

19.6.22 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: 19 June 2022

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Good morning and a warm welcome to the service this morning. It's good to see all of you. It's good to see some visitors as well. There was a couple of years where we saw very few visitors and we're seeing some familiar faces coming back year on year and some new faces as well. So good to have you worshipping with us this morning. There's tea and there's coffee at the end of the service. If you're able to stay it would be good to get the chance to meet with you and enjoy fellowship together. A few notices which are on the screen, they've been on the screen before the service began. I'll ask Jan Angus just to flick through them.

I'm not sure I've got the most up-to-date ones. The evening service tonight at 6. It'll be a fairly short evening service tonight because we'll be leaving, some of us will be leaving immediately from the service to go to the tent mission over in Lochs. It's the last night tonight. The YF, the younger ones, are being taken by DJ in a minibus. So we'll be leaving just before 7. So a short evening service tonight. And if that doesn't encourage you to come out, I don't know what will. The ladies' Bible study is on in the Bays and in Tarbert in the course of the week as usual. And you have the details there. Everyone is welcome there. Little Fish is on Tuesday from 10 till 12, Road to Recovery. Tuesday night at 7 o'clock for those who struggle with addictions. Prayer meeting on Wednesday here in the building. Be encouraged to come.

There's still quite a few on Zoom. Some need to be. I know some perhaps prefer to be. But it's great to be encouraged as we see each other's faces and come together. So if we're able to do that, be encouraged to do that. And the services next Sunday, the morning service next Sunday will be a family service. So we'll have the Sunday School Prize giving and a family service really pitched at the younger ones, 26th of June. That's next Sunday. So be encouraged to come and young ones, be encouraged to come with your voices and your questions and your answers and all these things. Any more intimations? I think that's us. Other than to say thank you for yesterday, we had a barbecue here. It was going to be at Shillabost. The weather didn't allow us to go to Shillabost, but we had a barbecue here at the church out the back there. So thank you to those who came, those who prepared, those who served us, those who are behind the scenes. We don't like to be named, but we see them and the Lord sees them. It was a great day. It was very encouraging. And so thank you to all who were present and all who helped. So these, I think, are all the notices.

We're going to begin this time of worship. We'll sing to God's praise. Mission Praise 1164, the words on the screen. Come, O fount of every blessing. We'll stand to sing in just a moment.

[2 : 59] Come, O fount of every blessing. Tune my heart to sing your praise. Streams of mercy never ceasing.

Calls of mercy never ceasing. Calls of mercy never ceasing.

God's great mercy. By his help I've safely come. And I know he will not fail me, but will surely bring me home. Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering far away from God, had to rescue me from danger. Shed for me his precious blood.

Through God's grace I am his debtor. Daily I miss all renew. Let that grace storm like a fether.

Find my wandering heart. Find my wandering heart to you. Prove to wander, Lord, I feel it. Prove to leave the God I love.

[4 : 57] Take my heart, O take and seal it. Seal it from your course above. Let's bow our heads and let's quieten our hearts and come to God in prayer.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this, your day. And we thank you that we are able to come to the fount of every blessing as we gather together in worship.

We thank you that that's the call that we hear in the Bible. A call where the God who made all things and who made us sounds that message to us who have been prone to wander and have fallen into

sin. We thank you that the call that we hear in the Bible is a call to come to you. Come to me, says Jesus, all who are weary, all who are burdened, and I will give you rest. And return to me, says the Lord, to those who have wandered, and I will return to you. So we thank you, Lord, that we are able to respond to that call as we come together this morning. We pray that we would come together with that spirit of worship.

[6 : 25] We pray that you would meet with us, that you would speak to us, that you would presence yourself amongst us, and that we would have that sense of your nearer presence.

We pray that we would know the stillness of this place, the stillness of this day where we have been told to stop work and find rest in you. And we pray that we would know in this hour and in this day the reality of the fact that you are God and that you are with us. We thank you for every blessing that is given to us in Christ. We thank you, Lord, that we, as sinners, are able to come to the fountain that's filled with blood, as we often sing, drawn from Emmanuel's veins. And sinners who plunge beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains. So, Father, as those who acknowledge and confess our sin, we pray that we would be washed in the blood of Jesus.

[7 : 35] We pray for that fresh cleansing. We pray for forgiveness for the sins that come before us and come before you as we bow in your presence.

