

29.5.22 am

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 29 May 2022

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Good morning and a warm welcome to the service this morning. Good to see a few faces of visitors with us this morning and you're especially welcome.

There's tea and there's coffee at the end of the service just in the hall on my left. So if you're able to stay behind at the end, it would be good to get the chance to meet you and enjoy fellowship. The Gaelic, sorry the tea is in here.

I'm only one minute in and I've already been corrected. So there'll be a tea and coffee in the church here after the service and you're all welcome to stay behind if you're able.

The evening service will be a Gaelic service, a monthly Gaelic service at 6pm and that will be conducted by Angus M. MacLeod who's here with us this morning.

I said it last time, let me just say again, an encouragement for people to come out to the Gaelic service. The session were, I suppose, forced to start to think about the Gaelic service just because of the lowness of the numbers.

[1 : 07] And we're conscious that it's the older people who are coming out, the 40s, 50s, who have Gaelic are very rare in coming to the service.

And so one of the elders actually said, we'll need to put this under review. So just an encouragement to come out to the Gaelic service. I don't understand much of it, but it's a blessing in being there.

And if there aren't people who come to it, then inevitably we'll lose it over the course of time. So I think that would be a shame to lose the Gaelic service. So be encouraged to come out to the service tonight at 6pm.

This evening at 8 o'clock, just to say there'll be a wake, a worship at the Church of Scotland. We obviously heard about the sad death of Mary Ann Macrae.

And so there's a wake at the Church of Scotland tonight at 8pm. And we can be praying for Campbell and Wilma and the family at this time. The Ladies' Fellowship on Mondays and Thursdays.

[2 : 08] You've got details there on the screen. Little Fish is on Tuesday, as is Road to Recovery at normal times, normal places. Wednesday evening, a prayer meeting here and on Zoom this coming Wednesday.

And it will be a prayer meeting. I think we maybe don't get enough time to pray. Because I speak too much. And so we will, I think over the course of this next month, really focus on giving time to prayer.

And be encouraged to come to the prayer meeting on Wednesday. Come on, come on. Morning. Morning. And the service is next Sunday at 11 and 6.

Both will be conducted by myself, God willing. Afternoon tea in the Church on Friday the 2nd of June. That's this coming Friday for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

All donations on the day go to Crossroads Harris and Cancer Research. There's a sign-up sheet at the door, the foyer, for donations of food and helper list. And a warm invitation to come along to that.

[3 : 17] The final thing is a fairly lengthy intimation. The Lewis branch of the Lord's Day Observance Society. Friday 10th of June at half past seven. The Reverend Ian Smith, who was in Leverborough before, will be speaking at that.

So be encouraged to give consideration to go in there also. The faith mission, tent mission, I think starts a week tomorrow in Graber.

So keep that in your prayers and on your mind. And the final thing is just to say that as a congregation, we are delighted to welcome baby Anna Caitlin King.

She's not with us today, is she? Is she here? She's with us. I think you should come forward, Joyce, just for a second. Come forward for a wee second.

I didn't think she'd be here today, but I'm not wanting to hold her because she's too delicate. You should stand here and take up that camera.

[4 : 25] So we are delighted. It was a bit of a scary week for Joyce and little baby Anna at Caitlin. But she is here, safe and sound, and we are delighted to see her stable.

And what a blessing she and all these other wee ones that have come in the last few weeks and months have been. I'm going to pray to you now. Heavenly Father, we thank you for this day.

And we thank you for the blessing of new life. We thank you for these wee babies that we have prayed for and whom we have seen coming in past weeks and months.

And we thank you especially today for Anna Caitlin. We thank you for hearing our prayers in a week that was difficult for the family and in a week where there was much anxiety.

We thank you that as we cast our cares and anxieties upon you, you've heard our prayers. And we thank you for little baby Anna Caitlin. And we ask that you would bless her and that you would watch over her and that she would grow up to know you and to trust you.

