

## 22.2.26 am

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Date: 22 February 2026

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 today.! It's always good to see some visitors and encouraging to see some visitors.

! The notices have been on the screen. I'll highlight just a few of these just now. The first is to remind you there's tea and coffee at the end of the service. Gillian McSween is on cakes today, so that should give you every encouragement to stay behind.

This evening we don't have a service as we would normally have. Normally it would be our Gaelic service tonight, but with it being the Leverborough communion, we would normally close on the evening to allow us to go out to the service and the fellowship.

So the service in Leverborough tonight I think is at 6. So there's the encouragement, the opportunity to go over there and to encourage them as a congregation.

Tomorrow there's a community lunch, 12 till 2, the monthly community lunch. So if you are able to come along to that, please do that.

[ 1 : 05 ] The donations for the lunch always go, I think, to Crossroads. So please take note of that. Men's Breakfast is coming Saturday, the 28th.

And the service is next Sunday in the morning. I'll take the service myself, God willing. And the evening service will be taken by Scott. It feels like a long, long time since we've seen or heard Scott.

He's in Graver and Kinloch today, but he'll be teaching here next Sunday morning. So please be encouraged to come along. A couple of dates for your diary.

The first one is for S1 to S6 girls. They're having a day when they get together under the heading Faith Over Fear, 12 o'clock till 2 o'clock.

And if you want more information about that, please speak to Gillian, who's here somewhere on Iona. And the last thing to note is the communion weekend is on the 5th to the 8th of March, which isn't far away now.

[ 2 : 14 ] Two weeks, I think, from now. And one change to what's been normal over the last couple of years. Normally we would have the Gaelic service at 12 noon on the Friday.

This year we're going to have the Gaelic service at 7pm on Thursday. A couple of reasons for that. One is the numbers in the Gaelic have been going down.

And for those who are a bit younger, but who would want to come out to the Gaelic service and who are working, this gives you the chance to come out. And the second reason is the communion weekend, as it always has been, clashes with Sculpey, who also have a Gaelic service at 12 noon on a Friday.

And so this means that we're not clashing. And maybe they'll be encouraged to come over here on Thursday. And we might be encouraged to go over there on Friday. So Thursday, 5th, 7pm.

And it's the Reverend Donald MacDonald Dolan who will take that service. And then Friday, the 6th at 7pm, Saturday, 7th at 7pm, Sunday at normal times.

[ 3 : 20 ] And these services will be taken by Neil Lachey, MacDonald, Mary's brother, as he's known to most of us. If there are those who are trusting the Lord Jesus, who are what the Bible calls secret believers, and who are hearing the call of Jesus to come and profess faith for the first time, and to come to the Lord's table, please be encouraged to come and speak to me, or to any of the elders between now and then.

One more notice. Last Sunday, I spoke about the congregational meeting and the chance to give. That's because Duncan wasn't here.

He is here today. So he'll say just a very short message. I'm conscious a lot of you weren't here last Sunday because it was a holiday weekend. But Duncan will just say a little bit about what we decided on and what there is the opportunity to do.

Thank you, David. So yeah, the congregational meeting that we had. I was following up on the previous congregational meeting before Christmas, and we were just talking about plans for the future.

And we're going to be working on a number of fronts looking at new potential things to do. And for that, there's a couple of things that are quite obvious when we look around today.

[ 4 : 48 ] We do need a bit more space in here. And in the long term, and I do stress the long term, it would be good for us to actually look at extending this building further back and creating more space in here.

But in the short term, there's a few things that have been done to the building in terms of getting the solar panels put on the roof, as you'll have seen, putting a new audio visual system in here and some general maintenance that's requiring to be done.

And then we also still have something just over £100,000 to pay off on the church loan, the way it did for the renovation. And we would be keen to try and pay that off a bit earlier if we can, save the money that goes on interest and payments, and think ahead to the future and what we can do with the building in terms of providing one that's fit for worship, not just today, but into the future, and also for reaching out to the community.

