

## 3.8.25 am

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Date: 03 August 2025

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning, everyone. A warm welcome to the service this morning. And a special welcome to those who are visiting with us. It's good to have visitors from different places. I met somebody from Hawaii at the door this morning. I don't know where the rest of you are from, but it's good to have visitors with us week by week. There's tea and there's coffee at the end of the service. If you're able to stay behind, please do so. It's good to get the chance to enjoy fellowship together.

The service this evening will be at six as usual, and I'll take that service myself, God willing. There's an informal prayer time at half past five just through in the room on my left for those who are able to go along for that.

Crest provision, if we've got babies in the service. I can't see yet, but if there's babies in the service and you're looking for a place to go, if the noise levels are rising, then there's a creche just through here, and you're welcome to use that.

The Sunday school will be a holiday Sunday school, which means that it's just for primary school children this morning, and they'll go out after the second singing. A couple more notices.

One to say that the community lunch, which happened last Monday, was well attended, and the monies that were raised were raised for Children for Christ Romania, which we're involved with, and there was £1,131 raised for that.

[ 1 : 33 ] So a great thank you to all who were involved in that in different ways. Jobs around the church. I think that was probably on the screen. Oh, they've been on the screen already, so you can see there.

If you're able to give a little bit of time for jobs around the church, then the list is up there. Speak to Janangas if you're looking for a bit of guidance on that. The last thing is to say that our annual holiday club happens this week.

So from Wednesday through till Friday, 6th till the 8th of August, we have the holiday club. The details are not on the screen. Well, they are in a poster.

So it starts, if I remember rightly, at 10 o'clock, and it ends at 12 o'clock. So please, boys and girls, note that. Come along to that, please.

For those who are not attending or not helping, actually physically in the building, please pray for that ministry. Many thanks to all those who volunteer already to help.

[ 2 : 40 ] For those who have offered to help and come along, please add your name and your email address to the sheet in the foyer. Anyway, there's a sheet of teaching and rough times to be collected.

So thank you for all those who are helping with the holiday club. Pray on for that ministry. These, I think, are all the notices I need to draw attention to just now.

So let's begin now this time of worship and let's sing to God's praise. We'll sing from Mission Praise 237, but the words are all on the screen.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty. Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee. So we'll stand to sing in just a moment to God's praise.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.

[ 3 : 47 ] Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.

Holy, holy, holy, holy. All the saints adore thee.

Casting down their golden crowns around the glass you see.

Channel it but seven, falling down before thee.

Which, when our God nevermore shall be. Holy, holy, holy, holy.

[ 5 : 12 ] All the darkness hide thee. All the darkness hide thee. All the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see.

Only thou art holy. There is none beside thee.  
Perfect in power with love and beauty. Holy, holy, holy, holy.  
Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy. Lord God Almighty.  
All thy works shall praise thine in earth and sky and sea. Holy, holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy.  
[ 6 : 21 ] merciful and mighty, God in free persons, blessed Trinity.

Let's bow our heads and let's unite our hearts in prayer.

Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you that we can come into your presence at this time as the God who is holy, holy, holy.

We thank you for the wonder of the fact that we can come because we recognize that we are not holy. We are sinful people.

And as we examine our own hearts as we are called to, we see much in our hearts that grieves even us. But grieves the Holy Spirit in a way that is much more acute than anything that we can grasp.

[ 7 : 41 ] We thank you, Lord, that you've called us to come. We thank you, Father, that we can come to you in prayer this morning, recognizing that you are our Father.

And we come seeing our Father because we have been taught to pray this way by Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior.

That he was and is the holy, sinless Lamb of God. And we thank you that he came into this world to be the sacrifice for sinners.

We thank you that he laid down his life at the cross, taking from us the curse of sin, cleansing from us the sin that we confess.

We thank you that through his blood, our sins, though they may be red like scarlet, are made white as snow.

[ 8 : 47 ] So we come this morning asking that you would cleanse us, Lord. That you would take away our sin. We pray that you would empty us of self because we confess that we are so quick to think about ourselves.