Cleanse us, Lord, we pray. And give us that blessed assurance that we are clean and that Jesus truly is ours, that he is our saviour and that he is our Lord. So we thank you, Lord, for the forgiveness for the salvation that is given to us as we come to Jesus, the fount of every blessing. We thank you for the rest and for the peace that is given to us as we come in response to that call also.

This world is full of trouble and Jesus told us that's the way it would be. But we thank you that even in the midst of the trouble, even in the midst of the storms of life, we can come to the God who gives to us that peace that passes all understanding, a peace which is not of this world. And we thank you for the contentment that we enjoy when we come to you. We know, Lord, that our hearts are restless. Sin makes our hearts restless.

[8 : 49] And we go to broken cisterns so often, that promise to quench your thirst but only aggravate it more. But we thank you that there is that satisfaction, there is that blessing, there is that peace, there is that contentment that is found as we come to Jesus.

The psalmist said that his soul thirsts for you. And we would echo these words and say, our souls thirst for you, Lord Jesus. And we pray that we would know that thirst quenched as we come and worship. So meet with us, Lord, we pray in this day. And we thank you that we're able to come together here. We thank you for the freedom that we have and for the provision of the building that we have here to be able to be comfortable and to be safe and to be dry as we lift our voices and lift our hearts to you in praise and prayer.

This is your provision, Lord, and we praise you for it. We thank you for the desire that you've placed in our hearts because we know that left to ourselves, we would not come. But only through the awakening work of the Holy Spirit do we have that desire to come and worship. So meet with us, Lord, we pray. Those who are in the building, we think of those who watch online.

[10 : 11] We pray for those who are struggling with illness at this time. Some who are struggling to get over COVID and we bring them to you in prayer. We pray for others who have other ailments that they struggle with and who wrestle with infirmity and the length of years and the aches and pains that come with that.

We pray for others that may be cast down in their souls who feel low and we bring them to you. And we ask that you administer to each one, those who are here and those who are elsewhere. We thank you for the visitors with us. We pray your blessing on them as they take some time of holiday here. And we pray for the fellowships that they're connected with, that you would be at work in these places also.

So hear our prayers and lead us and guide us in worship. Thank you, Lord, for the young ones. We rejoice to hear the wee voices in the background. And we commit them to you, Lord, in prayer. And ask that as they grow up, they would grow up with that sense of your presence, that assurance of your love. And that they would grow up to know you and trust you. And we ask all these things in Jesus' name.

[11 : 24] Amen. Amen. Boys and girls, would you like to come forward, please? On you come from me.

There's no rush. How's everyone today? Good stuff. I've got a video to show you today. So there's a video on the screen. Somebody that we know and we recognize.

And I want us to watch this video. Janangus, maybe, if it's possible, we'll play it through twice because it's quite short. It's not on yet, so don't worry.

You'll get to see it, whatever happens. But the older ones might not manage. Do we have any IT support for Janangus? All we're hearing is intriguing sounds just now.

Anyway, tell me about your week. How's it been? Let's just have a wee chat as we wait to see what's happening. Anything interesting been happening this week? Barbecue. Barbecue. Did you enjoy the barbecue? Yes.

[12 : 49] Did you have a lot of sausages and burgers? I had sausage and a hot dog, burger, and then another burger. A hot dog, a burger, and then another burger. Can anyone do better than that?

Anyone willing enough to admit to it? I saw that there were some who actually beat your record there, Michael. And you had two drinks.

And two Oreos as well. Good stuff. How are we getting on? Are we going to get some? Are we going to get some? Are we going to get some? Are we going to get some?

Are we going to get some? Okay. So who do you recognize?

Do you recognize that person on the screen? Ready? Here we go. No? Yeah? Oh, here we go. Here we go.

[13 : 55] So watch it through twice. You seen him? This is a minister's view every Sunday. We'll try it again.

Oh. Oh. Oh. Oh. So.

There's little Ben. Do you think he was tired? I think he was very tired. And he was on that.

Oh. I don't know what this one is. That's the airplane. That's another talk for another day. We can get rid of that. We already did that. We've done that one already, yeah.

That one's finished. So today we're talking of Ben. He was tired, wasn't he? How did you know he was tired? Well, you could see it, couldn't you?

[15 : 04] His head was bouncing around like some of your heads bounce around during my sermon. His head was going back and it was going forth and it was going to the side. And he was having his lunch.

