

25.8.24 am

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Date: 25 August 2024

Preacher: Scott Macleod

[0 : 0 0] Good morning everyone and a warm welcome to the service this morning. A special welcome to those who are visiting with us. I can see quite a number of visitors with us this morning and it's always encouraging to have you. There's tea, there's coffee at the end of the service and if you're able to stay behind please do so. It'll be good to get the chance to enjoy a fellowship together.

The notices have been going round on the screen before the service began. I've been observing over the last few weeks the notices are getting longer and longer. I think I was approaching a quarter past 11 by the time I was coming to a climax of the notices last week. So what we're going to do from now on is have the notices on an email that goes out to the congregation week by week. We'll try and figure out how to put it on the website also although we haven't quite figured out how to do that yet. They'll also be on the screen so you'll see them Sunday by Sunday but you'll have a notice in your emails as well. If you haven't got your name on the congregational email list which goes back to COVID times when everybody was getting an email to keep them updated on what was happening. There's a sheet in the foie out there so just add your name and your email address to that please and we can get the emails put out week by week. One thing I have been asked to say this morning is just that there's going to be a fellowship tonight. There's the Gallet service tonight at 6 taken by Hamish Taylor and there's a congregational fellowship at half past 7. Tonight the focus will be mission focus. We'll think about Nepal. We'll think about another country also and Angus and Kirsty will lead that fellowship tonight. So that's half past 7. The English fellowship and all are welcome to that and if you're visiting you're very much welcome to join with us for that fellowship also. I want to just invite now Scott and Fiona and Katie Bell and Lily to come up just for a second. So if you guys want to come up just to introduce you and welcome you. Up you come, right up. So we've been talking about you for a wee while and we've been praying for you and today is the first Sunday that we get to welcome Scott and

Fiona and Katie Bell and Lily into the congregation. So Scott is our minister in training in the Free Church. He's done two years so he's going to spend year three and four with us in the congregation hopefully. We're delighted to have you and we're throwing you right in at the deep end today because I'm just going to welcome you, pray for you and then I'm going to run away to grab her and leave you to take the rest of the service. But it's great to have you and we want to just welcome you. You're up here so that everybody knows who you are and although you won't have got all these faces locked into your minds yet, they all know you and so we just want to welcome you. So I'm going to pray and then after I've prayed you can go back to your seats. Scott, you can stay right here and lead us in worship. Heavenly Father, we thank you for this, your day and we thank you for the privilege of being able to come together as your people in your house. We thank you especially for Scott and for Fiona, for Katie Bell and for Lily being with us today and for them being with us as we look forward over the next couple of years. We pray that you would bless them, that they would know that they are welcomed, that they are loved here and that they would know your presence, your peace, your hand of guidance upon them here and as they look to the future. We pray now that as Scott leads the service, as he leads us in worship, that you would guide him, that you would be near to him and that you would minister to him and through him as he opens your word in this place. Hear our prayers, take away our sin, go before us, help us in this day and we ask all this in Jesus' name and for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Thank you guys. I'm going to hand over now. Thank you, David. Thank you, David. Thank you, everyone, for your warm welcome and I guess you'll all know our faces but hopefully slowly over the next few years we'll get to know each and every one of you and at our time together, together over the next few years we'll be blessed by the Lord.

But we've come to worship God and we'll begin by doing so by singing in Psalm 65. Psalm 65, let's sing Psalms version. The words of that psalm are, in Zion praise awaits you, Lord, to you our vows will pay, to you all people will come near. You hear us when we pray. When we were overwhelmed by sins and guilt upon us lay, you pardoned all our trespasses and washed our guilt away. A psalm of thanksgiving to our Lord who has washed all our guilt away and we'll sing down to the end of verse Mark 7. So we'll stand to sing these words to praise of God. In Zion praise awaits you, Lord, to you our vows will pay.

[5 : 45] In Zion praise I wish you, Lord, to you our vows will pay. To you all people will come near. You hear us when we pray. When we were overwhelmed by sins and guilt upon us, you hear us when we pray.

When we were overwhelmed by sins and guilt upon us lay, you pardoned all our trespasses and washed our guilt away.

How blessed are those you choose and bring within your courts of grace. We're filled with blessings in your house, in your most holy place.

With awesome deeds of righteousness, you answer us, O God, our Savior, hope of far-less ease and all the earth abroad.

