

reacted in a way that is more of selfish impulse than a response that is molded by your spirit we think about even the thoughts that are hidden from others but are seen by you the motivation sometimes of our hearts and Lord as we examine self we confess that we are sinners in thought and word in deed and we cry out with one of old

God have mercy on me the sinner we thank you that as we do so we have the promise that we are forgiven we thank you that we can enter into the joy that comes through this psalm also we can sing of the salvation that is promised to all who look to the Lord look unto me and be ye saved believe in the Lord Jesus Christ we are told and you will be saved call upon the name of the Lord and you will be saved and so Lord we do that even this evening afresh perhaps there are some who have come under a conviction of sin in past years and have never actually cried out with the tax collector God have mercy on me and we pray that even in these moments in this hour tonight there would be none who feels the weight of sin and leaves under that weight but we pray that each one of us would cry out for mercy that we would seek and receive the grace that is offered to us in Christ and that we would be enabled to sing that new song of praise to God that song where we want with our voices and in our hearts and through our lives to lift up the name of Jesus our Saviour and we thank you Lord Jesus for all that you have done for us as we prepare to come to the table we think of the bread and the wine these elements that speak of the body of Christ given for us and the blood of Christ shed for us we thank you that for us the offer of salvation the offer of grace it is the free offer all we have to do is confess our sin and receive the grace that is that is gifted to us but this weekend as we gather around the table once more we are reminded of the great cost at which our salvation came the death father of your son your only begotten son we thank you that he laid down his life so that we might live we thank you that the Lord Jesus came into this world knowing that he would be despised and rejected that he would be forsaken that he would suffer the man of sorrows that he would die to pay the penalty for our sin and we thank you that we remember that death over these days so grant to us

[12:10] Lord we pray a clear vision of the cross that we might be even more amazed by the grace that is outstretched to us and that we would be even more worshipful and filled with love in our hearts for the God who first loved us so bless these days to us we pray bless your word to us meet with us we ask and renew our strength as we come together as your people we thank you for those who have come forward into the membership of this congregation over these last couple of days for some who have transferred here for the McCritchies Lord we pray that you would bless them and that your hand would be upon them and as we remember them we remember

Ian in Greyfriars as he continues to serve you in Inverness and we pray your blessing on his ministry there that you would continue to use him to lift up the name of Jesus that you would sustain him through the days that you have ordained for him as he continues to serve you and we pray for others who have come forward for one who came forward today and we ask Lord that you would bless her and that she would know your presence that she would know your peace that she would know the joy that each one of us would know the joy of your salvation as we take the bread and we take the wine and we remember all that Christ has done for us and we pray Holy Spirit that you would continue to strive with others this evening for any in this building who have not yet trusted Christ we ask Lord that you would be drawing near to them that you would open their eyes as we pray that you would open our eyes that we would see that we are great sinners but Christ is the great

Savior and we pray for those who are outside of the building as well many who will pass going to different things this evening with no thought of the things of God and yet in a moment Lord you are able to change your heart and to awaken a soul and so we pray as we did yesterday evening for awakenings in these islands as we have known of in the past we pray that you would revive your work Lord God in the midst of the years we pray for any who are your people any who may be here tonight and who are trusting in Christ who are forgiven who have been cleansed who are saved who are secure and who have not yet come forward we think of the woman with the issue of blood who was healed and who felt that healing and the joy of that but hid back in the shadows we thank you that as she heard the call of

Jesus eventually she came forward to profess that Christ had healed her and if there are any hearts that have been healed and cleansed tonight but still the voice is silent we pray that you would give courage and clarity that every one of your people would come forward and profess that Jesus is their Lord and Saviour so bless us we pray be amongst us we pray we pray for Calum as he

continues to serve you here we pray for all the office bearers for the members for the adherents we ask that in everything that is done that Christ would be lifted up that each one would know the joy of worship as we come together as your people and we pray on Lord that this congregation as all the congregations in this place would be helped as your people seek to reach out with the good news of the gospel give us opportunities we pray give us courage we pray and as the seed of the gospel is sown in this community we ask that it would bear fruit as we hear our prayers cleanse us from our sin and go before us we ask we pray all this in Jesus name

