

Fear Not, For I Am With You

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Date: 06 December 2015

Preacher: Rev David Robertson

[0 : 0 0] Well again a very warm welcome to you to the service of worship this evening and it is good for us to be together as two congregations but united in Christ and as partners in the gospel here in Stornoway and in the surrounding area. We'll continue worshipping God by singing to his praise in the words of Psalm 126, Psalm 126, the Sing Psalms version and singing the whole psalm.

Psalm 126, the Sing Psalms version and the whole psalm, it's on page 171 if you're using the blue psalm books. When Zion's fortunes God restored it was a dream come true. Our mouths were then with laughter filled, our tongues with songs anew. Nations said the Lord has done great things for Israel, the Lord did mighty things for us and joy our hearts knew well. We'll sing Psalm 126, the whole psalm, to God's praise.

When Zion's fortunes God restored it was a dream come true. Our mouths were then with laughter filled, our tongues with songs anew. The nations said the Lord has done great things for Israel. The Lord did mighty things for us and joy our hearts knew well.

our hearts knew well. Restore our fortunes, gracious Lord, like streams in desert soil. A joyful harvest will reward the weeping soul.

the sons of God. In the Saints■. In the Well, a reading from the Word of God is taken from the prophecy of Isaiah and chapter 41.

[3 : 0 3] Prophecy of Isaiah chapter 41. And reading the first 20 verses of the chapter. Isaiah 41 from verse 1.

And this is God speaking to us through His Word. Listen to me in silence, O coastlands. Let the peoples renew their strength.

Let them approach, then let them speak. Let us draw together for judgment. Who stirred up one from the east? Whom victory meets at every step? He gives up nations before Him so that He tramples kings underfoot.

He makes them like dust with His sword, like driven stubble with His bow. He pursues them and passes on safely. By paths His feet have not trod. Who has performed and done this, calling the generations from the beginning?

I, the Lord, the first, and with the last, I am He. The coastlands have seen and are afraid. The ends of the earth tremble. They have drawn near and come. Everyone helps his neighbor and says to his brother, Be strong.

[4 : 1 6] The craftsman strengthens the goldsmith. And he who smooths with the hammer, him who strikes the anvil. Saying of the soldering, It is good. And they strengthen it with nails so that it cannot be moved.

But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend, you whom I look from the ends of the earth and called from its farthest corners, saying to you, You are my servant.

I have chosen you. I not cast you off. Fear not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Behold, all who are incensed against you shall be put to shame and confounded. Those who strive against you shall be as nothing and shall perish. You shall seek those who contend with you, but you shall not find them.

Those who are against you shall be as nothing at all. For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand. It is I who say to you, Fear not, I am the one who helps you. Fear not, you worm, Jacob, you men of Israel.

[5 : 20] I am the one who helps you, declares the Lord. Your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I make of you a threshing sledge, new, sharp, and having teeth.

You shall thresh the mountains and crush them, and you shall make the hills like chaff. You shall winnow them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the tempest shall scatter them, and you shall rejoice in the Lord, and the Holy One of Israel, you shall glory.

When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue is parched with thirst, I, the Lord, will answer them. I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys.

I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive. I will set in the desert the cypress, the plain and the pine together, that they may see and know, may consider and understand together, that the hand of the Lord has done this.

The Holy One of Israel has created it. Amen. And this is the word of God to us this evening, and we pray that he would add his blessing to that reading from his own word.

[6 : 33] Well, once more, sing his praises, this time in the words of Psalm 115. Psalm 115, the Sing Psalms version on page 152, and sing in verses 1 down to 9.

Lord, not to us, so not to us, to your name be the praise, because your love and faithfulness endure, O Lord, always. Why do the nations question us? Where is their God, they say?

Our God inhabits heaven high, and over all holds sway. We'll sing Psalm 115, verses 1 to 9, on page 152, to God's praise.

Lord, not to us, so not to us, to your name be the praise, because your love and faithfulness endure, O Lord, always.

Why do the nations question us?

[7 : 52] Where is their God, they say? Our God inhabits heaven high, and over all holds sway.

Their gold and silver images Are crowded carefully For they have mouths which cannot speak, And eyes which cannot see.

Their noses have no sense of smell, Let ears can hear no sound They have no feeling in their hands Nor can they walk alone Although these idols do have throats No word can they go clean Their meekers and their worshippers Will all become like them

O how strong is the place your trust Upon the Lord not alone He is the mighty help and shield Upon all who are His own Well, before we come to focus On the word of God together, Let's seek His blessing on the preached word.

Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, As we draw into your presence this evening, We are thankful for the fact That we are able to approach the God Who is all-powerful, The God who indeed has created The whole of this world In a set space of time And created it all very good And that you have not left this world To its own devices But rather you sustain this world By your powerful word.

[11 : 05] We give you praise and thanks For the way that your word reminds us Of the fact that you are not simply All-powerful, But you are also all-present. That you are the God who fills heaven And who fills earth.

That there is nowhere where we are In this world Where we can escape from you. We thank you and praise you That even if we were to try And rise up as high as we could go, We could not escape you Nor could we escape you Would we plumb to the depths of the earth.

And we give you praise for the way That your word reminds us That though you are all-powerful And though you are all-present, You are also all-knowing. That you know what we are thinking, You know what we are going to say Before we even speak it or think it.

And we thank you and praise you That this reminds us That there is nothing that we can conceal from you. There is nothing that is hidden from you. And we thank you for that Because maybe there are some of us here this evening Who are concealing a lot of problems Below the surface.

Things that we wouldn't share With our nearest and dearest. But we thank you that you know And that you understand. Because we thank you that Though you are all-knowing And all-powerful And all-present, You are also our Heavenly Father.

[12 : 13] We thank you and praise you That your word teaches us That through the Lord Jesus We are able to enter Into the presence of the living and true God And call this God, Abba, Father.

