

The Gospel and: Mental Health (Part Two)

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Date: 27 October 2024

Preacher: Rev Donald M Macleod

- [0 : 0 0] Good morning, brothers, sisters and friends, a joy to worship the Lord together. Just a few intimations for us. There should be enough sheets at the back door for us. If not, there'll be more this evening.
- Just a few points from the sheet. Of course, as always, the prayer meeting this Thursday at 7 o'clock in the hall.
- Again, the reminder, the prayer meeting is for everyone. Not just for members, not just for those who want to become members, it's for everyone. A short time of prayer and study and praise together.
- The next thing is a week this evening of the Next Youth Fellowship. We were so grateful for those who came last week and we certainly enjoyed ourselves. And I hope our teenagers did too.
- So a week this evening. And again, it's open to anyone between P7 and S6 in the village. So please do share that. One other thing. On the 11th of November, we hope to begin planning our carol event.
- [1 : 0 3] We had 70 plus people there last year with about 70 gospel tracts given out last year too. So a well worth thing for us to be involved in.
- So that's the 11th of November at 7 o'clock in the month. If you want to be involved in planning that, to help us out, please do come along. We're remembering especially today Haddington and Tear Fund.
- And we'll pray for that in our time of prayer. This evening at 9pm in the APC in Stornoway. The LDOS are having a special prayer meeting regarding the Tesco situation.
- That's 9pm this evening in the APC. And finally, just some upcoming dates for us. There's quite a few bits and pieces happening in the next few weeks. Just so we're all up to date with what's going on.
- So next Sunday evening, I'm doing a pulpit swap with Reverend Hugh Ferrier and the High Three. So he'll be coming here and I'll be going across to Stornoway. And on Sunday the 17th, I am on annual leave for a week.
- [2 : 1 0] And then the Sunday after that, I'm away to Nairn to help with the Nairn Communion. So far, you've got good varied supply in my absence.
- So do please pray for them as they prepare to come and preach with us. All that being said, we're here today to worship God together. We can do so then, first of all, singing in the Sing Psalms from Psalm 67.
- Sing Psalms, Psalm 67. That's on page 84 of our psalm books. Psalm 67 on page 84.
- God be merciful and bless us. Shine upon us with your face. That the earth may know your actions and all lands your saving grace.
- O God, may the peoples praise you. May all peoples sing your praise. For you judge the nations justly, ruling over every race. Psalm 67.
- [3 : 1 1] The whole psalm to God's praise. God be merciful and bless us.

O God, may the peoples praise you. May all peoples sing your praise.

For you judge the nations justly, ruling over every race.

May they sing with joy and gladness. May they all rejoice as one.

O God, may the peoples praise you. As they all unite in song.

[4 : 34] Thank the Lord. Thank the Lord. Boys and girls and teens.

Oh. Are we all fit today?

Be brave. Use two pews. Go on. Be brave. You can go back. You can go back. Go on. Go on. Go on. Or poor boys.

Guys. It's okay. Not that scary am I. Am I. How are we all? There's so many of you.

You're so quiet. How are you all? Come on. Thank you. Who was out last night? At the bonfire. Probably all. Most of us out. Probably all. It was good. I was there too. I know it was good. I enjoyed myself.

[5 : 52] Okay. So, not just bonfire last night, which is really good. Also on Friday in here, something happened. It was quite quiet. We've got a small thing. Very important for two people.

Something. What happened in church? You won't know this, but try and guess. What happened in this church right there? A marriage. There was a wedding on Friday. My first wedding. Well, not my first one.

But the first one I was in charge of. Why, it's scary. Quite important. Because I do something wrong. Then we're not really married. And it's so embarrassing. But anyway, it went fine, I hope. We're now officially married.

Of course, for your wedding, what happens? There's a wee sermon. And we had some speeches and some talking. And then you come to the official part, don't you? You have to sign bits of paper. And you have to say all your vows.

And say I do and everything else. As part of that process, you have to use something very important. Which is, of course, a pen. It's a pen. A normal pen, isn't it?

[6 : 50] I won't pass it along because I don't want to ruin your clothes. But there's something important about this pen. It's different, isn't it? It's ink. What kind of ink is it? It is a fountain pen.

It's a fountain pen. Who here is left-handed? You guys left-handed? Everyone left-handed? It's hard being left-handed. Trust me. As you get older and older and older, and you have to write more and more and more.

So a left-handed, some people here will know this, using this pen is so hard. So much ink comes out of it. Anyway, do you know why we have to use a fountain pen? See, I used a normal pen that day.

If I used this pen on the marriage certificate, it wouldn't count. The marriage wouldn't count. And I'll do everything all over again. Because we use this pen, it's okay.

Why, I wonder? What's different about this pen compared to a normal pen? Any guesses? Go for it. Rolls on, maybe?

[7 : 54] This one rolls on, maybe? This one, yeah, goes straight onto the paper. Also, something very special about ink here, that it's very hard to, about, very hard to get rid of.

It's much more, where are we going with P? Permanent. Permanent. Okay. So if Jane and Mike, that's a couple got married, if they got married and we had our speeches, they went to town and had a nice meal and our family and friends were here, if we didn't sign a bit of paper, if I forgot to do that, then it's all wasted.

