

5.2.23 am

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Date: 05 February 2023

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Good morning and welcome to the service this morning. The intimations, I've seen one or two visitors with us and it's good to see you.

And if you're able to stay behind at the end of the service, please do so. And we'll have tea. I think we'll have some cake as well. We had a nice cup of tea and cake yesterday to take a wee bit of time with John and Liz before they move away for a while on Wednesday.

So it was a nice time to come together. We'll have a bit more of that this morning. Time to have fellowship together and tea, coffee, cake. If we're able to stay behind, please do so.

There should be some notices on the screen. I don't have a copy in front of me. So I'll just have to read through them with you. We've got 30 seconds. 30 seconds is a long time when you're standing where I am.

Well, I can tell you, I can start by saying the evening service is at six. And you're very welcome to come along to the evening service.

[1 : 14] It's six o'clock till seven. And I think tonight after the evening service, there's a big YF. And they're leaving here at quarter past seven. So there'll be plenty of time to do that.

So be encouraged to go to that. Ladies' Fellowship on Monday. And I know that tomorrow we also have an elders prayer meeting at seven o'clock.

Keep going, am I? Little Fishers on Tuesday and Road to Recovery. So just a reminder about that. And prayer meeting on Wednesday at half past seven on Zoom and in the church building.

Friday clubs back on this coming Friday, God willing. Jam Connect and Rooted. And the service is next Sunday. You've got a bit of a change. So in the morning, Donnie from the Faith Mission will be taking the service.

So I'll begin the service and then I'll be heading off to Graver to cover Ian McTitchie. But Donnie will be with us in the morning. And he'll take the service.

[2 : 18] He's just about to retire. And he asked that he could have a last service here with us before he does retire. And so that's our next Sunday morning.

The evening service will be taken by Thomas Davis. And he'll speak on evangelism, which is just a fancy word for telling people about Jesus. And Thomas has written a book recently, which he'll probably talk a little bit about as well.

And there'll be a fellowship afterwards where we'll maybe be able to ask a few questions and have a discussion. So be encouraged to come to these services next Sunday. There's the induction on Friday night.

And that's for North Tolstah. Donald MacLeod, Donnie Dollack, as they call him, is being inducted on Friday. So you'll have details there.

Be encouraged to go there or to pray for that ministry as he begins. And any more? And then you've got the church cleaning rota.

[3 : 24] I think there are a couple more. Safeguarding training dates. Sheet in the church foyer. Tuesday 21st of February. Wednesday 22nd March. Thursday 27th of April.

Which is a little late, that one. I don't have exact details. But I know that if you're helping in Jam Connect Rooted YF, then we're required to have gone through safeguarding training.

And that's to be done by the end of March. Anyone who's not gone through that by the end of March, we're not actually allowed to carry on volunteering in clubs until we've gone through the training.

So if you're doing that but you haven't been trained yet, make a point of going to one of these sessions. Speak to Joyce at the back there and she'll give you more details. Or Mags, who's helping out there as well, Deputy.

Every year we get jars of marmalade and the funds go towards the Free Church Youth Camps. I think the jars have a price on each one of them.

[4 : 27] They're out in the foyer. There's also a big jar and you can put your marmalade money in there. So we've got three cases of it. So it's a nice marmalade. I don't need to sell it. But you can pick it up at the end of the service or whenever.

And I think these are all the intimations. So let's begin this time of worship now. We'll sing to God's praise. And we'll sing from Mission Praise 51, that well-known hymn, Be Thou My Vision, O Lord of My Heart.

Be Thou My Vision, O Lord of My Heart.

Not be all else to be saved, that Thou art. Thou my best God, by day or by night.

Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light. Thou my great Father, my true Son.

[5 : 47] Thou with me dwelling, and I will sing.

Thou my life with Thee one. Be Thou my battle shield, storm for the fight.

Be Thou my dignity, Thou my delight. Thou my soul sheltered, Thou my high tower.

Praise Thou me and work, O power of my power. Thou one suffering, Spirit.

ch Tin, f satisfactions for the line. Nice.

[7 : 00] Thou money that may be lived. Thou anything else do, a sicker or christowing in school.

