

A Call to Come

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 08 September 2024

Preacher: Rev Donald M Macleod

[0 : 0 0] Good morning, brothers and sisters and friends. A joy to worship together. A special welcome if you're visiting with us today. We ask the Lord would bless his word to you and indeed enjoy your time with us.

There's a few things to note on the intimation sheets. There's plenty by the back door. There's also a letter, a pastor's letter, for this month. If you excuse my slightly squint printing.

I started printing, came back in and realized I printed 40 of them, so I might as well keep going at that point. But please grab an intimation sheet and a letter. Let's highlight a few of the points on the sheet.

As usual, on Thursday, next door in the hall, we've got a prayer meeting. Again, a reminder that prayer meeting is open to everyone. Please do come along. I know in our culture it's got connotations and things attached to it.

It's for everyone who wants to come and spend a bit more time listening to God's word. Please do come along to that. Also, not on the sheet. That's my fault. Not on the sheet.

[1 : 0 1] God willing, a week today in the evening, hope to have a fellowship. And there's a representative from a charity called Safe Families Western Isles coming along.

Safe Families Western Isles. And just coming to tell us what we're doing. It's a Christian charity that seeks to just come alongside families that are struggling. And really, they want to empower, they want to encourage Christians especially, but anyone in the area where they work, to come alongside these struggling families and to be a practical help, a shoulder to cry on.

And we'll hear more about that. So next Sunday evening, after evening service, a fellowship. We'll hear all about Safe Family Western Isles. Now, this coming Saturday, God willing, there is the induction in North Uist.

David Ferguson's been inducted as their minister. And with that, there's a bus put on from, well, going down to the church. So they make their own way down to Leavarborough.

I'll read the notice from the Presbyte clerk. He says, For those travelling down to the induction, to be at Leavarborough for 8.05am. And there's transport available.

[2 : 2 3] We've got a 32-passenger bus from Burnery down to Karenish. I'll be heading down, God willing. So I have space for at least two, three if you breathe in.

So please let me know if you want to come down. There's space for two. Myself and Donald will be heading down, as well as the Everdon too, I'm sure. So please let us know if you want to go down to the induction.

The more folks that are there from outside of North Uist, the more encouraging it is for our brothers and sisters in North Uist. So that's next Saturday. Our biggest notification is, we hope to begin on Tuesday, of course, Hope Explored.

Hope Explored. That's starting Tuesday at 7 in the Tehele. It runs for three weeks, and you can attend all three sessions, or attend one of the sessions, whatever you can manage.

And perhaps, in a conversation, some folks are thinking, if they come to church, that Hope Explored isn't for you. If, as of yet, you can't say that you fully can call Jesus your friend or your saviour, then Hope Explored is for you.

[3 : 33] It's for everyone who's got questions about Jesus, who perhaps it's still quite awkward for you to talk about these things or ask these hard questions. Hope Explored is informal. It's relaxed.

It's a cup of tea, some biscuits. We watch a thing together, and there's a wee discussion about it. So you can come along and discuss, or come along and say nothing. You're welcome along either way.

Please do consider it. Please do think one hour out of your week, even one or two hours out of your month this month.

It's worth you come along for. So 7 in Tehaley, 10th, 17th, and 24th. There's still a few invitations at the back door. If you haven't yet given an invitation out to someone to come along to it, there's about 10 left.

Please grab one today, and think and pray who you can give the invitation to. If you've said you're going to volunteer and help out alongside me, if you can try and be at the hall for quarter to 7, just to give us time to pray first and to chat through some bits and pieces.

[4 : 45] And again, if you want to help out, you haven't told me yet, just tell me between just now and Tuesday. There's nothing required of you just to be a friendly face, to sit there, to chat, and to smile.

There's nothing for you to lead or do anything. I'll do all the hard work. So please do pray for that. That is our prayer this month. That is our opportunity this month, the whole month, as a family, to pray for Hope Explored, to pray for fruit from that.

And that those who come along to it, it's quite daunting, isn't it, to come along to these things? As a quiet person, it's my nightmare to go along to these things. It's somewhere new, with new people. And let's pray for the Lord, promise people to go, and that people come to meet and come to hear about Jesus for themselves.

All that being said, we're here to worship the Lord. All our worship today is from Sing Psalms. All our worship this morning is from the Sing Psalms. First of all, Sing Psalms, Psalm 40.

Sing Psalms, Psalm 40. That's on page 50 of our church psalm books. Sing Psalms, Psalm 40, on page 50.

[5 : 56] Sing Psalms, Psalm 40. We can sing verses 1 down to verse 5 of the psalm. Psalm 40, verses 1 down to verse 5. I waited long upon the Lord.

He heard my cry and turned to me. He raised me from the slimy pit and from the mire he pulled me free. He set my feet on solid rock, a place to stand both firm and broad.

He put a new song in my mouth, a joyful hymn of praise to God. Psalm 40, verses 1 to 5. To God's praise. Amen. I waited long upon the Lord.

He heard my cry and turned to me. He raised me from the slimy pit and on the night in the open pit.

He said, He set my feet on solid rock, a bestest town, O fair and broad.

