

9.6.24 am

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Date: 09 June 2024

Preacher: Jeff Townend (Faith Mission)

[0 : 0 0] Good morning everyone and welcome to our service this morning. It's great to see a lot of people out, a lot of visitors with us today. At the end of the service we'll serve tea and coffee just here, so we'd very much appreciate it if you've got time to hang around and have a cup of tea or coffee and a bit of fellowship with us at the end of the service.

We're pleased today to have Geoff Townend from the Faith Mission, who will be leading our service this morning. And I'm sure he'll give us a wee bit of word about the mission that's taking place down in Leverborough this week.

So the evening service tonight at 6pm won't be here as usual, but it will be down, we're joining with the South Harris Congregation in Leverborough. So that service at 6pm is in the Free Church in the village, and then there's an evening meeting in the tent that's up in Leverborough after that, led by folks from the Faith Mission.

The meetings through the week, the usual meetings of Ladies Fellowship, Little Fishers, Road to Recovery, prayer meeting on Wednesday night at 7.30pm in here and on Zoom, and also Heka Chloith, the Gaelic Mother and Toddlers group, that's on on Thursday this week.

So the service is next Sunday, will be taken by the minister, and an evening service. And he'll be finishing off the series on the Sermon on the Mount, and he's asked Dr. Anthony Latham to share a bit of testimony, because he came to faith through reading the Sermon on the Mount.

[1 : 3 3] So that'll be next Sunday evening. And then two weeks today, we have a family service where the Sunday school will get gift of books as they come to the end of the year, and they'll be taking part in the service.

And we will also have the baptism of Nancy Morrison taking place that morning. And in the evening, two weeks today, we'll have a communion service, led by Reverend Thomas Davis.

And if anyone here wants to profess faith for the first time, please do speak to the minister or to any of the elders. We'd be very pleased to welcome anyone into the fellowship of the congregation.

Stornoway High Free, they're having a bus trip to Scalpy on Friday the 21st, and we'll be having their lunch here. If you'll provide anything for that, that would be much appreciated.

And please speak to Anna McRae. Anna's actually away this weekend, so if you have her phone number, just text her. I'll get in touch anyway, that's great.

[2 : 3 7] And once again, Scott McLeod will be coming here shortly. Anyone who knows anything on accommodation, please get in touch regarding that. And we'll flag up the Lewis Christian Conference.

That takes place on Thursday the 20th to Saturday the 22nd of June. With a speaker being Jonathan Lamb. I think there's a poster that's been showing prior to the service starting.

And we'll give more information on that in the future. So, all that remains is for me to thank Geoff very much for coming to take our service today. And we pray for God's blessing upon you as you lead.

Thank you very much for that warm welcome. It's good to be with you this morning. I just want to add one thing. And first of that, we encourage you to come down to Leaverborough this evening.

This morning is their first service since they've redone the roof and redone up the church. So, they would love you to be down there. And we would love to see you in the tent.

[3 : 40] I just want to say, we've left some of these at the door. We invitations. And if you could take some of these and just give them out. Or maybe invite a person along. You know, just because we put a tent up somewhere doesn't mean that people all of a sudden think they should go along.

But if somebody invites them, they are so much more likely to come. So, if you would come down and support us. And if you'd bring someone, we would really appreciate that. And we would be so delighted to see you. So, anyway, that's enough announcements for this morning.

I just want to open by reading a few words. This morning, we're going to be looking at the parable of the lost sheep. And in Peter, we're reminded here. To Peter 24.

He himself, that's Jesus, bore our sins in his body on the tree. That we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds, you have been healed.

For you were straying like sheep. But now have returned to the shepherd and the overseer of your souls. And so, we want to think about that this morning. And as we do, we're going to open with a psalm.

[4 : 43] Psalm 34 and sing psalms. It says in verse 1. At all times, I bless the Lord. I praise him with my voice. Because I glory in the Lord. Let troubled souls rejoice.

