger car than me. He got more food on his plate at dinner time. And I never got this. And I never got that.

And they got this. And they got more than me. And that's like glass half empty. The glass is always half empty for some people. There's always something they're saying... I don't have it. And somebody else has got it. But a glass half full person... Is somebody who looks at the glass of life...

We're going to get deep here. And says... I'm thankful for what I have. I think that's how God wants us to be.

He wants us to look at all the things that he has given us... And be thankful for them. Not look at our friends and say... Oh, they've got more than me. But look at what God has given us and be thankful.

[18 : 39] So what we're going to do... Just now... Is we're going to think... And you're going to tell me... Some of the things you're thankful for. Because this is Thanksgiving week as well.

We had a prayer meeting on Wednesday... Where we thought about thankfulness. Last night at the meal... We thought about thankfulness. Thanksgiving. So... Tell me some of the things that you're thankful for.

And we could go on all day about this. But we won't. We'll just take... We'll keep an eye on the clock. So some of the things you're thankful for. Henry. Pardon? Earth. Eh? Earth.

Oh, the earth. Thankful for the earth. Yes. Katie? Friends. Friends. Lois? Our houses. Our houses. Michael? For God sending Jesus.

Family. God sending Jesus. Yes. Family. Miriam? Family. And Katrina said family as well. She was smiling at Shawnee when she said it. Fraser?

[19 : 39] Life. Life. Yes. Emily? Food. Food. Yes. Henry? Light. Light. Yeah. It was dark. It would be very miserable, wouldn't it?

Emily? The Bible. The Bible, yes. John-O? Family and friends. Family and friends. Any more? Henry?

Buildings. Buildings, yeah. You know, we can be thankful for so many things. And if I was to go around the congregation, we could spend the next hour just saying how thankful we are for all these things.

But who are we thankful to? Shawnee? To Jesus, yeah. To God. Because he's the one who gives us every good thing.

So what we're going to do now is we're going to thank him for all these good things. He's given us water. He's given us food.

[20 : 41] He's given us the building. He's given us light. He's given us life. He's given us the earth. He's given us friends. He's given us family. And the thing we should be most thankful for is what Michael said.

He's given us himself. He's given us himself. God. Can you remember John 3.16? For God. Let's hear it all together.

For God. Whoever believes in him. Everlasting life.

And that's the thing. John 3.16. That's the thing we should be more thankful. Most thankful for of all. But every single good gift we can be thankful for. So I'm going to ask you a question.

We're going to pray. Do you want me to pray? Or do you want to do what we do in the kids prayer meeting? And you all, or some of you, just say a very short prayer. Would some of you be willing to just say a wee short prayer?

[21 : 45] See, in the prayer meeting on Wednesdays at 5 to 7 to 10 past, you cannot, if you take a breath, you've missed your chance to pray.

It's like machine gun fire. They pray the most simple, sincere prayers. Thanking God for so many things. So, let's take a minute.

And you guys can just say a short prayer. And then in a minute's time, I'll finish and I'll pray. Okay. So, starting from 3, 2, 1. Let's pray. Thank you.

Amen.

Amen. Amen. Dear Lord, we thank you that you hear all our prayers, the ones that we speak out and the ones that we say quietly in our own hearts.

[23 : 53] And we thank you that you have given us all these things that the boys and girls have been praying about, from cosy beds to food to safety. We thank you that we're able to have the freedom to meet here.

And we pray, as has been prayed for those in Afghanistan and different countries where it's dangerous to meet together like this. We thank you for every single good gift and for the gift of prayer.

And we thank you above all for sending your son Jesus into this world to die so that we could live forever. And help us, we pray, to be trusting in Jesus.

And we ask all this in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. Thank you, boys and girls, for listening and for praying. We're going to sing now and the words are on the screen. Mission Praise 1209.

My heart is filled with thankfulness. Thank you. My heart is filled with thankfulness to him who bore my pain.

