

29.8.21 am

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Date: 29 August 2021

Preacher: Rev. Donald Macleod

- [0 : 00] Good morning. A warm welcome to the service today and a special welcome to any who are visiting with us this morning. It's good to see a number of visitors and we pray God's blessing on you and us together as we seek to worship God.
- Also a warm welcome to those who are not here in person but who are watching online still. It's good for us to be able to come together and to worship God in this way.
- One or two intimations before I hand over which was a surprise, a happy surprise for me today. The Gaelic service will be on this evening. We have a monthly Gaelic service and that's on this evening at 6pm and that will be conducted by John McSween, one of the elders here.
- And the prayer meeting will be on Zoom on Wednesday at half past seven. Boys and girls, any boys and girls here looking around? We've got a few. Jam and Connect start on this coming Friday.
- So we've been off for quite a long time but Jam and Connect both start this Friday. And so Jam is at half past one to three o'clock and Connect starts on Friday and it's 3.30 to 5.30pm.
- [1 : 18] So boys and girls, be encouraged to go to that. We're thankful for those who've volunteered to help. We could probably still do with a few more volunteers if there's anybody who's able and willing.
- So if you're able to do that, come and speak to me or to Mary. Rooted for the S1s to S6s began last Friday and it was a good evening. And that will continue this Friday from half past six to half past eight.
- A couple more intimations. One is to say that we were saddened to learn of the death of Donnie Munro, Flora's uncle. And we pray for them at this time as a family.
- The funeral service will be on Wednesday, this coming Wednesday, in the Church of Scotland at 11am. So that's 11am in the Church of Scotland on Wednesday.
- And we can be remembering the family in prayer at this time. And the final thing is to say that you've probably guessed by now that I'm not actually going to be taking the service today.
- [2 : 23] I'm just introducing and handing over. Our parents have been away for almost, I think, two years with COVID and everything. But they came kind of spontaneously on Monday of this week and are with us for a few days.
- So I posed the question to Dad, kind of half joking. Do you have a sermon with you? He didn't, but he soon found one. And so I'm grateful to have them with us today.
- And Dad's going to take the service this morning. So I'll stop talking and hand over. And we pray God's blessing on the service today.
- Thank you. It is a privilege and a pleasure to be with you once again here in Tarbert. We can begin our worship of God and sing to his praise in the Metric of Psalm 95.
- O come, let us sing to the Lord. Come, let us, everyone, a joyful noise make to the rock of our salvation. Let us before his presence come with praise and thankful voice.

- [3 : 37] Let us sing psalms to him with grace and make a joyful noise. And so on, sixth answers of Psalm 95 to God's praise. O come, let us sing to the Lord.
Come, let us, everyone, a joyful noise make to the rock of our salvation.
Let us before his presence come with praise and thankful voice.
Let us sing psalms to him with grace and make a joyful noise.
For God, a great God and great King, above all God's ears.
- [5 : 11] Deaths of the earth are in his hand. The strength of his ises.
To him the spacious sea belongs. For he the same did make.
The dry land also from his hands Its form at first it take.
O come and let us worship him. Let us bow down with all.
And on our knees before the Lord. Our maker, our maker, let us fall.
- [6 : 36] We can bow together for a moment in prayer. Lord, as we come together, we come in the words of the psalms to worship you.
We come with hearts that are full and overflowing with gratitude towards the God who is high and lifted up.
The God who is holy. The God who is worthy of our worship. Worthy of our praise. The God in whom we delight when we sing that psalm together and recognize that our God is a great God and great King.
And as we draw near to you this morning, Lord, we come with a full assurance that you are here among us.
That you are in the midst of the gathering where the two and the three are met together in your name. You are here and we believe with all our heart that you are here to bless.
- [7 : 53] You are here to speak to us. You are here to minister to those who are broken hearted. Those who are dispirited.
Those who are upset for one reason or another. Those who are anxious. Those who feel physical pain or mental pain or emotional pain.
We thank you that there is a balm in Gilead. That the Lord is able to use to anoint and to soothe the aching wounds of every soul.
And, O God, our Father, we thank thee even more. That there is blood, the blood of Jesus. The blood of the cross of Calvary. To cleanse us from every spot and stain and blemish.
And for those who come together today with us and maybe feel the burden of their sin weighing so heavily upon them. Grant, O God, that you would take of the blood of Christ and sprinkle it upon their hearts and their minds and their conscience and their soul.
- [9 : 03] And enable them to know what it is to be set free from that burden. To lay down at the feet of Jesus. Never to take it up again.
To feel that certain sense of freshness as we are cleansed anew by the living God. The God who enables us, as it were, to soar upon the wings of our worship as we come into his nearer presence.
The God who comes and is as a sweet fragrance around us and even sometimes within us. And particularly so as we gather together in this way.
We pray that you would infuse us with your grace, O God. That we would know what it is to feel the warmth of your spirit ministering in our hearts.

