

## 9.8.23 am

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Date: 09 August 2026

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0:00] Good morning, everyone. A warm welcome to the service this morning. It's good to see everyone. It's good to see a number of visitors with us as well today from various places.

and we've got a group staying in Scaladale as well. So you're especially welcome. There's tea and there's coffee at the end of the service. If you're able to stay behind, please do so.

So there's been various notices on the screen and on the church email, which have gone out in the last few days. I'm not going to take any time this morning to go through the different notices.

You can read through them at your own convenience, but just one notice which wasn't on the email or the screen that I want to take a moment to highlight. And that's with great sadness that we learned on Friday evening of the passing of Dr. Bill Cross. It was very sudden. He was actually here last Sunday morning.

And so his passing was very much unexpected. And let's be praying for his wife, Agnes, and children, Alistair and Katrina, and their families over these next few days and over the weeks ahead.

[1:21] It's a difficult time. The funeral service will be here on Friday the 14th. That's this coming Friday at 11am. And all are welcome to attend that. Let's pray for a moment.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you that we can come into your presence on this, the Lord's Day. And we thank you that we have the assurance that where two or three meet together, in the name of Jesus, you will meet with us. And we thank you that you are our helper. You are the God who is our refuge and our strength, the one who is close at hand in times of distress.

And we pray, especially for those who feel that acute sense of grief this morning. We pray for Agnes. We pray for Alistair and Katrina and for their families.

And we ask, Lord, that as they try to come to terms with the loss of a husband and a father and a grandfather, a friend to many, we pray, that they would know your help, your comfort and your strength.

[2:34] So bless them, we pray, as we've spoken of them. We bring them to you and ask, Lord, that you would meet with them in a special way where they are just now. And we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. We're going to sing to begin this time of worship. And we sing a version of Psalm 23, a great psalm of comfort.

Mission Praise 1008. The words are on the screen. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want. And we have that refrain throughout the psalm. And I will trust in you alone.

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.

He makes me lie in pasture's tree. He leads me by the still, still waters.

[3:46] His goodness restores my soul. And I will trust in you alone.

And I will trust in you alone. For your endless mercy follows me.

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

And he anoints my head with oil. And my cup is over, flows with joy.

I feast on his beauty alone. And I will trust in you alone.

[4:47] And I will trust in you alone. For your endless mercy follows me.

Your goodness will lead me home. And though I walk the darkest run, I will not fear the evil one.

For your love, I will not fear the evil one.

And I will trust in you alone. And I will trust in you alone.

For your endless mercy follows me. Your goodness will lead me home.

[5:56] Again, let's unite our hearts in prayer.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for that psalm that we have sang. And we thank you, Father, for sending your Son into this world.

We thank you for Jesus, the Good Shepherd, the One who laid down his life for the sheep. And we thank you that that is where all of our hope is founded.

We come this morning into your presence, recognizing and confessing that we are sinners. We are not able to, in our own name and on the basis of our own works, come into the presence of a holy God.

But we thank you, Father, because of your Son. We have the promise that our sin, if we are believing in him, is taken away from us.

[7:03] We thank you that he carried our sins to the cross. He took them, he bore them in his body on the tree. And if we are trusting in Christ, we thank you that we have the promise that even our vilest offenses are cleansed.

We thank you that in Jesus we are made righteous. Not our own righteousness, but we are clothed in his righteousness.

And we pray that each one of us here this morning would be able not just to sin, but to say from our hearts that we are trusting in you alone.

We pray that we would know the blessed assurance of our sins being taken away. The righteousness of Christ being given to us. The Spirit of God living within us.

And we pray that we would taste and see that God is good. We pray that we would enjoy that relationship that we are called into. Jesus says, Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

[8:14] Jesus said, The thief comes to steal and kill and destroy, but I have come that you may have life, life in abundance. So may we, each one of us we pray, receive and taste that life today.

And we pray that we would know the assurance of the promise of God, that the life that we taste in this world is a life that is enjoyed in greater measure.

In the home that is prepared for all who are trusting in Jesus. So give us faith, we pray, that we may believe. And we pray for all who have come through the door of the church this week past.

We thank you for the holiday club. We thank you that we'll hear a little about it from Stuart in just a moment. We thank you for the way that the gospel message was shared.

We thank you for the memory verse that we pray the children would retain. And we ask, Lord, that the seed that was planted would bear fruit. And that these young ones would give their lives to Jesus in the early years.