And know all the privileges That come from being children Of the Most High God. We praise you for this And we thank you for it. And we do thank you for this time That we do have together this evening.

A time when we can Take time out of our busy lives And stress-filled lives To centre our attention And our affections on you. And our prayer is That we would do so this evening.

That this would be a time of worship For each and every one of us. That it would be an oasis For the wearied and wounded souls That have come to this place. That we would indeed taste and see That you are good.

That we would respond to the summons Of the Saviour who says, Come to me, You who are wearied and heavy laden, And I will give you rest. We pray and ask That as we are in this place this evening, That your word would really speak to us.

[13 : 14] That your spirit would take And apply everything that David now says And proclaims from your word And apply it with force and conviction To our minds and to our hearts And to our souls.

That you would this evening Give us eyes that would behold Your greatness, your glory, Your goodness and grace in the gospel. That you would give us minds That would understand more of those truths.

Because you are the God Who opened the minds of the disciples So that they could understand That Genesis through to Revelation Was all centred on the person And work of Jesus. The full plan of God's redemption.

We pray that you would open our ears To hear you addressing us Through your word So that we wouldn't simply Be captivated by a preacher But we would be captivated By the God who speaks Through his word And through the preaching of men.

And we pray that through this You would open our hearts So that we would receive you Afresh this evening. That we would rest on you And that we would rejoice in you. That we would have hearts this evening That trust in you Above all things and treasure you Above all things.

[14 : 16] That you would be precious To each and every one of us From the youngest Through to the very oldest. And we pray that through Having these opened eyes And opened ears Opened minds and opened hearts You would open each of our lips So that we would praise and proclaim Jesus Christ to be Lord To the glory of God the Father.

And that this wouldn't simply Be the case this evening. That you would give us the grace
And the opportunities to go And make this gospel known In all the places and spaces That
you put us in.

So go before us. May David know at liberty As he proclaims your word to us now. May he
know your presence with him Your protection surrounding him Your peace being upon him
Your power being at work through him And your promises and providences Stretching
before him.

And all this we pray Asking for forgiveness for all our sin And rejoicing that there is no
condemnation For those in Christ Jesus In whose name we pray these things. Amen.
Amen. Well it's my privilege to be with you.

I want to thank Kenny, I and Hugh for allowing me To be here. I want to thank both
congregations. It's good to see Two congregations dwelling together in unity.

[15 : 34] And if you're here as a visitor from elsewhere You are also very welcome. If you're here as
someone who's not yet a Christian You're very welcome. Sometimes I wonder If we know
what it's like For someone who's not a Christian Who's never gone to church To come in
to a church.

We get a lot of that in Dundee And the most common reaction I hear from people
afterwards This was not what I expected. So I don't know what you expect Here this
evening But I hope that God will surprise you In a good way.

One particularly to give a warm welcome To any younger people Any boys and girls here
It's great to see you in church And that's what we need to see More and more of.

And I thought I'd begin by Telling you about I was in Northern Ireland A couple of weeks
ago And a man came up to me And he was telling me about his daughter Who was 10
years old And he said to me That his daughter had come in at night And said, Dad, what
happens If ISIS come to Belfast?

And she was very scared About all the terrorism That she's been hearing about And he
said to her You don't need to worry, sweetheart Us or the provosts will get them He was a
member of the Ulster Volunteer Force Which was a kind of Protestant terrorist
organization And that might sound very strange It's very strange actually And also the
provisional IRA And he's saying They're not going to come here Because they terrorize
We'll terrorize them Now I think as we look at Isaiah 41 When we think about our fears
And the things that scare us Or the things that we worry about And all of us have these
There is a temptation To try and work out our own solutions And what I want to do is As
we look at Isaiah 41 Is to see how God deals with these fears And as we go through this
There are certain things That I want to address and think about One is about the church in
this nation

[17 : 45] And also in this island Now one of the big questions That many people have Is why is evil
allowed to succeed?

How do we understand things When we see so many horrible things? If God is good Then
why is there evil? And for some of you That's a big question Because you see things on
the television And for others It's an enormous question Because you experience it yourself
I've been a minister For a long time I was going to mention as much As the minister here
Has almost been And you see a lot I was very young When I became a minister I don't
remember Kenny I in college at all Maybe I was too busy talking But I don't know if he was
listening But I was 24 years old When I went to Brora In my life I'd only ever been at three
funerals Because I come from Easter Ross And we don't have the same concern I
discovered when I read The Stornoway Gazette I started reading it That the things that
people

Seemed to be most concerned about Were the weather and death Well in Easter Ross I wasn't so aware of that But when I became a minister I became involved obviously In a lot of funerals And I remember one woman In particular That she had three children And each died In their first week After birth How do you cope With that kind of pain And sorrow It seems incomprehensible That in a world Which God created good There is so much evil Well in this passage In Isaiah Which I think helps Answer that question God's people Are faced with great evil Because They had been small But they'd been protected And now their land Had been invaded And their temple Had been attacked And all the things in it

Had taken away 200,000 people Taken into exile Tens of thousands Killed And beginning in Isaiah 40 Isaiah is called To comfort The people And so far He's told them That their sins are forgiven That they need to rely On the word of God He's pointed them To the one true shepherd To talk about Creator God Being more powerful Than the nations And to remind them That he Is the God Who will give them strength But The world Still mocks And the nations Still run amok And so now An image changes And it's the image That is tied in With The Courtroom And it's God's Challenge to the nations People are challenging God They're saying Where are you?