[7 : 26] He could tell you song in my mouth, a joyful hymn, of praise to God.
that he will guide you to godly ■. I loved your foot and obey them for our comfort.

homme- ölni ek- Blessed are you, who shan't the present of God's heaven.

The wondrous youth of the Lord, the heavenly and the great they had.

You've been swallowing and beyond the power to now never be filled.

- [8 : 57] It's amazing to remember, we can come down now. Good morning.
- Good morning. Good morning, morning, morning. Good morning. Good morning. Hi. It feels like it's been absolutely ages. Last time I saw you guys. Weeks and weeks and weeks and weeks and weeks.
- How are we? Good. Good. How's school? Good. Don't say that. I can't hear you, it's okay. Good, it's all good isn't it? Yeah, it's all good. That's what we said, it's all good. There's some people in sleepovers today and there's some people missing today, so you guys had to work.
- One, two, four views. Usually there's twelve isn't there of us. So three times as hard today in Sunday School. All the hard work. So actually, I want to tell you something today that I don't have.
- So, I was shopping a few weeks ago, Emma and I, in Tesco's. I realised there's something missing from my pocket. What was missing in Tesco's? In my pocket. What should I have in my pocket when I go shopping?
- [10 : 03] A wallet. What didn't I have? My wallet. I was like, oh, it must have been the car. It's fine. So, I went back to the car to check for a wallet. Couldn't find the wallet anywhere.
- It's fine. A wee bit panicking but not too scared yet. It's okay. Went home. Looked at Emma's car. What did I find? No, I didn't. Still missing.
- I thought, oh no, it's missing. I was down at my mum's house the day before that. So, I thought, well, I phoned mum. I said, can you look around the house for my wallet please? I can't find it anywhere. I was in her house.
- I was in her car. And she looked in her house. And she looked in her car. And she didn't find my wallet. Well, I got a bit more scared. I got a bit more desperate.
- So, I even had to call one of my elders. Because I was in his car before that too. I said, can you look in your car please? Because I can't find my wallet anywhere. And he's very thorough. And he looked in his car.
- [10 : 59] And did he find it? No. Anyway. I keep searching. We keep searching. We keep searching. And it's not just kind of money.
- But also there's my driving license. There's also a picture. A very important picture. The very first picture Emma and I took on our wedding day. A picture of us together.
- And there's no picture like that in the whole world. If I lose this, that's gone forever. There's also a key in my wallet for my house. My mum's house. There's also other bits and pieces which are really important to me.
- I think I've lost this. It's gone forever and ever and ever. Anyway. Eventually, we found it. Where did we find it? In the wash.
- Thankfully not in the wash. Close to the wash. It was in shopping bags. It had fallen out of my pocket somehow. While I was walking to the car with shopping bags. And dropped into the shopping bags.
- [11 : 57] And we put all the shopping bags away together. With one big bag. And I found it by accident. I was looking for one other corner of the house. And I lifted up our shopping bags. I thought they were very heavy.
- Obviously forgot to put something away. And there was my wallet. At the very very bottom of the shopping bags. I was so happy. I almost cried. I was so happy. So, so, so happy. It was so exciting to find my wallet again.
- Thinking all that time. It wasn't yet a day or two. It felt like weeks and weeks and weeks and weeks and weeks. Have you guys ever lost something? But you want to find it again? What did you lose?

One more cards. One more cards. Was it a good one? Was it a few of them? One or two? A few. A few. Was it a few cards? Do you find them again? Oh no. That's even worse.

It's bad enough losing something. When you lose it and you never find it again. It's even harder, isn't it? I was thinking and later on we're talking with the mums and dads.

[12 : 52] About Jesus of course. And Jesus says something amazing. Jesus says that for everyone. Boys and girls. Mums and dads, granddads and granddads. Jesus says that when he finds us.

When he comes to be friends with us. He promises what? He will never ever lose us. He cares more for us. When I do about my wallet.

He cares more for us than anyone else. And anything else in the whole universe. He says, I love them so much. I will never ever lose them. And as you guys get older.

Go to school. And leave school. And get as old as the mums and dads and granddads behind you. And go to work maybe. And explore the world maybe. Jesus says if you know him.

And if you trust in him. But how far away you go. He will always, always, always take care of you. He will never, ever, ever leave you. And he will never, ever, ever lose you.

[13 : 51] Which was really funny. I was supposed to take a walk to show you guys today. And in my rush. It's not where it's supposed to be. So I hope it's not lost again. I think I know where it is. I think it's back in the car again.

But we'll see that later on today. Hopefully it's back in the car. But unlike me. Who keeps losing things all the time. Jesus will never lose any one of us. And never forget any one of us.

We pray for you guys at Sunday School. Lord thank you. For our time together. Thank you for the boys and the girls. Thank you just now for our Sunday School teachers. Pray just now for the boys and girls. Who aren't with us today.

Pray Lord that you would give them back home safe to us. For the next few weeks. Thank you Lord for times of holiday. But also now back to school again. Pray Lord for our teachers. Our school teachers. And everyone who looks after us.

