

Fear and Faith

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Date: 21 July 2024

Preacher: Mr Scott Macleod

[0 : 00] There's a further notice about the vacancy. Our congregation has recently been made vacant, so I'll just read through that notice on the sheet.

The Kirk session met on Monday the 15th of July and agreed to follow the practice previously adopted during a vacancy by taking on the role of the vacancy committee.

The purpose of the vacancy committee is to arrange for the pulpit to be supplied with ministers who are considered suitable to fill the vacancy, but the final choice belongs to our communicant membership.

The vacancy committee would like to stress that they are seeking to secure the full scope of congregational interest so that the process of contacting ministers and arranging dates for them to preach can begin.

The initial meeting of the vacancy committee is scheduled for Monday the 26th of August, and over the next five weeks, as we pray to the Lord for guidance, the elders would like to encourage everyone in the congregation to speak to their own elder or to any of the elders and inform them of who you would like to be invited to preach in Stornoway.

[1 : 16] Please bear in mind that certain procedural steps are required, namely the completion of a financial schedule as well as a congregational development plan.

It is hoped that both of these items will be presented to the congregation in September before being sent to the Presbytery and the Mission Board for approval.

That's something for us all to pray over. Let us begin our time of worship by singing together in Psalm 40 of the Blue Praise Book in the Scottish Psalter version.

We have a Blue Praise Book available at the door if you don't have one. Psalm 40 in the Scottish Psalter version. You'll find that on page 259.

And we'll sing from verse 1 down to verse 5 and note that verse 5 follows over the turn of the page.

[2 : 20] The words there are, We'll stand to sing these words to God's praise down to the end of verse Mark 5.

I waited for the Lord my God and patiently did bear. I waited for the Lord my God and patiently did bear.

And then to me, He did apply my voice and kind to hear.

Just fruitfully did. Forgive me from the fear for this, And from the mighty pain.

And on our own He set my feet.

[3 : 47] Establishing my way He put a new song in my life For God to magnify Then he shall see it And shall feel And God the Lord rely O blessed is the man Whose trust upon the Lord relies Respect him not the proud

For such a stern aside to life O Lord my God to many are The wonders of the strong Thy gracious thoughts To us work from above O hosts are gone The northern unkind Reck on them To the effective way And speak of them

I will The more I can Be number The more I can Be number God We'll now join our hearts together for a word of prayer.

Our heavenly Father we give thanks to you for this day. We give thanks to you for this opportunity to come before you.

That we can return our thanks to you for all that you have done for us. That we can come and read your word. That we can sing your praises. That we can come to you in prayer.

[6 : 39] And you are a God that will hear us when we pray. Even if we feel like we are in the depths and in the fearful pit like the psalmist. You are a God that can draw near to us.

And put a new song in our heart. And turn our lives around. That we may come and joyfully sing praise to you. For you have saved us from death.

You have redeemed us because Jesus Christ has died on the cross for each and every one of us. And Lord we just pray this time for the young in our congregation.

We pray for those that are on holiday. We pray that you would give them a time of enjoyment. We pray for those that have gone to camp. And we ask that you would be mindful of them in their worries that they might have.

But that they would be supported and encouraged by those that are there. And that they would understand something new about Jesus and God. And that they may have seeds sown in their hearts at a young age.

[7 : 48] That you may bring them to grow. And bring forth much fruit. We pray for our planned holiday club.

We pray that you would go before us in all our plans. And again as we seek to join together to have fun and to learn more about God.

We pray that you would bless us in our time together. We remember our Sunday school in a time of break. We remember our school teachers also. That you would be with them.

Be with those who teach our children in our schools. That they may point them in the direction that God has set out for us.

That God has revealed to us in the Bible. That we should follow Jesus. And that he will provide for us. So be with us Lord as we turn towards your word.

[8 : 49] Give us minds of understanding. And ears to hear what you shall say to us. And all these we ask in Jesus name. Amen. Now I want to say a word to the younger ones that are here with us this morning.

And I want you all to imagine an orchestra. Orchestras consisted usually of lots of different people in lots of different things.