By strength and power you form the hills, you wash the ocean's voice. You calm the tune of the top of their wings and still the people's noise.

[8 : 03] We'll now join together in prayer. Let us pray together. Lord, we pray as your people gather that we would be filled with the blessings in your house, that we may receive from you the riches of your grace, your compassion, your love and your mercy, that we may know and receive the forgiveness of our sins through Christ Jesus.

Lord we pray as we draw near to you that we would see ourselves that we would have a reverent fear before you because we are drawing near to God the Lord God Almighty who has created the heavens and the earth who calms the tumult of the waves who gives us peace the God who also blows the strength of the wind and the storms that come upon this world Lord we see your power we stand in fear of your power and we see ourselves as very little before you Lord we pray that we may draw near with confidence because of what Jesus Christ has done for us on the cross he has shown us truly what love is that he would die for his friends that he would die for each and every one of us so help us to understand this morning who you are and who Jesus is that Jesus loves us dearly that Jesus died for us but Jesus also rose again the tomb was opened so that we may see that he has power over death that the resurrected Lord Jesus met with his disciples and his followers and they told the world about what they had seen and we know for those who have received Jesus that he is a living saviour to them he is eternally and eternally with them he will never leave them nor forsake them so help us to grasp hold of that truth this morning that we can have confidence in you who will not leave us and forsake us or often we feel like we walk away from you often we feel like sheep that stray down the wrong paths we feel like the pilgrims out of pilgrims progress that went the wrong way so often but lead us back and teach us we pray teach us through your word and instruct us by the power of your spirit be with us constantly be with those who preach your word this morning be with David as he goes to Graver be with that congregation there in their vacancy we pray that you would provide someone as pastor for them we pray for other congregations that are similar we remember Stornway we remember Shawbust and we give thankfulness in our hearts for provision in North East we remember South East also we pray for David Ferguson as he moves with Catherine and Duncan into North East pray that you would be with them and richly bless them in their time together there we pray whatever your word is preached this morning that it may be received with joy that it may speak with conviction that it may speak with comfort to those who are mourning that you may draw near to the broken hearted and that they may know a measure of your love comforting them this morning so be with us as we turn to your word later as we sing your praises as we draw near to you in prayer watch over us guide us keep us keep the evil one from us from distracting us and help us to sit with a focus on Jesus and keep our eyes on the one who has saved us from our sins all these things we ask in Jesus name

Amen if I could ask the children the children come and gather down beside me here which is great because the last church I was in I was so far away from the children and I couldn't really bring anything in to show them Stornway Church is a big church and the kids stayed so far away so you guys are very lucky that you can come so near to me and that the minister and whoever speaking can show you things and I've got something to show you this morning as many of you know me,

Fiona Katie and Lily we've moved to Scalpy we've been there for two years and we've made lots of discoveries in Scalpy we've discovered a new home we've discovered lots of different people probably many more people to discover yet and lots of places to go to but I haven't explored the whole of Scalpy but the house we have

I'm doing a bit of work in it it needs me to crawl through the lofts through the attic through the wee tight spaces and lift all the insulation that fluffy stuff that you don't touch to make you itchy you lift all that away and you run I'm running wires in because I used to be an electrician and I've seen this bit of paper lying in the roof while in the ceiling space under all insulation yes I made a discovery I discovered this in my house and if the person that lived in the house before me might be sweating wondering what this is but it was long before they were there I opened it up and I was wondering what it was it's a book it's a book I turned it around it's an instructor which is a magazine that the church the free church used to make oh they still make used to make for children it's a children's magazine that the church made it was called the instructor because it would teach us about Jesus teach us that God this instructor has been lying on the roof for a few years it's January 1977 it costs 10 pence and I decided to start looking through it as you do and you can see there's pictures there of boys and girls and I started looking through it and I'm from well we're from Stornway Church I was going through it yep and there's a picture there of Stornway Sunday School 1977 maybe the grown-ups would be more interested to see this you can see all the kids there you see that they're all they're all well at this aren't they yeah it's nice it was 10 years before I was born very old and then I was going through the pages just having a wee look and there's puzzles at the back for the kids but I mean another interesting discovery that you would send in your answers to the editor and then the next month they would tell you who got the answers right in the back and where they're from and it tells you they got the backs Stornway Tarbert's here I've got a few that got the right answer I'm not going to read the names because I don't know who people are yet [16:16] I don't want to put myself in bother but there's three from Tarbert and there's Scalpies there too and there's six in Scalte Scalpies Scalpies got all the right answers but as I was going through it as well this discovery that I made there's a story in it at the beginning I can find it about a great discovery funny a great discovery and it speaks about a scientist that discovered a chemical that was very helpful for making people feel better but someone asked him what the greatest discovery was that he had ever made and he answered by saying the greatest discovery that he ever made was when he discovered Jesus Christ as his own saviour there's nothing quite like it there's no discovery that can compare to discovering

