

28.12.25 am

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Date: 31 December 2025

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Good morning everyone and a warm welcome to the service this morning. It's good to see everyone. it's good to see a number of visitors as well those who are back over the holiday period.

And as you know at the end of the service there's tea and there's coffee. If you're able to stay behind please do so. The service this evening is a gallet service, the monthly gallet service and that's at six and Angus M. McLeod will take that service. There's usually a fellowship at the end of the month but with so much going on we're not having that tonight so just the gallet service tonight at six. In the course of the week in the course of the week I thought somebody was telling me there wasn't a there isn't a fellowship tonight was I hearing somebody saying whisper whisper David David no no no fellowship tonight so gallet service and that's it. In the course of the week there's various things going on just to be noting and praying through.

Road to recovery on Tuesday at seven. Please remember that. I know it's a small meeting and there's not many who go there but it's a difficult time of the year for those who are struggling with addictions. And so even if you don't attend that meeting pray for those who have these battles. Pray for a meeting on Wednesday at half past seven as usual and Amman will speak and give a message of that meeting. Thursday New Year's Day service at 11 o'clock and Angus M is going to take that service.

And then next Sunday the 4th the morning service will be taken by Stuart and the evening service will be taken by Kiki. So we'll be praying for them in their preparation. I hope to go on holiday tomorrow morning for a week and in that time if there's any pastoral issues if you could speak to one of the elders in the first instance and the Reverend Dollar is available for that week if anybody needs to speak to a minister.

[2 : 02] So these I think are all the notices that I need to share. The rest of you got the email that's gone out and you can see the rest of the details on that email. So let's begin this time of worship and we'll sing to God's praise. 760 in mission praise.

When we walk with the Lord in the light of his word what a glory he sheds in our way. While we do his good will he abides with us still and with all who will trust and obey.

So let's stand to sing this moment to God's praise. We'll sing this moment to God's praise.

When we walk with the Lord in the light of his word what a glory he sheds on our way.

When we walk with the Lord in the light of his word what a glory he sheds on our way.

[3 : 15] So let's stand to God's praise. God's praise. For there's no other way. To be happy in Jesus.

But to trust and obey. Not a shadow can rise. Not a cloud in the skies.

But his smile with me drives it away. Not a doubt, not a fear. Not a sigh, not a tear.

Not a sigh, not a tear. And abide while we trust and obey. Trust and obey. Trust and obey.

For there's no other way. For there's no other way. To be happy in Jesus. But to trust and obey.

[4 : 15] Not a burden we bear. Not a sorrow we share. But a joy he doth wish we repay.

Not a grief, not a loss. Not a sorrow, nor a cross. But it's best if we trust and obey. Trust and obey.

Trust and obey. For there's no other way. To be happy in Jesus. But to trust and obey. But we never can do.

The new life of his love. And to trust and obey. But we never can do. The new life of his love. Until all on the altar we lay. For the grave where he shows.

And the joy he bestows. For for them who will trust and obey.

[5 : 17] Trust and obey. For there's no other way. To be happy in Jesus. And to trust and obey. For there's no other way.

To be happy in Jesus. But to trust and obey. To be happy in Jesus. But to trust and obey. Then in fair ocean sweet.

We will sit at his feet. Or we'll walk by his side in the way. What he says we will do. Where he sends we will do. Where he sends we will do.

And we'll be happy in Jesus. And we'll be happy in Jesus. And we'll be happy in Jesus. To be happy in Jesus. To be happy in Jesus.

just and only Let's unite our hearts together and pray. Let's pray.

[6 : 38] Our Heavenly Father, we thank you on this last Lord's Day of this year that we can look back and we can say that you're the God who is trustworthy and you're the God who is worthy of our praise and you're the God whom when we obey we find there is blessing and there is the light of your presence with us.

We thank you that you are faithful. We thank you that you are trustworthy. We thank you that we can come to you as the God who is almighty the God who is all powerful, the God who is all knowing and yet the God who loves us with a love that is greater than we can grasp.

The God who is holy and powerful and yet we thank you that you are the one whom we can come to as our Father knowing that you will hear us and that you will receive us because we come in the name of Jesus Christ your Son and our Saviour.

