

7.7.24 am

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Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Good morning, a warm welcome to the service today. It's good to see all of you. It's good to see a lot of visitors with us today. A lot of our people are away and so it's good to have people visiting with us. At the end of the service this morning there is tea and there's coffee and you're all welcome to stay for that if you're able to do so. I'll just take a moment and run through the intimations. I don't have them on a bit of paper in front of me so I'll have to go from A to Z.

Sunday school, school holiday creche provision continues as usual. Holiday Sunday school is running for primary school aged children and any visiting children are welcome to go along as well. Evening service will be taken by myself, God willing. We're in Matthew chapter 8 today and so rather than having a different series this evening we're going to continue from the first half into the second half of Matthew chapter 8 this evening. Ladies fellowship on Monday as usual, little fishes on Tuesday morning, road to recovery Tuesday evening. Church cleaning rota, Mary and David, oh well okay you might have had messy church next week because I'm going on holiday.

I'll have to see what we can do there. We're looking for volunteers for the screen here. We're short and volunteers just now so if you're able to help with that please speak to Amman or Andrew or Donald or Richard. I'm hoping to go on holiday from the 11th, that's this coming Thursday for two weeks and if in that time there are any pastoral needs please speak to one of the elders first. The Reverend Donald, Donald as we know him, has agreed to be on standby if there's any need to see a minister. Thanks to those who volunteered to help with the planned maintenance of the church and you've got details there about the times which are planned 19th of July, 20th of July, 26th of July, 27th of July.

[2 : 02] These are all the intimations. Let us now worship God and we come into the presence of a holy God. We come acknowledging that we are sinners. We come looking to Jesus and we have this psalm. Psalm 51 verses 7 to verse 13. It's a psalm where we're taught how to ask for forgiveness and how to know the joy of that forgiveness as we come to God. So we sing Psalm 51. The tune will be St. Kilda and I'll read the first verse. Do thou with hyssop sprinkle me, I shall be cleansed so. Ye wash thou me, then I shall be whiter than the snow. We'll stand to sing to God's praise.

Do thou with hyssop sprinkle me, I shall be cleansed so. Ye wash thou me, and then I shall be whiter than the snow. Of gladness and of joyfulness, make me to hear the voice that so this very bold swiss thou has broken me rejoice. All mine iniquities plotted, thy face high from my sin. Create a clean heart, Lord, renew. Arise with me within. Cast me not from thy sight, nor take thy holy spirit of me. Restore me thy salvation's joy. With thy peace that me stay. Then will I teach thy ways of take thy holy spirit of me. Restore me thy salvation's joy. With thy peace that me stay. Then will I teach thy ways of thy ways unto those that transgressors thee. And those that sinners are shall then be turned turn it unto thee.

Let's unite our hearts together in prayer. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you that we can come this morning as we are called to come. And we come in the name of Jesus, your Son. And we thank you that he is the Lord and that he is our Savior. We come as those who confess our sin. We are the sinners that have been mentioned in the psalm. We know that this is a psalm that relates back to many years ago.

And one individual. And one individual. A man called David. Who turned from you for a period. And yet we thank you, Lord, that as he turned back, confessing his sin, he found the joy of his salvation restored.

And we thank you that this morning. And we thank you that this morning. And we are able to come, even using the words that the Holy Spirit inspired him to write. We are able to sing them. We are able to use them as our prayer.

[6 : 46] And we ask, Lord, that we as sinners would not turn away from you. And end up stuck in a life that is miserable. A life that is less than life.

But we thank you that we can turn in faith and in repentance to the Lord Jesus, the one that Sam points to. And we can find cleansing in his blood.

We thank you for the cross that we come back to week by week. We thank you for that place that we can look to where we see our sin dealt with. We thank you that the blood of Jesus is powerful. It's able to purify us from all unrighteousness. It's able to cleanse us from all sin. Come, let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow.

So we pray, Father, that you would cleanse us in the blood of Christ. That you would wash us. That you would take our sin away. That you would give to us the salvation that has been paid for by Jesus.

[8 : 06] And is offered to us freely. The amazing gift of grace. So give us faith, we pray. Eyes that see our sin and Jesus as our Savior.

Give to us hearts that are obedient. Hearts that will turn to you and not from you. Hearts that will seek to receive and know the salvation that is offered to us today.

And we pray that if we are those who are already saved. Those who have been cleansed perhaps many years ago. That you would help us to walk close with you.

