

Faith listens to Jesus, understands the gospel, shows, grows and comes to Christ

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[0 : 00] Good morning and a warm welcome to the service this morning and a special welcome to those who are visiting with us. It's good to have one or two with us and some who've been away for a while who are back with us again and that's good to see as well. After the service there's tea and there's coffee and there's also a wedding cake thanks to John and Donna so if you're able to stay behind please do so. There's a Gaelic service at 6 tonight here and that will be taken by Dan Marig as we know him and there's no English fellowship tonight because of the Leverborough communion. The service is at 6 o'clock in Leverborough and there's a fellowship afterwards there so those who are able to I would encourage you to go through there and it's the Reverend Ian McCritchie who's taking that service tonight.

Various things in the course of the week as usual as you can see there the normal things. The things to note this week, Ladies Mission prayer meeting, inter-serve meets on Friday at 8pm at Duncan and Morag's house. That's a monthly prayer meeting, Ladies prayer meeting for inter-serve and the services next Sunday God willing will be taken by myself. And please note as well that on the 10th of March which is two weeks today I think isn't it? Is it two weeks today? Yeah. We have our communion service so there'll be the communion weekend over that weekend so please note that and if there are any who have come to faith in Christ who know Jesus and are trusting him and haven't yet sat at the Lord's table please be encouraged to come. I don't speak to myself or one of the elders if you want to discuss it beforehand and also there's opportunity to come forward when the session is open over the course of that weekend. Let's unite our hearts together in prayer. Let's pray. Loving God we thank you that we come into your presence this morning knowing that you are a God of grace, that you are a God of love, that you are a God who is patient with us and the God who loves to save all who will look to him. We thank you that your word tells us that your desire is that none would perish but all would come to repentance and faith and salvation in Christ and we thank you Lord that this morning as we bow in your presence that's the invitation and that's the call that's the the urgent message that's pressed upon us that we would look to you that our vision would be lifted from ground level that our vision would be lifted from a fixation often on ourselves and on all that we see around us and that we would be given eyes of faith that we might look to Jesus the one who is our saviour. We thank you Lord that we come before you this morning and we worship the God who saves and Lord we confess that we are a people who are much in need of that salvation. We are sinners and we confess that even since the last time we gathered together in this place we can think of many occasions and the things that we've said and the things that we've done and the things that we have left undone and the thoughts that have passed through our minds we have sinned but we confess that sin Lord thanking you that you have promised that when we confess that you will forgive when we look to Jesus.

So Lord we fix our eyes upon Christ at this time and we ask Lord that you would wash us in the blood that was shed at that cross so that we might be saved. We thank you that we are promised when we look to him that we will be purified from all unrighteousness that we'll be washed clean and we pray that at the beginning of this Lord's day that day when we remember that Jesus died and rose to justify us. We pray that we would have that sense of joy and peace that we if we are trusting in Christ are your children and we are saved and we are cleansed through all that he has done. We thank you Lord that in a world where we often find ourselves confused and not sure which way to go you are our wisdom and we pray that in this week that it's before us that as we acknowledge you that you would guide us and that you would lead us.

We're conscious Lord that in this world we experience much in the way of trouble we have battles but we thank you Lord that you have promised to be the one who shields us in the battle that you are the one who gives us that sword for the fight. So we ask Lord that we would know your power that we would know your protection and all that's ahead of us in in this week and we ask Father that we would make our greatest desire that our determination would be not to to try and acquire as much of the riches of this world as we can. But we pray that we may know that joy of contentment and being in relationship with you and being thankful for all that we have. Help us as we pass through time to remember that we have no continuing city here. So enable us we pray to invest in that relationship with you which is an eternal relationship and enable us we pray to know your presence in this service. Help us we pray on your day in this place in your house to be in the spirit and to be worshipping you and we ask all these things in Jesus name and for his sake. Amen. Now let's turn now in our Bibles to Mark chapter 4 and we'll read the whole of the chapter. This is God's word. Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge. He taught them many things by parables and in his teaching said listen a farmer went out to sow the seed. As he was scattering the seed some fell along the path and the birds came and ate it up.

[6 : 49] Some fell in rocky places where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up the plants were scorched and they withered because they had no root.

Other seed fell among thorns which grew up and choked the plant so that they did not bear grain. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and grew and produced a crop multiplying 30, 60 and even 100 times.