[25 : 02] Who burned the depths of my disgrace and made me life again. Who crushed my curse of sinfulness and clothed me with his light and brought his law of righteousness with power upon my heart.

My heart is filled with thankfulness to him who walks beside. Who floods my weaknesses with strength and causes fears to die.

Whose every promise is enough for every step I take. Sustaining me with thankfulness and conveying me with grace.

My heart is filled with thankfulness to him who reigns above. Whose crystal is my perfect peace. Whose every thought is love. For every day I have honor is given by the King.

[26 : 32] So I will give my life my all to love and follow him. I will give my life my all to love and follow him.

I will give my life my all to love and follow him. Okay boys and girls if you head now through to Sunday school. And if we could turn in our Bibles to Luke chapter 17.

Luke chapter 17.

Luke chapter 17. And we're reading from verse 11 to verse 19. This is God's word.

Now on his way to Jerusalem. Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village. Ten men who had leprosy met him.

[27 : 56] They stood at a distance. And called out in a loud voice. Jesus master. Have pity. Have mercy on us. When he saw them he said go.

Show yourselves to the priests. And as they went they were cleansed. One of them when he saw he was healed. Came back praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus feet and thanked him.

And he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked were not all ten cleansed. Where are the other nine. Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner.

Then he said rise. And go. Your faith has made you well. Your faith has saved you. Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us.

We're going to sing again now to God's praise. And we'll sing from Psalm 51. Psalm 51 and it's verses 1 to 3.

[29 : 00] 2 stanzas. And we'll sing it in Gaelic. I'll read the verses in English. After thy loving kindness Lord have mercy upon me. For thy compassion is great.

Blot out all mine iniquity. Me cleansed from sin. And thoroughly washed from mine iniquity. For my transgressions I confess. My sin I ever see. These two verses we sing to God's praise in Gaelic.

And we remain seated to sing in Gaelic. The song is sang in Gaelic. It's a song is sang in Gaelic.

And we're singing in Gaelic. It's a song is sang in Gaelic.

The song is sang in Gaelic. The song is sang in Gaelic. The song is sang in Gaelic. The song is

sang in Gaelic. This song is sang in Gaelic.

Thank you.

[30 : 20] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[32 : 50] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. We're going to have to go to the road. We intended to take the most direct route from Allapool just straight through to Inverness, sticking to the main roads. But there was an accident. But there was an accident up ahead. And the road was blocked for quite a lot of hours.

[36 : 14] And so we had to change route. And that took us off the main road. And it took us through all these villages. And it took us through all these villages where you see people and where you see things that you wouldn't normally see.

And as we pick up in Luke chapter 17, we see that Jesus is traveling. Jesus is traveling. And his route takes him into a village.

And in that village, he encounters 10 people who suffered with leprosy. So four points, hopefully. And the first point is the way Jesus traveled.

So look at verse 11. It says there, Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee.

So we learn here, first of all, that Jesus is traveling. But we learn that he knows where he's going. He's not wandering aimlessly.

[37 : 21] He's not just kind of taking a tour and seeing where he might end up. But he knows where he's going. He has a very clear destination and focus. And that was the city of Jerusalem.

And we know that this is an important detail because this is not the first time we've been told this. This is actually the third time we've been told this by Luke.

In Luke chapter 9 and verse 51, it says, As the time approached for Jesus to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.

He comes to a point in chapter 9 and he sets the sat nav and he's heading for Jerusalem. And then in Luke chapter 13 and verse 22, it says, Then Jesus went through the towns and villages teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem.

So there's a lot happening in these chapters in between. Jesus meets a lot of people. He goes various places, but he hasn't lost sight of the destination. He's heading for Jerusalem.

[38 : 29] And here again in chapter 17 and verse 11, Luke tells us that Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem. And that's an important point for us to note.

You know, we tend to be sidetracked so easily. Increasingly these days I wander into a room and then I wander back out because I can't even remember why I wandered in in the first place.