We pray that we would be filled afresh with the Holy Spirit. that we may be enabled to see and hear the Lord Jesus.

And that we may know the blessing of God with us. We pray for any who may be here this morning or who may be watching at a distance who do not yet trust in the Lord Jesus.

We are conscious that we can come into a church but not be in relationship with God. We thank you that the call of the gospel is a call not to come simply to church but it is a call to come to Jesus.

And as we come to Jesus, we are promised that we will find rest for our souls. And as we come to Jesus, we are thankful for the fact that we have been promised that you will never cast us out.

[ 9 : 59 ] So receive us, Lord Jesus, as we come. Bless us, Father, as we bow before you. Fill us, Holy Spirit, that we may be in the Spirit on the Lord's day.

That our thoughts, our words, may be led and guided by the Spirit. That we may bring praise that is acceptable to you as our Lord and God.

We pray for all who are here this morning. You know our hearts, you know our homes, you know our situations. We ask, Lord, that you would meet us at the point of our need.

We pray for any who may be here or watching this morning, somewhere else who are anxious, who are troubled. And we pray that they may know your peace. We pray for those who battle with addictions and who may be feeling down just now.

We ask that you would give them strength to get back up and to look to you, Lord, as the one who is able to break the chains that bind us.

[ 11 : 07 ] We pray for those who are grieving and we ask that you would give to them comfort, that sense of your nearer presence. We pray for those who are sick, some at home.

We ask that you would bless them where they are, some in hospital. And we think especially of them. We pray especially this morning for young Lydia. We thank you, Lord, that she came through that big operation this week.

We thank you that the brain surgery was successful. It's successful. And as she has so much to do now in terms of recovery and physiotherapy, as the tests continue, we ask, Lord, that you would sustain her life.

We pray that you would protect her in her body and in her mind and her heart. We pray that she would know that Andrew and Peggy and Rory and Delane and all the wider family, that they would

know in the midst of this storm that you are with them.

And we pray for Lydia's friends, some who are here and others who are at school or at school with her. We ask, Lord, that you would draw near to them and that you would help them at this time also.

[12:22] We thank you that we can carry those whom we love to you in prayer, knowing that you will hear our prayers and that you will help them. And we pray for a world that is broken.

Even as we watch our news day by day, we see conflict, we see trouble, we see suffering. And we ask, Lord, that places, in places that we will never perhaps get to and with people that we will never in this world meet, we pray that you would be working to help them, that where there is war, that you would bring peace, where there is suffering, that you would bring relief, and where there is brokenness.

Lord Jesus, we thank you that you have promised that you are coming back one day to fix, to redeem, to make new a creation that groans until you're coming.

So hear our prayers, take away our sin, and lead us and guide us as we continue in worship. And we pray this in Jesus' name and for Jesus' sake. Amen. Amen.

Boys and girls, would you like to come forward, please? If you want to.

[13:38] No stress if you don't. How's everyone today? Come on, Cameron.

You sit down. How's everyone today? Are you enjoying your summer holidays? We've got some visitors with us as well.

Are you guys all enjoying your summer holidays? You're a bit quiet. Have you lost your voices in the last few weeks? Who was at camp? Was it good fun? Camp stories?

For another day, maybe. Well, we were on holiday for the last three weeks. And I could tell you lots of stories from the holiday, but I thought this morning I would just tell you one little story about something that happened when we were on holiday.

There was a disaster. An absolute disaster. Do you know what the disaster was?

[14:43] Lois' phone screen broke. So she came back from camp and she was wanting to message her friends and speak to her friends and do all the stuff with the messaging.

And her phone screen broke and she couldn't get through. And so there was a disaster. There was panic stations. She couldn't speak to her friends. She couldn't hear from her friends.

They would think that she's ignoring her. It was a total disaster. So we had to go off to a shopping centre and find the little man who could put a screen on her phone so that she could speak to her friends once more.