All the planning, all the dress, all the kilts, all the cake, it all means nothing. If they aren't actually married, if we didn't actually sign that. Because we did sign it, we are now officially married.

I was thinking a wee bit like, not just us, but everyone here, you know, we come to church, and it's good for us. We pray, I hope, and it's good for us to pray, it's really good for us to read our Bibles, it's good for us to read our Bibles.

We sing, we come to Sunday school, some of us, and they come to youth fellowship. All these things are really, really good for us. Mums and dads, granddads and granddads too. We come to church, we sing, we read, we pray.

[9 : 09] All very good. But if it's all just doing it for the sake of doing it, and there's nothing really real going on, then we're not really spending our time well, we're wasting our time really.

The Bible's clear. It's not about what we look like, or what we say, or what we do even. The Bible says all about our hearts, isn't it? What we actually think about Jesus. The Bible says, if we actually care for him, if we love him, then he knows that.

Coming to church doesn't make us Christians, but it's good for us to do that. Going to Sunday school doesn't make us Christians. Reading our Bibles doesn't make us Christians, mums and dads, granddads and granddads. But it helps us to get to what makes us a Christian, which is what?

Believing in Jesus, and trusting in Jesus, and knowing that he has done everything to save us, and look after us, and love us. Now a wee bit like this pen, which I'm very scared of, this leaks, my shirt will be ruined forever and ever and ever.

I hold it very far away. This pen, like the ink here, is permanent. The Bible says, we'll see this later on today, mums and dads, the Bible says that God's love for us is also, a wee bit like this pen, it is permanent.

[10 : 23] No matter what happens, it can never ever be rubbed out, it can never ever be removed, it can never ever be lost. When everything else perhaps in life changes, when we go through scary things and sad things, when we perhaps move away from the island, or get a job, or grow up and get married ourselves maybe, God says if we love and trust in him, like this ink for marriage, that we use for marriage, his love for us is permanent.

We pray if you guys go for Sunday school. Let's pray together. Lord, we thank you for the reminder that, as we saw the other day with the marriage ceremony, that it becomes official when we see that form signed, that nothing else matters apart from the fact that it is made official.

Help us, we ask in our lives, to understand that nothing else matters until we know where we stand with you. We thank you for the boys and the girls here. Thank you for the teens here. We thank you for mums and dads, and grannies and granddads, and great grannies and great granddads, and everyone in church here, and everyone at home, who loves and looks after our young friends here.

We thank you for them all. We pray just now, in Sunday school, they'd enjoy their day, they'd listen well. We pray just now, also as always, for the teachers, who spend so much time, and work so hard, to look after, and to teach, the boys and the girls.

Thank you that together, as one church, both here and next door, we are growing in our love and knowledge, of all that you are. Help us, we ask, to remind ourselves, and to remember, as we get older and grow bigger, nothing else matters, only, we come to know Jesus, and come to love Jesus, and come to know and understand, that he loves us too.

[12 : 07] Ask all these things, in and through, and for Jesus, in his precious name's sake. Amen. Enjoy the day, guys. Take a side of my pocket.

As the kids go to Sunday school, let's join together, in a word of prayer. Let's pray. Glorious, and highly exalted Lord, we come together, just now, we ask you, help us to come together, with hearts, and minds, that are focused, on what it is we're doing here.

We're here to worship you, the living, holy, sovereign, everlasting, unchangeable God. You alone, are worthy, of all eternity's worth of praise.

Help us then, just now, to come in the right, heart, in the right mind space, we confess, that perhaps even just now, and in other times of worship, we come to this place, and we are so distracted.

There are so many other things, which are fighting, for a place in our minds, just now. We bring these many things, before you once more. As we bring these things, before you, we remind ourselves, and we are reminded, that we are, simply human.

[13 : 36] We are creatures, made from the dust, but our capacity, and our ability, to help ourselves, is so limited. We come to a God, who is not limited. As we'll hear later on, you command us, to bring our burdens to you.

We come just now, bringing these burdens in. We come just now, bringing personal worries, before you. Life, family, perhaps career.

We bring just now, before you, our own health situations, perhaps. Pray just now, for those of us, going through, physical health, times of trial, waiting for appointments, and waiting for phone calls, and everything else with that.

Pray just now, for those we heard, in recent weeks, of going through, hard times, with mental health. Those who are struggling, and perhaps struggling, in silence, and in darkness, and no one else, knows their struggles, but are themselves in you.

Pray just now, for family worries, that we may have. Bring just now, before you, financial worries. Bring just now, before you, the various other concerns, which we cannot begin, to number our name just now, but you know them, and you care for them.

