

15.6.25 am

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Date: 15 June 2025

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Good morning. A warm welcome to the service this morning. It's good to see all of you and it's good to have some visitors with us especially and you are very much welcome.

! There's Keenus Coffee at the end of the service today as usual and please stay behind. Visitors, that's a special invitation for you but also for everyone today.

Today actually is Gordon's last day with us before he heads off to be the minister in training in Carlingley so we have a wee slice of cake I think to have at the end of the service so please stay for that if you're able to do so.

Service in the evening is at six and that will be Gordon's last official service with us. He'll be back and forth to some degree I expect but it's his last official service with us before he goes to Carlingley as minister in training.

So Gordon's going to preach this evening and I will lead communion, a simple evening communion at the end of the service after Gordon has preached.

[1 : 08] Well during the service but after Gordon has preached. So be encouraged to come along to that. For any who know the Lord, who are trusting the Lord, who may have been for some time now but have never come forward into Communicant membership, be reminded of the fact that you don't have to wait for a communion weekend.

The session is always ready to meet with somebody who wants to profess their faith. The session will be delighted to meet with anybody today who is hearing that call to come and profess faith in Jesus and take communion for the first time.

So please speak to me at the end if that's you. Also at the end of the service this evening we'll have a time of fellowship, informal fellowship. And we'll have maybe some of the cake that we haven't finished and one or two other things.

And Gordon, I'll ask him a few questions. He's been in the business over many years of interrogating people. We'll have some interrogation of Gordon this evening and we'll hear a little about how God has called him into this next chapter.

One or two other intimations. There's lots on the screen as you've seen. But let me just highlight a couple more. First to say there's a deacons court meeting here in the church half past six on Thursday, this coming Thursday.

[2 : 28] So deacons note that please. Services next Sunday. The morning service will be a family service. This is the, I think it will be the last Sunday before the schools break up.

So family service and the children will take part in that and probably be given their books at the end of term. So be encouraged to come out to that service. Evening service is going to be taken by the Reverend John Lachey McLeod.

He was in touch a long time ago asking to come and preach and speak a little about Romania. And so we'll hear from John Lachey about Romania and we'll be able to perhaps add our amends to that as well as some of us were out there.

Last thing to note is just to say that due to recent changes in the PVG scheme, we're having to make sure that everybody who's working with children, vulnerable people, has the right paperwork. So due to recent changes in the PVG scheme, Joyce will be available after the morning services Sunday 22nd and Sunday 29th June. God willing to assist new applicants with completing the forms and just to help book them through the system.

[3 : 48] For those needing to apply for PVG for the first time, take two forms of ID, one photographic, one addressed. And basically Joyce will help you get through this.

If you love filling out forms and want to spend many hours doing it in your own home, feel free. But if you want to be fast-tracked through with somebody who knows what they're doing, Joyce will help

you with that these two weeks.

These, I think, are all the notices. So let's begin this time of worship and we will sing to God's praise. The words on the screen from Psalm 34.

Psalm 34, verses 1 to verse 9. God will I bless all times as praise. My mouth shall still express. My soul shall boast in God. The meek shall hear with joyfulness.

We'll stand to sing to God's praise. Amen. God will I bless all times as praise.

[4 : 51] My mouth shall still express. My soul shall boast in God.

My soul shall boast in God. The meek shall hear with joyfulness.

Thanks, Lord. I sought the Lord.

God will I bless you.

God will I bless you.

[6 : 40] SONG CONTINUES Christ can see that God is good, who trusts in Him is blessed.

Fear God is saved, now that in fear shall be with what oppressed.

Well, let's join together in prayer. Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you once more that we are found here on this, your day, a day that has been set aside from all other days where we can stop our work and we can take time to be still and know that you are God and know the blessing of the fact that you are with us.

We thank you for that promise that we have received in your word that we are two or three meet together in the name of Jesus, your Son. You will be with us and you will bless us.

And so we thank you, Lord, for that blessing, for that promise and for the encouragement also that we receive as we come together as your people. We're told not to get out of the habit of meeting together, but to encourage each other.

[8 : 47] So we thank you for each other. We thank you, Lord, that we can together encourage each other to look to Jesus, the one who is the author and the perfecter of our faith.

And we thank you, Father, that you are the God who is good. Oh, taste and see that God is good, who trusts in him, is blessed.

And we thank you, Lord, for your abundant goodness to us. Even when we look around at the creation that we find ourselves a part of, we thank you for your goodness, that you have not created a world of grace and a world that is without beauty.

