

AM Luke 14:1-24

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Preacher: Rev Kenny Macleod

[0 : 00] Everyone, welcome to our morning service here in Dumfries. It's lovely to see you and it's lovely to be back in the building again after all our lockdowns and having to have our services downstairs.

And it's so good to see as well the work that's been done in the building. So we're thankful to God for that and the help that we have received from others to help us with the cost.

So we're so thankful. So a warm welcome to everyone to our service, especially if any visitors with us today, we do welcome you. And the ordination of elders will take place at the close of the morning service. Evening service is at 6pm.

And then following the dry rot repairs, the redecoration is planned to start this coming Tuesday. So we should still have access to the lower hall on Wednesday evenings and to this area on Sundays. So Wednesday meeting at 7pm, the prayer meeting of Bible studies to be led by William Kenyon. And next Lord's Day at 11am and 6pm, we're thankful for Robert Dale's help and we do appreciate this.

[1 : 12] Are you here next week? I think so. Okay. I am, yes. You are? Okay. Just throwing a wobbly there. But anyway, thankfully you are.

So Robert's here next week. But we do appreciate your ministry to our folk here. So thank you for that. Well, we begin our service by worshipping God.

And listening to the psalm, Psalm 34, which is in St. Psalms, and verses 1 down to 9. At all times I will bless the Lord, I'll praise him with my voice.

Because I glory in the Lord, let troubled souls rejoice. And so on, down to the verse mark 9. To God's praise. Let's pray.

Let's pray.

[2 : 55] This answer came from fear. From fear she set me free.

They look to him and shine with joy. They are not good to shame.

This suffering mankind guide to the Lord. From him deliverance came.

The angel of the Lord. The angel of the Lord.

And guards continually. All those who fear. All those who fear.

[4 : 06] And on an end. He sets his people free.

Come, taste and see. The Lord is good.

Who trust in him is good. Who trust in him is blessed. Oh, fear the Lord.

You saints with need. You will not be blessed. You will not be of blessed.

Amen. Well, let us come before the Lord in prayer. Let us pray. Amen.

[5 : 34] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. God.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. died and was in the grave for a time, and death could not hold our Saviour and Lord.

He rose on the first day of the week, and this is what we celebrate each first day, Lord, thinking of Christ rising from the dead. So our salvation is in him, the one who died and the one who rose again, and who is now at your right hand in glory.

[6 : 37] We thank you, Lord, that for us who are in Christ, died with him on the cross, where our sins were placed on him, but in his resurrection we rise again to be in the Lord, and knowing what your salvation means to us, and Lord, that our salvation means eternal life to those who put their trust in him.

We pray for this town, asking, Lord, that your blessing would flow upon it, and like many towns and villages and cities in Scotland, and throughout the UK, we find ourselves turning our backs on God, and how, Lord, we would love again to return to you, and give our hearts to you, that our nations again would be won over for Jesus, and Lord, that we would see the importance of knowing Christ for time and for eternity, that this would be priority for us, and even just for our number here today, that this is how we would see things, and that we would rejoice in these things, because knowing that what you give us is a great treasure of God, and this is where one day we will celebrate in the glories of heaven, being heirs and joint heirs with Christ, with all the riches that you have, where you said to your own, come see all that's been prepared before the foundation of the world. Think of the families here today, that you would bless each individual family, we all come with our own needs, we ask that you would meet us at our point of need.

We thank you for children in our midst, we pray for parents bringing children up in these days, that you would bless them, that you would support them and help them, in being able to do so.

And Lord, we are thankful for this morning, too, that we have three men, that we are able to ordain to the office, of an elder in the church, and we pray Lord, as these events take place today, that this would be blessed to them, and blessed to the congregation, and blessed to all of us, that we would have our eyes fixed, on the head of the church, the one who said, I will build my church, and the gates of hell, will not prevail against it.

[8 : 49] So, we Lord give all the glory, to you, as we come before you, asking for the forgiveness, of our many sins, we ask this in Jesus name. Amen.

Well then boys and girls, I was looking, looking up yesterday, of something, something that happened, in Dumfries, the last few days. So when I came in here today, Maria and myself, when I came in, I was so glad, that your lights were on.

Because do you know, what happened on Friday, when people were counting the votes, after voting, the lights went off, in Dumfries.

Did you know that? Nobody, does anyone live in Dumfries? Town centre, it went black, there was nothing, they were in the hall, between three and four, in the afternoon, so there were no lights, and even the street lights, in Dumfries went off.

So you can imagine the chaos, that that must have caused, in the town centre. And the people who are voting, they had to stop, because you could see, a picture of the hall, and it was in total darkness, all you could see, is the light coming in, from the open door.