[14 : 44] We thank you, for we can bring these things, to you, and know that it's not just, mere ritual, it is not just, simple routine, but as we bring these things, to you, we come to a God, who actually listens, who actually cares, and your word, and our experience, reassures us, you're a God, who cares, not just for, not just for, the major moments, of our lives, but you care for, the small things also, you care as it were, for what we eat, and drink, and what we wear, that nothing is beyond you, you who numbered, and named, and created, and right now, sustain, every single star, and galaxy, every single, part of creation, we will never see, nor understand, it is all yours, and with all that majesty, all that grandeur, all that beauty, we look back to ourselves, and we cry out to the psalmist, what is man, what is man, that you are mindful of, what are we Lord, that you look twice at us, but yet you do, and more so than that, you have shown to us, and continue to show to us, a never ending, never failing, love, and care, towards all, who cry out to you, we think of ourselves, we do pray once more, for the boys and the girls, we thank you for them, we thank you, that we have a group, of children and teens, who are so engaged, with your word, who we see, both in Sunday school, and a new fellowship, and other occasions, who seem to have, such a good grasp, of who you are, and who are seeking, to grow in that knowledge, we thank you for that, we know that's a privilege, we have from you, pray just now, for any in our villages, any in our, area here, who perhaps, are pondering, who are wondering, if they can send, their children, to Sunday school, that they would, know that they are welcome, and you would lead them, to do so, we thank you just now, not just for the current,

Sunday school teachers, but also the Sunday school teachers, this congregation, over many years, who have poured out, much energy, and time, into the children, who they taught, we know that every single, time your word goes out, it does not return to you, without having accomplished, its purposes, so remember ourselves, we pray for our brothers, and sisters also, next door as always, pray for the gospel cause, as a whole, in North Tulsa, pray for them, in a time of vacancy, that in your time, you may provide for them, one who would lead them, and one who would guide them, and one who would be, an under shepherd, over them, pray for the wider gospel cause, pray for every home, and every individual, and family, in North Tulsa today, who are not, and who do not pray, for themselves, we pray for them, we bring them before you, those who have no understanding, as to the danger they are in, those who have no understanding, as to the great privilege, the great joy they can have, the great peace they can find, if only they would come to Jesus, use us, we ask as salt and light, to be your witnesses here, so pray for ourselves, we pray for the wider gospel cause, across our island, across our nation, we give you praise, that we are a small part of that, that you are not the God, of the free church, nor the God of our nation, but you are the God, who reigns, across your whole creation, that we are brothers and sisters, to family across the world, across all the different colors, and cultures, and languages, of this world, and right now, we join in with a united praise, of brothers and sisters, we will never meet, on this side of glory, but who love you, as we do, and who serve you, as we seek to also, we do pray locally, especially this week, within our own denomination, we do remember,

Haddington, that church plant there, we thank you, for the years, of hard work, that's been going on, in that church plant, as we are, hearing now, of, growth, upon growth, so much so, that they are praying, that we, they're asking, that we pray, that you would send them, more workers, more elders, raise up more men, who will lead, and who will, be there, to bear, and shoulder, of responsibility, and the burden, we give you praise, that our church plant, is growing so much, that their biggest problem, is now, the need for more leaders, we thank you Lord, for that, to remember, for them, we also remember, ongoing Jeff, and leaving, we pray for him, as he, carries on his, great work, we pray for Jeff, and for Maddie, and for our family, we pray for them, privately, as a family, we also pray for them, publicly, as they engage, in their various roles, as Maddie, comes alongside, some of the young women, in the area, we pray for Jeff, as he leads, and pastors, as he seeks, to grow, that congregation, all for your glory, all according, to your will, and your plan, and your purpose, we thank you, for the great privilege, we have today, of this time of worship, we do so freely, we do so safely, we remember, just now again, brothers and sisters, who are not as safe, as we are, and not as free, as we are, who are worshipping, in fear, who are worshipping, just now waiting, as it were, for that knock on the door, remember just now, brothers and sisters, in prison, brothers and sisters, who are, facing long sentences, for the crime, of owning a Bible, or the crime, of proclaiming, your glorious name,

Lord you be with them, we ask, that we cannot, but you are, help us, to concentrate today, and to make the most, of the freedom, you've given us, that we can gather, like this, so openly, so freely, so easily, have no concerns, and no worries, over authorities, come and knock, in our doors, help us, when we ask, to be salt, and to be light, in this place, as we see, reminders, both locally, and nationally, that this world, is not ours, that we are, traveling through, that we are, passing through, that we are, pilgrims, and exiles, help us then, to have that mindset, the mindset, that we are here, as ambassadors, we are here, as ambassadors, sent from the king, to a land, that is not our own, yes, by heritage, and by history, and by blood, this land is ours, but by our souls, this is not our home, we are traveling through, and one day, we will see, a greater home, a restored home, a glorious home, until that day comes, help us, to be faithful servants, where we are, help us, to be faithful servants, in our homes, privately, behind closed doors, help our conduct, reflect what it is, we proclaim to be, help us, in our places of work, places of study perhaps, help us, in all what we say, and do, to glorify our saviour, and to do nothing, to bring shame, to his name, thank you just now, for those here, who are questioning perhaps, those here, who are longing, to know the love, of a saviour, of those who are wondering, if it's all for them, if it's all too good, to be true, that today, we will be reminded, once more, it is all for them, that they too, can come to know, and love Jesus, it's not about, knowing enough, or understanding enough, it's all about, trusting enough, that he is, who he says he is, and he has done, what he has done, that he is able, to transform, and change, any of us, look after us, we ask, forgive us, for our sins, we confess sin, before you today, in our thoughts, our very words, our very actions, we have gone against, a holy God, forgive us Lord, for that, help us, just now, to come before you, as we come to your word, to read it, and to hear it, with hearts, full of understanding, and full of joy, as we hear your living word, being read to us, ask all these things, in and through, and for Jesus, his precious name's sake,

