

# 11.8.24 am

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Date: 11 August 2024

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning everyone. A warm welcome to the service this morning and a special welcome to those who are visiting with us. It's good to see a few who are visiting with us today and you're especially welcome. There's tea, there's coffee at the end of the service. If you're able to stay behind, please, please do so. The intimations have been on the screen before the service began. I don't think there's much to highlight. Things are fairly normal in the course of the week ahead. Evening service tonight at six. If you're able to come along to that, please do so. And young folks, we've not seen so many young folks out in the evening. It's probably because I've gone on till five, ten past seven. We'll be finished by seven tonight.

So young folks, be encouraged to come back out in the evening. In addition to all the intimations that have been on the screen over the last few minutes, I just want to add one further intimation. And that's just to say a word of thanks to all who were involved in the holiday club. From those who organised it, those who helped out during the week for the children who came, for the parents who sent them, and for those who prayed at home. It was a good week. I'm not going to say any more about it because Stuart is going to come up and just give a wee update at the children's talk. But thank you to everybody who took part in the holiday club over the course of the last week. We're going to begin this time of worship.

We'll sing to God's praise and we'll sing a paraphrase of Psalm 23. And it's found in Mission Praise 1008. Mission Praise 1008. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want. And we'll sing the chorus, which focuses in on where we've got to in Matthew today. We're thinking about what it means to trust in Jesus. And the chorus is that verse where we proclaim that we will trust in you alone. So we'll stand to sing just a moment to God's praise.

NINGNINGNING The Lord's my shepherd, I'm not one.

He makes me lie in my church dream. He leads me by the still, still waters.

[ 2 : 35 ] His goodness restores my soul. And I will trust in you alone.

And I will trust in you alone. For your endless mercy follows me.

Your goodness will lead me home. He guides my ways in righteousness. And he aligns my head with oil.

And my love with overflows with joy. I feast on his pure delight.

And I will trust in you alone. And I will trust in you alone.

[ 3 : 38 ] For your endless mercy follows me. Your goodness will lead me home.

And though I walk the darkness down. I will not fear me even more.

For you are with me and you're raw and stuck. Other comforts I need to know.

And I will trust in you alone. And I will trust in you alone.

For your endless mercy follows me. Your goodness will lead me home.

[ 4 : 38 ] Amen. Amen. Let's bow for a moment in prayer. Let's pray together.

Our heavenly father. Father we thank you for this. Your day. And we thank you for the comfort.

For the blessing. For the encouragement. For the reassurance. Of the hymn that we have sang. We thank you for the psalm that it connects with.

That psalm that is so precious to us. Where we see Jesus. The one who is the Lord our shepherd.

The one who is the good shepherd.

The one who laid down his life for the sheep. We thank you father for your great love of us. That you sent your son Jesus into this world.

[ 5 : 33 ] We thank you that he came to seek. And to save sinners like us. And we thank you that we are given. Salvation.

We are given the assurance of an eternal home. We are given contentment. We are given peace. We are given purpose. We are steadied.

As we put our faith. In him. And we thank you that Jesus. Is the one that we. Can put our faith in. Knowing that we are safe. We thank you. As we'll sing. At the end of the service. That in Christ alone our hope is found. And we thank you that it's a hope.

Which we experience in this world. Day by day. As we search for meaning. We thank you that we find meaning. That we find hope in Christ. And we thank you that the hope that we have in Jesus. [ 6 : 38 ] Is a hope that takes us through. Each day that we are given in this world. That takes us through all of life. And it's a hope that takes us even through death. Into life that is everlasting.

We thank you for the eternal home. That we are promised in Jesus. That he said to his disciples who were anxious. And who were shaken. In this world. We thank you that we can turn to John 14. And hear him saying. Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God. Trust also. In me. In my father's house. There are many rooms. Many mansions. And we praise you Lord.

That you have prepared. A place. For all who are trusting in you. So we ask Lord today. That you would. Give us the faith.

That we would be trusting. In Jesus. We pray that you would give us eyes to see. That we would see. In a way that we can bear. That we would see our own hearts.

[ 7 : 39 ] That we are sinners. And Lord. That we would confess our sin. We do that even now. We confess that we. Fall short of our standards. Never mind.

The standards that are set. For us by you. We are called to be holy. As you are holy. And yet. We confess Lord. That so often.

We drift. And we fail. And we fall. And so as we think about. Our failures. In our sin. We pray that you would.

Cleanse us. Wash us in the blood of Christ. That blood. That was shed at Calvary. And give to us the assurance. Of the fact that in him. We are forgiven.

Every sin. Every transgression. The vilest defender. Who truly believes. That moment. From Jesus. A pardon receives.

[ 8 : 34 ] Give to us. We pray. The joy. Of knowing that we are forgiven. We pray for anyone here today. Who. Has not yet. Confessed their sin.

Who has not yet. Trusted in Jesus. We pray. Lord. That you would be moving. In the power of the Holy Spirit. To show. Each one of us.

That he is the savior. And that we. Need him above all things. We thank you Lord. That we can come to you. And we can. Pray for help. With all kinds of different.

Situations. We are conscious of those. Who are grieving. And we pray for those. Who are. Who are wrestling. With that weight of grief. That you would comfort them. We remember those.

Who are sick. Some who are in hospital. Feeling low. And feeling isolated. We thank you. That we can carry them. To you in prayer. Asking that you would meet them.