But it was a bit of a... Do you think it was a total disaster? It wasn't a total disaster. But it is a bit of a problem, isn't it? When we have friends and we want to speak to them and we can't speak to them and we want to hear what they're saying to us and they can't get through.

We understand that that's a bit of a stress. And as I was thinking about that, I was thinking about the fact that it's great that God didn't give us phones and iPads for us to be able to get through to Him.

[16:07] If we want to hear what God wants to say to us, how do we hear His voice? How do we hear God speak into our lives? How does He speak to us?

Family? The Bible. And if we want to speak to God, as I hope we do every day, and we want Him to hear what's going on in our hearts and in our heads and in our lives, how do we get through to Him? How does God hear what we have to say, Michael? Prayer. And the great thing about the Bible and the great thing about prayer is that we don't need to have a 4G connection to be able to get through.

we don't have to pay money every month to make sure that the connection is left open. We were away in Keswick for a while, we were away abroad in Italy.

And for a while when we were over there, phones didn't work. But it doesn't matter where we go in the world, whether it's Italy or Africa or Hawaii or Scotland or England or wherever.

[17:27] wherever we pray, at whatever time we pray, God is ready and He is waiting to hear our prayers and to answer our prayer.

So, anytime, boys and girls, that we want to speak to God, we're going to sing in just a second a hymn that says, what a friend we have in Jesus. All our sins and griefs to bear, what a privilege we have to carry everything to God in prayer.

And so, it's a great thing that we can pray and bring everything to God. But you know, something else I was thinking about this week that's a wonderful thing.

Not only can we come to God and ask Him to hear our prayers, but we can we can carry our friends.

Sometimes we have friends, like we were just praying for Lydia. And this week, when Lydia was in hospital, on Tuesday, she was having that big operation and she's far away from us.

[ 18 : 43 ] But in prayer, it's like we can pick her up and we can carry her to Jesus and say, Lord Jesus, will you look after her? Will you be near to her today?

So we can carry our friends to the Lord Jesus and all we have to do is pray. So let's pray just now and thank God that He hears us and He helps us.

Heavenly Father, we thank You that You are the God who speaks. We thank You that we have the Bible and we can pick it up and we can open it. We have it in a language we can understand.

And we thank You that every time we open Your Word, You speak to us. We thank You, Father, that You sent Your Son, the Word, made flesh into this world. We thank You that we can come to Jesus as He calls us.

And we thank You for this amazing gift of prayer that wherever we are, at whatever time of the day or night, we can come to You in prayer. and whatever it is that bothers us, things maybe that we wouldn't want to speak to anybody else in this world about, we thank You that You know us and we can take everything to You in prayer.

[ 20 : 03 ] And we thank You that when our friends and when our families might be struggling and we feel helpless to be able to do anything, we thank You that we can take them and we can carry them to You in prayer and ask You to help them.

So we ask, Lord, that You would keep us praying and keep us thankful for prayer. And again, as we've prayed already, we pray again for Lydia and we ask that she would know that You are close to her today in hospital.

We pray that even though we can't go and visit her when she's quite far away from us, we thank You that every hour we can bring her to You in prayer. and we ask, Lord, that You would help her and that You would strengthen her.

So go before us, we pray. Bless the boys and girls and the rest of their holidays. Thank You for the holiday club. We ask, Lord, that there would be lots of boys and girls that would come to it. We pray that it would be good fun, that we would be safe and that we would learn more about Jesus and that we would, each one of us, come to Jesus and put our faith in Him.

So hear our prayers. Go before us, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to sing now and we're going to sing Mission Praise 746, I think, which is that hymn, What a Friend We Have in Jesus.

[ 21 : 29 ] Hopefully the word will be in the stream just a second. And this is one of these settings that takes a long time. The words are now on the stream.

So we'll stand and give them a moment. what a Friend we have in Jesus What a Friend we have in Jesus All our sins and peace to bear What a Friend we have in Jesus and take a hand.

and take a hand and take a hand and take a hand and take a hand and take a hand. Everything to God in prayer. Oh, what history of the covenant.