We go from the left to the right. We're never quite sure where we're going. But Jesus, as we see him here, he has that crystal clear focus. He's on his way to Jerusalem.

Because his mission to save us will come to a climax in Jerusalem. See, Jesus knew all that was involved with him going to Jerusalem.

Jesus knew the words of Isaiah 53. And he knew that was a description of the climax of the mission that Jesus came to this world to fulfill.

[39 : 34] Jesus knew that in Jerusalem he would not be welcomed, but he'd be despised and rejected. But he still went. And Jesus knew that in Jerusalem he would be pierced for our transgressions.

He knew that he would be crushed for our iniquities. He knew that the punishment that brings us peace would be on him.

And he knew that the wounds inflicted upon him would bring us healing. So as Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem, you could see the shadow of the cross was starting to be cast on the road ahead of him.

He could see what he was walking into. But the amazing thing is that even though he knew all that was up ahead, he kept on traveling.

He kept on traveling. He kept on going. And on a week where we have spoken much about thanksgiving, as we see Jesus traveling on his way to the cross, we have the greatest reason of all to be thankful.

[41 : 06] We see that Jesus did it for us. It's what we sang in the first hymn. For me, he was in the garden. My sins, my sorrows.

This is a journey for me and for you. My heart is filled with thankfulness, we sang, for him who bore my pain.

Who plumbed the depths of my disgrace. And gave me life again. So we should be thankful. As we see the way that Jesus traveled as he sets his course and perseveres to Jerusalem. But there's more to see here in this point.

Because we see Jesus on his way to Jerusalem. He takes a route that most Jews would avoid. Jesus, it says, traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee.

[42 : 16] Now, the ordinary Jew would try to get as far away from Samaria as was possible to go. He would not be going along the border. He would be trying to get as far away from these Samaritans as he possibly could get.

But Jesus, who is the king of the Jews, He drew near to the Samaritan border. And he remained near to the Galileans, to the Jews.

And that in itself, as we see the route that Jesus took, we see something of the love that he had. He had love for the Samaritans. That's why he's on the border there.

He has love for the Jews. And so we see him walking this line because he is calling, he is concerned, he has love for those on both sides of it.

The Galileans and the Jews, they had no, the Galileans and the Samaritans, sorry, they had no love for each other. They had nothing but hate and prejudice against each other.

[43 : 26] But Jesus has no such prejudice. He has no such hate. He came to take away the sin of the world. Galileans, Samaritans, everyone.

And there's another reason for Thanksgiving. And it's simply to note that fact that we're taught from our earliest years, Jesus loves me. This I know.

I hope you know that. I hope we know that. Jesus cares for you. Jesus loves you.

Whoever you are and wherever you are and wherever you've come from and whatever you've been through.

Jesus loves you. Jesus loves you. You know, you and I might feel excluded in school. Or in work or in parts of the community.

[44 : 33] We might even feel excluded sometimes from our friends, even within the family circle at times. But Jesus excludes no one.

He loves, he desires to save everyone. He drives no one away. Not the Galileans. Not the Samaritans.

Not even the lepers. That takes us to the second point. There's the way Jesus traveled. And secondly, there's the works that Jesus did. The work that Jesus did.

Verse 12. As he was going into a village, 10 men who had leprosy met him. Now all the way through the Gospels, we see Jesus.

He's not at leisure. He's not at tools down. He's at work. He's doing miraculous works. He's doing wondrous works. And these works testify to the fact that he was the Son of God.

[45 : 36] You know, we're not running around doing the same things that Jesus did in terms of miraculous works. Because we're not sons of God. We're not the Son of God.

We're not trying to persuade people that we are the Savior. We're the Savior. But Jesus, the works that he did, testified to who he said he was. He said he was God the Son. And then as he did these miraculous works, people could see this is no ordinary man.

This is the God-man. And so Jesus, he's doing these miraculous works. And he's testified to who he is as the Son of God. And these works show to us also the kindness and the compassion and the love in the heart of God.