Amen we'll sing again now to God's praise we'll sing this time from Psalm 121 again the Scottish Psalter page 416 Psalm 121 I to the hills will lift mine eyes from whence doth come my need my safety cometh from the Lord who heaven and earth hath made we'll sing the whole of this Psalm to God's praise I to the hills will lift mine eyes from whence doth come my name my safety cometh from the Lord who heaven and earth hath made my safety cometh from the

[17 : 56] Lord who heaven and earth hath made I who till not bless life nor will be summer that he is behold he that he exists voy voy!

voy! voy! voy! He shall not smite, nor yet the sun by day.

The moon by night, he shall not smite, nor yet the sun by day.

The Lord shall keep thy soul, he shall preserve me from all ill. Hence for thy going, I'll stand in, God keep forever will.

Hence for thy going, I'll stand in, God keep forever will.

[19 : 35] If I could ask you to turn with me now please to Matthew chapter 11.

Matthew chapter 11, page 984 in the Bible here. Matthew chapter 11, page 984 in the Bible here. And we looked at the first part of the chapter yesterday evening down to verse 24. And I want this evening and into tomorrow morning also to look at the verses from 25 through to the end of the chapter.

So Matthew chapter 11 and we're reading from verse 25 to verse 30. At that time, Jesus declared, and think about the context actually here as we looked at it last evening.

Jesus has just spoken some of the strongest words of judgment on these cities that he had preached to, that he had performed amazing, miraculous works in, and they dismissed him.

[21 : 04] They rejected him. And so there's really strong words of warning in the verses immediately preceding this section. That's the time that Matthew is speaking of.

And now we have the contrast that comes through. At that time, Jesus declared, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children.

Yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

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

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us.

[22 : 23] We're going to sing again now to God's praise. Again, the Scottish Psalter. Psalm 116, page 395. Psalm 116.

And we'll sing from verse 1 to verse 7 of the psalm. I love the Lord, because my voice and prayers he did hear. I, while I live, will call on him who bowed to me his ear.

Of death the courts and sorrows that about me compass round. The pains of hell took hold on me. I grief and trouble found upon the name of God the Lord.

Then did I call and say, Deliver thou my soul, O Lord. I do thee humbly pray, God merciful and righteous as ye gracious as our Lord. God saves the meek.

I was brought low. He did me help afford. O thou, my soul, do thou return unto thy quiet rest. For largely, lo, the Lord to thee his bounty hath expressed.

[23 : 28] These verses of Psalm 116 we sing to God's praise. I love the Lord, because my voice and prayers he did hear.

I, while I live, will call on him who bowed to me this year.

Of death the courts and sorrows that about me compass round.

The grace of heaven to hold on me. I, while I live, will call on him.

I, while I live, will call on him. I, while I live, will call on him. I, while I live, will call on him.
[25 : 08] singing in singing Amen.

If you could turn back, please, with me to Matthew chapter 11.

And as we come back to these verses, once more, let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word that we have sung.

We thank you for the bounty that is found, that we are able to meditate upon and receive as we take time to listen to your voice and to think once more upon the wonder of the gospel, the good news about Jesus.

We thank you that every salvation story, even as we sing the Psalms and as we hear these accounts of crying out for salvation.

[27 : 19] We thank you that every experience, every answered prayer for salvation that was received and known leads us to the cross where we see Jesus.

And we thank you that we hear in the verses that we have read the words of God the Son who says, come to me. And so we ask that you would enable us, Lord God, in this time to come, to come afresh to Jesus.

That we may know the blessing, the rest, the peace, the joy, the contentment that is found only in him.

So clear our minds, we pray, of all that would distract us, all that has preoccupied us over these days and perhaps over the last week.

Cleanse us from sin, the sin that weighs us down. Bind the evil one, we pray, that he may not be able to assault us and attack us.