[9 : 59] So light, is really important, so we're thankful to God, that the light is on, in here today, so it means, that we have heating, as well. Do you know, that one of the old prophets, in the Old Testament, wrote about people, and he said about them, in Isaiah chapter 9, verse 2, he said this, the people who walked, in darkness, have seen a great light, those who lived, in the land, of deep darkness, on them, a light, has shone.

And, what we know, the prophet is speaking, about there, is something that's going, to happen in the future, which did happen, when Jesus came, into the darkness, of our world. And he is, the light of the world.

This is what Jesus said, about himself, I am the light of the world, whoever follows me, will not walk in darkness, but will have, the light of life.

So, that is so amazing. We all have light. Do you put your light on, do you have your light on, when you go to bed, at nights? Do you? The boys? You don't need to, can you sleep in the dark?

Yeah. Do you have street lights, where you stay? No? No street lights? You've just got, so you just get on with it, don't you?

[11 : 13] Well, do you know, sometimes, I remember, when I was wee, I always had to put, I had this teddy, and his arms, used to go out like that, and he was the one, that was guard on my door, but he kept the door open as well, so because, when I used to go to bed early, my mum and dad was still up, and I could see, that the light was on, and that is how, I used to fall asleep, but teddy was watching, at the door, but the important thing, for us, is light, and that is what's important, for us today, is the light of the gospel, that we have in Jesus Christ, Jesus is light, and he comes and lights up, our lives, and we're so thankful, for what Jesus, has done for us, well, we're going to listen, now, to how Jesus loves us, Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible, tells me so, and we'll listen to this, and listen to God's praise, Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible, tells me so, they don't want, to him belong, they are weak, but he is strong, yes, yes,

Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so, Jesus loves me, Jesus loves me, he who died, heaven's gates to open wide, he will wash away my sin, let his little time come in, yes, yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so,

Jesus loves me, loves me, yes, yes, Jesus loves me, Yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me, He has saved, loves me, side me on the way.

If I love Him, then I die. He will take me hold on fire.

[14 : 40] Yes, Jesus loves me, Yes, Jesus loves me, Yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.

If you could turn to the Gospel of Luke and chapter 14. We're going to read verses 1 down to the verse 24. Gospel of Luke and chapter 14.

I'm reading from the beginning of the chapter. One Sabbath when he went to dine, this is Jesus at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees.

They were watching him carefully. And behold, there was a man before him who had dropsy. And Jesus responded to the lawyers and Pharisees saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not? But they remained silent. Then he took him and healed him and sent him away. And he said to them, Which of you having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well on the Sabbath day will not immediately pull him out?

[15 : 59] And they could not reply to these things. Now he told a parable to those who were invited when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him.

And he who invited you, they both will come and say to you, Give up your place to this person. And then you will be given, you will begin with shame to take the lowest place.

But when you're invited, go and sit in in the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, Friend, move up higher. Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you.

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. He said also to the man who had invited him, When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid.

But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.

[17 : 21] When one of those who reclined at the table with him heard these things, he said to him, Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God. But he said to him, A man once gave a great banquet and invited many, and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, Come, for everything is now ready.

But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, I have bought a field, I must go out and see it, please have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them, please have me excused.

And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So the servant came and reported these things to the master. Then the master of the house became angry, and said to the servant, Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and the crippled and the blind and the lame.

And the servant said, Sir, what you have commanded has been done, and still there is room. And the master said to the servant, Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled.

For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet. Amen. May God bless to us the reading of his own holy word.

[18 : 49] We're now going to listen to Psalm 116, verses 15, down to the verse mark 19. And we couldn't get the previous verse, which I was keen for us to sing, but the words are, How can I thank the Lord for all he's done?

With gratitude, salvation's cup I'll raise. I'll call upon his name, and will fulfill my vows to him, before his people's face. And then we'll sing, listen to verses 15 to 19, to God's praise.

Dear King, O sight is in his saints' death, Thy servant, Lord, and I, Thy servant, you, Thy hand makes sun, My bands thou didst untie.

Thy call brings I to thee, He will give, And on God's name will come, I'll pay my vows to the Lord,
Before his people all.

Within the courts of God's own hands, Within the midst of thee, O city of Jerusalem, Pray to the
Lord, give me.

[20 : 59] Well, if you would like to turn back to the passage that we read, just have a look and
study a few of the things that Jesus did here, as he was invited to the house of a Pharisee.

And in many ways, this invite that Jesus had, and then he goes on to speak about the great
banquet, we also are given an invitation to this banquet.

And it is a banquet that none of us really should miss, because of all the benefits that come along
with attending this banquet that Jesus spoke about.

There's eternal life in the King's kingdom, where there will be no more death, there'll be no sin,
there'll be no pain, no more sickness, or anxiety, or worry.