That we would say with another, were not our hearts burning within us as the Lord spoke to us. And we pray, O God, that you would hear us too as we seek to offer all that we are and all that we have to you.

[10 : 09] You are the God who has given of yourself in death that we might have life. And we give ourselves in life to you in order that we might be saved from this death that Jesus has protected us from.

And that you would give us newness of life in the sense that we would feel the freedom that comes with the gospel. And also the responsibility to live as your people in the here and now of time.

We pray for those who are mourning today connected with this congregation. Those who are in the community that feel the burden of a sense of loss.

Those who perhaps are feeling anxious as to what life will hold for them now that a loved one has been taken from out of their midst. Grant them your comfort, Lord.

And all others that are here who have loved and lost family and friends in times past and feel the old wound being opened afresh.

[11 : 19] Oh God, our Father, we pray that you would comfort them with the comfort that you alone can give. Give them that peace which surpasseth knowledge.

Give them that peace. Give them that peace. Give them that peace. Give them that sense of strength that comes through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. And fill us with hope. The hope of the gospel.

The hope of life with Christ. The hope of service for you and the world and where we find ourselves. Hope and help with the throne of grace to be able to pray.

To cry out to you. From our own locations. In this place of global pain that we find ourselves in.

May we reach to the ends of the earth with prayer. That peace would be brought about in the war-torn countries of our world. There is so much suffering.

[12 : 19] There is so much warfare. There is so much argument. And there is so much falling out among the nations. And we pray to you, O God, that you might come.

And that you would help to bring peace and bring order to our chaos. We ask also that you would draw near to those who suffer the ravages of nature.

In famine or flood. Those who are experiencing drought. And so many more who are going through persecution as a result of having faith in Jesus.

Oh, not being slightly offended as we sometimes can be in our part of the world. But their very lives and their families threatened.

Their anxiety raised to levels that we have never experienced. The dangers around them so potent. And, Lord, our God, we feel so helpless in the face of it all.

[13 : 19] And yet we pray that you would come. That you would move. That their oppressors would be touched by your power. That if it isn't your mind to convert, to convict and convert.

That you would take them down from the situations that they find themselves in. Ruling over others in despotic manner. Ruling over others in despotic manner.

Ruling over others in despotic manner. Ruling over others in despotic manner. That it was the very gate of glory for our souls. And it puts a new spring in our step. A new desire in our heart. To tell the world about Jesus.

The only saviour of sinners. The one that each needs to hear about. More than anything else in this life. So grant, O God.

That you would come to us now and undertake for us. Bring your word to life for us. Make it live. Make it work within us. And may we be guided and directed by it.

[14 : 47] For we seek to serve. We seek to worship. We seek to give you thanks and praise and glory. And we seek so very much. To be ministered to by you in the spirit.

Through the word. As a result of our faith. In your son our saviour. Hear our prayer. Take away our sin. For Jesus' sake.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Now I wonder if I can take a minute. And it will be but a minute. To speak to the younger folk. I know that you sometimes come down to the front.

I don't know if you want to do that today. But we're very glad to have you. If you want to come. We maybe talk about exciting things together. But then maybe not.

Thank you. Lovely to see you. I quite often watch on Zoom. What's going on here on a Sunday morning.

[15 : 52] A dad always keeps an eye on his family. So he tunes in. And he hears the different names. And can never see a single face. Other than one.

So it's good to be here in person. To be able to see. Who you are. Now the text that we're going to take. With the big ones today. Is just a couple of words.

It says follow me. And I wondered. What or who. Do any of you follow? Do you know what it is to follow? What would you say Lois?