To trust, to obey. And to know that happiness that comes from walking with Jesus. We pray for those whose hearts are heavy today.

We are always conscious in this world that is broken. That there is much that grieves us. We pray for those who are grieving this morning.

[9 : 12] We pray for those whose hearts are sore. At the loss of a loved one. And we think especially of Nanny's family.

Some who are here. Some who are traveling back home. We ask Lord that you would comfort them. That you would strengthen them. And that you would help them and help each one of us to look to you.

We thank you that even as we remember Nanny. We are able to give thanks for our life and for our witness. We thank you for the way that she pointed us to Jesus. And we ask that our eyes would be fixed upon Jesus today.

The one who is the resurrection and the life. The one who promises that we will know eternal life. Resurrection life. If we believe in him.

We pray also for Duncan and his family. As they grieve for the passing of Duncan's father. And we ask that you would comfort them. And that you would be near to them also at this time.

[10 : 19] We pray for those who are in hospital. Today those who are sick. And those who are at home. Who don't have the strength to be out. And we ask Lord that you would lay your hands of healing upon them.

Where that's your will. And that you would give grace for each day. Because we know that that is your will. That we would receive saving and sustaining grace. So we pray for those that we can think of.

Who sat here for many years. And who are not able to sit here presently. And we bring them to you. We carry them to you in prayer. We pray for those who are away at this time.

Some on holiday. That you would give them a time of refreshment. And we pray for those who are on holiday here with us. That you would refresh them in their time here. We pray for the congregations that they come from.

And we ask Lord that you would bless these congregations. As they meet in different places on your day. We pray for every effort that is made to reach those who are outside of Christ.

[11 : 23] With the message of the gospel. We pray especially over the summer period. For the camps that are running. The free church camps. The SU camps. And faith mission camps. And every effort made to reach these young ones.

We thank you for those who have been away. And who are now back. We pray for those who are still away at this time. And those who will go away later this month. And we pray that you would be at work in all these camps.

That young people would enjoy themselves. That they would be safe. That they would look in faith to Jesus. And that they would find fellowship. Friendships of those that they will walk with Jesus

alongside through their lives.

So hear our prayers. And take away our sin. And help us as we come together on this. The Lord's Day. To be in the spirit. And we pray this in Jesus name.

And for his sake. Amen. Boys and girls. Would you like to come forward please? How are you all today?

[12:44] Good. Enjoying your holidays? Yep. The very beginning of a long. Is it seven weeks this year? Yes. Excellent.

I can remember when I was your age and it seemed just to last forever. Now. Any idea what this is? Something to show you. Yep.

Finley. It's not actually a postcard. It's a good guess. But this isn't a postcard. Michael. Michael. Michael. The one that's a voting card. It's not a voting card either.

No. No. Henry. It's a letter. And do you have any idea who this letter is from? Well who's it to first of all?

No. No. Miss Anna married Morrison MacLive. Miss Anna married Morrison MacLive.

[13:47] Pardon? So now you know her middle names. Yeah. So this is a letter that went to Anna. Who's it from do you think? Any ideas?

Go on Henry. HM Revenue and Customs. HM Revenue and Customs.

Do you know who they are? Not a clue. What do you think then? Do you think this is a letter that has good news in it?

Or bad news? Because you get letters. And some letters that we get were like, yes. Yes. Bad news. Some letters we get are like, oh, no. Michael, you think it's bad news?

Yes. You think so? Yes. Yes. What do you guys think? Because when you're your age, you don't really get these letters. When we see these letters coming through the letterbox, what do we generally think?

[14:50] Bad news. Bad news. Thank you, George. We've got our guest preacher here today. Good to have you back. It's generally bad news, isn't it? It's usually bad news.

And so when I see these things coming through the post, almost always, it's like, oh, no. Usually they're asking for a few hundred pounds and they give you like 10 minutes to pay it.

And if you don't pay it, they hit you with another 500 pounds for not paying on time. So it's generally not very good news. But if I open this letter, Anna doesn't know I'm going to do this.

And I look inside. It says, Miss Anna Myrick Morrison-McLeod, National Insurance Number, blank. Tax calculation.

Tax calculation. For the year 6th April 2023 to 5th April 2024. You have paid too much tax.

[15:55] HMRC owes you 293 pounds and 99 pence. Is that good news?

Is that bad news? It's good news. So this is the tax man saying to Anna that they owe her almost 300 pounds.