So can you imagine living in a world like that? All the things that bother us each day of our lives,
and everything that this life throws at us, all of these things are going to be taken away, and we are
going to be in this kingdom with Christ.

[22 : 11] In fact, the manifesto for this kingdom really is almost too good to be true. So, you would
think then, when you come with an invitation like this, that this is something that people would
simply jump at.

It's something that is so unbelievable. If you were looking for an insurance policy in this life, and
something of this value, you would say, this is simply going to bankrupt the company, because they
simply can't keep to this promise.

But this is a promise God is giving, not only for time, he's giving it for eternity. And the thing is, the
opportunity is given to everyone, but the problem is, that people are shunning this, they don't want
anything to do with it, they simply walk away from it, and they don't want it for themselves.

There's an underlying question here, and the question is, what kind of people will be in this
kingdom, that Jesus spoke about? What are they going to be like?

Well, from this passage, we realize that, and we know from scripture, that the Jewish leaders
thought, that they would be people, that would be first in, people like them, certainly not Gentile
dogs like us, because that is what they saw as like, immoral people, tax collectors and sinners,
there's no way, that they would enter a kingdom like this.

[23 : 41] But what Jesus does here, he simply pulls the rug from under their feet, and he tells them
parables, a couple of parables here.

And for us to understand the parable, we need to understand the setting. And the setting is
important, because we find here, that Jesus was invited by a Pharisee.

Pharisees had no time for Jesus, but yet this Pharisee wanted him to come, for a meal, as we read
in verse 1, on the Sabbath, when he went to dine, in the house of a ruler of the Pharisee, they were
watching him carefully.

Now, that is really the reason, not to give him hospitality, they were watching this Jesus, and you
can imagine, the tension in this place. Someone walks in, and all eyes are on this guy, and they're
watching every move, that he does.

Now, the tension escalated, when he healed the man, who was suffering from dropsy, that's
someone, who had bodily fluid. And behold, there was a man before him, in verse 4, who had
dropsy, and Jesus responded to the lawyers, and the Pharisees saying, is it lawful to heal on the
Sabbath day?

[24 : 53] Remember, this is the Sabbath, or not? But they remained silent, then he took him, and
healed him, and sent him away. And, you can imagine, that the tension, simply escalates, in this
place, because of what Jesus did.

He was met, with silence, here. But if that wasn't enough, he went on, to criticize the guests, verses
7 to 11, and he criticized the host, verses 12 to 14.

He criticizes the guest, for seeking the best seats. Remember, he said, don't go into the best seats,
go into the lower seats, and then if someone, if you go into the best seats, someone more important
than you, you're going to be asked to shift, and it's going to be really embarrassing, it's going to
cause a scene.

So, he got on to them, and everyone in the room, remember, he went on about the host as well, he
mentioned about him, in verses 12 to 14. We can actually read, what it says there, in regards to it.

He said, also to the man, who had invited him, when you give a dinner, or a banquet, do not invite your friends, or your brothers, or your relatives, or your rich neighbors, lest also, lest they also, invite you in return, and you will be repaid.

[26 : 11] So, he got on, to the guests, and he gets, he goes on, and he insults, the host. Now, I don't know about you, but you've been thinking, the tension in here, is really, why you're looking for the exits, because this is not, a comfortable place, to be in.

And I'm sure, have you ever seen people, that kind of, are kind of awkward, eating their dinner, they just play about, with a fork, they don't eat too much, because, there's total insult, here, in this home. But, did you notice, the quick thinking, guest, in verse 15. When one of those, who reclined at the table, with him, heard, these things, he said to him, blessed is everyone, who will eat bread, in the kingdom, of God.

And you feel, as if the tension, people saying, whew, someone here, has saved the day. It sounds good, but it wasn't sincere, because, what this man, was simply doing, was showing his own, religious confidence, blessed, are the likes of us, who will feast, in the kingdom of God.

And I'm quite sure, that the rest, would have said, Amen, to this. However, the confidence, their confidence, was misleading, and Jesus, was not going to, let this pass, for their own sakes, because they needed, to know, what the kingdom, of God, was like.

[27 : 41] It was then, that Jesus tells them, the parable, about the banquet. So that is our setting, and then he tells, the parable, about the banquet.

And to be honest, I don't think, any of them, would have been ready, for what Jesus, was about to say here. First of all, we see the invitation, in verses 16 to 20.

Let's go over them, and get these verses again. But he said to him, A man once, gave a great banquet, and invited many. And at the time, at the time for the banquet, he sent his servant, to say to those, who have been invited, come, for everything is now ready.

But they all alike, began to make excuses. The first said to him, I have brought, I have bought a field, and I must go out, and see it. Please let me be excused. And the other said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them.

Please have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore, I cannot come. Now the custom, when a banquet was on like this, was to give two invitations.