[ 9 : 32 ] At the point. Of their need. We pray for those. Who are at home. And who don't have the strength. To come out. And who may feel. Far away from. The fellowship.

Of your people. We carry them. To you in prayer. And ask that you. Administer to them. In the power of the spirit. And even as they connect. Online. That they would. Feel part. Of the fellowship. Pray for those. Who are. Struggling with worry. And anxiety. And who are. Fearful about the future. We thank you Lord. That we can bring. Everything.

To God in prayer. What. A friend. We have in Jesus. All our sins. And griefs to bear. What a privilege. To carry. Everything. To God in prayer. And so we carry. All these people.

All these situations. All these. Places. We think of the Middle East. The conflict there. We think. Of the ongoing conflict. In Ukraine. In Russia. We think of.

[ 10 : 28 ] The violence. In our own streets. As it comes closer. To us here. We pray for all these situations. But. Above all Lord. We pray.

For salvation. Above all. We pray that you would be working. In the power of the Holy Spirit. That. People would.

See. Jesus. That they would believe. In Jesus. That as he is lifted up. As we read the word of God. And as we sing. That many.

That each one of us. Would be drawn. To him. We know that in this world. There are many troubles. But this world. Is like a mist. Our lives. Are.

Are like vapor. They pass so quickly. And then there is eternity. And so we pray. That you would be working. For the eternal good.

[11:21] Of those that we. Know. Those that we work with. Those that we love. Those that we struggle to love. As we think of them Lord. We. We carry them to you in prayer.

And ask that you would be moving. In power. That you would be awakening. Those who are lost. That you would be reviving. Those who are your people. And that we would know.

Times of spiritual refreshing. As individuals. As a congregation. As a community here. And as a nation. We pray Lord.

That you would intervene. As is. In the scriptures. And as we often sing. Revive. Thy work. O Lord. Thy mighty arm.

Make bare. Speak with the voice. That wakes the dead. And make the people. Hear. Help us to. Hear your voice. To trust you Lord. To follow you.

[12:16] And to give you all the praise. And all the glory. And we pray this in Jesus name. And for Jesus sake. Amen. Boys and girls.

I'm going to hand you over to Stuart actually. I'm not sure. Are they coming forward? Or staying where they are? Yeah. I think they're coming forward. Come on forward boys and girls. I'll sit down for today for a change.

Amen. To warn you young people. I will be asking you to do the memory verse.

For those that were here. So don't worry if you weren't. In a wee minute. So jog your memories. Because I'm going to tell everyone about Holiday Club. A bit of a fraud standing here. Because I was only there for day one of three.

So it's a bit of a cheek. Me coming and telling everyone about Holiday Club. But did you enjoy Holiday Club? Those that were there. I don't think many of you were. Those of you that were there. Did you enjoy Holiday Club? Yes. Can you tell everyone what the theme was?

[13:11] What were all the leaders dressed up as? You don't know? No. I don't know how to explain it. So what was the name? Oh there's a big clue for you. On the screen.

Wild West. So everyone was dressed as cowboys. And we had a Wild West theme. And what I'm going to do is. I'm just going to give a very brief rundown. Of what we did throughout the three days. Or what everyone else did throughout the three days.

What the kind of teaching points were. How we structured it. And then we've got a little bit of a video. Just at the very end. Which we'll be able to play. And hopefully sound and everything works. But before we play the video at the end.

I'm going to ask. Those of you that remember the memory verse. And maybe some of the leaders. To help them out. I'll ask you to stand up. And say the memory verse. A little bit later on. But just as a little bit of a summary. Of what we looked at.

First and foremost. We were very much. Thankful to the Lord again. For his provision. Of another Holiday Club. Giving us the opportunity. Where we can share the gospel. With the young ones. I think maybe a week or two before.

[14:09] It was a bit of touch and go. With volunteers. And it's probably been like that. The last couple of years. I would say. But again. The Lord provides. And we were able to. To put on a Holiday Club. For the young ones. And across those three days.

Monday through Wednesday. We had a total of 45 children. Attending across. Not every single day. But there were 45 children. At least. On one of the days. At the club.

So. A lot to be. Prayerful for. For those young ones. Some of them. As we know. Are from the congregation here. Much of them. Are from the community. And from unchurched backgrounds. And some were. From there on holiday. So again. I would encourage you. To commit. These young ones. To prayer. We don't know. What homes. They're going back to. We don't know. The seeds that have been planted.

Where they'll be going. So. We again. Give it all over to the Lord. And ask that he would. To do. His will. With that. But. The teachings that we had. Across the.

[15:03] The three days. There was two main stories. From the Bible. That we focused on. The first was. The prodigal son. So we focused on that. And then laterally. The woman at the well. And from those passages.

You'll agree with me here guys. Those that you were there. Yeah. From those passages. We learned. How each and every one of us. Are stuck in what. What are we stuck in. In our lives. That

is. Very. Difficult.

For us to deal with. On our own. Sin. Not just difficult. Impossible for us. To deal with on our own. But what hope do we have. Who can we turn to. Yeah.

Emily. You were going to say. God. Good answer. Yeah. Put you in the spot there. So yeah. We've got that wonderful hope. In Christ. And no matter how far. We've strayed. When we looked at the prodigal son.