Thou life and sing of joy. King of heaven, my treasure of art.

High King of heaven, after victory won, may I reach heaven's joy so bright and sun.

Heart of my own heart, whatever before. Still be my vision, O ruler of all.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this, your day, and we thank you for the privilege and the responsibility that we have in coming near to you in prayer.

We say these words so often as a congregation that we draw near to you in prayer, and yet help us never to take that for granted, never to lose that sense of wonder that we can actually draw near to the God who is holy, the God who is sovereign, the God who rules over all.

[8 : 34] We thank you, Lord, that we can make our approach to you. In the name of Jesus, we thank you that we can pour out our hearts to you, knowing that you will not push us away, but you will draw us near, knowing that you will not turn away from us, but, Lord, that you will listen, you will bow your ear to us.

And we thank you that you are the God who is able to help us and meet us at the point of our need. We recognize, Lord, and we confess that we are sinners.

We sin in thought and word and in deed. We are sinners by nature. We are sinners by practice and the things that we do and the things that we leave undone.

And we confess that day by day. We confess that hour by hour. But we thank you that we have the promise that when we do confess, because of Jesus and all that he has done, our sins are forgiven. We thank you that there is power in the blood of Jesus to cleanse us from all sin, though our sins be as scarlet. We thank you that we are called to reason together with the Lord.

[9 : 41] And we are promised that when we put our faith in Jesus, our hearts are made as white as snow. So we pray for that cleansing this morning. We pray that you would take away from us all that is a barrier, all that is an obstacle to our fellowship with you and with each other.

And we pray that you would draw us near to yourself and bring us near to each other in the name of Jesus. We ask, Lord, that you would help us to worship you in this hour and worship you with our whole lives, but especially at this time.

Help us, Lord, to remember that we are in the presence of God. Help us to remember that as we open your word, we hear your voice. And as we bow our hearts in prayer, you are listening and you are with us.

So minister to us, we pray. We pray that you would meet us at our need. We pray for wisdom, Lord, as we've sang. And we thank you that when we ask for wisdom, you will give us liberally that wisdom that comes from heaven.

We pray for protection in a world that so often is full of trouble and snares and things that hurt us and things that grieve us. But we thank you that you have said that you will not leave us alone in this world.

[11 : 01] We are not orphans, but we have a heavenly father. We have a savior in Jesus, a friend that sticks closer to us than a brother. And so we pray for guidance.

We pray for protection. We pray for cleansing from sin. And we pray for that hope which is promised to us if we are in Jesus. We thank you that as we've sang, we have a place in heaven if Jesus is our savior.

We thank you that all those who look in faith to the Lord shall be saved. And so we pray that each one of us would know the assurance of that salvation.

And each one of us would have that sure and certain hope that at the end of our short lives here, that we have an eternity to be gained and not an eternity to fear.

We thank you that Jesus said that after he died and rose, he went back to heaven to prepare a place for all who love him.

[12 : 03] And we thank you, Lord, for the comfort that that brings to us, especially when our hearts are sore, especially when we miss those who have gone ahead of us from this world into eternity.

So grant your comfort to those whose hearts are sore this morning, we pray. Those who grieve, Lord, we pray that they would know your peace. We pray for those who are anxious, those who are waiting for test results, even some for tomorrow, Lord.

We pray that you would give them that sense of your presence, that you would help them not to worry, but to cast all their cares upon you. We pray for those who are looking for direction and guidance, that you would guide them, that you would guide us as individuals, as a congregation.

And Lord, we pray for those who are leaving us at this time, for John and for Liz. We thank you for their friendship. We thank you for our fellowship in Christ.

And we ask that you would go before them as they go to Helmsdale. Lord, that they would settle as they go there, both in the community and in the church. We thank you that they know the church fellowship there well.

[13 : 10] And we pray that you would bless them in it and make them a blessing in that fellowship. We pray for Roddy, McCray and for Marina and the congregation there.

Lord, that you would minister to them and minister through them in that place. We thank you that although we are separated in this world at times from each other for a period, that we have unity in Jesus.

And we thank you that even when we are separated by death, we are promised that there is unity, eternal unity for those who are in Christ.

