

14.4.24 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: 14 April 2024

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 0 0] let's unite their hearts in prayer let's pray together our heavenly father we thank you that on this your day we can gather together in the name of jesus your son and we can sing about the amazing grace of jesus we acknowledge lord we confess that the the words that we sang in the test in the the hymn are words of testimony in the life of of every christian sin is the condition that makes us wretched sin is the condition that separates man from god and causes all manner of trouble in this world and lord we confess that all of us are sinners and our words and in our thoughts and in our actions and our inaction we sin and lord we think about the the week that's passed we think about the the hours that may have passed and the things which we have done the things that we have said that weigh heavily upon us that we know have been grieving to you we confess lord these sins and we thank you that we have the promise that as we confess you have said that you will forgive us our sin you will purify us from all unrighteousness and lord that's because of the amazing grace of jesus we know that we cannot work in our lives to undo sin we know that we cannot through our religious efforts make amends for sin we know lord that only you were able to make atonement for sin and we thank you that jesus came into this world to be our savior we thank you that he is the lamb of god who came to take away the sin of the world we thank you that he promises that all who look in faith to him all who believe in him can have their sins forgiven and can have the assurance that we will never perish but that we will have everlasting life so we ask lord that each one of us would not only know these things in our heads as intellectual facts that we can take hold of in our minds we pray that these truths would touch our hearts we pray that we wouldn't just know that we are sinners but that we would cry out with those of old lord have mercy upon me a sinner we pray that we would know the assurance and the joy of your salvation we pray that we would know uh the the peace and uh the the the hope that we are given as we put our faith in jesus and we ask lord that you would grant faith to us so that everyone here uh would be able to say that they are christians that they are christ's ones we thank you lord that you hear our prayers and that you help us we pray for those who who struggle today we thank you for the hope that there is in the gospel not only for time but for eternity and as we think about eternity lord we thank you that you haven't left us in the dark wondering what happens next we thank you that we are promised that those who die in christ have a hope that is eternal and even this week lord as we think about those whom we have loved who have passed from time into eternity we thank you that when they are in christ uh there is there is certainly grief but it's not a grief that is hopeless it's a grief that is grounded in a hope that is beyond uh death and takes us to life that's everlasting so we pray for your comfort for those who grieve some are present uh with us even in this room just now who feel the sadness and the sorrow that death brings we ask lord that you the god of all comfort would touch their hearts and that you would sustain them uh through this time of grief and lord for those who

may be in different places whom we can think of whom we know uh we bring them to you also in prayer and we ask lord that you would sustain them that you would help them through this period we pray on for those who who battle with addictions we can think of uh many who meet on tuesday nights here many who don't as well who battle with addictions and some may be laying low even at this time we carry them to you in prayer lord and we ask that they would know uh your touch upon their lives we thank you that you are able to break the chains of addiction we thank you that you are able to give us purpose and hope when we feel that we are in the depths we thank you that we can cry to you and find that you hear us and that you help us and for those who who may be laid low and feeling hopeless even this morning we bring them to you and we ask lord that you would that you would seek them that you would save them we pray father for uh those who who may be anxious today uh you know our lives you know our hearts you know our homes you know our our