And we thank you that we see such beauty, such majesty, such awesome power in your creation.

And as we look at the creation, we are pointed to the one who made it all, the one who holds it all together.

And so we thank you for your goodness to us, Lord, and your creative power. We thank you for your goodness to us, Father, that we can come in prayer to the God who is over all.

[9 : 58] And yet we do not have to be in fear and trembling in a dreadful sense. Yes, there is reverence and there is awe. But we thank you that we are not those who are fearful of how you will be towards us.

You have promised that when we come in the name of Jesus, you will receive us. And you have taught us, Lord Jesus, to come in prayer and to address God as our Father.

And we praise you, Lord, for the blessing of that, that we can know you as our Father, our perfect Father who is always there and whose care and love for us is so vast, so wide, so deep, so great, that we cannot even grasp the magnitude of it.

But help us, we pray, and not just in these moments, but continually to be coming to you as our Father, as the God who loves us and who will never drive us away.

We thank you that we can come also to you as our Savior. Lord Jesus, you have said that you are the way, you are the truth, you are the life, you are the one who laid down your life to take away our sin.

[11 : 14] You are the one who took the curse of sin from us so that we can have the blessing that is promised in the psalm that we have sung. And we thank you for that work of salvation which is completed, that the Savior died and rose again, triumphant over the grave, and pleads our cause at God's right hand, omnipotent to save.

Help us, we pray, every one of us, to cry out to you and ask you, Lord Jesus, to be our Savior. And for any here who are saved but have not yet professed that faith in Jesus, we pray that even this afternoon, as we think about the prospect of the Lord's table, we pray that there would be none who would remain secret believers, that all of us would come and remember all that has been done to

secure our salvation, that we would take the chance to profess faith in Jesus and to proclaim his death until he comes.

And we thank you for the blessing also of the help of the Holy Spirit. You, Lord God, are with us always. And even though Jesus is no longer physically with us, we cannot see him with our eyes, we thank you that he said, it's better that I go away, because then the Spirit will come.

The one who teaches us, the one who comforts us, the one who helps us, who is everywhere at all times, and able to respond to us in our needs.

So we thank you, Holy Spirit, for all that you have done and are continuing to do in our lives.

Convict us of sin, we pray, and point us to the Lord Jesus, the one who is the Savior of sinners.

[13:00] So accept our worship, we pray, and help us in this day as we come to you. We thank you that you hear and you answer our prayers. We pray for a world that is so broken at this time.

We see scenes of violence and war in Israel and Iran, in Ukraine and Russia, even close to home in Ireland.

And we ask, Lord God, that you would have mercy upon these places, that you would bring peace where there's war, and that you would cause those who are in positions of leadership to look away from themselves and their own name and look to Jesus, the one who is the Prince of Peace.

We pray for all who are struggling at our local level also. We pray for those who are grieving, continuing to remember Peggy's family and others, who are continuing to grieve for loved ones who have passed on in recent months and distant years.

We pray that you would comfort all who mourn. We pray that you would light your hand of healing upon those who are sick. We remember Angus Alec at home with problems with his back.

[14:16] We ask that you would bless him, Lord, where he is. We pray for Neil Cameron in hospital at this time with an infection, and we ask, Lord, that you would drive that away and that he would know your presence, and Ketak also, where she is at home.

And for many more who are sick, those who are present in the congregation, those who are at home, those who are part of our family or our friend, our group of friends, as we think of them, we carry them to you in prayer, asking, Lord, that they would know your healing touch, if that be your will.

And we pray also for those who are healthy, those who are not in any kind of material need, who have the whole world as far as we can see, and yet who do not have Jesus, who are restless in their hearts.

And we ask, Lord God, that you would create that soul thirst that finds satisfaction only in Jesus.

And so, as we remember those who may be far from you and who show no apparent interest, we bring them to you in prayer and ask that you would awaken hearts, that you would touch souls, and that you would convict and convert the lost.

So hear our prayers and guide us and lead us as we continue to worship you. Take away our sin, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Boys and girls, would you like to come forward, please?

[16:05] How are you guys today? There's more of you today. Good to see you all. So, last week, I didn't have anyone, anything to show you, but I had someone to show you.

Do you remember who I showed you last week? Remember who it was? Michael? No? Taffy, yes, it was Taffy last week. So, I don't have anything to show you this week either.

Well, I might have in a minute. But I do have someone to show you this week. And he's sitting right in front of you. He's looking like that, and I've never told him.

It's Gordon. So, up you come, Gordon. So, boys and girls, do you all know who this is?

