

## 13.3.22 evening Service

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Date: 13 March 2022

Preacher: Reverend John Lachie Macleod

- [ 0 : 00 ]     Good evening and a warm welcome to the service this evening. A special welcome to those who are visiting from other congregations. There's a few faces that are not usually here on a Sunday evening in Tarbert.
- So it's good to see you and we pray that God will bless us as we seek to come together and worship. After the service tonight, which John will take again, there'll be a congregational fellowship.
- So if you're able to stay behind, please do so. There'll be tea and coffee and John, I think, is going to share a word of testimony and say a little bit about the church in Russia as well.
- Come on, Michael. And after the service this evening, there'll be a retiring collection for the Blytheswood Appeal, as has been the case over the last few nights.
- So if you're able to give to that, please do so. A couple more things. One is to say that this Wednesday evening, the prayer meeting at the usual time here and on Zoom.
- [ 1 : 07 ]     And on this coming Wednesday, we will hopefully hear the Reverend Rick Holman, who's going to share a word with us.
- Now, that name won't need much to us, perhaps, just now. But when I say this is Mackenzie's father-in-law, who's a minister over in Arizona, that makes sense to us.
- So we were... Father. Father, sorry. It's good to have a wife to keep you right, isn't it? Mackenzie's father. So we've had the pleasure of fellowship this afternoon, and he's hoping to be able to share a word with us on Wednesday.
- So we've been very much blessed over the last few evenings and this morning as well to hear God's word through John. And we're very thankful for your ministry. Please take our greetings back to your own church and to Gordon as well, whom we hope to see back here soon.
- And so once more, John, we're thankful to you and we pray that God will speak through you. So please stay where you can for the fellowship afterwards. And please remember, Wednesday evening, you'll get to hear the gospel through another voice.
- [ 2 : 19 ]     And then you'll be back to me, I'm afraid, next Sunday. So these, I think, are all the notices. So John, I'll hand back over to you. Thank you, David.
- And thank you, everyone, for the encouragement of being able to worship together and to remember Christ together. It's been a blessing to be here and to share with you. We're going to begin tonight singing in Gaelic from the 118th Psalm, Psalm 118.
- We're going to sing verses 15 and 16, singing to God's praise. Good God.
- For the onlyizations. Thank you. Thank you. But you. Thank you.
- Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.
- [ 3 : 27 ]     Thank you.
- Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 5 : 57 ] Thank you.

As we continue worshipping together, we're going to continue in Galec, and John McSween will lead us in prayer.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 7 : 52 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 10 : 22 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 12 : 52 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 15 : 22 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Amen.

Thank you.

Let's sing again to God's praise.

[ 17 : 52 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

God.

[ 20 : 22 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 22 : 52 ] But Jesus.

Thank you.

He said to him.

their region. Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. Some men brought to him a paralyzed man lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, take heart, son, your sins are forgiven. At this point, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, this fellow is blaspheming. Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? Which is easier to say, your sins are forgiven or to say, get up and walk?

But I want you to know that the son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins. So he said to the paralyzed man, get up, take your mat and go home. Then the man got up and went home. When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe and they praised God who had given such authority to man.

[ 25 : 26 ] As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. Follow me, he told him. And Matthew got up and followed. While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?

On hearing this, Jesus said, it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means. I desire mercy, not sacrifice. For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners. May God bless to our hearts and minds the reading of his holy word. Let's turn to him again in prayer. Let's pray. Father, we've had the privilege of reading your word. We're grateful for all that has been done through the years and for all that you have energized and purposed in various ministries that has enabled our English-speaking world to have such free and full access to the word of God. We thank you, Lord, that over the years there has been such diligence in the translation of the scripture from their languages. And we're thankful, God, that we're able to freely and publicly read aloud the word of the living God. And as we do so, we recognize the wonder of the testimony of the psalm is that your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. And as we have read it tonight, so we would pray that what was heard and what will be shared would truly enlighten our minds and enlighten our hearts and cause us this night to see more of the glories of Christ, to have more of our own failings brought into the spotlight, not for our shame, but for our confession that we might know the wonder of the fullness of the forgiveness that we see in Jesus. We read of him there ministering to that paralysed man and acknowledging that he had the authority to forgive people their sins.