[9:24] And walk with the Lord Jesus all the days of their lives. So be with the young, we pray. Be with all of us, we ask. We ask, Lord, that you would help us.

Many in the middle-aged years where there are so many distractions and so much pressure of work. So much going on in our families. So many commitments.

Whether it's in sport or leisure of different kinds. We confess that it's so easy for us. We pray for the times that we have drifted from you that you would forgive us.

We pray that today we would be able to resolve that we will put you first. That we will seek first your kingdom and your righteousness. We pray for those who are up in years.

Those who may be feeling the struggles of infirmity and ill health. We ask, Lord, that even those who are not present with us but who watch at a distance.

[10:27] We ask, Lord, that you would bless them. That you would minister to them. We thank you that you are a God who is not bound by the four walls of any building. But you are with your people wherever they are.

And so as we see people in our mind's eye. Those who once sat with us and now who are in their homes. We commit them to you. And ask, Lord, that you would bless them. And that you would meet them at the point of their need.

We continue to pray for your comfort for those who are grieving. We continue, Lord, to pray for your strength. For those who struggle with anxiety. With addiction. With the cares of this world.

And we pray for those who this morning wake up with not much in the way of the cares of this world. We pray for those who are healthy. And who are financially secure.

And who have all that this world offers but who don't have Jesus. We ask that you would show them. That there is no profit. Supposing we gain the whole world. If we lose our soul.

[11:29] And as we pray for those whom we love who are still outside of Christ. Some in this room even here. And some who are in their homes and in different places.

We ask, Holy Spirit, that you would awaken the souls of those who are lost. And that you would draw people. All of us. That we may look to.

Trust them. And cling to the Lord Jesus. And we pray all these things in his name. And for his sake. Amen. I am going to ask Stuart now.

Stuart's going to be starting with us at the end of this month. So he's not actually doing this as a minister in training. But Stuart and others have been leading the holiday club here in the church. And so it's good for us to hear what's been going on. It's good to hear from the children. How they've learned. And it's good for us as a congregation to be praying on for the work of the holiday club.

[12:29] So Stuart, I'll come and swap seats for you for a minute please. Thank you. Okay. You're on one. Do you want to? Primary school age.

But I really need you guys that were at the holiday club to be here as well. Okay. So I suppose maybe first and foremost, I think the most important thing to note is obviously to give thanks to the Lord for his blessing on the holiday club this past week.

It can always feel a bit of a frantic time but it's encouraging to see, I think it was between kind of 35 and 40 young people each day coming in to hear about how amazing God is.

Did you enjoy holiday club all of you? Pardon? Did you enjoy holiday club? Come on. Come on guys.

I need some volume. You're going to have to do the memory verse in a wee minute. So did you enjoy holiday club? Yeah. Okay. Thanks Fraser. You can help out at the back there. Good job. But I suppose before we go, I'll just maybe touch on what we did each day.

[13:35] But before, I'm just a wee bit of a summary. For weeks I suppose, we've known that the holiday club is coming and as it's been intimated, David has very much been asking for your prayers. So to give thanks to all of you who have been praying for it.

Only one minor injury and thankfully it was a child of a volunteer so that helped. But yeah, we're very much blessed across the week. And can you remember who we were learning about guys? Can you tell me the name of the person that we were learning about on each day? We were in one book of the Bible. Who was it? Begins with D. Daniel. Yes. So we were learning about Daniel. And on day one, we learned about Daniel who stood firm. Now the king, what did the king ask Daniel and his friends to do? So eat from the king's food.

But what did Daniel come back and say? What did he offer to do instead? What did he ask to eat, Olivia? Water and vegetables. A diet I am much well accustomed to. Water and vegetables.

[14:33] And they did a 10-day test. And who came out stronger? Was it the people that were eating the king's food? Or was it Daniel? Daniel. Daniel. So what we learned from that was that we shouldn't compromise.

Or we shouldn't give up what we believe and what God wants us to do. And we encourage the young ones to stay true to their beliefs. And I think if we're all, we would all agree that especially in this day and age, there's a lot of pressure from the world.

Be that in school. Be that just in the world. From the news. There's a lot of pressure to compromise. And to follow the crowd. But it's encouraging that the young ones manage to take away the fact that they need to stand firm.

And what was one of the songs called that we sang? Stand firm. So it reminds us to stand firm. And that the Lord will bless us. Day two. We learned about something else in Daniel chapter three. Now, what happened to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego? Or as I think Cammy said, Abednego. I think you were pronouncing it. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. What happened to them? They went in the fiery furnace.