And then down there, it says why. Verse 3 and 4. Together, let us praise the Lord. Exalt his name with me. Why? I sought the Lord. His answer came.

From fears, he set me free. So let's stand and sing to God's praise. At all times, I will bless the Lord.

I'll bless the Lord. I'll bless the Lord. I'll bless the Lord. I'll bless the Lord. I'll bless the Lord. I'll bless the Lord. Because thy glory in the Lord.

Let troubled souls rejoice. Together, let us praise the Lord.

[5 : 49] Let us praise the Lord. Exalt his name with me. I sought the Lord.

I sought the Lord. His answer came. From fears, he set me free.

They took to him and shined with joy. They are not put to shame.

This suffering man cried to the Lord. From him deliverance came.

The angel of the Lord surrounds. And guards continually.

[7 : 01] All those who fear and honor him. He sets his people free.

Come, Christ, and see the Lord is good. Who trusts in him is blessed.

O fear the Lord. You sing with me. You will not be oppressed.

Amen. Well, let's turn to the Lord in prayer. Let's pray. Dear Lord, we do, we want to come before you this morning. We want to thank you, Lord. Thank you for this wonderful day.

Thank you for the sun that is shining. Thank you for this opportunity to come and to meet together. And to bring our praise and our worship to you this morning. We thank you so dearly for that, Lord. Lord, as we come, we want to lift up our praise to you.

[8 : 20] Because you are the almighty, holy, Christ holy God. Who is worthy of all our worship and praise. But, Lord, as we come, we want to come.

And we come with hearts of thanksgiving because of what you have done for us. We are so grateful of what the Lord has done for us. That he himself bore our sins on the tree.

And that by his wounds we have been healed. We have been forgiven. And for that we are so deeply grateful, O Lord. Help us as we come this morning.

Not just merely to come. And to turn up to a building. And to come to a service. As maybe can often be our habit. But help us to come with hearts full of joy.

And help us to come with a desire to hear from you. And to hear from your word this morning. O Lord, as we would come and as we would look upon that parable of the lost sheep.

[9 : 22] That we may be familiar with. Cause us to see the good shepherd this morning. Cause us to see the one who laid down his life for the sheep. Cause us to see the one who went after the one lost soul.

And Lord we pray that our hearts would be filled with joy. And Lord we pray for maybe someone here this morning. Who does not know what it is to be in the fold of God.

Even as we've sung. Come and taste and see that the Lord is good. That's our prayer for someone this morning. That even this morning for the first time.

They might come. And taste. And see. And leave rejoicing. Lord we want to come. And we pray for every person who is gathered in here this evening.

Or this morning. Lord you know each and every one of us. You know the very number of hairs upon our head. You know the thoughts that are in our mind. You know the things that are upon our heart.

[10 : 26] You know the situations that await for each of us at home. Maybe some that are difficult. Maybe there is burdens that are being carried here this morning. And yet you know about them Lord.

Better than I do. And Lord we want to bring these things before you. We pray that you would meet needs that need to be met. Pray that you would touch hearts that would need to be touched.

Pray that you would speak into these situations this morning. So that each person might leave. Knowing that God has met with them. And ministered their need. Knowing that they have received that portion of bread this morning.

That portion of manor. That has just met their need today. Lord we thank you so much for the faithful witness. Of this church here in this area.

And Lord we just pray that you would continue to bless it Lord. As the word goes out and the gospel goes out. Sunday by Sunday and week by week. We pray that you would come.

[11 : 26] And Lord that as the word goes out. That there would be fruit seen. For the labor. And that even in this area of Talbot.

That the borders of your kingdom would be expanded. And that many would be added to the number. And so Lord we look to you this morning. Again we just come. Humbly giving our thanks and our praise to you.

Who is so worthy of it. We pray oh Lord. In your precious name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Well. I have a wee address for the children.

So I think maybe you come down do you. To the front. So if you want to come on down. That would be great. Now I have a wee piece of paper here.