And we know, Lord, that this authority has profound authenticity because today we've remembered why there is such authority in the person of Jesus Christ to forgive sinners because he is the one who bore the punishment for our sins. He is the one who took upon himself the wrath that we are deserving of.

And so we acknowledge with great gratitude the worthiness and the glory that belongs to Jesus. And we acknowledge the wonder of his authority that when he says we are forgiven, we are truly forgiven.

We thank you that there is a power in the gospel to reach the guilty, shame-filled hearts of human beings to this very day. And because the gospel comes in Jesus' name and because it testifies to his love and his truth, there is that authority to grant and to assure the troubled heart of the reality of forgiveness with God because of your desire to forgive us and set us free and to bring us into the glory of the kingdom of your light, releasing us from the dominion of darkness and bringing us to see your wonders and to see your glory, to see your power and to see your majesty and to see the amazing way in which we as sinful people are reconciled to a holy God through the greatness of the mercy that is in Jesus Christ.

[ 29 : 23 ] Oh Lord, we ask tonight for any troubled heart who has yet to come to know the power of the forgiveness of Jesus, that they would hear that voice that speaks with that authority, your son or daughter, your sins are forgiven. We thank you, God, that you have called us by the message of the gospel to be awakened, to be conscious of our need, to turn from sin and to find the forgiveness that you embrace us with.

May this be our experience on this day that you have given us, this day of life, this day of opportunity. May it be a day of spiritual illumination and spiritual direction for us where we would be drawn, oh God, closer to the one who came to reconcile us to yourself. Father, we thank you tonight that the work of your gospel goes on in so many ways and in so many situations. When we think of all the churches that gather in our nation and in the western world today, we thank you that whilst we can be so conscious of the messes and the failures, we're also encouraged by the testimonies for the many places where Christ is preached, where his name is uplifted, where he is pointed to as our only hope of salvation and the only saviour of the world. We pray that that word would have power and we pray that it would find its way into hearts that are receptive soil, that would bear a great harvest to the glory of your name. We thank you, Lord, that there are situations in our world today where there is much human devastation but still your word is preached and your name is called upon. We thank you tonight again for our brothers and sisters in the troubled nations of Eastern Europe and for the testimonies we hear of the faithfulness to the gospel, where we see, Lord, people in the name of Christ welcoming the homeless, feeding the hungry, drawing the broken hearted to their nations to shelter them and provide for them. Lord, how we pray that there will be glory given to your name for we recognise that it is often in some of the darkest experiences of this world that radiant brightness comes to honour and praise the name of our God. We see that supremely, Lord, at Calvary. We see it supremely that in the moment where Christ demonstrates the greatness of his love for you and for your people, when he demonstrates the greatness of his desire to honour and praise you and to rescue and ransom the souls of sinners. All of our creation is plunged into darkness and yet from that darkness is birthed the glory of the eternal hope that belongs to us in him. Oh, Father, how we long for the brightness of the hope of the gospel to shine from us in our dark world. We're so conscious of the difficulties so many face. We pray for those, Lord, engaged in so many of the public services in our nation, engaged in public safety, in police forces, in the medical services, in the educational services, where there is the constant pressure of the kingdom of darkness imposing godless thinking upon them, how we pray that in these areas the light of Jesus will shine and the truth of the gospel, the truth of your word would bring people to see that you alone are the voice that truly cares for us. You are the one who has come not to make us the best version of ourselves, but you are the

God who has come to show us the wreck that we are in order that we, through the glory of your saving love, can become the eternal inheritors of the kingdom of God as sons and daughters of light. So, Lord, we pray for this for our nation, recognising its lostness and its brokenness and acknowledging you alone are the one who can direct us to new life and heal us again. So, Lord, we pray that you will remember us, that you will be faithful and bring reviving power to the church of Jesus Christ for the glory of his name. Amen.