Yeah. Gordon, yeah. Everybody knows Gordon. Gordon, don't you? I think you've probably known Gordon for most of your lives. Haven't you?

[17:08] From when you were little, tiny tots, you've probably known Gordon. He's done Sunday school with you. Have you put your hand up if you've seen Gordon at Sunday school? He's probably played football with you, taking the legs out from under you, jam and connect.

Every tackle Gordon goes into, whether you're that size or you're the size of Taffy. He goes in with both feet in full force. He has been the YF leader for many of the ones who are a bit older.

You know that even Mary, my wife, Gordon was her YF leader. That's how old he is. I remember at lockdown when we couldn't meet in the church.

And I remember when Gordon got gunged in the garden. All these videos that we were doing. So you've known Gordon over a lot of years. And I was thinking this morning when I was walking the

dog, Gordon's a bit like a signpost.

Not because he's tall and thin. But Scott's more like a signpost, I suppose, from that point of view. But Gordon's been like a signpost because of all the stuff that he's done.

[18:28] What does a sign do? What's a signpost's job? Michael. It points you in the direction of something, somewhere.

So, what or who has Gordon been pointing you in the direction of all the years when he's been playing football and doing YF and Sunday school and all these things?

Michael, you're the only guy on... Well, come on, you guys. Who's he been pointing us to? To God. To Jesus. So today, boys and girls, whether you're young or you're a bit older, we want to, just as a congregation, say thank you to Gordon for all the ways that he's been pointing us to Jesus.

And I think that the best thing that could be done for Gordon, the thing that would make him probably happiest more than anything else, is if you, boys and girls, younger ones and older ones, would look to Jesus and put your trust in the Lord Jesus.

So, we want to just give Gordon a couple of wee gifts. The first thing, Gordon, we have got you as a church is a Bible.

[19:53] We thought you needed one. A larger print one. And it's a large print Bible for people who are getting a bit older. Thank you very much. So that's a Bible from us and a wee book that yourself and Julian can read in the morning that gives you some things to think about.

And I thought the last thing, there's a card as well, Gordon, and the last thing I thought I would get you is a comb. See, see when you go to other churches, they've got rooms called vestries.

We don't even have a vestry. But they've got a wee vestry and that's the room the minister goes into before he comes through to preach the sermon. And they always have a wee mirror in the vestry.

And so you see these ministers and they're combing their hair before they go in to do the preaching. I've got no use for it. I don't have a vestry and I don't have any hair. So I've got no use for a comb.

But I thought you could put that in your suit pocket. Thank you very much. So Gordon, we just want to say thank you for everything. And we want to give you the chance now to say a few words and maybe start crying if possible.

[21:03] Thank you very much, David. Thank you very much, everyone. We've thoroughly enjoyed our time here in North Harris. It's been a real blessing to be part of the congregation.

Obviously the girls have been here with us and some of them will be staying. As David said, the one thing that we would desire and certainly I will be praying for for each and every one of you here is that you will turn to Jesus and follow Jesus all the days of your life.

That that is the only way. He said that he is the way, the truth and the life. And that only by coming to Jesus can we inherit eternal life. And that would be my prayer as it always has been for the young ones here, for some of the older ones that are here.

It's nice to see you. I know you're not here because this is my last Sunday but it's great to see you here. Some that have been through the youth fellowship and are still walking with God. And that would be a prayer for each and every one of you that you walk with God and you follow him all the days of your life.

Thank you. Thank you, Gordon. There you go. Before you go, let's pray for you. I won't put my hands on you. Don't worry. Heavenly Father, we thank you for this day.

[22:17] We thank you for Gordon and for the way that he has walked with you, for the way that he has known you over many decades. We thank you for the way that he has served you in the police when he was working.

We thank you for the way that he was salt and light. We thank you that in the congregation here and in the East Church and in different places over the years he has been in worship and he has, over these years, taken every opportunity to point us and especially the young people to the Lord Jesus. So we ask, Lord, that as he continues to do that and as he goes into this new chapter, as he and Gillian head to Carlway, we ask, Lord, that you would bless them and that you would equip them for all that they will do there.

And we ask that as they come to the end of that period as well, that you would be going before them and showing them the way to go. So bless them, we pray, and bless all that they have shared of the gospel in this place over these years.

And we pray, especially for the children here, that they who have spent so much time with Gordon would listen to what he has said and would go to the Lord Jesus, would come to the Lord Jesus for that salvation.