But they are all trying to play music together. And they all have a bit of paper in front of them. That tells them the music that they are playing. The tunes that they are meant to play.

And while they have the music in front of them. They are also looking towards the conductor. They are following that man. They are keeping an eye on that man that is in front of them as well.

And it consists of lots of different people playing lots of different instruments. You may have the violinists. They are a group of violinists.

[9 : 51] And they might be playing very fast. They might be getting very tired having to play hard. And the conductor is telling them to play and play and play. And then there might be someone at the side with trumpets just coming in and out.

When they are told. And then someone with that trombone making a totally different noise. Just every now and again. And you might have someone at the very back. Just standing there and waiting.

Till the very end. To make a big crash with the cymbals. And that's not the way that the violinist looks around to everyone else.

And says I am working very hard here. And this man with the trumpets just putting me off. And this man with the trombone is making a totally different noise to the noise that I am making. And that guy at the back.

He is not doing anything. But when the conductor instructs everyone to do everything at the right time.

[10 : 52] To play the different tunes at the right time. It all comes together. To make a wonderful sound. People come and listen to orchestras.

Play amazing music. But the most important thing is that they follow the music. And they follow the conductor. And it's a lot like that in our own lives.

We are all different. And we have all got different jobs. The Lord will give us different jobs to do in our life. We have different purposes. But it's not that we look at everyone else.

And say. Well he is not doing what I am doing. And he is playing a different tune to me. Something totally different. And look at that guy. He is not doing anything.

We are not to look at others. We are not to judge others. The most important thing for us in our lives. Is that we follow the instructions that are set out for us in the Bible.

[11 : 55] Almost like the Bible is like the piece of music that is set in front of you. We follow what is in the Bible. And as we read the Bible. As we get to know the Bible.

And learn about the Bible. We will see Jesus. And we will see the man that is directing us every step in our lives. And when we follow the Bible.

And when we follow the Bible. When we listen to Jesus. Something wonderful will happen. We will give praise to him and glory.

And it is something that is so special to God. And yes we are all different. And yes we have all different jobs to do.

But that is not to say that we do our own thing. It is not to say that we come with our own piece of music. And go into the orchestra. It would ruin it.

[12 : 52] If we just decided to do what we wanted to do. In our lives. The best thing for us. Is to follow the Bible.

And to follow Jesus. So I pray that as we grow up. Even as we grow old. We continue. To follow Jesus.

And to look at him. I pray that will be blessed. To each of you. We will now say the Lord's Prayer together. You will find it at the top of the bulletin sheet.

Let us join together in saying these words. 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. And forgive us our debts. As we forgive our debtors.

[13 : 50] And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom. The power and the glory. Forever. Amen.

We will now continue in our praise. And we will now sing our Gaelic item of praise. Which you will find over leaf. On the rear page of the bulletin sheet.

The words of Psalm 23 in English. The Lord's my shepherd. I'll not want. He makes me down to lie. In pastures green.

He leadeth me. The quiet waters by. In Gaelic it is here. In Gaelic it is here. Is the Gia feen. Is the Bucheel go. Chabimi aon in ni.

We will remain seated for this singing. The Gaelic presenter will read the line out as we go through the psalm. And the congregation repeat the line as we go.

[14 : 56] Years ago. They wouldn't have had the words. Wouldn't be able to. The Bibles and psalm books weren't there for everyone to have. So this is the way that they sung their praises.

The presenter would read the line. And the people would then repeat the words back. So. We'll sing this together. often singing jatsung..

Propag format... Blue■ Oh, my God.

Oh, my God.

Oh, my God.

[17 : 15] Oh, my God.

Oh, my God.

The Gospel of John, chapter 14. Gospel of John, New Testament, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.

Read at verse 4, chapter 14 at verse 15.

We have two readings this morning. We'll turn to chapter 20 after reading section in chapter 14.

Gospel of John, chapter 14, reading at verse 15.

And this is Jesus' words before he was led away to be crucified. He's speaking to his disciples and instructing them. He says there, Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more.

[19 : 30] But you will see me because I live. In that day, you will know that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you.

Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, it's he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.

