

Friday Evening Service

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Date: 14 February 2025

Preacher: Rev David Macleod

[0 : 00] Reverend David McLeod. And it's my pleasure to welcome David to the pulpit this evening and over this weekend. It's good to have him with us. We look forward to his ministry and his fellowship with us over these days.

And we do pray the Lord's blessing on him now as he comes to minister to us. So I'll hand over to David to lead us in worship. Thank you, Callum. It's good to be with you over this weekend. We're going to begin this time of worship as we hear the words that we will come back to a number of times over the course of this weekend from Matthew chapter 11.

The words of Jesus. He says, Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. We'll worship God and we'll sing together to his praise from Psalm 95, the Scottish Psalter, page 357 of the books.

[1 : 15] 357 in the book, and we sing Psalm 95 from verses 1 to verse 6 of the psalm.

O come, let us sing to the Lord. Come, let us, everyone, a joyful noise make to the rock of our salvation. We'll sing down to the end of verse 6 to God's praise.

O come, let us sing to the Lord.

Come, let us, everyone, a joyful noise make to the rock of our salvation.

Let us sing to the Lord.

[2 : 44] A joyful noise. For God, a great God and great King, above all gods he is.

There's love, the earth, and in his hand, the strength of hell's distance.

To him the spacious seat belongs. To him the spacious seat belongs.

For he the same did make. The cry of God, the cry of God, so from his hand, his form and first did take.

O come, let us worship him. Let us bow down with all.

[4 : 12] And on our knees before the Lord, our maker, let us fall.

Let us unite our hearts in prayer together. Let's pray.

Our heavenly Father, we thank you that we are able to gather together in this place this evening.

And we are able to call you our Father because we come in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior.

And we thank you that it's through his name and through his finished work that we have a way through into the presence of the God who is almighty.

We praise you for who you are, even as you have revealed yourself to us in the psalm that we have sang. We thank you that as we reflect on the words that we have taken upon our lips, we are reminded of the fact that you are the God who is the Lord, the God who is over all.

[5 : 33] You are our creator, the one who has brought everything that we see in this world and everything that we are in our being. You have brought that into being with a word from nothing.

Such is the power of your creative word. And we thank you, Lord, for the majesty of your creation. Even as we look around in the place that we come from, we see the vastness and the beauty of creation, which points us to the wonder and the majesty of who you are.

And we ask, Lord, that as we lift our eyes to see the hills, as we are aware of the power of the sea, as we look up and see the stars which you have placed in space, we pray that our eyes would be opened to see that you are the God who has brought everything into being.

And we pray that day by day, we would worship you for who you are as our creator. We thank you that you are our sustainer.

[6 : 53] We have breath in our lungs. We have the measure of health and strength that enables us to be here because you are the God who sustains us.

And we praise you, Lord, for your sustaining grace. We thank you that morning by morning, you grant to us new mercies.

Even the food that we eat and the water that we drink. The health and strength that we enjoy. We confess that often we take it for granted.

But we pray that you would forgive us for doing so. Help us to remember with every day that you give to us that this is the day that the Lord has made. Enable us to rejoice and to be glad in it and to redeem the time.

To remember that our days in this world are short. So help us, we pray, whilst we have opportunity in this world to look to you, to trust you.

[7 : 58] And as your people, we pray that we would serve you. That we would live not for self. But that we would remember, as the catechum says to us, that man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

We thank you also, Lord, as we think about the words that we have sang that you are our Savior. We hear the phrase, the rock of our salvation.

And we are pointed to Jesus. And we ask, Lord, that over this weekend, we would have our eyes fixed upon Jesus.

We thank you, Father, for the vastness of your love. That you would send your only begotten Son into this world to be our Savior, to be the Good Shepherd.

The one who would lay down his life for the sheep. We thank you for the cross that we are called to gather around over these days.

[9 : 03] We thank you for the institution of the Sacrament of Communion. Where we gather around the Lord's table to remember his death until he comes.

We pray, Lord, you've forgiven us that we would be so distracted by the things of this world that we would forget. And yet we confess that often our minds drift.