[15:37] And what happened? Did they burn? Did all their clothes get burnt? No. What happened to them? Did they come out okay? Or did they come out with burns? Or did they have plasters on? No.

What happened? Olivia. Fresh as a daisy, you were going to say. And you were right. Fresh as a daisy, they probably did.

So they did. They came out fresh. But there wasn't just three of them in the fire. Was there another person in there as well? But only three went in. So who was it that was in there? Jesus was in there

as well.

So it reminded us that even if there's a fiery furnace, and we might hopefully never have a fiery furnace to deal with. But even in the difficult things that we face, if there's opposition, if there's people against us, who do we trust?

Do we trust ourselves to get through the fire? Who do we trust? Yes, we do. We trust God. And through those difficult situations, he will take us out the other end. And we saw from Daniel's friends, his three friends, that they were safe and they were protected.

[16:40] And then the last day, before I ask you to do your memory verse, the last day we learned about Daniel. And where did he end up? In the lion.

In the lion's den. And what happened? Did all the lions just eat him up? No. What happened? Shut the mouth of the lions.

Shut the mouth of the lions. And he was protected. There was not a scratch. There was not even a hair. Not even a tip from here. No gar stands on him at all. There was nothing.

He was protected in the lion's den. And God shut the mouths of the lions. So we know, again, in that story, that if we stand firm and if we stay true, can you remember what had happened to Daniel?

Why did he end up in the den? What did he try and get him to stop doing? Praying. And did he stop? Did he think, oh, I don't want to be anywhere near that lion's den. I'm going to stop praying.

[17:36] No. What did he do? He kept praying. So he stuck faithful to his God and he prayed. And it's the same for us. There may be difficult days. Maybe coming back to a school day and you've been told, get up.

You need to get a shower. There's still always time for us to pray. So we need to continue to pray. And that reminds us again, like the whole day, the whole week, if we are faithful, what will God do to us?

Will God bless us or will God ignore us? He will bless us in everything that we do. So that's what we did across the three days. Three different chapters of Daniel. But we're ultimately pointing the young ones to Christ.

And that he is the one that they can stand firm in. Now, I'm going to test you. The memory verse was from, I'm not going to tell you where it was from. But do you want to see the memory verse first before I ask you to shout it out?

Yeah? Okay, there you go. So, I'm going to put it up here. And I want you guys to say it loudly.

Don't cheat. I want you to say it loudly. See if you can remember the memory verse.

[18:38] Now, there's not as many of you as there were when we asked you to shout it in the church last time. So, you're going to have to be very loud with your voices. So, I'll start you off with the first word. So.

Do not fear. Do not fear. Verse 10.

Good job. Maybe one more time. I'm being really cruel now. So, do not fear. Do not fear. For I am your name. Do not fear. For I am your name.

I stand up. I stand up. I stand up. I stand up. I stand up. I stand up. I stand up. There's 10. Good job. Maybe a wee round of applause probably there for the end. So, I suppose I'll just close.

Thank you very much, guys. I'll maybe just close first with a word of prayer. But also just to continue to pray for the young ones. We don't just pray for them at one time of the week when they go out to Sunday school. Or at one time of the year for holiday club.

[19:39] But continue to bring them before you in your prayers. It's great to hear the young ones singing, doing their crafts, joining in, having a great time. But the most important thing is going away with these words in their minds.

So that when they come across trials, which they will in this world, that they'll be encouraged to rely on the Lord and on the Lord alone. So, we'll close our eyes, hands together, and I'll just say a wee word of prayer before we sing again.

Dear Heavenly Father, Lord, we give you thanks again for the opportunity the holiday club gives us to be able to share the word with our young ones here. And especially those that don't come to church. Those that are maybe not with us, that don't normally come to church each and every week. We pray, Lord, that they would go away with that word. That it would be, even this very morning, be something that is in their mind. That the songs they sung would be in their mind about standing firm.



And they love the place of honour at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces and being called rabbi by others. But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher and you are all brothers.

And call no man your father on earth, for you have one father who is in heaven. Neither be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Christ. The greatest among you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

[27 : 40] For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces, for you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.

Woe to you, blind guides, who say, if anyone swears by the temple, there is nothing. But if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath, you blind fools!

For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred? And you say, if anyone swears by the altar, it is nothing. But if anyone swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath, you blind men.