And cares for us. Pray just now for everyone here. And everyone at home. Who loves. And looks after the boys and the girls. We thank you for this time together. Bless your word to us. The reminder that you will never ever.

[14 : 49] Ever forget about us. And never ever lose us. Ask all these things. In Jesus name. And for his sake. Amen. Enjoy day guys.

As they head off. Let's join together. In a word of prayer. Let's pray. Lord God. We thank you. For this time of gathering. Thank you. That just now. We find ourselves together. As brothers and sisters.

As sons and daughters. And friends. Coming alongside us. Thank you Lord. For this time of worship. Help us not to come to this place. Just out of pure pattern. Just out of our weekly routine. But help us to come understanding. What takes place. What takes place.

What takes place. Here is special. And unique. For what we are doing. It is vitally important. We come just now. As worshipers. Worshipping the holy. The holy. God. And the holy.

In His name. Jesus name. And the holy. If he boom. Then it is. It is. How many times. The holy. But the holy. The holy.

[15 : 44] Even the holy. Amen. And the holy. And the holy. We are the holy. Give us an ornament. worshipping the holy, sovereign, living God.

For at this moment, the ground we are on, as it were, is holy ground. Not because of this building. This building will one day crumble away back to the earth. But this place is holy ground because you are here.

As we hear this evening, you are here because you have made your home in and with your people. Help us, Lord, then, we ask to have an appropriate view of what it is we're doing together.

That this is not just something we are doing week by week. But this is a time we're being called out of the world to join together. To sit together as friends.

But more than that, to sit together as brothers and sisters. And more than that, to sit together as sons and daughters. Help us, then, with that full understanding of what it is we're doing here.

[16 : 42] To come together just now and raise up voices of thanksgiving and voices of praise. We come this week admitting that perhaps this week's been a hard week for some here.

Perhaps this week has been a long week. Perhaps we have faced challenges and heartbreaks. Perhaps this week ahead looks just the same. A week of stress.

A week of worry. Lord, you alone know the full details of our lives. Pray just now for those missing from our number. Who would usually be with us. Lord, those who are away just now.

Grant them travelling mercies. Those who are ill just now. Be with them and comfort them. Those who long to be here just now. They would know something of your presence.

And something of your love and care for them. We thank you, Lord, for the privilege we have of worshipping you. That together as a church family, we can raise up our voices.

[17 : 37] And sing to you from your word. Words you have given us. Words we know are true and right and perfect. That we can together read your word together. That together we can spend time in prayer.

Both public and private. That together we can learn and grow in love for one another. And also grow in love and knowledge of who you are.

We ask, Lord, we would not leave this place today unchanged. We ask that for our short time together. Your word would speak to our hearts. Speak to our souls. It would enliven us.

We would leave this place having said, It was good for us to be here. As we pray for ourselves. We pray for all that's going on this week. We pray for all the items on our busy bulletin this week.

We pray especially for Tuesday evening. To your glory we ask that some would come. Some would come to watch these videos. And to spend time in discussion.

[18 : 35] Or spend time at least hearing about who Jesus is. About the hope he gives. About the purpose he gives. About the peace that he gives. Lord, we know that if you're not in it.

These things will not prosper. We pray just now that we would not be disappointed. That things do not go to plan. We would know that we're doing it for your name's sake. And for your glory. And that all things done for your name's sake.

And all things done for your glory. That you will use them in some way. Ways at times hidden to us. But a way we trust that will be beneficial. To the salvation of your people.

Pray just now for the many homes in North Tulsa. Who have as of yet no understanding of the gospel. Who as of yet have no gospel light in their lives.

The many homes in North Tulsa. Where there is no concern and no care for their souls. We ask Lord that this new week. You would use us. Use us as the means to bring the good news to them.