Judas, not Iscariot, said to him, Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us and not to the world? Jesus answered him, if anyone loves me, he will keep my word.

And my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine, but the Father who sent me.

These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

[20 : 47] Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled.

Neither let them be afraid. You heard me say to you, I am going away, and I will come to you. If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father.

For the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place, you may believe. I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me. But I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.

If you turn a few pages to chapter 20, chapter 20, and we'll read from verse 19. This is the account where Jesus appears after his death, resurrected to the disciples.

[22 : 00] Verse 19. On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, Peace be with you.

When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, Peace be with you.

As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.

If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven. If you withhold the forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld. Amen. May the reading of God's word be blessed to those who have heard it.

Let us join together once again in a word of prayer. Let us pray. Our Heavenly Father, we give thanks for this word that we have read.

[23 : 09] And we give thanks that you are the Lord Jesus Christ who brings peace to his people. And we just give thanks that you are one who has come to set us free from the power of death.

Help us to be mindful of what we do when we come to worship you. When we come before the presence of God and seek his face. That we may hear from you.

And although it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Lord God Almighty. We pray that we may draw before you with our reverence and our fear.

Acknowledging you as creator of all things. The one who sustains all things and keeps our very life. And Lord, we pray as we come to this word.

And consider it. We pray that you would give us understanding of it. That you may speak to us. We pray that the gospel may go forth with power by the power of the Spirit.

[24 : 15] For we acknowledge that if we do it of our own strength, it will come to nothing. So we rely on you, Lord God. And the presence of the Spirit to be with us as we come to you before your word and before you.

That you may guide us and show us and instruct us. And how we are to live our lives. Lord, we pray for our nation. We pray for our world.

We pray that the gospel may go out with power. That it may persuade and enable people to receive and embrace Jesus Christ that is offered to them.

The Christ that went to the cross for them. To die for them. In order that we may not be found guilty before God. That we may come before God knowing that our sins have been forgiven.

Confident in the blood of Jesus Christ as the sacrifice to pay for our sins. All is done. We can do nothing of ourselves. We trust in Jesus Christ.

[25 : 16] To whom else can we go? Who else offers that peace when death is set before us? You have promised us life if we believe in you.

And so help us in our unbelief. Help us in this hour to understand who you are and to trust in you. We pray for everyone that preaches your word this morning. Across our world and nation. That it may go forth with great effect.

We remember those people who have devoted their lives to you and your cause. Who are missionaries in this world. We remember Muriel from her congregation in Cambodia.

We pray for the work that she does with the Brow and Grung people. And the girls that stay with her. Lord, we pray that you would give her strength. And enable her to speak about her Saviour.

[26 : 18] And the change that has come about in her life. Lord, we pray for those who are worried this morning. Those who are fears. Those who have uncertainties. Those who are anxious over their health.

Those who mourn. We pray that you would draw near to them. And comfort them. Lord, we just ask that you would be with us in our time together.

That the gospel of Jesus Christ may take root in our hearts. And grow each and every day. Be with us. Guide us.

Keep us. Keep the evil one from distracting us. And let us see Jesus Christ. With beauty and wonder and awe.

All this we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll continue in our praise by singing in Psalm 56.

[27 : 14] You'll find that on page 73 in the Sing Psalms version. Psalm 56. I have it marked as verse mark 5.

But I think we'll begin our singing from verse mark 9. At the bottom of the page. When I call on you to help me.

Then my foes will turn aside. This is how I will be certain. That God is on my side. O relief. In the Lord whose word I honour.

In my God I praise his word. I will trust and not be fearful. What can man do to me, Lord? I have taken vows before you.

To my God I will be true. Sacrifices of thanksgiving. I will gladly give to you. For you kept my feet from stumbling. And from death you set me free.

[28 : 14] So that I may walk before you. And the light of life may see. From verse 9. We'll stand to sing. When I call on you to help me.

Then my foes will turn aside. Amen. When I call on you to help me. Then my foes will turn aside. This is how I will be certain. That my own is on my side.

When the Lord whose word I own. Then my God I praise his word.

I will trust and not be fearful. What can man do to me, Lord?