And I'm hoping you've not seen this one. Or heard this one before. But a wee piece of paper. I want to help me to use. To tell you how it is you get to heaven.

[12 : 27] And so this. This. I've only one piece of paper. So if this goes wrong. Then that's it. We're done for. But hopefully it won't go wrong. So if I fold this piece of paper. I'll just use the paper.

Now you see. Way back in the beginning of the Bible. In Genesis. I think it's chapter 11. There were some people. And they wanted to try. And get up to God. To get to heaven. And do you know what did they build? What does that kind of look like?

If I were to sort of put it up high. A house. A house. Yeah it looks like a house. But use your imagination. Maybe you sit a lot. What might it look like. If it was really tall. A tower is the word you're looking for.

And there was these people. That built a tower. And they thought. If we build this really really high tower. Then we could get up to God. And we could get up to heaven. And do you think. Did they get there? No they did not get there.

Of course you can never build a tower up to heaven. And God came down actually. And confused them. And gave them all a different language. But you know. You said this looks a wee bit like a house. And you're right.

[13 : 25] It does. And you know. There's some people that will tell you. You can't get to heaven. Because there's no such thing as heaven. And they'll tell you that. All there is. Is this life. And you just have to live your life here now.

And just make the most of it. And so some people. That's what they do. And they build fancy houses. And they fill them with all kinds of things. And they just try to enjoy life. Because they say there's nothing.

After this life. But you know. That's a terrible shame. Because it's not true. And there is. Life after death. And there is. A heaven. Well if I was to take this piece of paper here.

And I was to fold it. You might know what's coming next here. What does this stand to look like. Do you have any idea? What is it? Go and shout it out. A paper airplane.

A paper airplane. It's a bit rough. But. It's coming together. A paper airplane. There you go. And if I was really there. And I could try flying across there. But I'll not do that. That looks like a plane.

[14 : 21] Now planes can go really high. They fly I think about that. Oh. 35,000 feet. In the air. Which is. About six and a half miles up in the air. Do you think that you get to heaven on a plane?

No. Of course you can't get to heaven on a plane. But you know. Have any of you ever been on a plane? No. I have. Some of you have. What do you need to get on a plane?

There's two things you often need. A passport. A passport. And what else? A ticket. A ticket. Good man. And so whenever you go to the airport. You get up there. And you show them your passport.

And you show them your ticket. And then they say. Oh yeah. You've paid your price. You've paid for the ticket. You can go on the plane. And you know. Some people think that's kind of how you get to heaven. They think that you have to pay your way.

Or earn your way to heaven. And so they'll tell you. You've got to be a really good person. Or you've got to be religious. And you've got to go to church. Or you've got to do this thing and that thing. And if you do these things.

[15 : 19] Then you might just do enough. To earn your way. To buy your way into heaven. But do you know what? You can't buy your way into heaven. It doesn't matter how much you did.

You could never earn your way into heaven. Well if I was to take this here. And this is where it often goes completely wrong. If I can get it started. That's a quick piece of paper.

So I might not be there. Oh there we go. Now. Imagination needed again. If I tear this down here. Do you have any idea what it might be starting to look like? Oh.

Oh I think someone's seen this before. No? What does that kind of look like? A rocket. A rocket. Now rockets go really, really high.

They go like 300,000 miles above the earth. And they fly at thousands and thousands of miles per hour. Do you think that you get to heaven on a rocket?

[16 : 14] No. Even though it goes that high? No. No. You can't. But do you know the people that build rockets? They are super smart rocket scientists. And they work for NASA. And they're like the smartest people in the world.

And some people will maybe tell you that's how you get to heaven. You've got to be really, really smart. They'll say, you've got to know loads and loads of the Bible. And lots of things about Jesus.

And lots of things about theology and big words. But you know that's not true. Even just as a young boy or girl. If you give your life to the Lord. Then you can know what it is to have a place in heaven.