So many people have this wrong idea about who God is. There's all kinds of warped thinking that has distorted our picture of who God is.

If you want to see who God is, look to Jesus. He is the image of the invisible God. If you want to know what the heart of God looks like, look at the works of Jesus.

[46 : 51] And we see such kindness, such compassion, such love in the heart of God as we track the works of Jesus.

We see him in verse 12 going into a village. We read that ten men who had leprosy and met him. Now that was no coincidence. And that was to Jesus.

No inconvenience. Yes, he's heading for Jerusalem, but he's not checking his watch. He's not saying there's people now who are blocking my path. No, Jesus, he wants to meet them.

He doesn't have to meet them. But he wants to meet these ten lepers. Likely the route that he took was because he knew they were there.

And he had intended to heal them. Now we see these ten lepers. And in that day, leprosy was different to leprosy as we know it today.

[47 : 58] Leprosy was a much more serious condition than perhaps what we recognize today. It was highly infectious. There was no cure for it. So those who had leprosy, they were like the living dead.

It was like a death sentence to receive the news that you had leprosy. They couldn't live with their families. They couldn't mix in the community anymore. They were taken.

They were placed in these kind of infected ghettos. And they had to stay at a distance from everyone. And that's where Jesus encounters them.

Verse 12 says, They stood at a distance and they called out in a loud voice. So why did they call out? Why did they try to get the attention of Jesus?

Why did they call out in a loud voice? Other people are passing them by and they let them pass by. But when they become aware that Jesus is passing by, all of a sudden they're shouting.

[48 : 55] They raise their voice. They're getting his attention. Why is that? Why is that? Well, it's because they'd heard about Jesus. They'd heard that he was able to heal.

They'd heard that he had been willing to heal. They'd heard that this Jesus was a man of grace. A man of compassion.

A man of supernatural power and love. A man of love. And they knew he was close. And so they called out to him, Jesus, Master, Lord, have pity, have mercy on me.

And when Jesus heard these words, when he heard that cry, he was ready to respond. And when Jesus hears these words still today, coming from us, Jesus, Master, have mercy on me.

He's still ready to respond. He's always ready to respond to those who approach him in that way.

And the question I want to ask of us all is, how have we cried out like the lepers?

[50 : 18] Jesus, have mercy on me. We may be aware that Jesus exists. We may believe that.

We may see the cross and have some understanding of that. We may know people who have known the transformative touch of Christ in their lives and see the evidence of that.

And yet perhaps there's someone here who's never actually cried out, Jesus, have mercy on me. Some might say, well, why do we need to cry out?

And we see why they cried out. They were lepers. They had this awful condition. They were in such great need. We can understand why they raised their hands and cried out to Jesus saying, come over here, please have mercy on us.

We don't have leprosy. So why would we need to make a cry like that? But you know, leprosy is a picture of sin.

[51 : 27] It was a real medical condition, but it was a condition that illustrated what sin did to a heart. What leprosy did to a body, sin does to a heart.

Milne, the commentator says, leprosy was a loathsome condition with no absolute cure. In the same way, our sinful human condition is a loathsome one with no human cure.

Like leprosy, our sin separates us from our fellows and isolates us psychologically and morally.

Only Jesus Christ, in the exercise of his mercy, can cure anyone of the deeper malady of sin.

And everyone here is a sinner. That's what it tells us in Romans. Not one righteous. Not one single person in this room or any room is righteous.

None of us can pull out a CV and wave it before God and say, well, I'm okay. No, all of us have this condition. No, all of us have this condition. No, all of us have this condition. No, all of us have this condition.

[52 : 36] No. No, all of us have this condition. So what do we do? We cry out to Jesus, have mercy on me. And we do that when we're aware that he's close.

The reason the ten lepers cried out was because they knew Jesus was close. They knew that he was passing by. They knew that today, in this moment, this was their opportunity to cry out to him and receive that healing.