Amen, let's turn to the gospels, we turn to, excuse me, we turn to Matthew, Matthew chapter 11, Matthew chapter 11, it's on page 765, Matthew chapter 11, let's hear together, God's word, when Jesus, had finished, instructing, his 12 disciples, he went on from there, to teach, and preach, in their cities, and when John, heard in prison, about the deeds, of the Christ, he sent word, by his disciples, and said to them, are you the one, who is to come, or shall we look, for another, and Jesus answered them, go and tell John, what you hear and see, the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead, are raised up, and the poor, have good news, preached to them, and blessed is the one, who is not offended by me, as they went away,

[24 : 04] Jesus began to speak, to the crowds, concerning John, what did you go out, into the wilderness, to see, a reed shaken, by the wind, what then, did you go out, to see, a man dressed, in soft clothing, behold, those who wear, soft clothing, are in king's houses, what then, did you go out, to see, a prophet, yes, I tell you, and more, than a prophet, this is he, of whom it's written, behold, I send my messenger, before your face, who will prepare, your way, before you, truly, I say to you, among those, born of woman, there has arisen, no one greater, than John the Baptist, yet the one, who is least, in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he, from the days, of John the Baptist, until now, the kingdom of heaven, has suffered violence, and the violent, take it by force, for all the prophets, and the law, prophesied, until John, if you're willing, to accept it, he is Elijah, who is to come, he who has an ear, to hear, let him hear, but to watch, like compare, this generation, is like children, sitting in the marketplace, and calling, to their playmates, we played the flute, for you, and you did not dance, we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn, for John came, neither eating, nor drinking, and they say, he has a demon, the son of man, came eating, and drinking, and they say, look at him, a glutton, and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors, and sinners, yet wisdom is justified, by her deeds, then he began, to denounce the cities, where most of his mighty works, had been done, because they did not repent, woe to you, horizon, woe to you, beside her, for if the mighty works, done in you, had been done, in Tyre, and Sidon, would have repented, long ago, in sackcloth, and ashes, but I tell you, it will be more bearable, on the day of judgment, for Tyre, and Sidon, than for you, and you, comparing them, you'll be exalted, to the heaven, you'll be brought down, to heads, for if the mighty works, done in you, had been done, in Sodom, it would have remained, until this day, but I tell you, it will be more tolerable, on the day of judgment, for the land of Sodom, than for you, at that time,

Jesus declared, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven, and earth, that you have hidden, these things, from the wise, and understanding, and revealed them, to little children, yes, Father, for such, was your gracious will, all things, have been handed over, to me, by my Father, and no one knows, the Son, except the Father, and no one knows, the Father, except the Son, and anyone, to whom the Son, chooses to reveal him, come to me, all who labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle, and lowly in heart, and you will find rest, for your souls, for my yoke is easy, and my burden, is light, amen, and I could praise to God, once more, for his glorious, and his perfect, word, again singing, from Sing Psalms, this time, Psalm 96, Sing Psalms, Psalm 96a, so the first, of a Psalm, 96 is there,

Psalm 96a, that's on page, 126, Psalm 96a, on page, 100, and, or 127 it is, because we're singing, verses 7, down to verse 13, Psalm 96a, and the Sing Psalms, verses 7, down to the end, verse 13, all nations, to the Lord, ascribe, the glory that is due, glory and strength, ascribe to God, and praise his name, anew, enter his courts, with joy, and bring an offering, with you, worship the Lord, and holy fear, all earth, before him, bow, Psalm 96a, and the Sing Psalms, verses 7 to the end, to God's praise.

God's praise, is■■■■, the Lord, and the glory of this year, glory and strength, as guide God, I'll teach this day by you.

And yet this course with joy I bring, I know that he will you.

[29 : 07] Worship the Lord in holy fear, All ever be called and bound.

And let me now the Lord is King, Each child reshifts the air.

I'm kind on blue, The Lord will judge, The people can't do.

The people can't do. At heaven's rejoice, I'll never be found, With joy that oceans bring, The fields and all in the air will shout, And God's feelings will sing.

They all will sing before the Lord, Who comes to judge the earth.

[30 : 50] He'll judge the world in righteousness, The people can't do. And God's grace, The people can't do.

The people can't do. Let's turn back to our short time to the chapter we had there, In Matthew chapter 11. I remember the last few weeks in the mornings, We've been covering quite a heavy, But I hope helpful area.

We're seeing the gospel and something. Looking at how the gospel interacts with real life situations. So we had the gospel and grief. Then we had two weeks then, Looking at the gospel and mental health.

The second of those sermons should be up by tomorrow evening. A slight problem with the sermon hosting pages all sorted now. The problem was on my end. Would you believe it? So God willing, By tomorrow night, All the sermons will be online again.

If you haven't yet listened, I'm not promoting my own sermons. There's far better ones. But just to catch you up, Perhaps two weeks, Two weeks of the gospel mental health, And one week of the gospel and grief.

[32 : 05] Again, We saw gospel answers. We saw what Jesus says to those who are grieving, And those suffering with mental health. But also they are heavy topics. Heavy to preach, Heavy to hear.

And for those perhaps who are suffering it. Heavy, Heavy to be reminded, Heavy to think through it. So our plan this week is carrying on, And next week, Carrying on from the series.