You know there's only one way you can get to heaven. And hopefully this is going to work here now. I flick that there. What is that? A cross. A cross.

You see that's the only way we can get to heaven. And we'll be thinking about this a little bit later on. It's through the cross. You see that's why Jesus came down to this earth. As a baby. And he lived.

[17 : 12] And then eventually he died on the cross. So that if we would come to him. And ask him to forgive us of our sin. That's why he died on the cross. So that we could be forgiven of our sin.

And if we would do that. Then he would forgive us. And then. We can know what it is. To have a place in heaven. And it's only through the cross.

That we get to heaven. So did you follow that there? Do you think if I was to give you a piece of paper. You could do that yourself? Not so sure. Well you can practice when you get home. Oh well.

We're going to sing now again. And I think it's the hymn. I have a shepherd. One I love so well. And again this carrying on the theme of the shepherd.

One I love so well. How he has blessed me. Tongue can never tell. On the cross he suffered. Shed his blood and died. That I might ever in his love confide. Let's stand to sing.

[18 : 09] I have a shepherd. Tongue can never tell. I have a shepherd. One I love so well. Tongue can never tell.

I have a shepherd. I have a shepherd. One I love so well.

How he has blessed me. Tongue can never tell. On those we suffer, shed his blood and die, as I might ever in his love confide.

Following Jesus, ever day by day, nothing can harm me when he leads the way.

Darkness or sunshine, whatever before, Jesus the shepherd is my all in all.

[19 : 39] The waters abundant, the fish I provide, still waters flowing ever at my sight.

Goodness and mercy follow all my sight. With such a shepherd, nothing can I lie.

Following Jesus, ever day by day, nothing can harm me when he leads the way.

Darkness or sunshine, whatever before, Jesus the shepherd is my all in all.

[21 : 15] In darkest valley, I will fear no will. For he, my shepherd, will be with me still.

It's a very well-known passage to us all, but we long that the Lord would show us something fresh from it this morning. So Luke chapter 15, reading from verse 1 just down to verse 7.

[22:43] And we'll end our reading there. And we'll end our reading there.

The verse 1 is a Gaelic psalm. The verse 1 is a Gaelic psalm. The verse 1 is a Gaelic psalm. The verse 1 is a Gaelic psalm.

[24 : 49] CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR
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CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SING any old book but we believe it to be the living word of god and so we pray that we would hear the voice of god speaking pray lord that you would give us hearts that would be open to receive your word pray that you would help me and that you would simply just use me as your mouthpiece this morning and so we ask it lord in your precious name amen well i don't know if you're one of the those people that just sort of always seems to be losing things uh there sort of seems to be those kind of people that are always setting things down and it's either the wallet or the keys and then they're searching all over the place and and they can't find it and i don't know if that's you and often we don't realize how valuable something is until we've lost it and sometimes we do lose valuable things but sometimes i don't know if you ever been in that place maybe you've lost something uh and you know to everybody else it would just seem as nothing they would think oh well i'll just get a new one or it doesn't matter but to you it was of great value and you you know you would search for it that happened to me one time uh we were at church one sunday morning uh and i had my bible with me and i have a few kids and so i was helping them out to uh the car and i set my bible on top of the car and put them in and did their belts up and then got in the car and drove down the road and then i got home and thought oh where's my bible and oh top of the car i wasn't there anymore uh so i had to go back and i found it a few miles down the road uh but in that bible there was a wee just a wee memory verse that one of the children had written out for me one time and it meant a lot to me to anybody else it was just a bit of colored paper but to me it meant a lot and i searched up and down that road for maybe a good hour looking for it but to everybody else they would have thought ah doesn't matter but to me it was of value and you know that really is the core message as we come to this parable these people that we read about who were coming to jesus they were sinners but they were of great value to jesus even just one and so to really understand and grasp this parable and the parables that come after it we have to look at the short context that we're given in verses one and two it plays an important under it plays such an importance to understand in the parable and here in this section of luke jesus is on his way he's journeying towards jerusalem and as he goes towards jerusalem he's going there for one reason and that is to be crucified and so this is almost like his last journey and as he goes through the towns and the villages we read that he goes teaching and healing and uh meeting in the synagogue and being in people's homes and and as he did there was many people that were drawn to him but you know maybe the kind of people that you just wouldn't really want you know this wasn't high-ranking officials and upstanding members of society you know if any of us were wanting to start a new kind of a movement especially a religious one we would maybe look for you know really good people who are just known in the area so that if they were to join our cause everybody else would look and see oh that person is following jesus so jesus must be somebody worth following yet we read who was it that was drawn to jesus