- [19 : 37] Pray just now for our neighbours. Pray just now for those of our own households. Those who as of yet don't understand. Who as of yet don't know. Who as of yet don't love Jesus. As King, Saviour and Friend. Help us to be salt and light. Help us to be missionaries. To be ambassadors. Through all our conduct. All our words.
- All our thoughts. Help us to proclaim the beauty. And proclaim the power. Of our risen Saviour. Pray just now Lord. For those who are wrestling with the question.
- Of even coming along on Tuesday. Those who are anxious. And those who are nervous. Of a new thing. And a new place. With new people. We ask Lord you encourage them. And prompt them. And they would receive a warm welcome from us.
- We thank you Lord. For all we have seen done. In this place. For your name's sake. We thank you Lord. For the way you have blessed. The efforts so far. To share the gospel. It is your gospel.
- [20 : 37] It is your work. And we are simply your servants. As we pray for ourselves. To remember every single. Our gathering of your people. Across our island. And across our nation.
- Across the denominations. Every gathering that seeks to worship you. In spirit. And in truth. We ask you bless them. To pray for ourselves. We remember as always. Our brothers and sisters next door.
- We pray for them. In their own journey with you. Pray for them. In their time of vacancy. Pray for them. As they seek. The good. Of North Tulsa. We cry.
- With. Our brother. Of old. Who says. Who cares. For the free church. Who cares. For North Tulsa. Free church. But to the Christian good.
- Of Scotland. Who cares. For North Tulsa. Free church. But to the Christian good. Of North Tulsa. We ask Lord. That you would be glorified. In North Tulsa. From the Glen. To Gary.
- [21 : 35] We lift our minds. And we lift our eyes. And we think further. Afield. To your people. Across. Not our nation. But across. This whole world. As always. We remember. Brothers and sisters. Of different cultures.
- Of different languages. Of different backgrounds. We pray for them. Just now. Brothers and sisters. Who. We unite. Alongside. Just now. In our worship.
- As one song. Goes up to you today. A song of praise. From your people. As we join together. In praying. We join together. In that one prayer. The prayer of your people.
- We thank you Lord. For the privilege. We have brothers and sisters. Across this world today. Remember. Especially brothers and sisters. In Uzbekistan. And we hear of recent. Movement.
- In the state. As churches. Are being locked. And some. Are finding. Of our church buildings. Being repossessed. Illegally. Taken away from. Some areas.
- [22 : 29] Church buildings. Being condemned. And demolished. For reasons. That are not real. We pray Lord. For brothers and sisters. In that. In that nation. Brothers and sisters.
- Who daily struggle. To share the good news. Against a state. Against a culture. That despises them. Give them strength. We ask. Support them. We will never meet them.
- We know this side of glory. But we love them. And we care for them. Pray to our Lord. For gospel blessing. In that state. In that nation. We will hear soon.
- Of days. Of flourishing. It is possible for you. It is possible for you. To take. What was once dark. And bring it to light. Our own nation. Our own island. Is evidence of that. That's 250. Odd years ago. 300 years ago. We are a dark island. With no. Real gospel. And now. We see your gospel. Having flourished.

[23 : 24] Over these. A few hundred years. All things. Are possible to you. Pray just now. For our brothers and sisters. Who are in prison. Especially. Those who are waiting.

To hear news. Of their trials. Those who are waiting. To hear news. Of what the future. Holds for them. Pray just now. For them. And for their family members. And those. Who also wait. Anxiously.

To hear what is taking place. Give us Lord. We ask the sense. To make the most. Of the freedom. You've given us. Whilst we still have it. Pray just now. For our government. Those over us.

Locally. In the council. Those over us. In Holyrood. And those over us. In Westminster. Pray Lord. For. Wise decisions. And policies. Wise decisions.

And all that must take place. And all that must be decided. We ask Lord. You would prosper our nation. But we ask. That more importantly than that. Than prosperity and peace. We ask.

[24 : 17] That those who lead us. Would themselves. Come to understand fully. That there is one over them. Who is Lord and King. Whose decisions. Are far outweigh their decisions. Pray Lord.

For the salvation. Of our first minister. Our prime minister. And also our King. That they would come to know. The reality. And come to know. The truth. Of serving.

And knowing. The Lord Jesus. Thank you Lord. For our gathering here today. We thank you just now. For the privilege we have. Of worshipping like this. We ask Lord. You would keep us united together. We thank you. For the ongoing sense of unity.

That we do have. Pray just now. That you would keep us. Far from the evil one. We know that he hates. Times of worship. We know that he hates. The gathering. Of your saints. He hates this time.

He hates us. Or we ask that he be kept. Far away from us. Keep it far away from our minds. And far away from our gathering. We know that he is. Constantly seeking a way in.

[25 : 12] Constantly seeking to distress. And disrupt your people. Or help us then. To be focused on your word today. To be encouraged by it. As a simple gospel. Is shared once more.

Lord. You would take that. And use it for your glory. Thank you Lord. For our Sunday school. Thank you just now. For the reality. That there are. Many young people in our village. Who are coming to hear the gospel.

Week after week. Praise you Lord. For those young people. Who are missing today. For various reasons. Lord. You look after them. And keep them. We thank you for them. As we saw last session. A full Sunday school.

As we see this session. The same problem being faced. It's a good problem. Lord. We know. It's a problem. We give you praise for. That we are. Worried about room and space. Lord. You would give us answers.

For these problems. Help us as a Kirk session. To serve you well this week. Help us as elders. To serve you faithfully. In our duties this week. Pray just now Lord. For our housebound brothers.

[26 : 08] And sisters. And friends. Those who are. Not often with us. But who would long to be here. Every single week. Pray for them. And be with them. Pray just now Lord.

Especially for those. Who are heavy on our minds today. Those who do not pray for themselves. Those who will not pray for themselves. I ask Lord. You bless them. I ask Lord. You bring them to a gospel hope.

And a gospel knowledge. Thank you Lord. For the recent week we had. Thank you Lord. For Mirdo McLeod. We pray for him. As he returns back home. And as he preaches in Nairn today. Bless his gospel work.

Bless the church in Nairn. Bless himself. And Maggie. And all that they do in that place. Lord. Your word will go out in power. That you would. Give them.

As it were. And show them. The result. Of your goodness. Towards your people in that place. Thank you Lord. For our own encouragement.

[27 : 02] Of recent weeks. Lord you encourage us. And bless us as a congregation. But all we do. Will be for your glory. And for your name's sake. Forgive us. Our sins. We confess them. As we come confessing sin.