No matter how far. We've gone away. We know. That Jesus wants us. To come to him. And we ought to turn away. From the sin in our lives. Now throughout the club. As you'll see through the video.

[15:56] Later on. There was some singing. There was Bible teaching. There was games. There was crafts. Group time. There was a drama that was done. I think David will be delighted. That some of his footage was not caught.

So we're not able to show you. Too much of David. The cowboy. Running around. Or Lenny. I think his name was. But there were some pretty epic performances. Along the way.

And it just helps to shine a light. On who the Lord is. And the fact that these leaders. We give thanks for every one of them. That gave up of their time. To somewhat look foolish on this stage. To the young ones. Would you agree? They looked a bit deaf sometimes. Yeah. Yeah. You nodded a bit too quickly there Michael. But you're right. But running as a little bit of a thread. Throughout the whole. Throughout the whole week.

Was the memory verse. That the young ones are going to remember. In a few minutes. And it was from Ephesians 2 verse 8. And we've got a little bit near the end of the video. Where some of them have shared a little bit of a video.

[16:51] And we've stitched it together. So you'll be able to hear the memory verse. Reminded at the end of the video. The young ones were excellent at learning. They came up with it. Came up very quickly. With the memory verse.

And as Farrakhan mentioned on Wednesday night. At the prayer meeting. It was wonderful to see. On day one for me. But for everyone else that was there. Across the three days. The strength and the memory. With which they were sharing.

This wonderful passage from God's word. They memorised it. Hopefully. Three or four days on. They've still memorised it. But we'll put that to the test shortly. But again we give thanks to God. Give thanks to God. For his wonderful provision. For bringing these young ones along. The older ones. That used to be in Holiday Club. Looking at Lois. And some of the other helpers. That were once.

On the receiving end of Holiday Club. Were out helping. And giving a hand. In sharing this wonderful word. With the young ones. We give thanks again to the Lord. For his provision of food. There was wonderful refreshments.

[17:47] I don't know who made the potato and leek soup. On Monday. But it was tip top. And we ultimately give thanks. To those that maybe weren't able to make it. Those that couldn't come along. Or maybe unable to help. But still spent time.

In the weeks leading up to it. And in the three days. Committing the Holiday Club to prayer. We give thanks to those. That are prayerfully considering the young ones. Not just for this three day period. But each and every day. As we continue to pray for the young ones. They were immensely enthusiastic. About hearing the gospel. And we just pray. That we'll have more opportunities. To do that again in the future. Now I'll just ask you all. Well I won't ask you to stand up. Because some of you weren't actually at Holiday Club. So for those of you that were at Holiday Club. Maybe in amongst the crowd as well. As leaders. Do you want to start off. With your memory verse. So I'll give you the first word. Four.

[18:41] Five. Oh. A bit louder. Five. I guess Alec can't hear you. He's over there. Everyone together. Four. Five. Grace. You have been saved.

Through faith. And this. Not to undo any. But this way. Of God. Right. You're going to have to stand. I'm sorry. So. That was just. Angus, Alec. Did you manage to hear that? No. None of it. So. Stand up. I want to hear it louder. Well maybe.

Don't stand. Because some of you weren't there. But just be louder. Okay. If you're not louder. I'll have to ask you to stand next time. So. I'll help. Okay. So. For. By.

Grace. You. Have. Been. Saved. Through. And. This. Is. Not. Your. Own. What is it?

[ 19 : 38 ] It's. A. Gift. Of. God. Ephesians 2. Verse 8. Ephesians 2. Verse 8. Well done. So. Thank you very much for remembering that. And. We'll test you in about five weeks time.

We'll just throw it on you. In the middle of brownies. You'll be asked to see it. So make sure you remember that. So. Yeah. So we do give thanks to the Lord. And. David's given up five or ten minutes for his evening service.

But I'm going to give it back. Because that's all I've got to share with you. So. You'll have a bit of a longer service. But there's a wee three minute video. Just. Encapsulating what was done throughout the week. Some of the. Some of the teachings.

Some of the dancing. As well as. Right at the very end. We've got a short. Memory verse. Read out by some of the young ones. In a little bit of a video. So we'll play that. And for those that are online. It's not going to go on just now. But I will put it on after the benediction. So. Make sure to stay at the end of the service. It's hickey in it. Who? Hickey. Hickey? Yeah. I'm going to pretend I know what you're talking about.

[ 20 : 36 ] And say it. I don't know. No idea. What that means. But what I'll say is. After. After the video. I'll just stay up. And I'll do a short word of prayer. Just as we close. And is there a holiday Sunday school? I think. There is holiday Sunday school today.

So I'll say a short word of prayer. Afterwards. After the video. And then. You'll be able to go to Sunday school. So hopefully this plays well. I've got my remote. Just in case the volume doesn't work.

Thank you.

I'll do a short word of prayer.

I'll do a short word of prayer. I'll do a short word of prayer. So in faith I follow Jesus. I'm a road not understood. For I know He is working.

[ 22 : 10 ] For His glory and I do. To our God be glory.

To our God be grace. He alone. He alone. He is living above all names. I will boast.

Ever only in the Lord. I know. How I know. His glory is my good.

Well, how I know. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[ 24 : 19 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. So that's just a very brief snapshot of the week and as I say I would urge you all to continue to pray for the young ones and pray for the word that they've memorized and wherever the Lord chooses that that would go that he would indeed bless that seed that goes out.