it was the tax collectors and the sinners the tax collectors they they really were the enemy of society you know it's bad enough being someone who takes taxes of people uh there wouldn't be much love for that kind of a person but you know not just even in that these people were working for the enemy they were working for the the romans those people who had come in and occupied the land and had put their rule over them and now they were taking their money and these people were gathering it but they but not only that they were gathering it as i'm sure you're aware dishonestly they were taking some off the side for themselves and everybody knew about this and so they didn't like them and they were so much uh hated that if you read in chapter 18 whenever the pharisee is praying and he says i thank you that i'm not like uh robbers and evildoers and adulterers and like this tax collector that was the same category that these people were put in they were they were everybody hated them they were the bottom of society and then we see also that sinners were coming and that was the robbers and the evildoers and the adulterers and the lawbreakers but it was also just in the eyes of the pharisees it was just everyday people everyday people who were just going about their everyday lives working everyday jobs but yet they had no concern for the law they they didn't worry about keeping the feasts they didn't worry about observing the sabbath day they weren't worried about being ceremonially clean and so the pharisees looked on these people and they they belittled them these people they were wrong they were almost beneath them and that's the way they felt and that's the way they acted towards them they almost say that these people were worthless and that was seen in their actions they wouldn't eat with these people they wouldn't journey with them they wouldn't associate with them in any way in actual fact if you if you go back to jewish literature of the time it says let not a man associate with sinners even to bring him near to the torah such was the the how they looked down upon these people and so you can almost hear that the grumbling in their voice as they say this man receives sinners to them what jesus was doing was wrong and you can hear the condemnation in their voice this man he he receives sinners but all they were doing was stating the truth jesus received sinners and this is the core meaning of these three parables that that jesus didn't judge sinners he didn't despise them he didn't think of himself better but he loved them and he valued them he didn't look down on them and these people knew this surely that's what drew them to jesus they didn't feel this sense of unworthiness and so they drew near they felt that they could come to him that he didn't that he didn't offer to them religion but he offered to them the kingdom of god they realized that that the that that that is the beauty of the gospel that it's just for for everyday folk everyday people who are looking for life not a burden of rules for people who have maybe messed up and just made a mess of life and failed in life but yet the beauty of the gospel is that it's for them it's for all it doesn't matter where we are our standing in society or who we've come from or our upbringing the gospel and jesus is for all but well this this made the pharisees unhappy they grumbled and they complained and and they fought themselves better and you know i think often when we come to the bible we look at the pharisees and we think they're they're kind of the people that we just love to hate we love to think and look at them