Then Jesus said he who has ears to hear let them hear. When he was alone the 12 and the others around him asked him about the parables. He told them the secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you.

But to those on the outside everything is said in parables so that they may be ever seeing but never perceiving and ever hearing but never understanding. Otherwise they might turn and be forgiven. Then Jesus said to them don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? The farmer sows the word. Some people are like the seed along the path where the word is sown.

[8 : 02] As soon as they hear it Satan comes takes away the word that was sown in. Others like seeds sown in rocky places hear the word and at once receive it with joy.

But since they have no root they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word they quickly fall away. Still others like seeds sown among thorns hear the word.

But the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word making it unfruitful. Others like seeds sown in good soil hear the word, accept it and produce a crop 30, 60 or even 100 times what was sown.

He said to them do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead don't you put it on its stand? For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open.

If anyone is ears to hear, let them hear. Consider carefully what you hear, he continued. With the measure you use it will be measured to you and even more.

[9 : 16] Whoever will be, whoever has will be given more. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. He also said this is what the kingdom of God is like.

A man scatters seed on the ground night and day. Whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces corn, first the stalk, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.

As soon as the grain is ripe he puts the sickle to it because the harvest has come. Again he said, what shall we say the kingdom of God is like or what parable shall we use to describe it?

It is like a mustard seed which is the smallest seed you plant on the ground. Yet when planted it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade.

With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his disciples he explained everything.

[10 : 22] That day when evening came he said to his disciples, let us go over to the other side. Leaving the crowd behind they took him along just as he was in the boat.

There were also other boats with him. A furious squall came up and the waves broke over the boat so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern sleeping in a cushion.

The disciples woke him up and said to him, teacher don't you care if we drown? Then he got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, quiet, be still.

Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. He said to his disciples, why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?

They were terrified and asked each other, who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him. Amen.

[11 : 24] May God bless that reading of his word to us. Again let's unite our hearts in prayer. Let's pray together. Our heavenly father, we thank you for your word to us and we pray that our hearts would be like the good soil.

That our hearts would be ready and responsive. That we would receive and that the word of the gospel, the good news about Jesus, would be planted deep in our hearts.

And that there would be fruit evident in our lives as we put our faith in Jesus. We ask Lord that our hearts would not be like the other forms of soil.

The hard soil that the seed just bounces off and is snatched away. We pray that Satan would not be able to snatch the seed away from any lives that are here this morning.

But we pray that we would have ears to hear. We would have eyes to see. That we would have hearts that are responsive to your word. That the soil of our hearts would be deep and not shallow.

[12 : 39] That we wouldn't just make an emotional response to Jesus as we see him. And Lord that we wouldn't be those who are so taken up with the things of this world that the gospel is choked in our lives.

That it's not fruitful and we ultimately are not saved. We pray that salvation would come even to the heart of one person here for the first time.

We ask Lord that you would seek and save sinners like each one of us. And that we would know that assurance that we are safe in Christ and all that he has done for us.

We pray Father for every service around us in this island and across the nation and all nations. Wherever Christ crucified is preached we ask Lord that you would be at work.

We pray especially for the congregations around us. Who open your word and we pray your blessing upon them. We think of those in Leverborough preparing to sit around your table.

[13 : 43] And we ask Lord that as they do so that they would know the presence of the Holy Spirit. And that they would know that joy of being able to profess faith in Christ.

And proclaim that all our hope is resting on the death and the resurrection of Jesus. We pray for Ian McRitchie as he preaches this morning and this evening.

And we ask that you would guide him and lead him. As we look forward to going there this evening. We pray for Dan as well as he prepares to come here this evening.

That you would be near to him and that you would speak through him. We pray for the Free Church continuing in Scalkey especially this week. With the induction of the new minister Mr. Kent.

And we pray that he would be used for your glory in that place. And that many would see and hear Christ through the word that he brings. We pray for those in special need Lord at this time.

[14 : 42] For some who are sick in hospital. Some who have been in hospital and who are in recovery. We pray that your hand of healing would be upon them. As your hand of healing was upon many in the Gospels.

We pray for those who are grieving. Mindful of those who gathered in Leibaba in the course of the week. We pray for your comfort for them. Especially for Kathy here Lord. We pray your hand of comfort and blessing upon her and upon Morag.

