

Baptism Service

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: 14 April 2024

Preacher: Rev James Maciver

[0:00] Let's begin our worship now. We're singing firstly in Psalm 98. Psalm number 98, that's in the Sing Psalms version on page 129. Singing to the tune, Bays of Harris.

Singing verses 1 to 4 as they're marked there on page 129. For those that are visitors, we stand to sing our items of praise. Remain seating for the prayers.

O 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. His steadfast love and faithfulness he has remembered well. The covenant he made with them, the house of Israel.

That's Psalm 98, page 129. O sing a new song to the Lord. Let's stand to sing. If you're able to stand. O sing a new song to the Lord for wonders he has done.

[1:21] And if you're bound to wonder he's laughing. If you've only do not miss and a new song, to but be done. There is triumphantly. O sing and a new song, to be done. The victory of mine.

The Lord be grateful, Savior, and give it to the Lord.

To all the nations of the world, His righteousness is shown.

The death of God's love, and faithfulness, He has remembered the blood of the Lord.

He made within the hearts of Israel.

[2:47] And all the nations of the earth have seen what God has done.

Our Lord be grateful, Savior, and our Lord be grateful.

And in the Lord, O holy earth, Shall now be not rejoice, In music of the new earth.

To Him let the dear voice. Now let's call upon the Lord in prayer. Let's pray.

Especially we're praying for the young ones and the children just now. O Lord, our God, we thank you that we can gather together here today, of all ages and all backgrounds, and that we come together to worship you, our God, whom we confess as our God.

[4:25] We give thanks, Lord, today that you have promised to be with your people when they gather together and also when they're apart. And we thank you for the many promises that we meet with in your word.

And we thank you, too, for the promises that we have for our children and young people, as they are brought up in the ways of the Lord. So we pray that you would bless that teaching to them, and that their own lives will continue to be shaped by your truth.

Bless them, we pray today, and grant to us, as we wait upon you here, that we may know the guidance and the teaching of your Holy Spirit upon our hearts. Open our minds, we pray, so that we may receive your word, and that we may find it applied to our own lives, wherever we are and whatever our circumstances may be.

So hear us, we pray now, and continue to bless us throughout this day, and pardon our many sins for Jesus' sake. Amen. Children, we're going to see a baptism today.

And a baptism uses water. It doesn't matter whether it's an infant baptism, a baptism of a child, as we are today, or a baptism of an adult, because we practice both in the Free Church from time to time.

[5 : 40] And any time we use water for baptism, it always teaches us what baptism means, or as part of the way by which God teaches us what the meaning of baptism is.

Because we're using water, water usually is used for various purposes, but one of the main uses for water in our homes is for washing. And when we come to wash with water, whether it's a bath or a shower, or washing your hands, it actually has to do with taking away defilement or uncleanness or some contamination, something that you want to be washed away to make you clean.

And it's the same spiritually. Water represents the work of the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit, as God, washes us from our sins when we are forgiven our sins.

And in many ways, the Bible speaks about our forgiveness, God's forgiveness of our sins as washing us from our sins, because our sins defile us before God.

Our sins make us unclean spiritually, therefore we need to have them washed away. And in many places, in the Psalms, for example, you'll find the Psalmist praying that God would wash him and make him clean.

[6 : 56] That's to do with our soul, with our inside, with our spiritual requirements. And baptism sets out, in a way that you can see visibly, something that you can't see invisibly because it's spiritual.

Now, that doesn't mean that whenever we apply water in baptism, that that itself saves that person, or that itself washes away our sins. Remember, it's just a symbol or a picture of what happens spiritually.

When we come to Jesus and ask him to forgive our sins, and we receive forgiveness, what happens is our sins are washed away. God deals with us so that we are no longer standing before him, sinful and in the guilt of our sins.

So today, as you see a child being baptized, I want you all, not just the children, but also the adults, to ask, what does this mean for me?

What does it mean that I'm seeing baptism today? Where is my own life in my relationship with God? Have my sins been forgiven?

[8 : 08] Have I come to God asking that he would forgive my sins and wash me from the defilement of my sins? That's one of the things that marks an occasion like this.

We are all participants in this service and in actually in the baptism itself, not just the child being baptized and the parents.

So here is an opportunity for us to examine our own lives today and ask ourselves, where am I in relation to God? What's happened to my sins?