And for some here, maybe today, Jesus is close to you. The promise of Jesus is that where two or three meet in his name, he will be here.

So in the power of the Holy Spirit, he is here. But sometimes we're not aware of him. There are some days, perhaps, when you've sat here and you've heard nothing.

Your mind was in the office. It was in the classroom. It was out in the boat. It was on the football. It was on the dinner. But today, if you can hear this, if you're aware of your sin and your need of

Jesus, cry out, Jesus, Master, have mercy on me.

[54 : 10] Work in my life. Take my sin away. Heal my heart. The work Jesus did.

The way Jesus traveled. The third thing is the word that Jesus spoke. When Jesus saw them, verse 14, this is. He said, Go show yourselves to the priests.

And as they went, they were cleansed. Now in Luke's gospel, lots of people, if we try to pinpoint this point in history, as Luke tries to paint this picture for us of what was going on, he's an eyewitness to Jesus.

And so Luke is giving us this impression. He's giving us this picture as the Holy Spirit guides him, of who Jesus was and is, and what was going on around him at that time. And Luke, he's written this whole gospel for somebody called Theophilus, so that he'll be certain of the things that he's heard, so that he'll come to faith in Christ.

And the question that was on the lips of people in that place at that time, is who is Jesus? People were saying to each other, well, you know, who is he?

[55 : 40] He can't be a man. Because he does these supernatural things, so many of them. And he seems to be more than a prophet, because he does so much more than the prophets did.

In fact, he seems to fit the description of who the prophets were pointing us to. Could he be the Messiah? Could this be the Savior?

Could this be the Promised One? Could this be the Son of God? That was the question of the day.

And what Jesus does next, goes some way to answering that question, and demonstrating the truth that he was indeed God.

If you go back to the very beginning of the Bible, one of the first truths that we learn about who God is, is that God, he speaks, and amazing things happen.

So if you go back to Genesis chapter 1, we're not going there now, but you'll see that phrase repeated all the way through the chapter, and God said, and it was done. When God speaks, amazing, transformative, creational things happen.

[56 : 52] And now, we see that these lepers, they're crying out to Jesus. Jesus, he fixes on the lepers, they have his attention. They're crying out for healing, and he's going to heal them.

But how does he heal them? He doesn't get out a medical kit to treat them. He doesn't even touch them, like he did in the past when he healed the leper in Luke chapter 5.

On this occasion, Jesus, God the Son, he simply spoke. And his word transformed them.

When he saw them, verse 14, he said, go show yourselves to the priests. And as they went, in response to the word of Jesus, they were cleansed.

As they went, in response and obedience to the word of Jesus, the healing, the effective strength of the word of Christ, took effect in their lives.

[58 : 12] See, the word of Jesus is always transformative. It tells us in Isaiah 55, that God's word will never return to him empty. It won't return void. But for that word of God to be personally transformative in the lives of the lepers, they had to act on it.

They had to go, and show themselves to the priests. The priests back then were, were multitaskers. When you expect me to stand here and, and preach a sermon, I don't have many tasks really, that you expect of me to do.

But the priests, back in these days, they were experts in the law. They were medical officers. So this was kind of like us being told, go show yourselves to the NHS leprosy unit.

Show yourselves to them. Show yourselves to them. Show yourselves to them. And that took faith. You know, it was because these 10 men showed themselves to the priests, who saw the sores in their body, that they were diagnosed with leprosy.

It was the priests that verified that. It was the priests who said to, to these 10 men, you will go to quarantine, and you will stay in quarantine, and you will mix with no one.

[59 : 42] Because I'm sorry to tell you, you have leprosy for life. There's no cure. There's no hope. Go to your quarantine. Do not come back out.

It was the priests who said to these 10 men, you will stay away from us. So if you had leprosy, you would not be welcomed by the priests.

Just remembering that the beginning of COVID, maybe a year or so back, Grace, our middle girl, she, she hurt her foot.

