

12.7.26 am Baptismal Service Brendan de Kock

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Preachers: Reverend David MacLeod, Reverend Petri de Kock

[0:00] Good morning everyone. A warm welcome to the service this morning. This is a bit unusual! It's a view for me. Usually the church has spun around in the opposite direction, but we had a wedding on Friday and we've got Hugh and Julian, the newlyweds, with us this morning. We've got another wedding tomorrow, Duncan and Emily, who are not quite in the building, but as McKellars, you wouldn't expect them to be. It's only five past, so they'll be here shortly. Anyway, it's good to see everyone here this morning. A warm welcome, and especially those who are visiting, those who are at weddings, those who are here on their holidays. It's good to have you with us for worship this morning.

There's tea and there's coffee at the end of the service today. It's usually in this room. Today, it's not in this room. It's in the room as you came in on your right-hand side, the room just in behind that back wall. So, tea and coffee will be served through there at the end of the service. Please go through if you're able. There is a creche, and for those who have wee ones who have had enough, maybe, before the end of the service, there's the chance to go through that wee door, take a sharp left, and there's a creche through there. Morning, Duncan. It's good to have you.

There's also a Sunday school for the children, primary school children, and so any children in primary school can go out after the second singing if they wish. Evening service tonight at six will be taken by myself, God willing, and the wedding tomorrow. Duncan and Emily are getting married tomorrow at 1 p.m. There's an afternoon tea at the church after the wedding, and the church family is warmly invited to come and join with the family on this occasion. A couple more notices. I'll be on holiday, hopefully, from Tuesday through Tuesday 14th July through to 3rd of August. Scott, our minister, who's now finished really his training, he's now a minister out of training. Scott will be covering me for the month of July. So, any pastoral issues, please speak to Scott or to any of the elders.

Two more things. One is to note a date for your diary, and that's the Holiday Club, 5th to the 7th of August. Please be praying for this outreach event. We're still struggling a little bit for helpers, so if you're able to help for three hours any of these mornings, please speak to Mary or myself, and that would be good to have as many as possible helping. The last thing is just a thank you from Julian and from Hugh. They want to just intimate a heartfelt thank you to all the people who helped with the wedding, all who donated baking and helped with the setup and the serving of tea, Stuart for his help with the live stream, Cammie for coordinating traffic, Anna for leading the praise, David Cameron who went above and beyond in lots of practical ways, and the congregation, all those who helped in any way. So, I thank you from the newlyweds, and we pray God's blessing on them. The rest of the notes, as you can read through, they've been on the screen, and you can read through the email that came out at your own convenience. Let us now worship God, and let us sing to his praise. We sing from Mission Praise 51. The words are on the screen also. Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart. And then just a moment after the introduction, we'll stand to sing.

[4:15] Oh, Lord of my heart. Oh, Lord of my heart. Oh, Lord of my heart.

Oh, Lord of my heart. Oh, Lord of my heart. Oh, Lord of my heart. Oh Oh Oh

Oh Oh Well let's draw near to God in prayer. Let's pray.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you that on this, your day, we are able to take time and to be still and to know that you are God.

And we thank you that we have the promise that as we meet in the name of Jesus, you are with us. And we pray for your help for this hour.

[7:55] We're conscious that in this world, there are so many things that go on, so many things that draw our attention, so many things that we are called to look to.

We confess that often we, in our hearts, can be distracted. Our eyes can be full of the things of this world. And sometimes we confess that we lose sight of you, Lord Jesus.

But we thank you that we are able to say, that we are able to sing, that we are able to determine and resolve in our own hearts that you will be our vision.

So we pray that, especially in this service, that our eyes would be on Jesus. We thank you, Father, for sending your Son, Jesus, into this world to be our Saviour.

We thank you, Lord Jesus, for coming to this world, for coming knowing that you would be despised and rejected, knowing the mission for which you came. And yet we thank you that such was the love of God, that God the Son was willing to come to this world which is so broken, and live for us a life without sin, and die for us a death that would pay the wages of our sin, and rise from the dead, promising, resurrecting, eternal life for all who believe.