So Anna got this letter. She opened it. I said to her when it came through, I said, there's a few seats down here if you want. I said, when they came through, when it came through.

You better open that one quickly because if you don't deal with these ones quickly, sometimes they hammer you. But she opened it and she read it and she said, that's good news. 293 pounds.

Now, with the tax office, you can guarantee if we owe them money, you've got to pay it in two seconds flat. But for Anna, it says, if you want to claim this, you have to go to

www.gov.uk.p800refund.

[17:05] Sign this. Cross that. Tick this. Pass that on. Follow all these links. And then eventually, the money will get to the account.

So Anna said, that's great news. I said, it is great news. You'll need to actually follow that link. And you need to act on this or the 293 pounds will stay out there.

And eventually it will disappear. If you want a new bank account, you need to act on this. And I think this was on the 19th of June. So this was a couple of weeks ago.

So a day or two passed. Did you get that tax money sorted out yet, Anna? Oh, not yet, no. There are two more passed. You didn't know anything about that tax?

No, no. I'm not sure what to do. He says, you just follow the link. A couple of days passed. You done anything yet? No, I've not done anything yet.

[18:02] And so my children's talk this morning was going to go along the lines of, and after all this great offer that comes from the tax office, Anna still hasn't done anything. And so she still doesn't

have the money.

But actually she has. Because I asked her. And on Friday, she followed the link. And she did the thing. And I guess the money's still in the account. Oh, no.

In her account. So if you want a tenner, don't ask me. Ask Anna. Now, in this book, it's like a huge, big letter.

And it comes, who wrote this? Who sent this to us? Family? Jesus did. God sent us this letter. And who's it for?

Who's this for? It's full of promises. It's full of great news. And whose name is on the letter here?

Who's this for?

[19 : 05] Michael? It's for us. And so if we open this letter, this is the first thing that's really important.

If you've got a Bible in your house, don't leave it closed on a shelf. Don't leave it unopened. Anna could have left this unopened. She wouldn't have a clue what's in it.

This is God's word. It's his letter from heaven to earth, from him to us. It's full of promises.

It's full of good news. Open it. Read it. And then act on it. You know what God says to us in the Bible?

He says that if we ask for forgiveness of our sins, he will wash away every single sin.

[19 : 59] But what do we have to do to get our sins taken away? We have to pray and ask, don't we?

And this book says that if we believe in Jesus, we'll never perish. So today we're a bit sad about Nanny, having gone from this world, having died.

But the Bible says, those who believe in Jesus, they never perish. Because they are promised.

What are they promised? For God so loved the world, he sent his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but shall have what?

Eternal life. And what do we need to do to get eternal life? Pray. Ask for it. And there's a thousand other promises that are given to us in the Bible.

But we need to open it. And we need to ask that God will give to us the things that he's promised. Don't leave it closed.

[21 : 21] Don't ignore this. Don't delay and say, well, I'll do it tomorrow. I'll do it tomorrow. I'll do it tomorrow. Do it today.

Ask Jesus to take your sin away. Ask Jesus to come into your life. Believe in him. And we have the promise of everlasting life.

We'll pray, will we? Lord God, we thank you for this day and we thank you for your word, which is full of good news, full of great promises.

We ask that you would help us to see that and we pray that you would help us to act on it. Not to leave the Bible closed.

Not to think, oh, I'll do that another day. But help us to remember what it says in the Bible. Today, if you hear God's voice, don't harden your heart. now is the day of salvation.

[22 : 19] So help us, we pray, the young ones and the older ones to not delay, but to come to Jesus today and to ask for forgiveness for eternal life.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to sing now to God's praise. We'll sing the hymn that's on the screen that speaks about the gift of grace that is found in Jesus and given to us by Jesus.

What gift of grace is Jesus, my Redeemer? There is no more for heaven not 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.

[23 : 44] Oh, how strange and divine I can sing, all is mine, yet not I, but through Christ in me.

It 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, O, the night has been won, and I shall overcome, yet not I, but through Christ in me.

[24 : 43] O, the night I dread, I know I am forgiven, the future sure, the price it has been paid, for Jesus.

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 my feet.

O, the chains are released, I can say, 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.

To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus, all the glory evermore to Him.

[26 : 09] When the race is complete, till my lips shall repeat, yet not I, but through Christ in me.

Amen. Okay, if the primary school children, want to head through to Sunday school, visitors are welcome too.