So bless them, we pray, as they go from us. And bless each one of us here in the congregation. We pray for our nation, a dark place now, where your word is becoming more and more scarcely heard.

And we ask that you would reverse that, Lord, that you would revive us, that you would awaken hearts. And those who are in authority over us, Lord, we pray that you would humble them and cause them and cause each one of us to look to Jesus.

[14 : 17] So hear our prayers, lead us and guide us in this time of worship. May all that we say and do and think be pleasing to you. And may we know your blessing upon us.

In Jesus name we ask. Amen. Amen. Boys and girls, would you like to come forward, please? How are you all today?

All fine, yeah? I'm going to show you something, but not quite yet, I want to see how alert you are. When you're walking along the road to school in the mornings, and you look up at the church, have you noticed anything different over the last few days?

Ailey, you put your hand up first. The windows are different. Did we get new windows? No. What's different about the windows? There's a big picture.

And can anybody tell me what's the picture of, and what does the picture say? Fraser? It has like crosses on that. It's got crosses. How many crosses? Three.

[15 : 41] Three crosses. And has it got a message in words? Yeah. Emily? He is risen. So tell me, what do you think that picture's all about?

Cameron? About Jesus. About Jesus. So the crosses, does that take you back to our story? What's the story? Henry?

When Jesus died on the cross. So there was two criminals either side of him, and then in the middle, Jesus died on the cross.

Why did he die on the cross? Because was he a criminal? No. Why did he die on the cross? Do you know, Finley? It's because to get away our sins.

It's because to get away our sins. Exactly right. Jesus died on the cross to get away our sins. He was innocent.

[16 : 42] He had no sin. But Jesus went to the cross to take our sin away from us, so that we could have our hearts cleansed. Did he die?

No. We're getting into theology here. He really did die. He really did die.

And this is way off script now, but it says in the Bible, the wages of sin is death. So there was like a fine, there was a penalty that had to be paid for our sin.

And either we have to die for our sin, and that's what hell is, or Jesus has to die for our sin. And so he went to the cross, and he really did die to pay the wages for our sin.

But what does it say in the window again? Does it say Jesus died? What does it say? Let me hear that again. He is risen.

[17 : 47] He is risen. Because Jesus said on the third day, he would rise from the dead. And on that third day, Jesus rose from the dead.

And he promised that everyone who believes in him will also rise from the dead and live forever. So I think we want to say, excellent job to Lauren and Gillian, who I don't think is here today, but Lauren is.

I forgot to show you the pictures. So there's the first picture, okay? And when you're walking to school in the morning, you can see that picture. Better at night.

Wait, wait, Mike. I wasn't, I was just going there. So it's excellent in the morning when you see it, but at night time, when the lights are on in here, sometimes you might think, somebody's left the lights on.

There's a reason the lights are on at night. And the reason is that. Because when it's bright in here, and it's dark outside, you see really clearly that amazing picture.

[18 : 56] And we see that message. He is risen. So, boys and girls, what I want to say to you today, because you might be thinking, what do I do with this when I go into my week?

What I want to say to you today is, be like the window. Tell the message. Because see, when we trust in Jesus, he comes into our lives, doesn't he?

And Jesus is the light of the world. He's in us. And then he sends us out into a world that can be really dark sometimes, and a bit scary, and sometimes a bit sad.

And Jesus says, I want you to be like the window. I want you to be the light. I want you to tell people that I died for sinners, and I rose from the dead.

So when you're walking past the window in the morning, when it is still quite dark, and you see it, and when you're walking at night, think to yourselves, if you're those who are trusting in Jesus, if you're not, ask him to come into your heart, even today, and take away your sin.

[20 : 01] But if you are trusting in Jesus, as you head off to school, and as you head back home, think, I need to be like that window.

I need to tell people that Jesus died and rose to save us all. Okay? So be like the window.

We pray, and ask for God's help with that. Lord, we thank you for this day, and we thank you for, we thank you for that window, and we thank you for the gifts that you give to people like Lauren and Julian to be able to make these amazing pictures.