You're going to follow Jesus. Well that's good. A long time ago. Well maybe not that long. It's just when I was young. There's a song that some group used to sing.

And it went like this. They seek him here. They seek him there. His clothes are loud. But never square. It will make or break him. So he's got to buy the best.

[16 : 52] Because he's a dedicated. Follower of fashion. Don't know that anybody in Harrods. Would bother with fashion. Would you? Any dedicated followers of fashion.

Among you here? I know of three. But I wonder. If we were to have time. To ask everyone.

What's most important to them? What or who is it that you follow? Boys here. Do they play something called football here in Harris? Eh? Do they?

Are they any good? Yeah. They're very good. You're saying. Right. Well. I wonder who the world's greatest footballer is. We know that people follow football teams.

And we know that some people follow football players. And some people look up to football stars. Great players. Who would you think the world's best football player would be?

[17 : 56] Anybody got any suggestions? Any thoughts? Nobody knowing the names of any footballers. Who?

Oh. Ah yeah. Mo Salah. That's a good one. I hadn't thought about that. I was thinking about Ronaldo. That's a name that's in the papers at the moment. He's just moving to Manchester United.

Anybody interested in Ronaldo? Or Messi? What about Messi? He's supposed to be very good too.

I was asking around and I was told that there's a couple of other names that should be included in the list. There's a Hugh or an Andrew Brownie. Or maybe more importantly, the last one.

I don't know who this person is but maybe I'll find out today. Somebody called Jono McLean. Who's that? He's missing. Well, that serves me right.

[19 : 01] I still don't know who he is. Well, anyway, what I wanted to say to you just a few years ago when I was a little boy, doesn't seem that long ago, there was a very famous football player called Puskas.

I wonder if anybody remembers him. Hansel. Let's see who the old people are. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Some of them are just pretending to scratch their heads. Well, there's a chap called Puskas and he was considered to be the best player in the world at that time.

I don't know if he was or if he wasn't but he was certainly very, very good. He played for Real Madrid and he played for his own country, Hungary. And they were a very great team at that time.

But Puskas, what intrigued me about him is that he said that he so loved football, he talked about it and he thought about it all the time. You couldn't have any conversation with him other than talking about football.

And if he wasn't talking about football, he was thinking about football. And even when he went to bed and went to sleep, he would be dreaming about football. We could say that he was a dedicated follower of football.

[20 : 16] Yes, a dedicated follower of football. Now, I like football, as I'm sure many of you do here. It's good and it's good for you. But I also know that God has given us just so much more to enjoy in this life than just one thing.

Whether it's fashion, whether it's music, whether it's popularity, football, tennis, hockey, whatever, swimming.

God has given us everything to enjoy. And not just be stuck in a groove with one thing.

And we need to remember that because Jesus calls us to follow him. And of course, we follow him with putting him ahead of everything else.

And he asks us to follow him because he knows that you and I can enjoy life and the things in life best when we put him first in our lives.

[21 : 22] Everything is better. He is our guide. He has created all things. He understands all things. And he knows that there are bigger and better and purer things to enjoy than just one thing.

And it's not just in the here and now of this world that we can enjoy it and enjoy Jesus himself. But we can enjoy it where he is now. One day.

In heaven. In heaven.

In Jesus' name. To come. And to follow him. You do that. May he bless you. We'll pray together for a moment.

Lord, thank you for these wonderful children that are here before us. Thank you for the homes that they come from. Thank you for everything that they mean to us.

[22 : 43] And thank you for the people that they are able to hear about Jesus and know Jesus. And oh God, our Father, we thank you that Jesus knows all about them.

So we commit them into your care. And pray that you will bless them abundantly. In this life with all the gifts that they need to equip them well for the path that they will follow.

And may Jesus be their leader. Hear our prayer. In his name. Amen. Thank you boys and girls.

I believe that you are going to go out now to the Sunday school. The rest of us are going to sing again to God's praise and the mission praise.

Blessed assurance. Jesus is mine. It's number 58. I don't know why I'm getting numbers. I think it's going to be on the screen anyway. Blessed assurance.

[23 : 45] Jesus is mine. Amen. Amen. Blessed assurance.

Blessed assurance. Jesus is mine. Oh, what a fortress of glory divine.
 Aid of salvation. Purchase of God. Born of his spirit.
 Washed in his blood. This is my story. This is my song.
 Praising my Savior. All the day long. This is my story.

