

## 13.8.23 am

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Date: 13 August 2023

Preacher: Reverend Innes Macsween

- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Good morning and a warm welcome to the service this morning. It's good to see all of you and it's good to see quite a number of visitors with us this morning as well. And if you're able to stay behind at the end of the service, there's tea and there's coffee served in here and it would be good to get the chance to meet with you and enjoy fellowship together.
- There is a holiday Sunday school for primary school aged children and anyone in that age bracket will go out after the second praise if they want to.
- But there's also a creche just behind me there. So if you've got wee ones and you want to take them into the creche at any point, there's a provision for that there. The notices you can see on the screen, evening service at six. I'll take that service tonight myself, God willing.
- Elders meet for prayer tomorrow at half past six. Ladies fellowship as usual tomorrow night and little fishes and Road to Recovery on Tuesday morning and evening. Prayer meeting on Wednesday at half past seven on Zoom and in person and the services next Sunday, God willing, will be taken by myself.
- Prayer meeting on Thursday morning and evening.
- [ 1 : 3 8 ]     Prayer meeting on Thursday morning and evening.
- Innes and also Anna, who's somewhere here. I can't see her just now. And little Isaac and Levi here with us this morning.
- Innes said to me a few weeks ago that he would be in Scalpy over the weekend and if he wanted me to preach, then if I wanted him to preach, then I could ask.
- I've been doing a holiday club this week. I've been doing a holiday club this week. And so I haven't had much preparation time, so I was delighted to take him up on that offer. And also we'll hear a little about the work that Innes is doing in terms of church planting in Inverness.
- So we look forward to hearing God's word through you this morning, Innes. And we will be praying for the ministry that you lead just outside Inverness.
- [ 2 : 5 4 ]     We'll begin this time of worship now and we'll sing to God's praise. The words on the screen and we find them in Mission Praise 275.
- That familiar hymn that we so much love. I heard the voice of Jesus say, come unto me and rest. I heard the voice of Jesus say, come unto me and rest.
- Lay down the weary one, lay down thy head upon my breast.
- I came to Jesus as I was, weary and worn and sad.
- I found in him a resting place, and he has made me glad.
- [ 4 : 1 3 ]     I heard the voice of Jesus say, behold, I freely give.
- The living water, thirsty one, stood down and drink and live.
- I gave to Jesus and I drank of that life-giving stream.
- My thirst was quenched, my soul revived. And now I live in him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say, I am this dark world's light.

[ 5 : 10 ] Look unto me, thy heart shall rise, and all thy day be bright.

I look to Jesus and I found in him my star, my sun.

And in the light of life I'll walk till troubling days are done.

Amen. Just before we pray, I'll maybe give you a wee update on Shona.

We have been praying for Shona Davidson. for those visiting this is a member in the congregation who had an aneurysm just over just over two weeks ago two weeks two weeks yesterday I think it was or Friday and she's been in hospital since she has been making good steady recovery and we're thankful for that I did get a message this morning to say she'd been moved from intensive care to HDU and then into the main ward which had been a great sign but last night she had what they call I think a vasal spasm it's the second time she's had one of these and there's a risk of that in the first three weeks so I don't think it was a major thing I've not got much detail but the family were told there had been a spasm in the night and that she's been moved from the ward back into HDU just so they can keep a close eye on her so just to update you and let's keep on praying for Shona and for the family at this time so let's unite our hearts in prayer let's pray our heavenly father we thank you for for this your day we thank you that this is a day that has been gifted to us a day where we are told to stop work and find that rest for our bodies and for our souls that comes only as we draw near to you and we thank you that we have the promise that when we draw near to you you will not push us away but you will draw near to us and we thank you