We thank you for the story that that picture and these words tells, that Jesus died on the cross for our sin, and rose from the dead, so that we could have everlasting life.

Help each one of us, we pray, to believe, and to have the light of Jesus in our hearts, and help us, we pray, in this world, whether we're in school, or whether we're out playing football, or whether we're playing with our friends in a different house, or whether we're at home.

[21 : 08] Help us to be like the window, and to tell people that Jesus is risen from the dead. Thank you that today, the Lord's Day, is a reminder for us every week, that Jesus rose from the dead, and we thank you that that gives us joy in our hearts.

So hear our prayers, and help us, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to sing now, and we're going to sing a hymn about having Christ in me. And it's a hymn that's quite new to us, but we're getting to know it quite well.

What gift of grace is Jesus, my Redeemer? And we'll stand to sing in just a minute. What gift of grace is Jesus, my Redeemer?

There is no more for heaven I to give. He is my joy, my righteousness and freedom, my steadfast love, my deep and boundless peace.

To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus, for my life is holy, bound to His.

[22 : 34] O how strange and divine, I can sing, all is mine, yet not I, but through Christ in me.

The night is dark, but I am not forsaken, for by my side the Savior He will stay.
I labor on in weakness and rejoicing, for in my need His power is displayed.
To this I hold, my shepherd will defend me, through the deepest valley He will lead.
O the night has been won, and I shall overcome, yet not I, but through Christ in me.
[23 : 34] O things I dread, I know I am forgiven, the future sure, the price it has been made.

For Jesus bled and suffered for my pardon, and He was raised to overthrow the grave.
To this I hold, my sin has been defeated, Jesus now and ever is mine be.
O the chains are released, I can sing, I am free, yet not I, but through Christ in me.
With every breath, I long to follow Jesus, for He has said that He will bring me home, and day by day, I know He will renew me, until I stand with joy before the throne.
[24 : 49] To this I hold, my hope is holy Jesus, all the glory evermore to Him.

When the grace is complete, still my lips shall repeat, yet not I, but through Christ in me. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. I go to pray for them when they head to Sunday school.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. And we can turn in our Bibles to Luke chapter 24, please.
Luke chapter 24, we're focusing on verses 48 through to the end of the chapter. But I'll maybe read in from verse 40.

[26 : 23] So we have the picture here, the scene, and the disciples are locked in this wee room.
They're terrified of the authorities, and they're hearing the news that Jesus is risen.

And then Jesus appears in the room with them. And he showed them, verse 40, his hands and his feet. And while still they did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, Do you have anything here to eat?

They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence. He said to them, This is what I told you while I was still with you. Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms.

Then he opened their minds so they could understand the scriptures. He told them, This is what is written. The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.
You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my father has promised. But stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.

[27 : 39] When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.

Then they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and they stayed continually at the temple, praising God. Amen.

And may God bless that reading of his word to us. We're going to sing now Psalm 130. Psalm 130. The first three stanzas of the Psalm in Gaelic.

The verse marked 1 to the first bit of verse 6. Lord, from the depths to thee I cried. My voice, Lord, do thou hear. Unto my supplications voice give an attentive ear.

Lord, who shall stand if thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquity? But yet with thee forgiveness is that feared thou mayest be. I wait for God. My soul doth wait.

[28 : 36] My hope is in his word. More than they that for morning watch, my soul waits for the Lord. These verses we sing in Gaelic, and we remain seated to sing in Gaelic.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[30 : 45] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[33 : 15] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[37 : 15] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[40 : 55]

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[45 : 03] Thank you. Thank you. that you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. We're going to say, and think you're going to say, we're Alice determines, yeah, we shall cut you say, we, verse over, we're going to know you, we are the people, and we are the kind of people.

We will see, you know what we're going to say. We'll see. We'll see. So, So take the encouragement of that, if that's what you need, and take the challenge of that, if that's what you need.

What were the witnesses to say? Well, they were to tell people, verse 48, these things. What things?

Well, very simply, the things about Jesus. That he suffered. And that he died, and that on the third day he rose.

[46 : 36] They weren't to go scratching their heads and thinking about some speech that they could make up to share with people. They were to simply tell the people the things, the facts, the news, the good news about Jesus.