Are my sins forgiven? Have I come to Jesus? Am I relying on God for the direction that my life requires? We're going to say the Lord's Prayer then, and then we'll come to another singing.

So the Lord's Prayer is on the intimation sheet there, if you want to follow it. We normally follow the Lord's Prayer as it's printed there. Let's all together say the Lord's Prayer. Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

[9 : 10] Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen. We're going to sing again.

And this time our singing is going to be in Gaelic. Whenever we're together without a Gaelic service, as we have most Sunday mornings, we have one Gaelic singing in the combined service.

So we're singing from Psalm 25. The tune is Moravia. We're singing verses 8 to 9 in Gaelic. You'll find the English translation also set out on the intimation sheet.

God good and upright is the way he'll sinners show. The meek in judgment he will guide and make his path to know. So in Gaelic, the verses 8 to 9, Is maith is giroch, giroch, giroch, nannul.

[10:14] Is there an overroth, danirlish, nepechich rhue, I huggish gaunson rod. Trothich i an a dunya cuny, mrechonys gau chast. Is na dunya mine, tchagish gina lia, giroch, nannul.

Is maith is giroch, giroch, giroch, nannul.

Is maith is giroch, giroch, giroch, nannul. I huggish gaunson rod.

Is maith is giroch, giroch, giroch, giroch. I huggish gaunson rod.

white in CHANTING We find a star.

[12:05] Frisade we have loved us.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

[14:52] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Let's join together once again in prayer. Amen. Amen.

[18:08] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. We thank you today, O Lord, that you have revealed yourself especially in the Lord Jesus Christ to us. The way of salvation that you have set in him is open for us today, Lord, through the gospel.

We thank you that your word directs us to consider him who came into this world to give himself, to be a ransom for his people, to deliver us from the bondage of death, so that we too, Lord, might enter into the fullness of life that you promised to all who come to trust in you.

And we thank you today for the perfection of Christ's work, for the way that it stands before us in your word, as a work that does not need to be added to or anything taken from it.

And we give thanks for his perfection in his own person, both as God and man. We thank you today, Lord, that we come to you in his name, and we thank you that we come with the promise that you will receive us in his name and for his sake.

[19:24] We give thanks that that promise has been addressed to your people down through the ages, and is a promise that will be upheld by you to the end of time. Bless us here together, we pray.

Bless to us your word and bless its teaching to us. Help us to realize, Lord, that all the things that we require to know for our life in this world are revealed to us in some way or other in your word.

While we acknowledge, O Lord, that your word has many passages that are deep and difficult for us to understand in their entirety. We thank you that all things to do with our salvation, all things to do with the way of salvation, all things to do with the way in which we come to possess salvation, are made clear and open in your word.

For you call upon us to set our trust in you. You call us to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and your promise is that we will live. O Lord, that we will be saved, that our sin will be forgiven, that we will be accepted and acceptable to you.

Bless us then, we pray at this time. Bless to us all that we endeavor to do in your name as a congregation. Help us in all our activities throughout the week, and as we anticipate these in this coming week.

[20 : 44] By your will, we ask, O Lord, that you would bless all that we do in these activities. Our gatherings, our work with the children, and young people, we give thanks for them again today, and ask that your blessing will be with them in Sunday school, Bible class, in twinnies, in creche.

And all, O Lord, who come to give of themselves so devotedly to leadership and to teaching, we thank you for them and pray that their work might be blessed. We pray today for those who cannot be with us.

We thank Lord of many who are unable to be here through illness, who belong to us as families, and belong to us as a congregation. Remember too, we pray those who are undergoing treatment, those who are recovering from surgery.

Remember those who have mental health issues. Remember those who have suffered the loss of loved ones in recent days, or even in times gone by. Lord, in all of these situations, we thank you that your grace is sufficient for us, that your promise is that as we come to place our trust and confidence in you, so you will never leave us, so you will provide for us.

And we pray today that we may come to you with the promise that is written for us in your word, as Paul wrote to the Philippians, that my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

[22 : 11] We pray that you'd remember those with us today as visitors. We thank you for their presence here. We pray that they may know this as a time of blessing for themselves, especially those associated with the baptism.

We ask, Lord, that you would be to them today a means of blessing and a way of showing to them again the wonder of family life as it's lived in the ways in which you set out in your word.