We pray that you would be near to all who grieve in different parts of the island. And those connected with us. We thank you that Jesus is the one who weeps with those who weep.

And Jesus is the one who rejoices with those who rejoice. And we pray Lord with joy in our hearts. That you would bless John and Donna. At the beginning of their married life in Camille.

That they would know your presence. That they would know your peace. That they would know your hand upon them for good. Through each day that you set before them. We commit them to you.

[15 : 46] And ask Lord that you would be near to them. We pray now Lord that you would continue with us. We pray that you would go before us. We pray for the children Lord as they gather in Sunday school.

And we ask that you would open their hearts to the Gospel message. We pray once more for babies to be brought into the church here. As we are conscious of so few in the creche. We thank you for the news of another child brought into this community over these last couple of days. And we pray for your blessing upon baby Holly. We thank you for Fiona. And for the health that she has. And for your hand of protection over her. And we pray that you would bless her and Kyle. And that you would bless Holly. And that you would bless Joseph. And that you would bless the wee sister as well. And that you would be with Bonnie too. We commit them to you Lord. And we ask that you would be near to them.

[16 : 49] And we pray now that you would be near to us. As we seek to continue in worship. And we ask all this in Jesus name. Amen. Can you turn with me please to Mark chapter 4.

And we pray as we go there. Lord God as we have sang. We would pray. That you would teach us your perfect way. And that you would give understanding to us. As we come to your word. We are conscious that we. We need that understanding. That help of the Holy Spirit. And we pray for that man.

That he would be our teacher. And that he would be at work. In our hearts. As we would come under the authority of your word. Each one of us. And we ask this in Jesus name.

Amen. Amen. One of the questions that is likely. In the minds of some who are present here today.

[17 : 52] And it's a question that will be likely in the minds of some present here over the next few weeks. And the question is. Should I go to the large table? We're coming close to that period.

Where we come to the large table. And so the dilemma that people wrestle with. That we all wrestle with to a degree in our minds and in our hearts.

Is should I be there? Why do we go to the table? When we go to the table to profess our faith. We go to the Lord's table to profess the fact that we believe that Jesus is the Christ. That he is the Son of God.

Which is the whole purpose that Mark wrote. Remember the first Sunday that we looked at Mark. We asked these three questions. Who is Jesus? Why did he come? What does he call us to do?

[18 : 55] And we go to the table to respond to each of these questions. We go to the table to profess that we believe that Jesus is who he says he is. That he's the Christ. That he's the Son of God.

That he's the one who can save us. We go to the table to profess that we believe that he came to this world to die and to rise.

So that sinners like us can be saved. Can be justified. And we go to the table to respond to the call of Jesus.

That he places upon our lives. That he places upon our lives. And that's a call to follow him. To trust him. For our salvation.

And to obey him. And to obey him. And to obey him. As he calls us to do this thing that he has ordained. He has called us to take the bread.

[19 : 56] He has called us to take the wine. And to remember him. And to proclaim his death.

As we do so. And to tell other people. As we do so. That we are his people. And we're not ashamed to see it. And that he is our savior.

And our Lord. We don't go to the table. To make some kind of statement. That we ourselves are righteous.

And better than any other person. We go to the table. To acknowledge the fact. That we know how unrighteous we truly are.

But we have come to believe. In the one who is truly righteous. And who offers that righteousness to us.

[20 : 56] It's the place that we go. To profess. That our faith is in Christ. So the key question.

Is your faith in Jesus. And today with Mark 4 open. We're looking for indicators of faith.

We're looking for marks in our lives. That will help us to know. How to respond to that question. In certain parts of this building. I'm not sure which ones they are. But there are monitors.

There are detectors. And if carbon monoxide. Is in the atmosphere somewhere. Although we can't see it.

It's a gas. There are detectors. That will sound an alarm. To indicate that its presence is here. Now faith is something.

[21 : 57] That we can't see. We can't touch it. We can't handle it. Like we can handle objects in this world. And so it can be difficult to know. If people have faith.

It can be difficult to know. Truth be told. If we have faith ourselves. Sometimes. Which is why we have difficulty.

Sometimes in knowing. Whether or not we should go forward. To the table. But Mark 4 gives us some indicators of faith. And the first one is this.