[28 : 46] First of all, the invitation, that the banquet is going to be on such and such a date. The people then would agree to, yes, we'll come to the banquet. And then the second invitation, would go out, for people to attend.

So the excuses we have here, is when the second invitation went out. Now, what an insult, to the person, who asked them to come in the first place.

Because they all agreed, that they would come, to the banquet, the first time. So, this is how the, this is how the invitations work.

But on the day of the banquet, when the servant went, they come out, with their excuses. So, this is what happened in the parable, and they weren't ready, for what Jesus was saying here.

Notice what we have here, in verse 18. And I'm sure, farming folk will know exactly, what all of this is about. But they, all alike, began to make excuses. The first said to him, I have bought a field, and I must go out, and inspect, this field.

[29 : 55] Now, if you're going to buy a field, would you, would you not know, the field that you were going to buy, in the first place? Would you not have examined, done all that examination, before doing that?

Rather than buying the field, and then going to see, what you've done. People who do that, I don't know if you've ever seen, homes under the hammers, people buy houses, without ever seeing the home.

And then they go in, and see the state of the home, when they do buy it. It's just ludicrous, to do something, like that. It is bad practice. So really, to say, I can't come, because I bought a field, that's a flimsy excuse.

What about the second one, in verse 19? And another said, I have bought, five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them, please have me excused.

Well, surely, if you're going to buy, five yoke of oxen, you're going to know, exactly what, these, if it were cows, or whatever it was, you would know, what state they were in, and then you would offer, your price.

[30 : 59] You wouldn't have bought them, and then gone to see, what they were like. And what about verse 20, where it says, and another said, I have married a wife, and therefore, I cannot come.

Oh, does this mean that, this woman's got the trousers, on already? She won't let him go? She's not going to let him go? To this? What a flimsy excuse.

Now, the point that Jesus is making here, that none of these excuses, are sinful. The matters themselves, are not sinful, at all.

There's nothing wrong, with buying land, or buying oxen, or marrying. There's nothing wrong with that. But the point is, that although, these things are legitimate, and they're rightful place, it is wrong, if we allow them, to hinder us, coming, to Christ.

From getting ourselves, right, with God. It is not just, gross sins. You know, you would say, well, this is not a bad sin. This is kind of, everyday life, that was keeping people, from coming to Christ.

[32 : 12] Notice, the first two excuses, were to do with possessions. And the third, was to do, with affections. It doesn't make good sense, to ignore, God's invitation, just on the back, of what I've bought, or my affection.

You see, it is, there is this problem, that the things, that we buy, in this life, take over our lives. And the things of God, get put on the back burner, and we don't look, for these things, and we forget, about God, because the things, of possession, in this life, become so important.

And what about, in regards to affection? Wife, or husband? Well, you know, sometimes, husbands, your wife, may be only too glad, for a wee time, on her own, and just for you to go, to this banquet. Or even, could you not, take your wife, could we not, take her with us, to this banquet? Well, the excuses, for possession, and affections, the main things, in our own lives, that fills up, our own lives, but we, they become, more prominent, they become, more important, to us, than Christ, himself, and his invitation, to the gospel.

Why is it then, when Christ, offers us, eternal life, peace, and all the things, we spoke about, at the start, no pain, no death, all of these things, why is it, that we say, well, it's not for me?

[33 : 53] See, our thinking, really, is warped, you would think. You would think, there's something wrong, with us, if we think, I don't want this, because, I'm just interested, in the here and now, it is what's happening, now.

I'm not so bothered, about eternity. The problem, with this, is that, we're thinking, that everything, in this life, is going to go on, as it is, and that it will last, forever.

If only last year, taught us, that how many times, we heard, of people, being told, who died, because of COVID, and what they said, on the news, is that they died, before their time.

They had years, to live. But we don't know, when that time comes, and we should be, interested, in eternity. We get so, caught up, with possessions, and affections, that our souls, that never dies, is neglected.

It's neglected. Religious leaders, they act, as if they wanted, to be in the kingdom. Blessed is he, who will eat, at the feast.

[35 : 05] But yet, they were so far, from God, it was unbelievable, and they didn't see it, for themselves. Well, what does the master do?

Well, this is the twist, I'm sure, that they couldn't cope with, because they thought, they were in, the Jewish leaders, they were the religious ones. And the twist, is what we have, in verse 21, where it says, so the servant, came and reported, these things, to the master, then the master of the house, became angry, and said to the servant, go out quickly, to the streets, and the lanes, of the city, and bring in, the poor, and the crippled, and the blind, and the lame.

Now, the point is this, the master, has put on a banquet, whether we come, or not, is our decision. But the thing is, this, if we don't come, he's going to go, to others, so that they will come.

