

The Best News in the World

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Date: 20 December 2020

Preacher: Rev Kenneth I Macleod

[0 : 00] I extend a very warm welcome to everybody this evening on behalf of Stornowee Free Church. And we pray that as we gather round God's word, that we will know his blessing and his help and his grace.

We're going to begin by reading from Psalm 8. Sing Psalm, Psalm 8. In all the earth, O Lord, O Lord, how glorious is your name!

For you have set above the heavens your glory and your fame. From infants and from children's lips you ordered praise to sound, to silence all your enemies, the wicked to confound.

When I regard the heavens you made, your fingers work, I trace. I see the moon and the shining stars which you have set in place. I ask myself, what then is man that you should give him thought? The son of man that you to him such gracious care have brought. You made him little less than those who dwell in heaven above. And you have crowned and honoured him with glory and with love.

[1 : 08] Let us now bow in prayer. Let us pray. O Lord, as we gather before you this evening, we give thanks for, again, the opportunity and privilege that you have given to us.

We're able to come into the presence of the King. Lord, our God, we give thanks that you have made known to us the way of life.

That you have revealed to us through your word who you are and what you have done for us. We are amazed and it is so important for us to stop and to reflect and to remind ourselves from your word what it is that you've actually done.

That the Lord of heaven and earth has come amongst us. That he visited us personally. That the Lord of glory has come to walk this world and to become one with us apart from sin in order to take our sin.

And Lord, we have to confess that far too often we forget the enormity of what it is that you've done. And that somehow we just accept these things.

[2 : 17] Maybe we've grown up with them and we have become so familiar with all that is involved in the giving of the Son of God. And of the dying of the Son of God in our nature.

And the rising of the Son of God. And all that he has done for us and all that he continues to do in us. That sometimes we take these things for granted. And the wonder and the awe of it.

We have to confess, Lord, to our shame. That far too often we don't reflect upon it the way that we should. But we pray that even as we gather before you this evening.

That the thoughts, good thoughts will fill our mind and our heart. And that we will rejoice in all that the Lord has done for us. Because you could have left us to yourselves.

In fact, it would have been right to have left us to ourselves. Because we don't have anything. We are nothing that we can bring that commends ourselves to you.

[3 : 16] But that you have in your grace and in your love and in your mercy. You have come, reached out to us and drawn us to yourself. So as we come under your word tonight, again, we pray that your word will come with blessing and with reality and with power into our own experience.

And even although we come to passages that we're familiar with, we pray that as each day is a new day, that your word will come with a new impression upon our souls and a new meaning into our lives.

And that you will stir up our hearts in order that we will follow you in the right way. Lord, we give thanks for your goodness and mercy that you have promised will follow us all the days of our life.

And indeed, as we look back, there is nothing that we would rather more than that your goodness and mercy would follow us all the days of our life. And that we might dwell in your house forever.

Lord, we pray to bless in every single one who gathers under your word tonight.

And we pray for all who gather everywhere. Not just here as we gather in Stornoway, but wherever people are involved in your word and wherever people engage in your word and wherever people listen in and tune in to the way that your word is broadcast today.

[4 : 33] We give thanks for the way that your word is broadcast globally. And we pray that everybody who comes under your word tonight may be able to rejoice in you. Pray especially for any who as yet don't know you as Lord and Saviour.

We ask that you will open hearts that have so far remained closed against you. Open eyes that are blind to the truth and ears that are deaf to your word.

And we ask, Lord, that you will make a willing people in your day of power. And that you will break down the barriers that are preventing people from uniting their souls to yourself by faith.

And we pray that you will bless us richly. Bless every home and every family. As we are approaching, as it comes to Christmas time and New Year, we pray, Lord, that your blessing will be upon homes and families.

It's a difficult time just now because of restrictions that are placed and upon the worries that are brought about through travel and all these things at this time of year.

[5 : 39] We ask, Lord, that you will keep us safe and that you will continue to protect us and that you will bless us. We give thanks, Lord, for the breakthrough that has been made with regard to the vaccine.

And we pray that the vaccines will roll out and that all who need that urgently will receive the vaccines and that a greater level of protection will be brought.

Although it will still be a good while before there will be a degree of returning to whatever normality we do go back to. We give thanks, Lord, for the great brains and the great work of science and medicine and being able to, in such a short time, being able to produce a vaccine.