[29 : 18] I will trust and not be fearful. I will trust and not be fearful. I will trust and not be fearful. To my God I will be true.

Sacrifices of thanksgiving. I will gladly give to you.

For you kept my feet from stumbling. And from death you set me free.

So that I may walk before you. And the light of life may see.

We turn back to the passage that we read in John chapter 20. I want us to consider this passage that we have with Jesus. This resurrected body appears to the disciples.

[30 : 29] And there in verse 21. You'll see what Jesus says to them. Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me.

Even so I am sending you. Now the last time I was with you here in Stornoway. We looked at the first resurrection appearance of Jesus.

That was the appearance that he made to Mary. And we're walking our way through the resurrection appearances that are recorded in the Gospel of John. We thought about Mary.

We thought about the love that she had for Jesus. We thought about the love that she had lost as she came mourning over the loss of Jesus Christ.

But Jesus appeared to her there at the tomb of the bombshell moment of his first appearance. And the love that she had lost had now been restored. Because Jesus had conquered death.

[31 : 29] Jesus had not died. Jesus would live forever. Her love would ever be present. All her sorrows had been turned to joy in that account.

And Jesus' appearances after death form the foundations of the Christian faith. And gives everyone who believes in him a hope in life after death.

The Bible says that though ye die, yet ye shall live. And now we come to this second appearance in the Gospel of John.

We're on the same day still. Mary has been at the tomb in the morning in the early hours just at sunrise. And now we are told there in verse 19 that it's now the evening. And he appears to the gathered disciples within this locked room.

But what John doesn't record is another account which Luke does. Jesus walked with the two on the road to Emmaus between sunrise and the evening hours.

[32 : 39] Now John doesn't record this. And it's an interesting account. We've got to ask, well, why doesn't John record it? Why doesn't John record that fascinating account?

But John himself says, at the end of chapter 20 there, no, at the end of chapter 21 he says, I can't record everything.

Supposing everything was to be written, The whole world could not contain the books about Jesus. So John here, when he puts his Gospel together, he's selective to record these accounts for a certain reason.

And I hope that as we come and consider why and the importance of it, we'll understand the purpose of why John wrote this book. The purpose is there at the end of chapter 20.

He writes all of this for the reader. The reader this morning. For you and for me. That we may believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[33 : 50] Because as we'll see in the evening, these men also doubted that Jesus could ever live. They're amazed at what happens. And so there's nothing else like it in this world.

They record all this in detail. So that everyone who hears it may believe. So let us consider this passage together.

And I want you to think in your life that you know fine that you can't do everything. You can't do everything yourself. And often you need to, if you have a job to do, you need to delegate the task to someone else.

So if you think about a business, the boss can't do everything. And usually he'll give the simpler tasks to other people. And he'll hold on to the more vital aspects of the business himself.

But supposing you were that manager, you were that boss, and the time came where maybe you had to retire.

[34 : 53] Maybe you had to hand over the reins to someone else. Someone else had to come and fill your boots. You'd look for the most competent person you could find.

The most knowledgeable person on the subject. The most person who had the most experience. The person who was most trustworthy. The most reliable person you had in the company or out with the company.

Someone that would fill your boots and ensure that the business would run smoothly. Best person you could find. And in this account here, we've got a handover going on.

Jesus has died. He cannot stay in this world. He started a work. But he must return to be on the side of his Father in heaven. He's handing the work over to the disciples.

And they must be people that go out boldly into this world, facing all opposition and criticism, to declare that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Saviour of sinners.

[36 : 02] He is the man that can give you hope in the face of death. They need to be bold, men and women. But who does he have?

When you look at the passage here, who does he have? He's got people who are scared, confused, people who are inexperienced for the job that is required of them.

These disciples, when you read through the Gospels, they've already proven themselves to be unreliable, lacking in knowledge, not at all competent to do the task that has been asked of them here.

But this is who Jesus has. And if this was your business that you were handing over to people like this, you would be thinking, this isn't going to work.

What chance do I have? It's going to be a mess. And you would expect the work of Jesus to stop. Because the people here aren't really top notch.