[23 : 36] So hear our prayers and continue with us, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you, Gordon. We'll hear more tonight. We're going to sing now to God's praise the words on the screen from Mission Praise 799.

All I once held dear at knowing you, Jesus. built my life upon, all this world revealed, and wars to own.

All I once thought, I have counted lost, spent and worthless now, compare to this.

Knowing you, Jesus, knowing you, there is no greater thing.

You're my all, you're the best, you're my joy, my righteousness, and I love you, Lord.

[25 : 08] Now my heart's desire is to know you more, to be found in you, and known as yours to possess my faith, what I could not earn, all surpassing give, of righteousness.

Knowing you, Jesus, knowing you, there is no greater thing.

You're my all, you're the best, you're my joy, my righteousness, and I love you, Lord.

Oh, to know the power of your risen life, and to know you in your sufferings, to become like you, in your death, my Lord, so with you to live, and never die.

Knowing you, Jesus, knowing you, there is no greater thing.

[26 : 50] You're my all, you're the best, you're my joy, my righteousness, and I love you all.

Okay, boys and girls, if you head through to Sunday school, pray for them as they go. If we could turn now in our Bibles, please, to Matthew chapter 14.

Matthew chapter 14.

And we'll read from verse 22 to the end of the chapter. This is God's word. Immediately, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side while he dismissed the crowds.

And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat by this time was a long way from the land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them.

[28 : 20] And in the fourth watch of the night, he came to them, walking on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified and said, It is a ghost.

And they cried out in fear. But immediately, Jesus spoke to them, saying, Take heart, it is I, do not be afraid. And Peter answered him, Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water. He said, Come. So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid. And beginning to sink, he cried out, Lord, save me.

Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, O you of little faith, why did you doubt? And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, Truly, you are the Son of God. And when they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret. And when the men of that place recognised him, they sent around to all that region and brought to him all who were sick and implored him that they might only touch the fringe of his garment.

[29 : 33] And as many as touched it were made well. Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us. We'll sing again now to God's praise.

We'll sing again from Psalm 34, verses 10 and 11. I'll read the verses in English and we'll remain seated to sing in Gaelic.

So, verses 10 and 11. The lions young may hungry be and they may lack their food, but they that truly seek the Lord shall not lack any good.

O children, hither do ye come, and unto me give ear, I shall you teach to understand how ye the Lord should fear. These two stanzas of Psalm 34 but remain seated to sing to God's praise.

B'you who groan B'you who groan CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

[31 : 38] CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS as we come to study it.

We pray that you would minister to us what we've prayed for ourselves. Lord, we pray for the children as they go through to Sunday school class.

We pray for them and as they now sing and as they come to hear the gospel message in a simple way, we pray that you would open their hearts and that they would trust you in the early years. We pray for others who meet, as we do in different places, for congregations connected to us, those visiting with us. We pray for the fellowships that they have come from, for churches in different parts of the country here, for churches in different countries as well that we can think of, for Christian fellowships that we are connected with.

[34 : 39] We ask that whatever the word of God is read, whatever the name of Jesus is lifted up, that you would be at work, Lord. We pray for Scott, especially today as he begins, in Cope Ridge.

We ask, Lord, that you would take away his nerves, that you would give him courage and that sense of your presence and that the placement that he is on over these next six or seven weeks would be a blessing to him and to them.

And we pray for Fiona and for the girls and for Angus and ask that you would bless them and help them as they take some time at home before they go out to join him. So hear our prayers and help us, we pray, as we look to you and we ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen. Sometimes when we're on a journey, it is good to stop or at least change down a gear and just take a look around.

So we're not just whizzing past everything, but we're taking a bit of time to take in the surroundings. And that's what we're kind of doing today in a sense. We're coming to the end of Matthew chapter 14 as we journey through this gospel.

[35 : 54] But today we're not moving at any kind of speed. We are down into first gear and we're moving slowly through just two verses. And yet even these two verses are packed full of truth about who Jesus is and how we should be responding to him.

So four points today in the time that we have. The first point is we see that we are to be trusting in the word of Jesus.

The second thing we'll see is that we are to be those, if we're Christians, who are telling about the works of Jesus. The third thing is we are to be taking people to Jesus.

And the final thing we see is in this account that are those who are touched by the power of Jesus. So that kind of gives you the structure, the map of where we're going in the time that we have.

So first of all, trusting the word of Jesus. And we're looking at verses 34 to verse 36. So looking at verse 34, it says there, and when they, that's the disciples and Jesus, had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret.

[37 : 16] And it's easy just to skip over, to skim over these verses, but there's an incredibly important lesson to learn, even in this small detail, in this half verse.