[28 : 33] And fill us with the Holy Spirit, that the Spirit who inspired Matthew to record these words as we have them written down, that he would be our teacher, that the Holy Spirit himself would illuminate our minds and touch our hearts and spotlight Jesus, that we may fix our eyes upon him.

And we ask all this in Jesus' name. Amen. Matthew chapter 11 and looking at verse 25 down to verse 30.

And where I'd like to begin this evening is with the idea, the doctrine, the words that guide us here into thinking about God's will.

We often talk about God's will. We often wonder about God's will. Sometimes, even in our every good day conversation, we will answer in terms of God's will for our lives.

Something maybe as ordinary as an invitation to go and join friends for dinner in six weeks' time or six months' time, we check the diary. And if it's free, we'll come back in our response and we'll say, I'd be delighted to meet you.

[30 : 19] I'll see you at this place at this time, DV, Dio Valenti, which means God willing. And when we pray, as we come together as God's people to pray, as we attend prayer meetings, we draw near in worship and we bring our petitions in prayer as we are taught to, we ask for things.

But often we add rightly as we ask for things, if it be thy will. And so God's will, God's ways are often mysterious to us.

His ways are higher than our ways. Often God's will is obscured from our view and our understanding. But sometimes God's will is revealed to us.

There are aspects of God's will that are shared with us. And Jesus speaks in this passage about the will of God, the will of the Father.

And that's where we begin this evening. Three points in the time that we have. We'll think first of all about the will of the Father. God, the Son, Jesus, he tells us about the will of the Father.

[31 : 49] The second thing we'll see is the way to the Father. We're taught how we can know the Father, how the Father can be revealed to us. And the final thing we see or we hear is this amazing call.

The call of the Son. The will of the Father, the way to the Father, and the call of the Son. So first of all, the will of the Father. Verse 25 as we pick this up.

At that time, Jesus declared, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things, these gospel things, from the wise and understanding, and revealed them to little children.

Yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. Now, in Jesus' ministry, in this world, as it's recorded for us in the Gospels, it's very clear for us to see that Jesus, he met a lot of resistance.

And the majority of the resistance that Jesus met with was concentrated in people who were wise and understanding in their own estimation.

[33 : 08] Jesus clashed most regularly with people who had a very high opinion of themselves. I was reminded when I was preparing of a story that came back to my mind from Loch Caron, the first place I had a charge.

And we'd, as a family, just moved to Loch Caron. We were getting our boxes unpacked and getting organized. And our next-door neighbor was a Highland gentleman called Donnie Colonel, a wise, witty, warm character.

A character. And he would be in and out most days asking how we were getting on. And I remember one day he said to me, have you met this one? Have you met that one?

Have you met the next person? And I said, yes, I've met this one. I haven't met that one next. And then he said, he says, have you met, I'll change the guy's name, but he says, have you met Jim? And I said, well, as a matter of fact, I have met Jim.

I could remember Jim. He was a very confident character. I said, yes, I have met Jim. And Donnie paused. And he says, Jim is a very, very, very important man.

[34 : 25] And then Donnie paused with a half a smirk on his face. And he said, by the way, Jim told me that himself.

Now, Jesus met a lot of Jims. We have a record in the gospel of Jesus encountering lots of people who thought that they were very, very important.

And sadly, the majority of these people were religious people. They were scribes and Pharisees.

And in their own view, in their own estimation, they were wise and they had great understanding.

They were very, very proud people. And it's true that many of these people would have been able to recite large sections of the Old Testament.

They had a good grasp of the scriptures in terms of recall. They may have had an excellent understanding of church law.

[35 : 38] They may have been religious experts and had their names in many of the institutions of theology.

But when it came to the gospel, when it came to the good news about Jesus, these things, these gospel things were hidden from them.

They couldn't see. They would not see Jesus. They were filled with spiritual pride.

And spiritual pride is the biggest obstacle to seeing Jesus. If we are wise and understanding in our own eyes, we won't be able to see Jesus clearly.