So we'll just close with a wee word of prayer just now and then I'll hand over to David to sing. Our ever blessed Father Lord we give you thanks again for this day that you've given to us Lord and we pray for each and every one of the young ones here those who are here with us today and those who are with us throughout the week Lord we pray for them and ask that the word that they heard and the love of Christ that they saw in the time being spent in setting up the holiday club and the time being spent by volunteers to share that word with them Lord that it would be used by you Lord and it would indeed bless those who volunteer in your work Lord that you would bless them to be a blessing.

But we also bring before you Lord those who did not come along those who maybe were not allowed to come along or those who made a decision that they didn't want to come Lord and we pray for them and ask that in future opportunities that you would provide times for us to share a word in season with them Lord wherever that may be and give us opportunities grant us the boldness and the courage to take the multitude of opportunities that present themselves before us each and every day to share your word to share the hope that is within us Lord we give you thanks that indeed we can come to a God a God that's not distant one that hears our prayers one that answers our prayers Lord and we pray that we would continue to do so throughout the rest of this year and in the days ahead as the young ones here go back to school Lord we pray for them and ask that you would bring many more young souls into this house Lord to hear your word to hear the glorious salvation plan that you instituted before time Lord that we would be able to share that glorious hope that hope of salvation and that we would be able to see many young souls saved here on our island Lord and that you would use them and that you would make disciples of them and that we would seek to continue to see your word flourish and go out and that this place would be continually used as a warm beacon of light for you seeking to see your will done on earth as it is

in heaven Lord so be with us just now go before us be round us keep us and pardon our many sins in Christ's precious name we pray Amen

Thank you very much Thank you Stuart Thank you boys and girls We're going to sing now and we're going to sing about the grace that we've been hearing of your grace that brings the sinner home from death to life foreverNING Thank you.

[ 28 : 25 ] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. I really want me to the arms of Christ my Lord.

Thank you. Okay. Any boys and girls who are of primary school age are welcome to go to the Sunday show.

[ 30 : 23 ] You don't have to go, but you're very welcome to go. I should have said as well, there's a creche in behind me here. I'm glancing around, and maybe there's no babies in today. If we could turn, please, in our Bibles to Matthew chapter 9.

Matthew chapter 9, and we'll read from verse 18 to verse 34. This is God's Word. Well, Jesus was saying these things to them.

That's the crowds. Behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying, My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.

And Jesus rose and followed him with his disciples. And behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for 12 years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment.

For she said to herself, If I only touch this garment, I will be made well. Jesus turned, and seeing her, he said, Take heart, daughter. Your faith has made you well.

[ 31 : 36 ] And instantly the woman was made well. And when Jesus came to the ruler's house and saw the flute players in the crowd making a commotion, he said, Go away, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping.

And he laughed at him. But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. And the report of this went through all that district.

And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, Have mercy on us, son of David. When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, Do you believe that I am able to do this?

They said to him, Yes, Lord. Then he touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith, be it done to you. And their eyes were opened, and Jesus sternly warned them, See that no one knows about it.

But they went away and spread his fame through all that district. As they were going away, behold, a demon-oppressed man, who was mute, was brought to him. And when the demon had been cast out, the mute man spoke.

[ 32 : 45 ] And the crowds marveled, saying, Never was anything like this seen in Israel. But the Pharisees said, He casts out demons by the prince of demons.

Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us. We're going to sing again now to God's praise. We'll sing from Psalm 91. Psalm 91, the first two verses of this psalm.

We sing in Gaelic. I'll read it in English. He that doth in the secret place of the Most High reside, under the shade of him that is the Almighty shall abide.

I of the Lord my God will say, He is my refuge still. He is my fortress and my God, and in him trust I will. These two verses of Psalm 91, and we remain seated to sing in Gaelic.

NINGNING!

[ 33 : 49 ] ! .

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[ 36 : 07 ] . .

I worship you, O God.

If you could turn, please, back to the passage that we read in Matthew chapter 9. And again, let's pray for a moment.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for the psalm that we've sung. And that profession that the psalmist would trust in you.

We pray that that profession would be a profession that all of us could come to. As we think about the passage before us, as we see different situations in this account that Matthew records.

[ 38 : 04 ] We pray that we would see ourselves. That we would see our need. That we would see Jesus. And that we would come to him. We pray that, the Lord, for all of us in the room here just now.

We pray for the children. We thank you for them. And ask that they would come to you. And that no one would hinder them from coming to you in the early years. We pray for the wee ones in the creche as well.

We thank you for them, Lord. And ask that they too, as they become conscious of where they are in your house. We pray that they would know and sense and feel the love of Jesus as they grow.

And we pray for those who are not here today as well. We pray for those who are away on holiday. We ask that you would bless them where they are. We pray for those who are away in different duties.

And we ask, Lord, that you would give them strength. As we pray that you would give us strength. And that you would bless us here in this place. We thank you for the wee ones especially.

[ 39 : 10 ] And we pray your blessing upon them. And we thank you, Lord, for the safe arrival of little baby Georgia. We thank you for Gordon and for Jillian being a granny and a shenner now.

We pray for Rebecca and for Craig. And for all of the family that you would bless them. And that they would know your presence with them at this special time. So hear our prayers.

Go before us, we pray. Help us to understand your word. And to respond in faith. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. This has been exam week.