[37 : 12] But strangely, the work continued. And it's continued even up till this morning. With similar men and women.

So, the work is not entirely reliant upon the men and women and their own strength.

Surely there's something more going on here for the work to have continued throughout the ages till this morning. And when you continue reading through the Gospels, when you continue reading through Acts, and the works that these disciples went on to do, the leaders of the day complained against these men.

Because they said, they're turning the world upside down with the message that they're bringing.

These people who were in this locked room, their lives being turned upside down by meeting Jesus.

They go out boldly. And this appearance, I believe, is a preparation for the work that he has for them to do. And the disciples receive three things from Jesus here in this passage.

[38 : 28] And the first thing that they receive from Jesus is peace. The disciples are gathered in this locked room and Jesus comes into their presence and he says, peace be with you at the end of verse 19.

And I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall in that locked room to weigh up and to evaluate and to watch these disciples considering what's going on.

They're scared of what's going to happen. But Mary's come from the morning and she's reported that I have seen the Lord Jesus.

Maybe the two from the road to Emmaus have now returned and said to them, we've seen Jesus too. And they're probably weighing it all up and asking, what's happened?

Where's Jesus' body gone? Has Jesus risen? We'll have more of the questions that they asked this evening when we consider Thomas.

[39 : 31] But here the disciples, they're all locked in. And they're locked in for fear. And it's a fear of death. Because what would happen is when the Romans condemned someone to die, when they condemned a movement, they would seek after, well, the leader first.

But then all the followers that were associated with that man that had been condemned, they'd try and obliterate them. So that movement would no longer cause any issues amongst the people.

And the Jews weren't exactly their best friends either. The Jews did not like what Jesus had been teaching. So if they had seen any of the disciples out and about, they would have been straight reporting them as followers of Jesus Christ, that they would be captured and silenced.

So you can see straight away that there is absolutely no peace in this camp. They are fearful for their lives. They're locked in a room. It highlights their fear that they're locked in.

It highlights something of the body of Jesus. And the body, the appearance that he comes in, the physical attributes of Jesus, that he can just appear.

[40 : 47] We don't really have time to go into that this morning. But he appears out of nowhere to people that are already scared for their lives. Which is quite interesting.

And it's interesting to note that it doesn't record any fear, any extra fear on their part. they're joyful to see the man that comes in peace.

If you remember that count, Jesus was taken away to be crucified. The soldiers came to capture Jesus before. And where did the disciples go? They ran away.

They were scared of the soldiers. They were scared that they would die too. Jesus was captured. And Jesus doesn't mention this, that you abandoned me.

Where were you when the soldiers came for me? He doesn't mention that. But they didn't want to die. The disciples didn't want to die.

[41 : 57] They had a fear of dying at that moment. Jesus comes with peace. Peace be with you, he says. Peace. A peace that is not like any other peace in this world that we read in John chapter 14.

He brings peace when things are terrifying. Peace in the midst of absolute fear when their world is upside down. And in many ways the world is upside down today.

And I believe the world is looking for peace. We all want to have peace. We all want peace. It's almost like we're programmed for peace. We try to make our own peace.

But there's always something that will come across and spoil it. Jesus is here saying that he brings peace in the midst of fear.

His presence brings peace. And you can maybe imagine when you were a little boy or girl and something had happened to you. You were fearful of something. You were scared of something.

[43 : 03] You had a nightmare. Your parent would come in and their presence would bring you peace. Maybe you've started working and you're learning your trade and you make a complete blunder and you're fearful of the outcome.

What's going to happen? And someone more experienced comes in and says, it's okay. We can fix it. That person's presence brings peace to you. Jesus brings peace to them because he knows what to do.

And it's a peace not like this world. Jesus is called the Prince of Peace elsewhere in the Bible. And that is something that the Christian, the believer, receives.

They have a certain and special peace in life. Maybe you've seen it in action. Maybe you've seen a Christian go through the most horrendous experience and you wonder, well, how on earth can they have so much peace in the midst of something so terrifying, fearful?

The Christian has peace in life, but also the Christian receives peace in death. They have peace knowing that Jesus has conquered death for them.

