

What manner of persons ought ye to be - Little is much

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[0:00] Amen. You may think that you don't amount to much and you can't make much difference in the world. Who am I? Little old me.

Especially when we see a world that's careering towards judgment. We see in 2 Peter 3. 2 Peter 3. It tells us about the escalating times that we're living in.

And it says there from verse 9. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise. As some men count slackness but his longsuffering to us would. Not willing that any should perish.

But that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord shall come. As a thief in the night. In the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise.

And the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved.

[1:08] What manner of persons ought ye to be? In all holy conversation and godliness.

Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God. Wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved.

And the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we look. According to his promise. Look for. New heavens. And a new earth. Wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore beloved.

Seeing that.

Ye look for such things. Be diligent that. Ye may be found of him. In peace. Without spot. And blameless.

[2:01] Peter says. Seeing that. All these things. Shall be dissolved. What manner.

Of persons. Ought. Ye to be. It's seeing that. What's happening all around us today. We see. Open the newspapers. And you see more signs.

Don't you. Of the Lord's coming. And we can easily feel. In such a time. What difference. Can I make. Little old me.

And we can discount. Ourselves. And our own ability. What manner. Of persons. Ought ye to be. There's a song. That goes. Which I'll quote.

In part. Through the message here. Little is much. When God. Is in it. Labor not. For. Wealth. Or fame.

[2:56] There's a crown. And you. Can win it. If you go. In Jesus name. It's saying. Things.

Are going to be. Dissolved. Things. Aren't what matters. Seeing then. That all these things. Shall be dissolved. It's saying.

They're going to go. Don't. Get attached. To. Things. Who you are. Is what counts. Who you are. And look at life. Through this lens. Realizing. Things are going to go. It's about people. That count. Isn't it. What manner of people. What manner of persons. Ought you to be. And. That's about you and me.

Seeing how God's shaping us. He's working on us. He's. He's shaping us. Like the potter on the wheel. With the clay. And. Men. Aspire to be a man of God.

[3:55] Aspire to that. Aspire to that. As the ultimate. And highest. The heavenly. The holy. The highest calling. To be a man. Of God.

This is the ultimate. Aim. The ultimate. The top standard. To seek his approval. And I know. I was talking with some. Young fella. Yesterday. And I called him.

A man of God. I don't know. Where he is at. But I can see. That he could become. A man of God. And women.

Be a woman of God. A woman of honor. A woman of virtue. A woman who will be praised. A Proverbs 31 woman. You can be that woman. This is God's plan. And God uses the ordinary. The obscure. To fulfill his plan. He always has done. Don't say. I can't. [4:57] Do much. Little is much. If God is in it. And God uses the ordinary. He always has done. We simply have to come to him. By faith. By faith. By faith. That's what made them different. In Hebrews 11. They're just like you and me. They're just like you and me. If we were back. You know those thousands of years back. If we were back there. At that time. In that setting. In that city. Maybe it would have been you. He would have. Touched. Maybe it would have been you. He would have called. God. And reality is. He is with you. And he is touching you. And he is calling you. Here and now. Here. And now. What manner of persons ought you to be. Without faith. It is impossible to please him. That's what made the difference. Faith made the difference. And faith makes the difference with you. With you. Your flesh. [5:59] Just like they were. Just like those weak. Ordinary men and women. Of the Bible. They're just like you. They have the same God you have. What's different? Maybe it's faith. Isn't it? Maybe we could say. Lord. I believe. Help thou mine unbelief. I believe. But I know my faith is a bit weak. Make it stronger. Make that your prayer. God can use you. As much as he has used any other man. Any other woman. It's God's plan. To use the frail. And the weak. Just come by faith. Because without faith. It's impossible to please him. And he says. Without me. You can do nothing. We can get to a point. Where we think. We've got enough latent. Natural ability. Or some natural giftings. [6:57] Or capacity. Or confidence of our own. But it's not of that. It's all of him. Because without me. He says. You can do nothing. At all. Look at the so called champions. That our world looks up to today. The ones who are. The gossip magazines. Want to make much of. And their names are always out there. Aren't they? Whether it be the royals. Or the film stars. Or the rock stars. Of the day. They make much of these people. And the sports scene as well. It's going crazy. I was watching something lately. How the world is going crazy. Over some things. And making heroes out of people. Who excel. At some rather odd things. For example. Gaming. Can you believe it? Can you believe it? People are saying things that are. When. As far as their wealth. As far as their. [7:54] Remuneration. Some of these young. Kids. That are playing these video games. Fortnite. Or whatever it is. And these adventure games. Where they go through different scenes. And. Levels. And such. And get to. High scores. They can make. Literally. Millions of dollars. And they're actually amongst the. Highest paid sports people. In our world today. Are gamers. It's madness. Isn't it? Yes. That you could get famous. For playing. A game. Lives are lived in emptiness. Aren't they? How empty. And vain. To think then. And to think that that's made. Cool. And something to aspire to. That people want to be like them. Seeing then. That all these things. Shall be dissolved. What manner of persons. Ought you to be. In all holy. Conversation. And godliness. What is it that god measures. [8:55] As a value. That which is of holy. That which is of conduct. That which is of godliness. What is it that god measures. As a value. Of simple things. Of character. And virtue. Not about things. Not about. How thick. How thick your wallet is. Or how flesh. Your house is. Or your car. Or your job. Or your. Knowledge. Or the. Numbers of certificates. On your wall. That you can brag about. Nothing of that. What manner of persons. Ought you to be. In all holy. Conversation. And godliness. That's what counts. It's about character. It's about integrity. It's about the being.