And we come to the sin bearer. The one who became sin. On that cross for us. So that we would receive from him. His. Full. Righteousness.

Which now covers us. It's in. His name and for his sake. We ask these many things. Amen. Let's turn to reading God's word. We can read in.

Matthew chapter 11. Matthew chapter 11. We're counting on our ABC's.

Of the gospel series. Matthew chapter 11. Let's hear together.

[28 : 02] God's word. When Jesus had finished instructing his 12 disciples. He went on from there to teach. And to preach in the cities. Now when John heard in prison.

About the deeds of the Christ. He sent word by his disciples. And said to him. 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. And the lame walk. Lepers are cleansed. And the deaf hear. And the dead are raised up.

And the poor have good news. He's preached to them. And blessed is the one. Who is not offended by me. As they went away. 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.

[28 : 58] 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 women. 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. And if you are willing to accept it. He is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear.

Let him hear. But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces. And calling to their playmates. We played the flute for you.

[29 : 56] 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. A 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. When he began to denounce the cities.

Where most of his mighty works had been done. Because they did not repent. Woe to you Horazin. Woe to you Bethsaida. For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon.

They 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 Capernaum. Will you be exalted to heaven. Will you be brought down to Hades. For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Sodom. It would have remained until this day.

[30 : 56] But I tell you. It would be more horrible 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.

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 any 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 we could praise you God for his holy and his perfect word. Sing again and sing Psalms.

[31 : 54] This time Psalm 34. Sing Psalms Psalm 34. We can sing verses 1 down to verse 7. Sing Psalms Psalm 34.

Verses 1 down to verse 7. 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.

Together let us praise the Lord. Exalt his name with me. I sought the Lord. His answer came. From fears he set me free. Psalm 34 verses 1 to 7.

To God's praise. Amen. The key is now to praise and children. Through death. Theaps Daniel Holm 106. For the benefic drool of the Lord.

Lord bless America with them. The Lord bless you last night. Lord bless you last night.

[32 : 54] In the Lord let the man's soul rejoice. Together let us wish the Lord, and so just be with me.

I saw the Lord, his answer came, from fear she set me free.

They who do not shine with joy, they are not good to share.

This suffering man died to the Lord, from whom deliverance came.

The angel of the Lord's servants and hearts continually.

[34 : 20] For those who feel like God had him, he sets his people free.

Amen. Every one of us deserve wrath, all have sinned.

Then we saw the next one be, but God. Because of his love and grace and mercy, but God. And we saw then how, yes, we've all sinned. And yes, in and of ourselves we're hopeless and helpless.

But God, because of who he is and what he has done in giving us Jesus, we have hope. Now we come to see, and I'm sure you're on the ball enough to know where we're going with this.

It's the last verse, or second last verse, verse 28. Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Now if you remember, I think it was March, we looked at this text before.

[35 : 51] That was a different viewing of it for different reasons. If you'll allow me today to be quite blunt and quite simple and quite short.

Not because of lack of content, but the opposite. We said this before, sometimes there are certain texts, and it says what it says. And our job is to present what it says and to call you to respond to what is being said.

Not to respond to what I'm saying, but to respond to what God's word is saying to you today. We come to a text like this, like verse 28. It's a text which speaks for itself.

Of course, a wider context. We see that Jesus is, first of all, dealing with the disciples of John the Baptist. And we'll cover that one day. But then we see verse 20 onwards.

Jesus is reminding his listeners just that the level of sin and the level of disobedience in the world. As we see in verse 20, the cities he mentions, they're cities where mighty works had been done by him.

[37 : 00] Very often people say, well, if only I saw Jesus, then I would believe. If Jesus appeared to me and called my name and said to me, so and so, believe in me, then I would believe in him.

That would be enough for me. Why doesn't he do that? Well, verse 20 reminds us, there were many in Jesus' day who saw miracles. Many of them who ate and who drank from the miracles Jesus did.

Many who knew relatives, we are sure, who were healed, blind, who were seeing, dead, made alive again. They saw it all. They beheld it all. They touched part of the miracle, perhaps.

And yet they didn't believe. They didn't believe. We're seeing on our preemitting on Thursday night, we're starting a series in Jude.

And we remind ourselves briefly that Jude, being a brother of Jesus, that we then saw, that scripture tells us, that even his own family initially did not believe who he was.

[38 : 05] His family thought he was crazy. His family thought he was out of his mind. If even the family of Jesus didn't believe who he was, as they're seeing, presumably, what was taking place, then don't think for a second we'd be any different.

We say, if only he would show himself to me personally. Why do you think you believe then? I think we don't appreciate just how hard our hearts actually are.

But from the reminder of rebellion and hardness of heart, Jesus then offers, as part of his prayer here, the beautiful reminder of what he's come to do.

So last week, last time together, doing this, we saw, but God, now we come to see. Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden.

This is the great invite. This was initially I forming my list, but we'll do see instead. This is the great invite of scripture. Just three simple headings for us to help us through this verse.

[39 : 11] First of all then, who is invited? Who invites us? And what are we being invited to? Who's invited? Who invites us?