And as we find ourselves today, Lord, as a portion of your church, bless your church throughout the world and bless today your church in places where it is so difficult for them to meet unlike yourselves.

We pray for those who are persecuted and for those who are in different circumstances, two hours especially, in circumstances of war, of famine, of deprivation.

Lord, as these things are brought before us in news reports, various ways, we pray for them. We pray that your blessing, Lord, would come to bring an end to war and strife and terror.

[23 : 18] We pray that the gospel will advance and overtake the thoughts of people's hearts in enmity to one another. Grant to create peace where there is war, where there is antagonism, where there is hatred.

And bring about, we pray, conditions where your gospel will flourish. And we ask that that may be so throughout the whole world, not only among ourselves as a people. Bless our leadership in the nation.

Be with them, we pray, at this time. Our political leaders, the royal household, O Lord, all who are held out before us as having authority and places of influence in our land.

Graciously protect us, Lord, from the evil that is so rampant in the world. And enable us in all of these things to look to you. Help us now, we pray, to continue to bless you and to wait upon you here.

And pardon and cleanse us from all our sins. For Jesus' sake. Amen. I'm going to sing one more passage. From the Psalms. This is in Psalm 119 and page 157 verses 9 to 16.

[24 : 35] Psalm 119 at verse 9. That section to the end of verse 16. A tune this time is Herongate. How can the young keep their life pure?

By do what your word, by doing what your word demands. I seek you with my heart and soul. Let me not stray from your commands. Your word I've hidden in my heart to keep me from offending you.

Praise be to you, O Lord, my God. Teach me your statutes firm and true. That section to the end of verse 16. 16 to God's praise.

O can the young keep their life pure?

I do what your word is. I do what your word demands. I seek you with my heart and soul.

[25 : 45] Let me not stray from your commands. You work I've hidden in my heart.

You work I've hidden in my heart. To keep me from offending you.

Let me not stray from you. Let me not stray from you. Let me not stray from you. My God, teach me your status firm and true.

In thought proceeding from your mind, I gladly with my lips have told.

I love to follow your promise, as others love to count their gold.

[27 : 08] I meditate upon your grace, and on your peace I repent.

I take delight in your decease. Your words I never will regret.

Amen. Well, let's turn together for a short time this morning to Deuteronomy chapter 11. Deuteronomy chapter 11, and reading again at verse 18, we're going to consider verses 18 to 21.

Verse 18.

There are many types of technology available to us now that help us in daily life.

[28 : 48] Technology itself, of course, is morally neutral, you might say. There's no sin in owning and using the likes of a smartphone.

But technology, smartphones included, can have a profound negative moral influence on lives. They can actually have so much of the world's thinking fed into our souls, sometimes even imperceptibly, that we don't really notice what's going on.

And in a recent work, an author called Jonathan Haidt, wrote a book called The Anxious Generation, How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness.

Now, I haven't read that whole book, but I've seen this quotation from it, and it's as follows. He was commenting on the upsurge in the use of smartphones, particularly between 2010 and 2015, when they began to be used increasingly.

And he says this was a move that essentially migrated the social lives of Western youth onto their phones. They became the first generation in history to go through puberty with a portal in their pocket that called them away from people nearby into an alternative universe that was exciting, unstable, and unsuitable for children and adolescents.

[30 : 29] And what he meant by that was that because of the proliferation of smartphones, and sadly the way that many younger children even nowadays have access to the Internet through smartphones, it's calling us into an alternative universe, an alternative company of people.

They're not really company. They're just digitally available to us online. But it's calling us away from the more familiar setting of the community we belong to in family and in the church, that really are the community or communities that must and ought to shape our lives, especially when they are themselves guided by the truth of God.

So the church and the family, church that's faithful to God, a family that is established as a Christian family on Christian lines, are themselves not just alternatives to that other universe that's out there, but also a necessary bulwark against it, a necessary counter to it.

We have the great privilege, friends, of the strong bonds that exist and are created and continued in a healthy gospel church that enable us to actually be set against those influences that seek to be damaging spiritually and morally to ourselves as adults as well as our children.

And all of that takes us back really to the Old Testament, of course, as well, where you find these strong bonds, these covenant bonds, these family bonds, these bonds of people spiritually united together in relationship to God.