For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? So whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. And whoever swears by the temple swears by it and by him who dwells in it.

[28 : 46] And whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

For you tithe mint and dill and cumin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done without neglecting the others, you blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence, you blind Pharisee.

First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside may also be clean. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness.

So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

[30 : 00] For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous, saying, If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in the shedding of the blood of the prophets.

Thus you witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers, you serpents, you brood of vipers.

How are you to escape being sentenced to hell? Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar.

Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it, how often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing.

Amen. And may God give us understanding as we will return to that passage in just a few moments.

[31 : 44] We're going to sing again to God's praise. We're singing from Psalm 46. Psalm 46.

And we're singing from verses 1 to verse 5, and then verses 10 and 11. God is our refuge and our strength, and straits our present aid.

Therefore, although the earth remove, we will not be afraid. Verses 1 to 5, verses 10 and 11. The words on the screen, and we'll stand to sing to God's praise.

Amen. God is our refuge and our strength, and straits our present aid.

Therefore, although the earth we move, we will not be afraid.

[32 : 59] Though hills amidst the seas becast, though waters roll remain, and trouble be.

Yea, though the hills by swelling seas do shake, a river into streams to land, the city of our God, the holy place wherein the Lord most high hath gives the Lord.

For in the midst of earth doth dwell, nothing shall her renew.  
The Lord to earth and help her will, and the criteria through.  
Be still and know that I am gone. Our God beneath the land will be exalted.  
[35 : 06] Our God who is the Lord of hosts, is still upon our side.

The Lord of hosts is still upon our side.

The Lord of hosts, is still upon our side.

The Lord of hosts, is still upon our side. It's good to hear Gordon's voice on my left here.

Gordon and Gillian, it's nice to have you back in the congregation. Gordon and Gillian were away in Helmstale for six weeks, was it Gordon? Six, seven weeks. You don't get to know many people in such a short time.

[36 : 19] But if you lose your dog in the first couple of days, as was what happened, you get to know the whole place in no time. And so Gordon and Gillian basically got connected with everyone in Sutherland over the course of 24 hours.

And I know they very much enjoyed the placement. I know from hearing from Helmstale that they very much enjoyed having them. So we pray on for that place and for Gordon and Gillian as they persevere in the ministry road that God is calling them down.

Let's pray as we come back to God's word. Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word. This is a passage that we find difficult maybe to understand and even to read.

We hear some of the most serious words from Jesus as we read through these verses. We pray for the help of God, the Holy Spirit, that he would be our teacher and that our hearts would be opened, our minds would be illuminated, and that you would speak to us, Lord, through this passage.

Help us, we pray, not to be rebellious as many of the most religious people in Jesus' time were, but to receive the grace that is offered to all who will come like children to the Lord Jesus.

[37 : 50] And we ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. If you could have Matthew chapter 23 in front of you, that would be helpful.

We're going to go through the whole of the chapter in the time that we have. But I'm going to move very quickly and we're going to be looking over this passage a bit like the way we look down on the land when we're flying at a great height.

So Matthew chapter 23, just picking up the context of it, it's been a few weeks since we've been in Matthew. Well, at this point, Jesus is in teaching mode.

The congregation that are gathered around him as he speaks, they're mixed. Some of the congregation are the disciples of Jesus. They are those who are trusting him, those who are following him.

But there's also a large proportion in this crowd of critics of Jesus. There are many in the congregation who are listening to Jesus in order to try to prepare a case against him.

[39 : 02] A case that will lead to the cross. And we are coming now quite close to the cross as we step through Matthew's Gospel.

Matthew chapter 23 is an account of what Jesus said and what Jesus did on Tuesday. In just three days time, on Friday, Jesus will be crucified.

And he knows that. Jesus knows at this point that his time in this world is coming to an end.

He knows there will not be many more teaching sessions like this. And so there's a special clarity and urgency and seriousness about the words that Jesus speaks.

And I want to just think about these words and also what we see in Jesus as we look at him in this passage. And I want to structure our thoughts this morning under four headings.

[40 : 10] The first thing we hear in the opening part of the chapter is a warning from Jesus. That's a note that Jesus begins on. And then there is a list of woes for those who are so steadfastly rejecting Jesus.

The third thing we see as we come to the end of the chapter is the weeping of Jesus. And as we hear that in his words, we see it elsewhere in Luke's account.