And what are we being invited to? You think, well, we know this verse. We've heard this before. We've heard part of this before, even from yourself a few months ago. And it's very easy, I know it's very easy to switch off when you come to a verse you've heard how many times before.

God's word is God's word. And it's always worth us listening to it. So just for a short time together, let's look at these three questions and answer it from our verses here.

First of all then, who is invited in this great invite? Come to me. Come to me. Note how open the call here actually is.

Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden. Now, you'll be sick of this Greek lesson by now. And I should be asking you really to shout the answer out. What's the Greek word being used here for all?

[40 : 13] It's a word we looked at again, again, again. Panta. Panta. That widest possible word can be used. All. Come to me, everyone, everywhere.

All. Who are heavy laden. Perhaps we think at times that the call of Jesus is only to those. Only to those who are churchy. Only to those who truly know their stuff. He only cares. He only calls out to those who are at least trying to do their bit first.

And to our shame, that has infected our minds, hasn't it, so much. And we know the theology of it. But in our culture, in our mindset, we have this, I've covered this before, this legalism which has wound its way through our very veins.

And I won't give a history lesson today, but the legalism we have, it goes back to our Roman Catholic history. It's interesting. There's a study done about it, but I won't tell you the sound of great detail.

[41 : 24] But there's a great study done in Roman Catholic areas, which are then evangelized over time. There's the same thread that we have here. A real lack of the understanding that we cannot earn our own salvation.

And although it has been many, I said hundreds of years, the root is still there somewhere in the back of our minds at times. We think, who has Jesus come to save?

It's for those who are trying their best to be good people. Who has Jesus come to save? It's for those who are trying their best to try and to reform and change their lives.

And that is the exact opposite of what the gospel is saying to us. The exact opposite. Who is invited?

Does our saviour only care about good people? Does it only care for those who act the part and talk the part and dress the part and sound the part? Look how wide they call this.

[42 : 36] Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden. He offers his call to these two categories.

Those who labour and those who are heavy laden. What type of people does Jesus want to come to him? Who is Jesus looking for today? Those who are burdened.

Those who are tired. The exhausted. The burnt out. Are you tired today? Are you tired? You live your best life. You try your hardest.

You try and you are, I'm sure, a good son, daughter, husband, wife, a good parent, grandparent. Whatever category you fall into, you try your best to be the best person possible.

You're good in this community. And we keep saying this, we love this community. If we were living here and we weren't called here as minister and minister's wife, we'd be glad to live here.

[43 : 37] It's a lovely community. We love North Tolstain. Are you here and you think, well, I do my best. You know, I try hard. I try hard.

And you try so hard. And yet in the back of your mind or deep in your soul, you know there's still something not quite correct. There's still something not quite there.

Perhaps you've worked hard all your life. You've worked hour after hour after hour. And you're now enjoying a very well-deserved retirement. And you're proud and rightfully so of all your hard work.

I give praise to God for, I'm sure, your hard work. But now you're wondering, all these years of working, all these years of labour, all these years of intensive thought work or hand work.

But now what? Is that my life now? Just to be busy in retirement and then just to die?

[44 : 39] All for what? All for what? And you know and you sense. And perhaps you're trying to avoid it.

But perhaps late at night or perhaps early in the morning. Or perhaps when you're tired or distracted, the thought comes back heavy and solid to your mind saying, Why am I here?

What am I doing? And the thing is, you can't actually escape that thought. Because it's part of who you are. God made you as a worshipping creature, a worshipping creation.

And until you worship God, you will never fully be satisfied. You can't. It is part of your, as it were, DNA. Part of your structure as a human.

There will always be missing. There will always be that, as it were, gap. Until you actually come to worship the Lord. In the meantime, you worship yourself perhaps. Your family perhaps. Your job. Your joy.

[45 : 40] Your pleasures. Whatever else. We all do it. We worship everything else and anything else. But until we worship God, you'll always feel that hint of tiredness. That hint of uneasiness.

Of not being sure quite what's wrong. But you know deep down. Deep down you know. There is a God who made you. A God who knows you.

A God you must one day answer to. And still you're trying to run away from him. Ignore him. Push him away. And at the same time, you're so very tired.

Perhaps you think, well, you know. It doesn't sound very fair. Like, I'm living a good life. I'm living a good life. I try my best. You know, I try and be a good person.

I come to church week after week. I try and listen week after week. I try and engage in my life. I'm the best possible person I can be. We praise God for that. Genuinely, we do.

[46 : 41] Genuinely, we do. It's a good thing to come to church. It's a good thing to be here. It's a good thing to try and be a good citizen. All these things are good. But these things are not there to somehow trick God.

Or convince God of getting you over the line into heaven. That is not what we're told to do. What are we told to do?

If you're here today and you think, well, I'm tired of it all. Do you know what? Behind the scenes, and you'll never admit this out loud. But behind the scenes in your own heart, you say, I am tired. In fact, at times I feel pretty much done.

Jesus says to you. What does Jesus say? Try harder. Do more work. Jesus says, come to me.