What's happening? But he Challenges to the nations Listen to me in silence Oh close lands Let the peoples Renew them strength Let them approach Then let them speak Let us draw together Near For judgment Now He talks about One who's coming From the east Who stirred up One from the east Whom victory meets At every step In that context That was a king Called Cyrus Who is described By Isaiah As God's servant But here's the problem Cyrus was a pagan king Cyrus was also A cruel king He certainly Probably believed That it was one god But We know that He did not believe In the god of the bible So what is God saying About Cyrus Because the Jewish people Are looking And they're seeing This king come in And control And defeat Them And God is saying

[21 : 52] Even though He does not believe In me He is still My servant Because We in our circumstances Are very prone To think That Whoever's kind of winning On the battlefield Or politically Or whatever They're the ones Who are in control But God Is always In control Even When Evil things Dreadful things Happen St. Augustine Said That our god Is so great That he can turn Even the evil To good And here God reminds the people That Cyrus Is not master Of the world He is The lord's Servant A long time A long time ago In Scotland There was a man Called James Melville At the time Of the Just after The Scottish Reformation He became

The principal Of Glasgow University And refused To serve Under King James In his court And Melville When summoned By the king Said this You are god's Silly vassal It wasn't Perhaps the politest Way Silly meant Something slightly Different in those Days But he said This There are two Kings And two Kingdoms In Scotland There is King James The head Of the Commonwealth And there Is Christ Jesus The king Of the church Whose subject James VI Is And of whose Kingdom He is not A king Not a lord Not a head But a member Melville was A very brave Man And I think In our culture And country Today we are Going to have To be very Brave In standing Up for King Jesus Melville was Threatened By the king's Regent And Melville Replied Silence man Threaten your Courtiers So It is the Same to me Whether I Rot in the Air or in The ground Meaning whether You hang me Or whether I'm buried

And I've Lived out of Your country As well as in It Let God Be praised You can Neither hang Nor exile His truth He was Tried for A sermon Where he Preached The independence Of the Church And Melville Completely Unmoved Reached into His belt Pulled out His bible Put it on The table And said To the Judges These are My Instructions See if Any of you Can judge Of them Or show That I Have passed My injunctions Now this King Cyrus Was summoned In righteousness We will Find in Our culture That there Is no Neutrality When it Comes to The word Of God And that Increasingly Christians Will be put Under pressure And we Need people We need Politicians We need Church leaders With backbone Who are Going to Stand up And just Say this Is what God says And we're

Not moving Away from It And we Need that In the Church As well Because one Of the Things that Can happen In the Church Is we Can become Very tied To tradition And very Afraid Of men And we Can forget The fear Of the Lord And we Can forget To honour And revere And go By God's Word Verse 4 Who has Performed and Done this Calling the Generations From the Beginning I the Lord From first To last There was Panic at King Cyrus Advance Why is Evil allowed To succeed Well here There is Calmness God's plan Will be Carried out I go The first And the Last Who carries It all Out Jehovah Yahweh The only One who Is absolutely Free God's plan Now I Think that In our Lives Sometimes We misunderstand Who God Is and We misunderstand Teachings Like the

Sovereignty Of God God alone Is good God alone Is holy God alone Is love All that We have Is derived From that Jesus Alone Is head Of the Church Now you May say That's all Very well And that Sounds fine But you Don't believe That you Think of The alternatives There is An alternative Where people Want to say Just be Calm To calm Down They say Trust The politicians Some of You Will maybe Have watched The television Program Dad's Army Where you've Got the Private Jones Just running Around shouting Don't panic Don't panic Well when Someone's running Around shouting Don't panic Then of course Everyone panics And in a way Sometimes We get people Talking about Calmness In that Sense

[26 : 54] But Sometimes We get our Politicians They say Well look Don't worry About things We're going To deal with it Or maybe They say The opposite Maybe they say You've got to Worry about Things You've got to Worry about ISIS You've got to Worry about Bad people Coming and Doing things So let us Look after you And sometimes When they do That They end up Restricting Our freedom Sometimes People say Trust in False gods Look at verse 7 The craftsman Strengthens the Goldsmith And he who Smooths with The hammer Him who Smites the Anvil Saying of the Soldering It is good And they Strengthen it With nails So that it Cannot be Moved Human gods Created by Human skill Human approval Human stability But human gods Are only projections Of humanity Now some people Say that's true Of all gods No it's not It's not true Of the god Of the bible Who reaches down To us

In every single Religion in the World People reach up To god We create Our own gods And here's Another thing That When I talk To my Non-Christian Friends They say Oh I don't Believe in god Or I don't Have any Of this Religious Stuff But everyone Worships Something And everyone Has things In our heart That we value More than Anything else You know the Phrase don't Touch the Apple of your Eye Well for some Of you that's Your children For some of You it can Be different Things It can be Your car You can see Someone who's Got an Absolutely Immaculate Car It's always Shiny And clean And it's Become a Kind of Idol to Them For some It's their Homes They live in The most Gorgeous Beautiful Homes I saw a Thing this Week on The BBC Of a House That's just Above a Co-op A flat That's above A co-op And it's a Co-op In a not Particularly Nice street

And from The outside You look at It and you Go that's Not great And then You go Inside And it's Absolutely Gorgeous Everything Is beautiful And you can See that the Person has Put so much Effort And so Much time Into it But Isaiah Tells us Tells us That people Build their Idols And yet They can't Do them Any good What So ever So we're Left with This picture Of being Told that God is in Control That our False idols Won't work But ourselves Experiencing A world In which it Seems As though God is Not in Control So he Goes on From verse Eight God Brings comfort To his People But you He says Israel And it's a Very warm It's a very Personal thing That he is Saying And he Gives us Promises And I Just want To list These promises Verses

Eight to Ten Are the Kind of Premise Of it He says You're Israel I've Chosen You I've Brought You From the Ends Of the Earth Don't Be Afraid I'm With You Don't Be Dismayed I'm Your God I Will Strengthen You I Will Help You I Will U Hold You By My Right Hand I Have Chosen You Now The Doctrine Of God Choosing Or Predestination Is One That Causes A Great Deal Of Concern And Argument And It's One That As John Calvin Said Should Be Taught With Great Carefulness Because It's Not Meant To Be A Doctrine That Makes People Afraid Or Prevents People Coming To Christ It's Meant To Be A Doctrine That Comforts People I It's Interesting I Don't Often Hear It One Somewhat