[44 : 18] they have a special and certain peace through their life because they know that although they die, Jesus has provided for them and prepared for them a place for them to be.

He has made peace for this disciple. Jesus Christ has made peace for you. Peace for the one who is scared. Peace for the one who is full of fears in this life.

Peace for the one whose life is upside down. Peace for the one who feels like locking themselves away from the world. Peace for the one who fears death.

Jesus brings peace. It's a great treasure to have peace in your life. But Jesus also brings something else to the disciples here and he brings a purpose to them.

The second point. He brings peace and he brings purpose to them too. Now you know in your life if you don't have a purpose you feel a bit lost and when you think you have no purpose in this life you yourself can feel as someone having no purpose which can have sad consequences.

[45 : 43] Having purpose is personally a huge thing. Have you ever asked why am I here? What is my purpose? And a group of godly men knew the value of people knowing their purpose when they wrote the small book the shorter catechism that taught people about God.

The first question that they had there posed was what is man's purpose? What is the chief end of man? Is the way it was written.

They knew the value of it. They put it first and the purpose of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. In our passage here Jesus comes to the disciples and he gives them a new purpose.

They would go and glorify God. They would go out with the gospel. Jesus says to them peace be with you again in verse 21.

It's repeated because he's got something really important to say to them. He's saying as the father has sent me so I am sending you. This is the hand over.

[47 : 02] They are going to carry on the work that God sent Jesus to do. And in many ways they could not. they wouldn't do the work of Christ in the sense of redeeming people and forgiving sins.

But the first thing that Jesus did when he came into this world, you can read about in the gospel of Mark, is that he came and proclaimed the gospel of God. Calling people to repent and believe in the gospel.

And that is what the disciples are now being instructed to do. Go out with the gospel of Jesus Christ and call them to believe in him. That they may have life.

The man that died on the cross for you and for your sins. So that you may be set free from eternal punishment in hell and be received into heaven and to be with Christ forever to the eternal enjoyment.

He died for you. These men in this account went out completely changed after they saw the risen Lord Jesus.

[48 : 24] Their purpose in life had changed. They went out even if it meant facing a brutal death death, which it did for most of them.

They had a new purpose in life to fulfill and their lives were turned upside down by seeing this man. It's kind of proof in a sense that Jesus did appear to them.

They were so scared to die in the first instance and now they're going out boldly as completely different people. With the gospel message with confidence and even if they die they know they shall live.

And I'm sure they said of themselves well I can't do it. I'm not the man for the job. But this is the Christian church of the day.

This small number is the Christian church. church, the few that are gathered in this locked room they feel so weak, they're asking what's going on, they've isolated themselves, they've lost all courage.

[49 : 42] The church should never lock themselves away from the world. We have a purpose to go out with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Lord is a work for everyone and it's a different work as we were saying to the children.

Doesn't mean that we'll all stand and preach, doesn't mean that we go out and put the Bible down people's throats, but at very least it means that we live Christ-like lives.

We live like Christ lived in this world and continue his work in that way, if nothing else. We forgive others. We give, we help those who are poor, we love one another, we love our neighbours, we talk

to those who are despised, we do not judge one another.

We imitate Christ as Paul saw to do. God has his purpose for everyone. And the funny thing is that when you come to believe in this man, you've got your own purpose for your life already sorted. But when you meet with Jesus and you believe in Jesus Christ, he puts a new purpose in your life. And the things that you thought you'd never do, you may well end up doing.

[51 : 01] Because you are fulfilling his purpose for his glory. You yourself have a new purpose in this life. It is his purpose. And the peace that we have is his peace.

And the last thing I want to say to you today is that these disciples received power as well when they met with Jesus Christ.

Power in the sense of strength because they felt so weak to do the job that was asked of them. People like to feel strong enough.

We feel like we're sometimes we do feel like we're strong enough. Sometimes we do feel like we have power. but there are definitely times where we feel weak.

There are definitely times when we feel so weak that we have nothing left to give. We feel like we're so weak that we don't want to go into this world. Jesus knows our weakness.