And as they go, remember to pray for them. And if we could turn please in our Bibles, to Matthew chapter 7.

The words will be on the screen, in just a minute. Matthew chapter 7, and we'll read from verse 28, of that chapter, through to verse 17, chapter 8.

And then we'll deal with the second half of chapter 8 this evening. This is God's Word. And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowd were astonished at His teaching.

[27 : 34] For He was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes. When He came down from the mountain, great crowds followed Him. And behold, a leper came to Him, and knelt before Him, saying, Lord, if You will, You can make me clean.

And Jesus stretched out His hand, and touched them, saying, I will be clean. And immediately, his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus said to him, See that you say nothing to anyone, but go show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded for a proof to them.

When he had entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to Him, appealing to Him, Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly.

And he said to him, I will come and heal him. But the centurion replied, Lord, I am not worthy to have You come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed.

For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, go and he goes, and to another, come and he comes. And to my servant, and he does it.

[28 : 41] When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, Truly I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness in that place where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

And to the centurion, Jesus said, Go, let it be done for you as you have believed. And the servant was healed at that very moment. And when Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever.

He touched her hand and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him. That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick.

This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah. He took our illnesses and bore our diseases. Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us.

We're going to sing again now to God's praise, and we'll sing from Psalm 103, Psalm 103, and verses 1 to 3 in Gaelic.

[30 : 02] I'll read it in English. O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord, and all that in me is. Be stirred up his holy name to magnify and bless. Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God, and not forgetful be of all his gracious benefits he hath bestowed on thee.

All thine iniquities who doth most graciously forgive, who thy diseases all, and pains doth heal, and thee relieve. We'll sing these stanzas in Gaelic, and we remain seated to sing in Gaelic.

O manam yamish usenish, and hear ye hovam o. O manam yamish usenish, and hear ye hovam o.

O manam yamish usenish, O manam yamish usenish, and hear ye hovam o. O manam yamish usenish, and hear ye hovam o.

[31 : 25] O manam yamish usenish, and hear ye hovam o. O manam yamish usenish, . .

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[34 : 32] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

If I could ask you to turn back in your Bibles, please, to Matthew chapter 7 and to Matthew chapter 8. Thank you. and as we go there let's pray again heavenly father we thank you for your word and we pray for your help the help of the holy spirit now as we open that word and as we meditate upon it we pray that you would give to us faith that we would not only hear words but we would take hold of them that we would believe that we would know the benefit of believing the promises that you give to us in the word and so be working in us and amongst us we pray at this time we pray that not only for ourselves here in this room we pray for the children as we hear them through in the Sunday school and in the creche as well that in their early years they would come to know Jesus that the the babies would grow up knowing that Jesus loves them that the young ones next door would they would hear the gospel message simply and that they would believe readily we pray not only for ourselves in this church we pray for the churches around us the different denominations here in Tarbert and across the whole of Harris and across the the island of Lewis as well across all the the islands in the Hebrides across this whole nation across every nation we pray that as the name of Jesus is lifted up that many even today would be drawn in faith to receive salvation in and through him we pray for us as a nation in particular as we see government change as we see political instability we thank you that you are sovereign and as you have called us to remember and to pray for those that you've allowed to be in authority over us we we pray for them and we ask that we would continue to be living in a nation where we have the freedom to open your word as we do now and to join together in worship hear our prayers help us we ask in

Jesus name amen Matthew chapter 7 at the end looking into Matthew chapter 8 and just for for some context especially for those who who may be visiting today uh what we see in this section that we read is we see Jesus and Jesus has been preaching a sermon uh and we have the the record of that sermon uh going from Matthew chapter 5 through into Matthew chapter 7 it's a sermon that we now recognize as as uh the sermon on the mount that's called it's a sermon that was directed to the disciples of Jesus he he called his disciples to come to him he sat down and he began to teach them but as Jesus taught them and as he preached great crowds gathered and it seems that as Jesus spoke these crowds they hung on his words in verse 28 it says and when Jesus finished these sins the crowds were astonished at his teaching for he was teaching them as one who had authority and not as their scribes so we have this crowd a vast crowd and uh as Jesus pronounces the amen if you could put it that way uh they are uh they're astonished at the things that he said and the way that he said them they recognized that the one who was amongst them the one who was preaching had immense authority now we're a small ish crowd today by uh comparative standards but i wonder today if we are less astonished than we should be at the authority of Jesus in the passage that we have before us uh we see that Jesus is savior he's the one who came to this world to seek and to save sinners like us but we also see in this passage that he is lord he has authority and that theme of authority runs right through uh