And I know Ben likes his. He likes his food, doesn't he? He's not somebody who pushes his food away. He loves his food, but he was so tired he couldn't even stay awake for his lunch.

His head was bobbing from one side to the next. He was probably worried as well he was going to miss things. And so we saw him fighting the sleep back.

And then what happened? Well, he fell asleep again. And then what happened? He woke up again. And then what happened? He fell asleep again.

And then what happened? This went on for about 11 seconds on the video. But then if you could hear at the end, I think Dave said, oh, he needs to sleep. Come on. Let's put him on the couch.

[16 : 03] So they lifted him up, I guess, and put him over to the settee or the couch. And he had an orient as we caught as bed and he had a sleep.

And when he woke up, he was full of beans and he'd be kicking the football around and terrorizing his brother and his sister and doing all the usual things.

But the thing is, he needed sleep. And his dad and his mom knew that he needed sleep. And so they said, come on, let's let him sleep.

Now, was he safe when he was sleeping? Of course he was, yeah. Because his mom and his dad are watching over him. So he can rest. He can sleep.

Knowing that when he wakes up, if his tummy's still rumbling, he'll get some dinner. And everything's okay. Supper. Now, here's a question for you.

[17 : 03] Does God ever sleep? He might have rests. But not sleep. Okay. He doesn't need a rest.

We can go into great theology here. He doesn't need a rest. But sometimes he just has a rest.

Yeah. We could go and we could see Jesus, couldn't we? And he's sleeping in the boat when there's a big storm around.

So there has been. There's that time where we see Jesus, God the Son, sleeping. But think about the Psalms. Think about one psalm in particular. Does God sleep, do you think?

What rest do you think? No. Does he? He doesn't. 50-50 says Mike. I'm not sure. We can see passages where we see Jesus resting.

He goes to be with his Father. He prays. He rests. But it says in Psalm 121 that God neither slumbers. He doesn't slumber.

[18:08] Slumbering is what some people do during the sermons. Their heads go like that. You know, you see the eyes starting to go down. And you know they're sitting in the chair, but they're not really here anymore. They're somewhere else.

God doesn't slumber and he doesn't sleep. He's always awake, always alert. And he's always watching over us, always caring for us.

And so do you know what that means? It means that you can sleep. When? Not right now. But when we know that God, who is our Father, is always awake, he loves us, he's watching over us, he cares for us, do we need to be worried?

Do we need to be fighting back the sleep? No. We can be at peace. Do you ever find it hard to go to sleep? Yeah, so do I sometimes.

And sometimes, why do we find it hard to go to sleep sometimes? Worrying about different things. We might feel sick. If you lose your teddy, it's hard to sleep, isn't it?

[19:30] Yeah. But sometimes we go to our beds. And can I tell you a secret? See if you look over there, at some of these bigger people.

Some with grey hair on their heads. Some with no hair on their heads. Some with white hairs on their sides. Yes, thanks, Michael. All of us.

At times, we struggle to sleep. To sleep. Because we all get worried about different things. But the thing that helps us to sleep at night is knowing that we have a heavenly Father.

Father. It's Father's Day, isn't it? We have a perfect heavenly Father who's watching over us. He's caring for us. And is there any problem, anything that worries us, that's so big that it's not fixable by God?

No. No. No. He's able to do everything. so we don't need to worry we can sleep at night and we can pray and be thankful that God is watching over us so let's close our eyes not go to sleep yet and we'll pray Lord God we thank you for your word and we thank you that the psalmist in Psalm 121 that was singing a wee while said that you're the God who neither slumbers nor sleeps and we thank you that in another psalm it says I will lie down and sleep in peace for you oh God are with me and we thank you Lord that we're able to find rest in you we find that we're we thank you that we're able to sleep peacefully knowing that you care for us if we are your children and you're our father and we thank you that Jesus came into this world and died on the cross to take our sin away so that everything that was that was holding us back from you was taken away and as we trust in Jesus we thank you that we are told that we become your children and you are our father so help all of us we pray whether we're young or whether we're older to be trusting in you and help us when sometimes we find it hard to sleep and when sometimes we're we're fighting to sleep back because we're struggling with different things help us not to struggle in our own strength but to hand all these things over to you in prayer and to trust you and to find rest as we trust you so hear our prayers and help us in the rest of this day to be trusting you and we ask this in Jesus name