Well, this has been exam result week for many of the young ones in Scotland, certainly. And we've been thinking a bit of exams over the course of the week.

And reflecting back, thinking back to many years ago. I can remember, and probably most of us can remember, that sometimes we can be sitting on the exam and we can know the answer to the question.

[ 40 : 19 ] But we don't really understand what the answer means. That's how we get through some exams. That's certainly how I got through some exams.

I would memorize huge chunks of text. To have a whole essay memorized. I didn't really understand much about what I was trying to write. But I had the essay memorized.

I would memorize a mathematical formulae. And then when the exam paper came in front of me, I would connect the question with what was in the head. Hope that it had some kind of connection with what the examiner was looking for.

And I would just give it all back. So it's memorized on exam day. It's just given all back. It's passed on to the exam paper. And generally speaking, that's usually enough to get a pass.

But if someone was to have asked me, you've written all that stuff, but do you understand what you're writing? Can I ask you a few more questions?

[ 41 : 24 ] I'd have been lost. The honest answer. In many cases, chemistry, biology, as I think back in particular, physics, the answer was, I memorized the formula.

I haven't got a clue what it means. Now turning back to Matthew 9, I want to ask a question today. And it's a very simple question. It's a question that is very often asked in church and in Christian circles. And it's the question of, how do we become Christians?

How are we saved from our sin? And if the children were here, they would give us the answer very readily, and we would add an amen.

They would answer the question, well, we become Christians. We're saved from our sin by trusting in Jesus. We want to become Christians.

[ 42 : 27 ] We just have to believe in Jesus. And that's the truth. That's the right answer. But what does that really mean?

What does that look like? I'd be surprised if there isn't at least somebody here today who knows the right answer to the question of, how do I become a Christian?

Or have faith in Jesus? that maybe has always wanted to ask, that feels too daft to ask, because often we have questions which are perfectly valid, but we feel that they're silly.

So we don't want to ask them, what does it really mean? What does it really look like to have faith in Jesus? So I want to think this one through today.

And Matthew, in the section that we read, he gives us examples of people who have trusted in Jesus. And in giving us these examples, he illustrates for us the characteristics of saving faith.

[ 43 : 47 ] So for some here today, it might be a case of, this is a learning experience. This is something that helps us to know what does it mean to trust in Jesus? Because we weren't sure before.

And for some of us, perhaps, this is a message that will help us to remember and to be clear and to receive assurance that we really are trusting in Jesus.

So what does it mean to have faith? In Jesus? What does it look like? Well, the first point today is faith sees our need.

If we have faith, then we see that we have a need. And in each situation, if you've got the passage in front of you, you'd find it helpful.

In each situation that we read of, there's a clear sense of felt need. So verse 18, we see a ruler. And this ruler's daughter, it says in Matthew, has just died.

[ 45 : 01 ] Which for any father, it's just the absolute worst scenario one could ever imagine. This ruler, he may have been a man of some authority and some status in that place, but his daughter has just died.

So he's a broken man. He's distraught, he's grieving, and he knows that there is nothing he can do about this himself.

So he has this overwhelming, crushing sense of being in desperate need. And then we have another situation in verse 20.

We see a woman who has suffered from a discharge of blood. The old language, the woman with the issue of blood. For 12 years, for 12 long years, this woman has been wrestling with this. She's been sick. And in that culture, that meant that she was unclean. That's how she was looked upon in that culture.

[ 46 : 07 ] She was ceremonially unclean, which meant that she was isolated. So she was a social outcast, she was a religious outcast, and she has a desperate sense of need.

She needs help. She feels it. The ruler, he needs help. He feels it.

And then verse 27, we see two blind men. And in that culture, to be blind was just a little better than being dead.

There were no eye surgeons. There were no expert opticians. There was no support. The commentators tell us that to be blind was an awful, hopeless life.

And so these two blind men were in many ways in great need. and they felt it.

[ 47 : 17 ] And then verse 32, the last scenario, we see a demon-oppressed man. And this demon has got a hold of him.

We don't know the backstory. And this demon has caused him to be mute. He has no freedom. He's living in darkness.

He's living with this deep oppression. He is in great need. And that's the start point. We see these four situations.

And in each situation, the individuals involved, they feel this great sense of need. And that's where Jesus meets them.

But we might be asking the question, well, what on earth has this got to do with us? What does this have to do with me in secondary school, in my summer holidays, in between playing football and watching television and gaming and whatever?

[ 48 : 30 ] What does this have to do to me in the workplace? What does this have to do with me in this place at this time? Well, in many ways, as we read their stories, our lives are very different to theirs.

But in a sense, we struggle with all the same problems. Nothing has changed. We have the same needs. Like the ruler, we all face death.

We face the death of those that we love. And ultimately, we know that we face our own death.

And there's nothing that we can do to hold death back. we need Jesus.

The woman who was sick, we face sickness. If we're not struggling with physical sickness today, certainly we're touched by spiritual sickness.

[ 49 : 44 ] Sin makes us sick. Sin makes us unclean. And we cannot cleanse ourselves. We need Jesus. Like the two blind men, spiritually speaking, the Bible makes clear that we are blind.

And we cannot open our own eyes. We need Jesus. And like the demon-oppressed man, still we live in a world where there are principalities that are powers.