[9 : 25] And we pray that on this day, the Lord's day, we would know the joy of your salvation. We pray that on this, the Lord's day, we would rejoice in the fact that the grave in which Jesus was laid, that tomb is empty.

We thank you that Jesus rose from the dead. We thank you that there is life and hope that is eternal for all who believe in him.

And Holy Spirit, we pray that you would be working in each one of our hearts, that our attention would be drawn to Christ.

Jesus said when the Spirit comes, he will convict the world of sin. And we pray that we would, in this day, feel the reality of the fact that we are sinners.

We pray that you would hear us as we confess the fact that we are sinners. And we pray that you would hear our prayer as we cry out in the prayer that Jesus taught us, one of the prayers that Jesus taught us, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

[10 : 40] We thank you that that prayer is a prayer that when prayed from the heart, leads to righteousness. It leads to us being justified through all that Jesus has done.

So cleanse us from our sin, we pray. Save us, Lord, we pray. Fill us with life and eternal hope, we pray.

And fill our hearts with praise that we would sing not just for this hour, but that our lives would be an outpouring of praise to the God who is worthy of all our praise.

We thank you, Lord, that we can come to you and commit to you all the affairs of this world. We pray for those who are rejoicing. We thank you, Lord, for Hugh and for Gillian.

We thank you for their wedding on Friday. We thank you for them stepping out into married life as a couple who are worshipping you.

[11 : 42] Bless them, Lord, we pray, and keep them. We pray for Duncan and Emily as they prepare to come together in marriage tomorrow. We ask, Lord, that they would know your blessing also and your presence with them tomorrow and every day that you give them.

We pray for families who come together. We pray for friends who meet on these happy occasions. And we ask, Lord, that we would know the presence of Jesus with us.

We thank you for Brendan. We thank you, Lord, for the prospect of him being baptised in just a moment. We thank you for family who are gathered. We thank you for his grandfather, the Reverend Petrie, who will baptise him.

And we pray for him, asking, Lord, that you would bless him and that you would bless Lachlan and Olivia and all the children that we see coming here week by week.

Jesus said, let the children come to me. Don't hinder them. Help them to come. And we ask that you would help us to keep on praying for them. We pray that in their early years they would come to the Lord Jesus.

[12 : 51] So help us, Lord, we pray. We pray for those who struggle. We think of those who are sick. We think of those who await surgeries. And we especially pray for Shona Davidson as she prepares to go for surgery this week.

We ask, Lord, that you would uphold her and be with all who are sick, all whom we can see in our mind's eye. As we name them in the silence of our own hearts, we ask, Lord, that you would minister to them your healing touch, if that be your will.

We pray for those who struggle with grief, for those who struggle with addictions. We thank you, Lord Jesus, that not only did you rejoice with those who rejoiced at a wedding, but you wept with those who wept.

You came alongside those who were in trouble. And we ask, Lord, for all who need your special presence, that they and that we would know that today and each day.

So hear our prayers, take away our sin, and lead us and guide us as we seek to worship you. And we ask all these things in Jesus' name and for his sake.

[13:56] Amen. Boys and girls, if you're able in this new formation today, do you want to come out to the front so you can get the best view?

You grab a seat. I think down here is the best way. It's good to see you guys all today.

Now, I am going to show you something this morning and it's something that Lachlan is wearing. So I noticed last weekend when I was seeing Lachlan in church that he was wearing a special t-shirt. And I said to Hannes, do you think he might be able to wear that special t-shirt again this week?

Hannes said he'll wear it every week. He eats in it. He sleeps in it. He wears it all the time. So do you know what this is? Do you know what kind of t-shirt that is?

[15:21] Does anybody know? Olivia. Yeah. It's a South African rugby top. And I was just checking back and I think if I've got this right, South Africa beat England 45-21 at rugby last weekend.