So if you are able to give, then we're very happy to accept funds either as one-off donations or as monthly payments towards the repayment of the church loan.

And there were letters here last week. I've noticed they've all gone, which is very encouraging. But I'm quite happy to print off some more. If you would like to get a letter which gives a background to everything, please just speak to me at the end of the service and I can print off a number and bring them to prayer meeting on Wednesday night.

[ 6 : 21 ] And they can be available next Sunday again. And I just want to thank everyone who has given very generously to the church over the years. And don't by any manner means feel compelled to give at this point, because I know many people have been giving extremely generously.

And if you are giving all that you can, we are extremely grateful for that and don't expect any more. If you do wish to give, we'll be very happy to receive funds. And that will just help with our own mission in reaching people here with the gospel going forward.

So thank you for that and I'll be around at the end of service if you want to chat. Thank you, Duncan. Let's begin this time of worship now and let's sing to God's praise.

Let's sing. Let's sing. Let's sing.!!■ In my place all damned he stood,  
Sealed my pardon with his blood, Hallelujah, what a Savior!

[ 8 : 29 ] Guilty by unhelpful sweet, Swatless Lamb of God was he, Full atonement can it be,  
Hallelujah, what a Savior!

Ended up was he to die, It is finished, was his drive, Now in heaven exalted high, Hallelujah, what a Savior!

When he comes, our glorious King, All his ransomed home to bring, Then I knew this song we'll sing, Hallelujah, what a Savior!

Let's bow our heads and let's come to God in prayer.

Our Heavenly Father, We thank you for this, your day. We thank you for the words that We have been moved to sing in our hearts, Or words that we pray that we would have been moved In our hearts to sing, That direct us to your Son, Our Savior, And we pray that in our hearts We may be able to say with the hymn writer, Hallelujah, what a Savior!

[ 10 : 41 ] And we thank you that in that hymn We already have been directed to look to Jesus, We have already been called to remember The message of the Gospel.

And as we gather, We gather as those who recognize and confess that we are sinners. And yet we thank you That Jesus, God the Son, Came into this world to reclaim ruined sinners.

And we acknowledge that without Jesus, We would have no hope. Without Jesus, we would be ruined for time and for eternity.

But we thank you for that verse that so often we return to, That reminds us that God so loved the world, That he gave his only begotten Son, That whoever believes in him Shall not perish, But shall have eternal life.

Your word reminds us that the wages of sin is death, But the gift of God is eternal life. And we thank you that for us, This is a free gift.

[ 12 : 00 ] We simply need to ask for that eternal life. We simply need to come to Jesus, Confessing that we are sinners, And asking for the forgiveness, And the life that he promises to all who will come.

The gift of grace, The free gift of grace. And yet, We remember even as we have sang, That the cost of us receiving grace, The cost of our salvation, Was high.

It was beyond our estimation. It took your Son to a cross. As we sang, Lifted up was he to die.

It as finished was his cry. And now we thank you that he is in heaven, Exalted high. That he is the Savior.

That he is the one who will never push away any who come to him. We thank you, Lord Jesus, That you who knew no sin became sin, So that we can have that salvation, That is found only in you.

[ 13 : 13 ] And we ask, Lord Jesus, That you would enable us to hear your call over the noise of this world, Over the distractions of our own hearts.

Help us to hear the voice of Jesus saying, Come unto me, And find rest for your souls. So we pray, Lord, for each other.

You know our hearts. You know each home that is represented here. You know our motivation and coming even this morning. Some of us have come with joy in our hearts, With a desire to worship you.

Others maybe have come with questions, As they seek to understand the truth of the gospel, And seek to come to a decision on who Jesus is.

We thank you that your word is very clear, That Jesus is the Son of God, That he is the Savior. But we recognize that we need the eyes of faith to be able to see him.

[ 14 : 24 ] So Holy Spirit, we pray, That where there are those who have questions, Where there are those who do not see clearly, We ask that you would open their eyes, That they would see the glory and the beauty of Jesus.