We thank you that this is the day that we remember that the Saviour died and rose again triumphant over the grave and pleads our cause at God's right hand omnipotent to save.

We thank you that we Lord's day by Lord's day remember not just the birth and not just the death but the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

[8 : 17] We thank you that death could not hold him that having laid down his life to take our sin away he rose from the dead and promised life that is everlasting to all who believe.

And we pray this day that as we gather in the name of Jesus looking to the Lord Jesus that we would be given faith that we would not only see that he is the Saviour that he is the one who offers resurrection life but we pray that we would each one come to him and receive the everlasting life that he alone can give.

So we ask that you would be with each of us you know our hearts Lord you know our homes you know what's going on in our minds at this time and we ask Lord that you would guide us and that you would lead us and that you would enable us to be in the spirit of worship on the Lord's day.

We pray for any who may be here who who don't yet know Jesus as their Saviour we thank you that each time we come together there is that call to come to Jesus he says come to me all who are weary and who are burdened and I will give you rest and so we pray for that rest that we would receive it and that we would know and be able to say that Jesus is our Lord and our Saviour we pray for any who may be trusting the Lord but who may feel distant from him at this time we know that in this world there are many things that can distract us many things that can like sin entangle us that leave us at a distance from you but we thank you that we are only ever a prayer away from a close walk with God and so we come even now confessing that we are sinners confessing that we are prone to wander and asking

Lord Jesus that you would draw us close that we would be able to know what the hymn writer wrote of that close walk with God and that happiness of trusting and obeying the Lord Jesus and we thank you Lord that when we think about a new year and all the uncertainties of it we can go into it with courage and confidence knowing that you are the one who guides us and leads us we think of Scott and Fiona and the family here and as they think about coming to the end of ministry training this year and wondering what's up ahead we thank you that they can sing with us where he sends we will go never fear only trust and obey and we know that that is a calling you place on all of our lives so help us we pray to acknowledge you and to be guided and directed in all our ways by you be with those who are struggling this morning we pray we pray for those who are sick those that we can think of and name in our hearts who are in hospital at this time minister to them we pray and where it's your will we pray for your healing touch upon them and we pray Lord for your saving and sustaining grace to be with them at this time we pray for those at home who are struggling who would love to be here and we ask Lord that you would draw near to them and that you would bless them where they are we pray for those who battle with addictions at this time of year and ask Lord that you would give them strength and that they and we would be found looking to the Lord Jesus we pray for those who battle with the waves of grief that come more acutely at Christmas and New Year and we pray Lord for your presence for your peace that they would know that you are the God

of compassion the God of all comfort and that they would experience that at this time so hear our prayers and help us we pray bless us we ask and as we think of our nation and our world that is so broken we think of wars we think of places where there is conflict we think of stories that we have read and watched where there is suffering far removed from us here and as we pray for these places we ask Lord that your hand would be upon those who are struggling and that your people in the midst of suffering would be light in the darkness so hear our prayers take away our sin we ask and help us to to know your presence and to be still and to know that you are God and that you are with us and we ask this in Jesus name and for his sake

[13:15] Amen Amen A warm welcome for those who have come in over the last few minutes as well it's good to see you all Boys and girls would you like to come forward please I should have said as well there is a creche behind me for any who need to go there not right now but in the course of the service and there is also a Sunday school for the primary school children today but the secondary school children will stay in for the service Boys and girls how are you today?

Are you all good? Did you enjoy Christmas? Did you get any presents? Tell me what kind of presents? Did you get any good presents? Benjamin?

Pardon? You got a Nintendo Switch Wow Have you played in it many games? What's your favourite game? Minecraft Minecraft And what else did you get?

What did you get? I got these mittens You got these mittens There They can do that kind of stuff They can do that kind of stuff They're smart mittens So they've got no fingers and then you flick them over and they've got fingers And they're little bunnies You can turn your hands into two little bunnies as well They are super Pardon?

That's what Nova can do That's what Nova can do You're talking a language I don't understand but yeah They look super cool Did you get any presents Olivia?

[14:57] Yeah What did you get? I got some snacks and I also got gloves but they're different I still got pink ones like Nova Snacks and gloves but they're different and they're pink Wow We both have pink gloves You both have pink gloves What about any of the rest of you?