[22:14] Amen We're going to sing and we're going to sing it's a version of Psalm 23 that you know very well Mission Praise 1008 The Lord's my shepherd I'll not one and it says in the chorus I will trust in you alone The Lord's my shepherd I'll not one He makes me lie in posture's green He leads me by the still, still waters His goodness restores my soul And I will trust in you alone

And I will trust in you alone For your endless mercy follows me Your goodness will lead me home He guides my ways in righteousness And He guides my head with voice And my cup is over And flows with joy I feast on His pure delight And I will trust in you alone And I will trust in you alone For your endless mercy follows me Your goodness will lead me home

And though I walk the darkest path I will not fear the evil one For you are with me For you are with me For you are with me And you're broad and staff And the comfort I need to know And I will trust in you alone And I will trust in you alone For your endless mercy follows me Your goodness will lead me home Okay, you guys go ahead to head to Sunday school And we'll turn in our Bibles now to Luke chapter 21

Luke 21 Luke 21 And I'm going to read in from verse 25 actually Jesus is speaking about his return And the signs that will accompany his return And how we can expect him to come back And so he's speaking to his disciples And says in verse 25 There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars On

the earth nations will be in anguish And perplexity at the roaring And the tossing of the sea Men will faint from terror Apprehensive of what is coming on the world For the heavenly bodies will be shaken

At that time they will see the Son of Man Coming in a cloud with power and great glory When these things begin to take place Stand up and lift up your heads Because your redemption is drawing near He told them this parable Look at the fig tree and all the trees When they sprout leaves You can see for yourselves And know that summer is near Even so, when you see these things happening You know that the kingdom of God is near I tell you the truth This generation will certainly not pass away Until all these things have happened Heaven and earth will pass away But my words will never pass away Be careful or your hearts will be weighed down With dissipation, drunkenness And the anxieties of life And that day will close on you unexpectedly Like a trap For it will come upon all those Who live on the face of the whole earth Be always on the watch And pray that you may be able to escape All that is about to happen And that you may be able to stand

[27 : 32] Before the Son of Man Each day Jesus was teaching At the temple And each evening he went out To spend the night on the hill Called the Mount of Olives And all the people came Early in the morning To hear him At the temple Amen And may God bless that reading Of his word to us We're going to sing Again now to God's praise We'll sing from Psalm 121 And we sing this psalm in Gaelic The first two stanzas of the psalm I'll read them out in English I to the hills will lift mine eyes From whence doth come my need My safety cometh from the Lord Who heaven and earth hath made Thy foot he'll not let slide Nor will he slumber That thee keeps Behold he that keeps Israel He slumbers not Nor sleeps And we'll sing these two verses In Gaelic But remain seated to sing

In Gaelic Manne And so on And so one On a here Oh Oh

Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh

Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh if you could turn now please to the passage that we read in Luke 21 and again let's pray ask for God's help

Heavenly Father we thank you for your word a word which the Holy Spirit himself inspired to be written by Luke and we pray that just as the the words were penned by Luke as he was carried along we pray that we would be that we would know the help of the Holy Spirit as we speak and as we listen and as we respond we would be given understanding our hearts would be touched and that we would be changed through your word faith comes by hearing we are told and we pray that we would be given ears to hear we pray for that faith which is a gift from God and we pray that as we listen we would believe that we would be saved that we would be safe that we would know the safety of being in the arms of the loving God whom we have sung all of and to so meet with us Lord we pray as we pray that you would meet with the children in the Sunday school and in the creche that they would know your hand upon them for good so hear our prayers and help us we ask in Jesus name Amen