Faith listens to the teaching of Jesus. It's the first point. Faith listens to the teaching of Jesus. Look at verse one. Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him. Was so large. That he got into a boat. And sat in it.

[22 : 56] Out on the lake. While all the people. Were along at the shore. At the water's edge. He taught them many things by parables. And in his teaching.

He said. Listen. Listen. Listen. A farmer went out to sow his seed.

As he was scattering the seed. Some fell along the path. And the birds came. And ate it up. Some fell in rocky places. But it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly. Because the soil was shallow.

But when the sun came up. The plants were scorched. And they withered. Because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns. Which grew up and choked the plants. So that they did not bear grain.

Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up. And grew and produced a crop. Multiplying 30, 60. Or even a hundred times. Then Jesus said. He who has ears to hear.

[23 : 53] Let him hear. As he begins the parable. He says. Listen. Then as he brings this stage of it.

To a conclusion. He says. He who has ears to hear. Let him hear. See. For much of Jesus. Ministry. He's surrounded. By large crowds. But these crowds. Were there for. All kinds of reasons. There were those who were sick. And they'd heard that Jesus. Could give healing.

So that's why they were there. There were those who were demon possessed. And they would have been brought. By those who cared for them. Because they'd heard Jesus. Could drive out these demons. And so that's why they were there.

There were some. Who were there. Just for the free lunch. On occasions. And Jesus never grudged. Meeting.

[24 : 48] These. Physical needs. Of the people that were around him. But Christ knew. That the greatest need. For man. And woman.

And boy. And girl. Is salvation. Teaching. And so he kept on preaching. And he kept on teaching. And he called people to listen. And that's our start point today. Faith. Listens. To the teaching. Of Jesus.

Are you listening? Faith listens. To the teaching. Of Jesus. Dan Marig was telling me a story. Just a few days ago. About a man. Who. Who had been converted. And. And after he. He came to faith. He was so full. He was brimming over. With this.

[25 : 45] Newfound joy. Of this gospel. Of Jesus. That he'd heard. And he'd received. And he was just. He was just full of the joys. And one of his friends.

Said to him. You know. But you've been sitting. For years. In this church. And this. Exact message. That you're talking about.

Has been preached. Faithfully. For years. And years. In the seat. That you've been sitting in. And the man. Said with a grin. He says. I know. But I never heard it.

Till now. He says. I was building. In my house. In my head. Week after. Week after. Week after. Week. Sitting in one of these.

Pews. Every Sunday morning. And we know. That's perfectly possible. We've all been there. Some people.

[26 : 42] Can be part of a big. Crowd in church. And they're planning. Where to put their. Creels in the sea. Some people. Can be part of a. Big congregation. And they're planning. Where they're going. On holiday.

They're planning. How. Delicious. The Sunday. Roast is going to be. They're planning.

Out their week. Some of the complex. Problems. That are. Ahead of them. In the. In the workplace. And that's what's. In their head. And the preacher. Is standing there. And all they can hear. Is. Wah. Wah. Wah. Wah. Wah. And there's all this stuff. Going on in their minds. Not listening. Can happen for years. But when God.

The Holy Spirit. Begins a work of faith. In us. He opens ears. That were once blocked.

[27 : 39] He gives. Ears. To hear. We start to listen. Are you listening. This morning. Faith.

Listens. To the teaching. Of Jesus. Second point. Faith. Understands. The gospel. Of.

Jesus. Look at verse 10. When he. That's Jesus. Was. Alone. The twelve. And the others. Around them. Asked him. About the parables.

He told them. The secret. Of the kingdom. Of God. Has been given. To you. But to those. On the outside. Everything. Is said in parables. So that they may be. Ever seeing.

But never perceiving. And ever hearing. But never understanding. Otherwise. They might turn. And be. Forgiving. Now. I know. That's a complex verse. It goes.

[28 : 33] Back to. Isaiah. And it's a verse. Which. To be honest. I haven't got the time. To get into. And I don't want to get tangled up. In this morning. But the. The gist of it is.

If we. Drill down to the. The centre of the meaning. Of that verse. Essentially. It means. That when God. Is doing a work. Of faith. In a life.

People. See. And people. Hear. And people. Understand. The need. To repent. Of their sin. And to be forgiven. Some of you.