Often our lives are so taken up with the things of this world that we lose focus on the cross. But as we drift from the cross, we are in all manner of danger.

And so we pray, Lord, that over these days that we would remember the death of Jesus. And as we do so, we would do so with great reverence.

Remembering the greatness of who you are. We pray that we would do so with that sense of contrition. That we would be confessing our sin.

[10 : 13] That we would have that posture of continual repentance. Turning away from sin. Confessing our falls and failures.

And seeking fresh cleansing in the blood of Jesus. And we pray that as we remember the Lord Jesus over this weekend, we would do so with joy in our hearts.

Remembering that because he died, we are forgiven if we are trusting in him. And remembering that on the third day, just as he promised, he rose from the dead.

He reigns, he lives. And he has promised that one day he will return. And until that day, we remember his death until he comes.

And we pray that these days would be a time for us where we wait upon the Lord. And we know renewed strength.

[11 : 18] And we know the blessing of meeting together as your people and your presence. We pray that we would have fresh perspective. That we would see with even more wonder the depths of your grace.

The wonder of all that you have done for us to make us your children. And we pray that we would respond in worship. Not just as we gather here in the building for an hour or two each day.

We pray that over these days, as we go about the different things that we have to do, our minds would come back to remember all that you have done for us.

That we would be in the spirit of worship over these days. We ask, Lord, that you would be with those who are absent tonight from this place who would desire to be here.

We are conscious always of those who are struggling with ill health. And as we think of them, Lord, whether they are in hospital or at home, we pray that you would draw near to them.

[12 : 26] That you would lay your hands of healing upon them where that is your will. And that they would know your grace, which is sufficient for each day that you give to them in time.

We pray for those who are sorrowing. Those who struggle with grief. Those who may be bewildered even at the perplexing things that often happen in this world.

And as we think of them, we pray for your comfort. We pray that you, the God of all comfort, would draw near to them. And give to them that peace that comes not from this world, but that comes from heaven.

We pray for any who may be struggling in grief and who may feel distant from you at this time. And we ask, Father, that they would know your loving touch upon them.

That they would know the comfort of God, the Holy Spirit drawing near to them. We think especially of the Mitchell family in Braggar. And with the tragedy of all that we have heard of, we pray that they would know your peace.

[13 : 32] That they would know your presence. That you would uphold them. That you would strengthen them. That you would be in that community in a special way over these days.

We pray for those who may struggle with darkness that affects their minds. Those who may feel cast down in their souls. Who may battle with depression.

And we ask, Lord, that you would minister to them where often we cannot get through with words. We thank you that you are able to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit. And as we think of those who may feel that darkness engulfing them.

We pray that the light of Christ would break through. And that they would know that you are God and that you are with them. We pray for those who battle with addictions. Those who may come here week by week for road to recovery.

And many others who may not. And as our minds go to such, we ask, Lord, that you would help them. And that they would desire the help, the strength that comes from calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus.

[14 : 43] And we pray for those who may be healthy and who may be comfortable. And who may be at ease in their minds. And may have everything that they need in this world.

But have no sense of a need of Christ. We pray for those who do not realize the danger that there is in remaining in sin.

We can think of family members and friends and people we work with. Who may be interested in many things, but have no desire for the things of God.

And we know that without the moving of your spirit, there is nothing that we can do to change that. And so we know that we can carry them to you in prayer.

And as we think of names and as we think of faces. And we ask, Lord, that you would awaken souls in the power of the Holy Spirit. That they may feel the weight of sin.

[15 : 44] And that they may look to Jesus, who is the Savior. The one who is able to give rest. True rest and eternal rest. To all who will come to him.

So hear our prayers. Bless our time together. Help us, we pray. As we read your word. As we meditate upon your word. As we sing.

We know, Lord, that we can do nothing apart from you. And so we ask that you would draw near to us. And as we sing, we would sing from our hearts.

As we read, we would recognize that this is the word of God. And not the word of man. And as we meditate upon the word, we pray, Lord. That you would illuminate our minds.