Jesus of all the things that this man discovered the most important thing was discovering Jesus I had another wee look through and I've told another story about a shepherd boy we're going to be talking about shepherds today with the grown ups and I was thinking about a shepherd boy became a minister and he was a very clever boy he learned lots of languages he learned all about history all the subjects that we learn in school someone asked him about his life and he said that there was nothing like the language of God speaking to you and there was nothing like the history of Jesus Christ dying on the cross and how he was his saviour so what I'm saying to you today is these men in this book the story the greatest discovery they made was finding

Jesus Christ as their own saviour and trusting in him all their lives and that's the same that we pray for each and every one of you today whether you're young or whether we're old that we would all discover Jesus Christ as our saviour the most important thing in our lives as the scientist said all the things that he discovered the greatest thing is to discover Jesus as the saviour so if you want to have a look at this later I can show it to you and that goes for the adult too so I'll just pray before I'll say a short prayer before we sing our song our father in heaven we give thanks for you today we give thanks for everyone that is here whether we are young or whether we are old but we pray most of all that we would discover Jesus as we come to

Sunday school as we come to sing about you we pray that you would show yourself to us and that we would see Jesus like we have never seen him before and that we would trust in him all our lives as our shepherd to watch over us and guide us and keep us we pray these things in Jesus name okay so we'll now sing and we are going to sing a hymn about the shepherd and it is the Lord's my shepherd and it is that I will trust in you mission praise 1008 the words can you see the words on the screen yeah the Lord's my shepherd I'll not want he makes me lie in pasture screen he leads me by the still still water his goodness restores my soul so we'll stand and we'll sing these words to God's praise the Lord's my shepherd

we can be so busy I've been so busy since I've come moved out and I feel like I've not taken time enough that I need to sit in the quiet place to sit with Jesus to think about who he is and what he has done for me it's good for us to come aside it's good for us to have this day set aside we can come and be taught from God to remember who he is what he has done for us to pray to him in the quietness of our own hearts but we see that as the apostles return

Jesus tells them to come away they jump in the boat they make their way we see they don't get any rest really there's a multitude falling there's a huge crowd 5,000 and plus following them and you know yourself when you seek to have peace you seek a moment of rest for yourself and then there's someone there they won't leave you alone coming at you all the time it's a moment our compassion runs dry it's a moment we get frustrated Jesus doesn't show that he's not frustrated by the appearance of this crowd that have followed him rather he extends his continued compassion to them he loves them he's glad to see them there but they followed him they followed him because they had a need they're wanting something they're looking for something Jesus says they're sheep without a shepherd they're looking for something in this world and they know there's something in this man

Jesus I wonder if there's any here this morning that are like these sheep without a shepherd they've been looking for something in this world and they can't find anything that will satisfy their souls and they're coming to Jesus because they can see that there's something about this man he's done something for many other people and his words are like nothing of this world I pray that we would be taught by Jesus as we gather because that's the first thing that Jesus did to the sheep that he saw the people that were before the people weren't after food they don't come to be fed from him they come to hear something about him and that's the first thing that Jesus does to these people he teaches them about who he is he teaches them first he feeds their soul it's a great example of Christ's compassion that he would teach those who are in need those who are lost those who are looking those who are wondering those who don't know where quite to go he teaches all of us about who he is he teaches us in his compassion compassion is a wonderful word because it sees a need and it seeks to set the person free from the need it sees that they are in trouble it sees that they are stricken by misfortune is the way the dictionary says it but it's accompanied with a strong desire to set them free from that suffering and if there is anyone who knows just how stricken we are just how lost we are it is