[ 7 : 44 ] Lord that that has been made possible for us through Jesus we know that we are sinners and our sin is that barrier that keeps us away from the God who is holy you cannot look upon sin and yet we thank you that because of Jesus we can come to you and know that we will be received that we will be heard that we will be helped that we will be saved and that we will be sustained as we come to you in faith each day we thank you that Jesus is the way he is the one who opened up the way because he made an end of our sin we thank you that he came into this world leaving heaven that he lived for us that he died on the cross for us to pay the debt of our sin we thank you that on the first day of the week this this day that we celebrate that we remember each week we thank you that on the first day Jesus rose from the dead and promised life and eternal security and rest for our souls as we trust in him so father we thank you for sending your son and lord Jesus we thank you for coming and laying down your life for us and holy spirit we thank you for your work in our lives as showing us our sin and showing us that Jesus is the savior drawing us striving with us in order that we will come to him and we ask lord that each one of us in this room today would would come to Jesus we are conscious that there are still some even here who are hearing the voice of God and and yet hesitant resistant perhaps even rebellious and we ask lord that you would continue to strive with each one of us that if we are in rebellion if we are holding on to our sin and hardening our hearts we pray that there would be hearts that are softened today even broken in order that Christ may come in and lord if there are those who are anxious who are fearful as to whether or not they could be received who are burdened with the weight of their sin and unworthiness we ask lord that you would help us to see that Jesus came for sinners and that he alone is the worthy one and he laid down his life so that we can be made worthy in him and for those of us lord who are Christians who may be Christians for a short time or who may have been on the road for a long time we ask lord that we would draw near once more today that we would receive that grace that is sufficient for for today because we know that it's as we come to you each day that we are given the strength and the grace to keep on keeping on so bless us we pray help us as we sing and as we pray and as we listen to your word expounded to have hearts that are tuned to praise you to have souls that are expectant to receive your word work in our hearts lord we pray sanctify us make us more like Jesus and may our worship be in spirit and in truth we pray for those lord who are struggling those who need particular prayer at this time and we think of Shona especially we ask lord that as she is taken back into HDU that you would draw very near to her we pray that any any uh of the effects of this spasm would be very much limited we pray for her mobility we pray lord for her mind that she would be not confused but that she would be

alert and that she would have a clear understanding and a constant sense of your presence with her we commit her to you we thank you that in prayer we are able to carry those that we are maybe some distance from and we pray lord Jesus that you would touch her that if it be your will that you would heal her that you would bring her back to full health and strength and that once more we would we would know her uh here with us in the congregation testifying to your grace and your love and your power and for all others lord who are struggling with illness as we think of them we bring them to you and we pray for them for those who continue to grieve lord we are conscious of them we ask that they would know your comfort and your your your compassion for those who battle with addictions and who can feel low in their minds and anxious about all the the cares of this world we pray that you would meet each one of them of us at the point of our need and we pray lord for the young ones we thank you for the holiday club this past week we thank you for so many who came and we ask father that the seed that was scattered the seed of the gospel would take root in these young hearts and that they would believe that some some of these children we would see coming to faith in the very early years and walking with you and for others perhaps who who may go off in different directions we pray that even in decades to come the message of the gospel through these songs and memory verses would be with them and would be effective we pray now lord that you would continue with us in this day bless each one of us bless all the congregations that we are connected with those who are visiting with us and be with those who are away also that you would refresh them as they take a time of holiday so hear our prayers take away our sin as we confess our sin before you fill us with the holy spirit and lead us as we seek to worship you we pray this in jesus name and for his sake amen boys and girls would you like to come forward please and i will sit down for a minute and ennis will stand up you've met ennis before some of you i know but uh he can introduce himself and he's got something to say to you today hello boys and girls so it's so good to see you my name is ennis now i'm do you guys learn catechisms is that a word you've ever heard before no well i'm going to teach you one and do any of you know any british sign language do any of you ever do sign language a bit i'm going to teach you and in fact i'm going to teach everyone some sign language to learn a catechism where we're going to learn about the basics of what the bible teaches us that's what the catechisms do they help us remember the sort of basics of what the bible teaches us so the question and it's like a sort of question and answer kind of thing the question i have is how can we glorify god that's the sort of big question i'm going to tell you the answer then we're going to slowly break it down and we're going to do some sign language along with it and i want you to do it with me so how can we glorify god by loving him and by obeying his commands and law let me break that down how can we glorify god i want you to follow me we say by loving that's the sign for loving everyone do it this is the sign language of a catechism if i loving him and by obeying so you've palms on your fingers pointing to your top of your head and you go down like that palms up that's obeying his and then take this finger and hop up your arm three