[33 : 35] I thought I'd start today slightly differently by showing you a picture and it'll be on the screen hopefully in just a second and it's a picture of our dog his name is Shoros he looks a bit like an old an old man and that's Shoros in his his usual position for a fair chunk of the day that's the spot that he likes to to sort of stand alert on when everyone goes out you know if you came into the house when we were all in Shoros is happy enough lying in his bed or sitting on the rug or wandering around you know he likes to be in company he likes to be in a place where everybody else is but when we go out I'll usually say to him right Shoros you stay here till I get back and he'll kind of look crestfallen and then the second the door closes he'll charge to the window and he watches and he waits until we return he's got this inbuilt he's got wasn't going to tell you this but he's got this inbuilt mechanism where about half past three every day he doesn't check his watch but he just knows the bus is soon coming or the girls are soon coming so he may have gone for a snooze for a while but half past three every day he's out of the bed he's off the rug he's at the the windowsill he's watching for the girls to appear back so he's he's watching he's waiting you can see the alertness and he's anticipating our return and that's the posture that Jesus teaches his disciples to take in Luke 21. Jesus has been saying to his disciples repeatedly over the the last few chapters over the last few days that he is going away and when the salvation work is done he is going to go back to be with his father but Jesus makes clear repeatedly that one day he will return it says in verse 27 that one day we will see the son of man that's the term that he uses for himself one day we will see the son of man coming in a cloud with great with power and great glory and so Jesus he he presses that on the disciples

I'm going away he says I'm going to suffer I'm going to die to do the work of your salvation I'm going away but I'm coming back you will see me return and so with that promise that picture in the minds of the disciples Jesus teaches his disciples back then and still today through the scriptures we are taught how we are to live in time as we anticipate that day when Jesus returns or calls us to stand before him there's three things that hopefully we'll get to in the time that we have the first thing Jesus says and we'll spend most time on this is that we're to wait expectantly and the second thing Jesus says is we're to watch and pray and the final thing if we get to just a short word about the fact that we are called to work for him so first of all Jesus he says to us wait expectantly he told him this parable verse 29 look at the fig tree and all the trees when they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near even so says Jesus when you see these things happening he's given all these signs you know that the kingdom of God is near so Jesus he does what he often does he takes a very familiar ordinary example he takes the example of the fig tree and they were all over the place in Jerusalem you could see them everywhere and they had an appearance which in the winter time became kind of sparse the leaves thinned out they looked a bit poor but as spring came and as they approached summer time the leaves would begin to thicken they would sprout and that was an indication summer was near so Jesus he says to them look at the fig tree you recognise what happens in the life of the fig tree and it indicates to you when summer is approaching and we don't have any fig trees in Harris

I don't think anyway we don't have many fig trees in Harris but we understand the picture when we look out and we see the grass starting to grow we know summer is near or we hope summer is near when we start to hear the cuckoo waking up the whole of Tarbert at half past six every morning we know summer is near we have that anticipation that summer is approaching we have no promise sunshine is coming but we know the season of summer is coming and Jesus says to them he says to us you pay attention to the signs of the changing seasons make sure you pay attention to the signs that the son of man is coming and we looked at the signs a couple of Sundays ago the signs themselves can be somewhat alarming in verses 9 to 12 you just scan that in your Bibles Jesus he speaks about wars and revolutions and great earthquakes and famines and pestilences things like pandemics and persecution he says these are signs that the approaching of Jesus is near in verse 25

Jesus speaks about more signs he speaks about signs in the sun and the moon and the stars and the earth and the sea and we thought about that in the past that it sounds very much like environmental crisis and so Jesus addresses them he addresses us and says when you see these signs coming to pass when you hear about conflict in the world when you read analysis on the problem of global warming and climate change when you encounter things like the pestilence of COVID-19 when people will give you an increasingly hard time for being a Christian don't be alarmed it's the message that Jesus gives to us don't panic don't be alarmed don't be frightened remember the kingdom of God is near remember says Jesus

I'm coming back soon so wait expectantly for him I think we need to get hold of this just that we won't be panicking you know we live we live in a world where there's constant panic we watch the news and we read the papers and there's so much fear and alarm but if we're God's people we don't need to be scared we don't need to be anxious we don't need to have a lack of understanding about anything we're reading about either because we've been told this is what you have to expect as we approach the return of Jesus so wait expectantly for me says Jesus not fearfully but expectantly the problem is waiting is not an easy thing to do waiting is one of the hardest things that we find to do not many of us are very patient people you know so we have a problem in the house for example and you call it a tradesman and the tradesman says yeah

[42 : 39] I'll be there soon and you think soon means hours but hours pass and then we're into the next day and then days pass and then you're into a week and weeks pass and we think I'm not waiting anymore it's never coming and there are some people who believe the same about Jesus many many people believe he's not coming back and Peter in 2 Peter 3 he tells us about that too Peter says in 2 Peter 3 and at verse 3 in the last days scoffers will come scoffing and following their own evil desires they will say where is this coming he promised but do not forget this one thing dear friends with the Lord a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like a day the Lord is not slow in keeping his promise as some understand slowness instead he is patient with you not wanting anyone to perish for everyone to come to repentance and that's one of these truths which is so compelling in the