[41 : 07] Matthew 7 at the end here into Matthew chapter 8 and we'll we'll think about this both morning uh and evening today three points this morning the first point is that Jesus has authority uh to cleanse and that takes us into verse 1 of chapter 8 so we'll just track through the text when Jesus came down from the mountain great crowds followed him and behold a leper came to him and knelt before him saying lord if you will you can make me clean and Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him saying I will be clean and immediately his leprosy was cleansed and Jesus said to him say that you say nothing to say that you say nothing to anyone but go show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded for a proof to them now this is a passage that we considered a little

I think it was two weeks ago so I I don't want to try the patience of those who were here two weeks ago but just to recap on this first point we see here in this section a leper behold behold was a word that was like an exclamation mark there's no there's no exclamation marks in Greek so you have to use words so behold is like a a bold underlined exclamation mark behold a leper now a leper leprosy was a condition that at that time meant that your experience in life was an experience of hopelessness you could be a successful businessman you could be somebody who has great status in society but if you have leprosy instantly you were cast out of society you were known and

treated as unclean and the condition of leprosy medically speaking there was no cure it was impossible to be cured it's a terminal condition and yet we know from Luke chapter 18 verse 27 that what is impossible with man is possible with God and so as we read on in this section we see a picture of a hopeless soul this man who has leprosy and he's coming to Jesus with an impossible situation and he clearly believes that Jesus is able to do for him something that was medically impossible so he comes to Jesus he comes through this crowd which would have appalled the crowd when they recognised who was amongst them and this man he comes to Jesus and Jesus does for the man what no one else could do and what no one else would do he stretches out his hand and he touches him and instantly this man is healed so that's the first thing we see here

Jesus has authority to cleanse Jesus has authority to cleanse this man from leprosy so what's the application for us all these years later in a world where medical science has moved on vastly what's the application well the first application perhaps is to note that Jesus has authority to heal the sick that's the that's the first application that we can take from this Jesus has authority to heal the sick so we can come to him with our sicknesses and through prayer we can do what we've done already we can carry people who are sick to him and Jesus is able to heal and so there's an encouragement there for us to pray for ourselves and for others we can pray for medical healing physical healing so there's nothing to stop us from praying that way there's an encouragement here for us to pray for those who are sick that they will be physically healed but the thing is physically healed people they still die they just die a little bit later and so the greater application as we look at this passage is that we would pray for soul healing our souls are sick because of sin our souls go on living after our bodies die and they go on to hell if the sickness of sin is left untreated and they go on to heaven if Jesus gives that cleansing healing touch so what should we do we should come to Jesus as the leper did and in our prayers we should carry other people to Jesus we should ask for cleansing of our hearts we should ask Jesus to make us well we don't know if it's always the will of God to heal us physically we can pray but we don't know but we do know that the Lord is not willing that any should perish spiritually 2 Peter 3 9 makes that clear so we can with confidence and we must come and ask and believe having asked that God will cleanse us from our sin

[48 : 05] Jesus has authority to cleanse have you asked yet for that cleansing leper to have been close to Jesus and never have asked and have gone away sick how tragic it would be if we would come into church we would open our Bibles we would rub shoulders through our lives with those who point us to Jesus and yet we never ask him to cleanse us from sin let's be encouraged today to ask Jesus for that cleansing that we need for our hearts the second point is Jesus has authority to command healing that takes us into the second scene in Matthew chapter 8 verse 5 when Jesus entered

Capernaum a centurion came forward to him appealing to him I want to just hit pause as we step through the verses again and see first of all that see first of all what the centurion did this centurion he sees that Jesus is there he knows that Jesus is close by and so he comes forward to Jesus just as the leper did and he appeals to Jesus just as the leper did and there's a lesson in application here and the lesson is very simple and straightforward the lesson is everyone needs to come to Jesus the leper had to come to Jesus the centurion had to come to Jesus the rich have to come to Jesus the poor have to come to Jesus the powerful people in society have to come to Jesus and the poor people in society the powerless people have to come to Jesus everyone in this room everyone in this village everyone in this place everyone in every place has to come to Jesus we need Jesus Romans 10 13 says everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved but we need to call we need to come and that's what the centurion does verse 6 Lord he says my servant the Greek is a bit warmer than that it's my boy there's an affection in it Lord my servant my boy is lying paralyzed at home suffering terribly that's what he says to Jesus he sees Jesus he appeals to Jesus he comes to Jesus and he just tells Jesus the problem he takes his concern he takes this burden that he feels and he presents it to Jesus he doesn't tell Jesus what to do he doesn't give Jesus some kind of plan as to what he thinks would be the best next steps he just takes the problem he hands it over to Jesus and he asks for help and we have in this verse just a great model for prayer a great lesson in prayer