Will have been. To the optician. At one point. In your life. And you'll have been tested. For colorblindness. I'm not colorblind. So. When I go to opticians. And.

And she shows me. These. Pictures. And these charts. With the numbers. And the images. I look at it. And I can see it. Perfectly. Clearly. For someone.

[29 : 32] For someone. Who's colorblind. They look at this. Image. And they can see. Nothing in it. It's all the same. Because they're blind.

To these particular. Colors. And for. For some. When the. The gospel. Is preached. By whoever. Wherever. When confronted.

With the reality. Of sin. And the need. For salvation. They just don't see it. It's for somebody else. It's not for me. And then.

When they're taken. To. To. Calvary. And the cross. And they're. They're shown. The saviour. Suffering. And dying. They just don't see it.

The significance of it. It makes no impact. And then. When they're taken. From the. The cross. To that. The empty tomb. From which. Jesus. Rose.

[30 : 27] They. There's nothing. Exciting. About it. They can't. Understand. How. This is. Anything.

To do. With them. But. For those. Who can. See. And for those. Who can. Hear. For those.

Who. Understand. Why. Jesus. Came. What he was. Doing. On that. Cross. For those. Who see. Our sin. And who. Understand. That the need. That we have.

To. To turn. To Jesus. And to seek. Forgiveness. God is at work. In that heart. There is a faith.

Work. In progress. God. God. God. God. There may. May not. Have. Have. Been a lightning. Boat. There may. Not. Have. Been. A Damascus. Road. Shaking. And flashing. Of lights.

[31 : 21] But when we. See our sin. When we. See the cross. When we. Understand. What Jesus. Was doing there. When we. Understand. That we are. Sinners. Who need. To be saved. There is a faith.

Work. Going on. God. God. Is at work. In that life. As he was.

In. The life. Of the disciples. It was. In the early stages. But he was at work. In the life. Of these disciples. Look at verse 13. Then Jesus.

Said to them. The disciples. Don't you understand. This parable. How then. Will you understand. Any parable. The farmer.

Sows the word. Some people. Are like. Seed along the path. Where the word. Is sown. As soon as they hear it. Satan comes. Takes it away. The word.

[32 : 16] That was sown in them. And others. Like seed. Sown in rocky places. Hear the word. At once. They receive it. With joy. But since they have no root. They last only. A short time. When trouble.

Or persecution. Comes. Because. Of the word. They quickly. Fall away. Still others. Like seed. Sown. Among thorns. Hear the word. But the. The worries. Of this life.

The deceitfulness. Of wealth. The desire. For other things. Comes in. And chokes the word. Making it unfruitful. And others. Like seed. Sown. On good soil.

Hear the word. Accept it. And produce a crop. 30. 60. Or even. A hundred times. What. Was. Sown. What's Jesus doing here?

Well. Jesus is painting a picture. Of all the hearts. That he could see. We can't see. Each other's hearts.

[33 : 14] Thankfully. That Jesus. Could see. What was going on. In all the hearts. Before him. And he paints a picture.

And he categorizes. These different hearts. And as he does so. As we read this. And as they were confronted with us. We have caused to ask the question. Well.

Which heart is mine? And to be honest. I think this is one of the most unsettling passages. In scripture. In scripture. So let's look at these hearts.

First of all. There are. These hearts. That barely. Hear. Anything. Of the seed of the gospel. It's in one ear. It's out the other.

It's sitting in the chairs. Sitting in the pews. Have the spiritual conversations. In one ear. It's gone. Their hearts. Are as hard as a garden. Path. And the seed of the word.

[34 : 17] It just bounces off them. Verse 15. It's heart number one. And it's the second heart. That Jesus. Speaks of.

And. He talks about people. Other people. And they do hear. They do hear. The gospel message. They do see Jesus. And there's some kind of.

An emotional response. To Jesus. And to this gospel. That he presents. And especially when they're in the Christian crowd. They really respond warmly.

To this gospel message. But once they're out of it. It's different. And when it becomes clear. In the cold light of day.

On a Tuesday afternoon. In the warehouse. Or on the croft. Or in the office. Or whatever. When it becomes clear. That to be a Christian. Is costly. And there's a cost. Of denying self.

[35 : 11] In following Christ. When they realize. That there's a cost. To putting. First. Jesus. Which is what a disciple. Is called to do.