That you are. Whether god matters. Whether faith is real for you. Whether god is working. In your heart and soul. That's what matters. Not things. These things shall all be dissolved.

[9:51] Sometimes. Sometimes. It's simple words. You can say too. Isn't it? I was blessed yesterday. At the men's breakfast.

By some words. Of encouragement. Someone took the time. To stare me in the eyeballs. And to say. That he appreciated me. And he appreciated what I do.

And that meant more to me. Than much. I've heard. In many months. If someone takes the time. To say they appreciate you. They appreciate what you're doing.

They see something good in you. And as much as I think. I'm doing little. He saw something. And he said something. And it was a few little simple words. And what a difference that can make.

Can't you say some simple words. To exhort. To lift. To bless. To encourage. To inspire. To recognise. To uplift. You can.

[10:49] You've got a mouth. God can fill it. With words of love. Words of care. Words of prayer. Words of blessing. And sometimes.

It's simple words. That can make the biggest difference. Little words. Well it's just. Five or six words. Made a big difference to me. And it can to you.

Can't it? And to those you can tell. Simple words of love. Little is much. When God is in it. The first step in making the bridge over the Niagara Falls.

Was made by a 15 year old boy. He flew a kite. And the kite flew over to the other side. And that string. Crossed the chasm.

From one side to the other. And then they hauled over. Stronger and stronger string. And then cable. And then. Stronger and eventually steel cables.

[11:47] Crossed the divide. Between the one side and the other. And the Niagara Falls. Had a bridge built. But it was a 15 year old boy. That made the difference. It was a 15 year old boy.

Who flew a kite. Little is much. When God is in it. Amen. You might say. Oh. Little old me. What can I do? You can do. Exploits.

Exploits. Exploits. For the kingdom of God. God's people can do exploits. It says. Our Lord commands faith. How big?

As big as that. As big as the smallest. Grain. Of a mustard seed. Our Lord commands faith. As small as that.

You might say. What's my faith? What's my ability? What can I do? You can have faith. As a grain of mustard seed. And that's big. In God's economy.

[12:43] And he commands. Childlike faith. Doesn't he? Not a faith. Of some. Theological. Know it all. But of a child. Coming to the saviour.

Of a child. Uttering a prayer. Our Lord commands such faith. The widow's might. Wasn't much to show for that.

People would have sniggered. At the little ching. In the coin. Of the coin. Falling in the bucket. The barrel. The bowl. And they would have laughed at it.

Look how much she gives. It's nothing. She's given nothing. But a tiny coin. But our Lord commended the widow's might.

More than the large showy display of the Pharisees. As they kind of made a big show of it all. He said. Look at this little coin. She's given her all.

[13:39] She's given more. More. More. More. Much more. More. Than all the others. Much. Much more. The lowly donkey. Was the means our Lord chose.

They didn't choose some chariot. With some. Amazing stallion. Driving it into the gates of Jerusalem. No. He chose the lowly donkey.

As the vehicle. For his admission. Into the city of God. Little things count. Don't they? The humble things matter.

And you. In all your lowliness. Can be used of the almighty God. Little is much. When God is in it. 1 Kings 17. From verse 8.

Another account. Of little is much. When God. Is in it. We go to Elijah's day. In 1 Kings 17. From verse 8.

[14:38] And the word of the Lord. Came unto him. Saying. Arise. Get thee to Zarephath. Which belongeth to Zion. And dwell there. Behold. I have

commanded.

A widow. Woman. There. To sustain thee. Elijah. Go and stay with that widow.

That poor woman. And there she will sustain thee. Verse 10. So he arose. And went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city.

Behold. The widow woman. Was there. Gathering. Sticks. And he called to her. And said. Fetch me. I pray thee. A little.

Water. In a vessel. That I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it. He called to her. And said. Bring me. I pray thee. A morsel of.

[15:38] Bread. In thine hand. And she said. As the Lord God. Lord thy God. Liveth. I have not a cake. But a handful of meal. In a barrel.

And a little. Oil. In a cruise. And behold. I am gathering. Two sticks. That I may go. In. And dress it for me. And my son. That we may eat it.

And die. And Elijah said. Unto her. Fear not. Go. And do. As thou hast said. But make thereof. A little. Cake.

First. And bring it unto me. And after. Make for thee. And for thy son. A little water. A little oil. A little cake. She had nothing. Next to nothing.

That little. That she had. He said. Give it to me. Give it to me. Verse 14. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel.