Let's sing just before we turn to God's word again. We'll sing the great modern hymn 1072 and mission praise in Christ alone. Christ alone, my hope is found.

Amen. Christ alone, my hope is found. He is my light, my strength, my song. His cornerstone, the solid ground, burned through the greatest drought and storm. What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are still, when strivings cease. My comfort, my all in all, here in the blood of Christ I stand.

[ 34 : 52 ] Amen. A honor, many verses. In Christ alone who took on flesh, fullness of God in hell, blessed babe, this gift of love and righteousness scorned by the ones he came to save.

On that cross as Jesus died the wrath of God was satisfied for every sin on him was laid here in the death of Christ I live.

In the crowd his body lay light of the world by darkness slain bursting forth in glorious day and from the grave he rose again and as he stands in victory since curse has lost its grip on me for I am his and he is mine Lord with the precious blood of Christ O guilt in life O fear in death This is the power of Christ in me O Christ was right to find a breath

Jesus commands my destiny The power of hell has he not done and never part me from his hand till he returns or calls me home here in the power of Christ I stand It's wonderful the simplicity of what we read in Matthew 9 verse 9 where Jesus speaks to Matthew and says to him follow me and Matthew gets up and follows him It's such a simple statement It's such a simple picture and yet we realise it contains so much challenge and wrestling in Matthew's life and in the life of anyone who's ever come to follow Jesus

We'd love it always to be that straightforward that we hear we rise and we go but for many people it's often the wrestling and the struggling and the working things out and working things through before we reach that place of commitment to Christ I don't know whether it's just reminiscent of a Sunday evening back in Harrah's but I remember many a Sunday night going to bed in Northton believing that I wanted to follow Jesus and believing that this would be a time where I would maybe give my life to the Lord and then setting off on Monday morning back to school in Stornoway and then work in Stornoway and the bus probably hadn't even left Harrah's when thoughts of following Jesus had gone there can be that emotional response and there's something genuine in the desire but it hasn't been truly thought through or truly wrestled with like these men who came to

[ 38 : 53 ] Jesus at the beginning of our reading and as they come to them Jesus almost seems discouraging somebody who came to I'll follow you wherever you go well will you really Jesus seems to say it because following me involves a cost there's a challenge to it and somebody else came and again there seems to be a sense of genuineness in his desire to be part of what the Lord is doing but he recognizes he still has some responsibilities with regards to the things of this world and his culture and his tradition and his family and Jesus says well follow me if you're going to follow him and let the dead bury their own dead let the things of this life take care of themselves but you have to give your allegiance to the king of kings and to the Lord of lords and when I was reading these verses a few weeks ago what struck me was that we find here almost this emotional response and then we have

Matthew's genuine response and what is it Matthew shares with us between these two examples one example where people seem to want to follow Jesus but don't pull through as it were and get then a situation where there is someone going about his daily business and we can't garner from other places that he may have had encounters with Jesus before but in that moment as Matthew's dealing with his daily business suddenly the voice of Jesus speaks to him with such power that he does just get up and become a faithful follower of Christ what is it that makes these distinct distinctions what is it that makes our commitment real what is it that takes us from an emotional genuine desire to being a real wholehearted commitment to following Christ an emotional genuine desire that just doesn't as the legs to see it through as it were when