[5 : 33] And bless Joyce as she recovers and Stuart and Emily as well. That as a family they would know your presence and your peace. So hear our prayers and lead us and guide us in worship.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. He said, don't be offended if she sleeps. There's a few faces in here that sleep.

But she has a free pass for today. Okay. Let's start this time of worship now and let's sing to God's praise.

The first praise which is Psalm 8. Psalm 8. The words are just coming onto the screen. Psalm 8.

And we'll stand to sing to God's praise.

How excellent in all the earth, Lord our Lord is thy name. Who asked thy glory far advanced above the starry frame. We'll stand to sing. How excellent in all the earth, Lord our Lord is thy name.

[6 : 43] Who asked thy glory far advanced above the starry frame.

From heaven's hand, from suckling's mouth, thou didst strength for day.

For I, whose cause are so the might, thou benching for each strain.

When I look up unto the heavens, which thy own fingers lay.

Unto the moon and to the stars, which were by thee ordained.

[7 : 43] Then say I watch his man as he remembered his by thee.

For what a son of man that thou so bright to him should be.

For thou a little overcast him that the angels made.

With glory and with dignity thou crowned past his head.

Of thy hands, thou mayest in the Lord, all under the feet it lay.

[8 : 43] All sheep and oxen, yea, and beasts that in the fields do stray.

Found of the air, fish of the sea. All our paths through the same.

How excellent in all the earth, Lord our Lord is thy name.

One intimation that I forgot to read out is from Nurse Marian.

We would like to thank all those who contributed. Baking soup sandwiches, monetary donations, etc. And those who helped on the day at the cafe in the community hall on Friday in aid of Dachau's Education Trust.

[9 : 42] The magnificent sum of £858 was raised. So many thanks for all the generosity of all those who attended the cafe. There's containers and plates and all that kind of thing at the front entrance for those who gave donations.

So please pick them up on the way out. And one more thing just to say is let's as a congregation be mindful of Hannah as well. We've been praying for Hannah in past weeks and Hannah's in hospital at this time.

She's struggling with her diabetes. They can't seem to get her bloods under control. And she contracted Covid as well, which I think doesn't, it makes it even more complex.

So let's be praying for Hannah at this time. So let's again unite our hearts in prayer. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this gift of prayer.

And we thank you that we can come to the God who is excellent. The God who is majestic. The God whom the psalmist wrote of in that psalm that we have sung.

[10 : 48] The one who put the stars into space. Who ordained all things. Our creator, our sustainer God. We thank you that we can come before your majesty and your all.

Seeing in some measure the magnitude of who you are. And yet encouraged through your word to come to you with the details of our lives.

So we thank you that the same God who put the stars in space is the God who hears our prayers. As we bring to you those that we are anxious for.

And we think of Hannah in particular as we've given thanks for your protection of those who have been brought into the world. The blessing of these young ones.

We pray for Hannah at this time as she struggles with our health. We ask Lord that as the medical people try to get our bloods under control. That you would aid them.

[11 : 52] That you would give them insight. That all they do would be done with compassion and attentiveness. We pray Lord that your hand would be upon Hannah. And that she would know your presence.

That she would know your peace. That she would know in the isolation of a hospital ward at this time. That you are God. And that you are with her. And that she is remembered.

And that she is loved. We pray for Gordon. And for Jillian. And for the girls. And Catherine and Jim as well. With us at this time. And we ask that as a family. You would watch over all of them.

And we pray for all who are sick. Those in hospital. And those who struggle at home with different things. With infections. And with viruses. And illnesses.

We are conscious that in this world. We will always have these difficulties. But we pray for those who come into our minds eye. Those that we love and care for.

[12 : 50] And we ask that you would bring healing. To those who are sick. And that you would minister your grace. To those who are struggling at this time.

We pray for those who are grieving also. And we think of Campbell. And we think of Wilma. And the wider family. Many of whom. Have gone from the heights of joy.