[32 : 15] So often in the Old Testament, that's how the people of Israel and their relation to God are set out for us. And you can see it here in this chapter in Deuteronomy, in these verses that we've read and are looking at briefly today.

Obviously, these verses set out aspects of their relationship to God, of their relationship to one another, their relationship to the truth of God, to the words of God.

And the promise that's given to them is that if they are faithful to these ways of God, faithful to his law, faithful to his covenant, faithful to all the way in which he would have them to live, then the promise is their days will belong in the land that God has given to them in the land of Canaan.

We'll come to that point in the course of our study. It's clear that children belonged meaningfully to the covenant community of Israel in those days, and indeed on into the days of the New Testament as well, so that the church, as it comes to be the church in the New Testament, is no different.

Children are not somehow or other just added on to it, but not really properly belonging to it. One of the principles underlining or underlying our baptism of children is that they belong to the covenant community of God, and on the basis of their parents' faith, they themselves are given, just like the Old Testament children, the male children, were circumcised in their infancy, because they belonged to that covenant community of Israel in their covenant relationship with God.

[33 : 54] And that same principle follows through into the practice of infant baptism, and we're not in any way saying that we're special because of that. There are many churches, many denominations that don't practice infant baptism, but this is our practice.

This is what has been our practice. This is continuing to be our practice, because we believe it's biblical based on the way in which God's covenant runs through Scripture in his relationship with his people.

That's another subject, another big subject. But that same principle of children belonging to the church, to the visible church, the people of God visibly in the world, underlies out a practice of baptism.

So what is this passage telling us today? What do we learn from this passage about these people of Israel and about ourselves as the church of God, the visible church of God in this world?

Well, first of all, here are a people steeped in God's truth. A people steeped or to be steeped in God's truth.

[34 : 56] You notice what he's saying here in verse 18. You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and so on.

You shall lay up these words of mine. And that's emphatic in the text. These words of mine is how God put it. As he was distinguishing his words from the words of anyone else, from any other types of words or teaching, he is saying these words of mine are what you give your primary attention to.

You must lay up these words of mine in your heart, the words that I'm giving you, these directions that I'm giving you, this teaching that I'm giving you, this word that's come directly from myself to you, whether it's through Moses or through any other leader such as Moses down through the ages, even the apostles as well.

Of course, in the New Testament, God through them was revealing his will to his people, and these words are God's authoritative word as he used these people to convey them. And so for ourselves today, this is what our Bible consists of, these words of mine, these words of God.

And we are to lay them in our hearts. And it's interesting, the words lay up in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, you shall lay up these words of mine.

[36 : 24] And it's an interesting phrase that because it's actually used in chapter 10 and verse 2, if you just cast your mind back to that. He's talking there about the tablets of stone, the tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written.

And he said, At that time, the Lord said to me, Cut for yourself two tablets of stone like the first, and come up to me on the mountain and make an ark of wood. And I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets that you broke.

And you shall put them in the ark. Now, these words, put them in the ark. There's a deliberate placement, a purpose, and a placement in the way that they had to put the words written on the Ten Commandments in the ark.

This is going back to the first time God gave them that. And this is the same word that's used here for placing the words of God in our hearts. You shall put them, you shall lay them up in your hearts.

In other words, when you read your Bible, when you hear the Bible, the word of the gospel preached, when you're actually dealing with the words of God, my words, these words of mine, we're not to treat them like any other words.

[37 : 35] We're not to treat them casually. We're not to treat them in such a way that says, well, that's okay for the moment, but I can actually just leave it there. We are to lay them up in our heart as deliberately, as purposefully, as the tablets of stone were placed in the ark.

We are to place, we are to lay up the words of God in our hearts, the words that he's given us now in the Bible, with care, with purpose, with thoughtful placement.

That means when we come to an occasion such as this, when we hear the word of God preached, we're to say to ourselves, I have to say to myself, though I'm the preacher, it's still the same words have to go into my heart as well.

We are to say, what is God saying here? How is this meaningful to me in my life? How must I use what I'm actually seeing or hearing in these words of God?

What place do they have in my thoughts? How do they fit into the way that I see the world, the way that I live in the world, the way that I go about my family life? You see, you shall lay them up.