And so last Sunday, Lachlan was wearing this top and he was just like that, I'm not ashamed to wear this top. You can see he's proud of his rugby t-shirt.

He's saying, this is my team. And we've got more tops here. We've got a Man United top. We've got a France top. And so you're wearing tops and you're saying, I'm not ashamed to say this is my team.

And boys and girls, if you're trusting in Jesus, I hope that you're trusting in Jesus. Does Jesus love every one of us?

How do we know? He does, but how do we know? What did he do for us? What did Jesus do to show us how much he loved us? Shawnee?

[16:33] He went to the cross and he died to take away all our sin so that everything that came between us and Jesus was taken away so that we can be his friends, that we can be his children and be with him forever.

That's how much he loved us. And so he wants us to trust him and he wants us, when we're trusting him, to say, I'm not ashamed to say that Jesus is my Savior and I'm trusting in him.

And boys and girls, this morning, Hannes and Helen are going to be saying, in just a minute, they're going to be saying that they're trusting in Jesus.

And they're going to make a promise to bring up baby Brendan, who's looking quite calm so far.

They're going to bring him up, they're going to promise to bring him up in a way that points him to Jesus and encourages him, we hope and pray, when he's a bit older, to trust in Jesus.

And Hannes' father, the Reverend Petrie, he's going to ask Hannes and Helen some questions and then he's going to baptise Brendan.

[17:51] And then after he's done that, Brendan's other grandpa, Dr. Latham, is going to come and pray. So, that's what's going to happen, boys and girls, just now.

So, I'm going to invite, first of all, the Reverend Petrie to come up and take the next part of the service. And after he's done that, Anthony will come up and pray, please. Please. Please.

Please. Please. So, let's go to the next of the Bible. Good morning, brothers and sisters.

And good morning to all the children. We are, my wife and I, we are the in-laws of Anthony and Christian Latham. So, that makes us the parents of Hannes and Helen the Cock and the grandparents of Olivia, Lachlan and little Brendan who is going to be baptized this morning.

I'm going to say something to you in Afrikaans. That's my mother tongue. Here in, on the Isle of Harris, you have English and Gaelic. And in South Africa, we have 11 languages.

[19:12] The two most common languages are Afrikaans and English. And I'm going to say something to you in Afrikaans and then I'll translate it into English. Baie dankie, broers and sisters, vir die vorige en die geleentheid wat ek het om my klein sien vanmorgen hier in die midde van julle gemeente te doop.

Thank you very much, brothers and sisters, for the privilege and the opportunity of baptizing my grandson, Brendan, hier in the midst of your congregation this morning.

And I'm now going to present to you the baptismal order. God, our Heavenly Father, loves us and we belong to Him long before we are aware of Him.

Scripture clearly states this. even before the world was made, God had already chosen us to be His through our union with Christ.

Our union with Christ, Scripture also teaches us that we have died with Christ on the cross so that we may be dead for sin but alive for God.

[20 : 29] therefore God had raised us from death with Christ into a complete new life. This gracious act of God is affirmed in baptism, one of the two sacraments of the Church.

Through baptism we confess that we are made part of the body of Christ, grounded in His reconciling death and in the cleansing work of the Spirit.

Brothers and sisters, everyone knows that water has cleansing purifying characteristics.

If your hands are dirty, you wash it with water. So, water this morning is the symbol. Water is the symbol of Christ's blood as well as the cleansing work of the Spirit.

The grace of God the love of our Lord Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit shape and sustain the whole of our lives.

[21 : 41] Therefore, we baptize children within the community of God. and the baptism of this child, Brendan Ludecock this morning, once again reminds us of our own baptism.

baptism. We believe that the church has received the gospel command to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Baptism in the name of the Father bears witness to our new relationship in which God claims us as his own. Baptism in the name redemption through Christ.

Baptism in the name of the Holy Spirit assures us that he dwells in us and renewing our lives and continuously calling us to faithful discipleship.