[16:34] The barrel of meal shall not waste. Neither shall the cruise of oil fail. Until the day that the Lord sendeth rain. Upon the earth. And she went. And did according to the saying of Elijah.

And she and he and her house. Did eat many days. What was little. Went many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not.

Neither did the cruise of oil fail. According to the word of the Lord. Which she spake by Elijah. A handful of flour. She gathered a few sticks. She was going to make her last meal.

It was all over. A little oil. In a jar. You may feel like you have little. But little is much when God is in it. Amen.

Can you believe God? Can you believe God? Like the little widow woman of. Of Zarephath. Can you see what God can do with you?

[17:28] With even you? Little is much if God is in it. Spurgeon titled a sermon. The lad's loaves in the Lord's hands. The lad's loaves in the Lord's hands.

He was talking about John 6 verse 9. There is a lad here. There was thousands. And there's a lad here. There was thousands. But there was no food to feed them.

And there was much concern. Oh we've got to send them away. There's no way we can find a shop selling enough. Let alone enough for us to pay.

To feed such a multitude. These thousands that are here. Andrew said there is a lad here. Which had five barley loaves.

And two small fishes. But what are they amongst so many? Five loaves. Two fishes. What are they? It's nothing. It's a lad here.

[18:28] This big crowd. Was here. Who would have thought that this little boy mattered? Huh. People wouldn't have even counseled him.

They'd have overlooked him. The little boy here. This little lad here. They wouldn't have even noticed him.

But they noticed he had some food. In such a big crowd. One little boy in a crowd. And that little boy gave up his little lunch.

God was in it. Amen. Because it was the lad's lunch in the Lord's hands. And the Lord blessed the substance of that. Friends.

Yield what you have. Be like the little boy. In the big crowd. And say I'll give Jesus what I can. I'll give Jesus who I am. I'll give Jesus what I have. And I'll trust him.

[19:30] And he can use me. Even me. Even little me. You are not insignificant. You are not insignificant. Yield your inadequacy to him.

I'm just a little boy. It's just five loaves and two fishes. Yield it into the hands of the Lord. And he can work wonders. What manner of persons ought you to be?

Then. In the context of Peter. It talks about be diligent. Be diligent. I thank God for diligent people in this church. I thank God when you're diligent.

And you're diligent when. I don't even see it. There's people diligently praying this morning. When I walked in. There's people diligently picking up people. Far and wide.

And it's hard. I've done it. There's people thinking and praying about ministry. Of new works of service. There's people praying for missionaries. Caring for the lost.

[20:29] There's people visiting people. There's sick. And some of those ones who did the visiting are sick today. Be diligent. Diligent.

There's people preparing for the lunch next week. There's people ministering in diverse ways. Without us even knowing it. Thank you.

Be diligent. You can be a champion for God. A champion. A little boy can be a champion for God. In a big crowd.

You can be a champion for God. It speaks for men. Biblical manhood. It's great seeing some men get together yesterday. Just pray for those men.

That they will rise to the level of God's ability in them. Amen. So I can say you are a man of God. And I believe it.

[21:27] Because I can see what you can become. By faith I can see it. And we see Julie and I as we think back. This building next door was a burnt out shell.

It was fit for the bulldozer next door. It was graffiti in and out. Smashed here and out. And filled with darkness. With soot inside.

It was a burnt out shell. Literally. And nobody wanted it. So it was a good price. But I thought at the time. How could I even afford the council rates for that building.

When I saw what the council rates were. And then I found out. After I stepped out in faith. Well churches don't pay council rates. So that was a blessing. But you know. You think. You know.

You step out in faith. And you believe God. And you trust him. To do what seems impossible to do. And to take that which seems. A heap of. A pile of rubbish.

[22:23] And a heap of junk. And God can make something beautiful out of it. Can't he? You might think. Who am I? I'm the least. Gideon was one who thought he was the least.

Gideon. He was the least. He was the youngest. He was the smallest. And he comes out of obscurity. He was fearful and hiding. In Gideon. Judges 6.

Judges 6. Gideon here. It's a time where there's. There's great trepidation. And the. Enemies around. And they were scared. And Gideon was hiding away.

In this little hidey hole. A threshing floor. But he was hiding. He wasn't threshing it in the open.

Where the wind could blow it. But he was hiding. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him.

In Judges 6. 12. And said unto him. The Lord is with thee. Thou mighty man of valor. He would have been looking at who you're talking to.

[23:23] Don't you think? He would be saying. You've got the wrong man. I'm scared stiff. I'm a coward. I'm just kind of just want to. Keep a low profile. And hide.

And he says. The Lord is with thee. Thou mighty man of valor. Man of God. Mighty man. A mighty courageous. Valor. Valiant man. A mighty warrior.

But he was an unlikely warrior. Wasn't he? Gideon. Maybe he would have felt. Oh. I'm not good enough. I'm not brave enough. I'm not able enough. God saw Gideon.

To be what God could make him to be. God saw of Gideon. What he would become. And what God would make of him. God knows who you are. He knows you.