Did you get any presents? Joseph, did you get any pink gloves? No What did you get for Christmas? No Well you can tell me afterwards Emily Not Emily but Anna You were going to tell me something were you?

You got a bike! The streets of Kailas will not be safe anymore with you on the bike Can you ride your bike fast? Amazing Do you like getting presents?

Yeah And see when you get presents Lily Did you get a present? Yeah What did you get? Barbie dream house A Barbie dream house As your dad has been playing it all the time when you've not been looking Good stuff When you get presents what do you do with them?

Yeah I play with them Pardon? You play with them But see when you get a present and it's underneath the Christmas tree before you play with it what do you have to do with it?

[16:23] Benjamin You have to see the names so you don't take somebody else's present Yeah And once you see the name and it says on it Benjamin what do you do?

Pardon? Pardon? You show the names Yeah And once you've seen the name and you've showed the name and you've said Mum Dad it's definitely for Benjamin What do you do?

Pardon? You give it to them You're raising a very polite boy here Very polite and patient And once you've given it to them and they've said No it's not for me and they hand it back to you with the wrapping on it what do you do?

He's just winding me up now You open it That's what you do Now We had Christmas Day and we had all the presents underneath the tree and then yesterday I was looking and there was one present left under the tree and it's still unwrapped It's still wrapped that Christmas has passed So what do you think we should do with it?

What do you think it might be? What do you think it might be? I don't know Maybe it might be Lego Lego Lego Maybe Olivia What do you think?

[17:57] A box of chocolates A box of chocolates Do you think? Lily? Beats Beats How are we going to find out? What do you want to do?

Who wants to open it? Me Who wants to open it? Finlay you haven't you've not you've not answered the question yet so you can open it There you go So you open it and tell us what's inside What is it?

It's a box of Maltesers and I think maybe the best thing for these box of Maltesers would be that you take it to Sunday school and rather than having carrots for your snack you can maybe have some Maltesers for your snack today and then for the rest of the afternoon you can be bouncing off all the walls in your own houses Who's on the Sunday school today?

You guys So I'll leave these there No Finlay will take it with him when he's heading out because I trust Finlay to take it to the Sunday school But that's the thing When you get a present you don't just leave it wrapped underneath the tree do you?

You open it and once you've opened it you're able to enjoy it The greatest present the greatest gift that was ever given was what?

[19 : 50] Jesus And it says in 2 Corinthians 9.15 Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift The greatest gift ever, ever, ever is Jesus But you know the sad thing?

Some people they might hear about Jesus and they'll just say I'll think about Jesus another time I've got a lot of things going on in my life and I'm busy with work and I've got football and I've got this and I've got that and I've got all this and maybe maybe later I'll think about Jesus but not right now and it's like they just leave him to the side a bit like that present that was just left under my Christmas tree and that's not a good thing to do is it?

It's a sad thing to do The greatest gift ever given was Jesus and he was given to us so that we won't ignore him but we'll trust him and we'll love him and when we love him and trust him and know him he brings joy and happiness into our life every day not just on Christmas day but every day as we're close to him so we pray now and speak to God and thank him for his gift Heavenly Father we thank you that you love us so much that you sent your son Jesus into this world we thank you that he was and is the greatest gift that ever was or will be given we thank you that he's the gift that all of us need he's the one who's able to take our sin away he's the one who went to the cross so that we could have everlasting life and we pray that we wouldn't leave Jesus to the side but that we would receive him that we would trust him and that we would know the joy of Christ in our lives day by day and we pray all this in Jesus name

Amen thank you boys and girls for listening so well we're going to sing now a hymn your grace that brings the sinner home and we'll stand to sing in just a moment as you grace from death to life as as as the joy of your salvation by grace I am redeemed by grace I am restored and help my freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord through the grace that I cannot explain not by my earthly wisdom the grace of life without a stain was traded for this sinner by grace I am redeemed by grace I am restored and help my freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord let grace rise up and overflow my song return forever for grace will see me welcome home to walk beside my Savior by grace I am redeemed by grace I am restored and help my freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord by grace I am redeemed by grace I am restored and help my freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord thank you for me cheers okay

if the boys and girls primarily scoot head through to Sunday School and let's pray for them as they go. And we can turn now in our Bibles to Genesis chapter 35.