Jesus challenged well if we step back from the verses for a moment and remind ourselves what Matthew is accomplishing in the sharing of his gospel we know that he is revealing to the Jewish people and indeed to the world that Jesus is the king that God has promised to lead his people we don't need to go into all the reasons why we believe that but if you go back to the very beginning of Matthew's gospel and the birth narratives that are there and then we see the wonderful manifesto of the kingdom of God as some people describe the sermon on the mount this is very much the gospel of the king that God has sent to lead guide guard protect deliver his people into the glory of the king this is the one that God has promised and this is the one who has come with authority over life with authority over your life and authority over my life and he has come into the world and as we reminded ourselves this morning he has come very personally with the mission to die for us to suffer for us in order that he can reign for us and reveal to us the glories of the kingdom that we can be a part of and in all these incidents that we read between the initial encounters of those who expressed a desire to follow and the calling of Matthew where Matthew does follow we see a series of incidents that revealed to us the authority of Jesus over key things in life key things that could ultimately cost us from truly following Jesus key things that could be holding us back from truly following Jesus beginning with the teacher of the law and the other disciple who had come to him genuinely expressing that they wanted to be part of his family but

Jesus addressed them in such a way as if he's saying you know you need to consider what it really means to follow me the foxes of dens the birds of nests but the son of man has no place to lay his head are you conscious of the hardship that you will face when it comes to following and we know that for some people the worry of that and the fear of that can be what holds them back from following Jesus the reality of the fact that it's a challenge to belong to him in a world that increasingly shows rejection for him to be a people of light in a world of darkness to be a people of truth in a world of lies to be the person in your workplace is the person of integrity when everyone else is at it and looking out for themselves do you realize Jesus is saying that there is a cost to following that you don't have the comforts of the world in the way that others simply live for the comforts comforts of the world you'll have many blessings and you're free to enjoy them but in your identification with me and your kingdom there will be a cost there will be a challenge I sometimes think that's often what what transformed my

Sunday night feeling into my Monday morning failing was often the reality it's easy to want to follow Jesus when you're in the youth fellowship singing mission praise it's not so easy when you're in school with your friends or you're at work with people who spend their Monday mornings mocking and decrying the church there's a cost to this but Jesus has authority over these situations as the second disciple came to him and acknowledged the fact that he was burdened with regards to earthly concerns and upholding traditions in his culture to look after and see to the burying of his father that could have been years away from there according to some commentators we don't know all the details except that Jesus said to him no you need to make sure that all these issues are secondary when you give your allegiance to me so in these challenges that Jesus brought to these men he's not writing them off and he's not totally dismissing them but he's challenging them to realize the reality of the cost that there is to following Christ there are great benefits and the benefits far outweigh the cost but don't be daft about Christianity don't be daft about your faith it will bring you into conflict with this world but then in the next three incidents we see the authority of Jesus in three different situations and they will bring us to the heart of the hindrances that can stop anyone from following Jesus there are the issues of the storm there are the issues in related to satanic influence and there are the issues related to our inherent sinful identity sin and Satan and the storms of life are issues that Matthew brings before us and reveals to us Jesus' control his power and authority over all these things there is something so natural in the biblical imagery of using the storms that were so natural in the physical world where Jesus lived as being a spiritual illustration of what God's people so often go through there are times in the

[ 46 : 51 ] Christian life and there are times in this world where we are so conscious of the storms and the difficulties of this world as they pound in upon us and the difficulties we can face as even as we journey with Jesus Jesus was sleeping in the midst of the storm the storm comes and there's a danger that the waves are going to sweep over the boat and the disciples are truly afraid for their lives and they're they're believing that they're going to drown but the Lord is sleeping how on earth can you sleep in the storm well you can sleep in the storm when you know you can control and Jesus stands up eventually and commands the wind and the waves to obey him and it was completely calm and this causes amazement in the hearts and minds of the disciples and they recognize what kind of man is this this is someone with authority this is someone with power over nature but what he does in the natural has often been an encouragement to his people in the spirit as someone once so wonderfully said the waves that you worry will come over your head are under the feet of Jesus in that other incident when he walks on the water towards his disciples the things that we think will overwhelm us are under the authority of Jesus it's that great old promise that we read of in the prophet of old when you go through the water they will not overcome when you are in the fire you will not be burned it's not if these things happen it's when these things happen let me tell you you will not be lost you will not be forsaken you will not be broken one of the great old hymns that has had a bit of a revival in the last few years and I think the fact that it's had such a revival is testimony to what so many people in the Christian faith are going through in the world when I fear my faith will fail Christ must hold me fast and that is the promise of following Jesus immediately after