[38 : 47] You shall carefully place them, thoughtfully place them, purposefully place them in your heart. And he says, you shall bind them. He went on to say, you shall bind them.

You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And of course, as well as that, putting them on their house as well, on the doorposts.

What he's saying by that, of course, literally that was true of the Jewish people, down to the Old Testament, still true of them to this day, that you'll find them, many of them who are seriously religious at least, they'll find little phylacteries, little ways in which boxes or whatever, in which the extracts from the Ten Commandments or whatever, are actually set out before them.

They're on their doorposts, in their homes or whatever. So literally, this was going to be true of those people, Moses was speaking to them. But what does this mean for ourselves? How has that got any meaning for us today?

Because we don't actually hold a box that we tie then to our persons in such a way that contains extracts from the Word of God. Well, what it means is that we become so familiar with the Bible that we carry it into all our circumstances.

[40 : 04] You think of a Jew in the days of Moses and Jewish people then, even to this day, as they go about, those of them who are carrying this out literally, well, they carry out these, they carry about these extracts with them.

And what it's saying to us today is, here's your Bible, set it up in your heart, lay it up in your heart, but lay it up in such a way that you continually keep doing this.

Become so familiar with the words of the Bible, with the teaching of the Bible, that you carry it with you into all your circumstances. As we'll see in a minute, the context of teaching their children was that they would be taught in the different circumstances of family life.

And here we are today, some of us parents, some of us grandparents, some of us young people, some of us children. Here's what God is saying to us. This Bible is my words, these words of mine.

Lay them up in your heart. Bind them to you in such a way that you're constantly, you're constantly learning this word, learning what it means, becoming familiar with it.

[41 : 11] Because it gives us what's often called, a moral compass to our lives. Just as a compass points all the way to the magnetic north, the ordinary compass.

So the Bible is a spiritual compass for our lives. It will always keep us pointing in the right direction if we follow it. And for that, we need to lay it up in our hearts.

We need to constantly add to our familiarity and knowledge of it. I always admire those people. I'm not one of them. But I admire those people who constantly are able to bring the word of God up in their conversation in different circumstances in life.

And it's a wonderful thing when you, whether it's in a care home or in somebody's own home or whatever, when you actually come to people perhaps who have lost some of their mental faculties.

And yet when you start quoting the word of God to them, they will follow you word for word, especially if it's a psalm that you're going to sing. Why is that? What's brought that about?

[42 : 23] Because they've laid the word of God up in their hearts. Because they've lived by it day by day. Because they're so familiar with it that even though their circumstances have changed, they're still drawing from the word of God words which are meaningful to them.

And that's how it must be for yourselves and myself as well. Not just as individuals. We're talking today especially of God's truth at the heart of family life. That's what the title we've given to our study today is.

God's truth at the heart of family life. How is God's truth to be placed at the heart of family life? Well, you take it and you set it up in your own hearts. You lay it up there.

You carefully place it. You thoughtfully place it. You purposefully place it in your heart. And then you carry it with you. As your moral compass into the various circumstances in life.

Because as you know very well for yourselves as adults and for our children especially, there are so, so many other influences. Pulling them in different directions from the compass of God's word.

[43 : 27] And the more you have that compass of God's word, the more you will be sure that you're facing the right direction and traveling in the right direction, morally and spiritually, in your life.

There are people steeped in God's truth. And we are a people who seek to be the same. We know God's word. We hear God's word.

We read God's word. We lay it up in our hearts. We want to be steeped in this word. We want to use all our opportunities to actually become more and more familiar with the teaching of the Bible.

I know people will say nowadays that's just old-fashioned. It's completely out of date. Not if you believe this to be the word of God as we do. Because God's word does not become dated.

It doesn't need to be renewed. It doesn't need to be adjusted to take account of whatever the circumstances in our society are today. God's word is God's word.

[44 : 32] God doesn't change his mind. And God doesn't need to rub something out and replace it with something else. That's why it's so important to us to lay it up in our hearts today.

But there are people, secondly, not only steeped in God's word, but are people who teach our children God's truth. Teaching their children. So we teach our children God's truth.

You see here, you shall teach it to your children. You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you're sitting in your house and so on. Now that doesn't mean that the children don't ask things.

In chapter 6 of Deuteronomy, you'll find that the children themselves are given the facility of asking about the meaning of the Passover and things like that. From chapter 6, verse 20.