Therefore, baptism calls us all to love God with heart, mind, and soul. And that is possible because God as our Heavenly Father has poured out his love in our hearts when he gave us his spirit.

[23 : 01] Now parents, as well as the whole congregation, share the responsibility of teaching our children what their baptism means. And our children should be brought up in the community of God experiencing the comfort and the security of what it means to belong to God.

Amen. I will now call the parents Hannes and Helen to come forward so that they can answer the questions that are going to be put to them. Now Hannes and Helen, you are invited in the presence of God and his congregation to answer the following questions faithfully and sincerely.

Do you believe that we and our children despite our sin and without any achievement on our side are received by God in grace through our union with Christ?

Yes. Do you believe that the gospel of Jesus Christ makes known all that is necessary for our salvation as confessed by this church?

And then in the third place do you promise with the help of God to teach your child what his baptism means and to bring him up within the community of God?

[24 : 49] Your answer Hannes and Helen? Yes. There is hymn going to be sung now while the child is already in front. He should have been brought to now but he is here already little Brendan and we can continue.

Were you prepared to play something now? Brendan Louis de Coq I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit Army.

Maybe we can sing that. Please let us sing this now. Is that it? Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[28 : 40] Anthony, you can come forward for the prayer and the children are now leaving for Sunday school. Lord, we just thank you for the fact that you are alive and that you live.

And because you live, we have hope. We have certainty that when we put our trust in you, you will take care of everything.

You'll take care of our sin. You'll take care of our lives. You'll take care of our eternal future. And we just praise you for this service that we've just had.

We thank you for the congregation. We thank you for the children who were gathered around as well. We thank you for this baptism sacrament.

And we thank you that this is not just a form of words or actions, but you confer your blessing upon children when they are baptized.

[30 : 05] And we praise you for that. We praise you for little Brendan. We ask you, Lord, to be with him as he grows up. We ask you, Lord, to take care of his life, that you protect him, that he grows

up in the knowledge and the love of Jesus Christ.

And that when he is old enough, that he will put his trust in the Lord Jesus as Saviour. And we thank you for Helen and Hannes as they've answered these questions.

And we ask you, Lord, to give them the grace and the help to be able to bring up and nurture little Brendan in the knowledge and the love of Jesus.

And we ask you a blessing upon the whole family, upon Olivia and Lachlan also. We just praise you for them. We pray, Lord, that in everything you will be the center of their lives.

Lives that we know sometimes can be very difficult and stressful. And we all go through all sorts of experiences. But we know that through these, you never leave us.

[31 : 13] You never forsake us. And we pray that for each person here, that we can recommit our lives. We can use this opportunity in this service to say, Lord Jesus, I need you.

I'm looking to you. Please help me. Be my Saviour. So we pray this especially for Brendan. And we continue to commit this service to you.

For David, who's leading us, we pray as we listen to the word, that your spirit will be speaking to us deep in our hearts. So now we continue with the service and we ask your forgiveness for our sins.

In the name of Jesus. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you, Petrie. And thank you, Anthony. We are going to turn now to God's word.

[32 : 22] And we'll turn to the book of Philippians, chapter 3. Amen. The words will be on the screen in just a minute.

There's two passages that Hannes and Helen have chosen today. I gave him the opportunity to choose the readings. And they asked for two passages.

One is from Philippians, chapter 3. And the second is from Psalm 131. We'll sing the psalm in a moment. But first of all, we'll read from Philippians, chapter 3, from verse 12 to verse 21.

This is God's word. So God, as he speaks to the apostle Paul in this letter to the church in Philippi, Paul says,

Their God is their belly. And they glory in their shame with minds set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven.

[34 : 46] And from it, we await the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us. We'll sing now from the Psalms. Psalm 131. Psalm 131.

It's a picture of contentment. The contentment that you see in a child, a weaned child. Conversely, there's a picture, even in the Psalm, of the lack of contentment.

We can go looking in many different places in this world for satisfaction and contentment. But the only place contentment is found is in the Lord.