situations and for all that may concern us and worry us for all that may make us fearful uh we bring that to you and knowing that you are able to handle and take from us the burdens that you have not designed for us to hold and so lord we pray uh that you would help us not to be anxious uh but to trust you we pray that you would continue with us now on this day we pray for the world that you have created a world that groans under the weight of sin we pray especially for places in the world where there's acute suffering where there is bloodshed where there is war you have told us lord to pray for the peace of jerusalem and we see such carnage in that place just now as bombs rain down even from iran at this time we see a situation that seems politically impossible to unscramble and yet you are the god who is able to do what is impossible for us and so we pray that peace would be brought to that place and we pray that you would open the eyes of the people there that they would see jesus and that they would trust in jesus hear our prayers guide us and lead us that we would truly be in the spirit of worship on this the lord's day help us to rejoice in the fact that on the lord's day we remember that jesus died for our sin and rose from the dead and promises resurrection life to all who believe and we ask all this in jesus name amen boys and girls would you like to come out please good to see you all good voice today ben nice wee singing voice i'm hearing there henry how are you you were sleeping before the service even began this morning you're busy with the llama yeah good good wee story for you today i think i've got a couple of pictures i can show you so here is a picture on the screen do you know where that is not glasgow looks a bit like glasgow but uh it's not glasgow no it's not inverness either calum it's london yeah that's london and do you know where that photograph was taken it was taken at the top of a place called battersea power station so um we were in london uh i think it was last week was it and uh we mary heard about this place so we went to go and visit the battersea power station

i had all these shops all these cafes and uh it's got these massive chimneys and uh it's a power station so it goes up very high with these chimneys that are burning uh stuff for where in the past and uh there's a lift and the lift it's just made of glass so you can imagine this is the lift it's just quite small and i think the lift could only take about 10 people or so and so you could pay a wee bit and you could go into the lift get a wee tour of the power station and you could go into the lift and it would take you i think it was a hundred and one meters it's even taller than gordon i don't know how many meters would this building be where are the construction people maybe five six seven adrian glenn you should know you built it eh i don't know how many five meters would you say six there's an engineer at the back six meters so six meters how many sixes go into a hundred i don't know i'm under too much pressure here to know the answer to that sixteen sixteen sixteen so imagine this building sixteen massive tower in this wee glass lift and you could see all the way down and you could see all the way out and you could see all the way up so you could see all of london i think there's a few photographs there that give you different views of london so it sounded like a great idea to go up this lift and see the sights and just have great fun but once we started going up and up and up not everybody was having huge amounts of fun it was actually quite scary for some i won't name any names in this life do you ever come across things that seem a bit scary do you ever feel a bit scared about about different about different things i was speaking to angus and kirstie on friday i think it was and they were telling me about they were out they were in in nepal and um in their room in nepal uh kirstie looked and uh there was a cockroach you know what a cockroach is these big ugly beasts and she was saying the cockroach was bigger than the size of her hand and she was petrified as half of you are as you're shuddering your shoulders and so she shouted angus to deal with this cockroach he was more petrified but he was forced to deal with it so he got a thing and he covered it up and he put the paper underneath and he carried this cockroach out like a little puppy dog and uh he threw it outside where it would uh be gone and when he came back and kirstie said she was so proud of him she went to give him a hug and when she put her hand on his back she felt something and the cockroach had just jumped off the ground and it was on his back and it was back inside so anyway we can be scared of cockroaches what kind of things might you be scared of what are you scared of anything okay uh filming sorry sharks sharks are a bit scary emily

spiders can be a bit scary is anybody scared of the dark are you a bit scared of the dark see there's there are things in this life aren't there and and sometimes we we we find them scary now back to the left up and up and up i dread to think what that is up and up and up and up we went in the lift and it was actually quite scary did we need to be scared do you think do you think we needed to be scared we didn't actually need to be scared because the lift although it was made of glass it was made of super strong glass and although you could see up when you could see down and you