Just two weeks, As it were, Lifting our eyes up, And reminding ourselves the care that Jesus has for his people. We come to a text here, Verses we've had before, Recently actually.

And looking at these verses, Verses 28 onwards. We saw that section, Looking at it, How it calls out to those of us who are not yet Christians. But today we're seeing, In the context really, Jesus is here first and foremost, Speaking to his people.

Yes, we apply it, And we can, And we should apply it to those who are not yet Christians. The call to come to Jesus, And give him your burdens. But that same call, Is the same call he gives to his people here today.

[33 : 16] Christians who are grieving, Christians you who are going through mental health, Crises and mental health days of darkness and pain, And perhaps physical health days of darkness and pain. Verse 28, Verse 29, Down to verse 30.

It's for us too. And that is our hope for a short time together today, To see what these verses say to his people. And at the end, To apply it to all of us, I hope, Including those of us who as of yet, Cannot say that we know him, Or that we love him.

Just two simple headings for us, With these verses. First of all, We see the hope of the Christian, And then the heart of the Saviour. So the hope of the Christian, Then the heart of the Saviour.

Quite simply then, First of all, Verse 28, The hope of the Christian. Come to me, All who labour, And are heavy laden, And I will give you rest.

Now we're all very happy to take that verse, And to apply it to those, Who as of yet are not Christians. To say, Come to Jesus, Find your hope in Jesus, Find your rest in Jesus.

[34 : 27] And that's true, And that's right. But how often, Brothers and sisters, Do we actually stop and apply it, As Jesus does here, To his people, To ourselves.

For many of us, Perhaps we're quite good, At helping one another. We're quite good, perhaps, At giving good biblical advice, Or biblical encouragement, To one another.

We're good, Being there to listen, And to assist, And to come alongside, Our brothers and sisters. But we don't apply, What we say to ourselves. I certainly don't, Half the time.

It's one thing, Saying it, One thing. Preaching it, Sharing it, Quite the hour, Stopping and applying it to yourself. Christians, Brothers and sisters, We know this.

The world, Can understand this. Yes, we, As Christians, We have been, Given freedom. Yes, we now know, That the Lord, Who created and sustains all things.

[35 : 28] He looks on us now, With a smile, Never again a frown. Yes, he calls us his own. Yes, he says, You are mine. Yes, he says, I will one day have you, In glory with me forever.

Yes, we have Jesus, As our Lord, Our Saviour, Our King, Our best friend. But life is still life. Life is still life. We still, At times, Have broken hearts, Broken bodies, Broken minds.

And life, At times, Is still a bit grim. Still a bit dark. A bit of a trudge. Family worries. Health worries. Financial worries. We know ourselves. Everything we face and encounter.

The quiet things, That perhaps, Again, No one here knows about. Christians, We are no better than anyone else, At putting a brave face on things. How are you? I am fine.

How are you? We all say that, A thousand times a week. How are you? How are you? Are we good? Are we fine? Sometimes we're not.

[36 : 32] And brothers and sisters, Our Lord says to us, Once more today, As he cries out to his friends, As he declares here, It says here, He declares it.

In verse 25, This has all been declared. As he prays to the Father, As he ends and finishes that prayer to the Father, He's there beside his people, Beside his disciples, And he says to them, Come to me, All who labour, And are heavy laden, And I will give you rest.

Christians, The reminder for us today is, He is there, For us. And we know that, We believe that, But do we apply it to ourselves, Again and again.

I remember quite early on, When I first started preaching, I had a great problem, A great worry, In that as a brand new preacher, Very young, I only could preach the gospel.

That's not a bad thing now, But as a young Christian, As a young preacher, As a young supply preacher, I said, I can only preach about Jesus, I wish I could preach deeper things. I remember saying that, And sharing that to a, An elder and grader, And very carefully, And very gently, He reminded me, He said to me, Half English, Half Catholic, If you ever become a minister, I hope you preach, I hope you only ever preach, Just Jesus, And nothing else.

[38 : 00] By that he meant, The reminder that, Every single one of us, Need to hear the gospel. The gospel, The gospel is not just for those of us yet, Who are not Christians, The gospel is for every one of us, Christians, And non-Christians alike.

Of course, Non-Christians need to hear the gospel, Because they need to be saved, And be given new life. But brothers and sisters, We need the gospel. Because how often we forget it, We believe it, But we don't apply it to ourselves, We forget it.

Every single day, Augustine said, Wake up, And preach the gospel to yourself. The great church father, Had to do it. Spurgeon says something similar, As did Calvin, As did Knox.

Because they were aware, Very much so, Of their humanity, Of their frailty. You wake up in the morning, What's the first thing in your mind, In our minds?

The worries of the day, The stresses of the day, The burdens of the day. How many of us this week, Perhaps, You've had a sleepless night this week, For one reason or another. Genuine reasons, Valid reasons.

[39 : 02] Great worries, Great stresses, Great strains. And at these times, The question is, Do we stop, And remind ourselves, Of the gospel truth. Of this verse, For example.

Do we stop and say to ourselves, Yes, this is hard. Yes, this is grim. But I have a saviour, Who says to me, Come to me. And I will. And I will give you rest.

Brothers and sisters, Let's remind ourselves often, Of the rest, Of the peace, Of our saviour. But Jesus doesn't stop there. Yes, he reminds us of our hope as Christians.