Jesus has challenged people about the cost of following him an incident takes place that reminds us that the things we fear in this life will not overcome us when we are journeying with Jesus the things we think will destroy us will be stopped at his bidding and his command the things that make us afraid oh you of little faith why are you so afraid says Jesus I don't know if you do any then what we used to call wayside pulpits and as putting messages by the side of the church I noticed I parked in the car park today and there's a wonderful testimony to the word of God and the light in the midst of the darkness and when COVID started and we were all in lockdown we've always had messages outside our church aim for I've been there nearly 12 years or I'm in my 12th year somewhere around there I don't think I've ever had a comment from anyone about any of the messages we've ever put up in the church gardener in the church wall until the start of lockdown where we put up a banner that simply said faith not fear be safe it was remarkable people through the church website people who never go near a church thanking us and all these kind of things like I say no contact for 12 years and then we went through a period of a couple of months where nearly every week somebody not church connected was contacting us and just commenting on the fact in the midst of what was happening in the world they were challenged and helped by the thought of faith not fear Jesus has authority he has authority over everything he has authority over the storms of life he has authority over COVID he has authority over world economies he has authority over the things in the natural world the things that can sometimes stop us from following him why are you so afraid why are you so afraid to commit to Jesus because of rejection he has authority over your friends why are you so afraid to commit to Jesus because you fear your job prospects he has authority over your income he has authority over everything that comes into your life the good things and the bad things and here is a great reminder to us of the preciousness of faith that when we live in a world where the circumstances of the world can cause us to be afraid and fear that we're going to be destroyed in the company of Jesus we know that these things will be stopped at his will and command be gone on belief my saviour is near and for my relief will surely appear by prayer let me wrestle and he will perform with Christ in the vessel

I smile at the storm his power over nature and the storms of life and then we see his power over Satan his power over the power of darkness it's something every Christian needs to be affirmed so many times in this world because we become so aware of the powers of darkness and we know that there are all kinds of ways in which Satan works in this world and we see in this situation that here was a very violent situation I think if we were to consider what was happening with these two demon-possessed men some of the other gospel writers only mentioned one of them but we recognize so much of the hallmarks of the reality of satanic activity what does Satan do with a human life if he gets full access to it well he binds it and he destroys Jesus said that in John chapter 10 when he spoke of the fact that he had come to give us life and life in all its fullness but Satan comes he says he comes to steal he comes to kill he comes to destroy and here we have a situation which reminds us that life without the light of God is destruct and ultimately this situation was one of the worst spiritual darkneses we could imagine where there were these men so bound by so many demons it's one of the worst cases of demonic possession we could read of but yet the demons revealed the nature of their activity and we see here the reality of the fact that here is a situation where human lives are being ruined because they are steeped in the ways of darkness rather than walking in the ways of light their lives are characterized by brokenness broken relationship with their own community they were a danger and a threat to their community people feared them and shunned away from they were so violent they couldn't be contained and nobody could even pass their way there is no doubt about it that as