He knows you through and through. He knows you better than you know yourself. And later it was Gideon. Who threw down the altars of Baal. And this started in his own father's house.

[24:23] His own home. Judges 6.25. He threw down his father's idols. He smashed down his father's altars. The altars of Baal. He smashed them to bits.

He stood up for God. You know. Sometimes it's hard to stand up against your own father. When they're in error. Where they're at fault. Where they're in false worship.

Gideon was strong enough to stand up. And Gideon then led a small army. To a gigantic victory. A gigantic triumph.

Gideon had a small army. Again. God uses the weak. The small. The inadequate. I think of myself. I think. How can I be adequate to this ministry. I don't feel like I'm trained well enough. I don't feel like I've got the knowledge enough. I know there's much more Bible knowledge and exhortation.

[25:22] There's many Bible subjects that I've scarcely touched on.

Because I'm inadequate in my knowledge in many things. I do what I can do.

And I try to do more than I know. I try to learn and grow and do more. So I want to be the best. And it's just doing God's best.

Isn't it? Doing the best you can. Despite all your limitations. I know. Some have asked me to preach on some peculiar verses. And I'm sure there's very well trained Bible teachers.

Who struggle to teach on those very subjects. But I'll do my best to learn those things. So I can be intelligent in God. To deliver that which matters. Because for me it's about where the rubber hits the road as well.

So that practical Christianity. Where we practically live the life of Jesus. Not to discount theology and doctrine. And knowing everything down pat.

[26:23] And being able to argue and counter argue. And apologetics. And to correct and to challenge. And to demolish arguments of false doctrines. We need to do that too. Yet for me it's about how can I see a church grow.

How can I see people blessed. How can I see men and women realize the potential they have in God. And it's about saying you are a man of God. You are a woman of God.

And I see in you what God can make of you. What you can become by his grace and his working within you. People like Nehemiah the builder. He was chosen out of obscurity.

Obscurity. He was no one special of himself. But he saw the need. And he responded to the need. Sometimes that's all it takes. Doesn't it? If only we would see the needs.

And we would respond to the needs. I like to think that people will do that. That rather than me say. Look we need someone to do this. Or do that.

[27:24] That you won't feel asked. You won't feel pressured. That you will say Lord show me. I want to serve. And God knows who you are. Who you are.

1 Corinthians 1 26 it says. For you see brethren. You're calling brethren. How that not many wise. After the flesh. Not many mighty. Not many.

Noble. Are called. But God has chosen. The foolish things. Of the world. To confound the wise. And God has chosen. The weak things.

Of the world. To confound the things. Which are mighty. And the base things. Of the world. To confound. Sorry. And the things. Which are despised. Have God chosen. Yea.

And things. Which are not. To bring to naught. Things that are. That no flesh. Of glory. In his presence. Not many wise.

[28:22] Not many noble. Not many mighty. Base. Weak. Despised. You might say. Preacher. I've got some disabilities.

I've got some. Limitations. I've got some. Evident. Lack. Of. Schooling. Whatever it be.

God knows who you are. And God sees. What you can become. And he is able. It's his glory. Not flesh. To glory. We might.

Think of all the reasons. Why. It's hard. We're not eloquent. English might be. Our second language. We've got. That natural. Reserved.

Lack. Of confidence. Maybe. Everyone's been used. To putting you down. And you've got used to that. You've taken your place. God is able.

[29:22] To use. The weak. The despised. And God. Commends. The godly. The godly man. Numbers of people. Were called.

Man of God. As I said. I can't think of a more. Elevated title. To be called. A man of God. That's what I aspire to be. Moses was called. A man of God. Moses. He was the only man.

Man called. Man called. The man of God. In the Torah. And Samuel. Was called. A man of God. As was David. Elijah. Elisha. Timothy.

In the new. You might say. Oh. I don't really feel like. I'm a man of God. But God says. You are a man of God. He calls you. Man of God. He says.

You are a man of God. And you are a man of God. Whether you feel like it. Or not. If you're saved today. You're a man of God. Live like it. Step up to that.

[30:16] That high and holy calling. That heavenly calling. And. Women here today. You are a mighty woman of faith. You might say. I'm just like that little woman.

In. Zarephath. I've just got next to nothing. And what I have. I've already. I've already planned. What I'm going to do. No. God's got other plans.

Mighty women like Ruth. God worked in what seemed for her. A hopeless situation. Ruth. She was an outcaster. No hope.

Well. As it would have seemed to those looking at her. Hopeless. Here she is. A widow. There's no. Man occupied to. Earn money for.

Keeping of her. She's just going to wilt away. And have nothing. She's got to be in poverty. And desperation. And here there were two widows. With Ruth's situation.

[31:15] But God took Ruth. And changed everything. You might say. I'm not good enough. That's what I've always been told. That's what I've always felt. Really that's not true.

And it's sin. Don't say that. Our sufficiency is of God. It's not about you. Let's face it.

Brother. Sister. It's not about you. It's about him. Him having his way in you. Him having his way. In your life. He has made us able.