could see out engineers had designed that lift and they'd worked out all the calculations and they'd done all the hard work and it had been tested and it was being maintained and people were checking it and so although it seemed a bit scary to be up in the lift it wasn't scary at all it shouldn't really have been scary because we went up we were safe we saw the sights we were safe we came down we were safe and we just carried on and we did our stuff do we need to be scared in this world even when we think about what comes after this world do we need to be scared what does Jesus say do you know that one of the things that Jesus said most often what do you think do you think one of the most common things that Jesus ever said was to his disciples Henry he said don't be afraid trust in me and boys and girls when we're trusting in Jesus we don't we don't need to be scared when we're trusting in Jesus we don't need to be scared because can we trust him I was trusting an engineer although I never met the engineer I was trusting in calculations I never saw the calculations I wouldn't have understood them anyway but how do we know that God loves us how do we know that we can trust him what has he done to show us how much he loved us he sent his son Jesus and what did Jesus do for us he died for us on the cross to take our sin away and he promised that if we believe in him what will we get everlasting life that we'll be saved that we'll be safe forever so a text for you that you can take with you into your week and remember this maybe especially when you see a spider Emily or when you're in the dark or when you're swimming and you think you might see a shark Psalm 56 verse 3 says when I am afraid I put my trust in you so that's a good wee verse for us all to memorize because you know something boys and girls they're more scared than you are when you get older actually sometimes there can be even more things that people get scared about so when I am afraid I put my trust in you let's pray will we Lord we thank you for this day and we thank you for the fact that we can promise that we can trust you you promise that you will that you will save us when we when we put our trust in you and we thank you that your salvation

your safety that you give to us is for this world and it's for forever and we know that in this world still we can get sick and still we can be hurt by different things but we thank you that you promise that you'll be with us through all the difficult times and we thank you that you promise that when even we come to the end of our time in this world and when we die if we're trusting in Jesus he is with us and he carries us through death into life that's everlasting so help us whether we're young or whether we're older to when we are afraid put our trust in you and we thank you that we have no need for fear when Jesus is holding us and we pray all these things in Jesus name Amen We're going to sing now to God's praise our presenter ran out the door at high speed a minute ago so Farrakhan I guess you're on duty we're singing Psalm 139 the second version of the psalm from Sing Psalms and the tune for the psalm is Eventide it's a familiar tune it's the tune to abide with me [17:18] Lord you have searched my life and know my heart you search me and you know me through and through you know when I sit and when I rise and from afar my thoughts are known to you and this is a psalm that tells us that God holds us he keeps us safe so we'll sing verses 1 to what verses are we singing?

to verse 9 sorry I didn't take a note of it 1 to verse 9 and maybe Adam you could if you've got it handy you could play and if not Farrakhan could sing we'll stand to sing Lord you have searched my life and oh my heart you search me and you know me through and through you know me when I sit and when I rise and from afar my thoughts are known to you you see my going out and lying down and you have perfect knowledge of my ways before I speak a word you it's long! For nothing can be hidden from your gaze behind me throne you have me in and you!

laid on me your mighty hand such knowledge is too wonderful for me too high too grasped great to understand!

where from spirit can go and hide and from your presence Lord where can I find if I ascend to heaven are in and in lowest best prepare I lie!

[20:47] If I take flight upon the winds of dawn! And if I settle far beyond the sea there also you will guide me with your hands and still your hand will bold on me okay boys and girls if you head out to Sunday school and remember to pray for them as they go if you want to say for the sermon you're very welcome and if we could turn in our Bibles please to John chapter 5

John chapter 5 and we'll read verses 1 to verse the first half of verse 9 just a short reading this is God's word after this there was a feast of the Jews and Jesus went up to Jerusalem now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep gate a pool in Aramaic called Bethesda which is five roofed colonies in

going to be stuck in my head for the whole day now. And we know what that's like to hear a tune, to hear a song, and it just, it goes round and it goes round and it goes round and it goes round in our heads.

Sometimes it can be something that Jesus said. It might even be a question that Jesus asked. And that's where we're going today. That's going to be our focus for today.

I don't often go off course. Those who are not visiting know that. But I tend to go through the next chapter, the next chapter, the next chapter. I very rarely deviate from the book that we're studying. I had planned this morning to go back into Matthew chapter 5 and we'll hopefully get back there next week. But over the last 10 days, this question of Jesus has been stuck with me.

And it's the question that Jesus asked the man at the pool of Bethesda. And it's this question, do you want to be healed? Or as the NIV puts it, do you want to get well?