We face spiritual attack. The devil, it says in Peter, he prowls around like a roaring lion. And we are not strong enough to overpower him and his demons.

So we need Jesus. So Matthew, as he gives us these examples, in a sense, it's as if he holds up a mirror to us, the mirror of God's word.

And as we turn the stifling angles, we're seeing reflections of ourselves and of our need. our need of Jesus.

[ 51 : 13 ] So let me ask, do you see today, do we see that we are in need?

When eyes of faith are opening, we begin to see our need, our need of Jesus. We can be sitting in these chairs week after week.

We're thinking about creels, we're thinking about fishing, we're thinking about football, we're thinking about shopping, we're thinking about everything. There's no sense of need.

But when God, the Holy Spirit, is beginning to work in us, we begin to see our need. We begin our need. Our eyes begin to open.

And we start to see Jesus. Faith sees our need. Second point is faith believes that Jesus can meet that need. And again, let's just step through the situations.

[ 52 : 21 ] We come, first of all, verse 18, to the ruler. And this man, his daughter is dead, and yet he believes that Jesus can make her alive again.

Verse 18, listen to his profession of faith. He says, my daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her and she will live. It's an amazing profession of faith.

He believes that Jesus can meet their need. in this seemingly desperate final situation.

In the sick woman, verse 20, we know from the other gospels that she spent a fortune on doctors. She's been trying to find a cure all the way through these 12 years.

No one can help. And yet she believes, even after all these years of disappointment, it seems that she believes that Jesus could help her in her need.

[ 53 : 31 ] For she said to herself, verse 21, if I only touch his garment, I will be made well. She believes that Jesus can meet her need.

And then the blind men, in verse 27, we have this encounter, we'll look a little more at it as we go on, but we see in verse 27 or verse 28, that Jesus takes them aside.

He takes them out of the public view, and he gets alone with them, and he asks them straight out, do you believe, verse 28, that I am able to do this?

That he's able to open their eyes? And they said to him, yes, Lord. So they believe that Jesus can meet their need, they believe that Jesus can give them sight.

And then there's the demon-oppressed man of verse 32, and we don't know so much about him.

The darkness of his mind may have meant that he wasn't able to process very much, but clearly this man has maybe family, maybe friends, who care for him.

[ 54 : 53 ] So what do they do? They bring him to Jesus. Why did they bring him to Jesus? Because they believed that Jesus could meet the need of this man, and free him from the darkness.

So in every situation there are people who see their need, need, and they believe that Jesus can meet their need.

So they come to him. In every situation, the people who are involved see that Jesus has authority, authority.

And ironically, it's the blind men that see Jesus most clearly. Because in verse 27, the blind men, they cry out, they call out, and they address Jesus as son of David, and that was a phrase that was reserved for the Messiah, the Savior.

And they cry aloud in verse 27, have mercy on us. So they seem to recognize that Jesus, he is the Savior, he is the Messiah, he is the one who can show them mercy.

[ 56 : 21 ] J.C. Ryle says, they saw the truth which scribes and Pharisees could not see. They saw that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. They believed that he was able to heal them.

So what's the application? Well, again, it's not difficult, is it? We have to face the question that Matthew is putting to us here, do we believe, do we believe that Jesus can meet our need?

Do we believe that Jesus can meet our need for salvation? Do we believe that Jesus can give us victory over death? Do we believe that Jesus can take the sickness of our sin away? Do we believe that Jesus can open the eyes of our hearts? Do we believe that Jesus can free us from the clutches of Satan?

Faith believes that Jesus can meet us in our need.

[ 57 : 45 ] Do we faith sees our need?

We feel that sense of need as each one of these people did. Faith believes that Jesus can meet that need. And the third thing that we see here is that faith requires personal contact with Jesus. Faith requires personal contact with Jesus. One Saturday morning, I don't know how many years ago it was now, it was quite a few years ago, Anna and Mary were in the airport in Glasgow, and just along from them, maybe it was Grace and Mary, was it?

Grace and Mary were in the airport in Glasgow, just sitting along from them. was Lewis Capaldi. And the young people smiled because they recognised the name, the old people are going, who on earth is that?

He's a singer. And there are tens of thousands of people who pay big money to go and hear this guy sing. And he's just sitting in the corner of Glasgow airport with his guitar case and not very many people around him.

[ 59 : 05 ] And Grace and Mary had the chance to go and say hello to him. She's sitting on his own, have a chat. But he didn't take it. There was no personal encounter.

They could have known Lewis Capaldi. He could have been round at ours for Christmas. He could have been leading the praise if he was converted. All that could have been, but there was nothing. There was no personal encounter. now in Matthew's gospel, we see vast crowds around Jesus continuously.

But only a few of the crowd actually came to him. Only a few of the crowd had that personal encounter with Jesus.

And as we again look at these four scenes, these four people, or five people, in each situation there is a personal encounter with Jesus.

[ 60 : 16 ] Each encounter is different, but in each case there is personal contact. Verse 18, the ruler, he comes openly to Jesus.

We get a sense, and we completely understand this, we get a sense of the ruler interrupting Jesus mid-sermon. And this ruler, he's not concerned about who's watching, he's not bothered about who's listening, he comes directly to Jesus, he comes personally to Jesus, he comes publicly to Jesus.

And he takes Jesus into his house, verse 23. So there's personal contact with Jesus. And then the woman in verse 20, she's quite different to the ruler, she comes much more discreetly, quietly, indirectly almost.