When your son asks you in time to come, what is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the Lord our God has commanded you? Then you shall say to your son, we were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt, and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.

[45 : 38] He showed signs and wonders, great and grievous. He brought us out from there that he might bring us into the land that he swore to give to our fathers. In other words, when our children do ask, what's the meaning of the communion?

What is the Lord's Supper all about? Why do we baptize children? Why do we baptize adults? What is the meaning of that? Why do we go to church? Why are there elders in the church? What's the meaning of all of those things that we see?

We explain them, or seek to explain them, in terms of what God has revealed to us. And especially when you think of the likes of baptism and the Lord's Supper, just like in the days of Israel with the Passover, they are intimately connected, inseparably connected with the things of God's salvation in Christ.

That's what we need to constantly set before the children when they ask, as they should ask. And we have to encourage them to ask. But here in chapter 11, it's actually the responsibility is laid upon the parents themselves.

You shall teach them to your children. The initiative and the response there is with parents. But of course, the church fits into that context so very well.

[46 : 49] We're privileged ourselves as a congregation, as many other congregations are, to have people who are dedicated to the teaching of our children in Sunday school, in Bible class, in tweenies, various other activities with the Word of God as some input into it.

All of these things together form the framework in which we seek to present this teaching of the Bible, along with the formal teaching of sermons and of Sunday worship and so on.

Church context is a community together. That's why it's so important to think of the church as God's covenant community. They're people bound together by the truth of God.

Because that's where we need to be so careful with our own relationships and also our own online activities, but especially protective of our children.

There are many online communities, just to use that word, but they're very different to the relationships that you have in terms of physical community relationships.

[47 : 59] Online relationships, well, they're flimsy. They're sometimes not all that real. They can disappear just like that. They can be very aggressive. They can be very difficult.

They can become a real burden. But the church and Christian families ought to be where bonds of love and care and compassion and help are actually available to us.

Let's face it, our children today face so much peer pressure, as we refer to it. Pressure from their own age group, right? Through from primary school up into secondary school age, peer pressure is an enormous feature in their lives.

That's why I mentioned at the beginning of our study today the influence of smartphones. Because the smartphone brings that community out there online into your own presence.

Into your bedroom. Into your living room. Into your car. It's hardly any place that you get rid of it, unless you're very strict about how you use it.

[49 : 05] We have to actually watch how our children use it as well. Because peer approval is hugely a feature of young people's lives.

Especially when they get online and they want the approval of those that they're friends with on Facebook or whatever it is, TikTok, whatever. However, the approval of that community, that community, online community, is so important to so many people today.

You know, one of the great words that we find used is influencers. And I just happened to check on the meaning of that word. It's used a lot in terms of online communities.

And people actually live lives and not just live lives, but actually gain income, sometimes massive income, from being an influencer. Influencers in terms of what you wear, what you eat, how you live your life, what's important, what isn't.

You know, some of these influencers, I just checked a couple of them today. One of them had 44 million followers. 44 million followers, especially if they're from a celebrity background or from the pop culture, music culture, whatever.

[50 : 26] Massive, massive influence. One person with a smartphone, 44 million followers. Just imagine what that's doing to young people's minds if they don't have the benefit of God's truth to keep them, to direct them.

That's why the author I quoted at the beginning said, they're the first generation that carry a portal in their pockets through which they have so much influence coming into their lives.

From influence. I'm not saying there's not good influence. Of course there is. There's much good influence. There's nothing wrong with that. But there's a whole lot of bad influence as well. Both for adults and for children.

And that's where influencers in the church setting, influencers in the family setting are so crucial to offset all that influence that you find online and whatever else it is in the world.

Because the influence in the church bonds of friendship and of family bonds. The influencers that come to take their stand in God's truth.

[51:34] And that's their point of departure. That's the kind of influencer that you want to be and that you want to have influencing your life as well as mine. The most important influence in my life and in many other people's lives here were people who loved the Lord.

People who showed me the ways of God. People who told me that the influence of the world, though I didn't want to know it at the time, was harmful. Was not the thing that you should follow in life.

But when I came to know God. When I came to know the ways of God's truth. Then the influencers. These Christian people. These mature Christian leaders.

They're the influencers that really shaped my life. That's why I thank God to this day. That there are influencers. The church of God.