[33 : 05] So this, I believe, is a question that's for us today in this place.

Three points. The first point is that this is a surprising question. Do you want to get well? You know, sometimes we are asked questions that just, they take us a little by surprise and they just seem a little unnecessary.

You know, sometimes you can have a problem with your internet. We had a problem with the internet for a wee while last night and what do you do? You have a problem, it goes offline, you check out the number that you're supposed to phone, you press the number and invariably you're in a queue.

And you sit there at the end of a queue with some annoying song playing round and round and round and you wait and you wait and you wait. And it can be an hour, it can be longer than an hour. And then eventually, when somebody answers your call, if they ask you the question, is there something I can help you with? It just seems like such an unnecessary question.

[34 : 20] I've been asked that after an hour and a half of queuing. Is there something I can help you with? Well, I wasn't phoning for a chat. Of course there's something that you can help me with.

Wouldn't be in the queue all this time if there wasn't something I thought you could help me with.

Well, in John chapter 5, we see a man and he's in a queue.

Verse 5, one man was there who had been an invalid. He'd been frail, as a literal in the Greek, for 38 years. So he'd been there for 38 years. Where is there? Where was he? Well, he was, verse 5, at a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda. Why was he there? Well, because it was believed that that pool and that place had special healing powers. I read from the ESV and most of you are reading the ESV or the NIV. But if you glance down in your Bibles, if you're in the ESV or the NIV, you'll see that verse 4 is missing. Verse 4 is in a footnote.

And the reason for that is because the early manuscripts, the manuscripts that are considered to be most reliable, they didn't have that verse in there. So rather than put it in and have a question mark over whether it should be in, I think the ESV and the NIV, they rightly put a note just to say, well, this wasn't in the text, but we're putting this in as a verse that was in some texts.

But it says in the, it is in the King James Version, and it says in the King James Version in verse 4, for an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water. Then whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the water was made well of whatever disease he had.

[36 : 31] So that may not have been in the manuscripts, but that's certainly the reason that all these people were gathered around this pool. There was a belief that the water would be stirred and the first person to get in after the stirring of the water would be made well. So there's this scene that John paints for us.

We see this place where there's a crowd of people who are sad and who are sick and who are helpless, overwhelmed with problems. And into that place, Jesus comes.

And I think we should, we should pause even at this early stage and just take the encouragement from that. Sometimes when we, when we go through trouble, when we are dealing with sadness, when we feel overwhelmed with a situation or a problem, we're actually conscious that the people who know that we're struggling, especially with grief, they tend to avoid us. Is that not true?

Or when we've had an awful situation and people know that we're going through something that's difficult and they know how we're suffering. Very often people avoid us.

And the reason people avoid us is because they don't know what to say. They don't know what to do. And so in our dark times, sometimes we can feel quite isolated.

[38 : 20] But what we see here is that Jesus, he walks right into the middle. Of this place of trouble. And Jesus still, he walks right into the middle of our troubles and our trials.

And he's able. And he's willing to help. So for any today who may feel somewhat overwhelmed, who may be in the middle of struggles and troubles, take the encouragement of knowing that Jesus is with you.

He'll never call you a pest. He'll never avoid you. He's here. He is available. He is willing. He loves to help.

He's in that sad place. And Jesus, as he comes to that place, we see in verse 3, that he approaches the crowd that are gathered around the pool.

But Jesus' focus is on one man. Now when we see a crowd, we see a crowd. But Jesus has a laser-like focus on one man.

[39 : 40] And it says in verse 6 that Jesus saw, the Greek is, he stared. He stared at him. The emphasis is on the man, on him. Jesus saw him.

He stared at him. Jesus knew, verse 6, that he had already been there a long time. He'd been suffering for a long period. And Jesus spoke to him.

Singular. And see how personal this is. This is how Jesus works. He deals with us one-to-one. And how often you've heard that when somebody is coming to faith, they may sit in a room like this with another hundred people.