That is what, he is saying. And notice what he says here, first of all, verse 21, bring in, the poor, bring in, the poor. Who were the poor?

Well, obviously, there was poverty, in those days, if people had bread, on their table, in the day of Jesus, they were doing well. They went out, to work for that bread, put bread, on the table, they had food, for each day, they lived, for each day.

[36 : 30] But the point is this, for us today, are we poor, in spirit? If it is, that we're here, without Christ, then we are, poor. We need, we've got no faith, and we've got no grace, and because of that, we'll have no hope, in this world.

But what is Jesus, saying to them? I'm compelling you, to come in. I'm inviting you, to come in. And then we notice, in verse 21, is the maimed.

There was a time, what does this picture, show us the maimed? Well there was a time, we thought that we could, get to heaven, on our own strength. Because of my own good works, that'll get me there.

But we've now realised, that I cannot, save myself. I need Christ, to save me. And Jesus compels, us to come in, if we're maimed.

What about the halt? He mentions, go and tell, and bring the halt in. The halt are the ones, who are halting, between decisions, between two decisions. Will I follow Christ, or not?

[37 : 36] Will I put it off, till another time? See this is one, of the biggest excuses, we have. Oh I haven't got time, just now. But see before I die, I would love, to be a Christian, by then.

I'm putting it off. We are told, in 1 Kings, 1 Kings, and chapter 18, and verse 21, where Elijah, was speaking, to the people of Israel, there.

And he asked them, why do you halt, between two opinions? He said to them, in verse 21, he asked them, why do you halt, between, why do you stop, between two opinions?

The opportunity, for you, is to take the invite, now, and to follow Jesus. But you seem, to be stalling, in this place. And then he said, to bring in, the blind.

Well, we may think, that we're not blind, we think, that we're not lost, but really, we're blind, to the things of God. And we're lost, as well.

[38 : 38] Let's tell the story, about the wee boy, that went shopping, with his mum and dad, one day. And just in a second, he was missing. They didn't know, where he was. And they went looking, for him, everywhere.

And they couldn't find him. Half an hour, they went different ways, in the shopping centre, looking for this wee boy, they couldn't find him. And then eventually, it was the dad, that found him.

And do you know, where they found him? In the Thornton shop, looking at the sweets. And the point is this, that he was lost, and he didn't know it.

And that is the way we are. We're like the wee boy, in the Thornton shop. He didn't know his mum and dad, were looking for him. And he was, he was lost, until he was found.

And that is what needs to happen, with us as well. We are lost, and we are blind. And God is compelling, those who are lost, and blind, to come in.

[39 : 38] So, what happens then? What happens here? Notice verse 22. And the servant said, Sir, what you commanded, has been done, and still there is room.

So, they invited those people in, who had nothing to lose, but to come, and they came in, but there's still room. And then we read, and the master said to the servant, go out to the highways, and the hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled.

So, what is he on about here, that the highways, and the hedges, compel them to come in? These were the people, who were barred from the city, they couldn't live in the city, so they had to live out in the hedges, in the highways.

They were the downcast, who were talking about, your prostitutes, your robbers, and all of these people, the outcasts, the untouchables of life.

And he said, go and compel them, to come in. And you know, it's interesting, that the highway, leads away from a city, and the highway, always goes, to Gentile land, doesn't it?

[40 : 46] Eventually, it comes to Gentile land. And you know, that that very road, leads to Dumfries. It leads to Dumfries, it leads to Glasgow. We are in the outskirts, of the whole of Judaism, as they thought, we're the ones that are in.

But here, Jesus is saying, no, no, I want you to go out, to them, to all, of these people, in the highways, and compel them, to come in. What does he mean, by compelling?

It means, I want you to persuade them, I want to strongly, urge them, to come in, I want you to constrain them, to come in. Who is Jesus telling, to do this?

Who is he telling, for them to go and do this? Well, I would say, he's telling the church. Would you not? Isn't this what he's asking?

There's some, who don't want to come, but my house, is plenty room, and I want you, to go out. The ones, we thought, that would come, are not going to come, but now, I want you to go out, into the city first, into the towns, and villages, and once they come, I want you to go out, to the highways, and the byways, to the edges, and to those, who are living, outside, of society, and bring them in.

[42 : 12] It means, to persuade them, to strongly urge them, to constrain them, to come in. Is the church, in the United Kingdom, doing that, today?

Do we go out, to people, to bring them in? Well, for people, to be at the great banquet, this is what Christ, expects of us, as a church, to be doing.

I remember reading, and it's interesting, Don McLeod, he wrote a book, on compel them, to come in, and, in that, he mentions Spurgeon, how Spurgeon, spoke, Charles Spurgeon, was a preacher, in London, a Baptist preacher, and, blessed by God, by his ministry, and just the way, he spoke to people, because of his own, love for Christ, he wanted others, to know this Christ, as well.