That you would help us in speaking and listening and responding. So that all we do would be to the glory of God. Hear our prayers. Cleanse us from our sin as we confess it.

[16 : 45] And lead us in the power of the Holy Spirit. And we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll sing again to God's praise. We'll sing this time from Psalm 42.

Sing Psalms 42. Found on page 53. Sing Psalms 42.

And we sing from verse 1 to verse 5. As pants the deer for flowing streams, so longs my soul, O God, for you.

I thirst for God, the living God. When can I meet with God and you? And we'll sing down to verse 5 to God's praise. And we sing down to verse 5 to God's praise.

singing voyque For God, the living God, when can I meet with God anew?

[18 : 07] My tears have been my constant hurt, both in the night and in the day.

While all day long insisently, where is this God of new to sing?

As I pour out my soul in grief, these things I do remember still.

And with the multitude I went up to God's hands on Zion Hill.

In their procession I would lead, as we approach with cheerful song.

[19 : 36] And shouts of joy and thankfulness, rejoicing with the festive throng.

Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why are you so disturbed in me?

Just thought, for I will praise him yet. My Saviour and my God is he.

If you could turn with me now in your Bibles, please, to Matthew chapter 11. Matthew chapter 11, it's on page 983 of the Bible in the pulpit.

I don't know if that corresponds with Bibles in the pew. Matthew chapter 11, and we'll read from verse 1 to verse 24.

[21 : 18] This is God's Word. When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities.

Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?

And Jesus answered them, Go and tell John what you hear and see. The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk. Lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear.

And the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me. As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John.

What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing?

[22 : 19] Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in king's houses. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.

Truly I say to you, among those born of woman, there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

And if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. But to what shall I compare this generation?

It is like children sitting in marketplaces and calling to their playmates. We played the flute for you, and you did not dance. We sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.

[23 : 29] For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say he is a demon. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, look at him, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.

Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds. Then he began to denounce the cities where most of his mighty works had been done, because they did not repent.

Woe to you, Kerasim! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

But I tell you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven?

You will be brought down to Hades. For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I tell you that it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom than for you.

[24 : 42] And I'm going to read on just to the end of the chapter. At that time, Jesus declared, Come to me, All who labor and are heavy laden, And I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, And learn from me, For I am gentle and lowly in heart, And you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, And my burden is light.

Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us. We're going to sing again now to God's praise From Psalm 43, The Scottish Psalter, Page 264.

Psalm 43, And we'll sing from verses 3 To verse 5 of the psalm. O send thy light forth, And thy truth, Let them be guides to me, And bring me to thine holy hill, Even where thy dwellings be.

Then will I to God's altar go, To God my chiefest joy, Yea, God my God, Thy name to praise, My harp I will employ. Down to the end of the psalm, To God's praise.

[26 : 23] O send thy light, For time thy truth, Let them be guides to me, And bring me to thy holy hill, In where thy dwellings be.

Then will I to God's altar go, To God my chiefest joy, In where thy dwellings be.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son. And the question I'd like to think about tonight in the time that we have is, how are we responding to Jesus?

How are we responding to the offer of Jesus? How are we responding to all that Jesus has done for us? All that we are called this weekend to remember.

Now, in the passage that we read, we can note at least four responses.

And I want to take time to go through each of the four responses to Jesus that we see in the verses.

The first response that we see to Jesus is the response of doubt.

[34 : 37] So four points. Number one is doubt. We see John the Baptist wrestling with doubts as he speaks with Jesus.

The second response that we see is the response of disbelief. Those who brazenly do not believe.

The third response we see is in those cities who dismiss Jesus.

They just don't respond to him. And the final response that we finish with is to look at the disciples and see briefly how they are devoted to Jesus.

Their lives are devoted to Jesus. So first of all, as we work through the verses, we see doubt on the part of John the Baptist. Look at verses 1 and 2.

When Jesus had finished instructing his 12 disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities.

[35 : 47] Now, when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, Are you the one who is to come or shall we look for another?

So what's going on here in these verses? Well, what's going on is we see John. That's John the Baptist. And he's in prison. Why is John in prison?