But the message that's been spoken, they'll say it's as if it was only me in the room. It's as if it was only just for me. Or they pick up the Bible and read a verse.

And the verse is jumping off the page. And they're saying, this is for me. That's how Jesus works. He deals with us one-to-one.

[40 : 47] And he deals with us one-to-one. He sees him. He knows him. He speaks to him. And he says, Do you want to be healed?

And it's a very personal question. It seems to us to be a surprising question. But Jesus asks it. He says, Do you want, do you desire to be healed?

In the King James Version, I think it's, Does thou wilt? Do you have a will to get well? It's a surprising question to ask a man who's almost for 40 years been suffering, helpless, at the side of a pool.

But that's the surprising question that comes to all of us today. Jesus asks us through the Word of God and the power of the Spirit of God, he asks us, Do you want to be made well?

And it's a spiritual question at its root because just a little further on in verse 14, Jesus comes back to speak to the man and he speaks to him not about his mobility but about sin.

[42 : 09] And Jesus today, he comes to us through the Word of God to speak to us about the sin that makes us unwell. And because all of us are sinners, this is a question that applies to all of us here today.

There are some people who are here today who are not yet Christians. There are people in this room this morning who are not yet Christians. And there are some people who may have come and sat in chairs like this for more than 38 years and are still not yet Christians.

and I've never had that sin dealt with, that sin that makes our hearts sick, that sin that leaves us sad, that sin that kind of weighs heavily upon us with guilt.

There are those who are sitting here who have never experienced and tasted life in all its fullness because you've never given your life to the Lord.

and Jesus comes to you today and he says, do you want to be made well?

[43 : 37] There are perhaps others here today who are, who may be Christians but have backslidden like Demas.

Remember Demas who loved this world more than Jesus. He drifted from Jesus. There may be some here today who are far from Jesus and you're so far away that you don't know if you were ever truly a Christian at all.

And Jesus comes to you. And he says, do you want to be made well? And there are Christians in this room who know the Lord and who love the Lord but have a secret sin, a hidden condition, a battle.

It could be a battle with lust or envy or laziness. It could be an addiction to alcohol secretly or gambling or online shopping.

It could be an obsession about how we look. It could be a bad temper or a sharp tongue or a sulking spirit and these things plague us and these things cause us to sin and we hate them.

[45 : 07] but we keep on doing them and we live with this sickness and it makes us sad and it makes the people around us sad.

It stops us from growing spiritually and Jesus comes to us and he says, do you want to be made well?

It's a surprising question but it is a necessary question. The second point is we hear a sad answer. What does the man say to Jesus in response to this question?

Well, in verse 7 it says, the sick man answered him, Jesus, and he says, sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up and while I am going another steps down before me. And that's all he has to say. I mean, it's a sad answer. Over the last 38 years this man has learned that he could not save himself and no one else could save him or no one else would save him either.

[46 : 32] When the water was stirred up there was a great rush to be the first to get in but if you can't walk as this man couldn't you can't get there first.

It's hopeless. And if all the people who are around you in that place that you're looking to for help are also sick they're always going to put themselves before you.

So this man is in a desperately sad situation. He can't get into the water. But you know, even if that changed, even if he was able to pay someone to make sure that the next time the waters were stirred he would be first into the water, the water couldn't heal him because it was just water.

So it's a sad answer and it's a sad picture that John paints for us but it's an instructive one because it teaches us about our own condition. If we want to be made well how can that happen?

Well, like the man, we can't save ourselves from sin. We can't save ourselves by doing a multitude of good works.

[47 : 54] That's not going to save us. We can't save ourselves from sin by our good religion. By making sure we are twice on a Sunday and on a Wednesday night and doing all our religious rituals.

That will not save us if that's what our faith is. It says in Ephesians 2 and verse 9 salvation it doesn't come by works not by works.