But Jesus then, And it's a one time in scripture, We are told, By the very words of our saviour, What is in his heart. We are told of his internal life, We could say.

What does he say to us? How does he describe himself? Take my yoke upon you, And learn from me. For I am gentle, And lowly in heart.

[40 : 03] And you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, And my burden is light. Here we have a glimpse, Into the heart of our saviour, Into who he is, At his very core.

And this is how he describes himself, Gentle and lowly. We are commanded then as Christians, Brothers and sisters, To take his yoke, In verse 29, Upon us.

To remind ourselves, This of course is a farming image. The yoke, of course, Is that bit of wood, That bit of machinery, That connects two, Well, cattle on these days, Or horses together.

A bit of wood, Connects two animals together. So that together, They can better pull the plough, Or whatever it is they are doing, Or turn the wheel, To mill the grain, Or whatever it is.

A bit of wood, Two holes in it, Goes over the necks of the animals. And two animals together then, Do the work, Makes the work that bit easier. And Jesus says, I have here for you, An extended hand, To walk alongside me, To take my yoke upon you.

[41 : 20] Come and be joined with me, With me, He is saying there. Quite simply. Come and be joined with me. Perhaps the language is unclear for us, But Jesus here is speaking to crofters and farmers.

He is speaking to people who understood this straight away. He is saying, Come and walk alongside me. Come and be yoked with me. Come walk alongside me, As I lead us forward.

We know historically, The Pharisees, The teachers of the law, Often the hypocrites of the day, The religious leaders, So called of the day.

They would speak of being yoked to the law, Being yoked to the Torah. And they used it as an example of a burden. That is a burden for you, To try and drag yourself through life.

Remember the great burden on you of the law. That God is looking down on you, And saying to you, You are not good enough. You cannot save yourself. And here is more laws for you to keep. And Jesus says, My burden, My yoke is completely different.

[42 : 25] As you come and find yourself beside me, As a word attached to me. Jesus does not say, His yoke, His burden is heavy.

In fact, We see quite the opposite, Isn't it? My yoke is easy. My burden is light. Why? Because as we find ourselves, Brothers and sisters, We are not together with a Saviour.

We have a Saviour, Who bears the burden for us. And yes, There is a burden to be borne. Think of the animals in the field. Yes, We must still walk the field together.

We must still do the work. We must, As brothers and sisters here, Serve our Lord. We must go through the various days of this life. For all the ups and downs, And tears and heartbreaks, And dark days and everything else.

But we do it side by side, With a Saviour who says to us, That He is for us. Who says to us, That He has found us. That He keeps us.

[43 : 29] That He will never lose, Nor forsake us. It is Him we are attached to. Because of that glorious truth, And many more, He can say to us, Yes, There is a burden for you.

You must live a life. The burden is, It is light. The yoke, It is easy. Many people think, Becoming a Christian is some process.

But first you have to learn, Enough of the Bible. Then you have to know enough, About church. Then you have to understand enough. And they give themselves a burden, That Jesus does not give them.

And many people think, To become a Christian, There is a process. You read the Bible more. You pray a bit more. You try and improve your life a bit more. Then you might come to the prayer meeting for a while.

And then you might, Kind of just somehow, Walk into becoming a Christian. Find that anywhere in scripture for me. You won't. It has come to Jesus first and foremost.

[44 : 30] And everything else then, Fills and afterwards. That is not your worry just now, Friends. If as of yet, You are not walking side by side, With a Savior.

You have the heaviest of burdens. The Christians here, Our burden is light, Because He bears it for us. Friends, You bear all your burdens, Still on your shoulders.

Not knowing where you are going, After the end of life. Not knowing what weights ahead of you. But truly, Deep down, You do know what weights ahead of you. You do know where your life is going.

That is a burden. Even before that, You know that just now, That there is no peace, Between God and you. There is this reality, Where you know, Your sins have painted you, And taken you away from Him.

And He is still there as judge over you. And there is no peace, There is no happiness there. Our cause, You come to know, What it is, To have all that gone.

[45 : 32] To come, And walk alongside, Be joined with, Be yoked with, A Savior who says to you, Come, Come to me, All who labour, And are heavy laden.

And He promises, Rest. Brothers and sisters, We are attached, We are yoked, With, With, Jesus.

So who is this one, Who walks alongside us? What is He like? What is our Savior like? Again, He gives us, These two words, That describe Himself. Gentle, And, Lowly.

Gentle, And, Lowly. We have a Savior today, Brothers and sisters, Who is, Gentle. Elsewhere, Quoting from Isaiah, Matthew, Reminds us, Of who our Savior is.

When Isaiah prophesied, Ahead to the coming Savior, He described, Jesus as such, He will not quarrel, Or cry aloud, Nor will anyone hear, His voice in the streets, A bruised reed, He will not break, And a smouldering wick, He will not quench, Until he brings justice, To victory, And in His name, The Gentiles will hope.

[46 : 59] Writing these many years, Before Jesus, Isaiah looked forward, With the gift of prophecy, As the Holy Spirit inspired him, And Isaiah saw the Savior, And he described him, As one who would not, Break a bruised reed, As one who would not, Put out a smouldering wick, In other words, One who is gentle, One who is gentle.