In a family wedding. To the pain of grief. In a funeral. In just a few days. We thank you that we call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.

Who has experienced both. The joy of being with a family. At a time of wedding. And the grief of weeping.

At a graveside. With those who had lost a brother. We thank you that Jesus ministers. Still on the part of the Holy Spirit. To all who are struggling with grief.

[13 : 48] And for that family. And for all who continue to grieve. For loved ones lost in past months. And weeks and years. We hold them up to you.

And ask Lord. That you would comfort them. And we thank you for the hope of the gospel. This is the Lord's day. The day when. Jesus. Our Savior.

Your son. And not only died. But rose from the grave. And promised that because he lives. We too. If we are trusting him. Shall live. And live eternally.

So enable us. In our worship. To be joyful. To be sincere. To be filled with. The spirit of God. And we pray.

That you would be. Amongst us. In all that we do. So. Hear our prayers. We continue to. To pray for protection over. The wee ones.

[14 : 44] Not only those who are with us. Now. In time. But those who are. Being carried in the womb. We pray for Mackenzie. And Ian. And the wee one. That Mackenzie.

Carries at this time. And we pray on. For your protection. Of that child. And we. Thank you Lord. For the freedom. That we have to worship. As we think about the.

The jubilee. This coming week. We thank you for. The queen. That you've. Set over. Us. And we thank you for. The steadiness. Of the years.

That she has been in power. We thank you for. The. The witness. That we see in her. Of Christ. And we pray that you would bless her. And we pray that you would. Look upon us.

In mercy. As a nation. As we. Seem to be so determined. To go. In the opposite direction. To the way that you would call us to be. We pray that you would give us. That spirit.

[15 : 39] Of repentance. And that you would enable. Us. To be able to. To worship. In spirit. And freedom. And truth. For the years ahead. So.

I hear our prayers. Continue with us. We ask. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Boys and girls. Would you like to come forward please. Come a wee bit forward.

Forward please. Just so I can see you. How's everyone today? Good. You had a good week? Yeah? Nice to meet little. Emily. Emily.

You've had a big week. So. Great to meet your little sister. Today. And it's good to see you all. Just a short. Story for you today. I don't have anything to show you.

But I just want to. I want to tell you about something that happened. In the last few days. When I was away in. Away in Edinburgh. When I go through to Edinburgh. I stay with. With somebody that you know.

[16:47] Do you know who I stay with? I stay with McGilvery. And you know him. Under that. Another name. Do you remember the name you know him by? Dust Boy. Dust Boy.

His flat's tidier than you'd expect. But I stay with him. And there was one morning. I think it was the Tuesday morning. And I got up nice and early on.

And the Monday night. I said to him. I think. We're sitting down in the hall. In the assembly all day. It's a long day. Sitting in the same chair. So I said. I think. It would be good.

If I went for a run. First thing in the morning. Before all that sitting down. So. I said. Do you want to come out for a run with me in the morning? And he said. Well. I'm not sure.

I'm not sure about that. But. I will see in the morning. Anyway. Half past six in the morning. I've got my running shoes and everything. All ready to go. No sign of McGillivray. No sign of McGillivray. Snoring his head off in the room.

[17:41] So I went off for 40 minutes. And did a slow run. It's the only kind of run I can do. And I came back into the flat. Up the stairs. And I was feeling quite proud of myself.

For having gone out for a run. And. I could see. That McGillivray was up. He was looking terrible. But he was. He was up. And rubbing the sleep out of his eyes. And everything. And he said.

So. Macleod. You went for a run. Did you? And I said. Yes. Went for a run. Whilst you were snoring your head off. In that room. And he said. How far did you run?

I said. Well. I ran four miles. Right. For about. Just under 40 minutes. Four miles around the. The streets. In Edinburgh there. And he says. Well done.

Macleod. Four miles you've run. 40 minutes of your life. You've wasted. And how far have you got? He says. You're no further forward.