And likely we know that. Our situation, our condition is that we cannot save ourselves. And like the man we can't look around us at other people and expect them to save us because they like we are all sinners.

I don't know how many times I've heard people tell me about their great uncle who was a who was an evangelist or their grandfather who was a minister.

as if some kind of salvific value would be transferred from them to you. They can't save you. And we can't save ourselves and there is no magic pool.

[49 : 15] That's the other thing that we have in common with this man. There is no magic pool. There's no physical place that we can pilgrimage to. There's no holy water. There's no holy buildings that will make us well if we enter them on a Sunday morning and a Sunday night.

there's no magic in these chairs. So how can we be saved? How can we be healed?

How can we be made well? Well the clue is in the name of the place. The place is called Bethesda. What did Bethesda mean?

Well Bethesda meant house of mercy or house of grace and this man could only be saved through the amazing grace and the amazing mercy of Jesus.

And we can only be saved by asking, by receiving the grace and the mercy of Jesus.

[50 : 22] And the good news is that the grace of Jesus and the mercy of Jesus is offered to us today freely.

And Jesus asks us, do you want to receive it? Do you want to be well?

surprising question. There's a sad answer from the man. And the final point here is that there's a saving word.

Because that's what happens next. Jesus speaks into this man's life a saving word. Verse 8, Jesus said to him, get up, take up your bed and walk.

He speaks the impossible, doesn't he? The very thing this man couldn't do for himself and nobody else could do for him, Jesus speaks it into his life.

[51 : 28] He says, get up, take your bed and walk. And at once the man, verse 9, was healed. He took up his bed and walked.

respond by saying, I will.

I do. Please save me. And for the wanderers. For those who have backslidden. Lord, we confess that we are all, as the hymn says, prone to wander.

And we feel it. And we hate to be at a distance. Although, as the time goes on, we can become numb at a distance. We pray for any who may be at a distance.

[58 : 38] That they would hear the voice of Jesus. That they would return. And know that wellness, that joy of salvation restored.

Or the joy of salvation restored. And, Lord, for those who are following you. And who seem to be stuck in Romans chapter 7.

We think of the Apostle Paul, even towards the end of his life. Saying, the good that I want to do. I don't seem to be doing the evil I don't want to do. I keep on doing. For those, Lord, who feel stuck in that cycle.

And we thank you that there is healing. That there is the power to break the grasp that we have on idols. There is power to break the habits that may grip us.

And we ask, Lord, that you would give to each one of us a will. That we would live lives which are holy. That please you. To hear our prayers.

[59 : 43] And go before us, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll sing to conclude the words on the screen. Of the hymn, Jehovah St. Kenyu. I once was a stranger to grace and to God.

I once was a stranger to grace and to God.

I knew of my future. I felt not my own. Oh, fast walking rapture.

Of Christ on the tree. Jehovah St. Kenyu. Was nothing to me.

Jehovah St. Kenyu. Jehovah St. Kenyu. My treasure and most. Jehovah St. Kenyu.

[61 : 01] My treasure and most. In the ash of nowhere. My blood and my fear.

My table, my anger. My breastplate of sheep. NINGNINGNING . . .

.....

. . . . Sing nothing to me But cheers from the daughters Of Zion and all I went when the waters
Went over his soul In the rock of the prices I gave to the tree She holds us in heaven Was nothing
to me When we face our woe We die from on high And leave a future me I shall the Lord to die No
refuge will save me

Except who I see Jehovah's in Daniel My Savior must be My cherished soul punished Before the
sweet maid My guilty fears runnished With all the sign of grace To drink out the thousand He will be
Like living and free He will bless the day His whole face to me He's spreading the valley The
shadow of death This one's work shall rally

[63 : 59] My golden day For the blood of God's believer My love sets me free He will bless the day
My death's all shall be And I may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ The love of God the Father And
the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit Be with us all Now and forevermore Amen Amen me.