[24 : 57] This is my song. Praising my Savior. All the day long.
 Perfect submission. Perfect delight. Visions of rapture.
 Burst of my sight. Angels descending. Grain from above.
 And who's of mercy. Whispers of love. This is my story.
 This is my song. Praising my Savior. All the day long.

[25 : 53] This is my story. This is my song. Praising my Savior.
 All the day long. Perfect submission. All is at rest.
 I am my Savior. I am happy and blessed. Watching and waiting.
 Looking above. Filled with his goodness. Lost in his love. This is my story.
 This is my song. Praising my Savior. All the day long. This is my story.

[26 : 57] This is my song. Praising my Savior. Savior. All that day long. Now I'd like to turn to God's word.
 In the New Testament. In the Gospel according to John. John chapter 1. And reading from verse 35. John chapter 1.
 And reading from verse 35. I'm reading this morning from the ESV version. Jesus calls the first disciples.
 The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples. And he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said. Behold the Lamb of God. The two disciples heard him say this.
 And they followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them. What are you seeking? And they said to him. Rabbi.

[28 : 09] Which means teacher. Where are you staying? And he said to them. Come and you will see. So they came and saw where he was staying.
 And they stayed with him that day. For it was about the tenth hour. One of the two who heard John speak. And followed Jesus. Was Andrew.
 Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon. And said to him. We have found the Messiah. Which means Christ. He brought him to Jesus.
 Jesus looked at him and said. You are Simon. The son of John. You shall be called Cephas. Which means Peter. The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee.
 He found Philip. And said to him. Follow me. Now Philip was from Bethsaida. The city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael.

[29 : 06] And said to him. We have found him. Whom Moses in the law. And also the prophets wrote. Jesus of Nasserath. The son of Joseph. Nathanael said to him.
 Can anything good. Come out of Nasserath. Philip said to him. Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him.
 And he said of him. Behold an Israelite indeed. In whom there is no deceit. Nathanael said to him. How long do you.
 How do you know me? Jesus answered him. Before Philip called you. When you were under the fig tree. I saw you. Nathanael answered him. Rabbi.

You are the son of God. You are the king of Israel. Jesus answered him. Because I said to you. I saw you under the fig tree.

[30 : 03] Do you believe? You will see greater things than these. And he said to him. Truly. Truly. I say to you. You will see heaven opened.

And the angels of God. And the angels of God ascending and descending. On the son of man. And so on. Amen. And may God add his blessing to that.

Reading from his own holy. And inspired and infallible word. We'll sing again to God's praise from the medical psalm. This time we sing in Gaelic.

Psalm 43. Two stanzas. Verses 3 and 4 of the psalm. And it will be introduced by our presenter. Thank you.

Thank you.

[31 : 47] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[34 : 03] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[36 : 45] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. There are times when we go through periods when it's as though we don't really feel it here.

Things have got cold. And it's time for us to get back around the fire of God's word. And to get into the place of prayer.

And be with fellowship in the people of God. To hear what God the Lord would say. The most vital thing for us to hear at the beginning of any and every day.

So can you feel it? I pray to God that you will before you leave if you don't. Christ is calling to you. And his message is follow me.

[39 : 05] You come. And you follow me. I will lead you places that you would hardly believe. I will lead you even into the presence of my Father in the glory.

Does that not excite you? Does it not warm your heart within you? Does it not make you want to rise up and cry, praise the Lord? Lord? What can I do, Lord?

How can I serve? I want to tell others about it. That's one of the things within us. We want to tell others about it.

And while we're at this point, I would notice also at the same time that the message that they received was a very simple message. Very, very simple.

Sometimes we wonder and worry about the complex things. And there are complex things in the word of God to do with language and doctrine and theology and all that kind of thing.

[40 : 15] But it's a very simple message. Come and see the one Moses and the prophets spoke of. Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph, whom we now know to be the son of God.

Come, he said to his brother. He would have loved his brother. He would have been concerned, but he would have been excited as well as been concerned. He had found something much better than gold.

Pearl of great price. And he goes to his brother and he says to him, come and see what I've found. Come and hear what the Lord will say to you.

He's called to me and he's asked me to come and to follow him. And so he comes. He comes to Jesus.