Bible God loves us there's no one in this room no one who's watching at a distance who who's excluded from this God loves us he does not want anyone to perish he wants everyone to come to repentance and in his great patience and in his great love he has given us today so some of us might have woken up this morning and thought I wonder what the purpose of the day is and God has given you and I today so that we will come to him that's the purpose of today it's not about how much you'll achieve it's not about all the things that may be in our diaries to do the main thing the critical thing for us in this day the reason that we have this day it's because

God wants us to come to him and for some it's for the first time there's some perhaps who sit here and you've heard the call so many times for so many years maybe decades and you've never come but God in his great love and his great patience he's given you today and he's saying to you I don't want you to perish I want you to repent I want you to turn from sin I want you to come to me I want you to know the joy of your sins forgiven I want you to feel the loving embrace of a heavenly father who gave his only begotten son that whoever would believe in him will not perish but have everlasting life

I want you to taste everlasting life God is saying to us as he gives us today and for those of us who have already repented for those of us who may have turned in faith to Jesus many years ago as we anticipate this day that Jesus speaks about it's a great day now this is not a day for us to be in fear and dread over this is a day to look forward to this is a day when we are told in verse 28 our redemption which is drawing near will be fully realized and experienced this is the day when we will have no more struggles with sin how many times do you find yourself in Romans 7 with the apostle Paul saying the good that I want to do

I don't seem to be able to do the evil I don't want to do I've done it again when Jesus comes back no more struggles with sin no more attacks from Satan no more weariness no more suffering no more sadness no more grief but perfect and uninterrupted freedom and joy and peace as we go to be forever with the Lord that's the promise of God for his people and we become his people when we trust him when we hear that call to come to him and we come verse 32 Jesus says I tell you the truth this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened we read that and we think what on earth does that mean

[48 : 34] Jesus is speaking to his disciples and he says this generation will not pass away until all these things have happened and we look at this and we try to understand what is Jesus talking about because it can't mean that Jesus is talking about one literal generation because many generations have passed and Jesus still hasn't come back so what's he talking about here well I think he's talking about the nation of Israel I tell you the truth this generation that word in the Greek can also mean race this race this people this nation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened and even as we think back over history how many attempts has there been to wipe out the Jewish nation we've been reading about this in Esther yet they survive because God ordains that they survive they don't pass away so Ryle says

I think that the best way to interpret this is to say that this generation means the Jewish nation the Jewish people as a separate people will not pass away though cast down they would not be destroyed though scattered they will one day be gathered together again before everything is fulfilled you can think about it yourselves heaven and earth will pass away says Jesus there will be a new heavens there will be a new earth but my words will never pass away so wait expect don't we form he says second thing is Jesus he says to his disciples watch and pray and he prefaces that in verse 34 by saying be careful be careful and I think we should maybe just pause there for a moment to get the tone of this think about a child well think about a parent when they're addressing their child a parent when they're addressing their child whether they're eight years old and heading off looking wobbly on a bike down a rough track or whether they're 18 years old and heading off looking wobbly to college they're going to say to the child that they love be careful

I want you to be careful and it's it's a statement that's driven by love they don't want to see their child harmed and that's the tone of this Jesus is speaking to his disciples then and now and he is saying to us because I love you I want you to be careful in this world be careful or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation drunkenness and the anxieties of life so let's think first of all what Jesus is saying here he says watch and he says pray be careful watch pray so what does Jesus tell us to watch for well he tells us to watch for three things first dissipation which I had to look up in the dictionary I must confess and secondly he calls us to be careful about drunkenness to watch out for drunkenness and finally he says watch out for the anxieties of life and you could say that these are