If we are wise and understanding in our own eyes and think that we are something, the cross will make no sense to us.

[36 : 58] It will be of no relevance to us. And the good news that Jesus preaches will be hidden from us.

J.C. Ryle says this. Those to whom the gospel is revealed are generally humble, simple-minded, and willing to learn.

Let us watch against pride. In every shape, pride of intellect, pride of wealth, pride in our own goodness.

Nothing is so likely, says Ryle, to keep a man out of heaven and prevent him seeing Christ as pride.

So long as we think we are something, we shall never be saved.

Let us pray for and cultivate humility. And so Jesus, as he teaches the disciples here, and as we have this record from Matthew, we are given a negative example.

[38 : 16] We are given an example of what we are not to be. We are not to be those who are wise and understanding in our own eyes. We are to fight against any creeping spiritual pride.

And then we have the positive from verse 25. Jesus, having illustrated what we're not to be, he teaches us what we are to be like.

He teaches us what the Father would will us to be like in our approach. And he says in verse 25, we need to become like little children.

Now, in that day, much more so than in our day, little children had very low position. Little children didn't have money or power or influence.

Little children in that stage, in that age, they couldn't stamp their feet and demand rights. And little children, they hadn't become cynical and hard-hearted.

[39 : 37] We don't read in the Gospels of little children clashing with Jesus and resisting and pushing Jesus away like the wise and the understanding were.

Little children, we are told in the Gospels, they were coming to Jesus. And Jesus says, it is the will of the Father to hide salvation from the spiritually proud and to reveal salvation, to reveal the Savior to the humble, to the lowly, to those who come like little children.

Augustus, this top lady in the hymn, Rock of Ages, has a great line and it says in that hymn, nothing in my hands I bring, simply to thy cross I cling.

and that's the way that we are to come to Jesus. We come like little children.

Whether it's the first time or whether it's the thousandth time, this is how we come. We come like little children.

[41 : 12] Nothing in our hands we bring. We come with empty hands. We come with hearts that we pray that the Spirit has opened. We come ready to receive the salvation, the grace that Jesus offers.

And as we approach the Lord's table, let's ask the question, who comes to the table? Who is it that is called to come to the table?

And the answer is only those who see that they are not worthy. Only those who see that we have nothing good in ourselves that we can offer God.

we don't come with a spiritual portfolio. We come with empty hands. We come acknowledging the fact that there is nothing that we can trade in.

You know, when it comes to the stage where we want to buy a new car, we see the car that we want and we go to the salesman at the garage. and we ask about the price.

[42 : 39] But in the conversation, we're saying, I have another car parked out the back and it's just four years old and I've looked after it and it's only got 50,000 miles on it. So what will you give me for it?

I want to do a trade-in. Let's come to a deal. Let's negotiate. Let's bargain here. Let's trade. And that's the way we approach a salesman in a garage.

But when we come to Jesus, let's remember that we have nothing that we can negotiate with.

There's nothing that we can come and bring to trade in. as we prepare to come to the Lord's table. Jonathan Edwards said, you contribute nothing to your salvation except the sin that made it necessary.

It's a very humbling truth that is pressed in on us. You contribute nothing. I contribute nothing to my salvation except the sin that made it necessary.

[44 : 03] And so as we come to the Lord's table, as we come to Jesus, we come not like the wise and understanding. That's the lesson. we come telling Jesus about the good religious things we do.

We don't come showboating the great theological truths we have grasped. We come in humility with reverence and simple faith like little children.

This is the will of the Father. The second point, the will of the Father is the first thing that we are taught by Jesus as we listen in to this lesson.

The second thing we see here is the way to the Father. Jesus says in verse 27, all things have been handed over to me by my Father.

So that's where we start. So what's Jesus saying in that statement? Well, Jesus is saying in that statement what Matthew is teaching so clearly right throughout the Gospel.

[45 : 20] Jesus is saying that he is king. All things, says Jesus, all authority has been handed over to me by my Father.

Jesus is making clear that he has authority, that he has kingly authority. And we see that kingly authority illustrated in lots of ways.