And in coming to Jesus, we can learn from that, if you like. You could call it a second point, maybe. That this is a personal gospel. And verse 38, of course, is a question for us, too.

[41 : 25] Who are you seeking? Or who do you seek? That's what we were trying to get across to the children this morning. It's the thing that you seek, the most important thing in your life.

Really, it needs to be, doesn't it? What is there that is more important than knowing that our sins are forgiven?

That we have peace with God. In this world of global chaos, there is a Christ who is in control.

There is a place that is prepared. There is a kingdom that has been made ready. And even the pain that affects me from day to day is preparing me for that place in that kingdom.

Wonderful. Why would you not want to tell someone about that? This is the gospel. That's why we seek him, isn't it?

[42 : 36] Back in the days of Christ's early ministry, we perused the gospels, as I'm sure you all do. We learned that there are various people who came to Jesus for various reasons.

One blind man, he came to Christ and he simply asked, when Jesus asked him, what can I do for you? And of course, being a blind man, he might have thought to himself, well, this is not obvious.

I'm blind. Lord, that I would receive my sight, Mark 10 and 51. And Jesus met his need and he ministered to him and he ministered to him very generously.

And that is the nature of Christ in the gospel. It isn't a niggardly gospel. It isn't a niggardly promise that we receive from God. It is generous. It is warm. It is wide.

It is greater than our minds can comprehend. It's so, so wonderful. It encourages us. It inspires us. It is.

[43 : 36] And it must have affected this man in that way. Remember another layman at the pool of Bethesda? He was, he wasn't able to walk and he came and called to Jesus.

People told him to be quiet, but he called all the more. And Jesus, he healed him. The woman at the well in Samaria, she says to Jesus, give me this water you speak of so that I will not be thirsty or to have to come here to draw water again and again and again.

Tired of it, she was. And you know, on the one hand, what we need, what strikes me about this is that whilst these are all essential and good responses in their own right, but Jesus, it seems to me, asks the question because he wants them to discover that he has so much more to offer than simply a single solitary need in the here and now.

So often, I don't know about you, but in times past, even from childhood, when something was really bad and troubling me, you'd get on your knees and you'd pray to God and say to him, you know, if you'll only just get rid of this thing for me, I'll never do anything wrong again.

And that's a silly prayer when we think of what Jesus has. And Jesus wanted them as he wants us to discover that he has much more to offer than a single solution to an immediate problem.

[45 : 11] Oh, it's right for us to go to him with our immediate problems. Let us tell him about them. Let us tell him about all of them. Let's hold nothing back from the Lord Jesus. Jesus, he's interested, he's caring.

He's much more caring than anyone that is around us, even though they love us. He is much more helpful because we want to help others. But sometimes, though we would promise to help, the thing that is essential is something that is out with our ability to be able to do it.

But that's not the case with Jesus. And he wants them to receive, we could say, all that he has. I love that version of songs where the woman who's in love with the Lord says, let him kiss me with all his kisses.

And simply it speaks to us about her desire of having everything that Jesus has to offer her.

Sometimes we can be content with just becoming a member, getting over the next hurdle, feeling that it's good that we're able to pray.

[46 : 33] But we want to get on with the rest of our lives and we don't want any interference from the Bible or the Lord with the rest of our lives. And why do we lose out on so much when we take that attitude?

It's not enough just to be an adherent or just to be a member. Just to want one thing, to want the essential things. Free me from hell, Lord. Yes, the Lord will do that.

But we're called to much more than that with Jesus. The gift of salvation is what he comes here among us to administer today that will satisfy the needs of the heart and the soul and the mind.

And it will be for time and for eternity. Imagine that. For all eternity. And the point is he meets their need.

And then what he does, it would seem to me, that he forms a relationship with them, his disciples. That's key. A relationship that will never fade away in time of eternity.

[47 : 40] What a friend we have in Jesus. And our relationship with Jesus Christ can begin, if it hasn't already, begin here and now in this morning's service in this church in Talbert.

Don't settle for a little of it. Oh, reach out with your heart for all of it. Let the Lord come flooding into your soul.

May you feel blessed. May you be blessed. And may you be a blessing to all who are around you in the world so we know how badly the world needs it.

To feel helped. To feel healed. To feel cared for. To feel uplifted. To feel surrounded. To feel encouraged and inspired.