three these are three spiritual viruses you know for a long time we were very watchful we were very careful when it came to the the covid virus every 15 minutes we're washing our hands we're scooching ourselves with disinfectant we're wearing masks we're we're watching our distance we're staying indoors because we're aware there's a virus that can do us harm and Jesus he mentions three viruses that we need to watch for if we are to remain spiritually healthy and if we are to remain ready for the return of Jesus so first of all dissipation be careful be careful or your hearts be weighed down with dissipation now dissipation according to one commentator is excessive indulgence in pleasures that's what it means kind of describes our culture excessive indulgence in pleasures so to be weighed down with dissipation is to be living a life of self indulgence self centeredness so I eat what I want to eat and I drink what I want to drink when I want to drink it and I go to the places that I feel comfortable going in and I avoid the places that I don't like I refuse to do anything that doesn't suit me it's all about me so that's the life of dissipation it's a life where we don't put self to death as we're called to in Paul's epistles it's a life where we allow self to live and breathe and rule which is the perfect breeding ground for for sin what's at the center of sin think about the word s i n I'm at the center of sin usually i think about my life i think about the areas that i have to watch so much of the things that we fall into we fall into because because of me i want to do what i want to do i don't want to do what i don't want to do so we don't put self to death we let self rule and that's the life of dissipation jesus says watch for that it will weigh you down it will hold you back and the second thing jesus says to watch for is drunkenness which simply means drunkenness deep drinking intoxication when again self-control goes out the window self-rules self-reigns and when we are drunk we tend to go down the route of sin at double speed into all kinds of things that we might have thought we would never go near but when the beer goggles are on when there is intoxication of the system who knows where we go jesus says watch for that it will weigh you down it will hold you back and the third thing jesus says is that watch for the anxieties of life it's the third virus dissipation self-indulgence drunkenness and the anxieties of life literally the cares of this ordinary worldly life and jesus i think he's really speaking into our generation here because we are living lives at breakneck speed you know we are living lives that are so hectic we can hardly take a breath we haven't got time for anything we're just going from one thing to the next thing constantly and jesus he's speaking about the the busyness that takes over our lives we're told in colossians 3 2 set your minds on things above not on earthly things and jesus is warning us here about living in the opposite way to colossians 3 2 where we set our minds on things below and not on things above so we're going from this club to that club and this pursuit to the next pursuit and this job to the next job and everything is at ground level and everything that's spiritual we've lost sight of the anxieties of life watch for it says jesus it will strangle you it will suffocate you it's a deadly virus dressed up in very respectable clothes one commentator gives a profile of the person who's taken up with the anxieties of life just so we can watch out for it he gives us this diagnostic tool he says if you are taken up with the anxieties of life you will begin to invest all your energy your love and your passion in the things of this life you will give everything you have to looking attractive having a great job making enough money finding the perfect spouse and raising exceptional children all those things can feel much more real and certain than the return of christ so jesus he highlights these things for us in love he says to us will you be careful disciples dissipation self indulgence drunkenness the anxieties the cares the busyness of these lives watch out for these things says jesus and remember who he's speaking to here jesus is speaking he's not speaking to unbelievers he's speaking to believers he's not speaking to critics he's speaking to his disciples he's speaking to those who had left everything they'd walked away from businesses they'd walked away leaving their nets on the shore they'd walked away from their family unit for a period they had given everything to follow jesus they've been with him every day for three years and jesus says to his disciples back then and still today be always on the watch so that's the warning these are the things that we're to be always on the watch for so that they're not in our lives and now jesus he moves from the warning to the encouragement so what are we to make sure is in our lives what can we do that will keep us spiritually healthy and lively and zealous and bright what can we do that will keep us in a state of expectation and readiness and eagerness as we anticipate the return of jesus and the answer to that is we're to pray watch says jesus and pray pray says jesus verse 36 that you may be able to stand may be able to escape all that's about to happen and that you may be able to stand before the son of man pray speaking to a visitor a guy who was walking on the street a few nights ago well a couple of weeks ago now it was

[60 : 31] I think it was a Sunday night he had obviously had quite a few drams so his tongue was loose and he was very eager to speak and we just got into a conversation as we were walking along and he wanted to know what I did so when he found out as a minister he wanted to speak about what happens about when you die and so he told me that he believed that when he died he would meet God and he would stand before God he believed that when he died although he had no faith he said although he didn't go to church although he had no sense of worship although he never repented of sin and made all these things clear he said when I die I will stand before Jesus and I believe that on the final day I'll be shown my room in heaven if there is a room in heaven if there's such a place as heaven if there's such a God I believe that on the day that I die there'll be a nice little room for me because I'm a lot better than a lot of other people