Interesting Conversation With Him And I Hope He Remembered It And Actually If You're Him And You Remember Speak To Me Afterwards Because It Was Quite Enlightening But It Is Something That Is Used By People A Kind Of Fatalism There Are People Who Go And Maybe You're One Of Them You're Sitting There Thinking Well If I'm Going To Be Saved I'm Going To Be Saved If I'm Not Going To Be Saved I'm Not Going To Be Saved I Might As Well Just Get On With It That's Not What The Doctrine Of Predestination Is Meant To Be Let Let me Put it Another Way Let's Say You Get Hungry And You Want Some Food And You Apply The Doctrine Of Predestination Wrongly Do You Sit At Home And Go Well If The Lord Wants Me To Eat Food The Lord Will Provide Food And He'll Send A Raven Through The Window With Fish And Chips Just Straight From The Chippy You Don't Do That You Go Out You Buy Food You Cook Food You Prepare Food Or You Go To To A Chippy And Get Fish

[32 : 19] And Chips If You Want It And Yet You Can Still Believe In Predestination Because God God Also Predestines Means Why Is It Then That Some People Say Well I Believe That God Is Sovereign And I'll Provide Food And Things Like That But When It Comes To Salvation I Won't Do What God Says Because How Do I Know If I'm Predestined Or Not It Doesn't Really Make Sense And Here The Argument Is This I Have Chosen You Because What God Is Saying Is You're Chose You There's A Whole Bunch Of Gods And I Chose You Aren't You Lucky No God Says I Chose You He Is This Great And Awesome God And Out Of All The People He's Chosen You Not Because Of Your Ability And Your Beauty And Your Goodness And Your Parents Or Whatever But He's Called You Now I'll Say More About That In A Moment Jesus Said You Did Not Choose Me But I Chose

You To Go And Bear Fruit That Will Last The Relationship Here Is One Of A Servant You Israel My Servant You See It As We Go On Through Isaiah In The Servant Songs Cyrus Was A Servant But Not One With A Relationship With God But Here The Servant Israel Which Also Comes On To Speak About Christ As Well Is One With A Relationship Verse 17 Tells Us That They Fell Badly When The Poor And Needy Seek Water And There Is None And Their Tongue Is Parted With Thirst I The Lord Will Answer Them I The God Of Israel Will Not Forsake Them They Are Poor And Needy They Are Insignificant But They Realize That Because God Has Chosen Them They Are Significant Let Me Put It Another Way Let's Say That You Were An Atheist Naturalist Materialist And What I Mean By That Is Someone Just Says There's No God There's Just What Things Just What We Can See This Vast Universe But

That's Just It I Remember I Did A Talk In Cambridge And No Sorry I'm In Chelmsford In England And It Was In A Coffee Shop And There Was About 200 People There And A Man Stood Up And It Was Quite Funny Because He Opened His Jacket Like Like That And There Was A Big Shirt With A On It Like A T-shirt With A And That Was To Remind Him That He Was An Atheist Or To Tell The Rest Of Us I Thought It Was Quite Funny And I Said What Do You Want And Who Come Down Here You Are Not A Professor From Cambridge Or Oxford He Said Well I Mean That But No What I Mean Is This You Are One Of Six Billion People On This Tiny Planet In This Vast Universe Who Do You Think You Are And

I Said To Him Sir You Are Absolutely Correct In Your Understanding Of Things I Am Nothing I Am In The Words Of Birch And Let's Eat Drink And Be Merry For Tomorrow We Die Let's Go Out Of This Building And Who Cares If We Go Get Blazing Drunk Fall In The Harbour And Drown What Does It Matter We're Just Carbon But I Said I Don't Believe That I Believe That I Am Made In The Image Of The God Who Created The Whole Universe And That He Sent His Son To Die For Me So In Your World View And In Your Philosophy And In Your Understanding I Am Nothing But In God's Eyes He Died For Me And Do You Know What He Said To Me He Said If That Was True It Would Be Wonderful Well It Is True It Is True That's The Wonder Of What The Gospel Says To Us Our Significance Does Not Lie In Our

But In The Fact That God Has Chosen Us Don't Be Dismayed He Said And The Dismay There Is This Picture Of When You're Really Afraid And Your Eyes Are Looking Everywhere And He's Saying Don't Be Dismayed Calm Down Remember I Am The One Who Is In Charge You Don't Revise Your Beliefs When Things Start Getting Tough It's An Interesting One That I Come Across People Sometimes You Say I Used To Believe In God And Then And They'll Describe Something Bad That Happened I Almost Invariably Have To Say You Didn't Believe In God You Believe There Was A God Perhaps You Believe Some Doctrine You Were Taught You Remembered What You Had In Sunday School But You Didn't Believe Because Here's The Real Test Of Belief When You Believe In God When You Believe In Jesus And The God Of The Bible When Things Get Tough You Believe Even More Because You've Got Nothing Left It's Like A Friend Of Mine Told

[37 : 21] Me Of A Farmer In New Zealand He And His Wife Were Very Committed Christians They Had Two Small Children Who Were Killed In A Barn Fire And Somebody Was Very Cruel To Them And Said To Them Do You Believe In God Now And The Mother Said I Believe In God Even More Because Only He Can Bring Good Out Of This And If He Does Not Exist My Life Is Hell See Sometimes Suffering Drives People Towards God And That's What God Says To His People Hold On Verse 10 He Says I Will Strengthen And Help You Verse 11 And 12 He Says I Will Scatter Your Fear Because Fear Is What The Devil Uses To Cripple Us I Think One Of The Things That Hold Back The Church In That Holds Back Me And Hold Back