We pray for any who may be here this morning reluctantly, Who've come because it's less hassle to come than it is to stay at home. And we ask, Lord, that you would touch their hearts, As you would touch all of our hearts, That we all may be given a desire for eternal life.

A desire to come to Jesus. As a desire to live our lives, Not for ourselves, But for the glory of God.

We thank you that on this day, On the Lord's day, We remember that not only did Jesus die in our place for our sin, But he rose from the dead.

That he lives, And that one day he will return to this world, And we will all stand before him. And we ask that each one of us would be ready for that day.

We thank you, Lord, For these times that we are able to gather around the Lord's table, And remember his death until he comes. And we pray for the congregation in Leverborough.

[ 15 : 47 ] This morning we ask that you would bless them as they gather around the Lord's table.

We thank you for Chrissie Cumming, Who has professed faith for the first time, And who will sit at the Lord's table for the first time.

Bless her, we pray. And we pray that you would encourage all of the congregation, As she sits with them. We pray that as we see the prospect of the Lord's table coming close to us as a congregation, We pray for any who may be hearing the call of Jesus to profess faith.

Give them the courage, Lord, we pray, To come to the table and to do this, To take the bread, To take the wine, And to remember the Lord Jesus. We pray, Lord, for our country.

You have told us that we are to pray for those who are in leadership over us. And as we look at politics, And as we look into the royal family, We see such chaos.

And yet that shouldn't surprise us. As a country, We turn away from your word. We see more and more in the way of chaos. More and more in the way of laws being passed, Which bring distress to you, Lord, And bring disorder to the land that we are part of.

[ 17 : 15 ] So we pray as we are taught in your word, Asking that you would have mercy upon us as a nation, And that we would be cause to return to you, Knowing that you will return to us when we do so.

We pray that for ourselves as individuals, And we pray that for us as a nation. Draw us back, Lord, we pray. We pray for all nations.

We think of countries that we are connected with in particular. We think of Romania. We think of Nepal. We think of Malawi. We think of parts of East Asia as well. Where we remember those who have gone out from this congregation to these places. And we ask, Lord, that Christ crucified would be preached.

The name of Jesus would be lifted up. And that across all nations, There may be many who come in worship today. And we pray now, Lord, That as we think about our needs, That you would meet us at the point of our need.

[18:21] We, week by week, pray for those who are sick. Some in hospital, some at home. Week by week, we pray for those who struggle with addictions and conditions.

Week by week, we remember those who are grieving. And, Lord, we ask that as minds, As in our mind's eye, we think of names and people.

We pray that you would help them. That you would give to them comfort. That you would give to them strength. That you would give to them all that they need. In their times of distress.

And we pray, finally, for those who are healthy. And who have some superficial level of happiness. In this world.

But who know that there's something lacking. And we ask that you would cause them To realize that the riches of this world are Are just decaying.

[19:18] They are passing away. We cannot hold on to them. But help them and help us to see That time is short. Eternity is long. And that there is riches in heaven For all who will come to Jesus As the only way To the Father.

To hear our prayers And lead us and guide us In worship we pray. Cleanse us from our sin Empty us of all that is of self. And help us to see And fix our eyes upon Jesus The author The perfecter of our faith For we pray these things in his name And for his sake.

Amen. Amen. Boys and girls Would you like to come forward, please? How are you all today?

All good. Something to show you today. Okay. Who knows what this is? Hoover Pardon? Hoover It's a hoover And what do you do with a hoover?

Hoover up stuff You clean. You hoover up stuff Where do you use a hoover? What does it? Who can tell me how you use a hoover? Benjamin, your hand went up first.

[20:46] Come up and show me. How do you use a hoover? Hoover. So just imagine Just imagine somebody's eating a packet of crisps And they're all over the floor here.

What would you do? Show me. How would you clean them up? How do you use a hoover? Show me. Do you want a shot?

No? I bet he never wants a shot, does he? You want a shot? Okay, come on. See, your granny's head goes down.