And the lesson that we are to learn, that continual lesson that we are to learn, is that the word of Jesus, it can always, always be trusted.

Matthew tells us in verse 34, that the disciples had now crossed over the sea. And Matthew is very matter-of-fact about that.

But the disciples, if we can picture them, they're still in shock. Because the crossing that they have just been on was horrendous. I can think back to pre-teenage years, the Sullivan.

Remember the boat in Stornoway? I can remember being dragged out of bed at four o'clock in the morning, and cornflakes being put down me, and then you go into the boat, and there's the smell of diesel and fish and chips at half-past four in the morning.

[38 : 29] And then you're on the boat, and the boat was going up, and it was going down, and it was going up and down, and I don't know how many horrendous crossings I had in that boat. I can remember hanging over the side one day, looking at a seagull, thinking, I wish I was you.

But the crossing the disciples had was just horrendous. And they were fishermen. And the commentators, the scholars, they've done the logistics on the actual details of the crossing.

The disciples, after a busy day, with Jesus, when the feeding of the 5,000 men happened, the disciples, they set off on a seven-mile journey.

That was the length of the crossing, was seven miles. They would have left about half-past seven in the evening, and then we're told in verse 25 that during the fourth watch of the night, which was round about 3 a.m., the disciples are still in the sea.

They're in the middle of the sea. They're three and a half miles out, three or four miles out, it says in the other account. And they're getting nowhere. They're struggling, and the wind was contrary.

[39 : 42] It was against them. And then they see what at first they think is a ghost. They're terrified. But it was Jesus walking on the water, because Jesus, as he was on the mountainside praying, he could see the disciples, perhaps not with his physical eyes, but as he was on that mountain, he was aware that the disciples were in need.

They were in trouble. And Jesus came to them in their trouble. And to cut a longer story short, Jesus made sure that they got to the other side.

And yet that shouldn't have been a surprise. Because if we glance back to verse 22, and we listen to what Jesus says to the disciples, Jesus essentially says to the disciples, get into the boat, you are going over to the other side.

So you head in there, to the boat, I will see you there, on the other side. So Jesus speaks a word. He says to the disciples, we're going, we're crossing over, we're getting to the other side.

And when Jesus speaks, what he says happens. His word, his promises, they are always trustworthy, they are always true.

[41 : 19] Now Jesus didn't say to the disciples they were going to have a smooth crossing. He didn't say that they wouldn't have to face a storm. He just said that they were to go before him to the other side.

And now, as we see the disciples at the end of this chapter, safely on the other side, they could look back, they could look back to that storm.

And they could be reminded of the lesson that they learned in the storm. And that was that the word of Jesus could always be trusted.

Now as we just take a moment to apply this to ourselves, those of us who are disciples of Jesus, those of us who are trusting and who are following Jesus, where do you and I need to look if we want to be reminded that the word of God is trustworthy?

trustworthy. Because we live in an age where there are a thousand influencers telling us the word of God is not trustworthy.

[42 : 37] And doubts rise up that we have to try to deal with. So where do we have to look if we want to be reminded that the word of God is trustworthy?

Well, we look to a cross. we look to that place where Jesus endured the storm of God's wrath against our sin so that we could know the peace of God, so that we could be saved, just as the word of God promised we would be.

we could go all the way back to Genesis 3.15. There's the promise of a saviour. We could go back to Psalm 22 and hear that cry from the cross of the saviour, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

We can go back to Isaiah 53 and read about the one who would be despised and rejected and who would suffer and who would die for sinners.

And all that was promised in the word of God, it came true. It was delivered on. So if we want to know that the word of God is trustworthy, we look to the cross.

[44 : 06] And because Jesus knew that we would sometimes be distracted from looking to the cross, he instituted a supper. He set for us a table where there would be bread and there would be wine that pointed to the body and the blood of Jesus that took us back to remember the death of Jesus.

We are called tonight to a table to say together we trust in the word of God. We are called tonight to come to a table where we say that we believe in Jesus.

We believe that his death was for us. So will you do that tonight?

You know, to refuse to come to the Lord's table is not to say nothing. To come to the table we say publicly that we are trusting in the word of God and we are trusting in God the word.

But to refuse to come to the table is to say publicly I refuse to trust the word of Jesus. I refuse to believe that he loves me.

[45 : 38] I refuse to believe that his blood is strong enough to cleanse my sin. Like it or not we all make a profession whether we are present or whether we are absent we will make a profession.