We give thanks above all to you because you have equipped minds and you have given the great intellect to people. We pray, Lord, that you will bless those who suffer at this time.

And this time of year is often a difficult time. There's so often there's tragedies and accidents at this time of year. I pray for all, Lord, who have been through difficult times because of that.

[6 : 47] And ask, Lord, that your grace and help and strength will be given to them. Be with all who mourn and are sad, those who have lost loved ones. Those, Lord, who are looking at the empty chair and who feel the empty space in their heart.

And the silence of loved ones who no longer are present is a powerful silence. And any heart tonight is broken.

We ask, Lord, that into the veil of tears that this world so often is, that you will bring healing and help and solace and comfort. We pray, Lord, that you will bless us as a nation.

We seem to be departing more and more from you. And we seem to be going our own way and turning away from you. And that's a worst thing that we can do because righteousness exalts a nation.

Oh, Lord, forgive us. And despite every effort that has been made against you and against your word and every effort that has been made to remove your influence from our society, Lord, we pray that all these efforts will falter because it's a worst thing that could happen to us.

[7 : 54] And that your word will gain more prominence. And the influence of your word will gain more prominence in our land, despite all the efforts of those who seek to undermine your way and your cause.

Lord, be gracious to them. Open their eyes to see, to see you and to see the marvel of your grace, to see the wonder of who you are. And may they be brought to realise just what it is that they're doing against you and against their fellow being.

O Lord, O God, we pray for our leaders, those in authority over us. And as we're heading towards a countdown, as it were, towards Brexit and all that is involved in these things, Lord, there's so much uncertainty in our land.

And so many people are filled with so many anxieties and worries and depressions. Lord, O God, we pray that you'll be gracious to us and that you will watch over us as a church and as you will watch over us as a state.

O Lord, grant us your grace. Be with those who are ill and those who are laid aside. Pray for our NHS and we give thanks for them and for all our carers in homes and in the community.

[9 : 03] And ask, Lord, that you will bless them. What a great work they do. Bless all our emergency services and all who keep, as it were, the very arteries of society at work, keeping things going, often hidden away in people who do work that maybe others don't appreciate or realise is giving a massive contribution to the well-being of society.

We pray for them. Watch over us then as we come under your word and cleanse us, we pray, from our every sin. In Jesus' name we ask all. Amen. Amen. Amen. Excuse me.

Just a wee word to the young folk. Well, as you know, this is the time of year when we get presents and we give presents. And it's a great time of year.

It's quite an exciting time. And it's always great when you, particularly like a Christmas day, and you open your parcels, open your presents. And there there are things maybe, maybe you weren't expecting, but you realise and say, wow, this is, this is, this is great.

Or maybe you open your parcels there, it's just exactly what you were looking for. You know, it's great when you, the excitement and the thrill.

[10 : 18] And it's something that we just, we look forward to. And very often on Christmas morning, not just children, but grown-ups, there's a sort of a quiet satisfaction, a quiet happiness, because there you have something maybe you longed for or wanted, or even that you weren't expecting.

And very often, I remember, when the children were young, after the presents were opened and the excitement that was involved, there would be a period of real stillness and quietness that they were playing with what they had got.

But, you know, the sad thing, in a sense, and I'm not taking away from the joy of the excitement of Christmas, is that nothing really lasts. The things that excite you for a while, eventually, sometimes they break, or they wear out, or you begin to lose interest in them.

Because nothing really lasts, even the, even the best of things never really last. I remember telling you before, when I got my first football strip, I got the, the top, the shorts, the socks, and I still remember the thrill, standing in front of the mirror, saying, I can't believe it's me.

And I was so delighted with it, I wouldn't take it off all day, and I wouldn't take it off at night, I slept in it. But, of course, the day came when that strip wouldn't fit anymore. And no doubt it was, it got, it got all kind of worn, because I wore it, and wore it, and wore it.

[11 : 57] I remember that night, just the first night, going to bed in it, and I was dreaming of scoring a hat-trick for Aberdeen in the cup final at Hamden. But, that strip was gone long ago.

I still remember the first car I got. It was an Austin, a green one, Austin 1100. And I was so delighted with it. And I still remember the number plate, even though sometimes I have to go out and look at, look at the number plate now, because I sometimes can't even remember what it is. But that one was SST 64K. I still remember it. Where's that car now? It's a little scrap. It's gone. And that's what happens with everything.