He also calls to you today who feel heavy. Are you carrying heavy burdens? Are you carrying heavy burdens?

[47 : 43] We all know that the reality is we are excellent. We are excellent at presenting and showing ourselves as being okay.

How are things? Oh, fine. How are you? In reality, I tore the word behind the scenes. There's plenty of you letting go behind the scenes.

How are things? Things are fine. Things are not fine. Things are miserable. Things are rubbish. Life is hard. There's illness and there's stress. There's mental health. There's physical health.

There's family worries. There's financial worries. Life worries. The whole thing behind the scenes. And life is heavy. Why? We live in a fallen world. Not one of us today, I am willing to say.

Not one of us today, our life is exactly how we want it to be. I'm not saying we're not happy. I'm sure. I pray that we are happy. But the reality is there's always that worry somewhere, isn't there?

[48 : 41] Just now we're worrying about people in our minds. We're mourning losses. We're worried about this coming week. We're worried about perhaps making the bills stretch, making money stretch.

We're worried about this or that. Are you carrying today heavy burdens? Things unseen by the rest of us. Things unknown by the rest of us.

Again, perhaps it's physical burdens, mental burdens. The full scope is so large I won't give examples because I don't want to give you the excuse that I didn't name your problem or your worry or your burden.

Are you carrying heavy burdens? What does Jesus say? Does he say, well, sort yourself out first.

Sort yourself out first. Then come to me. Try and sort your life out first. Polish your life up first. Then come to me. What does he actually say?

[49 : 42] Come to me. All who labor. And all who are heavy laden. That's the invite.

That's who the invite is to. Well, I'm willing to bet that's every single one of us today. Every single one of us. Not just here, but across North Tolstice. Across our island. Across our country.

Across our world today. Tired. Heavy laden. Burdened. If you think I can't do this. There's a savior who says, you don't have to.

I can't do this on my own anymore. You don't have to. I can't do this on my own strength anymore. You don't have to. Who's the one who invites us?

Who's the one who invites us? If I was to ask you. What or who comes to your mind. If I was to ask you just now. Who is Jesus?

[50 : 43] Who is Jesus? Allow yourself to answer that in your mind just now. What comes to mind first? Is he some cold lawgiver?

Is he someone who is authoritarian over every single little part of your life? Is he someone perhaps in your deepest mind who has perhaps caused you worries and stress and strains?

Is he someone who is distant and uncaring? Is he someone who's okay for some but not you? Who is Jesus? Is he unapproachable?

Is he uncaring? And make no mistake. He is God. He holds the whole of reality, time and space.

The whole universe made through him and made for him. He has infinite power. He is fully sovereign. He is God. He is perfect in all that he is and all that he does.

[51 : 49] He is perfect in his power. Eternal in his glory. And so on and so on. But how is Jesus described in these verses? Is he unapproachable?

Is he distant? Is he too big and too far away for us? Verse 29. There are two words to describe Jesus which should absolutely break our hearts.

He calls himself gentle and lowly. Gentle and lowly. We have today a gentle saviour.

You are invited to come by a gentle saviour. When you come to him just now broken, you say, I can't do this anymore. Life's too hard just now.

Things are a bit too dark for me. You come to him saying, I just can't keep going on as it is just now. My body is failing me.

[52 : 50] My mind is failing me. My life, my hopes are failing me. And so on and so on. You come to one who is gentle. A saviour who, as it were, will handle you carefully.

Yes, he is perfect and holy. Yes, he has created and sustains the whole universe. Well, the galaxies and stars. But as the psalm reminds us, he heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

He determines the numbers of the stars and gives to all of them their names. He sustains and names and numbers the stars and galaxies of his creation. He is then more than able and more than capable of sustaining you, of keeping you.

He is gentle. He is gentle. Also, he is lowly. He came into this world. He lived a normal life.

He walked us over every single day, gathering the dust of this earth. Living and laughing and crying like one of us. Born as a baby.

[54 : 03] Looked after by his parents. Changed and fed and everything else. Learning to read and speak and everything else. Growing up. Like us emotionally and physically and mentally.

Every single way like us apart from sin. Every single way apart from sin. We have a saviour who knows what it is to be one of us.

He is truly humble. He is truly lowly. He descended to become the servant king. So that when you come to him, he can say to you, I understand.

I know. You say to him, how can you care for me? How can you understand what I'm going through? You're so distant from my reality. You're up there or out there and I'm here.

You go, well, I know. I walked the path you're walking. I felt the things you were feeling. Yes, we come to a king.

[55 : 09] We come to a king who is the servant king. Who is not aloof. Who is not unapproachable. We come to one who knows what it is to suffer, as we heard last weekend.

Who's invited? Everyone here. All who are weary. All who are heavy laden. Who invites you? Who is saviour, who is gentle and who is lowly.

Finally then, what are we invited to? What are we invited to? We're invited to approach him. We'll be invited to approach him.

Come to me. We've said this before. Many times. We'll say it again. Perhaps we are so used to this.

So used to this. We come. We hear a sermon for half an hour, 40 minutes. We sing some psalms. We go home again. And this is just part of our week.