times you go one two three his commands that's commands and then point to your mouth and then slam down on your hand with that finger that's law so how can we glorify god by loving him and by obeying his commands and law oh i missed i meant to go for my hand so that's a very very big question how can we glorify god now to glorify means to to see how amazing something is and to share how amazing something is with everybody else and the first part of the answer i'm only going to focus on the first part of the answer is that he wants us to glorify him to celebrate him to give him attention and praise first of all by what was this what did this one mean exactly well done by loving him so i'm gonna right now listen to my favorite music is that okay with you guys put in my headphones and i'll just do you guys listen to the same song what do you have a favorite song any of you have a favorite song you don't have a favorite song do you have a favorite tv show do you have a favorite film favorite football team yeah yeah so if you have something that you love a favorite song i bet you you listen to that song again and again and again and again and again probably your mums and dads are fed up of the song in the car or you have a favorite tv show or hands up who's watched one film 10 times or more is it a film that you think you've watched 10 times because you love it so much what film i don't even know what you just said what did you say oh big hero six isn't that that's an amazing film that's a fantastic film when you love something you want to watch it again and again and again and when you have a song that you love you listen to it again and again and again and when you have a football team that you love you want to watch them every single time they play and you probably buy their football stuff don't you because you love them so much now love is when you choose to give yourself to someone else you give them your feelings feelings and your time and your attention and your yourself you choose to give them yourself now that's what god did for you because we learn that jesus is god and we learn that he gave he loves himself he loves you so much that he gave himself for you he even died for you now he came back to life and he still loves you so we should glorify him give him attention celebrate him praise him because of that now at the same time when we learn this question how can we glorify god the very first thing he says is by loving him and actually the most important command in all of the bible is love the lord your god with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind god loves you so much he wants you to give him your attention and to listen to him again and again and again and again and to read about him again and again and again and to spend time with him again and again and again all the things that you love tv shows and films and music and teams they don't love you back but god does and he wants you to love him and spend time with him and come to church and come to sunday school and come to lots of different things again and again and again so that we can love him back

so thank you very much boys and girls for listening well i pray for us yeah i pray for you guys let's pray heavenly father heavenly father we thank you so much for jesus we thank you so much for love we thank you that you so love the world that you sent jesus to die for our sins and we pray for all these young folks that we would all bit by bit learn to love you back to glorify you to give you the attention the praise to celebrate you the way that you deserve and that we would spend time with you all of us and listen to you and talk with you and sing to you and sing about you and tell others about you again and again and again because when we love we choose to give ourselves to you be with us now we pray in the rest of this service and we ask this in christ's name amen so we're now going to sing we're going to sing psalm 139 so do you guys go back to your seats so they stay here you can stay here amazing we're going to sing psalm 139 verses 1 to 10 oh lord thou hast me searched and known thou hast me going remember here now

My footsteps on my lying down, the compasses always.

[ 21 : 55 ] The force of most entirely art acquit with all my ways.

For in my tongue before I speak, not any word can be.

But all together, O Lord, it is well known to Thee.

Be hiding before the hearts be set, and laid on me like hand.

Such knowledge is too strange for me to hide, to understand.

[ 23 : 05 ] From thine's river shall I go, or from my passage fly.

Ascent I am, lo, Thou art there, the infinite hell I lie.

Take I the morning waves, and dwell in utmost parts of the sea.

In there, O Lord, shall thy hand be laid. Thy right and hold shall meet.

Remember to pray for the wee ones as they go through.

[ 24 : 26 ] I just want to take a couple of minutes, just two or three minutes. It's up to you, Innes, how long we take, but it'll all be cut off your sermon length, so it's up to you.

Innes, many of us met him in the past here. He preached, and some of us have been to Smithton, where he was the assistant for quite a few years. Five and a half years. The plan was always that Smithton would plant a church just somewhere on the outskirts of M&S;, and that's happened now.

And so tell us, first of all, Innes, where it is you've planted, and just a wee bit about the community that you're in. Mm-hmm. So about January 2022, we gathered a team of people who lived in or around Tornagree, which is the new town being built beside Inverness Airport.

And so we started meeting in a small community room there. This is brand new. It's going to be 5,000 homes and 12,000 people plus built over the next sort of 30, 40 years.

At the moment, it's still only about 350-ish homes, maybe 800, 900 people. But then you've got Croy up the road. You've got Ardesea across the road on the A96 near the airport as well.

[ 25 : 52 ] And there are – so there is no church. It's so new, Tornagree. So lots of beautiful – if you get a chance and you're in Inverness going anywhere near the airport, pop in and see this new town.