So witnesses for Jesus are not perfect people. They don't have flawless track records. Think about the disciples. They didn't have massive theological education.

They didn't have PhDs. They weren't known for their great eloquence. They were fishermen. They were tax collectors. They were ordinary people. But they were ordinary people who knew Jesus. Who had trusted Jesus. Who believed in Jesus. And who were willing to simply and clearly tell people these things.

That they knew about Jesus. And that's your calling. And it's mine. If we are Christians.

[47 : 51] It's not enough just to know. We have to go and tell. We need to tell people these same things about Jesus.

What happens when witnesses don't speak up? Well, even if we think back to the courtroom or the classroom. If witnesses don't speak up.

Usually people suffer. Unnecessarily. People suffer. And spiritually, it's a sobering thought.

But spiritually, when we don't witness. When we don't tell people. About Jesus. People may suffer. Eternally. There are people who are lost. Who we have perhaps had many opportunities over the years.

[49 : 07] To tell people about Jesus. And yet we can think of many folks. That we had opportunities. And we stepped back from them. When we don't speak up.

People may suffer. But when we do speak. When we tell people about Jesus. That he is the savior. Who will not drive them away. But who will receive them. As they come to him.

The Lord may use our testimony. To cause people. To look in faith. To Jesus. And to be saved. Doesn't have to be a long speech.

It may be just a simple smile. And a point. In the direction of Christ. Just a word. That the Lord may take.

And use together. With many other words. From many other people. To. To bring faith. To bring salvation. Are you and I being witnesses.

[50 : 13] For the Lord. That's the first. That's the first point. That's the first question. The second point. Is we see the disciples. Being told to wait. Upon the Lord.

Because if we go back. To the wee. Wee room. That John tells us about. Jesus says to the 11. You are. You are witnesses. But if we see.

What happens next. The doors don't fly open. And they don't go charging. Out at high speed. To tell everybody. In there. Within their reach. No. The disciples.

Are actually told. You are witnesses. But first of all. You're going to have to wait. Don't go charging off. Jesus says. In verse. 49.

I'm going to send you. What my father has promised. But stay. Wait. In the city. Until you have been clothed.

[51 : 10] With power. From on high. So Jesus says to them. Before you go out. And speak for me. First of all.

You need to wait. Zechariah 4. And verse 6. Verse 6. Says. Not by might. Nor by power.

But by my spirit. Says the Lord. Almighty. And they were to wait. For the Holy Spirit. To. To come upon them.

And to fill them. They needed. God's power. To be able to go out. And speak to people. About the. The gospel message. And. That's. The way it was. In the Old Testament. In Zechariah's day. It's not by might. It's not by power. It's by God's spirit. That's the way.

[52 : 08] It was in the New Testament. We see it. Repeatedly. And it's still. True today. We can't do God's work. In our strength.

We can't. Be God's witnesses. Using our own power. We need the power of God.

To be able to. To go out. And be. And be witnesses. Jesus. Says to his disciples. You need to wait. Until you have been clothed.

From on high. You need to wait. For the Holy Spirit. And then. When you go out. As my witnesses. Then. Your words.

Will go forth. In power. Now. How does this. Apply to us today. Because. You know. We don't have to wait. For the Holy Spirit.

[53 : 03] To be given. They were in a. A specific. Scenario. Where they had to wait. For the Holy Spirit. To come upon them. We. Are those. Who. Have received.

The Holy Spirit. The moment we believed. To what it says. In Ephesians 1. 13 and 14. We receive. The Holy Spirit. When we believe. But in Ephesians 5.

18. We're told. That we have to keep on. Being filled. There needs to be. Constant. In fillings. Fresh. In fillings. Of the. Of the Holy Spirit.

And how does that happen? How are we. Filled with. With God's power? How are we. Filled with God's spirit? How does that happen? Well that happens. As we wait upon him. As we charge around.

In this world. Trying to do. A thousand different things. Whether it's in. In general work. Or whether it's in ministry. Then we don't get filled. We get emptied. We get. But as we turn to the Lord.