and think well you know i would never be like that i would never act like that but you know sometimes i think maybe we can fall into that attitude of the pharisees and particularly in this case maybe in two ways the first is no compassion the pharisees they they had no compassion but jesus he had compassion he had compassion that that valued one soul that he would seek after it he had compassion that that looks out longingly for that wayward son longing that he would return he had compassion that we read in in chapter 13 of luke that as he looks out over jerusalem he says oh jerusalem jerusalem how often i would have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under their wings his heart his heart was for the lost and what about our heart as christians do we have compassion do we have a love for the lost is there a concern for our neighbor or our work colleague or or other family members for those living around us in the area of this church do we look upon them and do we have compassion a compassion that brings us to the place of prayer and that weeps for them and that yearns that they would see the lord and turn from their evil ways a compassion that goes or are we like the pharisees yeah maybe we're not grumbling but is there is there that same coldness of heart that we look at and those around around us and we may be not looking out scornfully but yet there's a numbness to their need there's a missionary ct stud and and this was his plea he said some wish to live within the sound of a chapel bell but i want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell and is that the compassion that we have for the lost around us you know the other way that maybe many people can slip into thinking like the pharisees is is that they begin to rely upon self-worth you see the the pharisees they looked out on the masses and they called them sinners and they thought well we're not like that they thought that they were good people they thought they were religious people they didn't need to be saved if anyone needed to be saved it was those sinners but but not us i mean we've kept the law uh to to the tea uh we eat the correct foods we observe the sabbath we we do this thing and the next thing and the next thing and the next thing and so surely if anybody's saved it's us and you know there's a danger that some people can slip into that way of thinking they can say well i'm not a sinner you know i'm i'm not a bad person in actual fact i'm pretty good i mean compared to the next person or to that person i'm a pretty good person i help people i'm morally good if someone was in need i would i would try and help them might say well i'm actually religious go to church i read my bible been baptized i this i that i the next thing and if that's the case then then we've just slipped into that same line of thinking as the pharisees and relying upon our self-worth you know there's a an illustration that a preacher in america has used you maybe heard it but he talks about uh it's maybe not theologically correct but it's a good illustration that day whenever we stand before god

and we stand at the the gates of heaven as it were and god looks at us and he says why should i let you into my heaven and if we start if we answer that question in the first person if we say well i have done this or i have done that then the gates will be shut to us and don't be fooled don't be like the pharisees relying upon your self-worth relying upon what you have done because it won't be enough whenever we stand at them gates and that question comes why should i let you into my heaven the only thing we can say is because jesus because he said that i could come the tax collectors and the sinners they realized this and that's what drew them near but sadly the pharisees stood on looking in judgment when the sad truth was that they were every bit as lost and every bit in need have been saved and i wonder this morning have you come to jesus for forgiveness or are you lying upon self-worth if you were to stand before the gates of heaven what would your answer be well the parable goes on and jesus gives the pharisees this parable and so we see secondly searching for the lost they said that this man receives sinners and that's exactly what jesus does and he gives them this parable to show what he does he says so he told them this parable what man of you having a hundred sheep if he has lost one of them does not leave the 99 in the open country and go after that one that is lost until he finds it and as is usual with parables jesus is using an everyday situation and that's he starts it with what man of you and so this obviously was a familiar situation to them there could have been shepherds there or many people would have been familiar with seeing people looking after their sheep maybe down there on the fertile plains beside the jordan or on the slopes of bethley outside bethlehem they would have been familiar to the shepherds watching over their sheep and as they did so it would have been a common experience for sheep to wander off

[40 : 55] I mean if you have anything to do with sheep even now you know even with all the electric fence and the sheep wire we have it's still common for sheep to get out and wander off so this must have been a common occurrence and the suggestion seems to be that of course the shepherd is going to go out to find the lost sheep and some have put an emphasis upon the fact that the shepherd is willing to leave the 99 unattended and to go and seek the one and so emphasize the value that is placed upon the one I don't think that's maybe the case I think with such a large number of sheep there would have been a number of men looking after this flock but regardless of that we still see the value that is placed upon the one in verse 4 we read that he searches until he finds it this shepherd was not willing to give in failure was not an option such was the value for that one lost sheep that he would continue and he would search until he found it and of course this is a picture of the good shepherd this is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ the shepherd that seeks for lost sinners until he finds them he will not give up because he values them and it's such a wonderful picture of Jesus and I just want to draw out in a few ways how we see this picture of Jesus you know many other shepherds they might have thought it's a lot of effort looking for the one lost sheep you know the wilderness is a vast place and they could wander for hours and hours and even if they did by chance find the sheep it might even be dead