Well, John is in prison because he had been uncompromising in his preaching of the truth. And as John preached the truth, he clashed with Herod.

He was an authority and he clashed with Herod's wife in particular, who didn't like the message that John was bringing. And you can read the story of that in Luke chapter 2 at the end of that chapter.

And what we see is that John, having clashed with Herod and his wife, John ends up in prison. So life is difficult for John, as we pick up at the beginning of chapter 11.

[36 : 53] And if we think ourselves into John's experience, not so long ago, there were vast crowds. Whenever John preached, there were vast crowds that gathered to hear him preach.

He was the man of the moment. And he was a man who was free. And John the Baptist, we know, was a man who liked to settle out in the wilderness, in the wide open spaces.

And yet here we see John, and he's isolated. He's locked away in a prison cell. And in this dark time, in John's experience, it seems that he has a crisis of doubt.

One commentator, Green, says, everything tends to get out of proportion when you are suffering for a long time in a confined space alone.

Doubts grow in such a soil. So if we pause there just for a moment and try to draw some application.

[38 : 07] The application is not complicated. And I think the application that flows from this is, if John the Baptist can struggle with doubts, any of us can struggle with doubt.

Especially when we're suffering. And we can't understand what's going on in life. Especially when we're isolated.

And we're not much in Christian fellowship. Doubts can creep in. And that's what seems to be happening in John's experience.

John is struggling with doubts. Some of the commentators, if you read them, will say, well, John didn't struggle with doubts. It's his disciples that struggled with doubts. John's just sending the disciples to Jesus so that they can have their doubts dealt with.

But I don't see that in the text. That doesn't seem to me to be an assumption that we have license to take. I think the most obvious application here is that John, in that dark prison cell, is wrestling with doubts.

[39 : 23] But the question to consider as we move on is how are John's doubts overcome? John's doubts are overcome when he takes them to Jesus.

John doesn't do the thing that lots of people do when doubts crash in. He doesn't withdraw and turn away from Jesus and turn away from the Lord's people.

John takes the doubts that are plaguing him and he takes them directly to Jesus. And Jesus deals with the doubts and lifts him from that place.

And how does Jesus do that? Well, he does that by reminding John of what the Bible says about the Messiah, about the one who was to come.

Jesus answered them, that's the disciples who've been sent as messengers. Jesus answered them, go and tell John what you hear and see. The blind receive their sight and the lame walk.

[40 : 47] Lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear and the dead are raised up and the poor have good news preached to them and blessed is the one who is not offended by me.

So what Jesus does here is he quotes from Isaiah chapter 35 and Isaiah chapter 61 and in the quotes that Jesus lifts, he reminds John of what the one, what the Messiah would do, was prophesied to do.

He would heal, he would preach good news. And what was Jesus doing? He was doing exactly what had been prophesied.

Everything that was found in Isaiah that prophesied, that painted this picture of who the Messiah would be. Jesus was doing these things. So Jesus says to the messengers who'd come, go back to John and tell him Isaiah 35, tell him Isaiah 61.

And as they marry together with the accounts of what Jesus was doing, he's able to see with no doubt but crystal clarity, this is the Christ.

[42 : 14] this is the Savior. So John's doubts are overcome by taking them to Jesus.

John's doubts are overcome by being in the Word of God. How are our doubts overcome? exactly the same way. I don't know many of you personally, I don't know the congregation here well, but my, I would be surprised if there isn't at least somebody whether here or watching at a distance who is wrestling with some measure of doubt.

And these doubts are overcome as we take them to Jesus in prayer and tell him what's in our mind, tell him what's assaulting us.

And these doubts are overcome as we listen to what God says by being in the Bible. So maybe this is a word for a struggling Christian tonight.

[43 : 39] Maybe doubts have been crashing in. Maybe there's someone here who's saying, you know, with all the thoughts I've been having and the battles in my mind, I wonder if I, I should even come to the table when I feel so, so low and unsettled, do I have warrant to come?