It's been built in a very deliberate and different way to other communities. So even though it's early days, it's already got a shop, pharmacy, cafe, tennis courts, play parks, allotments.

And it's built in a way that makes people – it's actually successfully bringing back the idea of a community. And so much like how I grew up, you can't go to the shop without speaking to someone for half an hour, which, like the rest of Inverness, is unheard of.

I've lived in a number of places around Inverness, and you might know your immediate neighbor, and that's it. You don't know – even in new developments, you just keep yourself to yourself. They're building it differently. And everyone's coming in with that vibe of, I want to be part of a community, which just plays right into the hands of what we're trying to do.

So it didn't have a church. We had a lot of people who already had moved there and lived there. So over the course of a year, 2022, we met in a small community room in Tornagree.

[ 27 : 00 ] About 35 of us, 25 adults and about 10-plus children every Sunday. And then we launched public services on January this year.

And we, by God's providence, a door opened for us to rent the nearest Church of Scotland, Petty Church of Scotland, which is on the A96, right before the roundabout to the airport.

So it's just there. They're closing it. It's actually – they have their last service. They meet at 12. We meet at 10 in the morning, and they meet at 12. And they're having their last service next Sunday, a week to eight.

And we're in the process of buying it. God will it, if everything goes well. But we've got a congregation of about 50 to 60, sometimes 70 folk every week.

Lots of new people. Lots of people who have never in their adult life gone to church before. But just through getting to know folk, befriending folk in the community, being out and about.

[ 28 : 01 ] And, yeah, those people have started coming, which is a wonderful thing. Yeah, I've got a kind of special interest in this because when I felt a call to ministry, you had to approach your minister.

And then you were put to a church for six months to kind of be assessed. And the church that I was put to was – you didn't know this until this morning – was the church at Ardesear and Petty that were linked to that time.

And at that time, the congregation was dwindling, and you had a sense that they probably didn't have a lot of time left. The people were lovely. That was a long time ago, though, wasn't it? Well, I'm not – maybe three or four decades, yeah.

No, not quite that long. Was it – probably not far off 20 years ago now. Okay, wow. Let me think about it. 15 to 20 years. I won't go into the details of that.

But they were lovely, warm people. I can remember this beautiful church building. And you drive past it, and I used to think often, I wonder what it looks like now.

[ 29 : 02 ] And I wonder, is there much life there? So it's just an encouragement to hear that although one chapter in the church's history is closing, the gospel message will continue to be preached.

It was built as a free church in 1849. And then became United Free in 1900 or so, and then church school in 1929. So it's a very interesting history of churches.

So it's great to hear of the gospel work going on. Very quickly, prayer points for us to be praying for you? Yeah, pray for the – we're hoping to become, in the next year, independent from Smithton and become a fully sanctioned charge with our own elders and deacons.

I've got two elders and two deacons already through Smithton attached to us, but we're at a stage already where we're probably going to go with our own. And just really the practical side of things is a big part, buying a building, hopefully down the line buying a manse.

But really, we had a holiday club ourselves, and we've had a couple of families coming since to the church. And we did Hope Explore before the summer.

[ 30 : 11 ] We had five people. We're doing Christianity Explore. We had six people coming along this time. And just pray for the long, patient work of explaining the gospel well to people who barely know of them or completely misunderstand the gospel.

So pray for us in our evangelism to that time. Okay, we'll pray briefly, and then I'll hand over to you. Heavenly Father, we thank you for the work of the gospel. We thank you that Jesus said that he will build his church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

And we thank you, in particular, for the work of the gospel that's continuing in Ardusee and Petty and Tornograin, this new development.

We ask, Lord, that you would be at work as we see that you already are at work. We thank you for Innes and for Anna and Nicole that you've placed upon them. We ask that as they minister, as they reach out, that you would give them strength and perseverance and sensitivity, and that they would know your leading and guiding and your grace each day.

We thank you for those that have been touched already by the message of the gospel, the kids through the holiday clubs, those who attended Christianity Explored and Hope Explored.

[ 31 : 28 ] We ask, Father, that where there is no knowledge of your love for these people, that they would hear the good news about Jesus.

We are conscious that in Scotland this is now news to many people. And we ask that they would understand the goodness and the importance of this news.