And, I took down the notes, and it's interesting, that, when I did this, I noted Don McLeod, used the same points, he just gave, what Spurgeon said, and it's worth repeating, and this is what Spurgeon, said to his own congregation, first of all, he said, I exhort you, to flee to Christ, I exhort you, to flee to Christ, he said this, I once despised him too, he knocked on the door, of my heart, and I refused to open, I can never forget, that I thought so ill of him, but what loving reception, did I get, when I came to him.

How incredible, that for years, we could be rejecting Christ, but yet when we come, he lovingly accepts us, when we do come.

[44 : 02] By not coming, surely, is an insult to Christ. The second thing, Spurgeon said, I entreat you, now this is speaking to his own congregation, thousands of people, and stop and consider, he said, do you know, what you're rejecting?

You're rejecting, eternal life, life that will never end, in a place, that you're going to be loved, and all the things, that this world, could never give us, you're going to have it here, and you're going to be Christ, with Christ, your saviour, and Christ is, the only saviour, and he said, there's the reality, a day will come, when you will see, your need of a saviour, but by then, we might be too late.

I entreat you, to stop and consider. The third thing, he said, I plead with you, to come, to Christ.

Do you know, what Spurgeon said, as he thought of this, and as he thought, about the day of judgment, God saying, to one of his hearers, to depart from me, I never knew you.

He said this, I cannot bear, to think of you, in that position, it seems, as every hair, on my head, must stand on end, to think, of any hearer, of mine, being damned.

[45 : 33] Oh, how much he loved, his people, and for them, to come to know Christ. And then, fourthly, he said, I feel, I couldn't, say this to you, because you're thinking, I'm only your inter-moderator, and you just come, now and again.

But Spurgeon, could say to his own, and maybe I can't say, he said, if you don't listen, to these things, then I'm going, to threaten you. You will not always, have warnings, like these, he said.

A day is coming, when there shall be, no promise, proclamations, of pardon, and of mercy. It will be swallowed up, in nights, of endless misery.

So he said, I'm threatening you. But you see, how lovingly, he did it. He's only doing, these things, because he loved them. Well, if it is, that we haven't come, to Christ yet, what is it, that's keeping us, from coming?

Surely, surely, we should come. As if some people think, oh well Christ, I know he can forgive others, but he won't forgive me, I've got too much guilt, and I simply cannot, fall on my knees, and ask for forgiveness.

[46 : 53] But yet, if you do come, you'll be surprised, at his forgiving love, towards sinners, like us. It was sinners, he came to save, remember?

Do you think, by staying away today, things are going to get better? Well, they're not really. I'm just noticing, in the last while, how I notice, in my own, with my own mind, not as sharp, as it used to be, and forgetting things, and, I think, I can't really sit down, and think, oh well that's going to get better, when I get over this point, of life, it'll get better.

It's not going to get better. The problem is, my mum and dad, had dementia, and, who knows, what lies ahead? How can we say, that things are going to get better?

We're getting older. It might get worse. And the longer, we stay away, from Jesus, the worse it's going to get, until the point that, maybe we're too late.

I can't even, can you mention the point where, I've forgotten, how to ask, for forgiveness? Some say, it's not a convenient time.

[48 : 07] Well, when will it be convenient, for us? Will it be, when we get over, the next hurdle? Will it be more convenient, on our deathbed? Well, this sermon, is preached, for today.

This is what God led, the preacher, to preach this, today. We're not going to hear it, next Wednesday. We might not get, the invitation to come, next Wednesday. The invitation to the banquet, is today. I have no authority, to see, or you can come on Wednesday, or the following Wednesday. It is today, because everything, is ready, now. Spurgeon, finished like this, he said, after all that, and if still, in vain, I have, I have, I have, but one more, resort, that I will try. I can, be permitted, to weep, for you, and I can, be allowed, to pray, for you. You can, scorn this address, if you like, but you will remember, that the message, you are rejecting, is a message, from one, who loves you.

[49 : 24] Oh, how much, he loved, his people. He just simply, wanted them, to be saved, to know Christ. What about those, who have invited, the invitation, to the banquet?

Well, do you know, what Christ has done, for us, is this, is that he's given us, a wee reminder, in the church, for us to be coming to, and I believe, that you, had this reminder, recently, by coming, to the Lord's table.

It's just as, it was something, we missed, we haven't had, that opportunity, not till next month, in our own church, we're looking forward, to it. It's nothing much, it's only a simple meal, bread, and wine, but it's what it signifies, that's important, to Christ, and to those, who have taken up, the invitation, is to remember, the Lord's death, until he comes.

You see, the bread, is his symbol, of his broken body, and the wine, is the symbol, of his shed blood, at Calvary. That's what Jesus, did, to save us, broken, and shed blood, and he was willing, to go to the cross, to die for us.