It says. In 2 Corinthians 3. He has made us able. If you're saying you're not able. You're saying Jesus hasn't made you able. That's. Wrong. That's an.

That's false. Because Jesus has made you able. And. Our sufficiency is of God. Let him have his way. In you. God can say.

[32:13] The ordinary. The unschooled. You might say. I didn't go very high at school. It doesn't matter. It's irrelevant. Absolutely. I mean. You might be highly qualified.

In a way. It doesn't really matter. Does it? What. The qualifications that matter. Are that he saved you. And he's called you. With a holy calling. What manner of persons ought you to be.

Brothers and sisters. This world's going down. Down. Down. Down. Down. Down the tubes.

Ultimately to be dissolved. Everything's going to be dissolved. So what matter is. What matters is.

What manner of persons ought you to be. God loves and he chooses the unlikely. Doesn't he? Look at the disciples. I mean. Honestly. Who would have chosen the disciples?

You know. If you had to start a church. Who would you want in that church? Fisherman. It's almost funny.

[33:07] Isn't it? And he's. You know. A zealot. It must have been a bit of a. Kind of. On a right wing. Left wing. Whatever he was. He was. It was a bit of a. You know.

Out there. You got. Judas. I mean. He even. He even had Judas on his team. Think of it.

Matthew. Tax collector. You know. The most despised of his day. Who would you. Why would you want him on your team? If you had to choose. From amongst the.

The population. There weren't any kings. Or. Queens. There wasn't any. There wasn't anybody. That was really. Remarkable for. Their background.

Was there? And God chooses the unlikely. Doesn't he? That he would choose. Me. That he would choose. You. Let's be honest. That God would choose us. What a joy.

[34:04] What a privilege. What a blessing. And. God chooses. And he uses. And he loves. The unlikely. Think of Abraham. It was ridiculous. Abraham.

Father. Abraham. What? How old was he? 19. Something. Whatever. Father. Abraham. What a joke.

God's got a sense of humor. Hasn't he? And he would choose Abraham. And Sarah. No wonder they laughed. It was ridiculous.

For those looking on. Wasn't it? For those looking without faith. It was a joke. Abraham. Father. Abraham. Moses. Moses.

Who would have picked Moses? You know. He had a reputation. His CV. You know. He killed somebody. Moses. Exodus 4.

[35:03] Verse 2. The Lord comes to Moses. And. Well. In Exodus 3. It talks about. That he.

He talked about. How inadequate he was. Didn't he? Moses. He had all the excuses. Down. And. You know. You see that in churches too. There are people with excuses. Excuses.

Let's face it. Weak. Excuses. Why. I cannot serve. No. Wrong. Do. Wrong answer.

What does. The Lord say to Moses. Exodus 3. Verse 12. I will be with you. That's what makes all the difference. Isn't it?

I will be with you. Young man. The Lord says. I will. I will. Be. With. You. That's what makes the difference.

[36:00] Don't hold back. Jump forward. Jump forward. I know you've got a great mentor in Peter there. He's trying to.

Stir you along. And encourage you. And put his arm around you. And. Prod you. And encourage you. We want young men up here. Amen. And I can retire then.

I'll do something else. I'll go on a worldwide mission trip or something. Now we need some young men up here. Stepping out of the comfort zone.

We've got a. Opportunities for all. Moses said. I'm not able. He felt inadequate.

Moses. Reluctant. And the Lord said unto him. What is that in thine hand? A rod. He said. And what did.

[36:59] God use. Moses. And his rod. Just a staff. A shepherd's staff. He says. Exodus 3. 12. I will be with you.

And this rod. Just a. Piece of wood. It wasn't. Anything. Flash. It wasn't. Gold plated. Or. From some. Heirloom.

Or some. It wasn't. Maybe. Carved. With ornate. Carving. So. I don't imagine. I'd imagine. It was just a simple. Piece of wood.

What is that in thine hand? And he said. A rod. And what did God do. With that rod? Wow. And he says.

Oh look. I can't. I'm not very. Articulate. You know. I haven't. I can't put two words. Together. I stumble. And I stutter. And I. Can't. Voice.

[37:56] Myself. And I'm just. I'm just so quiet. And somebody else. Aaron's much better than me. Exodus 4. Verse 12. He says. I will be with your mouth.

Wow. That's going to make a difference. Isn't it? You say. I can't say much. He says. I will be with your mouth. I will be with your mouth. And that's going to make all the difference.

He says. I will teach you. You might say. I don't know much. He says. I will teach you. It's not about you. It's about him. Jesus cares for the small.

When he walked through the city. And the crowds were everywhere. Who did he notice? In the tree. Zacchaeus.

The short man. The tax collector. He would have been hated. He could imagine. You know. Whether. Rightly or wrongly. He would have had a reputation. Oh.

[39:00] Nobody's friends with Zacchaeus. He's one of those. Tax collector. Works for the government. You know. He climbed up a sycamore tree.

And he could see above the large crowd. And Jesus saw him. He said. Come. Let me eat with you. He notices the small.

The weak. The inadequate. The hated. And as I say. The disciples. What a bunch of misfits. And they're the ones he chose. Twelve.