How does it work? Show me how a hoover works. And this way. So how do you hold it? Like that, yeah? So you're going to hoover stuff up.

So how do you hoover it up? You press a button. Which button do we press? Give it a try. You're going to hoover up their fingers.

[21:46] Okay, you're doing a good job there. That's how the hoover works. Now, before you go, before you go, the last few weeks, you know, we had this new hoover that sucks up all the mess on the floor.

But the last few weeks, you know, there was something missing called the battery. And so that's the battery. If I take the battery out and put it there and move it away from the hoover, you have a shot hoovering now.

Doesn't work. Why does it not work? Because you need the battery, don't you? And if you take the hoover and you put the battery away from it, will it suck up anything off the floor?

It'll be absolutely useless. Won't it? And you know, there's a verse in the Bible. Thank you. You can go and get a wee seat now. Good job.

There's a verse in the Bible. And listen to this. Jesus, he was speaking to his disciples one day. And do you know what he said to them? He said to his disciples, apart from me, you can do nothing.

[23:10] And you know, that's a lesson that we have to learn over and over again. All the strength that we need to follow Jesus comes from staying close to him.

And if we want our hearts to be forgiven of our sin, who do we have to come to? Jesus. Can we have the strength ourselves to take our own sin away?

No. We have to come to Jesus. And so, if Jesus is here and we decide, I'm not going to come to Jesus, I'm going to stay far away from him, what will we be able to do?

You would go back. Excellent. But if we're away from Jesus, what are we able to do?

Are you feeling? Absolutely nothing. So, boys and girls, what I want to say to you today is, if you've never come to Jesus, I think a lot of you have come to Jesus already, but if you've never come to Jesus, come to him.

[ 24 : 28 ] And boys and girls, whether you're very young, or whether you're a bit bigger like some of you guys are, or whether you've got grey hairs like me, or whether, maybe, we've got nowhere, like what Benjamin said a minute ago, there might be somebody, there might be some people even today who once were really close to Jesus, and just stuff's happened in their lives, and now it feels like he's far away.

And Benjamin, what did you say you would do if Jesus was there and you were far away? Come back. You would come back to him. And that's wise words from a little boy.

Well, you're not that little, you're quite big, aren't you? Yeah. But let's listen to what Jesus says. He says, Apart from me, you can do nothing, so come to me and stay close to me.

Stay near to me, says Jesus. So let's pray and ask that we'll be people who do that. Lord Jesus, we thank you that you love us. We thank you that you call us to come to you.

And we thank you that you say to the disciples back then and still to us today, you say to us, Stay near to me. And we ask that all of us would be near to you, Lord Jesus.

[ 25 : 50 ] And if any of us maybe feel today like we're far away, we thank you that we can come back in just one little minute, through one little prayer, where we say, Lord Jesus, I'm sorry that I've been far away.

Please receive me as I come back and keep me close. So help us, Lord, we pray, to come to you, to stay close to you, and to live our lives in a way that shows other people how good you are.

And we ask all this in Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you, boys and girls, for helping me and for listening so well. We're going to sing now, Mission Praise 482, and it's about staying near to God. Nearer, my God, to thee. Nearer, Nearer my God to thee, nearer to thee, in the way free and cross, that praiseth me.

Till all my song will be, nearer my God to thee, nearer to thee, nearer to thee.

[ 27 : 30 ] Though like the wanderer, the sun brought down, darkness be over thee, my rest of store.

Yet in my dreams I breathe, nearer my Lord to thee, nearer to thee.

There had the way appeared, steps unto heaven.

All that thou sendest me, in mercy give. Angels to beg of me, nearer my God to thee, nearer to thee.

Nearer to thee. And with my waking thoughts, right with thy praise, and of my stony grief, better thy praise.

[ 29 : 17 ] So guide my goals to thee, nearer my God to thee, nearer to thee.

Nearer to thee, nearer to thee. Or in what joyful way, freeing the sky.