[52 : 13] Jesus knew that these disciples needed help. They needed strength and so he would send that Holy Spirit we read about as the helper for his people. He has promised to give his people strength.

They cannot do anything on their own strength. It's clearly evident that they have no strength of themselves. They lock themselves away in this room.

They can't face the world. But they changed so dramatically to go out confidently to declare the gospel. And it's the same for the church today that we must rely on the power of the Spirit, the strength of the Spirit.

It's the same for every single believer that we rely not on ourselves but we rely on his strength that he gives us through the Spirit. Because it's not easy.

And there are days where you will make a mistake. There are days where you will blunder. Not that you want to. But the Spirit will also teach you, correct you.

[53 : 28] That's what the Spirit will do in your life as well. Give you strength but also teach you every step of the way. And instruct you and guide you so that you may keep going.

and the most elderly Christian here will say that, well, I have not remained a believer because of my own strength.

I would have quickly gone off track if there had not been for the strength that I received from the Lord Jesus Christ. And you work through this passage here.

They receive something of the Spirit that raises questions, a few difficult questions that are raised in the last few verses here. They receive the Spirit but the Spirit comes at Pentecost later on.

And people ask, well, what did they receive here at this moment? Was it a promise of the Pentecost to come? Was it a measure of Spirit at this moment? We're running out of time.

[54 : 33] We don't have time to consider it. The second thing that it says is that they would have the power to forgive sins. And really that is not that they themselves can forgive sins.

Only the Lord Jesus Christ can forgive sins. But they are going out with the strength and the power of the gospel. They are going out as changed men and it is the gospel that has the power to forgive sins.

They present the gospel to people as it is presented to each and every one of us here this morning. If we receive it, our sins will be forgiven. If not, forgiveness is withheld.

The gospel can change your life. And though we feel so very weak at times, the presence of Jesus can turn us around, turn our world upside.

day. Jesus is here as a man that died on the cross for each and every one of us, saying that he can give you peace, he can give you a purpose, and he can give you strength for the day and strength for life.

[55 : 52] And there are three aspects of our lives that I think we all want to have. We all desire to have and we long to have it. maybe we chase after peace, purpose, strength, power.

The world promises to give us all these things and at the end of the day, we are left weak. we exhaust ourselves finding things that satisfy us when really it is to be found in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And it is nothing of ourselves. It is a gift of God. It is whose peace that is given to us. it is whose purpose that we find ourselves doing.

And it is whose strength that we find the strength to go on every day. Jesus prepared the disciples for life and for death.

Jesus will prepare you for life and for death with his peace, with his purpose, and with his power. I pray that we believe in the risen Lord Jesus.

[57 : 16] Amen. We will conclude by singing in Psalm 118 of the Scottish Psalter. Find that on page 397 of the blue praise book.

We will sing from the beginning of that psalm. We will sing four stanzas down to verse Mark 6 in conclusion.

The words there are, O praise the Lord for he is good. His mercy lasteth ever. Let those of Israel now say, his mercy faileth never.

Now let the house of Aaron say, his mercy lasteth ever. Let those that fear the Lord now say, his mercy faileth never. I in distress called on the Lord.

The Lord did answer me. He in a large place did me set, from trouble made me free. The mighty Lord is on my side. I will not be afraid for anything that man can do.

[58 : 22] I shall not be dismayed. The eternal abiding mercy of God do we receive it. Let us stand to sing praise to him.

O praise the Lord for he is good, his mercy lasteth ever. O praise the Lord for he is good, his mercy lasteth ever.

Let those of his that free come again Let those that fear the Lord Christ take His mercy favor never. I am this faithful of the Lord, the Lord did answer me.

He in the dark place did me set, from trouble make me free.

[60 : 09] The mighty Lord is on my side, I will not be afraid.

For anything that thou can do, I shall not be blessed.

We'll close in prayer, remain standing. Our Lord and our God, may we know the eternal abiding love and grace known through Jesus Christ.

As we part with one another, we pray that you would remain with us, watch over us and guide us in every step of life. That we may consider Christ and give us hearts that are willing to receive Him.

Be with us as we part, forgive us our sins, in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

[61 : 29] Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.