And he left the care of his church. With these. With such as these. Mind you.

They had three years. Intense. Personal training. With the. Greatest teacher. Ever known. But they were weak men. Weren't they? Twelve men. And then we see. Acts 4.

[39:56] 13. As. The Lord. Worked in. A persecuted church. Now when they saw. The boldness. Of Peter and John. And perceived.

That they were what? Unlearned. And ignorant men. Who are these people? They're unlearned.

They're ignorant. But they marvelled. And they took notice. That they had been with Jesus. They took knowledge of them. And they had been with Jesus. I will be with you.

He says. They had been with Jesus. That's what mattered. And our courage comes from being with Jesus. Doesn't it? Brother. Sister. Pray. Get closer to Jesus.

Jesus. I'm saying that for me too. Our courage comes from being with Jesus. It's not about you. He will enable you. He will enable you.

[40:51] Now I've come to appreciate. I've got a section of biographies at home. The amazing power of reading biographies. I'm reading one at the moment. Abraham Lincoln.

Now I've yet to discern whether he's a saved man or not. I've got a feeling he wasn't a saved man. But you see where Abraham Lincoln came from.

He was just. He'd come from sheer poverty. He'd come from a total life of desperation. He'd been brought up with nothing. Next to nothing.

And yet. He was able to aspire. But more so spiritually. Think. Of men and women of God. Revivalists and reformers.

And missionaries of old. God used the most unlikely of men and women. And he sent them into these. Places of danger. And testing.

[41:47] And loss. And hardship. And suffering. And their family members dying. And them having nothing. Of the world's goods.

Yet what God did. And when you read the. Read some good Christian biographies. I'm sure we've got some. Out here. Get a. Get a Christian biography.

And see what God can do. With people just like you. Little is much. When God is in it. Realise the intense cosmic battle.

That you're in. It's a battle out there. And. You're faced with. Opposition. And testing. And trial. Little is much.

When God is in it. When our conflict here is ended. And our race on earth is run. He will say. If we are faithful. Welcome home. My child. Well done. We wrestle not against flesh and blood. There's a conflict.

[42:44] In the here and now. But one day. It'll all be gone. And over. And the trials and tests. Will be as nothing. Sometimes we can feel overwhelmed. Like it's hopeless.

Like we're losing ground. Everything's getting dissolved. We're seeing. Looking for the. The hastening. Of the kingdom. We're seeing. That. Things are getting desperate here.

As we've. As we led in with. You know. The earth's going to melt. The. The world's going to be burnt up. Everything's going to be dissolved. What manner of persons ought you to be.

Look at Elijah. And Elisha. Elisha. In 2 Kings 6. And I'm. Flitting here and there. But. Just another human example. Because. These human examples.

Are what speaks to you and me. Because. Had we been there. Maybe. You would have been the Elisha. Wow. Couldn't that be possible.

[43:41] If you had been. At that time. At that point. In that place. Maybe you. Could have been the Elisha. In 2 Kings 6. 15.

When the servant of the man of God. Was risen early. And gone forth. Behold. And host compassed the city. Both with horses and chariots. The enemy came. Here is Elisha. And his servant.

And his servant. Said unto Elisha. Alas my master. How shall we do? And he answered. Fear not. For they that be with us.

Are more. Than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed. And said. Lord I pray thee. Open his eyes. That he may see.

And the Lord. Opened the eyes of the young man. And he saw. And behold. The mountains were full of horses. And chariots of fire. Round about. Elisha.

[44:37] Sometimes we think. We're. We're losing. We're losing. We've got a great.

Backup. From heaven. Haven't we? And we just need to open our spiritual eyes. And see. The mountains. Are full of horses. And chariots of fire.

Round about us. And. The victory is the Lord's. Brother. Sister. You might be feeling like. Life's tough right now. There's a battle going on.

And it's hard. You've been hit hard. It's hurting. Behold. The mountains are full of. Horses. And chariots of fire.

Round about. Open your eyes and see. God is with you. Fear not. Elijah. James called him a frail man.

[45:40] A frail human vessel. Of like passions. Like passions. Just as. As weak. As you. Like passions.

Such as we. Three and a half years of drought. 1 Kings 18. Verse 41. 1 Kings 18. 41. Three and a half years of drought.

Now. And Elijah said unto Ahab the king. Get thee up. Eat and drink. For there is a sound. A sound of abundance of rain. Now.

Ahab must have thought. My ears are a bit blocked. I can't hear it. Yeah. I can't hear any rain. Elijah said. Get thee up. Eat and drink.

For there is. A sound of abundance. Of rain. Of rain. Sometimes we can't hear. What God is doing. We've got to have ears of faith too.

[46:35] In 1 Kings 18. 44. It says that. Elijah sent his servant. And then. The servant came back. Ultimately. The seventh time. Said there's a little cloud.

Little cloud. 1 Kings 18. 44. There was a little cloud. And like a man's hand. You just stuck your hand up. And it was. It could hide it.