What's the images there? Well, a bruised reed, We have rushes here, Think of our rushes, I don't want a single term, Our rushes, Rushes, Imagine rushes, Take one bit of rush, And, Gently bend it, And bend it, And bend it, A bit of straw, A bit of hay, Whatever, Bend it slowly, And bend it, And we all know, It takes, Quite literally, No energy, No power, To break, Rushes, To break some straw, It just happens, It just bends and breaks in seconds.

The image here, Is a Christian, Is a person, Who knows and loves the Lord, We come to him battered, We come to him bruised, We come to him with, All the physical health, And mental health, And everything else, And say, Lord, I'm done, Lord, I have failed you, I failed everyone else, I'm a bad example, I'm a bad Christian, I'm a rubbish witness, I don't know enough, I don't understand enough, I'm tired, We're bruised, We are as we are, A bruised reed, And he does not come along, And say to us, Yes, you are right, You are a rubbish Christian, You're a rubbish servant, I am so sad, I ever saved you, Of course not, It's the opposite, He sees us bruised, And battered, And Isaiah said, He does not break us, Quite the opposite, Quite the opposite, He takes us carefully, And he reminds us, That our strength,

Is found in him, Our peace, Our hope, Our rest, Is found in him, Not in our own reserves, Not in our own efforts, A smouldering wick, A smouldering bit of flax, A candle wick, Imagine, A small bit of ember, And you just touch it, And it goes out, No, Here we see the example, That Jesus is aware, He slowly, Fands it back into flame again, At times, Perhaps, brothers and sisters, We feel as if we are, Just that ember, Perhaps once we were shining bright, Glowing bright, But now, The wick's gone down, The wax is gone, The fuel is gone, And we're now just in our last, The last bit of ember, Soon to go out, And we say, Surely he is now done with me, Surely now, I've used up far too much of his time, Far too much of his goodness,

Far too much of his grace, Far too much of his love, And Jesus comes along, And rather than going, He takes us, And he fans that smouldering wick, That ember back, Into flame again, Why?

[50 : 17] Because he is a gentle saviour, He is sovereign, He commands the full armies of heaven, He is not a weak saviour, He is not a weak man, But he is gentle, He is gentle, And his gentleness is seen, Even more so, By reminding ourselves of his power, Because he is all powerful, In contrast to the eternal power, Of a second person of the Godhead, Of the Son of God himself, With him dealing with us gently, And carefully, Sadly, brothers and sisters, We, At times, Perhaps have not been dealt with, Gently, Or carefully, By our brothers and sisters, And we ourselves perhaps, Have dealt, Harshly to our brothers and sisters, That's to our shame, To the shame as well, Of the church,

But not so for our saviour, He is not harsh, He is careful, He is gentle, He is gentle, He is also, Finally, Lowly, He is lowly, He is lowly, In heart, For I am gentle, And lowly, In heart, To help us understand that, We can read just, Two verses from Philippians, Philippians 2 verses 6 and 7, We are reminded what, Our saviour has done for us, Christ Jesus who, Though he was in the form of God, Did not count equality with God, A thing to be grasped, But he emptied himself, By taking the form of a servant, Being born in the likeness of men, That whole beautiful passage, Philippians chapter 2, Quite simply, A reminder for us, That Jesus, God, He is God, Eternal, And yet,

He takes on, The full form, Of humanity, He is born, Like one of us, And we have covered that, Many times before, And every single way, Emotionally, Physically, Mentally, He becomes like us, Every single way, Apart from sin, He is like us, From time, And from before time, From eternity, He has all power, We can't begin to describe, The majesty, And the power, Of who, The second person, Who the Godhead is, Who our son is, Who the son of God is, He is beyond our description, He is God, And yet, He empties all that away, All the praise, All the glory, He emptied himself, Of all that, And takes the form of a servant, And comes,

Kicking, And screaming, And crying into this world, Being fed, Being looked after by his mother, Being changed, Being taught, Being taught how to speak, How to walk, A normal child, A normal human, He is born into this world, Feeling and seeing the dust, Feeling and seeing, And experiencing the devastation, That sin has ravaged, In the world that was made through him, And made for him, And he does it all, Why?

Because he is the servant king, He endures all the many years of his life, Because he is the servant king, Even on the cross, When we are reminded, He can call down legions of angels, In the garden, He reminds them, Legions of angels, Can be called down to help him, Of course you can, In fact, More than that, We know, Theologically speaking, That our saviour, Has the power, At any point in his whole life, To just stop everything, He has eternal power, This world belongs to him, But yet, He lives in it, He endures it, Every single day, Making his way, Towards the cross, Showing himself to be, The servant king, Brothers and sisters, You are not a burden, On your saviour, You might feel a burden to others,

[54 : 52] And others might treat you that way at times, And to our shame, Others in the church, Might treat you that way at times, But to our saviour, We are never a burden, Because he is the servant king, He came to seek, And to save the lost, But he also came to serve his people, He came to serve his people, From listening to young women, And young children, The example there being that, They were the lowest, And most useless, In society at that time, He gives place to women, To speak by themselves, He gives space to children, To interact with him, Again, Unheard of in that day, Unheard of completely, Yet, He allows it to happen, He encourages it to happen, Then washing them through, His disciples feet, He is there eating, And drinking, And spending time with those around him, Because he is the servant king, Because he is the servant king, Into the garden,