And what we can hear as the passage comes to an end is the willingness of Jesus to save those who will come to him.

So first of all, there is a warning from Jesus. Now, oftentimes, whether we are young, like the group over on my right, or whether we are older, we don't like warnings.

When a parent says to a child, I'm warning you, the child will very early smile and say, thank you so much for this wonderful warning that you're giving me.

[41:23] It's not how it works. When a police officer pulls us over on the road and warns us about the speed that we're doing, we don't usually enjoy that experience.

We don't like warnings. We'd rather not have warnings. But oftentimes, we need warnings.

And if we care for someone, and if we see that they're in danger, then surely we will want to warn them about the danger that we see up ahead.

And that's what Jesus does here. He warns his disciples. He warns those who are following him. He warns those who are in the crowd who are maybe agnostic and undecided.

And he warns them about danger. And the danger that Jesus warns them about comes from the most surprising source. It came from the religious leaders.

[42:28] It came from the scribes and the Pharisees. Listen to the way the passage begins. Verse 1 to 3. Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples.

We can just imagine this. Imagine being part of this crowd. The scribes and the Pharisees, remember, they are the most important, the most powerful people in that place at that time.

And Jesus, the way he speaks, he just calls them out. They're right in front of him. They're in the congregation. We can imagine them in the front row. And Jesus addresses them directly.

And he addresses them publicly. Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, The scribes and Pharisees sit on Moses' seat.

So practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do. For they preach, but they do not practice.

[43:28] That would have sent shockwaves to that congregation. Because back in the day that Jesus spoke, the scribes and the Pharisees, they did have a good reputation.

That was the understanding of the majority of the people. They thought that the scribes and the Pharisees, that they were the men of God. And Jesus picks up on that.

Jesus describes them in verse 2 as being those who sit on Moses' seat, Which simply meant that they taught the things that Moses taught. The scribes and the Pharisees, they weren't, they didn't have a religious manual that was a clear manual full of heresy.

They weren't picking up a different spiritual religious book. They were picking up the Bible. They were picking up the words that Moses spoke.

So they sat on Moses' seat. They taught the things that Moses taught. In other words, they knew their Bibles. The scribes and the Pharisees, they could quote huge chunks of the Old Testament.

[44:42] We were impressed this morning as we heard the young ones reciting to us the memory verse. The scribes and the Pharisees could quote massive chunks of the Old Testament.

They had it in their minds clearly. I can think of some houses that I go into and visit.

And on the wall, we have the same kind of things we have in our own church here. We've got, if you look around the church here and go from room to room, there's various texts of Scripture on the wall.

Verses that are framed and put into prominent places. And I can go into some of your homes and there's verses that are framed on the walls. I could pick up some of your phones.

And the screensaver, when the phone comes to life, is a verse of the Bible. Now, the scribes and the Pharisees, they went one up on that.

[45:47] They attached verses of the Bible to their bodies. Jesus speaks in verse 5 of phylacteries. And these were small leather boxes that contained the Scriptures.

And they strapped these things to their left arm. And they strapped these things to their foreheads. So the Scriptures were hanging from their bodies. So you looked at these people.

The Scriptures were actually attached to their bodies. They knew the Scriptures in their minds. They wore the Scriptures on their bodies. But the problem was, none of these Scriptures touched their hearts.

And in verses 3 to 12, you can just scan that. I'm not going into it. Jesus points out that these scribes and Pharisees, they did lots and lots of religious things.

They weren't secularists. They were religious men. They did lots of religious things. Verse 5, Jesus says, they do all their deeds.

[47:02] Verses 6 and 7 show us, they went to all the religious functions. If there was a meeting, if there was a service, if there was a gathering, they were there. They weren't sitting at home watching Champions League.

They weren't watching the soap operas. They were there. They were there. They were there. They were there. They were there. They were there. But their religion was all external. It was all to be seen by men.

And their religion was all about them. It was all about the deeds that they did. It was all about their religious works that they hoped everybody would see.

And Jesus is making clear that that kind of religion, it doesn't save. It doesn't save. It doesn't save us.

There are many people, there may even be some in the congregation this morning, who have this false impression that the more religious we are, the more likely God is to save us.

[48:21] There are conversations I've had over the years, and people have this idea, if I just do more good religious things, and I do less bad things, then maybe God will look at my life, and maybe he'll save me.

And it's all about me. It's all about what I do. And that kind of religion, it doesn't save.