I mean it could have died at first or a wild animal could have got to it and then they're putting their own life in danger as they go out against these wild animals and so it would require a lot of effort a lot of time a lot of energy and any natural shepherd would maybe just say well it's too much too much effort for an unlikely return but not the good shepherd no effort was too great for the good shepherd no sacrifice was too great no cost that he was not willing to pay the good shepherd says to the father not my will but yours the good shepherd says I will lay down my life for the sheep the good shepherd says I have other sheep that are not of this fold and I must bring them also and he did not rest until he had paid the debt of our sin on the cross he did not rest until he had made it possible that we might be made right with God he did not rest until he had opened the door that leads to everlasting life no effort was too small for him you know maybe many other shepherds might have looked for the sheep and they might have done so resentfully they might have said well the sheep should have known better or it's its own fault or they might have gone sort of haphazardly and says well if I find it

I'll find it and if I don't well it doesn't really matter you know if you've ever worked with sheep you wouldn't be surprised if this was the hundredth time this sheep had wandered off that's what they do they're always wandering away and you might the shepherd might have been prone to say well I'm not going to waste my time with this sheep I'm not going to waste my time and you know in many ways that's the attitude that the good shepherd should have took of us that's the attitude that the Lord should have took of us how many times have we wandered away from God how many times have we rejected him how many times have we broken his law the Bible describes us in the eyes of God as not only sinners but enemies with God that's the natural state of our hearts is to be at enmity with God to be an enemy and to reject him and say no not you but me my way and if anyone had a right to say well let them go their own way leave them to their own let them be lost it was God but yet in his mercy he doesn't and he sends out his only son the good shepherd didn't give up on us he didn't give up but he's still seeking for lost souls even this morning and are you lost this morning are you wandering into a lost eternity well I want to tell you there's a shepherd who loves you dearly and who is seeking and calling even for you this morning you know many other shepherds might have looked on the sheep and they might have said well it's only one sheep and they might have searched for it for a few hours and then given up and they might have said well it's just one anybody who works with sheep knows that there's losses that's what sheep do they die one out of 99 that's not bad going 1% loss that's pretty good

I could live with that and so they might have said well it's insignificant it's just one but the good shepherd he goes on looking until he finds the lost sheep such is the love of Christ for those who are lost he does not see us as insignificant but he values each and every soul he values him that he is willing to leave the glory and the splendor of heaven and to come down and to take on the form of sinful flesh and not only that to live as a mere man but to go and to die and to suffer upon the cross and to die in our place such is his love for us such is the value that he places upon us and what was it that he did upon the cross did Jesus just give us a get out of jail free card did he just sweep the punishment of our sin under the carpet no he stood in our place he took the punishment of our sin there was no get out of jail free card no someone had to pay the punishment and the price for our wrongdoing and for our sin and that is what

Christ did upon the cross in his own blood as we read earlier he himself bore our sins upon the tree so that that day whenever we would stand at the gate of heaven and the question would be asked why should I let you in we would be able to say because one has paid the price for me because he loved me and he valued my soul so much and that is the value that he places upon each and every soul even here this morning you know recently a wee while ago it was told that there was 8 billion people living on the planet that's a lot of people 8 billion but then think of throughout history of all the number and number of people who have ever lived what a vast number but then if you're saved this morning if you know what it is to have trusted in the Lord think out of that vast number out of those millions and millions of lost souls that he found you think of that moment or that hour when out of those millions and millions the shepherd drew near to you and found you