In God's families in the world. Families that are Christian families. That's the influence our children need. That's why it's important having children belonging to the church.

[52:43] Coming to be influenced properly. Morally and spiritually. By those whose conviction is that this is the word of God. I need to lay it up in my heart. I need to convey it meaningfully and lovingly to my children.

To my grandchildren and so on. You see. The teaching context he gives us here is important. Just before we come to wind up. He says here.

There are five elements really that he mentions here. Aren't there? He says you shall teach them to your children. Talking of them. When you're sitting in your house. That's one. When you're walking by the way.

That's two. When you lie down. That's three. When you rise. That's four. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house. And on your gates. You see. He's saying there. When you're sitting in your house.

In other words. At mealtimes. And I remember when I was involved with church camps. A number of years ago now. But surprising even then. The number of children.

[53:43] That were never actually familiar with sitting around a table at a family meal. They were given something to eat. They went off and they just sat in front of the telly and ate it there.

Never used to actually sitting together. Around a family table. Around a family meal. Never used to having grace said before meals. And so many in the world sadly are like that.

So many in our own community. Around us are like that. But here is the alternative to that. Here is the counter to that. You shall teach. You shall speak of these things. You shall teach them to your children.

Talking of them while you are sitting in your house. How many of us today. Especially if we have children around our table. While we're having the meal. Are going to talk about spiritual things.

About Jesus. About the love of God. About something or other that comes from the Bible. This is what he's saying to us here. Teaching them when you're sitting down.

[54:39] And also when you're walking by the way. When you're actually going on holiday. When you're traveling. When you're going from one place to another. He's saying. You shall teach your children these things when you're doing that.

In other words. When you go on holiday. You don't leave your Bible at home. You don't leave the Bible's teaching. Behind your closed doors at home. You take it with you. You teach your children.

Even when you're walking on the way. When you're traveling on the way. When you lie down. When you rise up. The two points of the day.

When we wake. And when we go to sleep. Everything in between too. Of course. But it's important. When we wake up. That our thoughts. Are upon God's word. Upon God himself.

That when we go to. End the day. That we're thinking of God. How good he's been to us that day. What we've learned from him that day. In other words. We're talking about family worship. Family worship.

[55 : 37] Is in decline. And has been for many years. And family worship. Where children. Especially the younger children. Are nurtured. In hearing the Bible read.

And having it explained. Briefly. Simply. It doesn't have to be complicated. And hearing. A parent or parents. Pray to God. That's the context. The beginning.

The end of each day. He's saying here. You shall teach them. In that context. And you shall mark them. On the doorposts. On the gates of your house. In other words.

So that your house. Will be distinguished. As a house that fears God. Of course. We don't. Necessarily. As I said. At the beginning. Have something. Attached to our doorposts.

That say. This is a Christian home. It's much more. By way of. What we do. And how we're seen. And how we live. And how we behave. But our homes. Need to be.

[56 : 33] Marked out. As belonging to God. As belonging to. A people who love the Lord. And we can only do that. As we follow. The teachings of God's word.

For ourselves. So there are people. Who are steeped in God's truth. There are people who teach. Our children. God's truth. And the context of teaching. Is really. As wide as to take in.

All of those circumstances. That's meant. That are mentioned there. In verses 19 to 20. But he gives us a promise. Let me just finish with this. You shall do this. So that your days.

And the days of your children. May be multiplied. In the land. That the Lord swore. To your fathers. To give them. That doesn't mean. Necessarily. That they would live.

To a ripe old age. Every one of them. Many of them died. In childhood. Especially in those days. Means rather. That they would not be.

[57 : 29] Displaced. From the land. That God was giving them. Because being displaced. From the land of Canaan. Was a mark of God's displeasure. A mark of God's judgment. Indeed. And the exile that came.

Later on. That's foretold here. And by the prophets. Especially. When they were taken away. To Babylon. For their time of captivity. In Babylon. For these 70 years. That was God's judgment.

Because they had abandoned. God's ways. They had actually. Brought a lot. Of pagan. Ideology. And practice. Into their. Into their. Way of life.

And so. To be displaced. From the land. Was actually. A mark of God's judgment. It was itself. God's judgment. And what he's saying. To him here is.

So that your days. Will be long. In the land. That they'll be multiplied. That you will not. Be displaced. Ubruted. From this covenant land. Do these things.