Christ if there is anyone who knows truly how stuck we are how we are so helpless it is Jesus he sees our need may be greater than we do ourselves he knows that sin will leave you condemned to death and he knows that you must be set free and that was his greatest compassion to die on the cross to set each and every one of us free he saw your need and he wants you to be free from that need he died on the cross for each and every one of us he knew that sin was too much for us we can be so overwhelmed by sin so imprisoned by sin we can't escape it but Christ sets us free from that power because of what he has done on the cross and we need to be taught about

[44 : 31] Jesus to understand what he has done Christ's life is tied up in this word compassion it appears 12 times and every time it is relatable to Christ in the New Testament you remember the compassion of the good Samaritan you remember the compassion of the father to the prodigal son when he came back every time it is relatable to Christ so this compassion is like nothing else it is like no one else's compassion it is specifically Christ's compassion because Christ's compassion is like no other compassion the one who gave himself for all of us to die on the cross Christ is like no one else he is the Messiah the promised saviour that would come he is the one that they spoke about in the

Old Testament that he would come he would be their saviour he would rescue them Ezekiel tells us about a man a shepherd that would come that would seek out those who are lost he would bring back those who have strayed away he would bind up those who are injured and he would give strength to those who are weak this is Jesus this is the shepherd that is like no other shepherd we are the sheep because we are the ones that are lost we are the ones that have become injured we are the ones that so often feel so weak that God would raise up a shepherd one shepherd that Ezekiel said would feed them that's exactly what he does in this passage he shall feed them and be their shepherd

Jesus is fulfilling that prophecy of this man that would come revealing to them I am the good shepherd he is our shepherd he is calling us to come and be taught by him this morning wherever you are wandering today however lost you feel today take rest sit down and listen to this man's

words sit at his feet and read from his words in the bible because he is a great shepherd with great compassion but his compassion is true so that it provides for you it provides for each and every one of us he is a shepherd with great compassion like Noah but he's a shepherd that provides for us like no other secondly the provision here in the passage is that they were fed but they were taught first that's what he provided first teaching he taught the 5000 plus but he had lots more to teach them he asked well the disciples saw the crowds were going to get hungry soon the disciples knew they didn't have enough food to feed them and the reason how they could feed such a great multitude Jesus tells them verse 37 and you give them something to eat and he said shall we go and buy 200 denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat Jesus told them to bring what they had they brought the five loaves and the two fishes what was that for so many it was so little for such a vast crowd which they estimate to be between 10 and 15 thousand this little quantity of food was in a desolate place this is where they had gone for some peace and quiet where there was nothing he makes him sit down in the green grass in groups and what is implied by that word of sitting down is that they would be reclining to eat when he tells them to sit down he's not just telling them to sit down he's almost telling them to sit down at the dining table when he tells them to sit down in groups he's telling them you're going to be fed they don't know how it's going to happen but he's saying it will happen you will be provided for and Jesus provides for them in the desolate place where there is nothing there he gives them bread he gives them meat and you might think back to Moses in the wilderness they were in a desolate place Moses gave them bread Moses gave them meat through God Jesus is a greater one than Moses he came to feed these sheep he was a greater than Moses to come he is the greatest shepherd that ever could be he is the one that makes them sit down in the green grass thereby the still water he is teaching them in paths of righteousness just like Psalm 23 it might not be the first passage that recalls Jesus as a shepherd but it is just Jesus becomes their shepherd when you read through Psalm 23 their cups are overflowing because of the way he provides for them the baskets were overflowing at the end of the day they all fed and were satisfied they had enough

[51 : 14] Jesus provided for the ones that he looked out over he saw their need and he gave them what they needed what does Jesus see when he looks out over us this morning what does Jesus see when he looks into my life this morning when he looks over our community this morning so often we feel like sheep that are lost so often we feel like we've gone the wrong way so often we feel like we just don't know where to go the shepherd does not abandon his people the shepherd sees each and every need that we have and the shepherd will provide for us in a way that maybe we never thought anyone else could have provided for us and at the end of the day it may not be the greatest meal it may not be the greatest thing that we ever experience but at the end of the day we'll not be left lacking we will be fed from the riches of his grace and we will be fed abundantly we will be fully satisfied with