[18:37] At this minute. Than you were. When you go to bed. In the morning. Which is of great encouragement. But I thought to myself.

You know. That's true. All that huffing. And puffing. And sweating. And. Energy. All these calories. And I hadn't actually moved. One inch forward.

I was standing. In the same place. As he said that to me. As I was. Before I left the flat. First thing. In the morning. I hadn't made any progress. In the day.

And it just made me think about. Our lives as Christians. What does Jesus call us to do? Think about this. Think about this. What does Jesus call us to do?

It's a big open question. He calls us to trust him. Doesn't he? That's. The thing that we. We always think of first. And it's right that we do. He calls us to believe in him. But then. What else does he call us to do?

[19:35] Think about the disciples. Washing their nets. Getting on with things. And Jesus comes along. And what does he say to them? To them.

Lois. To tell people about God. Well he said to tell people about God. About him. But he said something before that. Daniel.

What? Say the first bit again. Come with me. And I will make you fishers of men. Which is another way of saying. Follow me.

Jesus. He says. He's not standing still. With the disciples. He says. We've got a job to do. We've got places to go. We've got people to see.

So. Come with me. Follow me. And. That's. What Jesus calls us to do. He said that to the first disciples. He says that to all of us.

[20:34] If we're Christians. He says. Follow me. I've got things for you to do. I've got places for you to go. I've got an adventure of a life for you to live. So.

So. Follow me. He. He leads us forward. And as we follow him. He makes us stronger as Christians. He makes us more like him. We stay close to him.

He uses us to be fishers of men and women and boys and girls. To tell people about Jesus. So that they. They'll trust them. So he. He calls us to follow him.

Suspending me with arms of love and guiding me with grace, my heart is filled with thankfulness to him who reigns above, whose wisdom is my perfect peace, whose every thought is done.
[26 : 42] For every day I have honoured is given by the rain, so I will give my life, my all to love and for him.

Amen. Okay boys and girls, just seeing Callum's got a medal. Did you get that for running a race? No? I thought that could have been the perfect illustration that I didn't have. And let's turn in our Bibles now to Luke chapter 21 please.
Luke 21.

And we're reading from verse 5 down to verse 19. Jesus is with his disciples and we join in at verse 5 where there's a conversation happening between the disciples.

[28 : 09] Some of his disciples were remarking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. But Jesus said, As for what you see here, the time will come when not one stone will be left on another.

Every one of them will be thrown down. Teacher, they asked, When will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place? He replied, Watch out that you're not deceived.

For many will come in my name, claiming I am he, and the time is near. Do not follow them. When you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened. These things must happen first.

But the end will not come right away. Then he said to them, Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes and famines and pestilences in various places and fearful events and great signs from heaven.

But before all this, they will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name.

[29 : 18] This will result in your being witnesses to them. But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.

You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death. All men will hate you because of me.

But not a hair of your head will perish. By standing firm, you will gain life. Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us.

We're going to sing again now to God's praise. Psalm 117. It's just two stanzas. And we sing this psalm in Gaelic. We'll give you praise unto the Lord, all nations that be.

Likewise, ye people all accord his name to magnify. For great to us word ever are his loving kindnesses. His truth endures forevermore. The Lord, O do ye bless.

[30 : 21] So we'll sing these two verses of this psalm. We'll remain seated to sing in Gaelic. Thank you.

We'll sing this psalm.

We'll sing this psalm.

We'll sing this psalm.

We'll sing this psalm.

[32 : 56] We'll sing this psalm. We'll sing this psalm. We'll sing this psalm. We'll sing this psalm.

We'll sing this psalm. Psalm.

We'll sing this psalm. We'll sing this psalm. We'll sing this psalm. We'll sing this psalm. We'll sing this psalm. We'll sing this psalm.

CHOIR SINGS Amen.

Thank you. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we pray again for the help of the Holy Spirit as we try to understand these words.