Oh, what needless pain we bear. Oh, because we do not carry. Everything to God in prayer.

Are we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?

[ 22 : 48 ] We should never be discouraged. Take it to the Lord in prayer. Can we find a friend so faithful?

Who will all our sorrows share? Jesus knows our every weakness.

Take it to the Lord in prayer. Are we weak and heavy laden? Comfort with the Lord of care.

Precious Savior, still our refuge. Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Do thy friends despise forsake thee. Take it to the Lord in prayer. In his arms he'll take and shield thee.

[ 23 : 59 ] Thou will find us all as there. For you boys and girls, if you head through to Sunday school, and any primary school children, I know some came in a wee bit late, but any primary school children are welcome to go through for Sunday school and there's a creche just on my right for anyone who wants to take their wee ones into the creche at any point in the service.

You get through that door just in case you're wondering how to get there. So we pray for the children as they go through to Sunday school and we turn now to read God's Word.



those in thresh. We ask Lord that you would bless them and that we would come with you in the early years of our lives and that we would walk with you all the days of our lives. We pray for these young ones and we thank you that Jesus said let them come to me, don't hinder them. We pray also Lord that you would be with the congregation that meet around us, where the gospel is preached, where Christ crucified is preached. We ask Lord God that you would add your blessing to the word preached and that the church of Jesus as has been promised will be built up. And we pray for the congregations connected with us, for those who are visiting with the church. And we pray that whatever they worship, that the congregations that they have left behind for a period would know your blessing upon them where they are in different parts of the world. We thank you that we have many brothers and sisters in different parts of the world that we may never meet in time. But we thank you that heaven is a place where every tribe and tongue and nation is present. So bless Lord your word we pray here and everywhere. And be lifted up Lord Jesus. We ask that we may be drawn to you.

[ 34 : 24 ] And we pray these things in Jesus name and for his sake. Amen. I wonder if we were to record our conversations or if we were to just have a listen back to our conversations in the course of a day. What subjects do we most commonly talk about?

It would be interesting to actually get a bit of feedback. I'm not asking for it, don't worry. But I wonder what kind of subjects would fill our conversations in the course of a day.

I imagine if we were to listen back to ourselves, we would spend some time talking about our families and our friends. We may talk about our work. We may talk about our schoolwork.

If we are still in school or in university. We might talk about sport. We might talk about our schoolwork. We might talk about our schoolwork. But as Hebrideans, as Islanders, the one subject that I think probably never passes us in any given day is the weather.

The weather. The weather. The weather. The weather. The weather. Palmine McGilvery came from Inverness yesterday, traveled across the country and got as far as Uwag.

[ 35 : 59 ] Bright sunshine all the way across the nation. Gets to Uwag, the clouds come down, the mist descends, the drizzle intensifies. So we spend a bit of time talking about the weather.

We're never done talking about the weather and what the weather is going to do today and what the weather is going to do this week. And that's actually not a new thing. And it's something that we've read in the passage that we've looked at this morning.

It's something that Jesus mentions. He actually talks about the weather and talks about the fact that the people back then, they were still talking about the weather. So I want to look at the passage that we read this morning under four headings.

The first heading is we see opposition. There is opposition to Jesus. The second thing we'll see is repetition in terms of the question that is brought to Jesus, in terms of the answer that Jesus gives to the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

There is repetition. The third thing we see is confusion on the part of the disciples as they're trying to understand the teaching that Jesus brings to them.

[ 37 : 14 ] And the final thing we will just touch on as a preface really to the next passage is we'll hear a profession of faith from Peter.

He says for the first time that he believes that Jesus is the Christ. He is the Son of God. So that gives us the structure for the next 25 minutes or so.

First point is opposition then. And we'll just step through the text. So if your Bible is open in front of you, you'll find that helpful. So verse one says, And the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and they came to test Jesus.

So we can't get away from the fact that the first thing we see in this passage is very clear opposition to Jesus.

And we could step back through the previous chapters that we've studied, and we could actually look at any part of Jesus' ministry.