So let's profess faith in the word of Jesus as being trustworthy. Let's be encouraged this evening to take the bread and wine to remember his death for us and to say I am trusting him.

Trusting in the word of Jesus point one. Second point telling about the works of Jesus. So verse 35 and when the men of that place that place Gennesaret recognized him recognized Jesus they sent word to all that region.

So again if we think back to the context here Jesus and the disciples they've come through the storm they are now on dry land they're in the area of Gennesaret and it seems that very very quickly Jesus is recognized.

It tells us in verse 1 of chapter 14 that the fame of Jesus had very much spread to the extent that even kings like Herod he had heard he recognized the name of Jesus.

[47 : 23] Herod had heard about Jesus and he was disturbed which drove him to awful extremes. You can read about that in the first 12 verses. The Pharisees knew about Jesus they recognized Jesus they were offended.

If you look at chapter 15 you can see another clash which is about to happen between the Pharisees and Jesus they're trying to build a case against him. And the crowds the men of that place as they're called in verse 35 they'd heard about Jesus.

they recognized his name they had heard about his works and I suppose that's not surprising because this is the Jesus whom we read of in verses 13 through to 21 who was able to take a young boy's lunch of five rows and two fish and feed 15 to 20,000 people with.

That's a headline story. This is the Jesus who is able to make sick people well wherever he goes. So when the men of that place realized that Jesus was in their area that he was close by they sent word around to the whole region to all the region.

In other words they they told people about the works of Jesus. Why did they tell people about the works of Jesus?

[49 : 04] Because they knew that they were sick people in their area. Maybe in their family circles amongst their friends they knew of people who were sick who were in need.

And Jesus was here in their area. He was near. And so it's only right it's only sensible that they would tell those who were sick and in need that Jesus is here.

That they would tell these sick needy people about the works of Jesus that now had been told. I mean think about it.

how wrong it would be not to tell the sick that the great physician was just nearby.

And these men in a very simple way are an example to us. There's nothing complicated here about the passage or the application.

[50 : 14] These men in a simple sense are an example to us. They teach us, they remind us of what we should be doing if we are disciples. We should be telling people about Jesus.

We should be telling people about the works of Jesus. And increasingly even here people don't know who Jesus is.

people don't know what Jesus has done. We've had conversations with kids in the kids clubs who know nothing about Jesus. All they've ever heard is what they've heard whilst Gordon tackles them playing football.

And our job as Christians is to tell people about the works of Jesus. What has Jesus done someone may ask? What work has he done?

Well, he's done the work of salvation. He has done everything that was necessary to make it possible for our sins to be taken away and eternal life to be given to us.

[51 : 34] Jesus has gone to a cross for us Jesus has taken the sickness of our sin into his body on the tree.

So that's salvation. Everlasting life, peace, joy can be given freely to all who will come to him.

how wrong it would be for us to know all that and not tell people. So, let me ask you the question that I have to wrestle with myself for longer than you do.

Are we telling people, not just for this hour, but are we telling people about Jesus? Jesus has given us a commission.

to tell people about him. And Jesus calls us, again, as we think about communion, Jesus calls us to a table.

[52 : 49] And at that table, even without words, what do we do? We tell people about the work that Jesus has done.

we take the bread, we take the wine, we remember him, we proclaim, we tell out his death until he comes.

telling people about the works of Jesus, that's the second point. Third point is taking people to Jesus, verses 35 into verse 36.

And so these men of that place, they brought to him, they brought to Jesus all who were sick and implored him that they might only touch the fringe of his garment.

So we see people here who are taking others to Jesus. And it strikes me as this week, between this week and last week, we have a marked contrast.

[53 : 57] Contrast is one of these things that's very helpful. If we want to see a picture clearly, whether it's on our screens and our phones or on our TVs, we can adjust the contrast.

And as we adjust the contrast, the image sharpens. And we have that kind of contrast in the Gospel of Matthew. You think back to last Sunday, we were in Matthew 19. And in that passage, in Matthew 19, verses 13 to 15, we see the disciples.

And what are the disciples doing? Well, the disciples, they are keeping the children away from Jesus. They are blocking the children from coming to Jesus. And so they are rebuked for it.

And now in Matthew 14, by way of contrast, we see the men of that place. And they're not blocking people from coming to Jesus, but they're actually bringing people, they're taking people to Jesus.

They're presenting people, they're leading people, that's what the literal Greek means, they're presenting people, they're leading people, all who were sick, they're going out of their way to get them, so that they can take them to Jesus.