I know bad people and I'm not one of them I do nice things I don't do nasty things I don't try and hurt people I try and be kind to people and so on the basis of who I am on the basis of everything that I've done I'm sure I'll stand on the final day and the tragedy is that's what most people think but that's not true our salvation our ability to stand before God on the final day is not about us and what we've done it's about Jesus and what he's done none of us are righteous none of us can stand on the final day on the basis of who we are it's all about the grace of Jesus it's God's riches his peace his joy his salvation that comes at Christ's expense takes us to the cross so if we've never been to the cross if we've never come to

Jesus if we've never prayed and said please forgive me of my sin please cleanse me please come into my life please make me your child then on the final day we can't stand so the critical question for you and I is have we prayed remember the thief on the cross he hadn't done all the good things he hadn't got much knowledge he hadn't got any time to do good works but on the final day in these final moments he prayed he said to Jesus remember me and Jesus says today you will be with me in paradise so if you have never yet prayed that prayer today is the day of salvation this is the time when God is saying to us speak to me the

Christian life begins with prayer and the Christian life and Christian health continues through prayer for the Christian to be ready to meet with Jesus we want to be close to Jesus we don't want to be wandering as we sang in the first hymn we don't want to be drifting away from Jesus we don't want to be in that state of awkwardness when we know that there is something between us and the Lord we want to have that close walk with God and for us to walk close with God we must often be in prayer speaking to him that's true in the private place we're to be in prayer and in the public place for us to be spiritually bright and healthy and ready for the return of Jesus we need to be in prayer I'll put it another way our spiritual health is a congregation it's not shown by our Sunday morning numbers it's not shown by the number of activities that we're engaged in it's shown through our commitment to pray that's where we see our health remember Spurgeon when he was asked what's the secret to all the conversions that you've seen over the years he didn't speak about his sermons he didn't speak about his methods he took them to this basement under the sanctuary and he said when I preach my people pray he understood that spiritual life and health comes back to prayer William Carey who was a missionary in India as he prepared to go to India he spoke to the congregation he said I've been to India it's like a deep dark mine he said I am willing to go down into it but you as a congregation must hold the ropes and we do that through prayer so we wait expectantly we watch and pray and the final thing and we love to hear the wee cries we pray for the wee cries the parents stress over it but we don't stress so we wait expectantly we watch and we pray and the final thing and it is just a word we're to work if we're

[66 : 48] Christians we're to work verse 37 and verse 38 Jesus each day Jesus was teaching at the temple and each evening he went out to spend the night on the hill called the Mount of Olives and all the people came early in the morning to hear him at the temple so what do we see Jesus doing as the chapter finishes well he's teaching he's telling people who he was and who he is he's telling people about what he was about to do for their salvation which when you think about it is staggering now we have an exam the following day stressing us out in our minds we can barely speak to anybody we don't want to see anybody we just want space we want peace there's something that's troubling us that we just want to be left alone

Jesus knows that he is on the cusp of being arrested humiliated beaten flogged crucified he knows that he's just about to go into that and yet he doesn't withdraw he doesn't try to find a quiet place away from all the people no each day he's teaching at the temple and each evening he's out on the hill to be with his father and that's an example for all of us if we call ourselves followers of Jesus

Jesus is coming back soon we have to wait expectantly we're to watch for these viruses that debilitate us spiritually we're to we're to pray as
Jesus did and we're to work I don't need to tell you you know there are so many people in this place there are people even in this building I expect who are still lost and who still do not know Jesus and who are still not ready for that day when Jesus returns and the desire of God is that they will not perish and so the work that God has given us to do if we are his people is to go and tell people of how great the father's love for them is that he would send his son his only son to live and to die and to rise so that we who who are lost and can be saved and become the treasure of God that's your work that's my work so let's go out from here and be encouraged to follow the example of Jesus and tell people about the salvation that is found only in him and we'll sing to close of that depth of the love of the father how deep the father's love for us how vast beyond all measure that we should give us our past beyond all measure that we should give his only son to make our wretched treasure how great the fate of searing laws the father turns his face away as wounds which are the chosen one bring many sons to glory hold them on upon a cross my sin upon his shoulders ashamed
I hear my walking voice fall out among the scoffers it was my sin that held him there until it was accomplished his dying breath has brought me life I know that it is finished I will not boast in anything no gifts no power no wisdom but I will boast in Jesus Christ his death and resurrection why should I give from his reward
[73 : 17] I cannot give an answer but this I know with all my heart his wounds that paid my ransom 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 forever more Amen