They quit. There's no root of faith. Their hearts are shallow.

Like shallow. Rocky soil. That's verses 16. And 17. The second kind of heart. Third kind of heart. Jesus. Shows us in verses 18. And 19. And he speaks about people. Who. Who hear. The gospel. Who see Jesus. Who see their sin.

And they seem to respond. And it looks like a response of faith. Initially. And for a wee while. They walk steady.

[36 : 17] But then as life goes on. And. There's marriage. And there's children. And family life. Becomes intense. And complicated.

And work. Becomes increasingly demanding. And there's things that you want. In your career. And there's things that you want. Material possessions. And you see your friends. Get them. And you need them.

And you want them. And you desire them. And you chase them. And as life goes on. You find. That. That increasingly. Your love for Christ. And your commitment for.

For Jesus. It's shrinking. And the desire one has for the. For the world. And the things of the world. And all that the world has to offer.

It's growing. And it's becoming. More and more. Important that we get it. And Jesus describes. These emotions.

[37 : 12] These ambitions. And worries. And priorities. As weeds. Thorns. And they come in. To our hearts.

And they choke. The word. And our hearts. Become. So suffocated. With these things. That there's no. Room for faith.

To grow. You could say. That the third category. Of heart here. That Jesus describes. It's a. It's a cluttered heart. Jam packed.

With. The worries. And the ambitions. And the cares. Of this world. So much so. That there's no. Time and space. To give any.

Serious consideration. To the world. To come. And one day. They wake up. And. They're just not. Following anymore. It's a third.

[38 : 14] Category of heart. Verses 18 and 19. And the final. Category. In verse 20. Is the heart. That.

Has faith. Growing. In it. And. A heart. In it. It's a heart. Where faith. Is. Growing. Is a heart. That not only.

Sees the need. To turn. From sin. And turn. To Jesus. And not only. Hears. The call. Of Jesus. To trust him. And not only.

Feels a desire. To follow him. But sees the urgency. Of doing that.

Now. Today. Immediately. This. Heart. Where faith. Is growing. Is a heart. That sees. The priority.

[39 : 11] Of accepting. Christ. And following. Christ. Today. Above all other. Things. This is a heart.

That does. Seeking first. First. God's kingdom. And determining. That we will use. Our time.

Our talents. Our energies. Our everything. Not to glorify. Self. But to glorify. Christ.

So the question. For. You and I. Is which heart. Is yours. And let's note.

Carefully. Hear. Hear. Hear. That the only. Heart. Where there is. Saving faith. The only heart. That is genuinely. Christian.

[40 : 15] Is the last one. That is. That is. That is. An unsettling thing. It is possible.

To see. Jesus. And to hear. The call. Of Jesus. It is. It is possible. To even respond. To Jesus. With joy. To feel.

To feel. And feel. Sincerely. Moved. In our. Emotions. As the gospel. Is preached. First. And yet.

Not. Commit. In our. Willes. In our. Lives. To be. Disciples. Of Christ. Who will.

Follow him. Day. After day. After day. After day. And put him. First. That's a disciple. Faith.

[41 : 13] Faith. Faith. Listen. To the teaching. Of Jesus. Faith. Secondly. Understands. The gospel. Of Jesus. And responds.

To that. The third point. Here. Is. Faith. Shows. Faith. Shows. Jesus. Said.

To them. In verse. 21. Do you. Bring. A lamp. To put it. Under a bowl. Or a bed. Instead. Don't you.

Put it. On its stand. For whoever. Is. Whatever is hidden.

Is meant to be disclosed. And whatever. Is concealed. Is meant to be brought. Out. And to be opened. If anyone is ears to hear. Let them hear. Consider. Carefully. What you hear. He continued.

With the measure. You use. It will be measured. To you. And even more. Whoever has. Will be given more. Whoever. Does not have. Even what. He has. Will be taken. From him.

[42 : 10] St. Harris House. One day. And. There was a conversation. Going on about sheep. One of the people there. Had. A lot of sheep. But. I quickly grasped.

So I said to. To one of these carers. How many sheep. Do you actually have? She looked at me. And frowned. She says. That's private. You should never ask that.

And I've. Had conversations. With. People. Over the years. And I've. I've said to them. You're a Christian. What. What do you believe? They frowned at me.