The Church In This Island As Well And My Church Is The Fear That We Have What Will People Say Fear Of This Fear Of That There's A Right Fear There's A Fear Of The Lord There's A Right Respect For Other People But There's A Wrong Fear A Fear That's Associated With Pride A Fear That's Associated With Weakness A Fear That Is Associated With The Devil Who Is The Father Of Lies And The Accuser And Who Wants To Make Us Afraid Fear Undermines Your Whole Relationship With God Do Not Fear Perfect Love Drives Out Fear And What's The Perfect Love It's Not Your Perfect Love It's The Perfect Love Of Christ Driving Out Your Fear I Will Hold Your Hand And Take Away Your Fear That's Why It's Important For Us To Think About The Cross That's Why When You Take Communion Next Week We Call It A Strengthening Ordinance Because It's Christ Taking Your Hand And

Saying Don't Be Afraid You Know What It's Like When You're A Small Child Maybe Not A Small Child And Someone Just You're Very Scared About Something And They Come And They Hold Your Hand And They Tell You It's Okay It's Okay Don't Be Afraid And You're Maybe A Very Small Child Near Your Dad And You're Thinking I'm Great Because My Dad Is With Me And That's The Christian That's What God Is Saying The Christian Attitude Should Be Towards him He Says I Jacob I Haven't Often Heard Someone Pray Oh We Are Just Worms One Time I Did Hear A Man Pray That I Am A Worm Of The Dust And Someone Came Up To Him And Said You Worm And He Was Very Angry But He Just Prayed It Did He Really Mean It Well Sometimes You Do Feel Like That Sometimes You Feel Like Dirt Sometimes You Feel Horrible And God Week

And It Is A Worm Faced With Mountains And Hills That Would Make A Great Cartoon By The Way Yet This Worm He Says Will Become A Threshing Sledge That Will Chop Up The Mountains A Threshing Sled In Those Days Was Solid Heavy It Was Studded With Flints It Was Dragged Over The Reaped Corn So That The Corn Would Break Open The Ears Which Were Then You Worm Jacob You Are Going To Be My Threshing Sled You Are Going To Level Mountains He's Telling His People What He's Going To Do Through Them I Think It's A Metaphor As Well By The Way For God's Judgment Because The Threshing Sledge Was Used To Separate The Wheat From The Chaff Jesus In Matthew 21 I Tell You The Truth If You Have Faith And Do Not Doubt Not Only Can You Do What Was Done To

The Fig Tree But You Can Also Say To This Mountain Go Throw Yourself Into The Sea And It Will Be Done If You Believe You Will Receive Whatever You Ask For In Prayer God Promises His People That He Will Help Them Overcome The Obstacles Which Caused Them To Stumble And He Promises His People I Will Provide For You In Need I Will Open Rivers On The Bare Heights And Fountains In The Valleys I Will Make The Wilderness A pool Of Water And The Dry Land Springs Of Water Those Who Are Downtrodden By Life Life Those Who Are Needy Sometimes My Children Tease Me Particularly On Social Media Internet And So On And Say You're Looking For Something Do You Like This Or Look What So Needy And It's Not Really Meant As A Compliment But We Are All Needy People We Are In Great Need And If Anyone Here Says No Wait A Minute I

[42 : 27] Don't Need Anything I've Been An Elder For 30 Years Or I Was Brought Up In A Godly Family Or I've Got Plenty In My House Or I've Done This And I've Done That I'm A Minister Whatever I Don't Need Anything You Need To Hear The Words Of Christ Which Says You Say You Are Rich And Well Fed But You're Cold And Lukewarm And You Make Me Feel Ill We Are All Needy People In That Sense And Christ Comes To His Needy People And Look What He Does He Provides Alec Motier Puts It Wonderfully He Says He Provides Innovation Rivers On He Transforms Desert And Parched Ground Into Pools And Springs My God Will Supply All My Needs According To His Riches In Glory In This Passage There Are Constant Referrals Back To The Exodus Where We're Told God Says This Is How I Did It Before Trust

Me To Do It Again I Had A Feeling That One Of The Things That Hold Back The Church On This Island Is The Same I Held Back The Church In Other Places And It's This We Had Wonderful Days In The Past But They're Gone And It's All Downhill From Now On Why How Do You Know That You're Not God How Do You Know That Remember An Elder In Brora Telling Me Once After The Second World War That The Road From Fisher Town In Brora Up To The Glebe And The Mance And The Church That On A Sunday It Used To Be Black With People And He Said This With Great Sorrow Because Forty Years Later He Was Seeing Thirty Or Forty People Where There Had Been Three And Four Hundred Did He Believe That That Could Be Turned Around I Think A Lot Of Us Don't I Think We We

Look To A Past Rather Than Looking To God If Forgive This Personal Reference 1992 I Was Asked To St.

Peter's Free Church In Dundee It Is The Church Of Robert Murray McShane And If You Read The Account Of The Revival There McShane On A Thursday Night Used To Have A Youth Meeting Where A Thousand People Would Gather There Were Six Months Of Revival Where They Met Every Single night And Thousands of People Were Truly Converted Which Was Registered To See 1100 You Could Probably Get About 800 In And There Were Seven People In The Congregation And Some Of Them Left When I Went There It Wasn't Exactly The Greatest Place In That Sense To Go To But I Remember The First Meeting That We Held In The Evening Now The Tradition In The Highlands And Islands That I Was Part Of And I'm Part Of Was That Your First Meeting Of A New Minister In The Evening You Always Got A Big Attendance When I Went To Broder The