I regularly hear people say don't ask me to pray I don't know how to pray please don't ask me to pray in a group because I don't know how to pray this is how to pray take the problem just present it to Jesus take the thing that's worrying you take the thing that is weighing down on you and just tell

Jesus about it it's the best way to pray it's the only way to pray there are so many occasions I can think of in life in ministry where I've been burdened with a problem and seeing a situation and seeing no way through it and thinking how do I pray and how we pray is just tell the Lord about it as the centurion did

Lord my servant is lying paralyzed at home suffering terribly just as long as his prayer was and Jesus said to him verse 7 I will come and heal him and there's a another amazing reassuring statement from Jesus he is willing to heal he's willing to save and that was true back on on that day in that place it's still true today I'm going to keep saying this because we need to hear this Jesus is willing and he is able to save to all who will come asking for soul healing to all who will come and ask for salvation Jesus is willing to save he's willing to heal our hearts no question about what he might do no question about how he might respond to our asking for salvation

[54 : 30] John 6 tells us he will never cast anyone away he is willing he is able to save us we have to ask him I know there are people in this room who have sat for week after week and month after month and year after year hearing this and have never asked you need to ask so Jesus says verse 7 to the centurion I will come and heal him verse 8 but the centurion replied Lord I am not worthy to have you come under my roof but only say the word and my servant will be healed for I too am a man under authority with soldiers under me and I say to one go and he goes and another come and he comes and to my servant do this and he does it there's two important things for us to see here in this testimony of the centurion before we move on from this point the first thing is the centurion he sees his own unworthiness and he confesses that he tells

Jesus about how unworthy he is and the second thing is he has faith in the power and the grace of Jesus and he asked for that grace so he sees his own unworthiness this is a centurion he's got a hundred men who are at his beck and call he has some authority and yet as he comes into the presence of Jesus there's no swagger he comes with reverence he comes recognizing that he does not call the shots as a soldier over Jesus he recognizes that Jesus calls the shots over him Jesus is the one who is worthy the centurion sees his unworthiness and he confesses it one commentator says a sense of personal unworthiness in Jesus presence is paradoxically the sign of genuine faith in

Jesus it is a standard response of all sincere believers it's good for us this morning in fact more than good it's necessary for us this morning to see that we are unworthy sinners and we are coming to the worthy and the willing saviour we need to see our sin there's anyone here who thinks they can swagger up to Jesus and call the shots pray that God will show you your unworthiness pray that God will show you the glory of Christ Christ this centurion he sees his own unworthiness and the second thing is he has faith in the power and the grace of

Jesus and he simply asks for it notice that the conversation he has with Jesus is not a negotiation he doesn't come trying to strike up a deal he doesn't come trying to exert some kind of authority over Jesus he doesn't come with his wallet and his credit card saying what is this going to cost how much can I give you Jesus he just comes and he asks for grace he has faith in the power of Jesus and he has faith in the grace of Jesus verse 10 we see the response of Jesus when Jesus heard this he marveled and said to those who followed him truly I tell you with no one in Israel have I found such faith I tell you many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness in that place there will be weeping a gnashing of teeth there's strong words here and what is Jesus teaching well it's this repeated lesson that everyone needs to come to him the leper was a Jew he was what Matthew calls a son of the kingdom by birth the centurion was a Roman a non-Jew but both the Jew and the Roman needed to come to Jesus for salvation the Jews had the privilege of being brought up to know the Bible they could quote vast sections of the Old

[60 : 26] Testament they knew that there was this promise of a saviour who was coming they had all that to their advantage they were a privileged people and many of us here have had the same privileges so the words that Jesus spoke to this man are words that we need to hear today many of us grew up in homes where the Bible was read each day many of us have grown up with godly parents and grandparents who spoke into our lives and showed us the reality of what it looks like to walk with Jesus many of us have enjoyed that privilege in this place and