Do you know, I was brought up, in a Christian home, and the simplicity, of the gospel, went by me, until David Patterson, asked me one day, and said, what does Jesus, mean to you, Kenny, and I said, well I suppose, he died for you, he said, he either did, or he didn't, there's no supposing, about it, but he said this, see if you come, today, and accept Jesus, as your savior, all you have to say, is thank you Jesus, for dying for me, can we see that, can we simply come, just like that, why do we remember, his death, it is because, of his death, and resurrection, that we are saved, he died, so that we may live, forever, and he rose again, as the first fruits, of the harvest, well the most poignant thing, for a minister, ever to do, is and I'm sure, yourselves standing, at an open grave, where you're with loved ones, burying their loved ones, and I'm sure, there are many thinking, well this is the end, but it's not, because faith tells you, that those who died, in Christ, will rise first, and what a resurrection, what's going to be like, all the graves, of the risk, that to rise, in Christ, their bodies, to be reunited, with Christ, and this is the beautiful picture, well, the table is set,

[52 : 17] I think I told you before, about, when you go to a wedding, you go and look, for the wedding plan, and you're there, the banquet is on, and you look through the tables, they give, fancy names now, for tables, usually where they come from, and you look for your name, and, you find that it's there, or you're an invited guest, and you've accepted, the invitation, so your name is there, and you can go to that table, nobody can sit, at your place, because your name is there, just you, that is what it's like, in the banquet, in glory, the chair, at the moment, is pushed in, I remember being, somewhere one time, couldn't believe it, where we're going to sit, at the table, we had to stand aside, till the waiter, pulled the chair out, you sat down, and then he pushed it in, and he put the napkin over, that doesn't happen much, that happened once, I never forgot it, but the chair is pushed in, and you know,

I often think, that the one taking the chair, will be Christ, and say, you can sit now, with me at the table, or what Christ has done, and you know, it is his desire, Father, I will, that those whom you have given me, will be with me, where I am, so that they may see, my glory, where are we going to see, this glory, at the banqueting table, of the lamb, he is going to be, welcoming his bride, to come to the table, and all of heaven, will stand, do you know the way it is, when the piper comes in, with the bride and groom, everyone stands, the angels will stand, as they watch the bride, coming, to the table, may God bless to us, these thoughts, as we come, now to, the ordination, of our elders, here, in Dumfries, and I've got, just a wee thing, intimation here, in regards to, how the events, came about, following the recent process, to elect new elders, the following, received votes, from the congregation,

Mr. David Kenyon, Mr. Jonathan Kenyon, and Mr. William Kenyon, the Kirk session, has subsequently judged, that those elected, are duly qualified, for the office, and all, have now intimated, their acceptance, of the office, therefore, the session, agreed, that the ordination, to the

office, of elder, of Mr. David Kenyon, Mr. Jonathan Kenyon, and Mr. William Kenyon, to take place, at the close, of the morning service, on Sunday, the 9th of May, 2021, which is, this morning, as no member, of the congregation, has any objection, to the life, or the doctrine, of any of those, appointed, to the office, of elder, we will proceed, with the ordination, as we have come, to the end, of the service, so if, the three men, would come, and if you could, or you could stand up, social distance, I know you're in a bubble, anyway, so you could, the three of you, could stand here, at the front, because you work together, and you're brothers, and I'm sure, you're together, all the time, and I'm going to, put questions, to them, questions, in regards, to their ordination, as elders, there's six questions, and I will ask you, each, as I go through, the questions, do you believe, the scriptures, of the old, and new testament, to be the word of God, and the only rule, of faith, and manners, do you sincerely, own, and declare, the confession, of faith, or proven, by former general, assemblies, of this church, to be the confession, of your faith, and do you, own the doctrine, therein contained, to be the true doctrine, which you will, constantly, adhere to, do you, do you, own, and acknowledge, the Presbyterian church, government, of this church, by Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies, to be the only government, of this church, and do you engage, to submit, therefore, concur, therewith, and not to endeavor, directly, or indirectly, the prejudice, or subversion, thereof, do you believe, that the Lord Jesus Christ, as king, and head of the church, has therein, appointed a government, in the hands, of church officers, distinct from, and not subordinate, in its own province, to civil government, and that the civil magistrate, does not possess, jurisdiction, or authoritative control, over the regulation, of the affairs, of Christ's church, and do you approve, of the general principles, embodied, in the claim, declaration, and protest, adopted by the general assembly, of the church of Scotland, 1942, and in the protest, of ministers, and elders, commissioners, from presbyteries, to the general assembly, read in the presence, of the royal commissioner, of 18th of May, 1843, as declaring, the views, which are sanctified, by the word of God, and the standards, of the church, with respect, to the spirituality, and the freedom, of the church, of Christ, and her subjection, to her, as her only head, and to his word, as her only standard, do you promise, to observe, uniformity, of worship, and of the administration, of all public ordinances, within this church, as the same, are at present, performed, and allowed, do you, do you, accept, do you, accept, the office, of an elder, of this congregation, and promise, through grace, faithfully, diligently, and cheerfully, to discharge, all the duties, thereof, good, good, well, we come, to sign, the formula, so there's a formula, for them, to sign, which we have here, at the front, and they all sign that, and if anyone wants, to read it afterwards, by all means, you can, you can read this, but this is basically, saying, what they, vowed to there, and they're just, signing that, so, if you would each, come, and sign that, please, you, go, no, no, no, no, it's, oh, no, no, no,