So we'll stand to sing to God's praise. We'll stand to sing to God's praise.

[36 : 20] Amen. Amen. Amen. My heart not hold ye is, O Lord.

My eyes not hold ye be. Nor do I heal in matter's day, or fail to hide for thee.

I surely have myself behaved with quiet spirit and mire.

As child of mother, weep my soul. It's like a weaned child.

Upon the Lord let all the hope of Israel rely.

[37 : 53] Heal from the time that present is, unto eternity.

Please take a seat. And let's pray as we turn back to the passage that we read together.

Lord God we thank you for your word your word which we have read which we have sung and which we come now to study we pray for the help of the Holy Spirit we pray that he himself would be our teacher that he would illuminate our minds that he would soften and open our hearts and we pray that we would be given faith each one of us we recognize that faith even the faith that causes us to come to Jesus is a gift of God and so we pray for that faith asking that we would not only hear the call of Jesus but that we would come to him and know him as the savior and the satisfier of our souls we pray on for the children we thank you for them and as they head through to Sunday school and as some go through to creche we pray that your hand would be upon them we pray that as the those teaching them will give to them the the gospel in a simple way we pray that they may see Jesus and trust Jesus and we ask Lord that these young ones may may walk with Jesus all the the days of their lives we pray for all the congregations that are connected with us today we see many visitors we can perhaps think about many churches in different places and we ask Lord that

whatever Christ crucified is preached and all the connected congregations and all the denominations and congregations around us we pray Lord God that you would be at work building your church Lord Jesus adding to the number of those that are saved so hear our prayers and help us we pray as we look to you and we pray this in Jesus name Amen

Amen well if you could open your Bibles please if you have Bibles to the passage that we read in Philippians chapter 3 when I was speaking to Hannes and Helen over the last few weeks about the baptism today one of the things that they said to me was that baby Brendan's coming into the world had already been quite a journey and all of us who are parents know that it is a journey into uncharted waters when we have a child so already there has been quite a sense of journey and it's coming into the world and looking forward as Helen and Hannes think about being parents parents who will who will lead Brendan and Lachlan and Olivia there's that sense of adventure that they're able to speak about that sense that the life in this world is not meaningless but the God who who made us is a God who has marked out for us a course that we are to follow on this journey of life and that's what leads us to the passage really that they've chosen in Philippians chapter 3 and I want to consider the the passage that we read under three headings the first thing I'd like us to look at is Christ's journey the second thing I'd like us to look at is the Apostle Paul's journey this is a letter that has been written by Paul the Apostle to a church in Philippi and so I want to think also as we kind of think more broadly than the letter but think about Paul's life I want to think about Paul's journey and lastly I want us to think about our journey our journey in this world so Christ's journey Paul's journey our journey so first of all

Christ's journey looking at verse 12 the Apostle Paul says not that I have already obtained this or I'm already perfect but I press on to make it my own because Christ Jesus has made me his own and really what I want to do at this opening part is focus on the the second part of verse 12 the Apostle Paul says Christ Jesus has made me his own and that's an amazing statement and we can imagine the Apostle Paul beaming with joy we can imagine the Apostle Paul his heart overflowing with praise as he writes these words Christ Jesus has made me his own so how did Jesus make Paul his own and how did Jesus make us his own if we are Christians well that takes us to Christ's journey something that Jesus had to do if we were to become his own it was a journey that he had to make and we we sing of that journey we focus on that especially at Christmas time there's some of the words in the carols that speak so powerfully of Christ's journey one carol says he that's Jesus came down to earth from heaven who was God and Lord of all the God the Lord of all came from heaven to this earth that was the journey that he made another carol says sacred infant all divine what a tender love was thine thus to come from highest bliss down to such a world as this