Now what does the old hymn say? Just as I am, though tossed about with many a conflict, many a doubt, fightings within and fears without, O Lamb of God, I come.

I come. And that's what we see John doing. He comes, he comes to Jesus even with his doubts. And Jesus does not reject him, Jesus receives him.

And in verses 7 through to verse 15, which I'm not going to drill down into, Jesus speaks in such a manner about John where John is able to receive the reassurance that he needs.

There's such words of commendation about John if we were to step through these verses. But this is always the way. As we trust Jesus, as we obey Jesus, as we come to him, or as we come back to him if we've drifted, he receives us.

[45 : 29] He reassures us as we come. So the first thing that we see in terms of a response to Jesus is a doubt.

The second, and that doubt is overcome. The second response as we move into verse 16 is disbelief. So more briefly, Jesus says in verse 16, but to what shall I compare this generation?

It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their playmates. We played the flute for you and you did not dance. We sang a dirge and you did not mourn.

And what Jesus is doing here in these two verses is he's doing what he often did. He would take an everyday illustration, the illustration of the children as they played, and he makes it a teaching point. So in Jesus' day, just as in our day, the children would play at being grown-ups. And the children would do what they saw the grown-ups doing. And as the grown-ups came together, the children would see them sometimes dancing at weddings and sometimes mourning as they came together at funerals.

[46 : 50] That's what they saw in everyday life. And so that's what the children, maybe to us seems strange, but that's what they would play at. I suppose it's no more strange than what we used to play at, playing housework and playing schools when we were six and seven years old.

You'd be the teacher, you'd be the mum, you'd be the dad. That's the kind of thing that was going on here. The children would play at being grown-ups. But just as it is with us, it was back then that there was always one disgruntled child that didn't want to play.

We played the flute for you, say the children, and you didn't dance. We played a dirge that you didn't mourn. There's always one child that could never be pleased.

I was thinking back to school days in Aberdeen. I remember a boy in my class called Brian. He always had the best of the greatest trainers.

I always wanted them. He always brought the leather football to school. He had the most money or his family did. And so we would play with the mitre leather football or the umbral leather football that Brian would bring.

[48 : 03] But invariably we'd be halfway through a game and if somebody tackled Brian hard or his team started to lose, he would take a huff. And he would take hold of the ball and go off on a huff and that was the game all over.

Acting like a spoiled child. And Jesus is saying to the people who are listening, that's like you. You're like spoiled children. You can never be pleased.

Verse 18, For John came neither eating or drinking and they say he has a demon. They don't want to listen to John. The son of man came eating and drinking and they say look at him a glutton and a drunkard a friend of tax collectors and sinners yet wisdom is justified by her deeds. didn't matter what was done. They wouldn't believe.

That was the picture that Jesus was painting. And it was a word for that generation in verse 16. But it's a word for every generation.

[49 : 12] there are always people who will find reasons not to believe in Jesus. They exist in Harris.

I expect they exist in Lewis as well. People who say I don't feel enough. If I could just feel a bit more. If I had more feelings a bit more conviction then I could believe.

or I don't know enough to believe. I need to do more study I need to read more books and maybe when I get to a higher academic grasp of the things of God then I can believe but not yet.

Then there's so many people who say you know I'm not good enough. I'm not good enough to be a believer. And the list can go on.

Every generation every congregation will have some people who are experts in giving reason after reason for disbelief.

[50 : 30] unbelief. And Jesus saw it back then and he called them out on it and he sees it still today. And I wonder does he see any of that in you or in me?

Disbelief is a serious thing. unbelief is a serious thing because it leads to eternal death and Jesus will make that crystal clear in the next section.

That's the bad news. But the good news is that whoever believes in Jesus John 3 16 shall not perish but shall have eternal life.

What do we come to the table to say? We come to the table to say that we believe in Jesus. We're not coming to speak about ourselves.

We're not coming because of the feelings that we have. We're not coming because we've reached a certain level of intellectual stature.

[52 : 04] We come in that simple childlike way to say that we believe in Jesus. That he is our savior.