And said. That's a private thing. You should never ask that. God. And yet. Jesus teaches. That if we have faith in him.

It should show. It's not meant to be hidden under a bed. And it was a ridiculous picture. That he painted there.

[43 : 11] Deliberately so. You don't put a lamp under a bed. It's ridiculous. And Jesus is saying. It's ridiculous to have faith in me. And for it not to be seen.

It's ridiculous to have the light of the world. In your heart. And for that light not to shine out from your life. We have faith in Christ.

That's meant to be disclosed. That's meant to be brought out. Into the open. If you and I. Have felt the forgiving. Healing. Restoring. Touch. Of Jesus.

On our lives. We should be willing to tell people that. In the next chapter. Which we'll come to next week. God willing. We meet a woman.

Who touched the hem. Of Christ's garment. And instantly. Miraculously. She was healed.

[44 : 11] Her faith. In Christ. Brought healing. We're told. In the passage. But Jesus. Wanted her. To profess that faith. So he says.

Who touched me? He wanted her. To show out. The faith. That was within. And as the Lord's table. Approaches. Those. Who have. Trusted Christ. Those. Those. Who have. Jesus. In their hearts.

By faith. Are called. To show that. Step forward. As the woman.

Do. Faith shows. Next. Faith grows. We see this. In verses. In verses. 26.

[45 : 04] Through to. Verse. 33. You have. These two. Parables. The parable. Of the. Growing seed. Jesus said. Verse 26. This is what the kingdom of God is like.

A man. Scatters. Seed on the ground. Night and day. Whether he sleeps. Or gets up. The seed. Sprouts and grows. Though he does not know how. All by itself. The soil produces grain. First the stock.

Then the head. Then the full kernel. In the head. As soon as. The grain is ripe. He puts the sickle to it. Because the harvest has come. Growing seed. Again.

He said. Verse 30. What shall we say. The kingdom of God is like. Or what parable. Shall we use to describe it. It's like a mustard seed. Which is the smallest seed. You plant in the ground. Yet. When planted.

It grows. And becomes the largest. Of all garden plants. With such big branches. That the birds of the air. Can perch. In its shade. With many similar parables. Jesus spoke the word to them.

[46 : 00] As much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them. Without using a parable. But when he was alone. With his disciples. He explained everything. Now there's two sections there.

And I know there's a lot. In these verses. And we're. We're not even scratching. The surface of these verses. But we're moving at speed. As Mark. I think. Encourages to. Us to do. In his gospel. And. And what connects. These two sections. These two parables. The parable. Of the growing seed. And the parable. Of the mustard seed. Is growth.

It's what we see. In both. Of these parables. Growth. And the lesson. Is clear. If. You and I. Have faith in Christ. It grows.

It should always be growing. If our hearts. Are good soil. And if we have faith.

[46 : 58] In Christ. That faith. Should be growing. And growing. And growing. Constantly. If a child. Is healthy.

Physically. She will grow. And if we're healthy. Spiritually. We'll be growing. Now just to be clear. Before we. Get off. Into heresy here. It's not. That our faith. Has to reach. A certain. Growth level. To be saving faith.

You know. You hear of the. The guys. That are out fishing. They're taking in the lobsters. And they have the. The measures. And they measure the lobsters. And if they reach. A certain growth level. They're taken on board. And they're. They're saved. And they're sold on. If they're not. A certain size. They're flung over. We're taught here.

[47 : 55] We can have. Faith. The size of a mustard seed. The smallest. Of all the seeds. Verse 31. But if that faith. Is in Jesus. We will be saved.

Think of the thief. On the cross. He spent. Only a few hours. With Jesus. Faith. The faith. Didn't have long to grow.

But he's assured. As he hung on that cross. By Jesus. He is assured. That today. That very day. He will be.

With Jesus. In paradise. Never sat in a church. Never professed his faith. He never took communion. He never had the chance. To devote his life.

To good works. For Jesus sake. But he's told. Because of the mustard seed. Faith that he has. He will be saved. It's not the size.

[48 : 53] Of our faith. But it's. The one in whom. Our faith. Is resting. But all that said. It's very clear here.

And in different parts. Of scripture. If we have faith. In Christ. It should be growing. The mustard seed.

It starts small. But when it's in good soil. It grows. And our faith. Starts small. But it grows.