And, Lord, where are those who maybe have a warped understanding and maybe a legalistic view of how you become a Christian? And we ask that they would see and taste of your grace and that they would be drawn to your son.

So help Innes and all those who work with them as they continue this work of your gospel and give them strength for the days ahead.

And may there be many who turn to Jesus and who are saved and sanctified. And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Innes, I'm going to hand over to you.

[ 32 : 28 ] So, thank you. Let's turn to the Gospel of Matthew and just read a few verses from Matthew chapter 11. And at the end, the very famous words of Jesus from verse 25 to 30.

Matthew chapter 11 and verse 25. At that time, Jesus said, I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children.

Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son, and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Amen. May the Lord bless to us the reading of his word. In a few moments, we're going to come and look at these words together. But first, we're going to sing a Gaelic psalm, Psalm 4.

[ 34 : 04 ] The final two verses of Psalm 4 in Gaelic. We'll stay sitting down, and we can sing to the Lord's praise. Amen.quesf MUSIC PLAYS

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 37 : 17 ] Thank you.

A bit like a zombie when you wake up. Sometimes our hearts and our minds are too full, too anxious to rest.

And sometimes we come back from holidays. It's nearing the end of the summer holidays and we still need another holiday. If you have young children, you need a holiday to recover from your holiday.

Because really a holiday with children is just childcare in a foreign country. Sometimes rest doesn't work.

Sometimes we're looking forward to a day off. It doesn't work the way we hoped. It doesn't have the impact the way we wanted it to.

[ 38 : 30 ] We're still tired. We're still tired. Jesus promises rest in our reading today from Matthew 11. Those famous words of verse 28.

come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. But what kind of rest does he mean?

If you are a parent or if you remember it, you remember you know 2 a.m. wake-ups and you need a bottle feed your child or change a nappy, is Jesus offering to do that shift for you so you can sleep on?

Will he take care of the paperwork so that you can go have a nap? What's the rest that he's offering you? Is he offering you time off?

What is he saying in these verses? What do they mean? What does he mean by rest? And so to get to the heart of that, rather than us kind of fill that in, in the ways that we would like that to mean, we always have to go to scripture and see what does scripture say about rest?

[ 39 : 39 ] And so the first point this morning is a very simple point. The rest is history. Looking at the history of rest. Because when God created everything, in those days of creation, at the very beginning, there was no irritation in the way in which the cosmos functioned.

There was no disharmony. Just smooth runnings. In fact, everything was working so smoothly, with such harmony, and it was so good that on the seventh day, God rested.

Not because of exhaustion, but because of exhilaration. Our God enjoyed it. He saw that it was very good.

And that word Sabbath that we use so often, literally means he rested. So I wonder if you've ever thought about it like this, looking and thinking back at the days of creation.

The day of rest, which was the seventh day, was actually Adam's first full day. He was created sometime during the sixth day of creation.

[ 40 : 57 ] He apparently went to sleep twice. On one occasion, a beautiful woman appears. And then the second time, the seventh day appears. He began his life, ultimately, in rest.

It was his first day of the week. And so he's been created in a world that is functioning so beautifully, so well.

Here was a world to enjoy, Eve to live in harmony with. And he had work to do. To extend the garden to the ends of the earth.

Now this was easy work. It wasn't hard work. That came later, with the curse of the fall. And with this task in hand, given this task to do, and with this wife beside him, his first full day, his Sabbath.

It's an indication that their whole working life comes out of the energy that you get from rest.

[ 42 : 09 ] Now, we know, we can understand that. When you're tired and tense and worried, life becomes increasingly unstable. So, when you have peace and rest, you find yourself with energy and creativity.

You're ready to do things. But then came the destruction of that rest through sin. And there was the fall of the harmony between humanity and God, between us as human beings, and between us and the cosmos.

Brokenness in our very genes, in our very, we brittle against creation. Creation groans because of us.

And so the Bible, from that point on, is a story laced with restlessness. That's part of our story. The restlessness of our sinful condition with the promise in Genesis 3 that someone would come who will bring rest.

And so then later in Genesis chapter 6, just a few chapters after this, when Noah's parents had a baby boy, they call him Noah.