[ 38 : 20 ] And Jesus was always facing opposition. Even if we rewind to the time of Jesus' birth, when he arrives in this world, there is the most violent opposition from King Herod as he tries to locate and as he tries to exterminate this child who has been born King of the Jews.

There is opposition from the Jews. There is opposition from the get-go. But then, as we look at Jesus' life and ministry, there was sometimes opposition from the family of Jesus, who for a long time they didn't believe in him.

They tried to stop him going forward in ministry. Sometimes the opposition was opposition that came from Jesus' own disciples as they tried to steer him away from the cross.

But most of the time, the opposition came from those who were in authority, those who were in religious and civil authority.

And that was the case in verse 1. We see the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and they're making this sinister approach to Jesus. But what was unusual about this approach was the fact that the Pharisees and the Sadducees came together.

[ 39 : 50 ] Usually they were apart. They were very different people. They believed very different things. They were usually quarreling with each other. But on this occasion, they joined forces to oppose, to test, to tempt, to try to trip up Jesus.

J.C. Ryle says, As a general rule, these two sects were at enmity between themselves. In persecuting Christ, however, they made common cause.

Truly says, Ryle, this was an unholy alliance. So that's the first thing we see. We see opposition to Jesus.

And if we are people who are with Jesus, then we can expect the same kind of opposition.

It's the first thing, really, that we can take in terms of a point of application. If we are Christians, I'm conscious not everyone in the room will be a Christian.

[ 41 : 00 ] There are some who are with Jesus. There are some who are against Jesus. These are the only two categories that Jesus allows us to have. But if we are those who are trusting in Jesus, if we are Christians, if we are Christ's ones, then we can expect the same kind of opposition for as long as we are in this world.

We love the promises of Jesus, don't we? And we make it our discipline to dig into the Bible as we should. And we take the promises of Jesus that are so precious, and we underline them, we highlight them.

Sometimes we take texts and verses, and we paint them on paintings. We stick them on our walls. We put them on fridge magnets. We set them as the wallpaper on our phones.

Verses like when Jesus says, I will be with you always. A wonderful promise we say, I'm having that. It's on the wall. That's a good thing to do.

But one promise of Jesus that we don't tend to hang on our walls. One promise of Jesus that we don't tend to set as our home screen and our mobile phone is John 16, 33.

[ 42 : 25 ] For Jesus says, in this world, you will have trouble. Then he goes on to speak about opposition and persecution.

So, you and I, if we are Christians, will face opposition, for Jesus' sake.

That's a point in application. But a follow-up point in application is we don't need to be too scared about that. We don't need to be unsettled by that. We don't need to be too stressed out by that.

Because as we see Jesus here, we have the Pharisees who are always coming to him. They're always picking a fight. We can trace that back through the last few chapters.

But now we have the Pharisees and the Sadducees joined forces. They're coming at Jesus. But we don't hear Jesus saying, oh no, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, I'll never cope with this.

[ 43 : 30 ] See, the Pharisees and the Sadducees as a joint coalition, they were no match for Jesus.

He faces them. And as we'll see, he overcomes them. I thought about singing Psalm 2 today, where we have this picture of all the nations of the world, all the power rulers of the world, uniting in opposition against God's anointed one, his son.

There's no panic in heaven. The almighty God looks at the united forces of the world across all of history, and supposing everybody comes together against God.

It is a pathetic display of opposition. The one in heaven laughs. So these Pharisees and the Sadducees are no match for Jesus.

He overcomes them. As we think about the promises of Jesus, we can extract John 16, 33. Part one, Jesus promises, in this world you will have trouble.

[ 44 : 44 ] Part two of that same promise is take heart. Says Jesus to his believers, his followers, his disciples. Take heart. Don't stress.

Don't worry. I have overcome the world. So point one, opposition. That's what we see in this passage.

Point number two is repetition. And we'll read down to verse four. The Pharisees and the Sadducees came and to test them, they asked them to show them a sign from heaven.