Jesus Christ but I read a second passage this morning in Mark chapter 8 and it was a passage about them being in the boat so soon after Jesus had fed the multitudes and they're in the boat just a few of the disciples that are there they've only got one loaf and it's almost as if they're moaning about having so little Jesus says to them do you not remember remember what I've done for you think back the way that I've provided for the great multitudes previously and often there's times where we feel like we might be like the people in the boat maybe as a church we feel like we're in the boat where they are but we feel like we've got very little to work with maybe we feel like we don't have the resource that we would like to have we feel like we've just got enough to sustain ourselves what do we do many of you probably know great stories about how the Lord has worked in the communities of this island the Lord has mightily revealed himself in revival days we even consider ourselves and we see how the Lord has worked in our lives maybe you've heard a testimony of someone and said isn't it amazing how the Lord has worked in their lives we wonder will the Lord work like this again to feed so many will the multitudes come I think we need to come to the desolate place ourselves come to that place of prayer Jesus told the disciples in the boat don't trust in the leaven of the

Pharisees and the leaven of Herod the Pharisees had rules for themselves they had ticked all the boxes you'd be received by God they could do it themselves in their eyes Herod had all the money that he needed he could do anything he wanted himself Jesus is saying to them stop trying to reason it by yourself and reason it by your own ways and your own means remember what I have done he's saying to them trust in me it's interesting that he only says the leaven of the Pharisees

and Herod he doesn't say the bread of the Pharisees and Herod I think that's an interesting point because he knows that loving of yourself and trusting in yourself will never satisfy you like they were satisfied with bread from Jesus they couldn't they wouldn't be satisfied with the leaven they wouldn't be satisfied with the things that they would work up themselves they wouldn't be satisfied with all the things that they could accomplish or the riches that they could achieve they need to put all that aside stop trying to reason it by your own ways and the resources you have come aside to the desolate place remember what I have done be taught by me read my word look at the way that I've had compassion on so many look at the way that I have provided previously it gives us confidence knowing that he will not leave us that he will go with us and provide for us I read of Chalmers Thomas Chalmers his famous names in Scottish church history and they would pray they were men of prayer they would pray for up to three hours a day three hours a day they don't have to get the time to pray for three hours a day and they were so busy and it's such an important task to do they knew the value of taking time aside to pray you read of revivals up in this island and you hear the people went out to the barns to pray for another in the morning and they had so much to do where did they find the time for an hour to pray but it was in those days that the multitudes came when the people were praying to God they didn't know how they could bring the multitudes in they didn't feel like they probably had the resource to do anything but they went to the Lord every morning and gave him time in the desolate place in the quiet place they trusted in him [58 : 29] I will trust in you I thought we were singing about the shepherd they fully trusted in him and that was a clear sign of their trust that they spent time praying for hours every day they knew they couldn't do it themselves and they knew they needed to pray so wherever we are today we look at ourselves we feel like we're so often like the sheep that are lost feel like the sheep that have strayed the sheep that have gone down the wrong track maybe the sheep that refuse to listen his compassion is extended to each and every one of us this morning he loves to teach his people and he will teach us and just like he taught the people out of his compassion he teaches you out of his greatest compassion and you know that when he teaches you he will provide for you compassion because his compassion is true he sees you into your need and he will provide for you in a way like no one else will he will give you a new life he will give you an inheritance to be adopted into heaven as a son of

God what a provision he makes for those who trust in him what a provision he makes for his sheep what a shepherd we have I pray that we all find ourselves in the quiet place that we would see ourselves truly as we are that we would come before Jesus knowing his great compassion and knowing his great provision as a shepherd that will provide for us help us to understand we pray that he would help us to understand we pray that we would see we pray that we would hear we pray that we would know and discover Jesus as our saviour may these thoughts be blessed to all of us we will conclude by singing in mission praise 987 here is love vast as the ocean and afterwards I conclude with prayer here is love vast as the ocean loving kindness as the flood when the prince of life our ransom shed for us his precious blood we'll sing these words to god's place we'll stand to sing here is love past us the ocean loving kindness as the flood when the prince of life our ransom shed for us his precious blood who his love will not remember who has ceased to save his praise he can never be forgotten through our temps eternal days!
of the mountains of crucifixion fight and hope and deep and wide through the flag gates of God's mercy through the past and gracious time!
his love is a love like mighty rivers poured and set from above! unhealthily peace and perfect justice kiss the guilty world in love Jesus Christ be over us as we part be with us in our time of fellowship and our evening service we pray in Jesus name Amen