Not simply by us as we are physically. But by the Spirit of God flowing through us as we seek to live for him. Reaching out to others.

[48 : 51] And as we do. We find that our relationship not only with the people that we reach out to but also with the Lord. It deepens. And all that he gives is something that will minister to us.

It will never fade away in time of eternity. What a wonderful thing. And maybe we have grown a little cold. Or maybe the childness of life of really giving us a battering.

And the faith that we have been. And the faith that we had that was once so vibrant. It feels a bit jaded. Just life is tough. And it is tough.

Well this is a good day to come back. To where the Lord would have us to be. Sitting at the feet of Jesus. Hearing the words of Jesus.

Feeling the companionship of Jesus. Knowing the warmth of the love of the Holy Spirit of Jesus. Ministering in our hearts.

[50 : 02] That's important because the third thing I'd want to notice is that it's an intimate gospel. We're not simply introduced to Christ and then told.

No. Here is the law. There is the ten commandments. This is what the prophet says. This is what the Psalms have to say.

These are cries from people who fell foul of the Lord at different times. And there are penalties. He doesn't say. Go off by yourself now. But do the very best that you can to toe the line.

And to keep the faith. And maybe at the end of life I'll meet you again. And if you've done well enough. I'll let you enter into the kingdom of heaven.

No. That's not the gospel. That's cold and pure religion. Which does nothing to warm your heart.

[51 : 04] Jesus begins and deepens the relationship. After this question. What are you seeking? They respond with another question. We always have questions don't we? We don't know it all.

We can never know it all. There are always going to be questions as we study the word of God. As we walk by faith. We don't know everything. So they turn and they say to Jesus.

Maybe it seems like a silly question. Rabbi where are you staying? They've got God in front of them. They could ask him anything at all. He would be able to answer. But they ask this little question. Where are you staying?

Maybe they were just in awe of him. Or maybe it was that they realized who they were speaking to. And they wanted to know where he was. Because they didn't want to lose sight of him ever again.

It's a good way to be. None of us here want to lose sight of Jesus ever again. Because he is God. Oh he is the saviour.

[52 : 02] He is the one who is able to help us. And he tells them. Come and see. And when they do. There comes the key and the more intimate invitation.

In verse 43 that we take. For our text today. Come. You come. You follow me. You know when you read that. It seems to me that these are in a sense.

The preliminaries that are over now. The introductions have been made. And there's a new beginning for them. Jesus is effectively saying to them. Look.

Let's go on from here. Together. Today. That's what God is saying to us too. No matter who we are.

Let's go on. From here. Today. Together. What an invitation. What did the Ronaldos of this world look like now?

[53 : 03] What can they offer in comparison with us? We respect them for what they are. But wonderfully. We have a Jesus.

Who invites us to come. And to go out. From here. Together. With him. To be with him forever.

How do you feel about that? That's a key thing. Please be honest with yourselves. When you. Get asked these questions.

How do you feel about it? Oh. I hope you feel encouraged. That's what I would want you to do today. I want you to be challenged. Yes. By all means.

I want you to feel uncomfortable. If that's what it takes. But I want you to go out of here. Together. With Jesus. For he will do you good.

[54 : 00] And he alone will do you good. He'll do wonderful things for you. This is an active call.

It's an intimate call. But it's also a call to discipleship. We are not all called in the same way. We're not all converted in the same way.

But we are called for the same reason. And the reason that we are all called. Is because we need Christ. That's the basic fundamental. Foundational reason for coming to Christ in the gospel.

We are called first to salvation. Without that. We are paupers. No matter what our earthly standing might be.

There is an emptiness. Without that gift of salvation. We are called first to salvation. With all that it means. But we are also called.

[54 : 59] And this is important to grasp. We are called to discipleship. To be God's children. We are called by Jesus. To live.

And to share the gospel. In an active and an ongoing. Growing relationship with him. Not just to put it into our mind. And into our heart. And say well that's comforting.

That's good to know. And then. Not go out and share it with others. And we know that. It is good for us. To be studying the word of God.

Being found in the place of prayer. Being encouraging of others. Being always. Deciding to give. An answer. To those who would ask us.

The question as to why we have hope. Within us. To speak. The word of Jesus. Jesus. But along with that.