Jesus answered them, When it is evening, you say it will be fair weather for the sky is red. And in the morning it will be stormy today for the sky is red and threatening. You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.

An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah. So he left them and departed.

[ 45 : 48 ] So we have the challenge to Jesus, the opposition from Pharisees and Sadducees. Then we have the response. And we might ask the question, Well, where's the repetition? Well, the repetition, first of all, comes from the Pharisees.

With their question. Because in verse one, they're asking Jesus for a sign from heaven. They're demanding from Jesus that some, some sign, some amazing wonder be done.

That will authenticate his teaching. That will confirm that he is the Christ. Show us a sign, they say. They've just had the feeding of the 4,000 from a few loaves.

They've just had the feeding of the 5,000 from a few less loaves. They've had miracles galore. And they say, well, we're looking for a sign.

But see, if you rewind just a few chapters, go with me to Matthew chapter 12. Keep one finger in Matthew chapter 16. And then go back to Matthew chapter 12, verse 38.

[ 47 : 03 ] And what do we read there? Well, it says in Matthew 12 and verse 38, Then some of the scribes and Pharisees, they come to Jesus, they answer Jesus, saying, Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you.

So just days before, probably, just a little bit back, the Pharisees, not with the Sadducees, but this time with the scribes, they come to Jesus and they say exactly the same thing.

Same demand, same question. We want a sign. So there's repetition in terms of the questions, the requests they make of Jesus. And then there's repetition from Jesus in his answer to the religious leaders.

Because again, if you go back to chapter 12 and verse 39 and 40 and compare that to 16 where we are, and Jesus answers chapter 12, verse 39, he answers in exactly the same terms.

He says, An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. So the only difference there between these two conversations, Matthew 16 and Matthew 12, is the message about the weather.

[ 48 : 25 ] So Jesus says to them, you can read the signs in the sky that help you to understand the weather, but you can't, or rather you won't, read the signs that I perform to help you to see that I am the Savior.

And then Jesus says to the Pharisees and the Sadducees, no more signs. Don't come asking me for any more signs.

There will be no more signs except the sign of Jonah. And you can go back to Matthew 12. Jesus has already explained what the sign of Jonah is.

The sign of Jonah was a sign that simply pointed people to Jesus. Jesus himself was the sign.

Charles Price in his commentary says, the sign of Jonah was pointing to Jesus' own death, burial, and resurrection from the dead.

Then Price says, we can never make sense of Christ without understanding the cross. So Jesus, to paraphrase this and summarize this, Jesus is saying to the Pharisees and the Sadducees, I am the sign.

[ 49 : 55 ] And specifically, my death and my resurrection will be the sign. Jesus is pointing them to himself.

And that is the message that is repeated throughout all of the Bible. Every page of the Bible is pointing us to Jesus. That's why every week that we gather here, whether it's me preaching, or Richard, or Duncan, or Dolan, or Kenny I, or whoever, every single week, the message is, in terms of the big picture, the same message, look to Jesus.

We want to see Jesus. And in every page of the Bible, we are being pointed to Jesus. Alistair Begg says this, we find Christ in all the scriptures, in the Old Testament, in the Old Testament, he is predicted, in the Gospels, he is revealed, in Acts, he is preached, in the Epistles, he is explained, and in Revelation, he is expected.

So there's this, repeat message, throughout all of the scriptures, and it is a call, to look, to Jesus.

And that makes, perfect sense, because, if you and I, are to be saved from sin, we need to look, to Jesus, for forgiveness.

[ 51 : 48 ] There's no other place, we can find it. If you and I, are to escape judgment, eternal judgment, we're to look, to Jesus.

only he, has taken, the judgment for us. If you and I, are to, be sure that we will, escape hell, and have a place, in heaven, we need to look, to Jesus.

No other name, no other way, only Jesus. We need to look, to him. We need to believe, and the fact that he, he died for our sin, and that he rose, from the dead, for our salvation.

There's a hymn, that we sometimes, which is the prayer, really, that the Pharisees, and the Sadducees, needed to get to, if they were to be saved.