[55 : 17] Why do they do this? Well, because they believe that Jesus can make the sick people well. That's why they bring them. And then having taken the needy, sick people to Jesus, they implore Jesus, they literally were begging Jesus that the sick might only touch the fringe of his garment because they believed that if they had that touch, they would be made well.

So, although we don't actually know very much about these men of that place, we know that there were many people who came to Jesus and who were healed by Jesus because of the word of these men as they told other people about Jesus and because of the witness of these men who were actually taking people to Jesus.

They were speaking out with their voices and saying, come to Jesus, and then they were actually reaching out with their hands and feet and saying, come on with me.

We need to see Jesus. And again, this is very, very simple, and yet it's instructive for those of us who are Christians.

Christians, these men show us in a very simple way what we are to do. We are to take people to Jesus. How can we take people to Jesus?

[57 : 11] Well, we can take people to Jesus with our words. we speak about many, many things, but the most important thing that you and I can speak about is Jesus, and the grace, the salvation that is offered and promised to those who will come to him.

So we can take people to Jesus with our words, and we can take people to Jesus with our witness, the way that we act, the way that we react, the way that we speak, the way that we listen, our lifestyle, our whole being, that can and should be used to take people to Jesus.

And when our words and our witness come together, people can see and hear that what we preach, we also practice, what we say, we also believe, what we proclaim, we also live out.

When these things come together, people are taken to Jesus. things come and tonight, again, as we think about the table, the Lord's table that is prepared, we are called to come to a table to speak out, to profess faith in Christ.

Christ. We proclaim the death of Jesus, we proclaim the resurrection of Jesus as we sit there, because we do this only until he comes. We remember his death for a short period until he comes, so we make that proclamation even without words as we sit down.

[59 : 06] time. But then when we rise back up from the table and we go to work or go back home tomorrow and then the next day and the next day and the next day, we're to keep on telling people about Jesus.

We're to keep on taking people to Jesus through our lives, through our day-to-day witness as we are called to and hopefully help to be salt and light in the world, but distinct, not of the world.

Maybe just before I move on from this point as well, can I just highlight the fact that the men of that place, they're imploring Jesus to heal, to save those who are sick.

They're begging Jesus that he will touch them. And that too is an example to us.

We're called to pray. pray. And as we pray, we're to beg Jesus to touch the hearts of those who are still lost.

[60 : 46] Are we doing that? Who are you imploring Jesus to touch at this time? what names are on your list?

What faces are in your mind? These men, in a simple way and an example and a challenge to us, we are to implore Jesus to touch, to seek, to save the lost.

And many of you are doing that, I know, and be encouraged to keep on doing that. Friends, neighbors, husbands, wives, who may not seem one inch closer today than they were 20 years ago when you were still begging.

But be encouraged to keep on imploring the Lord Jesus to touch these hearts. Because his touch is what changes everything.

Taking people to Jesus, the final point as we conclude is we see those who were touched by the power of Jesus. And as many as touched the hem of the garment of Jesus were made well, Ligon Duncan, the commentator, says the main point of this whole account is that Christ has power and love which stagger our imagination.

[62 : 33] If we could see the power that Jesus holds, if we could get a greater sense of the love that Jesus has, we would probably find it much easier to implore him to touch those who are lost.

And that's what we need to see in this passage, the power and the love of Jesus. Because as many as touched, as many as laid hold of, as many as attached themselves to Jesus, even the hem of the garment of Jesus, they were saved thoroughly.

there was no cases of someone who touched but it wasn't effective. Every touch was a touch that caused that person to be made well.

It's the touch of Jesus that brings the change in the lives of these people, even though for them, likely for the majority of them, it was just a physical change, it was a short-term change.

One commentator, Green, says, when, thinking about the whole of the passage here, when the people recognized who Jesus was, they longed for their sick friends just to touch the edge of his cloak, and as many as touched it were healed.

[64 : 02] Those who merely touched a crust of bread during the feed-in were filled. Peter, who simply touched the outstretched hand of Jesus on the water was held up.

Faith, says Green, is touch. It is making contact. Now, for those in the congregation, for our environmentalist drivers, those who have gone into the world of electric cars, I'll resist the temptation to say anything about that.

those who are driving electric cars, you can take your electric car and you can park it in the car park next door where there's a charging station, but parking it in the car park is going to do nothing for the battery of the car.

It might be close to the charger, but it's going to do nothing for the power level of the car. For the car to be charged up and to receive power, it's got to be connected.

It's got to be right there, it has to be touching the power source. And that's what we see with the people in this passage. They needed the touch of Jesus to be made well.