With your hand. And he said. Go up. Say unto Ahab. Prepare thy chariot. And get thee down. That the rain stop thee not. There was a sound. Of abundance. Of rain. When there's time of drought. And maybe it's a spiritual drought too. Where it's. You feel like. You've not heard from God. Like. It's a dry time. Spiritually. There's a sound.

Of abundance of rain. God's doing something. Believe him. Trust him. Open your spiritual ears. Get the wax out. Listen to the sound. Of abundance of rain.

[47:33] And trust him. Even when there's a little cloud. And that little cloud. Can do wonders. Can't it? Little faith. A little cloud. Maybe a little prayer.

Simple prayer. Short prayer. But. Effectual. Fervent prayer. Of a righteous man. Friends. God chooses the unusual too. Doesn't he? We see.

The jawbone. Of an ass. God can use even. A lump of. A lump of. Bone. That others would throw away. And discard. And use. For a victory. God uses small things.

To accomplish. His big plans. Little is much. When God is in it. In the harvest field. Now ripened. There's a work. For all to do. Hark. The voice of God.

Is calling. To the harvest. Calling. You. Who me? Little old me. I'm just like. I'm like Moses.

[48:31] Yes. Exactly. Someone else. No. You. I'm like. The little boy. In his lunch. What's that?

Among so many. Okay. But I'll put it. In the master's hands. Like Moses. With his rod. It's just a piece of wood.

Yes. Give it to me. I'll do something. With your life. I'll do something. With you. David. Just a shepherd boy. Five smooth stones.

Out of the brook. In a shepherd's bag. 1 Samuel 17. 40. He took his staff. In his hand. And chose him. Five smooth stones. From the brook. And his sling.

Was in his hand. As he drew near. To the Philistine. Shepherd boy. What's he. Amongst this. Great army. Of.

[49:28] Seasoned. Battle hardened. Warriors. This. Shepherd's boy. With five. Smooth stones. What a joke. But God. Was with him.

Amen. What manner of persons. Ought you to be. People of God. What manner of persons. Ought you to be. One that God chooses. And he has chosen you. Don't say.

Oh. I'll wait for the call. I'll wait for the call. I'll wait till I feel it. I'll wait till I'm trained. I'll wait till the pastor asks me. No. Don't you just love the underdog.

I know. I know as a kid. I used to. No. No. I've put away childish things. But. You know. Manchester United. Which was my hometown. And.

Manchester United. Were the underdogs. And I know my dad's still. Yet to. To be as. Spiritually mature as me. And put these things away. But yeah. Manchester United. Was the underdog team. [50:30] And I like to think that. God chooses the underdogs. Doesn't he. Doesn't he. Now. I don't. Barak for Manchester United anymore. Because they're not the underdogs anymore. But I like to barak for the underdogs.

Don't you. And to think of the underdogs. Of scripture. These men and women. Discounted ones. People just like the disciples. You know that have smelt like fish. You know that have been. Kind of pretty. Kind of rough. Look. You could say rough as guts. You know. You know. These are men. They're used to washing nets. Down by the seashore. And you can imagine. How callous. And how. Kind of. Down to earth. These men were. Such as we. What manner of persons.

Ought you to be. God chooses the weak. He chooses the foolish. He chooses. The derided. He chooses the underdogs. Be small enough.

[51:29] For God to use you. Some people. Actually get too big. For their boots. And they think. That I'm called. For higher things. So I won't do the lower things. No. Be faithful in the little.

Be faithful in that. God will then lift you up. Be small enough. For God to use you. And. You know. Little is much. When God is in it. Does the place. You're called to labor.

Seem too small. And little known. It is great. If God is in it. And he'll not forget. His own. You know. It'd be nice to have. Some big mega church. With thousands.

And the great. Worldwide reach. Of this ministry. And. We could think. No. We won't. We won't. Look to that. Labor. We're. We're small. And insignificant.

By the world's reckoning. Because. Does the place. You're called to labor. Seem too small. And little known. It's great. If God is in it. The wonder.

[52:23] The blessing. Of souls. Individual people. You that I love here. Men and women. That I love. That have been ransomed. Out of God's. Saving grace.

To be saved. To be. Taken out of darkness. And brought into his light. To be precious jewels. Bless you today. It's a great joy.

And privilege for me. To be your servant. Be not weary. In well doing. Brother. Sister. Don't get weary. You might say. I know. Julie and I. We have our moments.

We get weary. In well doing. And it's hard. But. It's not quitting time yet. You know. You wait to. It's like. You're working at work. And you wait till. Five o'clock.

Yeah. I can. I can hang in there. A bit longer. Amen. It's not quitting time yet. I don't think. There's any retirement. In the economy of God. Stop fighting the call.

[53:19] You might say. Oh. I've not heard it yet. There must be a blockage then. There must be a blockage. Right. Ask God. To take the blockage out.

Ask God. To. You know. Get the syringe. Get the. Get the. Get the. Get the blockage out. Because God has called you. God is calling you. God has called all of us. Stop fighting the call.

And start moving. In Isaiah 6. Verse 5. Isaiah. Woe is me. I'm unclean. Yes.