Sun, moon, and the sun, nearer to thee. Sun, moon, and the sun, nearer my God to thee.

Sun, moon, and the sun, nearer my God to thee. Nearer to thee.

to me. Okay boys and girls, if you head through to Sunday school.

[ 30 : 48 ] Remember to pray for them when they go, as they go. I don't ever remember joy levels being that high as I went to Sunday school that age.

But it's a good thing to see and hear. We're going to turn now to God's Word, to Matthew chapter 19. Matthew chapter 19 and we'll read from verse 16 to verse 26, the account of Jesus meeting a rich young man.

And behold, a man came up to Jesus saying, Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life? And he said to him, Why do you ask me about what is good?

There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments. He said to him, Which ones? And Jesus said, You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness. Honor your father and mother. And you shall love your neighbor as yourself. The young man said to him, All these I have kept.

[ 32 : 25 ] What do I still lack? Jesus said to him, If you would be perfect, go sell what you possess and give to the poor. And you will have treasure in heaven.



distraction and help us to fix our eyes upon Jesus.

We pray that we pray that we pray that we pray that we pray that we may be those who, having spent time in the presence of Jesus, would not walk away sorrowful.

But we pray that we pray that we pray that we pray that we pray that we pray that we would know the joy of your salvation. We pray also for those who preach in different places today.

We think of Stuart in Crossbost. We ask that you would help him and that he would know that you are close to him as he opens your word.

We pray for Scott in Graver this morning and in Kinloch this evening. and we ask that he would know your continued help as he seeks to serve you and as he and Fiona and the family seek to discern your will for the future.

[ 39 : 47 ] We pray for Gordon as he preaches in Carloway and ask, Lord, that you would bless him and that you would continue to strengthen him for all that he is doing and all that you have prepared in advance for him to do and whatever that might be.

And we pray on for the Church of Scotland and for the Free Presbyterian Church, for those who gather as we do in different buildings in this place and we ask that as the word is preached that you would add your blessing and that, Lord Jesus, you would continue to build your church across denominations and across nations.

We pray as we have done that many would cause to look to Jesus today and that the kingdom of God may have much rejoicing as sinners like us repent.

So hear our prayers. Help us, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. I wonder if I was to ask the question this morning of each of us, how we would respond to this question of whether or not in our lives we have regrets.

Do we have regrets as we think back over our lives and as we think back over maybe conversations and meetings we've been in and things that we've said and things that we haven't said.

[ 41 : 20 ] I was listening actually to a podcast the other day and there was an ex-professional football player, Dennis Bergkamp, who played for Arsenal probably 20 years ago now, I guess.

And he was reminiscing, he was being interviewed about his career, the highs and some of the struggles and he was asked the question at one point, do you have any regrets as you look back over the years?

And he kind of struggled and hesitated before he gave his answer. Now we've read in the passage before us in Matthew 19 about a rich young man and he comes to Jesus because he senses that Jesus can give him the eternal life that he knows that he's lacking.

But we read that he walks away from Jesus sorrowful because the cost of following Jesus he recognised was just it was too high.

It was more than he was willing to absorb or pay. And this is just speculation but I wonder if years later when the rich young man was no longer young maybe we can imagine him sitting on his yacht with his Rolex and everything the world could offer.

[ 43 : 01 ] I wonder did he look back on this meeting with Jesus with a sense of regret wishing that he hadn't walked away wishing that this sense of lack that still was eating away at him that had been dealt with.

And I wonder as we just apply this to ourselves from the outset I wonder how many times we've been where this rich young man was for some of us it might today might be the first time.

You know we have the promise that where two or three meet together in the name of Jesus he is here but for many of us we've been here and elsewhere in the presence of Jesus hundreds if not thousands of times listening to what Jesus is saying to us hearing him calling and yet for some of us time and time again we've walked out the door with a sense of lack.

We don't actually know for sure but this rich young man may never have had another opportunity to come to Jesus.