[55 : 57] For many of us. There comes a problem. At least initially. And the problem is. That we might hesitate. Just as Moses did. In Exodus 3. Who am I?

Said Moses. When the Lord called him. I want you to go to Pharaoh. I want you to deliver Israel. Out of Egypt. Who am I? Said Moses.

What can I do? We feel the same also. We look at ourselves. We look at our abilities. Or we look at our. The lack of our abilities.

More likely. And we think to ourselves. Well. What can I do for God? But if you want. Your doubts dispelled.

With regard to faith. You've got to understand this. That assurance of faith. And a walk with God. Will only come.

[56 : 50] As we follow him. As we give ourselves. Into his service. You remember that. Great international figure.

Gandhi. From India. Leader. Came to this country. At one time. Because he was interested. In things religious. He had heard about.

Christianity. And he came to study it. He came to see. Just what it was all about. And he stayed amongst us. In Britain. For a good period of time. And then he rejected.

Christianity. And the reason he gave. For rejection. It was simply this. I hear what it says. But I cannot see what it does. And that's the danger.

For the church as well. There are the two. Swings. We could say. There is those. Who give themselves. Only to works. And nothing to.

[57 : 51] Serving the Lord. In the spiritual. Worshipful sense. And there are those. Who would want to give themselves. To the worship only. And not do anything. On the service of God. And yet the two.

Must be held together. And it's as you do that. That you begin to feel. The help of the Lord. And you come to know. The Lord. And the Lord. Ministers and encourages you.

Tokens to be found. Everywhere. In life. Because. We are walking with Jesus. And that's what discipleship.

Is all about. Great works. Often have small beginnings. Global evangelism. Is a great work. Billions of people. Have been. Become believers.

Over the years. They've all been saved. By God. Because they heard. From one of God's people. The message of the gospel. But every one of them.

[58 : 48] Though we think about. Billions. They're all saved. One. At a time. One at a time. It's not en masse.

The Lord doesn't come. And herd us up. Into a group. No. He comes. And he speaks. Intimately. He speaks.

Tenderly. He speaks. Persuasively. He speaks. Encouragingly. To each of us.

Individually. To come. And to follow him. It's a wonderful thing. Why would you not want to tell others about that?

The gospel has power. And this is for those who. Perhaps seek to serve the Lord. Or are given their lives to prayer.

[59 : 50] And they feel their prayers are not being answered. Or they feel that. The words that they use in witnessing. Is not having any effect. But you remember the words that are spoken.

Here by John the Baptist. He spoke them earlier. Behold the Lamb of God. That word was like a tiny seed. Sown by God through John the Baptist. And it grew up into a great.

Gospel tree. We could say. A place. A tree that had branches. Everywhere that would shelter. And heal the nation. Saul who would come.

And dwell under it. By faith in Christ. Who causes people to follow him. But remember. How two of John's disciples. Heard the message. And followed Jesus.

It's worth noting there. That this wasn't the first time. That they had heard the message. They had heard it before. The day before. Maybe they had heard it.

[60 : 46] Lots of times. In the company of John the Baptist. They knew what it was all about. And then John points to Jesus. And said. Behold the Lamb of God. Nothing happened.

No one bothered. No one moved. And yet the following day. They're out again. Together. And they see the Lord. And John gives the same sermon.

Behold the Lamb of God. And everything changes. Everything changes. They heard it again.

Next day. And all. Became new. Well gospel preaching. Can be like that. And so can gospel hearing.

One day it doesn't seem to mean anything. I wonder how many times we've. Been here and heard the gospel. And gone out.

[61 : 47] Just glad to get on with things. And never gave it another thought. Ah but maybe this is the day. That it's all going to change. And the Lord is here among us.

And what didn't seem to mean anything yesterday. Means absolutely everything today. And if not today. Well we have no guarantees for tomorrow.

But maybe something will befall us. That will compel us. To regret. That we did not respond. To the God.

Who called us to come. And to follow him. You're praying for someone. And nothing's happening. Don't lose heart.

God's timing is the important thing. Keep praying. You're witnessing to someone. And taking. A bit of flack for it.

[62 : 57] Doesn't seem to have any effect. Don't lose heart. Keep witnessing. Trust the Lord. Walk with the Lord.