[26 : 27] Genesis chapter 35.

We're going through the life of Jacob and this takes us to the end of this series, this chapter that takes us to almost the end of his life.

Genesis 35 and verse 1. This is God's word. So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods that they had and the rings that were in their ears.

Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree that was near Shechem. And as they journeyed, a terror from God fell upon the cities that were around them so that they did not pursue the sons of Jacob. And Jacob came to Luz, that is Bethel, which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with them. And there he built an altar and called the place El Bethel because there God had revealed himself to him when he fled from his brother.

[28 : 07] And Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died and she was buried under an oak below Bethel. So he called its name Alon-Bakuth. God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Paddan Aram and blessed him.

And God said to him, Your name is Jacob. No longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name. So he called his name Israel.

And God said to him, I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you and kings shall come from your own body.

The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you and I will give the land to your offspring after you. Then God went up from him in the place where he had spoken with them.

And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had spoken with them, a pillar of stone. He poured out a drink offering on it and poured oil on it. So Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with them, Bethel.

[29 : 13] Then he journeyed from Bethel where they were still some distance from Ephrath. Rachel went into labor and she had hard labor. And when her labor was at its hardest, the midwife said to her, Do not fear for you have another son.

And as her soul was departing, for she was dying, she called his name Benoni, but his father called him Benjamin. So Rachel died and she was buried on the way to Ephrath, that is Bethlehem.

And Jacob set up a pillar over her tomb. It is the pillar of Rachel's tomb, which is there to this day.

Israel joined on and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder.

While Israel lived in that land, Reuben went and lay with Bilhah, his father's concubine, and Israel heard of it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve. The sons of Leah, Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.

The sons of Rachel, Joseph, and Benjamin. The sons of Bilhah, Rachel's servant, Dan, and Naphtali. The sons of Zilpah, Leah's servant, Gad, and Asher.

[30 : 23] These were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan Aram. And Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kiriath Arba, that is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned.

Now the days of Isaac were 180 years, and Isaac breathed his last, and he died and was gathered to his people, old and full of days. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us. We'll sing again now to God's praise.

We'll sing from Psalm 67, the first two stanzas of the Psalm in Gaelic.

And I'll read the verses in English. Lord, bless and pity us, shine on us with thy face, that the earth thy way, and nations all may know thy saving grace. Let people praise thee, Lord.

Let people all thee praise. So let the nations be glad, and songs their voices raise. We'll sing these two verses of Psalm 67, and remain seated as we sing in Gaelic.

[31 : 31] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. sharp Thank you.

Oh Oh Oh

Oh Oh Oh

[35 : 31] Oh Oh Oh Oh Let's pray again as we come back to God's Word.

Heavenly Father, we thank you that this is your Word. We thank you for the promise that you've given us that it won't Return empty, that it will do what you determine it is supposed to do in our hearts and in our lives.

Your Word is active, your Word is strong and powerful. And so we pray that you would be at work in the power of the Holy Spirit as the Word goes forth.

Speak to us, Lord, we pray. And clear from our minds all that would distract us and create in us a sense of expectation That you, the living God, would speak into our hearts And guide us and direct us as we come to the end of this year And as we approach our new year, should we see it Guide us and lead us, we ask.

We pray for the children, we thank you for them, those in the Sunday school, those in the creche, Those older ones as well, in the service just now. We thank you for the way that we believe that you are working in their lives.

[37 : 00] In their lives, we thank you for the way that they encourage us and they challenge us sometimes. And we pray, Lord, that you would bless them and that you would continue to make them a blessing That we may see more and more of these young folks trusting in Christ And that we would see more and more of the likeness of Christ in them As we pray that we would see the likeness of Christ in us.