We could just glance back through a few chapters. You can do that yourself later in the evening.

And as we scan over the past few chapters, we can see where the authority of Jesus is so clearly demonstrated.

when Jesus preaches, people listen. Matthew 7 and at verse 29 says, he was teaching them as one who had authority, not as the scribes.

he's teaching them like the king, but he was and is. And then there's the miracles.

[46 : 26] We see all these records of miracles in Matthew's Gospel. Jesus is healing the sick. He is casting out demons. He's raising the dead.

And through these miracles, through these signs and wonders, we see the authority of Jesus. And even if we rewind a few verses to the section that we were in last night, we listen to Jesus as he pronounces woe on Carazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum.

And as he pronounces these woes, he is showing that he has authority to judge. He is judge and king.

And now Jesus goes on to teach that he has authority to save. Verse 27.

Jesus says, no one knows the Son except the Father. And Jesus is teaching in these verses that he is God the Son.

[47 : 44] He calls God his Father, which to us doesn't surprise us, but to those who are listening on this day, they would have been shocked and appalled to hear such language.

And yet Jesus is just teaching the truth. of who he was and is. No one knows the Father except the Son.

Verse 27, if I continue, no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. And with that statement, Jesus, he emphasizes, he gives us something of a window in to the Trinity.

there's something of the intimacy of the Trinity revealed to us as Jesus speaks of his Father and the relationship between Father and Son.

But then Jesus goes on, you could say, to open the door further to show us that we can know the Father.

[48 : 57] Something that would have shocked the people as they heard him speak. So how can we know the Father?

How can the Father be revealed to us? How can we be brought into relationship with God? The most important question any of us will ever grapple with, how can we be brought into relationship with God?

How can we know the Father? How can we gain access to heaven where the Father is? And the answer is through Jesus.

Jesus. And only through Jesus. No other way, no other name, no other route, no other religion, no other man.

Only Jesus. The only way that we can know God, the only way that the Father can be revealed to us is through Jesus. this connects with John 14 6, these familiar verses that we know so well.

[50 : 16] Jesus says, I am the way, the way, singular, full stop. No one comes to the Father except through me, says Jesus.

Jesus. Or John chapter 10 and verse 9, Jesus says, I am the door. The way to the Father is through Jesus, the Son.

One commentator, again, it's Ryle, says, Jesus bears the keys. To him, we must go for admission into heaven. He is the door.

Through him, we must enter. He is the shepherd. We must hear his voice and follow him. If we would not perish in the wilderness, he is the physician. We must apply to him.

If we would be healed of the plague of sin, he is the bread of life. We must feed on him. If we would have our soul satisfied. He is the light. We must walk after him.

[51 : 21] If we would not wander into darkness, he is the fountain. We must wash in his blood if we would be cleansed and made ready for the great day of account.

The so-called wise and understanding who were rejecting Jesus, they were choosing woe, they were choosing judgment, they were choosing hell.

But those who came like little children to Jesus were being assured that this was the way to the Father.

So the will of the Father is that we will come to Jesus like little children. The way to the Father is through Jesus the Son, the Savior.

And we finish with the call of the Son. Verse 28 is as far as we'll get.

[52 : 40] Jesus says, come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Weerspe, the commentator, says, the Pharisees all said do and tried to make the people follow Moses and the traditions, but true salvation is found only in a person, Jesus Christ.

And that person, Jesus Christ, God the Son, the Savior, the King of Kings, he says to us, come, come to me.

And just think about the privilege of that and the wonder of that. The magnitude of the goodness of the news that is communicated to us in that God the Son, the Savior, the one who promises access into heaven, eternal life, forgiveness of sin.

He doesn't push us away. He doesn't hold us at a distance. He says come. I was watching a video on the computer the other day and there was a concert and the lead singer was singing and at one point he extends his hand and this girl in her 20s or 30s is invited onto the stage and she sings along with this singer and all these comments underneath are saying how amazing that she's not pushed back by security, how amazing that she gets to come.