And as it grows. So does our joy. And so does our peace. And so does our assurance.

And so does our. Our spiritual. Stability. So do the fruits. Of the spirit. In our lives. And the character. Of Christ. Being formed. Within us.

[50 : 00] Faith in Christ. Grows. Faith. And faith that grows. As increasingly. As faith that shows. First the stock.

Then the head. Then the. The full kernel. Verse 28. The question is. Is your faith. In Christ. Growing. Can the world.

See. As the world. As the world. Looks at our lives. As the world. Does. Can the world. See. That faith.

In Christ. In us. As it ripens. In your life. And mine. Faith shows.

And faith grows. And finally. Just a word. To finish. Faith comes. To Jesus. Faith comes.

[51 : 01] To Jesus. That day. When evening came. Jesus said. His disciples. Let us. Go over. To. The other side. Leaving the crowd.

Behind. They took him. Along. Just as he was. In the boat. There was also. Other boats. With him. A furious. Squall. Came up. When the waves. Broke over the boat. So that it was. Nearly. Swamped.

Jesus was in the stern. Sleeping. On a cushion. The disciples. Woke him. And said. Teacher. Don't you care. Are we dry? He got up. Rebuked the wind. And said to the waves.

Quiet. Be still. Then the wind. Died down. And it was. Completely calm. Jesus said. To his disciples. Why are you. So afraid. Do you still have no faith?

They were terrified. And asked each other. Who is this? Even the wind. And the waves. Obey him. Now very often.

[52 : 03] It's the storms. Rather than the calm. That caused us. To come to Jesus. We think. When life is going to be smooth.

When everything. Is going to be. Well. That we're going to. Willingly come to Christ. Very often we don't. That's when we stay from it. But when the storms hit.

Often that's when we come. To Jesus. And very often. We come. With all kinds of doubts. And all kinds of fears. And all kinds of.

Inner. Conflicts. We may come. To Christ. Asking all. The wrong questions. Like. The question. The disciples asked Jesus.

The most. Insensitive question. In the history of mankind. They say. To Jesus. Who came from. Heaven. To earth. To go to the cross. To save us from sin. And they say to Jesus.

[53 : 05] Don't you care? And sometimes. We can come. With all these wrong questions. And these wrong. Attitudes.

But faith. Saving faith. Will come. And keep. On. Coming.

To Jesus. The disciples. Were far from perfect. They would get it wrong.

A million times more. In their career. As disciples. And the gospels. Make that. Very very plain. To us.

They would. Desert Jesus. When he needed them most. They would deny Jesus. Peter. After making all these. Huge proclamations. About how he would be with them.

[53 : 58] To the very end. And Jesus knew. The extent. Of all the failures. That were. Ahead of them. At this stage. In the life of the disciples. It was mustard seed faith.

That we're seeing. And Mark does this. All the time. He tells us a truth. And then he illustrates it. We're seeing mustard seed faith. In the life of the disciples here. They didn't properly understand. Who Jesus was. Although they were in. Great awe. Of who he was. They don't remotely understand. Yet why Jesus came.

But they heard his call. And so just as they are. With many. A conflict. Many. A doubt.

They came. They came. They came. To Jesus. And they began. And still. Here. In Mark 4. They are continuing.

[55 : 02] To follow him. Have you come. To Jesus yet. Are you and I.

Following him. Are we listening to him. Do we understand.

The gospel. And a great need. Of Jesus. Is your faith in Christ.

Is that faith that's growing. God willing. God willing. In two weeks time. Will your faith in Christ. Will your faith in Christ.

Be sure. Amen. Let's pray. Lord. You are the God.

[56 : 11] Who searches our hearts. And who knows us. And we pray. Holy Spirit. That you would search. Each one. Of our hearts. And that you would show us. Where we stand.

Before you. We pray. Lord. That each one of us. Here. Today. Would be. People who. Have faith. That is in Christ. Faith that is saving. Faith that is growing. And faith.

That will be showing. In time. And then ultimately. Showing. For all. Eternity. Help us. We pray. To come.

To Jesus. Whilst. We still can. And we ask this. In Jesus name. Amen. And I may. The grace. Of our Lord. Jesus Christ.

[57 : 08] And the love. Of God. The Father. And the fellowship. Of God. The Holy Spirit. Be with us all. Both now. And forevermore. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.