And again, Father, we pray for any who may be here this morning who don't yet know Jesus Some who may have sat through many sermons over many years And who once more sit, maybe thinking that they have to just endure a few more minutes in this place Sometimes this is the way that you break into a life unexpectedly, even against our desire Sometimes we have testimonies that speak

of the way that you powerfully break in And so we pray, Holy Spirit, that you would be working to soften hearts, to break hearts That you may enter in and that salvation may come into the lives of each one of us So help us, we pray, and guide us and we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. It doesn't seem long since we actually stood here at the beginning of the year We're now coming to the end of this year This is the last Sunday in 2025 And as we come to the end of one year And as we approach the beginning of a new year We tend to become a bit more thoughtful and reflective We maybe think about the last year And the things that we've done Perhaps some things that we've done that we wish we hadn't done Or maybe we'd wish we'd done them a bit differently We maybe think about things that we'd hoped to have done That we've left undone And as we think about the prospect of a new year We perhaps give some thought about the things that we maybe hope to focus on

What we might even resolve to do Some of us might be kind of New Year's resolutions kind of people And we may have thoughts about what we should resolve to do What if we open up our phones or we go on the TV There's no shortage of people who will seek to speak into our lives to help us steer these kind of decisions There are self-appointed influencers wherever we look Who want to give us some direction, their direction Into what we should put our time and money into as we approach a new year But what I want to do today is step away from that And open our Bibles And what I'd like us to do is listen to what Jacob might say to us As we go into a new year For those who are visiting Genesis 35 might not be the obvious text to pick

At the end of a year But this is where we've got to in our series We've been stepping through the life of Jacob And this takes us to the end of our Jacob series And in this chapter I believe we're given some lessons that Certainly I and we collectively I believe Would do well to take into 2026 Six lessons if we have the time to get through them Lesson number one Lesson number one Is we are to recommit our lives to God Lesson number two Is we are to repent of our idolatry Or get rid of our little gods Lesson number three Is we can relax If we are God's people We can relax knowing that God is with us Lesson number four Lesson number four

[41 : 33] Is we are Again if we are Christians If we are God's people We're to remember our names Remember who we are Whom God has called us to be Lesson number five Is there's a reality check in this chapter And what we see very clearly Is that God's people will experience joy And sorrow We can expect that And lesson number six Is as far as it's possible for us We are to First of all Most importantly Is reconcile with God And reconcile with others So these are the six lessons And we'll see if we can step through these In the time that we have So first point Is we are to recommit our lives to God Looking at verse one If we just follow through these verses We can see in verse one

This is what God calls Jacob to do In verse one God said to Jacob Arise Go up to Bethel And dwell there Make an altar there to the God Who appeared to you When you fled from your brother Esau So there's a very clear word from God At the beginning of this chapter God says Arise Get up Jacob From where you are Go up to Bethel And dwell there Relocate to there And there's history to this word This isn't a boat from the blue If we were to rewind to Genesis 28 We can see and we can remember That it was in Bethel That God met with Jacob In a powerful And a personal way Bethel you could say Was the place where Jacob was converted

That's where he became To use our language A Christian That was the place That he first committed His life to God And that was the place That he vowed to return to And we can track the course Of Jacob From Genesis 28 Through to Genesis 35 And we can see That Jacob He is actually on route To Bethel He's met with God He's trusted God He's seeking to walk with God But Jacob Like us Is very easily distracted He's very much prone to wander And so Jacob Only I think it's It's just seven miles away From Bethel He's distracted By the shiny lights Of a place called Shechem It was a good place For the animals That he had It was a good place

To do business There was lots of connections It was a place Where a business Could flourish And he could make money So in this world's terms Shechem was an ideal place And Jacob He's travelling to Bethel But he gets distracted Just shy of Bethel And Shechem And the world says That's a great place For you to be But it's not the place That God called him To be in And because Jacob Delayed In that place He actually delays For 15 years In that place He causes his family To be led into A whole world Of trouble And you can scan back Through Genesis 34 I have no intentions Of delving back Into the dark

Plot line of that story But Genesis 34 Is a hard read Because of all That Jacob and his family Have to go through But he has to go through Because he's on the wrong place He's out of God's will And we can look at Jacob's life And we can see that Consistently He's not just Once or twice Out of God's will But he's always String out of God's will He's always doing The wrong thing He's always messing up But what we can see Is that God Didn't give up On Jacob God keeps On being faithful To Jacob God keeps On showing grace To Jacob God keeps On calling Jacob And at the beginning