You see the rejection of the message. On that first day. When John the Baptist was preaching. It didn't discourage him. From going on with the work. Because he knew.

That the word was like a fire. That was going to burn within his bones. If he didn't speak it out. He couldn't. Put out the fire. That was within him.

And that's what it is to preach. You know some days. For those who preach the word of God. And there are many of you here. In this. Gathering this congregation. And we give thanks to God.

For everyone who does that. They can be like Elijah. They can feel as though. There are days when they preach. And they're on fire. Standing as it were.

[63 : 56] On Mount Karma. God is blessing. There are other days. When they also feel like Elijah. And it's as though.

You want to go. And hide in a cave. And cry for the rocks. To fall on you. It's so hard. Exhaustion sets in.

Gospel preachers. And Sunday school teachers. And all. Who are involved in the work. Take care of yourselves.

Don't drive yourself to exhaustion. We cannot save a single soul. We cannot save a single soul ourselves. It is God that does it. Do what we are asked to do.

And leave the rest. To the God who has called us to follow him. He will do it. Trust him. Trust him.

[64 : 58] Believe in him. John would say with Jeremiah. As many a minister has said. If I say.

I will not mention him. Or speak any more in his name. There is in my heart. As it were. A burning fire. Shut up in my bones. And I am weary with holding it in.

And I cannot. Even when you get a bit older. And your voice is going. And you feel kind of decrepit. And there are lots of young people around.

Who can do this much better. The word still burns there. And it has to get out. There has to be expression.

And we do it. Not because we think we are any good. But because we know. That it is God who takes it. And makes it live. And saves souls.

[66 : 02] As a result of it. So friends. Be encouraged. It is a good thing. That John continued in that work. And things continue still.

The fire still burns. There are many who have tried. To put it out over the years. They kill. They try to kill the word. And to close down the churches. But the word itself tells us.

Heaven and earth will pass away. But my words will not pass away. For the word of God. Is living. And it is active. So take heart.

Because the last thing. That I want to just mention here. Is to say that the church. All who believe. May be a persecuted church.

In the era in which we live. It is also going to be a church triumphant. And it will sing praise to the Lamb of God. In the presence of God. The Lamb who takes away the sin of the world.

[67 : 01] And today this same Jesus calls us all. To hear the call. To share the blessing. And in his name I ask. That we all.

Should follow him. Follow him. Follow him. We'll pray a moment. God our Father.

We thank you for your word. Thank you for this wonderful congregation. Thank you for those who serve here. It's ministry. It's elders.

All who are involved in. It's administration in Sunday schools. Deacons. Those who attend to the fabric. Many people who pray.

Lord we thank you for them. And we pray today. That you would hear the. The prayers of the saints. Down through the generations. Those who have gone from time.

[68 : 01] And are present in eternity. Remember them. And remember the prayers. That have been offered to you. This day itself. And may it please you. To call. Your people to yourself.

Revive your work. And grant oh God. That you would awaken. The spiritually dead. That you would make. The people here. That we might together.

Give you glory. In the here and now. And also. The hereafter. Hear our prayer. For Jesus sake. Amen.

I lose sight of. What I'm supposed to be doing. When I'm preaching. Sorry about that. We can close our service. By making our own profession.

And singing the. The hymn in mission praise. I will. Sing the wondrous story. It is a wondrous story. Sing it out. Share it.

[69 : 10] Go out. In the strength of the Lord. And let us be blessed together. Mission praise. Mission praise. 315. I will sing the wondrous story.

Of the Christ who died for me. I will sing the wondrous story.

Of the Christ who died for me. How he left the realms of glory.

For the cross on Calvary. Yes, I'll sing the wondrous glory of the Christ who died for me.

Singeth with the saints in glory gathered by the crystal sea.

[70 : 30] I was lost but Jesus found me, found the sheep that went astray.

Raised me up and gently let me walk into the narrow way.

Yes, of darkness still may meet me, sorrows but my oft may tread.

But His presence still is with me, I is guiding on Thine land.

He will bring me till the river, roseless waters at my feet.

[71 : 36] Then He'll bear me, save me over, with my grace for glory meet.

Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story of the Christ who died for me.

Singeth with the saints in glory, gather by the crystal sea.

Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, rest upon and remain with you, now and always.

Amen. Amen.

[72 : 48] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.