[44 : 56] Christ Jesus God the Son came on a journey from heaven to earth and he lived for us a life without sin if we were to think about our lives for a moment and think about how we're doing performance wise how many of us could put our hands up and say well so far I've lived a life without sin if we know ourselves at all none of us we can't do it none of us are righteous and so Jesus came from heaven the sinless Son of God to live for us he lived in our place as our substitute a life without sin and he willingly went to die on a cross for us to pay the wages of our sin because all of us have sinned and our sin has to be dealt with our sin has to be taken away if we can be God's people if we can get to heaven and so Jesus not only came to live for us but he came to die for us and he died on the cross to pay the wages of our sin and he rose from the dead and all this he did on this journey that he took from heaven to earth to make us his own the Apostle Paul in another letter in 1 Corinthians chapter 6 verses 19 and 20 he says to the Christians in Corinth you are not your own you are not your own for you were bought with a price and that same message comes to us today you are not your own

I am not my own we were bought with a price and Jesus paid that price not with silver and gold but with his blood Christ's journey took him to the cross where his body was broken and his blood was shed so that we could be made his own his children and that truth that gospel truth it's just amazed it overwhelmed the Apostle Paul and that truth should amaze and it should overwhelm us I hope when it comes to the end of the service we can sing these words from our hearts and can it be that I should gain an interest in the

Saviour's blood died he for me who caused this pain for me who him to death pursued amazing love how can it be that thou my God should die for me that's Christ's journey that's what he he did for the Apostle Paul to make him his own and that's what he did for you and for me so that we could be made his own if we believe in him so a quick question before we move on to point number two do

you believe maybe you're sitting here this morning there's lots of you here I don't know maybe you've heard about

Jesus but you've never believed in Jesus and today in the gospel he's calling you he's calling you to believe so that you can be made his own his child there's many of us in this room I know who have heard the call of Jesus many many times and still we're trying to remain at a distance but he's calling us to trust in him to believe in him to become his own Christ's journey secondly Paul's journey and if we think about the life of Paul he had been on quite a journey in his life we could go back to his early life and the apostle Paul the one who wrote this letter he has a different name his name was Saul and he has a different profession his job was to hunt down and to destroy Christians his job was to close down Christian churches so that was Paul's old life when his name was Saul and then one day Saul met Christ and he tells the story of his testimony in Acts 9 Acts 22 Acts 26 you can read it yourselves and what happened is that Jesus on the Damascus road he confronts Saul the persecutor and Saul believes he's shaken he's shocked as he's confronted by Jesus but he believes he's converted and his life changes his name changes from Saul to Paul his profession changes from Christian persecutor to Christian preacher and church planter and that was all in the past and now as the

[51 : 25] Apostle Paul writes this letter he's still full of love for Jesus 25 30 years after his conversion he's still full of zeal for the Lord's work Sinclair Ferguson says Paul is flat out for Christ we can have that picture I've got this little Volkswagen up it's got hardly any power in it so if I try to get anywhere at speed I'm flat out the foot is to the floor all the way and that's a picture almost of the Apostle Paul he's flat out for Christ listen to how he speaks in verse 13 he says brothers I do not consider that I have made it my own and Paul in verse 13 he's talking about being made like Christ and he admits that he's not there yet he's a work in progress

I'm not perfect he says I haven't made it yet I'm not as like Jesus as I want to be but one thing I do verse 13 he says forgetting what lies behind and straining towards what lies ahead I press on towards the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus and we can sense we can hear the enthusiasm the zeal as the Apostle Paul writes there's two things that he says there that I want to just underline as we pass on the first thing is he forgets what lies behind and that would have been important for the Apostle Paul there were sins in his past that could have haunted him all his days remember Paul had been responsible for the persecution and for the death of many Christians we can go to the account of the first martyr Stephen and as he's being stoned to death Paul is holding the coats he's giving his approval that's the kind of man he was he had sinned gravely but Paul repented he sought forgiveness and Jesus had paid for every sin of the past so Paul needed to forget them and he says I'm forgetting what's behind the other thing we can think about when we consider Paul's life is that he was a high achiever Paul had accomplishments in the past that would have caused many people to become proud and boastful

Paul was a gifted academic he could have held his own in any university he in verse four tells us that he had reason to have confidence in the flesh he had a CV that would have impressed many people all around the world but Paul says I've determined to forget all that all that is behind me so he forget what lies behind and he says secondly he strains forward to what lies ahead and so what lies ahead for the apostle Paul retirement a nice house a boat fishing trips!

picnics saga holidays! cruises! Is that what Paul's focus is? Is he looking forward to this idyllic lazy retirement?