Yes. Me too. I'm not worthy. I'm not. I'm not where I want to be. Where God. Will ultimately make me.

But. Start moving now. And ultimately. You know. Isaiah said. Here am I Lord. Here am I. Send me Lord. And so. What manner of persons.

[54:17] Ought you to be. Left with conduct. Becoming of the gospel. Amen. You know. That's. That can be hard. Well. Who sets the standard. Jesus. Wow.

I'm not there yet. But let's be like Jesus. Let's be like him. Like him. That's the conduct. That's the standard. That's the dress code. Humble yourselves.

Be clothed with humility. Let your conversation. Be such that it becomes. The gospel of Christ. This is Philippians 127. Let your conversation.

Let your conduct. Be such. That it becomes. The gospel of Christ. Such that. Those who know you're a Christian. Don't see a. Contradiction in you.

Let it be. That you line up. With what you. Say. Now. Is what you live. And that you stand fast. In one spirit.

[55:16] One mind. Striving together. For the faith of the gospel. Little is much. When God is in it. Are you laid aside from service. Body worn from toil and care. You can still be in the battle.

In the sacred place of prayer. You that are. Perhaps less able. Physically. You have the blessing of prayer.

You're the prayer warriors. Of this church. You're the ones who pray. Your body worn from toil and care. You can still be in the battle. In the place of prayer.

Seeing then that all these things. Shall be dissolved. What manner of persons. Ought you to be. In all holy conversation. And godliness. Wherefore beloved. Seeing. That you look for such things. Be diligent. That you be found of him. And what does it say? In peace. Without spot. And blameless. How do we get there? In peace.

[56:11] Without spot. Blameless. It's God. Only God can get you at peace. Only God. Can make you spotless. Only God. Can make you blameless. It's more of Jesus.

What made the difference? They had been with Jesus. Unlearned. Ignorant. What made the difference? To Moses. I will be with you. I will be with your mouth.

No excuses. I'll give you the words. I will give you. The enabling. We must prepare. What manner of persons.

Ought you to be. The place is going down. Don't get attached to things. Get attached to people. Be brothers and sisters. Beloved. All of us.

Ordinary people. Let's be ordinary. Let's be ordinary enough to say. Brother can you pray for me? I've got a need. Be vulnerable enough to say.

[57:08] And I know people do that. And I do pray. I pray. Pray for me too. Pray for one another. We've got to be vulnerable enough. We're all failing.

In some. I put to you. That's my perspective. That I could do better. Be humble enough to God to use you. And be ordinary enough. We're all people with problems.

When you scratch the surface deep enough. There's something we can all pray for one another. And let's be not respecters of persons. Let's not have some. The in crowd. The out. There's no outcasts in the kingdom of God.

We're all unworthy sinners. We're all unprofitable servants. We're all needing of his grace. What manner of persons ought you to be? Make spiritual preparations.

Make yourself ready. Now friends. I've been preaching to saved people this morning. And I'm not taking it for granted that you are saved. I urge you.

[58:06] I urge you. With all the urging and urgency. And with all the foreshadowing of peril.

That awaits those outside of Christ. To get in Christ today. Put your trust in Jesus today. Put your heart's trust in him today. Know his saving today.

Know his forgiveness today. Know that Jesus is your saviour today. Not by religious ritual or doings of your own. But all of his doing.

All of his done. That all of his cross would be your trust. All of his bleeding and dying would be your substitute for yourself.

All of his punishment and penalty would be yours paid for in full. As you trust. I urge you today. You might say, look I've heard this before.

[59:01] But one day I'll make that decision. No. Don't stop. I was going to say, Jimmy don't go. Don't go.

Don't stop. It's okay. Now is the day. Please trust him now. I urge you. You might say, I don't know how. Talk to me straight after.

Come and grab me by the neck. Come and grab me by the tie. And don't let me go. Say, preacher I've got to know how to be saved. Grab my tie. And come to me now.

At the close of this service and say, preacher I want to know how to be saved. Don't let go of my tie. Until you've trusted him. Amen. Please don't let go.

Don't go without Christ. There's no guarantee of tomorrow. And I urge you. Find peace with God today. And every believer. I pray you've been exhorted this morning to find that fervour, that urgency, that joy to be, to know what manner of persons ought you to be.

[60:01] In all holy conversation and godliness. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for every soul that you choose ordinary people just like the people sat here right now.

Each one. And Lord, none of us can say, well, we've got to wait for the call. We've heard the call right now. We've heard it crystal clear. Lord, the call to save, to be saved, to be your servants. Lord, to serve, to be diligent, to be found of you, to be having conduct becoming, to have a holy conversation and godliness, to be diligent.

Lord, to be your servants. And Lord, to not make excuses, to stop making excuses and to start saying, yes, Lord, I'm ready. I'm ready and I'm willing and I'm able.

Because you are my ability. Because you have made me able. Able ministers of the New Testament. Because my sufficiency is of God. It's not of myself.

[60:58] I thank you for it in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Praise God. Amen.