We only read about him once in the Bible. This may have been his one time his one opportunity to come to Jesus. But this morning if you are hearing this and if you have a sense of a desire for something more than what we can grasp in this world you have the opportunity today to come to Jesus.

[ 45 : 12 ] So what I'd like to do very simply today is just replay this conversation between Jesus and the rich young man and I pray that as we listen in again to this conversation as we enter in to this scene because it's for us as well as for him my prayer is that like the rich young man I pray that

none of us would walk out the door today sorrowful with the fear and regret of being eternally lost but rather we would leave here repenting with the assurance of having the eternal life that this man wanted but perhaps never got.

Three points just to structure our time first thing is we see a man here who has a desire he has a desire to have eternal life that's point number one this man he has a desire to have eternal life the second thing we'll see is that this rich young man he learned a lesson and the lesson he learned was that doing his good deeds that was not the way to have or to get eternal life and the last thing we'll see is that it's discipleship it's actually it's following Jesus that's the way to have eternal life so very simple as we just step through the verses but of eternal importance for us as we read through this passage again so first of all we see a man who has the desire to have eternal life verse 16 and behold a man came up to Jesus saying teacher what good deed must I do to have eternal life so we think just for a moment first of all about the man we don't know a whole lot about him but we know that this man that comes to Jesus he is rich he's extremely rich and in all likelihood he would have been popular we're told in Luke chapter 18 that he was a ruler he's known in Luke chapter 18 as the rich young ruler so he was a young man but he was a man who was an elder in the community which means that he had influence so he's rich he is influential he has everything you could say that this world would offer but he he knows there's something missing he knows that he doesn't have eternal life and he has a desire to have eternal life and that's what brings him into conversation with Jesus and many of us have been where this man was it says in Ecclesiastes chapter 3 and verse 11 that he that's God has put eternity into man's heart and so as much as sometimes we may protest this the truth is that deep down we know because God has put this in our hearts that there is more to life than just this there is eternity and there are some times in our lives where the sense of eternity seems so powerful

I've sat and listened to people who have come to speak to me in the past when everything in their lives is just going swimmingly and they've got plenty of money and they've got a nice car not a Volkswagen up but a nice car that's running that's powerful that will drive up the Clesham they have a good house they have a steady family situation they have everything that this world seems to tell us is what we need to be happy and yet nothing seems enough there's a sense of lack there's an emptiness a hollowness and a desire for something more something eternal sometimes it's actually when things are as good as they can possibly be that we suddenly just have a sense of the eternal that there must be more than this and sometimes it's actually when things are very difficult that that sense of eternity just breaks in maybe we've seen loved ones die and we've sat with them at the bedside we've been there when they took their last breath and had that sense of eternity being so close just a heartbeat away and now for some of us perhaps as we try to get to sleep at night our minds are full of eternity and we fear eternal death as we should and we desire eternal life and maybe that's why some of us are here this morning we have a desire to have eternal life and so we do what this rich young man did we come to a place where we want to meet with

Jesus we come to a place where we want to hear what Jesus has to say because we believe rightly that he has the power to grant our desire to have eternal life so that's the first thing we'll see we see a man here who has a desire to have eternal life and that's what brings him into conversation with Jesus the second thing that we'll note here is that this man learns that doing or his good deeds that's not the way that's not the currency that he can use to persuade God to give him eternal life thinking about the rich young man again this was a man who would have been used to getting things he was probably no stranger to hard work he has no shortage of money and because he has no shortage of money this rich young man would have been able to get most of the things that he wanted in life and he makes the mistake of thinking that he could get eternal life by doing something so he comes to

Jesus in verse 16 and he says teacher what good deed must I do to have eternal life so this rich young man makes the mistake that many people still make they maybe we think that getting eternal life is about what we do that was his misunderstanding he thought he could do something that would unlock eternal life for him and that's a common misunderstanding today I'll often ask people do you are you a Christian do you think that you'll get to heaven and the answer very often is well I hope so what do you mean and then they'll follow up by saying well you know I'm trying to be a good person