[55 : 40] No that's not his focus even though he's up in years his focus is on being with Jesus and being like Jesus that was Paul's singular focus Christ Be thou my vision we sang that was Paul's song and in verses 15 and 16 Paul basically says to the church in Philippi don't be distracted from Jesus hold true to Jesus live as children of God so Paul's journey Paul's life was all about Jesus earlier in the letter to the Philippians in chapter 1 verse 21 he says which gives the whole theme the whole tone of the letter he says for me to live as

Christ and to die as gain so that was Paul's journey and I want to ask a couple of questions to apply this before we move on to our final point and the first question is how much can we identify with Paul's journey Paul could go back to the Damascus road and on that road his life changed now for most of us there's no great drama like the apostle Paul experienced but if I was to go around the room with a microphone and say tell me your story have you got a story to tell can you and I go back to a day or a season of life when we met Jesus when we trusted

Jesus when our lives changed direction when we turned from self living lives that are all about what I want when we turned from sin and began to follow Jesus can you tell me about that and perhaps an even more important question is a question for those who profess to be following Jesus are we still following we can have our name on a church roll we can talk about putting our hand up in a testimony meeting 20 years ago but are we still following Jesus is our following of Jesus confined to one hour on a

Sunday morning or do we still have a laser-like focus on Jesus as the apostle Paul did is our greatest desire desire not academic success not financial gain not man's empty praise as we sang but it's our greatest desire today to be with Jesus and to be like Jesus anyone who was looking at the apostle Paul's life would say his life is full of Christ I can think of some people and it's not 30 seconds into the conversation and you know what football team they support their life is full of rangers the apostle

Paul his life was full of Christ so can people see Jesus in our lives if we were to go and ask your family members and your work colleagues and your friends tell me about tell me about him tell me about her would they say his life is full of Jesus he's all about Jesus Helen and Hannes have promised to live in a way that points Brendan and Lachlan and Olivia to Jesus that's the promise that they made this morning in the presence of God and in the presence of the congregation and we need to pray for them we need to pray for them and help them as they seek to keep that promise and live lives that are full of

[61:05] Jesus Christ's journey Paul's journey finally our journey and the passage concludes with Paul taking the spotlight in application and he shines it on us as he did on the church in Philippi and essentially he says to them he says to us how are you going to live what course will you take in the journey of life and then before we get the chance to answer this question he says to us this is how to live I'm going to tell you how to live and he says three things and I'll just give you these three things and then we're done the first thing the apostle Paul says as God the Holy Spirit directs him is be imitators of Jesus the second thing he says is don't set your mind on earthly things and the last thing he says if I paraphrase his words he says be heavenly minded enough to be of some earthly use so first of all verse 17

Paul says be imitators of Jesus brothers he says join in imitating me and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us now we can pick up any day of the week the Bible we can read through Matthew and Mark and Luke and John and we can see and take in all these eyewitness accounts of what Jesus was like we can see how he lived we can hear what he did we can see his actions and his reactions remember when the apostle Paul wrote this they didn't have pocket new testaments so they couldn't easily read about how Jesus lived so Paul says something that must have been incredibly challenging he says imitate me because I'm trying to imitate Jesus now children do this don't they they imitate their parents