And the hymn goes like this, my faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Calvary, Saviour divine. Now hear me, as I pray, take all my guilt, all my sin away.

[ 53 : 10 ] Oh, let me from, this day, be holy, thine. So there's opposition, there is that, repetition, we hear the repetition, from the Pharisees, give us a sign, the repetition, from Jesus saying, you're not getting any more signs, I am the sign.

And the third thing, we see here, on the part of the disciples, is, confusion. Verse 5, through to verse 12. Verse 12. When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread.

Jesus said to them, watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. And they began discussing it among themselves, saying, we brought no bread. But Jesus, aware of this, said, you of little faith, why are you discussing among yourselves the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive? Do you not remember the five loaves for the 5,000, and how many baskets you gathered? Or the seven loaves for the 4,000, and how many baskets you gathered? How is it that you fail to understand that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

[ 54 : 39 ] So there's confusion amongst the disciples. And I think, speaking personally, I think the disciples are such an encouragement in a tragic kind of way.

Because they're always confused. They're always not quite getting it. They're always forgetting things. You know, for someone like me, who's always forgetting to bring things, it's good to see the disciples were very similar.

When Mary and the girls went off on holiday a week ahead of me, I had one instruction. Remember to bring the case. The big pink case that's at the front door.

And it was at the front door. I couldn't open the front door because of it. I tripped over it three times. It was all the stuff that we needed to be able to fly to Italy. And so it's there at the front door.

I'm tripping over it. I'm pushing it aside. It's the one thing I had to remember. And it's the one thing I forgot. And the disciples were just the same.

[ 55 : 51 ] They were a bit slow. Verse 5 tells us they forgot to bring the bread. Mark tells us in Mark 8, verse 14, all they had was one row, one loaf. So they were quite slow with the mundane things.

But when it came to the spiritual things, the things of faith, it seems they were actually even slower. Because Jesus, in verse 6, he talks about leaven, and immediately you think, oh, no bread.

We've forgotten the bread. As if a lack of bread was a big problem for Jesus.

But Jesus wasn't talking about bread. Jesus wasn't talking about bread. Jesus, remember, in Matthew 15, he's just fed 4,000 men, plus the women and the children, from seven rows and a few fish.

There was mountains of bread to the miracle of Jesus. And step back to the chapter previous to that, and Jesus has fed 5,000 men, plus women and children, with five rows and two little fish.

[ 57 : 04 ] A little boy's packed lunch. Bread wasn't a problem for Jesus. He wasn't stressed about the fact that they didn't have bread. And the disciples should have grasped that.

But they didn't. John MacArthur, the late John MacArthur says, When the disciples became hungry after rowing to the other side, their thoughts did not turn to Jesus' provision, but to their own lack. And as Jesus frequently did, the Lord took their extremity as his divine opportunity to teach his truth. They're stressed about bread, sandwiches.

Jesus is saying, Forget the bread. Listen to what I have to say to you. So what truth was Jesus teaching? What was Jesus getting at when he spoke about leaven?

What was the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees that he's warning them about that they're to beware of? Well, what was it that unified the Pharisees and the Sadducees in this situation?

[ 58 : 16 ] It was unbelief. It was unbelief. They disagreed on many things, but they agreed on this one thing, and that was that they did not want to believe in Jesus.

So you have the Sadducees, who were very often powerful politicians. They were often aristocrats. They were the liberals. They were the secularists of their day. But for all they were, without faith in Jesus, they would be lost.

Then you have the Pharisees, who are the most religious of men. They were serious about God's law. They were serious Bible scholars. They were the conservative theologians of their day. But without faith in Jesus, they too would be lost. And the point is, the point that we must not be confused about, is that eternal life, salvation, it depends on believing in Jesus.

[ 59 : 46 ] And only in Jesus. We sang in Psalm 62 and at verse 6. He only my salvation is, and my strong rock is He.

He only is my sure defense, I shall not move to be. If we don't have Him, if we're not believing in Him, there's no hope.