Where he is under so much pressure, We said last week mentally, Where his capillaries begin to rupture, And blood oozes out his pores, He is under so much mental, And physical stress, Because he is the servant king, He then allows himself, As it were, To be nailed to the cross, A crown of thorns, Jammed onto his head, Hitting all the nerves, He then is on the cross there, Slowly suffocating to death, As fluid fills his lungs, Because he is the servant king, Because he is lowly in heart, From glory as it were, To the ground, From glory to Golgotha, All because he is lowly, In heart, Brethren and sister, Never think you are a burden, To the king, Who has come to serve you, He has shown,

In ways unbelievable, In ways at times, That are horrifying, The level to which, He is there, To be your king, Yes, But also to be your servant king, You are not a burden to him, You are not an interruption, As it were, To his reign, In fact, Brethren and sister, You are the reason, That he came, Out of love, Yes, obedience, Yes, to the father, But the plan was, To show the father's love, To you, You are, Brower and dear sister, You are, as it were, The jewel, The diadem, And the crown of the king, You are his precious possession, And he has great joy, In seeing you, And great joy, In showing you, As his treasure, He does not lie, To his people,

And because our saviour, Does not lie, We come to him today, Trusting, That he is gentle, So that we can come to him, At any time, With anything, If we failed him, Again and again and again, We come to him, If we feel so far away, But we can't even come back to him, We come to him, Great burdens, Great stresses, Great strains, We come to him, Backsliding, Shortcomings and sins, We come to him, We come at times fearful, We come at times terrified, We come to one who is a gentle king, Not weak, But he is gentle, He is gentle, We come to one also, Who is a servant king, Who I was right, Who is very moment, And we said this quote, A thousand times, I'll say it again, Rabbi Duncan, One of his most famous quotes, Because he is a servant king, We come to one, Right now, The dust of the earth, Now sits enthroned,

In glory, We come to one right now, As we praise him, And pray to him, Who is like us still, Who is in the glorified yes state, But also right now, Who is still in human form, Still taken on in the form of a servant, With the marks of his love, They are still for us, Right now and forever more, He looks like us, He is like us, Why?

[59 : 31] Because he is a humble king, His heart, His heart, Of a servant, He is lowly in heart, And if he says then, Both lowly and gentle, If this king says to us, To come to him, Because he will give us rest, To come to him with every burden, Every heartbreak, Every worry and concern, Every darkness, And he says to us, I will take you on, Then he will, Brothers and sisters, Here is our king, Broken and bruised for us, Here is a king, Who takes us, Broken and bruised, And he heals of us gently, And his position towards us, Is one of a lowly servant, Friends, If you hear these things today, And you think, I wish I knew this king, I wish this could be said for me, There is nothing stopping you,

But yourself just now, Your own ideas, That you can somehow save yourself, That you can somehow, Make yourself good enough, That this servant king, Will take you in, Or accept you, To that I just say again, The words of verse 28, As Jesus calls out to who, Well, All who labour, And are heavy laden, And dear friends, He promises you rest, If only you would come to him today, Let's close now, A word of prayer, That we thank you Lord, For the gift, Once more of your word, That we find in, These well known words, The living word, The true word, We thank you for encouragement, To your people here today, That you are the, One who sent, Our servant king, Out of his obedience towards you, Out of his love for his people, Out of your love for your people, You sent him, And he came and lived that life, And died that death, And rose again, Come to our saviour just now,

Who he know deals with us carefully and gently, He is no fool, And he is not weak, But he is also, I give you praise for it, A gentle, A lowly, King, Help us then, To come this week, Bringing our shortcomings, Bringing our pains, Our agonies, Our sins, Our darkness, Bringing all things before him, Who promises to love us, And to keep us, And to never lose a single one of his own, Thank you for this time of worship today, Thank you as always, For those who lead, The sung praise, Help us, Come again, And we pray together this evening, To do so, Knowing it's good for us to gather, As brothers and sisters and friends together, Take us home in safety we ask, Always things in Jesus name, And for his sake, Amen.

We can conclude once more singing, In sing psalms, In sing psalms, Psalm 98, Sing psalms, Psalm 98, That's on page 129, Sing psalms, Psalm 98, Page 129, We sing verses 1 down to verse 4, Psalm 98 verses 1 down to verse 4, A psalm of course just, Singing and declaring, That the care and love and glory of our God towards his people, Psalm 98, Sing a new song to the Lord, For wonders he has done, His right hand and his holy arm, The victory have won, The Lord declared his saving work, And made it to be known, To all the nations of the world, His righteousness is shown.

Psalm 98 verses 1 to 4, To God's praise. Amen. Sing a new song to the Lord, Where wonder he has done, His might and and his holy arm, The victory have won, The Lord declared his saving work, And made it to be known, To all the nations of the world,

[64 : 26] His righteousness is shown, His set fast love and faithfulness, He has remembered, The God of love he made with them, the house of Israel.

And all the nations of the earth have seen what God has done.

And all the nations of the earth are given by His right hand alone.

That King, the Lord, O all the earth, yet gladly and rejoice, the music and the children to end it at your heart.

The great diction. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, both you now and forevermore. Amen.

[66 : 36] Amen.