Lachlan I know is already imitating his dad with a surfboard but Hannes' mission is not just to teach Lachlan and Brendan and Olivia how to be like a surfer the mission is much greater than that Hannes and Helen are to teach the children how to be like the saviour how to be like Jesus Paul says that's how to live be imitators of Jesus it's not just for them it's for every Christian be imitators of Jesus says the apostle Paul the second thing he says is don't set your mind on earthly things look at verses 18 and 19 for many of whom I have often told you and I tell you even with tears he says walk as enemies of the cross of

Christ their endless destruction their God is their belly and their glory the glory and their shame with minds set on earthly things now again going back to the first hymn we love that hymn we sang the opening the opening words that we sang in praise was be thou my vision and when we sing that we sing it with determination and resolve because it's so easy for you and I to get caught up with earthly things so we have to sing be thou my vision because there's so many earthly things that are crashing in to our line of sight work is demanding isn't it time with family and friends is important sport is entertaining how difficult it is to turn away from the

TV with the world cup and the Wimbledon and all that we could be constantly watching earthly things let's not kid ourselves earthly things are attractive and many of these earthly things they're not bad they're good gifts from our good God but if we set our minds even on good things they soon become God things they become idols and idols by definition are in competition with Jesus idols can make us enemies of the cross enemies of Jesus idols the apostle Paul warns us take us on a journey that ends in destruction so don't go that way says

[66:38] Paul don't set your mind on earthly things and the last thing he says is be heavenly minded enough to be of some earthly use verse 20 and 21 but our citizenship is in heaven and from it we await the saviour the lord Jesus Christ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself!

there are many people that we can think of who've made an impact in this world for good one man who has gone down in history of being of huge earthly use was William Wilberforce much of his life was spent fighting against slavery and bringing slavery to an end or endeavouring to do that but William Wilberforce's mind was full of heaven I remember reading that Wilberforce said that there wasn't a day when he didn't think about the return of Jesus one writer says in his personal diaries he emphasised that a Christian's ultimate citizenship is in heaven

Wilberforce believed that looking forward to the return of Christ and the joys of heaven should be a Christian's daily delight and glory and Paul is saying live with that mindset be heavenly minded think like Jesus did that's what Paul is saying!

no one thought more about heaven than Jesus and no one ever did more good in the world than Jesus!

and if we live lives full of Jesus remembering day by day even hour by hour that he lived and died and rose for us and soon will return if we live lives remembering our citizenship!

[69:36] is in heaven not here then we won't waste our lives here we won't go off course in our journey of life but we will live lives that bring glory to Jesus and point other people to Jesus that's how to live says Paul that's what our journey in life should look like so may God help us not just Hannah and Helen but may God help all of us to seek to live lives like this we'll pray heavenly father we thank you for the gospel we thank you for the journey that your son the

Lord Jesus took in coming to this world we think of the words of John who when he saw Jesus said behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and we thank you that that's the promise for all who believe in him no matter what we have done we thank you that if we believe in Jesus if we confess our sin we are forgiven we become children of God when we look at the life of the apostle Paul so violently against Jesus so blood thirsty in his desire to wipe out Christians an earlier life full of murder and sin and yet we thank you that he find forgiveness and life and purpose in pointing people to

Jesus the one who saved him and who can save them help us we pray in our lives to believe in Jesus to seek to imitate the Lord Jesus not to allow our minds to be so congested that we're setting our minds on every earthly thing help us to thank you for every good thing that you allow into our lives but not to worship anything but the Lord alone and we pray that as we go from here we would go with a desire to be of earthly use glorifying God in the things that we do remembering always that this life is like a mist and then there is home in heaven hear our prayers continue with us we pray in Jesus name amen we'll sing to conclude the words of mission praise 33 and can it be that I should gain an interest in the saviour's blood time! I need for me who caused his day for me who lived to death for soon I need to love how can it be that thou my God should die for me I need to love how can be that love my

God should die for me this is all in your delights who guide his for this strange design in the words of Christ who shall the dance of love divine tis has the all ever adorned that angel might in quiet no more in can she all ever adore but still by n

[75:26] Oh Oh Oh

Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forevermore. Amen.