[ 43 : 36 ] And the name Noah sounds very much like the Hebrew verb for rest. And so his parents knew of the promise of God. spanning the generations before, that someone would come who would restore rest.

And so they hoped. Perhaps it was Noah. Maybe. And in quite a dramatic way, Noah did find rest.

as the judgment of God fell upon the world, he found rest and peace and security with his family on the ark.

And then rest in this newly recreated world, reshaped world. And so this was an early picture of how God would bring rest in the true Noah to come.

but it didn't last. Then we have the story of slavery in Egypt. We have the promise and the covenant promise for God to take them out of that slavery, to bring them to a promised land.

[ 44 : 43 ] He gives them, once he has saved them, once he has brought them out of that captivity, he gives them his law. He gives them how they should live. He gives them the fourth commandment to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy, to not work and to rest in the Lord.

But that commandment couldn't change us. It just showed us even more how all our efforts to try and rest aren't enough.

They won't work enough. And so zoom ahead to now. How tired are you?

Have you given up on resting? Do you feel like Bilbo Baggins when he tells Gandalf, I feel thin, sort of stretched, like butter scraped over too much bread?

Where will you find the rest? that we all yearn for? That peace that humanity is always looking for in some way?

[ 46 : 00 ] Well, second point this morning, the rest is in Jesus. When Jesus says these words in Matthew 11, come to me and I will give you rest.

It means he's the true Noah. It means he's the true Adam, the second Adam. it means he's the creator who enjoyed the rest of the seventh day of creation.

It means he's the Lord of the Sabbath. And so it's no accident that directly after these words of rest, this promise of rest that Jesus gives, Jesus in chapter 12, and remember there was no chapter divisions in the original New Testament, in the original Bible.

that's been put in to help us navigate where do we go in the Bible. But these words at the end of verse 11 flow straight into chapter 12. And it's no accident that after those words, after that promise of rest, Jesus tells Sabbath day stories.

These marvelous examples of how Jesus was able to give what the Sabbath day of rest only symbolized and pointed us towards. Here was someone with a withered hand, and there was somebody else, blind and mute, both of them burdened, weary, heavy laden, and helpless.

[ 47 : 31 ] And Jesus works in them a deposit, a foretaste of new creation power into their lives.

He brings a sample of the new heavens and the new earth He is going to bring directly to bear in their lives, giving them rest and peace and hope.

And it's clear, here is the Lord who can give you rest. Here is the Lord of creation who can undo the twistedness and the disharmony within the genetic makeup of our characters, within our physical disabilities, within our heart and sin disability.

But how is He going to do it? What's so special about Him? How can He give us rest? Well, He does it by entering into the deepest darkness of our restlessness.

I don't know how many of you in this room have ever gone through the deep sorrow, deep grief, deep depression, deep agony, psychosis, anxiety, for a spell you've not been yourself.

[ 48 : 54 ] How can Jesus bring you rest? Your restlessness, you think, is way beyond what other people's tiredness and restlessness is.

Your sins are way beyond what other people's sins are. How can Jesus give you rest? Well, the gospel writers bring this out in very powerful terms.

They describe Jesus going into the garden of Gethsemane, the place where he was betrayed and arrested before the cross. And they use violent emotional language.

The gospels say that Jesus began to be filled with sorrow and greatly distressed. There was an 18th century English scholar who once said that the verb that's used here describes the overwhelmed.

describes the half-hearted state that emerges from physical derangement or mental oppression. I think that's why the gospel writers are at pains during the events of the Garden of Gethsemane before the cross to point out that Jesus fell on the ground.

[ 50 : 14 ] There's a certain sense that he is going through a restlessness of an unparalleled nature. And remember just before that event he had just given the disciples the cup of communion blessing.

The new covenant. He had given them the fruit of the vine. Wine to drink and bread to eat. To be blessed in that upper room.

And now he's in the garden. Hours later taking from his father's hand the cup that his disciples should be drinking.

The cup of wrath. The cup of terrible restlessness that is the fruit of sin. And he's tasting it on a level that none of us can even begin to imagine.

And so he is going into the darkest chamber of restlessness in order to take all of that upon his shoulders. Taking our burdens.

[ 51 : 33 ] Taking our weariness. Taking the fruit of our sin. All the disharmony. All the restlessness. all the fears.

He's taking it on his shoulders. And then he goes to the cross road. And he deals not only with the restlessness but with the very source of our restlessness.