We thank you for this conversation that was recorded by Luke. This conversation that happened with the disciples a long time ago, far from here.

[34 : 47] But a conversation which still is instructive for us in guiding us on how we are to live here and today. So help us, Lord, we pray. Help us to be attentive as we study your word.

Help us to hear your voice and to know your presence. And we pray again, Lord, for the wee ones as they go to Sunday school, that they would hear the gospel message clearly and simply.

It was an amazing building. It took decades to build. It was a place of great beauty and significance. It was a place that had been designed very particularly to exacting specifications that God had set out to be that way.

[41 : 19] This building that Jesus is speaking about, it was designed to bring glory to God. in the first instance. It was a building that was designed for the purpose of God's people, of believers, coming together to worship him.

So when Jesus says to the disciples, this whole thing is coming down, not one stone will be left on another, every one of them will be thrown down.

The disciples would have been absolutely shocked. They would have been dismayed. Not just because of the architectural loss, but the spiritual loss.

The disciples would have been thinking in their minds, how can God be glorified without a temple? How can we meet with God?

Where do we go to worship God if there is no temple? These are the questions that would have been going round in their minds. And of course, Jesus was teaching them here.

[42 : 25] A lesson, not just about the future, but about the way things were going to be in the theological sense. because in the past, they were fixing their eyes on this temple.

And Jesus was saying to them, now, you fix your eyes upon me. See, the coming of Jesus into the world meant that the temple was no longer needed.

How can we meet with God? The disciples would have been thinking, well, the answer is through Jesus. We'll come to the Father through Jesus the Son.

Where do we go to meet with God? Well, we can meet with God anywhere. As long as we are in relationship with Jesus. Where can sacrifices be made?

Because remember, the temple was the place where all these sacrifices were made. Well, there was no need for sacrifices now because Jesus was the perfect sacrifice. He was the one that John said when he saw him.

[43 : 38] This is the Lamb of God who has come to take away the sin of the world. And so, it used to be that the people had to come to God in the temple.

But now, God had come to the people. In Jesus. And when we trust in Jesus, we're told in the Bible that the Holy Spirit himself, God himself, he comes to live in us, in our hearts, in our bodies. our bodies, the Apostle Paul tells us, are now the temple where God lives. 1 Corinthians 6, 19 and 20.

Paul says, Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own.

You were bought at a price. Think of the cross. Therefore, honour God with your bodies.

[44 : 59] So, the first prediction, the first word that Jesus has to say about the future, it concerned the fall of the temple. And 40 years later, to think about the immediate application of this, the temple did fall.

Jerusalem was destroyed. Barclay, the commentator, says Jerusalem fell to the Roman armies in AD 70 after a desperate siege in which the inhabitants were actually reduced to cannibalism and in which the city had to be taken literally stone by stone.

Josephus says that an incredible number of 1.1 million people perished in the siege and 97,000 were carried away into captivity.

It was horrendous. And you can read in detail about it, but history testifies to the truth of Jesus' first prediction.

He speaks about the temple. The second thing Jesus speaks about is timings. Verse 7. Teacher, the disciples asked, when will these things happen?

[46 : 16] At what time will these things happen? What will be the sign that they're about to take place? Now, we live in time. We are concerned with time.

Believe it or not, I have a watch in front of me here. It doesn't always do a whole lot of good, but it's in front of me. I'm concerned with time. When the clock strikes 12, I can see increasingly that you're concerned with time.

We have a focus on time. We like to put things in our diary. We like to mark big events in our calendar so that we're prepared for what's up ahead.

So it's not surprising when Jesus has just said this incredible thing that the disciples asked, when will these things happen? And in Matthew chapter 24, a parallel conversation, it's slightly differently

phrased.

The disciples say to Jesus, it's slightly broader, when will this happen and what will be the sign of thy coming and the end of the age?