[ 54 : 33 ] I'm really trying to be a good person I'm trying to do good works I'm trying to be at church more regularly I'm trying not to do some of the bad things that I know I shouldn't do I'm trying not to

lose my temper I'm trying I'm trying I'm trying and I hope I'm trying enough to be able to unlock the door of heaven and that's the way that this man was thinking so Jesus challenges his thinking in verse 17 Jesus said to him why do you ask me about what is good there is only one who is good if you would enter life says Jesus keep the commandments there is only one who is good says Jesus who is the only one who is good well it was Jesus the only person who ever lived without sin was Jesus who is the only one who kept all the commandments never broke one

Jesus but the problem is this rich young man he's not seeing Jesus clearly and we can hear that even from his opening word he calls Jesus teacher but he should have actually called him Lord and God and that's actually a key point we can't get eternal life we can't get to heaven unless we see and believe and profess that Jesus is God the Son that he is the saviour that he is the Lord we can't take Jesus and place him on a shelf with a whole lot of other religious leaders and say well I can pick my leader and there's many paths that will all get me to heaven no there's just one path it's one name there's one way to heaven and it's through Jesus he is God the Son he's the God man he's the only person who ever lived without sin and died for sinners we can't get to heaven unless we see that and say that now the rich young man isn't looking in faith to Jesus to save him he's looking at himself he's hoping he can save himself by his commandment keeping and so Jesus has to teach him that that's impossible so Jesus kind of just goes with his logic and he says okay well let's talk about the commandments let's talk about some good deeds Jesus says in verse 17 if you would enter life keep the commandments then the rich young man verse 18 said to Jesus which ones and Jesus said you shall not murder you shall not commit adultery you shall not steal you shall not bear false witness honor your father and mother and you shall love your neighbor as yourself the young man verse 20 said to

Jesus all these I have kept what do I still lack right do you think the rich young man had really kept all these commands he seems to think that he's kept all these commandments had he really kept all these commandments had he made all that money and never ever told a lie I don't think so had he always honored his parents I don't think so had he always loved his neighbor as himself I don't think so but he seems to think so so Jesus has to work with him to try to help him to see the reality of what he was really like we are speed the commentator says Jesus did not introduce the law to show the young man how to be saved but to show him that he needed to be saved the law is a mirror that reveals what we are but the problem is sin blinds us to the point that he can't see how he really is this man thinks he's perfect this man is able to listen to

Jesus list of commandments and say yeah I've done them all since I was a boy I have full marks and Jesus could quite sensibly have said to the man young man you're absolutely deluded you're talking absolute nonsense could have said that but instead what Jesus gently and respectfully does is he goes to the first commandment and the first commandment says that we shall have no other gods and Jesus says to the rich young man well let's see how we get on with this commandment let's just take the first one and let's think about it for a minute you shall have no other gods Jesus said to him verse 21 if you would be perfect go sell what you possess and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven and come follow me mark in his account of this passage he says that Jesus looked at the man and he loved him and he loved him enough to challenge him he loved him enough to put his finger on the idol that was most precious to this man and that was his money and his possessions and it was at this point that the man suddenly sees that he is not perfect that he's breaking the first commandment and it seems that for the first time this man he feels a sense of conviction of sin it's like he looks in the mirror of God's law on the first point and he suddenly realises

[ 61 : 46 ] I'm a commandment breaker not a keeper and very often that's the way it is it's very often one sin that Jesus uses to show us our hearts for me it was it was when I was eight years old I won't tell you the whole story but I remember being eight years old and stealing something and that one sin was the sin that the Lord used to show me that I was a sinner and from there I could see I was a sinner in a million different ways but that was the first sin that showed me that my heart was far from perfect that I was in need of forgiveness that I was in need of a saviour and for you it may be something totally different it may be an idol that you're holding on tight to and Jesus is saying to you this morning you need to smash it or it may be a sinful habit something that you hate and yet at the same time you love it and you're hanging on to it you want to lose it but you're terrified of losing it just like the rich young man was terrified of losing his possessions and and Jesus essentially says to this man all your good work all your so-called commandment keeping is worth nothing if you're