And, um, she went to get it checked out, and she was told, you need to get an x-ray. So she was sent from the, the surgery to the hospital.

But in between Tarbert and Stornoway, the COVID restrictions kicked in. Before that, there was threats of them kicking in. But on the road, somewhere on the road between Stornoway and Tarbert, the hospital rules changed.

[60 : 45] And, uh, when Grace arrived in hospital, um, there was panic stations. Because she walked in, as she was instructed to, but once she walked in, and people realized she was in, there was panic stations.

And she was told, she went to sit down on the chair to, to get the exercise. She was told, no, no, no, don't sit down there. Children are super spreaders. Children shouldn't be in here. See, the rules had changed.

She was told, you shouldn't be here. And that's the kind of response a leper would expect. Uh, but Jesus said, go. And so they went.

And as they went in faith, they were, they were cleansed. And the priests, who diagnosed their illness, when they saw them, were now able to verify that they were, indeed, cleansed.

And there's a lesson for us. We're hearing the word of Jesus today. Every time the gospel is preached, whatever it's preached, we're hearing the, the word of Jesus. And Jesus says to us, he doesn't say to us, go, but he says, come.

[62 : 01] The whole message of the gospel is a message where, where Jesus says, come to me. Come to me. Come to me and receive rest. Come to me and be forgiven. Come to me, says Jesus, and receive my grace.

Receive my love. Receive my eternal life. We don't need a priest or a minister to be a middle man. Not today. We come to Jesus.

And he promises that if we do, he will help us. He will have mercy on us. He will save us. That's the word Jesus speaks.

But sometimes we can be unsure about actually taking that step. We hear, we hear the word, but we're unsure about taking the step. We hear the offer of the gospel.

But we're not sure if, if really it's for us. We're not sure if Jesus will, will really give to us what, what he promises. We know he's given it to others, but we're not sure it's this for us.

[63 : 11] So we, we hear the word Jesus speaks, but we can't dither. Will I stay? Will I go? Will I move? Maybe I'll look stupid if I step out.

Maybe I won't be able to keep on going if I step out. So, so we can have dither. But you know, as long as we're standing still, not taking Jesus at his word, nothing happens.

To know the transformative touch of Jesus in our lives, to know the, the salvation of Christ in our hearts. We knew we need to do what he says. We hear the word he speaks.

And we step forward in faith. And it's only then, that we realize, like the lepers, as they walked, they realized, our hands are getting better.

We're not seeing the scabs on our, on our skin anymore. We're, we're healed. We're healed. It's not until we actually step forward. In response to the word that Jesus speaks, that we know his saving, his healing in our hearts.

[64 : 28] It's kind of like an automatic door. You know, these automatic doors we see. We can stand at a distance, looking at an automatic door for a whole day long. And if nobody ever steps forward towards it, it will stay closed.

You know, we know the theory of these things. You walk up to, and it opens. But until you actually walk, there's no movement. But when we do walk, everything opens.

And the forgiveness, the rest, the peace, the joy, the life, that Jesus is able and willing to give, we will not receive until we believe his word.

And come to him. Or perhaps for some year, come back to him. Or some, somewhere out there. Come back to him.

If you've drifted. The word Jesus spoke. And finally, very briefly, the worship Jesus is due.

[65 : 43] And we see there from verse 15 to verse 19, this conversation that Jesus has with the, with the one leper. One of them, when he saw, he was healed.

You can imagine him walking along that road, seeing his skin being restored, feeling the, the health, that Jesus had spoken, come back into his body. And as he's walking down the road with a pack of lepers that he spent all this time with, he realizes he's healed, and he turns back.

He heads to Jesus. And he's praising God, verse 15, in a loud voice. And he threw himself at Jesus' feet. That's in the posture of worship. He's worshiping Jesus.

He's realized this is God. And he thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. He was the least likely of the 10.