Congregation Was 40 My First Sunday Evening Meeting There Was 400 People There Because People Gathered From All Different Churches To Come And Support So My First Evening In Dundee I Was Expecting A Few People And There Was Fifteen Eight Of Whom Were My Own Family Or Friends And My Son Stood Up And He Had A Broad Sutherland Accent Six Years Old At The Time And He Said To His Mother Mom There's No People Where's All The People And He Looked Oh My Goodness And We Were Typical Presbyterians By The Way Because A Building 750 People And We Were Dotted All Over The Place And At The Back Because We Don't Sit At The Front Because Presbyterians Don't Sit At The Hall And The Hall Had 1950s Curtains And Pictures Of Dead Ministers On The Wall And It Was Awful I Said We'll Meet In The Church We'll Put The Heating On

[46 : 44] And I Said Please Please Please Can You Sit In The Middle Now I Know You're Presbyterians And It's Going To Take Revival To To Get To The Front But At Least The Middle And Kind Of Together And They Said I Saw This Woman Looking At Me She Was One Of The Few Elderly Women In The Congregation And She Said Well I'll Get A Crick In My Neck If I Have To Look Up At The Pulpit And I Said I'll Not Preach From The Pulpit I'll Preach From Down At The Bottom We Sky And I Said Listen To This I Am Not Telling You I'm Not Saying To You That I Can Get 100 People To Come To This Church Because I Can't I'm Not Saying To You That God Is Going To Bring 100 People Because I Don't Know But I'm Saying To You This If You Do Not Believe That God Can Turn This Round And He Can Bring 100 Or 200 We're

Finished Because What Kind Of God Are We Worshipping Well There Is We Need Renewal And Revival Repentance And Reformation Throughout Scotland And Here As Much As Anywhere Else I Came Here As Back In The Days That Kenny I Was Referring To And My Mother In Law And My Father In Law Insisted That We Came To Church 45 Minutes Early So That We Could Get A Seat And They Didn't Just Mean Their Seat Though They Did Mean That But Also Just To Get A Seat And That's Changed Phenomenally And It Will Continue To Change Because You Have To Look At The Demographic How Many Young People Young Families How Many Children In The Nicholson Are Growing Up In Christian Homes Attending Sunday School And How Many

Are Not And That Should Be A Burden Upon Us All Not To Maintain What We Have Got But To Reach Out And So I Want To Finish By Just Going Some Applications Of This I Am That I Am Says God We Need To Hear The Message That's Here In Isaiah And That's Throughout The Bible I'm Not Saying We Change The Message We Need To Hear It And We Need To Believe It We Need To Hear About Election And Calling And Redemption And The Promises Of God And The Faithfulness Of God All Focused On Christ Calvin Says This This Reminds Us That The Reason We Do Not Think With So Much Reverence As We Ought Concerning The Power And Goodness And Wisdom And Other Attributes Of God Is That We Do Not Listen To Him When He Speaks Men Roar And Murmur Against God Some Swelling With Their Pride Openly Despise His Word Whilst Others Through Some Kind

Of Slothfulness Disregard Him And In Consequence Of Being Buried In Earthly Delights Take No Concern About Aspiring To The Heavenly Kingdom Do Not Pride Yourself That You Are A Church Who Honours The Word Of God And Delights In The Word Of God And You're Not Liberal And You Haven't Turned Away From The Word Of God If You Do Not Listen To The Word Of God And Put The Word Of God Into practice Because An Orthodox Church Which Is Sound In Doctrine But Doesn't Practice That Doctrine Is A Blasphemy And We Need To Be Very Careful About That He Says We Need The Man From The East Ezekiel 43 The Man Brought Me To The Gate Facing East And I Saw The Glory Of The God Of Israel Coming From The East His Voice Was Like The War The Roar Of Rushing Waters And The Land Was Radiant With His Glory Some Of You Will Have Experienced

Revival What That Glory Was You Remember The Stillness You Remember The Times In Church When If Someone Was There For Two Hours It Felt Like A Moment But Now Two Minutes It Feels Like Eternity You Remember What It Was Like Well We Have Got To See That Again That People Will Come Into Our Mids And They Won't Need All The Clever Arguments They Just Need To Experience And Know That God Is Amongst Us I Am That I Am Jesus Christ Do You Not Suspect That We Have Forgotten The Doctrine That Christ Is The Head Of The Church When I Hear People Talking About The Reformed Faith As Though Our Faith Was In The Reformed Faith It Makes Me Feel Ill Because It So Unreformed Our Faith Is In Jesus Christ And Biblical Theology Is Christ The Theology

[51 : 51] And Our Aim Is To Introduce People To Jesus Christ Our Aim Is To Communicate Christ I Love Reading The Puritans And I'll Tell You Why I Love Reading The Puritans Because There's A Warmth And There's A Passion In People Like John Flavell And Thomas Watson That's The Opposite Of The Coldness That Sometimes Comes Across In Our Churches We Need To Tell People As Well How Can They Hear About Jesus And Where Are They Going To Hear About Christ Unless We Tell Them Now Here's An Interesting Thing What Would You Say If I Told You That That That That That There That There Were You Don't Need To Pray Because God Knows What You Want Already And To Pray Is To Do The Work Of God Or If They Said You Don't Need To Preach Or Read The Bible Because God Is All Powerful And He Knows What People Need To Hear Don't Need You To

Preach It Well Rightly You Would Go That's Ridiculous Teaching Why Is It Then That People Can Still Say Things Like We Don't Need To Evangelize Because God Alone Can Convert Of Course God Alone Can Convert God Alone Also Can Hear Prayer And Make His Word Work I Mean The Two Brothers Beside Me They Don't Stand Up On A Sunday Thinking I'm Going To Be Brilliant Today And People Are Going To Be Converted They Stand Up Knowing That Nothing They Say Will Make Any Impact Without The Holy Spirit Working And Yet They Believe That God Has Called Them To Do It Well God Has Called The Church Here To Reach Out I Don't Have A Responsibility In My City My Street St Peter Street The Churches Around The Church I Don't Have A Responsibility To Convert Anybody There But I'll Tell You This I Have A Responsibility To Make Sure That Everybody