going to love your possessions more than you love

God Jesus says to this rich young man if you want to get eternal life by the good deeds that you do you have to be perfect across every point of law and the young man at this point realizes the danger the trouble that he's in he comes under that sense of the conviction of sin so what does he do when he realizes that he can't actually do anything to earn or to buy eternal life well he does the worst possible thing he walks away from Jesus when the young man verse 22 heard this he sees himself in the mirror of God's law he went away sorrowful for he had great possessions and he was not going to drop them so here's a man he has a desire to have eternal life but he has now learned that doing his doing is not the way to have eternal life and the last point here is what

Jesus teaches his disciples and it's the answer that shows us how we can have eternal life and the answer is discipleship finally briefly discipleship following Jesus is the way is the only way to have eternal life so we see this man in our mind's eye and he's walking away from Jesus one commentator Charles Price says Jesus did not run after him and reduce the demands he had made or allow him to pick and choose his own preferred ingredients and discipleship he let him go his own way and as the disciples watch this this man walking away they're shocked they see this highly respected good living young man walking away from Jesus unsaved and they ask Jesus if he can't be saved who on earth can be saved and Jesus verse 23 said to his disciples

I tell you truly I say to you only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven again I tell you it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God one commentator says Jesus is not only saying that it is difficult but it is impossible I sat trying to fix a jumper a few weeks back with a little needle and a bit of thread and spent 15 minutes trying to get the thread through the eye of the needle and I gave up I couldn't do it Jesus is taking this picture this ridiculous picture of trying to get a camel through the eye of a needle and it's not just difficult it's impossible when the disciples verse 25 heard this they were greatly astonished saying who then can be saved but

Jesus looked to them and said with man this is impossible but with God all things are possible and with that last statement of Jesus there's bad news and there's good news and we'll finish with this the bad news is if we are trying to get eternal life if we are trying to get a place in heaven through the good deeds that we do we're never going to get there so we may as well stop trying if that's our strategy Jesus says if our eternal life is left with man with man's efforts and man's good deeds it's impossible so for anyone here this morning who's trying to get a place in heaven through performance based behavior through racking up as many services as we can attend through trying to do as many good works as we can through trying to give as much to charity as is possible if it's all about us and our efforts and we're hoping that that's going to unlock the door of heaven the bad news is that door will always stay locked with man it's impossible but the good news is packed into two words and the two words are with

[ 69 : 23 ] God with man impossible but with God says Jesus all things are possible that's what he says to the disciples now think about the disciples who were the disciples they were ordinary men so what made them different from any other ordinary men the fact that they were with God Jesus God the son in Mark chapter 3 verse 14 he called the disciples to be with him he called them to follow him and so these disciples they were with God they were following God the son and where would they follow him to do they would follow him to a cross and on that cross he would lay down his life and what did Jesus say as he laid down his life but where we sang it lifted up was he to die it is finished was his cry what was finished the work of salvation was finished everything that was needed to make it possible for us to have eternal life

Jesus had done it he finished the work of salvation we sang it in Psalm 22 at the end that Psalm takes us to the cross that Psalm shows us what was needed to be done for us to have eternal life and that Psalm concludes with these words he Jesus hath done this and it's the message of grace we'll sing it in a moment actually your grace that leads this sinner home from death to life forever and sings the song of righteousness by blood Jesus blood on the cross and not by merit not by my good deeds so let me say it one last time having eternal life life is not about the good works that we have to do it's about the perfect work of salvation that Jesus has already done on the cross having eternal life is about believing in him it's about becoming his disciples and yes in following Jesus we may in fact we will have to leave some things behind but what are these things that we leave behind compared to the eternal life that we gain if we will follow Jesus so today if you're hearing this he is calling he is offering you eternal life the question is will we follow him or will we