So we now commend these men to the Lord in prayer.

[59 : 45] Let us pray. Eternal Father, as we come this morning here in Dumfries on this beautiful day, and as we have come under the sound and the preaching of the gospel and the worship of God, we pray Lord as we would be, as we know that we are in your presence, that we would be humbled people in the presence of God.

And Lord as always asking who am I that you would even consider such a dead dog like me. And this is what Mephibosheth said to David when he was invited into the presence of the king and where he always was to sit at the king's table.

But David had a promise for him, a covenant promise, a promise that he had already made with his father Jonathan. And he wanted to show him the kindness of God.

And Lord we pray today as we come at the ordination of these men, that Lord you would bless them in their work. We pray for your grace to be upon their lives.

We pray for them in your drawing close to them, to David, to Jonathan and to William, and their respective families. We pray that by the grace of God they will be able to fulfill their duties and to do so in a Christ-honoring way.

[61 : 09] And Lord that we would all fulfill this knowing that we are not perfect. We are sinful people ourselves saved by grace. And there are many things Lord that we will make mistakes in.

But we are so thankful that you don't write off those who make mistakes. You are the one who comes and forgives. And you will forgive us of our sins if we come readily to you confessing those sins.

We pray them in their duties in the church and in the Kirk session now as they become members of the Kirk session of Dumfries Free Church. And we pray Lord that in their duties that they would do so to their best knowledge and in their own mind to be clear in what they believe in and to stand up for the truth as they see it in the gospel.

Help us also to be open to others as well teaching us along the way we don't have the full product. We never will in this life.

And Lord there may be things in life that we're learning all the time and life seems to show us so many things that makes us and teaches us and sees things differently.

[62 : 22] We pray for them to have an open mind. We pray Lord as they are elders of this church that they would also look out for other churches in the community and to remember them and to be favourable to them when they meet them and to show that the Christ that is in them is the Christ that is in us too.

And Lord that together that they would make an impact and have an impact on this town and on the surrounding villages of Galilee that you would bless them. Be with them in their families.

We know that they're busy farmers and we pray Lord that when they can that they will be able to be and fulfilling the duty of Christ.

We can all make excuses and thinking of ways and means of being and not being at the means of grace in church. Lord bless them with their young families.

Bless them as we think of children growing up in these days. But Lord the God that kept us and that kept our parents as the same God that will keep them as we bring our children to you at the throne of grace.

[63 : 29] As we remind you that Lord to keep the covenant. You are a covenant keeping God. So bless the congregation too knowing their duties that they have for their elders to bring them to the throne of grace and to remember them so that God would help them to strengthen them to be able to lead the congregation.

Lord we would be weak leaders if it were that we went in our own strength so we need the prayers of your people too so that you are reminded in glory of the work.

We are thankful that this is your work. They're involved in not their own. It's not their church. It's Christ's church. And we are thankful that you are the one who is building his church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

So bless them Lord. In these strange days where we can't give the right hand of fellowship because of this pandemic but yet Lord you understand these things too and we are so thankful for your graciousness and your patience and your love and your concern for us all.

So go before us as we welcome David and Jonathan and William into our Kirk session here and as their names now will be added to the role of elders of this church and that will be minuted too and Lord we are thankful for those who witnessed this on this day.

[65 : 00] So bless us Lord we ask in Jesus name. Amen. May God bless you all the three of you every blessing you can sit down. So our closing praise is Psalm 72 and verses 17 to the end of the Psalm.

His name forever shall endure last like the sun it shall men shall be blessed in him and blessed all nations shall him call to God's praise.

This name forever shall endure last like the sun it shall men shall be blessed blessed in him and blessed all nations shall him call now blessed be the Lord the God the God of Israel for he a lot of wondrous works in glory that they sell valentuckum let this glorious name to all the Lord of the Lord and holy

For even. Amen. So let it be.

We conclude our service with a benediction. Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forevermore.

[67 : 41] Amen. Amen.