Hears About Jesus And On The Day Of Judgment God Will Ask Me About That And There Something Went Vastly Wrong In This Island When There Was This Revival And God's Presence At Work In So Many Ways And So Many Good People And So Many Godly People And It Stopped At The Minch Why Where Was The Passion For The World And How Easily Churches Do You Not Consider It Absurd That We Have Less Christians And More Churches How Does That Make Any Sense In A Biblical Sense And We Need To Think About What We Are Doing We Need To Tell People God Predestines Us God Chooses Us That's True But Ephesians 2 Tells Us He Chose Us To Do The Works Which He Had Prepared In Advance For Us To Do If You Are The Kind Of Person Who Uses The Sovereignty Of God

As An Excuse For Inaction Then You Are Blaspheming As Much As If You Denied That Jesus Was The Son Of God Because He Did Not Die For You So That You Could Sit In Luxury And Comfort And Luxurate In The Knowledge That You Have Been Chosen By God He Died For You So That You Could Do The Works That He Had Prepared In Advance For You To Do Those Of Us Who Are Christians We Need To Remember That We Need To Rejoice In Serving The Lord As His Children I Will Lead The Blind In A Way They Do Not Know In Past Sorry Got The Wrong One Says This You Shall Rejoice In The Lord In The Holy One Of Israel You His Work Ours Is The Joy Whatever Their Circumstances We Sing Sometimes People Go Oh I Don't Like Modern Hymns And Songs I Just Like The Traditional Ones Because People Nowadays Don't

Know How To Rubbish There Were People Who Wrote Rubbish Songs 200 Years Ago And Good Ones And It's The Same Today It's A Man Called Matt Redmond He's Written A Song 10 Thousand Reasons To Sing We Have 10 Thousand Reasons To Bless The Lord Jesus Says I No Longer Call You Servants Because A Servant Does Not Know His Master's Business Instead I Have Called You Friends For Everything That I Learned From My Father I Made Known To You You Did Not Choose Me But I Chose You And Appointed You To Go And Bear Fruit Fruit Fruit That Will Last Then The Lord Will Give You Know Then That God Has Called You To A Life Of Service And Let Me Say This If You Do Not Accept That And You Do Not Think That I

[56 : 52] Doubt That You Are Converted Because Someone Who Sees The Beauty And Glory Of Christ Wants To Share It With Other People My Friend David Meredith In Smithton Free Church Now The Missions Director For The Free Church Told Me Something Once That I Haven't Forgotten He Said In All My Years In Ministry I Have Seen People Weep Over The Movement Of A Communion Table And Rarely Seen Anyone Weep Over Lost Souls There's Something Wrong In Our Priorities At Least For Many Of Us And I Say That To Myself As Much As To Anyone Else We Need To Rejoice In Serving The Lord As His Children We Sang On The Way In I Joy Went To The House Of God Go Up They Said To Me I I I Wonder If People Observing Us Coming Into Church Or Going From Church I Wonder If They Go Why Are These People So Happy They're

Going To Church Will They Ask That Or What Do They See See Us Fulfilling A Duty See Us With A Wrong Idea Of What Holiness And So This Is A Serious Business That We Are Doing Of Of Of Of It Is I I This That There Should Be A Holy Joy That Infects Everyone That We Meet The Godly Lachlan Mackenzie Of Loch Caron The Minister There What Was His Nickname The Happy Man I Wonder If The Same Could Be Said Of Us We Are To Rejoice In Serving We Need To Look Beyond Our Own Comfort Zone Because If You And I Understand The Greatness Of God And The Wonder Of What Christ Has Done For Us Then The First Thing We Want To Do Is Serve Because We've Been Set Free Says Hebrews To Serve The Living God I Don't Know In This Church Or In The High Church If You Have Rotas I Hate Rotas But You Know Rotas For Tea And A

Rotas For Cresh And Rotas For This And I'm Fed Up Asking People To Do The Rotas I Will Believe Revival Has Come To My Church When There Are No Rotas Or At Least They're All Automatically Filled From People Who Want To Serve And Want To Help And Do So Gladly And With Joy Because Of What Christ Has Done For Them Let Me Leave You With One Thing And It's I Have To Say This To Those Who Are Not Believers And It's This In Terms Of Choosing What Are You Trusting In You See You Don't Have To Know It All You Don't Have To Be The Person Who Says I Am Going To Believe In God If He Shows Me This This This This And This Because It's Not Your Choice You Have A Particular Responsibility And I Think I'll Put It This Way God Chooses And He's Chosen To Bring You Here He's Chosen To Bring You To This Island He's Chosen To Bring You To This Service

He's Chosen To Let You Hear His Word And Now He Tells You To Choose Acts 17 The God Who Made The World And Everything In It Says Paul Is The Lord Of Heaven And Earth He Does Not Live In Temples Built By Hands And He Is Not Served By Human Hands As If He Needed Anything Because He Himself Gives All Men Life And Breath And Everything Else From One Man He Made Every Nation Of Men That They Should Inhabit The Whole Earth And He Determined The Time Set For Them In The Exact Places Where They Should Live There's A Robust Doctrine Of Sovereignty You God Did This So That We Could Seek Him Don't Ever Misuse

The Doctrine Of The Sovereignty Of God To Say Well If God Is Going To Save Me Meanwhile I'm Going Home To My Supper And My Television And Whatever It Is What God Has Done In His Sovereignty Is Call You Hear To Hear About Jesus And To Call You To Believe And Trust In Him And You Do Not Have The Option Of Saying Well I'll Let God Do It You Either Say Yes Or You Say No And Every Time You Hear The Gospel That Is The Case You Grow Warmer To Christ Or You Grow Colder Why Why Why would You Reject Christ The One Who Gave His All For You Some Of The Other Things Have Been Saying Well The Church Is Like This And The Church Yeah You've Been Asked To Accept Christ And Then You Become Part Of The Church And Then You Can Sort It All Out And Then You'll Discover Just How much Of A sinner You Are The Same As The Rest Of But It's Wonderful That Christ Saves And