[46 : 38] Of this chapter God calls Jacob To To not commit But to recommit His life to God God Calls Jacob To Remember How faithful God had been To him In the midst Of all the troubles That he had With the fallout With his brother Esau God calls Jacob To redirect His paths From that place Of disobedience Into the path Of obedience God calls Jacob To come Back into A close Walk with him And Jacob After 15 years Of a spiritual Coma You could say Jacob Hears God's call And responds

By recommitting His life To God One commentator Warren Weerspey Says When a person Is backslidden As Jacob Was There is Nothing else For him But to go Back to the Place Of dedication And renew His vows And you know That might be A word For someone Here At the end Of this year On the cusp Of a new year It may be I pray that it May be That God Is calling Some to commit Our lives To him For the first Time There are Certainly People here Today I know Who have Heard many Many sermons Who have Many times Heard the Lord Jesus Call them To come And who Have never Come Sat in Churches Going through Religious Rituals But never Come into Relationship With Jesus And in His patience He's saying Again Today Will you Come to Me Will you Commit Your life To me For the First time And go From A hard Metallic Religion To a Close walk With God So for Some There may Be a Call For the First time To come In faith To Jesus And for Others It may Be that God is Calling Us to Come back To him Because we've Got stuck In Shechem Maybe there's

Been 15 days Or 15 Weeks Or 15 Months Or like Jacob 15 Years Where we've Been wandering Away from God And our Ears are Being closed And our Hearts Are being Hard And yet Today We're Hearing God Calling us To come Back And Jacob Is saying To us Do it Come back To God Come to God It's the Only Way Of blessing It's the Only Way To know Happiness You can Go to a Dozen Influencers And a Dozen

Pages That will Tell you A thousand Ways On how You can Be happy In 2026 And it's All shallow And it's All empty But you'll Be burnt Through 2026 Before You realise It God Speaks To us Through Jacob Who's Learned A lot Of lessons The hard Way And he's Saying If we Want to Know Happiness If we Want to Know Joy If we Want to Know Salvation If we Want to Know Satisfaction If we Want to Know Peace If we Want to Have Purpose Commit Recommit Your Life To God Point Number One Point Number Two Which Very Much Is Connected With Point Number One Is We Are To Repent Of Idolatry That's

[51 : 47] The second Lesson That Jacob Teaches Us We're To Get Rid Of Our Idols We Are To Get Rid Of Our Little Gods Verses Two To Four So Jacob Said To His Household And To All Who Are With Them Put Away The Foreign Gods That Are Among You And Purify Yourselves And Change Your Garments Then Let Us Arise And Go To Bethel So That I May Make An Altar There To The God Who Answers Me In The Day Of My Distress And Has Been With Me Wherever I Have Gone So They Gave To Jacob All The Foreign Gods That They Had And The Rings That Were In It's Quite A Thought That After Everything That God Did For Jacob And For The Family Of Jacob They

Still Have Bags Full Of Idols They Say They're God's People They Say They're Following The Lord They Say They're Going God's Way But It Seems That They Still Have Bags Full Of Idols They've Got Shelves Full Of Idols In Their Houses And Jacob Knows It And He Probably Had Some Of His Own Stashed Away And We Might Shake Our Heads Disapprovingly But The Reality Is If We Know Ourselves At All And If We Know Our Homes At All We All Have Our Little Hidden Idols Not Little Statues You Know Not Like Golden Ornaments Little Buddhas That Sit On A Mantel Piece But It Could Be Cars Locked Away In Garages It Could

Be Clothes And Wardrobes It Could Be Careers That We Obsess Over It Could Be The Currency That We Watch Continually In Our Banks We Are Expert Idol Makers John Calvin Said The Human Heart Is A Perpetual Idol Factory And Jacob Says To You And I Need To Get Rid Of All These Idols If We're Going To Follow God Because We Can't Commit And Recommit Our Lives To The Lord

And Keep Our Stash Of Idols They're In Conflict So As 2026 Approaches The Question And Application That I Have To Ask With You Is Are We Going To Take Our Idols With Us Into Another Year