[47 : 22] So they're not just thinking about the temple here, they're thinking about the second coming of Christ, the end of the age. So they say, tell us about when's this going to happen?

What time? So how does Jesus answer their question? Well, the first thing he says to them is don't be deceived. He replied, verse 8, watch out that you are not deceived for many will come in my name claiming I am he and the time is near.

Do not follow them. So Jesus says there's going to be a whole lot of people over the generations who pretend to be me. And over the generations we know that there have been many who have pretended to be Jesus coming again.

Every generation we hear of somebody, I watched a YouTube clip you know a year or so back I can remember it of some guy in Australia who's pretending to be Jesus.

He's come back, he's got this little kind of colony of people. they're all blinded to the nonsense of what he's saying and Jesus is teaching these people and he's teaching us if anybody comes and says I am Jesus don't listen to them.

[48 : 44] Don't be deceived by them. Don't follow them says Jesus. Don't buy their books. Don't pay any attention to them when they appear on quiz shows. It's all nonsense. If there's any doubt in your mind about this person who says I am Jesus then they're not Jesus because when Jesus comes back the second time every eye will see him every tongue will confess he's Lord there will be no doubt there will be no ambiguity everyone will know.

So until then says Jesus waste no time over the deceivers. Don't be deceived by those who come saying I am he. second thing he says to them in terms of their question that he answers is he says don't be frightened.

Verse 9 when you hear of wars and revolutions do not be frightened. These things must happen first but the end will not come right away.

Then he said to them nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes famines and pestilences in various places and fearful events and great signs from heaven.

So the disciples are asking Jesus tell us about these signs tell us about the things that must happen before the end of the age and in these verses Jesus he lists them.

[50 : 17] He tells us about some of the signs. And I think we need to note the fact that we see them all. Wars revolutions international conflict we see it all.

Earthquakes and famines we're always seeing it. pestilences things like global pandemics we're seeing them.

Great signs from heaven we're not quite sure what that means probably meteors comets cosmic activity we we're always seeing these things and they're all signs they're all reminders that Jesus is coming soon but the message for the disciples of Jesus the message for those who are trusting Jesus from Jesus is when you see these things don't be frightened and that's a timely word for us today if we are disciples of Jesus if we are trusting Jesus we see wars we hear of rumors of wars world wars we encounter pestilence we have lived through and are still living through a global pandemic such as which we have never seen before and the whole world is in a panic and Jesus says to his disciples don't be frightened remember my father is in control

Jesus is on the throne these are signs that were predicted that will precede the coming of the end of the age so when we read of all these things and experience in some measure these things if anything they should settle us in the sense that we we see that Jesus is telling us the truth Dale Ralph Davis says however chaotic our times are however crazy nations and politicians seem however topsy-turvy our world appears it's not as if everything is running amok what may look like cosmic pandemonium is yet in the grip of an ordering will these things says Jesus must take place first so Jesus in response to the question he says don't be deceived don't be taken in by the charlatans don't be frightened when the news leaders are going crazy but do be ready be ready for the end of the age be ready says

Jesus for my for my return I noticed that Jesus doesn't actually say be ready it's implied because Jesus doesn't answer their question they say tell us about the signs he says here's the signs they say tell us about the time and he says nothing we're not given a year we're not given a date we don't know when Jesus is coming back so the implication here is we're to be ready and if we're

ready we don't have to be frightened even when we see all these signs of the end of the age we don't have to be frightened because we know that when the end actually comes and when Jesus returns we will embrace him as saviour and not have to face him as judge so do be ready says [55 : 01] Jesus don't hesitate don't delay don't waste your life running round in circles with things that don't really matter and get caught short be ready the temple the timings and thirdly the trials Jesus says in verse 12 but before all this they will lay hands on you and persecute you they will deliver you to synagogues and prisons and you will be brought before kings and governors and all on account of my name you will be betrayed says Jesus to his disciples even by parents brothers relatives and friends and they will put some of you to death I think if I'm right all the disciples with the exception of John were put to death for being followers of Jesus