He was the guy who knew less, less Bible than anyone else. He was the one who knew less of the, the wonder of God's grace than anyone else. They'd all gone to Sunday school, YF, church.

[66 : 53] They knew the whole thing. But these nine likely Jews, they just carried on walking. But the Samaritan, who's just, just heard a snippet of the gospel.

He turns back and worship. And Jesus asked, verse 17, verse 17, we're not, we're not all 10 cleansed. Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God, except this foreigner?

He's not being disparaging there. He's, he's just underlining the fact, this is the man that doesn't know anything. Where are the guys who knew it? Where are the people who were given all the privileges of gospel teaching?

Where have they gone? Where have they gone? There's only the one praising God. Then Jesus says to him in verse 19, rise and go.

Your faith has made you well. And I think the question that we're supposed to take with us as we leave this parable, not this parable, this real, this real account of, of an encounter with Jesus.

[68 : 10] I think the question we're supposed to take with us as we walk out the door is, has your faith in Christ made you well? You know, we've all known many blessings.

The children reminded us of them this morning. Every breath we have is a gift from Christ. Every pulse of health that travels through our body is granted to us by Jesus.

Now, like the 10, we've so many reasons to thank Jesus for what he has done for us. We can, we can think about the 10 as well and think about the crisis that they had encountered.

They're in such crisis in their life. They've gone from a loving family, a steady job, a group of friends, to quarantine. Forever.

Can't imagine the crisis and the trauma, the suffering that, that brought to these people. And, and, and yet Jesus comes alongside. Everything changes.

[69 : 24] And for some of us, we've known that too. I've sat with, with some of you, even in the congregation, who've gone through medical trauma, crisis, distress, of all kinds.

And have known, the healing touch of Jesus. On our bodies. The question, as we finish is, what came next?

Nine walked away. taking the blessings, but forgetful of Christ. But one Samaritan, he turns back to Jesus, having felt that compassion, felt that grace, felt that mercy.

And he comes back in, in faith to Jesus. And Jesus says to him, that your faith has, better translation, your faith has saved you. You thought it was just your skin, that was going to be healed. But I'm telling you, I've healed your heart. And we see the worship, that this man gives to Christ.

[70 : 53] So where are we in this picture? In this picture. We've known the touch of Jesus. But has he been a saving touch? Are we bowing before him today?

Are we worshipping him? For the richness of the grace, that he has shown to us. Let's pray.

Lord God, we thank you for this, this word that we have studied. We thank you for this, this word that we have studied. We thank you for, this eyewitness account of, the compassion of God, that we see in Christ.

We thank you for the, the grace, for the love, for the mercy, that is so evident in Jesus. We thank you Lord, for the, the healing touch, that these 10 lepers knew, in their bodies.

We thank you for the, the eternal healing touch, that that one leper knew, in his soul. We thank you that, he came to Jesus, and found eternal rest.

[72 : 09] And we pray that we, who have known, so many of the, the blessings of Christ, in our lives. We pray that none of us, would walk away like the nine. Forgetful of Christ, into a lost eternity.

But we pray that each of us, would turn and come, to Jesus. And know that eternal rest. That is promised to all, who will respond to the word, the word of Jesus.

And we ask this in his name, and for his sake. Amen. We can respond, in our own hearts, through this final, praise.

Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood, was shed for me, and that thou bidst me come to, to thee, O Lamb of God, I come. Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood, was shed for me, for me, and that thou bidst me come, to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, and waiting not, to rid my soul, of one blood, to thee, whose blood, and cleanse each spot, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

[74 : 07] Just as I am, am not tossed about, with many a conflict, many a doubt, by things within, and fears without, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, the will, the wretched light, sight which is, giving of the might, may all I need, in thee, to find, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, the wills receive, with welcome, part of, and cleanse, we leave, because thy promise, I believe, for Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, thy love and Lord, have broken, every barrier down, no to be thine, yet thine alone, O Lamb of God, God, I come, I come.

And I 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.