Jesus says to us you can have all that and still verse 12 be thrown into the outer darkness in that place says Jesus there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth it's an awful picture so how can we avoid as those who have been privileged who've had the Bible read who've seen genuine

Christianity in the lives of those who have been around us how can we how can we avoid this outcome well it's by doing what the centurion and the leper did we we need to come to Jesus we need to confess our unworthiness we need to confess our sin we need to put our faith in him what happened next the centurion to the centurion verse 13

Jesus said go let it be done for you as you have believed and the servant was healed at that very moment so there's the authoritative command from Jesus and with that command no touch this thing just a word one authoritative command and in that moment the servant was healed and let's just let's just take in the the blessing and the joy that's connected to that Jesus speaks there's healing and the good news for us today is if we have confessed our sin if we have come in faith to Jesus if we have asked for his grace we are healed we are saved we are cleansed we are secure so take that in take that into your

Sunday and think about it if we have come to Jesus all the sin and the impurity that we know is in us it's cleansed it's been taken away and all the health and the healing and the salvation salvation that Jesus can give us we have in Psalm 51 the psalmist he says restore me thy salvation's joy I think that's perhaps a word for for some of us here today we need the joy of our salvation restored how quick are we to complain about all kinds of trivial things we fixate on this thing we fixate on that thing we get dark in our thinking think about this our sins are forgiven and we are saved we are secure eternally if we have come to

Jesus so rejoice in your salvation if you are saved and if you are not don't hesitate another moment come to him and ask for it Jesus has authority to command healing he has authority to cleanse and the final thing and it is just a word that leads into the evening service Jesus has authority to cast out evil spirits verse 14 when Jesus entered Peter's house he saw his mother in law lying sick with a fever he touched her hand and the fever left her and she rose and began to serve him it's just another picture of the authority of Jesus he touches his mother in law of Peter's hand and the fever is cast out instantly how do we know there's instant healing well because she's up immediately and she's serving them you know we get a cold it takes us a week to recover this woman has a fever she is severely sick one touch and she's up making bacon and eggs that evening verse 16 they brought him they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick and as we glance forward into the second half of the chapter and the chapters that follow we see that there is an intense period where there's a fierce battle between

[67 : 12] Jesus and Satan evil spirits demons are continually warring against Jesus as he ministers and in every single situation he casts them out there's never a defeat there's never a draw Jesus always wins they are no match for the authority of Jesus Jesus has authority to cast out evil spirits so as we finish what is Matthew doing here in this chapter he's reminding us of the greatness of the authority of Jesus he is able to cleanse he is able to command sickness the sickness of sin to leave and the salvation that's in him to be given to us he is able to cast out evil spirits he's able to fill us with the

Holy Spirit such as the authority of Jesus I want to just close by asking the question how is this possible where does the illness and the disease of my sin go if my son is to be cleansed and your son is to be cleansed where does that sin go who pays for it and the answer is Jesus does when we ask for forgiveness our sin doesn't vaporize it has to be paid for or God is not just and Matthew concludes this section by referencing Isaiah 53 and showing us where our sin goes when we ask for that cleansing this was verse 17 to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet

Isaiah he took our illnesses and bore our diseases so we're taken to the cross it's a passage that connects us with Isaiah 53 which is pointing forward to the cross surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows he was pierced for our transgressions he was crushed for our iniquities upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace and by his wounds we are healed so as we finish let's remember let's look to let's give thanks for the cross that place where Jesus took the sickness of sin from us and offers in exchange to us the amazing grace!

salvation remember it's an offer don't refuse it don't neglect it don't delay but come to Jesus and receive his grace we'll sing to conclude from mission praise 988 to him that takes us to the cross how deep the father's love for us how vast beyond all measure that he should give his only son to make a rich his treasure love for us how vast beyond all measure that he should give his only son to make a wretch his treasure how great the pain of stealing lost the father turns his face away as wounds which mar the chosen one bring many sons to glory behold the man upon a cross my sin

upon his shoulders ashamed

I hear my mocking voice call out among the scoffers it was my sin that held him there until it was accomplished his dying breath has brought me life I know that it is finished I will not boast in anything no kiss no power no wisdom but I will boast in Jesus Christ his death and resurrection why should

[73 : 56] I gain from his reward I cannot give an answer but this I know with all my heart his wounds have paid my ransom and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forever more Amen