She knows her needs, she believes Jesus can help her in her need, she comes to Jesus, but she doesn't want to be seen. She's hiding in this big congregation.

She wants Jesus to touch her, or she wants to touch even the hem of his garment without anyone seeing her. But she still comes to him.

[ 61 : 45 ] So there's that personal encounter, there's that personal touch, there's personal contact with Jesus. Then there's the blind men in verse 27, they can't see Jesus in order to come to him, but they hear that Jesus is close by, and so they shout, and they shout, and they shout until Jesus comes to them, and the crowds are telling them to settle down and be quiet, and they won't listen to the crowds, they keep on going, because they want this encounter with Jesus, and they too, like the ruler, when Jesus comes to them, they take Jesus to their house, so there's personal contact with Jesus.

And then verse 32, there's the demon, oppressed man, and he doesn't come to Jesus of his own volition, he's brought to Jesus.

I imagine there was probably a fair bit of resistance, but still, whether against his will or not, there is personal contact with Jesus.

And when it comes to our salvation, when it comes to the need that we have to have our sins forgiven, when it comes to our need for eternal life, there needs to be personal contact with Jesus. Jesus doesn't save batches of people. He saves us one by one. He saves all who come to him personally.

[ 63 : 42 ] And we might come boldly, like the ruler or the blind men, we might come quietly, like the sick woman. We might even come because we've been brought by someone else.

We didn't even want to be here, like the demon oppressed man. But we need to come to Jesus. We need personally, in prayer, to call upon the name of Jesus.

There needs to be that personal contact with Jesus. Faith requires personal contact with Jesus. Faith feels our need.

Faith believes that Jesus is able to meet us in our need. And there's the personal contact. The fourth thing, faith is seen in perseverance. perseverance. Spurgeon said, final perseverance is the necessary evidence of genuine conversion.

There are many people who have an encounter with Jesus who may have a supernatural experience even. Maybe they've been going through a hard time and they're struggling and they come into the orbit of the church.

[ 65 : 09 ] They come around Christians. They hear about Jesus and they're wanting help and they have some kind of experience and they receive help from above. They feel the touch of Jesus.

They get the help that they were looking for. But once the trouble is over, once the season has passed, they have no word of Jesus.

They just go back to their old lives. It's a fleeting experience. It's an encounter. That's not uncommon.

But that's not faith. Faith, saving faith, it is seen, it's evidenced in perseverance with Jesus. perseverance. And in each of these cases, we're just seeing the beginning, but we do see perseverance. The ruler, verse 18, his daughter has died.

[ 66 : 15 ] She's not sick. She has died. But the faith of the ruler is persevering faith. Still he comes to Jesus.

Still he believes that Jesus can raise her up. And when Jesus is interrupted, and this visit to his daughter is delayed, he doesn't give up. He keeps on believing.

He's persevering faith. And then the woman in verse 20, she comes to Jesus, she touches the fringe of his garment, she's healed.

There's that healing, saving, personal contact, but that's not where it ends. Mark chapter 5 gives us the extended version of this encounter.

And in Mark 5, time's gone, we're not going to go there. We see this woman, and after Jesus heals her, he doesn't want her to run away.

[ 67 : 22 ] She knows she's been healed. but Jesus doesn't want this woman to run away. He wants her to profess her faith. And so he asks repeatedly, who touched me?

Who touched me? And although the woman is terrified, she doesn't run. Trembling, she comes forward.

forward. And we see in her that persevering faith. The blind men, verse 27, again, Mark 5 gives us the fuller account of events.

The men are crying out to Jesus, the crowd are telling them to be quiet, and nothing will keep them quiet. There's all this pressure to shut up, that they persevere in faith.

The demon oppressed man, verse 32, this is more speculative, but I doubt it would have been an easy job to get this man into the company of Jesus.

[ 68 : 33 ] There would have been dark, demonic resistance, but somebody was determined to bring this man to Jesus, and that would have taken persevering faith.

And the point in application is that faith is seen in perseverance. Jesus, in Matthew 7, if we just rewind a chapter or two, he says to those who needed to be saved, ask and it will be given to you, seek you will find, knock and it will be opened to you, for everyone who asks receives, the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, it will be opened.

And there's an intensity there, there's a growing intensity. Ask, seek, knock. To be saved, we need to persevere in faith.

salvation. And when we are saved, the genuineness, the assurance of salvation is seen in our perseverance.

We can have no assurance of salvation if we are not going on with the Lord. A Christian isn't someone who can tell a story about an encounter with Jesus 20 years ago in some mission tent where they put their hand up and said a prayer.

[ 70 : 03 ] And then life just carried on the way it always was. That's not salvation. There's no assurance in that. A Christian is someone who has persevering faith in Jesus, where day by day we open his word and we say, speak to me.

I need to hear your voice. and we come in prayer and we pour out our hearts and we have to come to his house and we have to be in his presence because he is our saviour and he is our lord and he is our friend and we want to walk with him.

Faith is seen in our perseverance. There's no perseverance. There may be salvation, but there can't be any assurance of salvation.

Last point as Matthew takes us to the end of the situation. No faith.

If we have no faith, there is no salvation. That's the final point though. If there is no faith, in Jesus, there is no salvation.