[58 : 23] And that will not happen. And so. Where does that fit into. Our experience. Our circumstances. Today. Well. How do we come to have. Stability.

In family life. How do we come to have. Stability. In a church. Congregational setting. How do we have. Stability. In our individual lives. This is all about.

Stability. Remaining in the land. Stability. Peace. Satisfaction. Well you come to it. By laying up the words of God.

In your heart. That's what he's saying. In verse 13. Isn't it. If you will indeed obey. My commandments. That I command you today. To love the Lord.

Your God. And to serve him. With all your heart. And with all your soul. He will give you. The rain for your land. In its season. You see. This was not to be.

[59 : 19] A legalistic observance. Of these commandments. As if to say. Well we've done that. And now God is obliged. To bless us. Now we're going to do them. Out of love for God.

That's where we start. That's the beginning. That's the root. Our love for the Lord. When we love him. With all our heart. Then the promises.

You see. Come into their own. The promise of stability. The promise of being. Kept by him. Guided by him. Blessed by him. We pray that God.

Will bless to us today. These words. We're going to sing now. Some more verses. This time we're singing. From Psalm number 90. Psalm number 90.

To the tune. Kilmarnock. At this point. Others will be coming in. To join the service. Psalm number 90. That's on page 350.

[60 : 30] And so we're singing from verse 14. Oh with thy tender mercies Lord. As they early satisfy. So we rejoice. Shall all our days.

And still be glad in thee. According as the days have been. Wherein we grief have had. And years wherein we ill have seen. So do thou make us glad. Oh let thy work and power.

Appear thy servants face before. And show unto their children dear. Thy glory evermore. And let the beauty of the Lord. Our God be us upon. Our handiworks establish thou.

Establish them. Each one. These verses to tune Kilmarnock. O with thy tender mercies Lord. O with thy tender mercies Lord. Thus there is satisfied.

O with thy tender mercies Lord. Thus there is satisfied.

[61 : 31] Who will, since we are in the Lord. And shall Paris be.

God be. Ever. The world we hope and have. Close societals. Friends have been. Xin We'll be right back.

We'll be right back.

We'll be right back.

We'll be right back.

[64 : 01] We're right back.

We're right back.

We're right back.

And we give thanks for the reminder in it that we ourselves are liable to the death that our sins deserve. And we give thanks today that you deliver us from such when we trust in you, when we come to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior.

And we thank you today, O Lord, for the many promises that are attached to the sacrament itself and to the family life that's associated with it. We do pray today that you would grant your blessing to us as observers, and to their children as we find ourselves today with them in this happy and joyous occasion.

[66:09] Bless them, we pray, and bless this water now as it's used for a sacred use. May it please you, O Lord, to follow its administration with the blessing of this child and the blessing of this family.

Continue to pray, O Lord, to follow us, O Lord, to follow us, O Lord, to follow us today.

Just turn now and switch it to the camera. That's great. Yeah, it's brilliant. It's fantastic. Amen. Ellie, Margaret Ann McLeod, I baptize you in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, One God.

May God bless you and keep you. May he make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. May he lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. Let's briefly pray.

Lord we ask that you would bless Ellie now as she has received baptism that you would bless her parents that you would bless Alexander that you would bless them as a family bless them in their home and in all the things that they do together we ask oh Lord that you would continue to watch over us as a people to continue to provide for us and in all of these things we pray in your mercy and grace that you would receive our thanks for we ask it in Jesus name Amen Please be seated you can take your seat Now my apologies I left out a psalm when I gave it to the to Lizzie for the intimations and also to the presenter so we'll sing 133 So we're going to sing Psalm 133 on page 424 Psalm 133 that's on page 424

[68:25] It's a psalm that talks about the benefits of being together of being a people who are united together by the truth of God and as compared to the Jew that comes down on Hermon's hills on the blessing of God that he has commanded so we'll sing these three verses of the psalm we'll stand to sing after we've sung the psalm please remain seated seated for the benediction standing sorry for the benediction Behold how good a thing it is and how becoming well together such as brethren are in unity to dwell let's praise God thank you out to the beneficiary the good of the together now we wheel to keep out to neg Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. This morning I'll go to the door here to my left. Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you now and evermore. Amen.

Amen.