It doesn't, no matter how gleaming, and how beautiful, and how new things are, new cars become old. New houses become old houses.

That's a sad thing about this world, that nothing lasts. One of the great blessings in life is the blessing of marriage. But even on the day of the wedding, even on our wonderful day when bride and groom are taking their vows together, there is a reminder.

[13 : 08] That however close and powerful this union comes where husband and wife come together as one, the two become one, we're told, until death do you part.

It's going to come an end to everything. And you know, that's the truth of everything except one thing. There is only one thing that you can get in this life that lasts forever.

And that is the greatest gift that we can ever be given. And it is the gift of eternal life by Jesus Christ. Because when Jesus comes into a person's heart and life, it is forever.

That's why it's called eternal life. The moment you come to trust in Jesus, the moment you accept Jesus as King and Lord in your life, by faith you rest in him and believe in him, it's forever.

Even death doesn't bring an end to it. It is the only thing, the only passion, we could say, that is forever and ever and ever.

[14 : 24] And so I would ask you and say, listen, here we are, coming to Christmas, time of gifts. Ask the Lord for that this year, might be the year if you haven't already, ask him, Lord, give me the gift of your son.

God Almighty, give me the gift of your son. Because that is the greatest gift that can ever be given. And the greatest gift that can ever be received.

Lord, please come into my heart. Because the moment you do, you're in it forever and ever. And even when I come to sleep in death, I will wake in glory to be with you. With eternal life forever. That's the greatest gift ever. You make sure that that gift is yours. Let's say the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.

[15 : 36] 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 and the power and the glory forever.

Amen. Let us read now God's Word and we'll read it in the book of Luke. Luke's Gospel and chapter 2. We're going to read the first 20 verses.

Luke chapter 2. In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. There was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria.

And all went to be registered, each to his own town. Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary his betrothed, who was with child.

And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

[16 : 52] And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear.

And the angel said to them, Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy, that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you, you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths, and lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest.

And on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased. When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, Let us go over to Bethlehem, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.

[18 : 11] And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.

And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God, for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Amen, and may God bless to us this reading of his own holy word. And I want us to consider just that little section from verse 6 to verse 10.

And while they were there, that is in Bethlehem, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear.

[19 : 25] And the angel said to them, Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Well, there are many wonderful statements in this chapter, a chapter that describes to us just the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into this world.

Not so long, I think maybe it was about this time last year, we looked at verse 11 of this chapter, and we looked about at the word Saviour.

And we took the letters of the word Saviour, and we saw that S stood for Save, what Jesus does. A for Able, that he is able to save to the uttermost.

We saw that V stood for victory, the victory that Jesus gives over death and over the grave and over sin. We saw I for the individual, that he is the Saviour of each one, each one individually.

We saw O for only, that he is the only Saviour, that there aren't a lot of Saviours, there's only the one Saviour. We saw O for the Lord, we saw O for the Lord, that there is an urgency, the message of the Gospel is always given with an urgency.

[20 : 43] And we saw O for the Lord, that he is the reliable Saviour, that he never lets go anyone that he saves. So that is what we saw last year, that Jesus is the great Saviour.

Now of course the coming of the Son of God in our nature is really nothing short of a mystery. It is the greatest marvel ever that has taken place.

That the second person of the Godhead, the Son of God, should humble himself and take our nature and have that nature tied up in his own divine being and have it not just to come into this world for a wee while, but to continue in our nature forever and ever and ever.

And it really is the most wonderful thing that has ever happened. And to think that the Son of God who was behind the creation of all things, the one whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, and yet we find him shut up in the confines of the womb.

It's a mystery beyond all mysteries. And of course there's so much of it we just can't understand. But faith lays hold of it. That's what faith enables us to do.

[22 : 11] Faith persuades us of the reality, even of things that our mind cannot understand, but we see them as clearly and we grasp them and lay hold upon them and we base our whole life, our present, our past and our future upon all that Christ is and all that Christ has done.

And of course we know that the Lord Jesus Christ came into this world to do for us what we couldn't do for ourselves, because we were hopelessly lost.

And even if we wanted to make our way back to God, we didn't know how to make our way back to God. But the Lord has come to show us the way back to God and to himself be the way back to God.