Jesus ventures into this region of the Gentiles we are to see something of the reality of the powers of darkness and how it's manifested in the lives of these two men we're to understand how much life can be broken by the power of darkness darkness and how much darkness can grip people and control people and destroy people and we're to see that so that we then get to see that no matter how dark the darkness is when Jesus comes they go when Jesus comes he has authority over the darkness if I'm sure many of you at times as well people tell you horrific stories about this happening in witchcraft and that happening in witchcraft and all kinds when we were students in Aberdeen we used to hear all kinds of stories at all kinds of times this is the passage for us in these times because you know when Jesus comes it's the darkness that's afraid not God's people afraid of the dark but the darkness is afraid it's a remarkable insight to spiritual realities friends the darkness knows its time is limited have you come to torture us before the appointed time think of it here were legions of demons and when the son of God came into their presence they didn't say I hear Jesus let's get they said what do you want with us son of God have you come to torment us before the appointed time and again there's so much that you we can explore with regards to spiritual issues and God's working in this world and what's happening in this world don't have time to go into all that now but what we can say is this friends darkness knows its day is limited the powers of darkness know that their time of freedom is coming to an end there is a day coming where darkness will be brought to account where darkness will be banished forever and the appeal of the gospel is don't be on the side of darkness because the day is coming when darkness is going to be banished forever and there's going to be a separation where the kingdom of light will be seen its glory and all the powers of darkness will be banished to their place of darkness and the appeal of the gospel is this don't be in the dark but come to Jesus who has the authority to break every power that is stopping you tonight from following him the gospel is not asking you to make yourself better the gospel is not asking to make yourself good the gospel is telling you there are powers that will control you until you find a greater power who will release you and that power is Jesus Christ and Jesus released these men from that demonic oppression and the pigs go into the sea which again creates a lot of problems for some of our animal loving people and certainly in our world there are some people who value animals almost more than humans but it's not that God is dismissive of his creation but it's that God values human souls more than aspects of animal life and there was a great cost to that region with the loss of these pigs but there was a greater worth and value to that community because Jesus established in the lives of these men the light of the gospel the light of hope the light of truth isn't that what happened we've read one of the other gospels one of them wanted to go with him he says no you stay here

Jesus had revealed his authority he had revealed his power and sadly the whole town wasn't granted they were driving Jesus away isn't it wonderful the mercy of Jesus by the way you might think that you know you've rejected the gospel so many times that that Jesus won't take you now here was a situation where we read in Matthew 8 verse 34 that the whole town went out to meet Jesus and if you were reading that for the first time you would almost expect and they were so excited to see what Jesus had done for their neighbors but it doesn't say that it says that when they saw him they pleaded with him to leave their region yet what do we know Jesus did he left a witness he left somebody to testify in a place that said Jesus we don't want you Jesus said well I want you and he left the delivered man to testify to their power and authority of Jesus Christ friends whatever is holding you back in the spiritual realms from following Jesus he has the authority and the power to deal with it and we see that finally in what happens in the beginning of chapter 9 he has power over sin he has the power to forgive again Matthew doesn't give us all the details that other people give us with regards to the desperation and the love these men had for their friend in the way that they take him and lower him into the room so that he can meet with Jesus they were so desperate for him to know the healing power of Christ and then Christ kind of surprises the audience there because instead of dealing immediately with the man's paralysis he deals with something that nobody had even mentioned the man's sin take heart son your sins are forgiven and we recognize that immediately then this created a theological controversy the teachers of the law there were saying this fellow was blaspheming because they knew only God has the power to forgive sin only God can truly forgive sin because sin is what offends God

[ 61 : 08 ] I mean we live in a world where people get offended at just about anything God isn't that petty and he isn't that kind of touchy natured person the way that our world is today but he has told us that there are things that are truly offensive to him there are thoughts that we have our self-exalting thoughts our self-righteous thoughts there are our sinful desires the things we do when we're deliberately or thoughtlessly hurting other people these things are an offense to God and so the Jewish people knew this that God was the one who determined what was sin and what wasn't sin and therefore God alone had the authority to forgive sins so when Jesus says your sins are forgiven it's startling to them it's offensive to them it's blasphemous to them but Jesus knowing their thoughts actually revealed their sins and revealed their judgment on the son of God and he asked them the question what is it he says that's easier to say and in some ways it's easier just to say your sins are forgiven because there's no tangible visible evidence for us to see any of that but then he says just so that you know the son of man has authority to forgive sins he said to the man get up take your mat and go home and the man got up and went home friends Jesus has power over sin he has power to forgive he has power to renew he has power to set you free he's got power to release you and to renew you the next person he called was Matthew and Matthew went up and followed because the voice of Jesus speaks with authority there may be many times in our lives where we stumbled and fall maybe you're one of these people like I was many years ago lots of times where emotionally wanted to follow Jesus but never got there the voice of Jesus Christ is calling you tonight to get there and you'll get there under his authority you'll get there under his steam you'll get there under his power you'll come there under his love under his calling under his grace under his keeping