Peter was crucified upside down because he was a follower of Jesus all men says Jesus and men means men and women everyone will hate you because of me so Jesus is crystal clear that for a disciple for a follower of Jesus up ahead in terms of the predicted future there's going to be trials now I wonder if someone was to ask you this morning somebody who's thinking about becoming a Christian maybe somebody has come to church or they've been watching at a distance and they have an interest in things spiritual that they didn't have before and they know you're a Christian so they come to you and they say tell me something about what it's like to be a

Christian and you got your chance what are you going to say to them well I think if we were asked that question many of us would kind of launch forth into a very positive Christian sales pitch and we would say well you know as a Christian there's such a great sense of freedom there's a burden that's lifted because I know because of what Jesus has done my sins have been forgiven the weight of my sins has been taken off and it's been thrown away that's what it feels like to be a Christian a burden that's lifted and there's a peace in knowing that when I die I have a place in heaven you know and there's a new purpose and there's a joy in life because I know Jesus is with me these are some of the things that I want to tell you about you know as the experience of a Christian I think we would probably say all these kind of things to somebody who's thinking about becoming a Christian and all these things are true but sometimes we forget to mention trials and then when a new Christian when a baby Christian hits a period of trials they think they've done something wrong they think they've drifted off course somehow but Jesus in speaking about the future for the first disciples and for all future disciples makes clear there would be trials he says if you follow me expect trouble expect trials because sometimes I'll lead you into storms and if we were to fast forward from

Luke to Acts which is Luke second volume we could see that everything that Jesus predicted came true Christians were laid hands on physically brutally they were attacked they were beaten they were persecuted they were delivered to and punished by the civil and the religious authorities they were thrown into prison they were disowned by friends they were betrayed by relatives they were killed you know that in the lifetime of these disciples the burning bodies of Christians were used as street lights in the streets of Rome by Nero those who followed Jesus were hated they suffered many trials and today there are still

[60 : 21] Christians in some parts of the world who suffer all these exact kind of trials you know we don't know too much of this but we're starting to see it if you stand up in a public place or you take out your Facebook account and you post up this afternoon that you believe marriage is between one man and one woman you'll get some hate if you in your workplace say you're not going to fly a rainbow flag or wear a rainbow badge for the month of whatever the company is LGBT month you say I'm not going to wear that badge don't believe it's right you're going to get some hate if you say today that you don't believe a boy can become a girl and you don't believe a girl can become a boy you'll get some hate and likely it's going to get worse and Jesus has said that shouldn't be any surprise to you

Scotland you've had it peaceful for a long time this shouldn't surprise you if you're a Christian Jesus predicts there will be some trials in your future and mine JC Ryle says if we are faithful undecided servants of Christ the world will certainly hate us as it hated our master in one way or another grace will always be persecuted no consistency of conduct however faultless no kindness and amiability of character however striking will exempt the believer from the world's dislike so long as he lives it is foolish to be surprised at this it is a mere waste of time to murmur at it it is a part of the cross and we must bear it patiently if you and I know nothing of trials then we're probably not following

Jesus Jesus doesn't do slick sales pitches there's full disclosure of what to expect for the disciples of Jesus trials fourth point last two are very short Jesus says in the midst of these trials testify they will lay hands on you and persecute you verse 12 they will deliver you to synagogues and prisons! You will be brought before kings and governors and all account on account of my name and this verse 13 will result in your being witnesses to them and this is so unlike how we think which is why Jesus needs to teach us this when we face trials when it becomes difficult to be a Christian we tend to go quiet we put our heads down we wait for the storm to pass but Jesus says that's not the time to be quiet that's the time to testify speaking to someone actually in our own congregation a week or two back and speaking about how easy it was to speak about being a Christian in this place at this time and the person said to me that they didn't feel like there was any great openness to the gospel there wasn't really much in the way of opportunity to speak about Jesus and to speak about the things of