And so, as we were saying to the young people, at the time of the year when gifts are given and received, the greatest gift this world has ever known is heaven's gift to us, the Lord Jesus Christ. And so this chapter is telling us about the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into this world. And you notice the chapter opens by announcing that a decree had come from the Roman Emperor, Emperor Caesar Augustus, that all the world was to be registered.

[23 : 35] And in order to be registered, you had to go back to where your people had come from. And supposing you, just supposing here, for instance, that you live here in Stornow, but that your people were from Point or from Loss or from Nests or from Carlow, whatever, that's where you would have to go back.

You had to go back to where your roots were. This is what was required in this registering. And so Joseph and Mary, who lived away up in Nazareth in the top, had to travel all the way down into Judah, right down to Bethlehem, because that's where they were to register.

So Mary and Joseph began the long journey back to Bethlehem. And you know, it's wonderful how God is in control of everything, because here is this Roman Emperor who has no idea of the God of heaven and earth.

And yet the God of heaven and earth is influencing to bring about this particular registration at this particular point in order that the Son of God will be born in Bethlehem.

Because about 500 years prior to this, Micah the prophet had prophesied that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. And so in the fullness of time, because the Bible often used this expression of the fullness of time, in other words, the time that God had appointed and ordained for the Son of God to come into this world, here this time had come.

[25 : 18] And so this great, the mightiest man in the world, at this particular juncture, orders this registration in order that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem.

And you know, that should calm our troubled minds, because so often as we look around in this world, a world where evil seems to be on the wrong page, and we wonder what is going to happen, let us never lose sight of the fact that God remains in control.

And the Bible tells us that the King's heart is in the hand of the Lord, and He will turn it whichever way He will. You see, God has never at any point lost control of this universe that He has created. He is God, and He remains God, and will always remain God. And so that should calm us. Little did Caesar Augustus realize that in what he was doing, he was enabling biblical prophecy to be fulfilled. And the coming of this King into this world was to be the King of a Kingdom that is going to last forever. The Roman Empire, who could have foretold, or who could have thought, that of course the Bible foretold it was going to crumble.

[26 : 39] It was part of Daniel's vision, of Nebuchadnezzar's vision, the book of Daniel. It was the feet of iron and clay. All these great kingdoms, the Babylonian and the Persians and the Greek,

they all came, they flourished, they thrived, they dominated.

Then they crumbled. They were, but here is one that will never crumble. It is the only kingdom. This kingdom shall last forever. And so we find that Jesus is born.

Now, it's amazing. The Bible never dramatizes events. In fact, if it does anything, it downplays it. Facts are often given with, really with the simplest brevity.

Say, for example, when Jesus rose from the dead and he appeared to the disciples in the room. Remember, they were in the locked room. And it was his first appearance to them as a group. And it tells us, when they saw him, then were the disciples glad. That was kind of like the understatement of understatement. They were absolutely thrilled.

[27 : 54] They were beside themselves with joy. Here he is. He's risen. It was one of the most sublime moments ever in their experience in their life. Then were the disciples glad.

So this is what I mean how the Bible tends to downplay. And here is the most significant birth that ever took place in this world. And it tells us just so matter of fact, in just the simplest way of what has happened.

Now, we find that Jesus, it tells us very simply that it couldn't be simpler. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth.

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. The swaddling cloths were, that was customary that they would wrap their little babies in.

But who is this that's been born into this world? Who has arrived into this world at this time? The king of glory. The king, the creator of this world in human nature.

[29 : 01] Now, if you and I were writing this as a story, we would have Jesus being born into a palace.

He would be, Mary would be attended to by the very, very best midwives of the day. He would be wrapped in silk and put in the most magnificent cot.

And his birth would be announced globally. There would be a huge royal fanfare. And there would be banners and everything and this huge declaration of what had happened and who had been born.

But there's none of that. It couldn't have been further from that. Jesus is born in an outhouse. It's probably the end of a house where the cattle would be.

I suppose it's kind of like how it used to be in this island way back, where you'd have the, here's the house, and then there was this bit at the end of the house where the cow would be. And this is kind of how it would be that there was no, because there was no room.

[30 : 07] There was no place for Jesus. There was no place for Mary and Joseph. And the only place they could get was this, as it were, this outhouse where the cattle would be.

And so this is where the Son of God comes, arrives into this world, the King of Glory. And it couldn't have been lower. And yet it is through this very humility and lowness and poverty that is Jesus' life and is ultimately Jesus' death, that it is through his poverty that we are made rich.