[54 : 07] And as we listen to. His voice. In the Bible. As we. Speak to him in prayer. As we turn away from sin. As we mortify sin. And as we.

Spend time with. The Lord Jesus. Then. Our strength is renewed. And we're given power. To be witnesses.

For. Jesus. There's a hymn. That we. Often sing. That says. Take time. To be holy. Speak. Oft. With the Lord. Abide in him. Always. And feed. On his word. That's what it looks like. To wait upon the Lord. Lord. And we're to do that.

Every day. But this day. In particular. Is a day. Where we have been. Gifted time.

[55 : 05] To wait upon the Lord. Stop work. And take time. To wait. Upon. The Lord. It's.

God's. Command. To us. It's instruction. To us. And it's. His gift. To us. On the Christmas. Holidays. Mary's brother's.

Wife. CJ. She. She. Was. Running around. With her phone. And she was saying. Why is my phone. Always at 2%. Why is it.

That every time. I want to go. Watch a video. On my phone. I can't watch it. Because my phone's at 2%. And Neo. Responded immediately. By saying. Because you never leave it. Plugged in long enough. You put it in. The wall.

For. For 3 minutes. And then you're taking it back out again. And you're trying to play a video. Or you're. You're. FaceTiming somebody. You need to let the thing wait. And charge up. Before you pull it out.

[56 : 01] And use it. And. And. And. I think the reality is. That often. We can be like a phone. On 2%. We're called to.

To be witnesses. We're called to. To work for the Lord. But we struggle. We're called. Because we're like. A phone in 2%. And we need. To take some time.

To wait upon the Lord. Witnesses. For. Jesus. We're called to be witnesses. For the Lord. We're called to wait.

Upon the Lord. The third thing. We see here. Is the will of the Lord. And if you see. Verses. 50 and 51. We get a. A picture of this. When Jesus.

Had led them out. To the vicinity of Bethany. He lifted up his hands. And blessed them. While he was blessing them. He left them. And was taken up.

[56 : 57] Into heaven. So what is the will of. Of God. That's a big question. We could spend a long time. Talking about that. And we could get down.

Into sort of micro detail. About. God's will for us. But. In terms of the big picture. God's will. Is to bless us. As his people. If you rewind. All the way back. To Genesis 1. God created man. And woman. In his image. And it says in. Genesis 1. Verse 28. God blessed them. Genesis 3. Man falls.

The curse of sin. Crashes in. Suffering. Begins. To be experienced. In the world. But no sooner. Has the curse of sin. Broken in. That gone.

[57 : 56] Than God reveals his plan. To reverse the curse. And to bring blessing back. In and through Jesus. grace. So the first words.

Of the Lord. In the beginning. Are words of blessing. The first. Words. That. Humans. Hear. From the voice of God.

Are words of blessing. God blessed them. And the last words. Of Jesus. To his disciples. In this world. Are words of blessing. So we have this beautiful.

Picture here. As Luke's gospel finishes. And we see Jesus. Having completed. The work of salvation. Having succeeded. In his mission.

To save. His people. He blesses them. J.C. Ryle says. Says this. He says.

[58 : 56] Jesus came on earth. To bless. And not to curse. And blessing. He departed. He came in love. And not in anger. And in love. He went away.

He came not. As a condemning judge. But as a compassionate friend. And as a friend. He returned to his father. He had been a savior. Full of blessings.

To his little flock. While he had been with them. He would be a savior. Full of blessings. To them. He would have them know. Even after he was taken away. He is the same yesterday.

Today. And forever. A savior. Ever ready to bless. Abounding. In blessings. And I think this is a. A corrective. That some of us need to. To take. Some people. Have this. Warped idea. About God.

[59 : 55] I hear this all the time. Lots of people have this. Twisted idea. About God. That he is. Out to get us. That he is out to punish us.

That he. He thrives on. On making our. Our lives miserable. That's why. You get young people. Who say. I don't want to become a Christian. Until I'm 60 or 70. I want to enjoy life first.

As if. God wants to take all the enjoyment. Away from us. That's the devil's lie. The truth. The truth. Is. That the will. Of God. Is to bless us. That's why Jesus came. He came.