That he is our Lord. That we are trusting in his finished work. that we are remembering him. Doubt that has overcome disbelief that Jesus identifies and calls out.

The third response that we see here is to dismiss Jesus. And we see that in verse 20 down to verse 24. Jesus addresses cities that were unrepentant, cities that had dismissed them.

Then he began to denounce the cities where most of his mighty works had been done, because they did not repent. Woe to you, Chorazin. This is verse 21. Woe to you, Bethsaida, for if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

But I tell you it would be more bearable in the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And so the words go on. And I think that these words that Jesus speaks in this section are some of the strongest words that are recorded anywhere in the Bible that we hear Jesus speak.

[53 : 34] He speaks words of woe, he speaks words of judgment, he speaks words that warn of being brought down to Hades, brought down to hell. Jesus talks about Sodom in verse 23.

And we're not going there tonight but you can take a tour back to Genesis 19 in your own time and see the darkness and the immorality of that place Sodom and we can read about the judgment of God that fell upon that city.

And yet alarmingly Jesus says in verse 24, it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom than for you, Capernaum.

And for Chorazin and Bethsaida, Jesus warns them of incoming woe, literally grief.

So we have to ask the question, what did these cities do? What is it that Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum did that prompted such serious words from Jesus?

[55 : 03] How did they respond to Jesus that caused Jesus to speak to them in such terms? And the answer to that question is their response to Jesus, what they did in terms of responding to Jesus is they did nothing.

They dismissed Jesus. they just ignored him. Jesus performed mighty works in these cities and he preached the most amazing sermons that have ever been preached and he pled with them to repent and yet they would not repent they walked out the door unrepentant unmoved they'd heard the gospel plea they'd heard the voice of the saviour and they looked at their watches and they headed home and they did nothing.

And Jesus mentions Tyre and Sidon. Now the people in Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum they would have looked down their noses at Tyre and Sidon because they were Gentiles.

They were non-Jews. They hadn't had the kind of background and the upbringing that these cities had had. But Jesus says if they in Tyre and Sidon had seen and heard what you've seen and heard they would have taken notice.

They would have repented but not you. there were so many in these privileged cities who ignored Jesus.

[57 : 26] They rejected Jesus. Not with any kind of violence. There was no heat and violence in their rejection. They just seemed to be too busy.

that they weren't that interested. Their lives were cluttered.

Lots of conflicting priorities. So they dismissed Jesus and his gospel.

and to treat Jesus that way causes woe. Jesus teaches us that to treat Jesus that way by dismissing him it leads down to hell.

Charles Price says the more we know of Christ the more responsible we become.

[58 : 44] So how much do we know of Jesus? Jesus well we know significantly more than Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum did because we have a New Testament and they didn't.

And we know about the cross. we remember that Jesus went to the cross to die to pay for our sin and they didn't have that knowledge.

They couldn't yet see that. We know about the resurrection. Of course they didn't.

And we have had generations of our forefathers teaching us the good news about Jesus. We have enjoyed great privilege.

The vast majority of us although I don't know many of you the vast majority of us here I assume we have known great privilege. privilege.

[60 : 15] So let me leave the application with one of the commentators leg. He says this great privilege brings great responsibility.

Hearing the gospel week in week out knowing the word of God being taught the truth from my youth or hearing it regularly in church these are great privileges but salvation cannot be taken for granted. Here is a warning says leg to children brought up in Christian homes to those who attend church and who are members of the congregation they must not despise their privileges but must make sure that they respond in repentance and faith.

Otherwise there will simply be a greater and more unbearable punishment on the day of judgment. Let none of us this evening walk out the door dismissing Jesus.

Too busy. Too distracted. Too much going on. Let none of us follow the example of these cities that Jesus warned who heard the gospel who experienced great privileges but failed to repent and to believe.

[62 : 09] Maybe there is someone here who knows so much who sat in the pews for year after year who has been through Sunday school and YF and all these things but hasn't yet repented.

Don't delay another moment. do not dismiss Jesus. Repent. Ask for forgiveness. Ask for him to be Savior and Lord of your life.