And Jesus wanted the disciples back then, and He wants us today, to have absolutely no confusion over that point.

We must look to, we must believe in Jesus, we must come to the cross of Jesus. He's the only Savior, He's the only refuge. So we must come to Him.

We can have faith in, we can have mountains of faith, in other religious leaders, in other ways, in other philosophies.

[ 61 : 00 ] It will do us no good eternally. Only Jesus. So to use this illustration, if our lives are a bit like a lump of dough, the leaven, that you and I, any relationship, any place we frequent, anything that we watch, any podcast that we listen to, any YouTube channel that we subscribe to, any voice that we listen to, that seems to steer us away from Jesus, that's the leaven, that we are to beware of.

And just like a, a little leaven, goes through the whole batch, just a little bit of unbelief, just a little influence, that pulls us away from Jesus, away from Jesus.

It can lead to great confusion, and immense spiritual damage. So we are to beware. Opposition, repetition, confusion, opposition, confusion, and finally, we come to this famous section, where we hear Peter's profession of faith.

Verse 13. Now, when Jesus, came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, who do people say the Son of Man is?

And they said, some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He said to them, but who do you say, that I am?

[ 62 : 57 ] Simon Peter replied, you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered them, blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

So here we see the disciples again. And so often they were confused. And so often they battled with doubts.

And Jesus is honest about them. He describes them in verse 8, there's been those who have little faith. But their little faith, or saving faith, because their faith was in Jesus.

They're with Jesus. And here, Peter professes that his faith is in Jesus, as the Christ, as the Son of God.

And he makes that profession for the first time. And I don't want to do any more than just note that today. We'll return to these verses next time, God willing.

[ 64 : 19 ] But I want to just close today by listening again to Jesus ask that direct question in verse 15. He says, Who do you say that I am?

And that question, it wasn't just for Peter. Peter. It wasn't just for the disciples in that room back then. That was a personal question that was recorded in the scriptures, and that comes to you and me today in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And that question requires a response. Peter responds by professing faith in Jesus.

You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. He makes that profession of faith.

He's not the finished article. He's going to go on to do a huge blunder in five minutes' time. Because he has little faith. But he has saving faith.

[ 65 : 46 ] But he has saving faith. Because his faith is focused on, and it's professed in, the Lord Jesus. And the question to close with is, will we follow Peter in professing faith in Christ as the

promised Messiah, as God the Son, not just another religious teacher, but God the Son, and as the Savior who lived and died and rose for our salvation?

Can we respond, actually, by singing from our hearts the words of the final praise? The Lord is my shepherd. So let's turn and close by singing the paraphrase of Psalm 23 when we are invited to make a profession of faith ourselves and say the Lord is my shepherd and I want for nothing as I trust in him.

We'll stand to sing just a moment. Amen. The Lord is my shepherd, I am upon.

He makes me die in pasture tree. He leads me by the still, still waters. His goodness destroys my soul. And I will trust in you alone. And I will trust in you alone. And I will trust in you alone. For your hand is my shepherd, I will trust in you alone.

And I will trust in you alone. And I will trust in you alone. For your hand that's mercy follows me.

Your good, and I will trust in you alone. And I will trust in you alone. His goodness destroys my soul.

[ 67 : 37 ] And I will trust in you alone. And I will trust in you alone. And I will trust in you alone. For your hand that's mercy follows me.

Your goodness will lead me home. He guides my ways with righteousness.

And he anoints my bed with oil. And my cup is overflows with joy.

And he's drawn his pure delight. And I will trust in you alone. And I will trust in you alone.

And I will trust in you alone. For your hand that's mercy follows me.

[ 68 : 44 ] Your goodness will lead me home. And though I walk the darkest path.

I will not fear the evil one. For you are with me and your rod and star.

And the comfort I meet to know. And I will trust in you alone. alone and I will trust in you alone for

your endless mercy follows me your goodness will lead me home and I may the grace of the Lord

Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all now

and forevermore Amen