He went to the cross. To remove. The curse. Of sin. From us. And to give the blessing of God. To us. If we will believe in him.

[60 : 59] We just have to believe. We just have to receive. His blessing. But then having received.

The blessing of God. When we. Come to Christ. When we become Christians. We're to share it. We are blessed.

In order to become a blessing. To others. We'll see that. In Genesis 18. When we go back there. Tonight. The will of the Lord. For Abraham. Was to bless him.

In order that he would be a blessing. And that's the will of God. For us. He wants to save us. He wants to. Take our sin from us.

He wants. To bless us. And then make us a blessing. In your home. In your school. In your workplace.

[61 : 59] Amongst your friends. Many of whom will not know Christ. And God's will. For us. Is to bless us.

So that we will become. A blessing. It's not. It's not complicated stuff. But it can be costly. Because it involves.

Not thinking first about me. But thinking. About the glory. Of Christ. And the needs. Of those.

Around us. To. To trust Christ. Christ. So let's. You know. Very practically. Let's. If we are Christians. Ask the Lord.

To help us see. as a church, as individuals. Ask the Lord to help us see how we can be a blessing to those he has put around us.

[62 : 56] Not what we can get from them, but how can we bless them? The will of the Lord is to bless and we see that as he ascends to heaven.

And the final thing we see in this section is this example that we're left with, this call to worship the Lord.

Verse 52, Then they, the disciples, worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple praising God.

So Luke's gospel finishes with worship. And I can't help thinking of Theophilus. Because remember, in Luke chapter 1, Luke says, I'm writing this for you, Theophilus.

I'm going to give you an orderly account of all these things about Jesus. So that hopefully you'll see, you'll understand, you'll believe, you'll be certain about the truth about Jesus.

[64 : 12] And we have this amazing record in Luke's gospel. We have the life and the ministry and the sufferings and the death and the resurrection of Jesus. It's all so carefully investigated.

It's so clearly presented. And the final camera shot in Luke 24 is that of Jesus ascending and the disciples are worshipping. And the question by implication, I think, comes to Theophilus as he finishes this book.

Luke, where am I? Am I worshipping yet? What does worship look like?

It's joyful. Verse 52. I mean, it has to be joyful. If we know that our sins are forgiven, if we know that we have eternal life, if we know that we have a relationship with the God who made us for himself, if we know that when we die, we're going to heaven, we must have joy.

If we've got no joy, we can't be in worship. The disciples are joyful. Even though they're probably still shaking their boots, even though they know they're going to become public enemy number one, their lives are going to be in danger.

[65 : 48] They're going to be hunted down for Jesus' sake. They would suffer. They would die for Jesus' sake. They would have known that. And yet they were joyful.

They were in worship because they knew they had Christ. And that joy was expressed in their worship.

And the other thing that we see in their worship is it's not just joyful, but it's continual. It's not a flash in the pan thing. It says in verse 53 that there's a continual worship.

The good work that Jesus began in the lives of these disciples, it would continue. Even though they failed in the past.

And even though they would still get things wrong in the future, they would keep on keeping on praising God. So we see them in worship.

[67 : 03] So where do we finish this morning? As we close our studies in Luke's Gospel, where do we finish this morning?

Well, we finish with the same question. And it's the question of worship. Are we worshipping Jesus? It's great to see you in the chairs.

It's great to have a church where there's lots of people who come together. We enjoy each other's company, but we come here to worship. Are we worshipping Jesus?

Have we trusted Jesus? Have we asked him to take away our sin? to fill us with the Holy Spirit? Are we worshipping him?

Do we believe these things that Luke has shared with us about Jesus? And are we sharing these things as witnesses for Jesus in all the places that he's going to put us on Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday and every other day that he gives us?

[68 : 29] Are we worshipping the Lord? Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word and we thank you for Luke's gospel.

We thank you for this clear, carefully investigated account of the ministry of Jesus. We thank you that when we look to Jesus, we see the character of God.

We see God the Son. We see the heart of the Father. We see the work of the Holy Spirit. And we pray that we would be those who don't just see and who don't just understand in our heads, but we pray that we would be those who in our hearts trust in the Lord Jesus.