I've mentioned Gordon Thompson already and how much he loves coming here he is actually on a mission in Northern Ireland this week you can pray for that if you remember in your prayers this week he would really value that in I think it's Irvinestown or somewhere like that in Northern Ireland he's in a mission but I mention him because last Sunday he was in our church along with our guest preacher who was Sam Gordon and I first met these both these men about six months after I was converted there was a faith mission convention in Stornoway Sam Gordon was the preacher and Gordon Thompson was one of the the faith mission pilgrims they used to call them I think they just call them workers nowadays and he was testifying Sam was preaching I met them then and I've known of them and got to know them better many years later and we were marvelling at the fact that here we were probably 30 odd years later for the first time the three of us together again and the comment was made isn't it amazing not just that here we are meeting up together again but 30 years later we're still following the law because it's his power it's his grace it's his authority

I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins and Jesus has the authority to forgive you to forgive me to forgive whoever will call on his name what will take us from being emotional desirers to being committed disciples simple trust in the authority in the power and in the glory of the person of God in Jesus Christ it is as wonderfully simple as that follow me he told Matthew others came and he rebuffed them and challenged them but those who got to understand that here is the one with the voice that speaks to the depth of our hearts and promises the pardon that we need that gives us the hope that we desire and brings us the love we don't deserve his voice speaks his voice calls and he has the authority to forgive you he is the authority to break you from every chain and every binding power that holds you back he has the authority to deal with the storms of your life he has the authority to make you his how will you respond when he says to you tonight follow me let's pray you are the God who calls and you are the God who keeps forgiveness you are the God who restores you are the God who forgives whether we're conscious tonight for the first time in our lives that we need your forgiveness or whether we're conscious for the umpteenth time how much we need your forgiveness we thank you

God that there is forgiveness forgiveness to be found with you we thank you for Jesus and his authority and his power we thank you Lord that there is no spiritual power that could bind us from Christ's authority for those who need to be set free tonight we call on the name of Jesus for whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved and so we ask you God to bring your salvation near to us this night and that you will hear the heart cry of those who truly want to follow you speak Lord that we might say tonight I heard the voice of Jesus say come unto me and rest we pray this for your glory sake amen we're going to close as we sing number 673 so thankful that though there's a lot wrong in our world tonight there is still a redeemer for us to call upon there is a redeemer

Jesus God's own son precious lamb of god messiah oh holy one thank you oh my father for giving us your son and leaving your spirit till the work on earth is done Jesus my redeemer name above all names precious lamb of god messiah oh for sinners slain thank you oh my father for giving us your son and leaving your spirit till the work on earth be done when I stand in glory

[ 70 : 33 ] I will see his face and there I'll serve my king forever in that holy place thank you oh my father for giving us your son and leaving your spirit till the work of earth is done and so may you know the command of Christ over the storms that trouble you may he bring you peace may you see the power of Christ granting freedom from all that Satan would use to bind you and may you know the glorious love of Christ in the assurance of the pardon he brings that your sins are forgiven and may grace mercy and peace from father son and holy spirit the only true and eternal

God be with you this night and forever more amen will be by you one another thing this means is neredede you can prepare effective and promise money and her daughter feel and they will Australian support it it It the way it