[61 : 54] If You Are Not A Believer I Urge You To Seek And To Find Christ It Is As I Say For Me Very Moving Thing To Be Here I Didn't Know My In-laws For Long But Here's A Fascinating Thing Before They Died I Never Found Anyone Who Would Say A Bad Word About Them Or Their Christianity Why Were They Particularly Brilliant People I Don't Know I Know This I Know They Love The Lord And They Live For Jesus In The Work And Places And Amongst The People And Family That God Called Them To And In This World Supposing They Been Kings Or Queens Or Mega Well Known Preachers Or Famous Politicians Or Political Leaders They

Will Never Have A Finer Accolade Than Well Done Good And Faithful Servant I'm Very Grateful To Them And To The Community And The Church And The Culture In Which They Were Brought Up And That's Why It's Heartbreaking To See How The Church Has Moved So Much And How This Island Is Becoming So Much Like The To

Absolutely Packed He Told His Congregation I Believe That The Latter Days Of This Church Will Be Greater Than The Former In 1988 It Was About To Be Sold And Turned Into A Pub Or Flats You Would Never Have Believed That It Would Be Filled With Worshipping People In The Mercy And Providence Of God And It's Only This In The Sovereignty Of God Each Sunday Morning We're Filled Downstairs There's A church Being Planted In St.

Andrews There's A new One In Montrose We Want To Plant One In The Housing Estate And It's All Just The Mercy And Sovereignty Of God And I Hope And Pray That McShane's Vision And McShane's Dream Will Come True And I Hope That This Will Be True Here That You'll Need A New Building For The High Church And This Place Will Be Full And That There Won't Be Anyone On This Island Who Doesn't Know The Lord Anyone In Scotland Because I'm An Old Fashioned Post Millennialist That A Day Will Come When A Man Need Not Say To His Neighbor Know The Lord Because All Will Know Them May God Grant That Would Be True Let's Pray Lord Thank You For Your Word Help Us To Hear It Help Us To Ignore What Is Of Man And To Hear Only What Is Of You Do Not Allow The Devil To Come In And Take Away Your Word From Us Those Of Us Who Do Not Know You Oh Lord May We Commit Our Lives To Follow You May We Accept That We Are Sinners And That You Are

God And That You Died For Us And Lord Those Of Us Who Are Already Believers But Have Become Cold And Cynical And Frightened May We Listen To Your Voice As You Call Out To Us To Take Your Hand To Believe What You Have Said And To Go And Do What You Have Called Us To Do And Grant That There Would Be A Spirit Of Repentance And Renewal In Our Churches That We May See Revival And Restoration And Reformation In The Midst Of A Hostile And Cynical World For We Ask It In Your Name Amen Well Thank You David For Your Encouraging But Also Challenging Words For Us All And For How Relevant So Much Of It Was For Each

[66 : 58] Of Us Just To Remind You That There Is A Tea And Coffee Following The Service In The Memorial Hall For Any And Hopefully As Many As Possible To Stay Behind For So That Will Be Through Next Door Following The Benediction We'll Close Our Worship Of God By Singing To His Praise In The Words Of Psalm 72 Psalm 72 The Scottish Salter Version On Page 314 And Singing Verses 17 Through 19 Psalm 72 The Scottish Salter Version Page 314 Singing Verses 17 To 19 His Name Forever Shall Endure Last Like The Son It Shall Men Shall Be Blessed In Him And Blessed All Nations Shall Call Now Blessed Be The Lord Our God The God Of Israel For He Alone Doth Wondrous Works And Glory That Excell And Blessed Be His Glorious Name To All Eternity The Whole Earth Let His Glory Fill Amen So Let It Be Sing These Words To God Please His

Name Forever Shall Endure Last Like The Son It Shall Men Shall Rebirth In Him And Blessed All Nations Shall Him Call Now Blessed Be The Lord Our God The God Of Israel For The He Our Lord The Wondrous Works In

Glory Have Excel And Blessed Be His Glorious Name To All Eternity The Whole Earth Earth Is Holy Amen So Let It Be Our Father in Heaven we thank you this evening for the wonderful truths that we have considered from your word for the way that we have been reminded repeatedly that you are the God who is absolutely entirely sovereign and we give you praise and thanks for this.

That this evening we have been reminded of our smallness and your greatness. And we thank you that that is good news because it reminds us over and over that when we are unable you are able.

That we thank you also for how we have been challenged that there is a responsibility that lies with each of us. That we have good news and good news both to receive but also to proclaim.

[70 : 24] And we pray that you would give us the grace to do so. That every one of us this evening would be found in Christ not having a righteousness of our own but a righteousness that is freely available to those who receive the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

We ask that you would give us that ambition that Jeremiah had where he felt a burning in his own bones and body to proclaim that gospel. That we could not be silenced no matter how much pressure we may be put under because we have this good news of a great and glorious God and Savior.

We thank you for David. We thank you for his ministry and his witness both nationally and internationally. May you surround him with your protecting arms.

May you keep him close to yourself at all times. We remember this congregation in Dundee. We thank you for them. We thank you for how you have worked in mercy over these years. We pray that you would continue to do so.

That that congregation would be a great beacon for your glory within Dundee and the surrounding area. We remember the congregations that we represent here this evening. We thank you for them.

[71 : 31] And we thank you that though there is differences of views and differences that go on within these congregations. We thank you and praise you for the oneness that we have in Christ.

And we pray that you would enable us by your grace to work together to spread the gospel here within this island. But as David has challenged us not to leave it at the island here. But to take it to the mainland.

To take it throughout the nations. So that the nations would be glad and joyful in you. So hear our prayers. Accept our praise. Forgive our sins. As we pray that grace, mercy and peace from God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

One God would be with each and every one of us now and for all time. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.