Or Are We Going To Bury Them So That We Can Seek To Have A Closer Walk With God We're Going To Sing At The End It Would Be Good If We Could Sing From Our Hearts The Dearest Idol I Have Known Whatever That Idol Be Help Me To Tear It From Thy Throne And Worship Only Thee Then Will My Walk Be Close With God And That's Actually The Greatest Resolution We Could Take Into The New Year That We Will Walk Close With God But For Us To Walk Close With The One True God We Have To Repent And Get Rid Of All The Little Gods That We Stash Away And Just As We As We Move On From

This Point Note That This Is A Word Particularly For The Fathers Jacob Said To His Household And To All Who Are With Them Put Away The Foreign Gods That Are Among You And Purify Yourselves Jacob Takes The Lead Because God Called Him To And God Still Calls Us To I Think That Us Men Are More Than Happy To Subcontract So Much Of The Spiritual Responsibility To The Mothers But At The End Of The Day When We Stand Before God You Won't Be Looking At The Mothers You Be Saying To The Fathers What Did You Do What Did You Say How Did You Lead Third Point Is We Are Taught Through Jacob Here

[56 : 49] To Relax If We Know That God Is With Us And If We Are Trusting Him He Is With Us And That Promise Of God With Jacob Was First Given To Jacob In Bethel When He Came To Know The Lord In That Personal Way At It's Conversion Point You Could Say Genesis 28 And Verse 15 God Speaking To Jacob Says Behold I Am With You And Will Keep You Wherever You Go And Will Bring You Back To This Land For I Will Not Leave You Until I Have Done What I Have Promised You So That Was God's Promise That He Will Be With Him And I Was Jacob Heads Obediently To Bethel He Has That Experience Of God Being With Him And Because God

Is With Him He Is Safe Travels He Is Supernaturally Safe Travels As He Travels Back To The Place Of God's Will Says The Cities That Were Around Them So That They Did Not Pursue The Sons Of Jacob And Jacob Came To Luz That Is Bethel Which Is In The Land Of Canaan He And All The People Who Were With Him And There He Built An Altar And Called The Place El Bethel Because There God Had Revealed Himself To Him When He Fled From His Brother If We Just Try Think Ourselves Into Jacob's Position At This Point He Has To Head To This Place Bethel That God Has Instructed Him To Go To And That He Has Vowed To Go To But We Have This Picture Here Of All These Cities That Were Around Them And These Were Hostile Cities This Is Territory That Jacob Was Going To In Their Opinion Encroach On So What Would You Do If You See Someone Coming To Take Your Land Or You Attack But They Have The Sense That God Is With Jacob Because God Was With Jacob And That Fear Of The Lord Caused Them To Take A Step Back And Hold Their Fire And Let Jacob Pass Through In Safety And So Jacob As He Arrives In Bethel He Says I Didn't Need To Worry I Saw

All The Cities I Saw All The Military! Threat I Saw All The Risks All The Dangers But You Know I Didn't Need To Lose A Moment Sleep Because God Was With Me Just As He Promised To Be And God Kept Me Safe Just As He Promised He Would And Jacob In A Sense Through This Passage Says To Us If We Are God's People We Can Relax You Know In A World That Is So Crippled With Fear And Anxiety We Can Relax Because We Have The Promise God Is With Us It's The Message Of Christmas Isn't It We Just Thought Through It The

Child That Was Born His Name Was Emmanuel Which Means What It Means God With Us God Came All The Way From Heaven To Earth To Be With Us God The Son Went All The Way To The Cross To Be With Us And When We See That And Remember Jacob Couldn't See That When We See That When We See The Extent To Which God Is With Us Surely Our Faith And Our Courage Is Boosted And If We Are Trusting The Lord We Can Relax Going Into 2026 Knowing That God Is With Us And We May Experience

[61 : 52] All Manner Of Difficulty There May Be Waves There May Be Waters There May Be All Manner Of Trouble But Even In The Trouble We Can Relax If We Know That God Is With Us In It Jesus Said In Matthew 6 27 Which Of You Can Which Of You By Being Anxious Can Add A Single Hour To The Span Of His Life Relax If The Apostle Paul In Philippians 4 Said The Lord Is At Hand Do Not Be Anxious About Anything But In Everything By Prayer And Supplication With Thanksgiving Let Your Requests Be Known To God And The Peace Of God Which Surpasses All Understanding Will Guard Your Hearts