This is a life changing experience. It's only a singer. It's only a moment. But there's such amazement that this singer who's got some degree of importance says come.

[54 : 55] And yet here the King of Kings the Lord of Lords the Saviour the Son of God says come to me.

Who can come? Well, those to whom the Father has revealed the Son.

Verse 25. If we think back to the day that Jesus first spoke these words, there were many who heard the call, but they wouldn't come.

They could see no reason to come to Jesus. The beauty, the glory, of Jesus was hidden from them.

So how do we know tonight if the Father is revealing the Son to us?

How do we know if this call is for us? Well, we know because we feel weary and heavy laden.

[56 : 07] And we know that the reason for the weight that makes us weary and weighs us down and leaves us restless is sin.

sin. And when we see that, when we feel that God is working in us, Jesus told us in John chapter 16 and verse 8 that when the Spirit comes, He convicts us of sin.

And we're told in verse 25 that the Father reveals Jesus to us as the Savior of sinners.

And when these things, these things come together, when we see, as I pray that we see tonight, that we are great sinners and that Christ is the great Savior, we are to come to Him in response to His call, to us.

And we're to confess our sin. We're to ask Him to take the weight of that sin from us. And that's what the cross is all about.

[57 : 36] The weight of our sin at Calvary is transferred from us to Jesus. We often sing a line in a hymn, Behold the man upon the cross, my sin upon His shoulders.

And yet when we come to Jesus, He takes our sin away from us. That's His promise. And He gives us rest.

So the call of the Son is come to me. Come to me, says Jesus. If you feel weary, if you feel burdened, if you know that you're a sinner, come to me, says Jesus, and keep on coming to me.

So will we do that tonight? Will we come to Jesus? Maybe there's someone who's come into this church a thousand times, but still you haven't come to Jesus.

come to Him. Tonight, maybe there's someone watching at a distance who never comes into the church, and yet is beginning to feel the weight of sin, and beginning to understand the restlessness of heart.

[59 : 30] Come to Jesus. And then come to the table. like little children, like little children, to remember with gratitude all that Jesus has done in and through His death to secure our salvation and to promise us eternal rest.

come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The call of the Son. Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word, and we thank you for your will that is revealed to us in the verses that we've read this evening.

We thank you that it is your will to hide from those who are full of pride the wonder and glory of your Son, and to reveal the wonder and the salvation that is promised in Jesus to those who are recognizing that we are sinners.

We thank you that when we see that we are sinners, God, the Holy Spirit, is at work. We cannot see this on our own. It's a work of the Spirit.

[61 : 24] And we thank you that when we see that we are sinners, we also are shown that Jesus is the Savior.

He is the way to the Father. O come to the Father through Jesus the Son and give him the glory. Great things he hath done.

Help us, we pray, as we prepare to come to the table, as we prepare for your day, to remember and to rejoice in the great things that Jesus has done for us.

And help each one of us, we pray, to come in response to the call, to trust Christ, in response to the command to do these things, to remember him.

Help us, we ask, in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll sing to conclude from Psalm, sing Psalms 116, page 154, from verse 12 to verse 19.

[62 : 35] How can I thank the Lord for all he's done. With gratitude, salvation's cup I'll raise. I'll call upon his name and will fulfill my vows to him before his people's face.

Down to the end of the Psalm, to God's praise. Psalm 116, verse 12 to verse 19, page 154 of the Psalter.

Oh, can I thank the Lord for all he's done, with gratitude, salvation, cup I raise.

I'll walk upon his name and will fulfill my love to him before his people's face.

The Lord, don't hear the death of all his face. Hear me, O Lord, I am your servant too.

[63 : 53] I am your servant and your son. And what change I have been free by you.

And what means I will sacrifice to you. And call upon the name of God the Lord,!

When our people live not set me eat, which I have fulfilled my solemn word.

Before his people I will keep my blood love within the of our God's holy place, within the city of Jerusalem, to the Lord alone be all the place.

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.

[65 : 21] Amen.