[56 : 10] Nicely packaged. Nicely boxed. Done our bit. We can relax now and go home. Today, you're not coming to hear the words of Donald MacLeod.

My words won't save you. Today, you're coming to hear the word of God. And from the word of God, God speaks to you. And he invites you.

And he says to you, come to me. Come to me. See, it's a personal invite. And you think, well, this is not for me.

Well, who else is it for? Person beside you or behind you or behind you? No. It's for you. Come to me, says Jesus. It's also a genuine invite.

Sometimes you sit through these services and you think, well, surely all this can't be true for me. You might believe it's true. You might believe that Jesus does save those who come to him.

[57 : 10] You might believe it's true that Jesus is gentle and lowly. You might believe all about Jesus, who he is. But you're stuck in the fact, well, surely that can't apply to me.

It is a genuine invite. Jesus isn't just saying this for the sake of saying it. It's said to us because it's a genuine true invite.

Come to me. We used it two weeks ago, three weeks ago in relation to the Lord's Supper. Let me apply it again to ourselves.

Imagine the men's breakfast in the manse. And we bought and prepared, I don't know, how many packs of sausages and bacon. And the oven's been firing on all morning.

And there's a bowl and bowls of everything waiting to go. And the table's set. And all the men come. And they camp out outside the gate in the front garden.

[58 : 11] What are you doing? Come in. Your food's there. The rolls are there. They're all buttered. The bacon's ready. The sausages are ready. Come and sit down and have your food and have a chat. Come. It's all prepared for you.

It's all free. And the men all say, no. No. We don't believe the invite is really for us. You know, by name, we tell them to come in.

One by one by one. It's for you. It's for you. It's for you. Well, I don't feel that I'm ready yet to come in. I don't feel I'm good enough to come in. I don't feel that I deserve to come in.

At the same time, the table is set. The food is there. It's all done before they even arrived. The food was bought before they were invited. It was prepared that morning and cooked that morning before they even walked up to the front door of the manse.

I said, well, it's all done for you. It's all prepared for you. You're invited to come in, sit down, and enjoy what's been given to you. Free for you.

[59 : 15] Prepared for you. The invite is genuine. The invite is real. The Lord says to every one of us here today, come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden.

And he gives rest. He gives rest for our souls. You will find, and many of you know this, you will find no rest for your soul anywhere else.

In any other method you can think of trying to use. Our minds always go to the bad methods, don't we? The drink and drug side of things. And many of us try that. And have tried that.

Try and quiet down that voice by excessive drinking, by drug use, and so on, and so on, and so on. But also, there's positive ways.

Also, we try and drown out the voice of God. We work too hard. We focus only on ourselves, only on our families, only on this, only on that. All good things.

[60 : 22] At the same time, the Savior says to us, come to me and rest. We ignore him. Friends, do not ignore the call to find rest for your souls today.

It's something that no one else can give you. Coming to services, we love that you're here. And we pray you'll always keep coming here. But there's not one minister, not one sermon can give you rest for your souls.

There's not one friend or family member who can give you rest for your souls. Only Jesus can give you rest for your souls. We can close with just some words from one of my favorite hymns.

Come ye sinners. Come ye sinners, poor and needy, weak and wounded, sick and sore. Jesus ready stands to save you, full of pity, love and power.

Come ye weary, heavy laden, lost and ruined by the fall. If you tarry until you're better, you will never come at all.

[61 : 30] I will arise and go to Jesus. He will embrace me in his arms. In the arms of my dear Savior. Over our ten thousand charms.

Our prayer is you would listen to these words. And come, come to the one who says, who tells you, who cries out to you, who asks you to come to him to rest and to find rest for your souls.

It's about our heads now. A word of prayer. Lord, we thank you for the gift of your word once more. We ask as we have read it, you would apply it to us. And help us to leave this place not just having gathered together as part of our weekly routine, but to leave this place having grown in our understanding and our love for who you are and for your word.

Pray to our Lord once more for those who have gathered with us today, our visitors and our friends. That you have been blessed by your word. Thank you as always for the ones who lead the sung worship.

We thank you for them. As we lead that essential part of public worship. The singing of your words to you. Help us, Lord, rest this afternoon.

[62 : 44] To have a heart and mind set on praising our Savior. The one who tells us to come and to find rest for our souls. In his name and for his sake. We ask these things. Amen.

Amen. In conclusion, we can sing from Sing Psalms. That's Psalm of unity and Psalm of love. Psalm 133.

Sing Psalms, Psalm 133. Sing Psalms, Psalm 133. How excellent a thing it is.

How pleasant and how good. When brothers dwell in unity and live as brothers should. Psalm 133. To God's praise. Amen. The God of faith.

Whoggi'm faith. Then figure things then. Whing think them half in age. Practice all within. How pleasant and how good.

[63 : 47] When brothers dwell in unity and live as brothers should. We go For it is time that precious
I For that on a man's hand That running over again is fair Upon his father's head Like
anyone's chair upon the hill Of Zion yet he stands

And our glory shows his blessing death The life that never ends May the grace of the Lord
Jesus Christ And the love of God the Father And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit Be with
you now and forevermore Amen