God because you can see when you start to speak they close down so they said well on the one hand there's very little openness to speak about Jesus but on the other hand they said there's lots of chances because what they said was if I was to speak up every time somebody criticizes a Christian I could speak every day and that's what Jesus is teaching us to do to so counter to our own thinking Jesus is teaching us to think that way when we come under fire for being Christians we've got the opportunity to show grace when somebody says I don't believe any of that rubbish I know such and such and they're a Christian and they did this and they looked at me the wrong way and they said this and they did that and I don't like them and they're just a they're all these bad things then we tend to fight fire with fire or we go silent and Jesus says when you come under that kind of attack testify when somebody says you know you call yourself a

[65 : 56] Christian you just lost your temper the way to respond is not well you lose your temper too the way to respond is you're right I'm a sinner I struggle with sin and I need a saviour and I'm thankful that I have a saviour that I trust in and you can trust him too testify when you hit trouble when there are attacks testify don't return fire with fire speak about Jesus admit so say yes I'm struggling far from perfect that's why Jesus had to die one commentator McKinley says trouble is not to be understood as a disaster but as a

God ordained opportunity to bear witness to him think about Hannah in hospital having a hard time over these last few months but she's not complaining and grouching about her time in hospital when I've spoken to her she's she said it's a bit of a rollercoaster all this I'd rather not be on it but I know God's got a plan in the middle of all this she's testifying and Jesus says testify when you hit trouble when you experience trials testify but I don't know what to say you say and Jesus says don't worry about what to say I'll give you the words to say make up your mind verse 14 not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves for I will give you the words and wisdom that you that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict and Jesus is saying to us you don't have to have a script you just have to be willing to open your mouth be ready to testify and the final thing is triumph

Jesus speaks about the triumph that is up ahead and I suppose when we think about this message so far there's a lot about the future that Jesus predicts and it's very unsettling no one wants to suffer trials something wrong with us that we wanted to suffer trials it's wrong to seek them out and the thought of having to speak out to testify to tell people about Jesus when we know that they'll hate us for it is a scary thought but the good news says Jesus is that for those who follow him for those who stand firm there is triumph not a hair of your head will perish verse 18 says Jesus by standing firm you will gain life what does that mean does that mean that

Jesus is saying if we follow him nothing bad will happen no one will hit us no one will take a swipe at us well of course it doesn't mean that because that would contradict everything he said so far Jesus is not promising physical protection he's promising eternal life many many disciples of Jesus have perished physically but ultimately and eternally they have gained eternal life think about Stephen the first martyr hated for following Jesus he suffered the most cruel unjust brutal trial and in the midst of it he testified to the faithfulness of Jesus he stood firm to the end and it was a bloody end but as he died there was that smile of Jesus as he gained life and that's the most important thing to be sure of as we finish you know we don't know the specifics of our future thankfully we don't know what's going to happen in time we don't know which direction our lives are going to go and what we're going to have to encounter in detail but we can know what lies beyond time and for the one who stands firm

Jesus says you will gain life and where do we see that work down and we see it on the cross lifted up was he to die lifted up was Jesus to die for us to pay the wages of our sin it is finished was his cry a cry of triumph and now in heaven exalted high hallelujah what a saviour so is he your saviour is he your saviour think about that as we sing this final hymn 458 and mission praise man of sorrows for the

[72 : 07] Of sorrows, what a name For the Son of God who came Who went sinners to be free Hallelujah, what a sinner Beating shame and scoffing root In my place on empty stood Seal my pardon with His blood Hallelujah, what a sinner Guilty, violent, helplessly Stomless Lamb of God was He

Full atonement can it be Hallelujah, what a Savior Lifted up was He to die It is finished was His cry Now in heaven is all ten high Hallelujah, what a Savior When He comes, our glorious King All His ransomed home to bring Then I knew this song will sing Hallelujah, what a Savior 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