Our good works, our religious works, cannot save us. Only Jesus can save us.

He is the only Savior. And the cross that Jesus was approaching was the place that Jesus would go to do all the work that was necessary for our salvation.

We can do nothing to save ourselves. I can't remember who said it right now, but there's that quote, The only thing that we contribute to our salvation is the sin that makes it necessary.

[49:50] Jesus is the Savior. What he did on the cross, that's where we can be saved. Remember, as Jesus breathed his last, he said, He said, It's finished.

Everything that was needing to be done for us to be saved from sin, saved from death, saved from hell, saved into heaven, saved into a relationship that our souls long for with the God who made us for himself.

Jesus has done the work. He's opened up the way. We simply have to believe in him. We simply have to believe in him. And the scribes and the Pharisees, they had a whole lot of religion in their lives.

But they rejected Jesus. And they were trying to lead the people away from Jesus. They were trying to discredit Jesus. They were trying to silence his voice.

They were trying to remove him. They were trying to close the door of salvation. And so Jesus, publicly, clearly, bravely, shockingly, he warns the people against following the scribes and the Pharisees.

[51:14] What is the application for us this morning? What is the application for us this morning? Well, the application is clear and it's simple.

Just as Jesus warned them back in that day, Jesus, through his word this morning, warns us. He warns us against any person, any philosophy, any religion that takes us away from him.

There are not many ways to heaven. There are not many roads to God. There is one way. There is one road.

There is one name. There is one Savior. And it's Jesus. And so we have this very clear warning from Jesus about anyone, anything, even any habit, any hobby, any preoccupation that takes us away from him, that gets in the way of us coming to him.

We are warned about. Jesus said in John 14, 6, I am the way and the truth and the life.

[52:33] No one comes to the Father except through me. Now, I know that's not a popular message today. I know that's the kind of statement that can get you into trouble in a whole lot of different places, but it's the truth.

There is one way, one name, through which we can be saved, and it's the name of Jesus.

In Christ alone, our hope is found. No Buddha, no Allah, no Muhammad, no other name, no other way, no other religion, no other route.

Only Christ. So the question is, are we in Christ? Not are we religious? Not are we religious?

Not are we living reasonably good, clean, moral lives? Not are we doing more good things than bad things? Not are we attending a higher number of services this year than last year?

[53:46] The crux of this is, are we trusting in Jesus? Not in ourselves, but are we trusting in Christ and all that he has done for us on the cross?

There's a warning from Jesus. That's how this passage begins. The second point is there are woes for those who reject Jesus.

[illegible]



People, God's people, have reached out to us time after time. From Sunday school days to youth fellowship days to tent missions to services here to conversations in our workplace to those in our families who are Christians reaching out to us and saying, Will you not come to Jesus?

And if we are not saved this morning, it is not because of Jesus.

There is nothing between sinners and eternal happiness, but their proud and unbelieving unwillingness. So the message to close with is simple and it's so often the message we close with.

Come to Jesus. So I was preparing this, I was, sort of got this picture, I'm not trying to be charismatic or anything, but I had this picture in my mind of traffic lights.

And there are some even in this room this morning, and I think you've sat for years looking at an amber light. You know the way is not closed, but you're sitting there looking at an amber light thinking, well, can I go?

[71:09] Maybe something's got to zap me from the outside. The light's still amber, I think. I can't go yet. There is no amber light when it comes to the gospel.

You come to him. He will save you. He will save us from our sin. Every sin. Every weight of guilt that lies upon us.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding. And that hollow feeling that sometimes we wake up with of why am I here and what am I doing and where should I be going?

life in abundance, you'll get it in no other place. You'll get it as you come to Jesus and he's calling. So will you come? We'll sing as we conclude and we can respond in the final praise. 683 in the hymn book.

I am coming Lord, coming now to thee. Wash me, cleanse me in the blood that flowed on Calvary.  
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 may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may  
 may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may  
 may my precious one and Lord of Calvary I am coming Lord coming now to me washing hands in  
 the blood and

[74:19] Lord of Calvary it's Jesus calls me on to perfect faith and love to perfect hope and peace and trust forever and ever I am coming Lord coming now to me wash hands near the blood and Lord of Calvary it's Jesus who confirms the blessed one within I am in grace to welcome praise

where in the power

I am coming Lord coming now to me wash me cleanse me in the blood that Lord of Calvary may  
may Wash me, cleanse me in the blood The Lord of Calvary

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