[48 : 59] I can remember that moment just as a young boy only 5 years old just sitting in the front room of our house with my mum and as she simply explained the gospel there the shepherd drew near and found me and what a wonder out of the millions that the shepherd would draw near and find one who is lost but if you're not saved this morning I want to tell you that there's one who values your soul so much and he is seeking for you even this morning and maybe that's the reason why you're here this morning and you're longing that the Lord would come and find you maybe that's why you're here this morning because and there's a sense of conviction under your heart on your heart the Lord loves you and the shepherd is seeking for you and maybe even this morning he is seeking you and so we see that the love of the shepherd well lastly and just to bring things to a close we see the rejoicing over the lost sheep and when he has found it he lays it on his shoulders rejoicing and he comes home and he calls together his friends and his neighbors saying to them rejoice with me for I have found my sheep that was lost the shepherd rejoices over finding the sheep you know he lays it on his shoulders rejoicing

I don't know about you but if I had been out all day looking for a sheep and then I found it and I had to carry a lump of a sheep home I don't know if I would be rejoicing you'd probably be a bit begrudged but yet it just gives us another picture of the joy of the Lord even though he had to suffer and to face the full wrath of God upon the cross yet he did it with joy Hebrews 12 2 who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross you see the pain and the punishment and all that he would face was nothing compared to knowing the joy that sinners would be saved such was his joy and then we see that joy as he comes home and the shepherd rejoices with his friends and this is just a wonderful picture of heaven verse 7 just so I tell you there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 righteous persons who need no repentance why because I have found my lost sheep that which was lost has been found a little later on it says it so wonderfully in the parable of the lost son my son which was dead is alive and that's what happens whenever we're born again we are brought from death into life we are lost and then we are found and that's why there is such rejoicing even just over one one sinner who repents what does it mean to repent it's to realize we're lost to realize that we need Christ to turn away from our way and to call out to Christ and to long and to live for him maybe you're here this morning and you're saying

I hear what you're saying and I long that the shepherd would find me but how how can it be well this morning I was out walking just staying in the house above Nofton and I was thinking upon this and as I was thinking there was some sheep out in the hill and they were bleating and they were calling and you know the shepherd would have been seeking for that sheep but I'm sure the sheep as it was lost would have been bleating and would have been calling out and that's all we have to do we can't save ourselves but we can call out to the one who can save us call upon the name of the Lord and you shall be saved and so if you're here this morning and you're lost and maybe you've been wandering in the wilderness for a long time maybe you've been living for your own way won't you come and repent won't you come and call upon the shepherd the Pharisees thought that the crowd was lost they thought that they were worthless but Jesus he values each and every soul what was one out of a hundred it would hardly matter but to

Jesus it mattered and we see that in that wonderful picture of the angels rejoicing in heaven you know in Luke chapter 2 think of that moment whenever the angels appear before the shepherds and the sky is filled or in Revelation chapter 5 and in the throne room of heaven and it talks about the myriad of myriad and the thousands of thousands of angels that are worshipping the Lord when one soul repents that is the picture that thousands of thousands of angels in heaven rejoicing over the one that was lost and that is found and all I want to say this morning the Lord values your soul and wouldn't it be so wonderful if the angels were rejoicing in heaven this morning over one that would be lost and would be found even this morning amen well we're going to close with the hymn when I survey the wondrous cross and really this hymn just speaks to us of the value that Christ puts upon lost sinners so let's stand and sing this three when I survey the wondrous cross on which the prince of glory died my riches gave

I can't put lost and poor contempt on all my pride forbid it Lord that I should boast in the death of Christ my God all loving things that charm me most I sacrifice them to his blood he from his head his hands his feet sorrow and love flow mingled down!

[56 : 16] He there such love and sorrow meet our forms compose so rich a crown where the whole realm of nature mine and for an offering far too small love so amazing so divine demands my soul my life my own just just a just a close of a prayer dear lord help us to survey the wondrous cross this morning whether we are knowing and trusting in you or whether we are not help us to see the beauty of all that

Christ has done for us and that might be our prayer that we would long to give our life our soul our all in following Jesus every day by day and lord we pray if there is even one here who you would be calling this morning pray that they would just bow the knee and so lord we thank you so much for our time together we pray that you would watch over us and that you would amen