As Isaiah 53 puts it, but he was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought us peace was on him.

And by his wounds we are healed. Or in the original it could also mean we are made whole. those of you who have really really messed up in this room.

And in many ways there's no need to look around the room. There'll be an element of truth that when you look within you'll think I'm a mess up here. They don't know.

[ 52 : 44 ] this preacher doesn't know a thing about me. Whatever you've done, whatever mess up, whatever thing is in your life, you wouldn't want to talk about it with someone who was proud.

You wouldn't want to talk about it with someone who didn't understand. Those of us who have struggled with any sort of type of mental health, you don't want to talk to someone who's never had an idea of it, never had it themselves.

Because you're scared that they're going to scoff at you, or not believe you, or just think you're making it up, or you're weak, and all this kind of thing. You fill your head with these ideas, and to be honest, it's true.

Some people do make comments and say things. I've been at the brunt end of it myself. Whereas you don't want to talk to that person and you wouldn't go near them ever again to talk about that thing.

But when you find someone who's also been through what you've been through, a miscarriage, on medication for whatever it is, or having gone through cancer, there's an element of relief.

[ 53 : 50 ] you wouldn't want to talk to someone who couldn't empathize. You don't want to talk to someone or deal with someone who, as you're telling them what you've gone through, they would have a bit of a sour face.

We prefer to find someone who knows what we've gone through, in some way. You want to go to someone gentle and humble in heart.

And this is Jesus. Gentle and humble in these verses, you read it in chapter 11 there, come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest, take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Gentle and humble means meek and understanding and lowly, servant hearted towards you. Not above you, not looking down on you.

Jesus' natural disposition towards those who come to him is not a pointed finger saying, I told you so, or why didn't you do this, that, or the other thing, and you wouldn't have been in this boat, you wouldn't have felt that way, you wouldn't have messed up if you just followed what I told you to do.

[ 55 : 20 ] His, that can be our reaction, that might be a human reaction that you faced, but his reaction to you is never a pointed finger saying, I told you so.

He has perpetually, this is one of the few times in scripture we are told directly what the heart of God towards sinners is. He has perpetually open arms, he is constantly accessible, and for all his glory and power, no one in history has been more approachable than Jesus.

There are no hoops to jump through. Here he is, and Matthew 11 tells us specifically who qualifies for this fellowship with Jesus.

all who are weedy and heavy burdened. You don't need to unburden yourself first, pull yourself together first, clean yourself up first.

Any notion of that in your head, get it right out. Your need is what qualifies you to come.

[ 56 : 38 ] And no payment, I will give you rest. I will gift you my rest. This is the one who invites us to come to him.

Now, if you don't come to him, don't think that gentle and humble means that he's a wet wimp. The verses immediately before this, verses 20 to 24, give us an idea of how Jesus handles those who refuse to repent, who refuse to acknowledge their need, who refuse to see their sin.

Woe to you, Karatzin, woe to you, Bethsaida. It's judgment. But for the repentant who will accept the invite, he's the true ark of Noah, in whom all can hide as the ark takes the brunt of the storms, keeping us safe in his bosom.

And so how do we finally enjoy that rest? How does that rest actually apply in life? The rest is in him.

What does that look like? What does that mean? him? Well, I'm not going to stand here and tell you to take more naps, to do this thing more, to have more devotional time, and that's the ticket to resting in Jesus.

[ 58 : 19 ] Now, those things are not bad, and those are great disciplines of enjoying the rest that you've been given, but for some of us, illness means you can't sleep well.

for some of us, life circumstances mean early starts and late nights. For some of us, you're on night shifts, and so your pattern of day-to-day and how you juggle life is all over the place.

But these words here are more than lessons in time management, are more about just get more sleep. In fact, for those of us, you struggle sometimes, the pressure to get to sleep, and you see the clock, and you're like, okay, I've got eight hours, two hours go by, okay, sleep now, I've got six hours, and each time you're telling yourself, I've still got this amount of time left until it's gone.

The anxiety to get to sleep is part of the pressure that keeps you awake. the idea of rest in this passage is less to do with practical things like me saying to you, just be less busy.

Reorganize your life and be less busy and make time to rest more. Now that is a good and wise application of many parts of God's word. But his promise here is rest for your souls.