[65 : 25] And you and I, we need the touch of Jesus if we are to be made well.

It's not enough to know about Jesus in our heads. It's not enough to come and sit in a building where the name of Jesus is recognized.

It's not enough to be close to Jesus attending church, Sunday school, YF. we need to come to him. We need that saving personal individual touch.

And that point came through even in the psalm that we sang, Psalm 34. The personal call is very clearly heard. Oh, taste and see that God is good.

Not, oh, stand at a distance. Oh, taste and see. There's touch that God is good.

[66 : 42] Now, we don't know the story of these people who were healed by Jesus on that day. Many were healed. We don't know their stories. but we do know the story of a woman who was healed by Jesus on another day.

She was sick. She had what was called in that day an issue of blood and she'd gone to every doctor and she'd get no healing.

but she heard about Jesus. She heard about the power of Jesus. And so she too touched the hem of the garment of Jesus and immediately she was well.

But then Jesus looked out over the crowd and he said, who touched me? Who of you just now has been made well?

And this poor woman is terrified. She's trying to hide. She wants to remain silent.

[68 : 11] But Jesus keeps on going and keeps on looking and keeps on saying, who touched me? The disciples say, everybody's touching you.

What are you asking that for? And Jesus says, no, no, no. Someone has received a saving touch. Who touched me? He keeps on asking.

God's asking that God's asking that God's asking that today. Maybe there is someone here or some people here who in recent days or in distant years, you've come to Jesus.

and you have known the saving touch of Jesus. Your sins are forgiven. Your heart is healed. You're made well, but you're silent. You're hiding in the crowd. and you're a secret believer.

[69 : 30] And Jesus is still asking, who touched me? Who has had the sickness of their sin taken away? Who has been made well and never told anyone?

Do you notice that the woman, you could go to Luke chapter 8 or Matthew chapter 9 to read the story of that woman with the issue of blood. But that woman, as she's trembling, and as Jesus is asking, who touched me, she doesn't say, Jesus, can I please have a sign?

Because before I come forward, surely I need to have a sign. Surely I have to have a fuzzy feeling. There must be some drama before I take a step forward. No, all that she knew was that her heart was healed and that Jesus was asking her to step forward.

And so she did. Costly it was, I know, scary it was for her, but she did it.

And she was blessed and she was used and continues to be used as a blessing to many today. I wonder if there's someone tonight who needs to step forward from the crowd, come to the table in response to the call of Jesus, in response, a response of obedience to your Savior, to remember the power of his cross.

[71 : 18] the power of his blood to tell people about his saving touch on your life.

Let's pray. Amen. Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word, we thank you for your Son once more, for the power and the touch of Jesus, for the power and the cross of Jesus, for the power and the blood of Jesus.

We pray for any who may be here this morning who know about Jesus, who have heard that he is able to heal, that he is able to save, but have never yet come.

You may have heard others saying you should come, you may have been brought by others to a place where they could come, but still sit at a distance. We ask, Holy Spirit, that you would strive with each one that they may come to Jesus.

And for those who have come to Jesus but never have stepped out of the crowd, we ask, Lord, that even this afternoon there may be someone who hears the call of Jesus to do this, to take the bread, to take the wine, in remembrance of him, to proclaim his death and his salvation in their lives until he comes.

[72 : 50] Hear us and help us, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. We sing to finish of the power of the cross. 1, 2, 1, 7, and mission praise. Oh, to see the dawn of the darkest day.

This is the power of the cross. Christ on the road to Calvary, Christ became sin for us, took the power cross.

Christ became sin for us, took the power of the cross.

Christ became sin for us, took the blame, o'er the wrath, we stand forgiven at the rise.

Oh, to see the pain written on your face, filling the awesome weight of sin.

[74 : 36] every bitter thought, every evil beat, crowning your blusting crown.

This the power of the cross, Christ became sin for us, the To the pain o'er the wrath, we stand forgiven at the cross.

the day of day our out ground beneath, quakes as its maker, flowers' hand, curbs and torn in two, then our race life, finish the victory cry.

This the power of the cross, Christ became!

sin for us, to command for our life, we stand unforgiven at the cause.

[76 : 11] O to see my name, written in the wounds, for through your suffering I am free.

Death is crushed to death, life mine to one through your selfless love.

This the power of the cross, son of God, strength for us.

What a love, what cross, we stand forgiven at the cross.

may the our Christ, love of God the and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit, be with us all now and Amen. Amen. unto!

[77 : 25] !!