That's what the Bible tells us. So he was born there because there was no place in the inn. There was no room in the inn. There was no place in the inn.

And it's quite possible that it was because the population, because of the registration, the population would have probably doubled or maybe even trebled because so many people would be making their way back in order to register.

And quite possibly because Mary was very near the time of giving birth as they travelled from Nazareth way up in the north all the way down to Bethlehem in the south, the journey would have taken them a lot longer because she was carrying the baby Jesus and the time of giving birth was drawing ever closer.

[31 : 35] But you know, it would have been difficult for them. They were probably amongst the last to arrive. And so it would be hard for them to find a place.

And in fact, there was no place except this outhouse. There's a spiritual picture as well here when there's no place for Jesus. No place for Jesus being born into this world.

And you know, it's still the same. There's no room for Jesus. No place for Jesus. And you'll find that in the corridors of power today. That a lot of people have no place for Jesus.

They have no time for Jesus. They're too busy with their lives. And if you went to many of the main players in society today, whether it's in Westminster or in Holyrood or in all the different places of

commerce or industry or whatever and say about Jesus, say, listen, we're too busy with Jesus. That's... And there are so many people who just... They don't even think about Jesus. But there are other people who do think about Jesus and the thoughts that they have are terrible.

[32 : 41] Because they have at the top of their agenda to remove the place of Jesus out of society altogether. They want the Bible removed.

They want the influence of God. They want the influence of the Christian removed out of society. And they say, Christianity belongs to the home.

If you want to be a Christian, have it at home. But don't bring it into society. Don't try and influence society. What an affront to our Creator God.

What an affront to God's great love where he has sent his Son into this world for us. It is the most extraordinary thing where people with great intellects and great gifts on top of their agenda is remove the whole influence of Christianity from society where it's the worst thing that could happen to us as a nation.

Pray. Pray that it won't happen. Ask the God of heaven and earth that his name and his influence will always be in all areas and aspects of society.

[33 : 56] Because if it's taken out from society, we're finished. But, you know, we can push Jesus out from our own lives personally.

And I hope there's nobody listening today who's actually doing that. Where the, over the years, the tug of the gospel has been there. And you know that the Lord is speaking to you and you know what you should be doing.

And yet you keep, you keep pushing Jesus away. But you intend one day to do something about it. You intend one day to allow Jesus in and you say, Lord, before I die, I want to get this sorted.

Well, you don't know when you're going to die. You and I don't know when that time is going to be. And that's why the gospel is always presented in the present, in the now, it's the here.

There's an urgency to it. So you make sure that there is room in your heart for Jesus. Do you know the wonderful thing is that although so many people say there's no room for you, Jesus, because I don't want you, I don't know what it means to be a Christian.

[35 : 05] I'm comfortable where I am just now. Although I know I do need someone really I could do with, but not just now because I don't know how it will impact or affect my life.

So people push away. Remember this, although you might be saying there's no room in my life just now for Jesus. Do you know the wonderful thing is that with regard to the gospel, Jesus says, yet there is room.

There's room for you. Yes, there's room for you today. That's what he says in that great invitation. It doesn't matter how young you are, whether you're in the very threshold of life, or it doesn't matter how old you are, how many years have gone by, and you're still without the Lord, there is still room for you today.

Will you turn to him? Now in verse 8, the focus we find shifts to the shepherds who are watching over their flocks by night. And it's to these shepherds that the angel comes with the news of Christ's birth.

That's very interesting. The angel doesn't come to the church leaders, doesn't come to the chief priests, doesn't come to the priests, doesn't come to the scribes, to the Pharisees, doesn't come to Herod's palace, doesn't come to the nobility.

[36 : 26] It comes to the shepherds, just to the ordinary. And that's one of the wonderful things about the gospel of Jesus Christ. It's not about precision, and it's not about status, it's not about privilege, it's not about any of these things in life.

There is a beautiful oneness in the gospel, where everybody is treated the very same, whether you're the prince in a palace, or the prisoner in a prison.

It's the same message, the same gospel, the same Jesus, for whoever you are. And so it's to these shepherds, ordinary shepherds, and you know, it's very interesting that it's to shepherds.