[ 71 : 29 ] Now Matthew, he zooms in on just a few people and these people help us to understand what it means to have faith in Jesus.

We've been looking at them. But you can see in the chapter that there are other people also in this section and they actually help us to see what it looks like not to have faith in Jesus.

And Matthew highlights them as well. And Matthew also shows us in the dialogue the consequences of not having faith in Jesus. So who else do we see in this chapter?

In the section that we read? Well, immediately in verse 34, our eyes go to the Pharisees. And the Pharisees, as we know, they were the Bible experts. They should have been the first to see that Jesus was the one who was the Savior, the Messiah, the one who could meet their need.

But they didn't see Jesus. And instead of calling Jesus blessed and recognizing that he was the Savior, they called him a blasphemer.

[ 72 : 41 ] instead of recognizing that he was casting out demons by the power of God, they say he's on the side of Satan. And they clash with Jesus and they clash with him again and again and again.

They want to kill Jesus. And as we read on in this gospel, we see that the Pharisees, for all their religious rigor, they're almost all lost.

there's no salvation. And the application again is alarming, but it's simple and it's this.

We can know a lot about Jesus. We can sit through church year after year. We can go to Sunday school. We can go to youth fellowship. We can go to camps.

We can go and study theology. We can have a PhD in Old Testament history, but if we don't have faith in Jesus, if we don't ask Jesus to be our personal Savior, there is no salvation.

[ 73 : 54 ] Then the last group that we see in this section are the crowds. We see a huge crowd at the ruler's house, and they're all gathered in this place of mourning.

they all become aware of Jesus very quickly. These crowds would have been surrounding Jesus. Many occasions, I'm sure. But when Jesus comes in and tells them what he's going to do, do they believe in him?

No, they laugh at him, verse 24. They think his claims are ridiculous. So what does Jesus do with the crowds? Well, look at what he does with the crowds. verse 24, he tells the crowds to go away. Verse 25 says that he put the crowd outside. And that's a preview of what will happen on judgment day.

Those who have not trusted in Jesus will be told to go away eternally from Jesus.

[ 75 : 12 ] Depart from me, he will say. I didn't ever know you, but I was part of the crowd. I went to the church week by week.

I went through all the programs. I did Christianity Explored. I was part of that crowd, remember? We can be part of a crowd.

And never trust in Christ. And if that's the case, we will be told to go away eternally from Jesus.

Those who have not trusted in Jesus will be, as we see in verse 25, put outside. Outside of heaven. Outside of peace.

Outside rest. Outside of joy. Outside of blessing. Forever. How tragic it would be for us to be part of a crowd who get this close to Jesus, peace.

[ 76 : 28 ] With his word in our hands and in our ears. With his miracles on the page before us. With a sense of his presence sometimes breaking into our lives when we're most in need.

And yet we never have personal faith, personal contact with Jesus. If we do not have personal faith in Jesus, there is no salvation.

And that's a dark place to end, but that's where Matthew ends. so it's where we end. Do you have faith?

Faith sees our need. Faith believes that Jesus can meet our need. Faith requires personal contact, not crowd contact, personal contact with Jesus.

Faith is seen in our perseverance, our walking with Jesus. Day by day. And if there's no faith in Jesus, there is no salvation.

[ 77 : 59 ] We'll pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for how simple and how clear it is.

And yet, in that simplicity, it can be very unsettling. But we pray that if we are outside of Christ, even this morning, that we would be unsettled, and that we would realize our need, saved, and that we would see Jesus as the one who is able to meet with us personally, and save us from death, save us from the sickness of sin, and give to us life that is everlasting.

We thank you that if we are in Christ, we are promised that we will be taken in to heaven eternally, and not shut outside. we thank you that if we come to Jesus, we are promised that we will never be cast out, that we will be received, that we will be held, that we will be kept secure.

So give each one of us, we pray, faith, and enable each one of us personally, even in this prayer, to say, Lord Jesus, save me, cleanse me, give to me salvation, and we pray this in Jesus' name, and for his sake, amen.

We'll sing to conclude Mission Praise 1072, In Christ Alone My Hope Is Found. He is my Light, my Strength, my Song, This Cornerstone, This Solid Road, The Good Exist Love, That Storm, For I So Love, That Peace, When Fears Are Still, When Striving Cease, I Love, Return, I All In All, Here In The Love Of Christ I

[ 80 : 31 ] Stand. In Christ Alone, You Turn Of Flesh, Full Of God In helpless Way, This Gift Of Love, And Righteousness, Stored By The Ones He Came To Save, Till On That Cross As Jesus Die, The Wrath Of God Was Satisfied, For Every Sin On Him Was Laid, Here In The Death Of Christ I Live There

In Their Hand Is What He Lay Light Over My Darkness Slay And Bursting For In Glorious Day Up From The Grave He Rose Again And As He Stands In Victory Sin Trust Has Lost His Grip On Me For I Am His And He Is Mine Offer The Precious Blood Of Christ No guilt In Life No Fear In Death This Is The Power Of Christ In Me From My Spurge Dry

To Final Bread Jesus Demons My Destiny The Fire Of Hell No Sea Of Man Than Ever Blood Made From His Land Till He Returns Or Goes Be Whole Here In The Power Of Christ Our Stand And May The Grace Of The Lord Jesus Christ The Love Of God The Father The Fellowship Of God The Holy Spirit Be With Us All Now For Everyone Amen