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved. God So we see John the Baptist who wrestles with doubts and they're overcome.

We see those that Jesus identifies almost like spoiled children who have every reason not to believe. They're disbelievers. Jesus challenges them.

We see cities who are warned of incoming judgment because of the great privileges that they've enjoyed and yet they dismiss Jesus. They're too busy. And the final thing we see here is a small group of disciples who are devoted to Jesus.

[63 : 39] And just as we finish, this is what we're taught right running through the gospel. This is how we're taught how to respond to Jesus.

How are we to respond to Jesus? We're to respond to Jesus by devoting our lives to Him. Not dismissing Him, not doubting His words, not disbelieving, but repenting and believing and devoting our lives to Him, to the one who paid for our salvation with His blood at Calvary.

We are to devote our lives to Him. We see at the beginning of the chapter just a small note. At the beginning of this chapter we see the disciples and we can see them in our mind's eye.

Jesus, He's instructing these 12 disciples, they're gathered around Him. And what were the disciples called to? They were called to a life of being with Jesus, of being instructed by Jesus, of being devoted to Jesus.

And that's what we're called to. the gospel went out so that all who hear and believe will be disciples, those whose lives are devoted to Jesus.

[65 : 24] Mark chapter 3 verse 14. It's one of my favorite verses and it's so simple. Jesus appointed 12, whom He named also apostles, that they might be with Him.

And that is our calling tonight. That's the calling of a disciple. If I was to ask you, tell me about a disciple, what's a disciple?

I think the majority of us would probably say, well, a disciple is someone who does this and does that and does the next thing. They're called to serve Jesus and they're called to do this and all that, and all that's true.

But the primary call for the disciples back then, and the primary call for disciples here and now, is a call to be with Jesus.

So are we with Him? That's how we finish. Are we with Him? Are we trusting Jesus as our Savior?

[66 : 38] Are we following Jesus as our Lord and our King? if not, that's what He calls us to tonight, to devote our lives to Him.

And if there are any of us this evening who are Christians but we are drifting, as we are prone to, then as we approach the table, let us take this opportunity once more to confess the distance if there's drift and to devote our lives to Christ afresh.

That we may be with Him, that we may abide in Him, that we may remain in Him. and know the blessing and the fruit that comes from being in that place.

And if we are with Him, then what does He call us to do? Where does He call us to be this Lord's day? He calls us to be at the table.

Maybe there's someone here tonight who is a secret believer. You've asked for forgiveness. you've asked Jesus to be Lord.

[68 : 19] But communion season by communion season, the profession that you make from the place that you sit is that you are not with Him. Hear the call once more, the command that comes from Jesus.

if you are trusting Him, if you are saved by His blood. And hear His command to do this, to come to the table, to be with Him openly, and to remember all that He has done for our salvation.

let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your Word. We pray that You would help us as we face the challenge of it, as we take time to meditate upon it.

We thank You for the encouragement that there is as we hear the words of Jesus. us, and we pray that as You search our hearts, that You would work in each one of our hearts and lives, that we may hear the call of Christ, and that we may come in repentance, in faith, in obedience.

We pray this in Jesus. From Psalm 63, sing Psalm 63, page number 80. Psalm 63, verses 1 to verse 8.

[70 : 02] O God, You are my God alone. I seek Your face with eagerness. My soul and body thirst for You in this dry weary wilderness. Down to the end of verse 8 to God's praise.

O God, You are my God alone.

I seek Your grace with eagerness. My soul and body thirst for You in this Thy weary wilderness.

I've seen you in your holy place, your power and glory held my gaze.

Far better is your love and life and so my lips will sing your praise.

[71 : 25] I'll bless you, Lord, throughout my life and raise my heart to You in prayer.

my joy to live with senior praise. My soul is fed with riches clear.

upon upon my bed I lie awake and in my thoughts remember you.

I meditate throughout the night and keep your constant love in you.

Because You are my help alone, in shadow all Your wings I sing.

[72 : 51] You hold me up with Your right hand to You O God my soul will clean.

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forever more. Amen. Amen.

Amen.