Because two of the greatest leaders ever in the history of the church on earth were shepherds, Moses and David, who led God's people before they became the greater leaders of God's people.

They spent years as shepherds. And of course, Jesus himself has termed, he terms himself, I am the good shepherd. In the Bible, he's referred to as the great shepherd, and also the chief shepherd.

[37 : 39] But he himself terms himself the good shepherd. So we find that the angel appears to them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them.

And notice their reaction. They were filled with fear. Now these shepherds are tough characters. They faced off in dangers and difficulties.

And so they were hard men, they were tough men. And yet, here they are. And when the glory of the Lord appears, they are filled with fear. And there is no human being that would be filled with fear.

That is going to be the only reaction when the glory of the Lord appears. And every single person that has ever been or ever will be has to stand before the glory of the Lord.

And the only way we can have freedom and liberty in the presence of the glory of the Lord is by having come to know and accept this Lord.

[38 : 48] This isn't even the Lord who has come. It is the angel of the Lord. And yet, they're filled with fear. You know, on that great day, there won't be one atheist or agnostic.

There won't be one secularist or humanist. But all will bow before the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Well, the shepherds were told not to fear.

Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. And so the news that the angel was bringing wasn't just for a small group.

It was for all people. For all people. You see, the greatest thing that we can ever do is to be part of the spread of the gospel throughout this world because the news of Jesus' birth, the news of Jesus coming into this world to be the saviour of sinners is the news that you and I and every person must tell others.

The greatest thing that you can do in the world is to spread the news of the gospel by word and by life. by witnessing, by living, by telling, by sharing when the opportunity is there and telling people about this great saviour.

[40 : 05] The worst thing a person can do is to try and prevent anybody coming to know of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And every attempt that is made to remove God's word is the most heinous sin against heaven.

You know, it's an insult to heaven and an insult to the human race. It's a worst thing that can be done before heaven and the worst thing that can be done to the human race is to try and remove God's word and to remove God's grace and to remove the beauty of what Christ has done.

To tell, to, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should have eternal life. Should not perish but have eternal life.

And yet people want, don't want you to know that. Don't want anybody to hear about that. what does God think of that? Where one day everybody has to answer for what they have done in this world whether good or bad.

And that's about the worst thing that you can do is to try and prevent people from hearing and knowing of God's great love and God's great grace in this world.

[41 : 24] Where here is good news that is above all news. You know so often when we turn on the news or when we read the news it's so gloomy it's so depressing.

Some people say I'm going to stop reading the news I'm going to stop listening to it. I feel depressed afterward because it always seems just just it's so heavy.

Well here is news to gladden the heart. You know there was a moment there where there was the discovery of this vaccine and all of a sudden there was light at the end of the tunnel there was hope set out for the human race.

Once again they say it's going to take time but a vaccine that is 90 or 95% successful has been found.

Yes it'll take a while before it's all rolled out and everybody gets a vaccine and so on. But this was great news. Well here's even greater news.

[42 : 22] there's a disease called sin that there is no human remedy for in this world and we were all born with it and it's all going to destroy us. Destroy us forever unless there is a remedy.

Well God has sent his son as the remedy. He is the remedy and if we take his son if we look to his son if we believe in his son then we will never die with the disease of sin but be ultimately delivered from it.

And that is the best news we could ever hear and that's the news that has been given to us from heaven and that's why in the next verse it says unto you is born a saviour.

Yes for you for me. Will you accept then the saviour who came into this world to save sinners like you and me.

Let us pray. Lord we give thanks for your word and for all that you do for us and all that you give to us. Bless us then we pray taking away your sin in Jesus name. Amen. We're going to conclude singing in Psalm 72 from the Scottish Psalter.

[43 : 33] Psalm 72 these great verses that speak to us about the wonder of who Jesus is. His name from verse 17 His name forever shall endure last like the sun it shall men shall be blessed in him and blessed all nations shall him call.

Blessed be His glorious name to all eternity the whole earth that is glory filled Amen. So let it be. Amen. Amen. Amen. His name forever shall endure last like the sun the sun it shall may shall be blessed in him and blessed all nations shall him call.

Now blessed be the Lord the Lord the God the God of Israel for he alone does wondrous words His glory■■ to all Blessed be his glorious name to all eternity.

The whole earth led his glory fill. Amen.

Now may the grace, mercy, and peace of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit rest and abide upon each one of you now and forevermore. Amen.