And Your Minds In Christ Jesus We Can Relax But All That Hinges On The Truth Of God Being With Us And Who Is God With He's With Those Who Come To Him In Faith So We're Back To That Call Come To Him We're Only At Less Than Three But This Is Where We're Going To Finish Come To Him If You Can Hear This And You've Never Come To Jesus Come To Him You Can See Your Sin And See That He Is The Savior If You Can Understand That The Cross Is The Place That He Went To Die For Sinners And You Recognize That You're A Sinner Come To Him There's No Other Place You'll Get Salvation You Have To Come To Him And For The Wanderer For The Prodigal He's Been Living Half Alive Maybe For Fifteen Years Like Jacob Was Just One Day's Journey Away From The Place That He Was Supposed To Be In He Falls Into Sin And As The Years Go On The Heart Gets Harder And It Gets Easier To Live Out Of God's Will And Then Suddenly There's The Call Of God That Breaks Through And He Hears It And If You're Here Today And I've Been Living At A Distance From God For Some Period Because Of Indiscipline Or Because Of Some Sin Or Because Of Whatever And Today You Hear His Voice Come Back To Him And We Have The Promise That Those Who Come Will Never Be Pushed Away And Those Who Return God Will Return To Them So Come To Him Commit Your Life To God As This Year Comes To A Close Get Rid Of The Little Gods That We All Like To Stash Away And When We Are Doing That We Can Face A New Year Not Knowing What's In It But We Can Face It Relaxed Knowing That God Is With Us Let's Pray Heavenly Heavenly Father We Thank You For Your Word We Thank You That Wherever We Go In The Bible We Have The Gospel Call Coming To Us And We Pray That You Would Open Our Ears That [66 : 57] We Would Hear And That You Would Give To Us The Faith That Is A Gift From God That We Would Respond To Your Call Help Us To Come To Jesus Whilst There Is Time We Thank You That In Your Patience You Have Given Us Today And We Know That Your Word Says That Today Is The Day Of Salvation Today If You Hear His Voice Do Not Harden Your Heart Again So We Pray That Those Who Have Never Come Would Come To Jesus And Know Forgiveness Of Sin Salvation Eternal Life Peace Joy Purpose And For Those Who Have Wandered Into The Far Country And Forgotten How Sweet It Is To Know Fellowship With

God We Pray That They That We Would Come Back And Find As The Prodigal Did The Warm Embrace Of The Father We Confess That We Are Experts When It Comes To Making Idols We Have Garages We Have Cupboards We Have Banks Full Of Them We Can Find Many Many Ways To Pour Our Time And Our Energy Into Things That Will Never Satisfy And Have No Eternal! Benefit Whilst We Neglect You Forgive Us We Pray Help Us To Give Thanks For Every Good Gift That You Give To Us But To Hold Them Lightly Knowing That You Are The Only One That Our Hearts Need Our Hearts Are Restless As It Said Until They Find Rest In The Help Us We Pray As We Think About The Prospect Of A New Year Some Of Us With A Sense Of Excitement Thinking About Weddings And Relationships That Are Coming Together And Others Who May Be Thinking About New Year With A Sense Of Forboding Wondering What's Ahead We Thank You That When We Are In Christ We Don't Have To Fear To

We will sing to conclude Mission Praise 494, O For A Closer Walk With God. O For A Closer Walk With God O For A Closer Walk With God O For A Closer Walk With God O For A Closer Walk With God O For A Closer Walk With God Love leads me to the love. Where is the blessed dance I view? When I first call the Lord, Where is the soul refreshing view Of Jesus and his word?

[71 : 32] What peaceful earth I once enjoyed The street and memory still But may I let a living boy The world can ever fill Return, O Lord, he now returns In messenger of rest I give the stint that may be warm And draw me from my best

The dearest night of light and road What ever thine love be?

Help me to take with all thy blood And worship only thee Nor shall my want be close to God How master in thy name So pure light Shall mark the road That leads me to heaven Now may the grace of our 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.