[ 59 : 49 ] not necessarily rest for your bodies. And this rest is gifted and enjoyed in his personal invite to you.

These words are not a lecture in time management. Instead, this passage has everything to do with the gracious gift of a rest that is out of your hands.

and only found in the open arms of Jesus. So if I had a final point, it would be called the ruler's rest.

Because to enjoy this rest is to simply accept the invite and in his arms you find he's got the whole world in his hands.

rest. And when you do have a bad day and everything goes to pot, or when you're going through a season in life and all notions of rest, you are done in.

[ 61 : 00 ] You still know he's got the world in his hands. things. It's more than just blandly saying to yourself the cliché, it's okay, everything is going to be okay.

Although it is okay to say everything is going to be okay, if that is your shortcut way of reminding yourself to bask in the fact that the God who made it all, who controls it all, the Lord of all creation and the Lord of the Sabbath is the personal one who invites you in because he's taken on the burdens, he has entered into the depths of our restlessness, he has paid it all, conquered it all because of his gentle and humble heart and he says again to you today, come to me.

Verse 27 said all things, Jesus said all things have been committed to me by my father, so come to me. He's the one who paid the death wages of sin because we cannot keep God's law, he pays for the guilt that plagues your conscience, he took on the anxieties you cannot shoulder, he took on the fears you cannot conquer, he took it all and he rules over it all and the same one who rules over all is the one who is gentle and humble enough not to be distant from you, not to be sour on you, but to draw you in again and again and again and again tomorrow you'll mess up, some of you more seriously than others, he invites you in again based on his gracious gift of rest and purely based on his invitation not to manage your time, reorganize your life, devote yourself more, do more reading, do more this, do more that, come back and he'll say to you in his arms it's finished, to his people who trust in him he says it is going to be okay because I am the alpha and the omega the beginning and the end,

God is not anxious about the current state of the world, God is not anxious about the mess in the political system in our nation, he's not anxious about it, God is not anxious about whatever is going on in your home, the baggage, the history, the deep dysfunctionality of it, the breaking at the seams part of it, God's not anxious, in fact he has ordained all of this so that his glory, the glory of his grace and the glory of when the repentant come to him might shine all the more brilliantly, it might not come about this full idea of rest in the here and now, it won't, we're promised suffering and difficulty in this life if you follow

[ 65 : 53 ] God that we can slip into thinking, I deserve blessing and rest and help, a little bit like the parable of the workers in Matthew chapter 20, when the workers who started early in the morning end up getting paid the same as the workers who started with just an hour or two left of the day, and the master says to those who are grumbling and who have worked longer hours, we've done more, we've done more for you, why are we getting paid the same as them?

God is almost ironic that he says, take my yoke upon you and learn from me. To yoke is farming language, where two animals are linked together by a heavy bar so that they end up walking in the same direction, but the yoke he puts on you, connecting you to him, is easy, it's light, when the other side of that is connected to Jesus, he's taking the weight, but he wants you along for the ride.

Walk with him. Talk with him, follow him, obey him, his fellowship, his kindness, his infinite attitude of gentleness towards your lack of smooth running.

Then you go and work to extend the garden of his kingdom and his goodness to the ends of the earth. All the work that has been left for his people to do, all the commands that we must obey, go and make disciples of all the nations.

Amen. Amen. We're going to finish singing the song, Christ is mine forevermore.

[ 69 : 16 ] These wonderful words, they might be new to some of you. Hopefully not. They are fantastically helpful biblical words for us to sing, truth to enjoy. Let's stand and sing to God's praise.

I am missed forevermore. In times of sorrow, darkness no one is understood.

Through the valley I must travel, where I see no earthly good. But mine is peace that flows from heaven.

[ 71 : 02 ] And the strength in times of need. I know my pain will not be wasted. Christ completes His work in me.

I know days here as a stranger. Pilgrim on a narrow way. One with Christ I will encounter. Harm and hate, hate for His name. But mine is armor for this battle. Strong enough to last the war.

And He has said He will deliver. Safely to the golden shore. Mine are keys to Zion City. Where beside the King I walk. For there my heart has found its treasure. Christ is mine forevermore.

[ 72 : 18 ] Lift up your heads and be blessed by the words of God. Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forevermore.

Amen. Amen. Amen.