

# Kingdom Faith and Kingdom Formation

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Preacher: Rev Callum Macleod

[ 0:00 ] So we're going to begin our service of worship by praising God from Psalm 149 in the Scottish Psalter.! It's on page 450 and the tune is Gainsborough. Psalm 149 at verse number 1.

Praise ye the Lord and to him sing a new song and his praise in the assembly of his saints. In sweet psalms do ye raise. That this written is maker joy and to him praise his sing.

That all that Zion's children are be joyful in their king. We'll sing from verse 1 to verse 5 and we'll stand to sing to God's praise. Praise ye the Lord and to him sing a new song and his praise.

In the assembly of his saints. In sweet psalms do ye raise.

Let his servant his maker joy and to him praise his sing.

[ 1:34 ] Let all that Zion's children are be joyful in their king.

For let them unto his great name.

He'll praise his singled dance. Let them with sin will and with heart.

In songs his praise and hands. For God the pleasure take the rose.

That is only for thee. Let them with sin will and with heart.

[ 3:14 ] Let them with sin will and with heart.

Almighty and most gracious God. We rejoice in you and in the worship of your name. You have called us anew on this morning to draw near to you to hear what you have to say to us.

We worship you as the God who is our Father in heaven. The God who has a family here on earth. And we rejoice in heaven.

Father in heaven who looks down upon us as we worship you together this morning. Your word tells us that you are the God who in building a family for yourself.

God who gave you our son to be our Savior. And we give thanks to you today for the Lord Jesus Christ. And we pray that as we worship you we may come to you in his name.

[ 4:40 ] As we worship you may he be at the center of all that we say and all that we hear. Lord Jesus Christ. And may you be pleased O Lord God to shine upon us.

And come and be present with us. That we may truly hear what you have to say to us. Your word tells us that you speak peace to those who are your people.

And we pray today that you will bless us all in our hearts. That we may indeed be your people. And that we may indeed know your blessing. We do give thanks to you for the families that are part of the family of God here.

Even in our own congregation. We give thanks to you for parents and for children. We give thanks to you for their desire to hear what you have to say to them. And we pray that you will bless them here today with their young hearts and lives.

May the children know your hand upon them. Your blessing in their hearts. The light of your word. Helping them every day to live their lives. Remembering what you have said to them.

[ 5 : 45 ] And bringing them to faith in your son as their saviour. And we pray that you will bless every aspect of the teaching that is brought before them. Even today in all of the different classes.

May they know your voice speaking to them. And may you bless their young hearts. We do ask your thanks to you for those who teach them. And we pray that you will bless and guide them.

And may they learn as they teach. And may they teach what they have learned. And may those who they teach benefit from those who teach them. As those who walk with you.

And to bring to them the good news of the gospel. We pray for your blessing to be upon parents as well. That you will continue to guide and uphold them. And raising up families.

And that you will bless them not only on the Lord's Day. But also on the weekday. In school life. And in every area of family life. May you bless them together. And enrich their lives to the glory of your name.

[ 6 : 42 ] For their benefit and blessing day by day. And for their hope of everlasting life. That they may have that hope of the gospel in their hearts. So bless them and bless us as we continue before you.

Blessing your word to us. And guiding us in hearing. And singing. And praying. And reading your word. May you draw near to us. And speak clearly to us. O Lord our God.

We do pray. Hear us. And our mercy upon us. We pray these things for Jesus' sake. Amen. Amen. Well boys and girls. It's good to see you again at church today.

And it's such an encouragement to see you coming to hear what God has to say to us. And I think the worship of God is the most important thing that you can do the whole of the week.

So it's great to have you here. Our Bible story today comes from the Gospel of Matthew. Which is the first gospel in the New Testament. And it's about God building a church for himself.

[ 7 : 38 ] And it's about asking people who do they think Jesus is. And I want you to think about that. And I want to say three things to you. And the three things begin with P.

And the first is project. There is a building project going on. And God has promised that he will build a church for himself.

And Jesus in the Bible today promises that on this rock he will build the church. He will build that church on the rock which he is himself. And as we come to him and believe in his name.

We become part of that building project that God is building. And that God is working every day of life. And so as we do worship God today. We want to remember that this is God's project.

And that by believing in Jesus. And not by the things that we do. By believing in Jesus that we become part of this great project of God. And the second thing is that there is a promise.

[ 8 : 39 ] And the promise is to you and to all of us. Depending on what we do with what Jesus says to us. And Jesus tells us in that great long sermon. Perhaps a lot longer than the sermons that we're used to in Matthew chapter 5 to chapter 7.

It's a long sermon. And at the end of that sermon he says to those who are listening to him. That those who hear his words and do what Jesus says to them. That they will be like a wise person who builds a house on a rock.

And today that's what God wants you to do. And he gives you that promise. That if you hear what he says. And if you do what he tells you to do. Then you will be like that wise person who builds a house on a rock.

And Jesus tells him that when the storm comes. The house that is built on a rock will always stand. And that's the promise of Jesus to you. If you believe in his name.

Because he also mentions those who hear his words. And do not do them. And they are the foolish people who build a house on the sand. And we know what happens when the tide comes in.

[ 9 : 44 ] And when the winds blow and the seas roar. The house that's built on the sand will fall. So today there is a promise to you and to all of us. If you hear. If you believe.

And if you do. Then you will build a house for yourself. You will be safe in life. As those who believe in Jesus. And the third thing is. That there is a problem.

Because if we don't start well. Then we cannot finish well. And we visited Italy. Two or three years back. And we visited the Tower of Pisa.

It's one of the four towers. At a cathedral complex. In Tuscany. On the northwest coast of Italy. And it's known as the Leaning Tower.

It was built in the 12th century. And halfway through the building project. The tower began to lean over. It became the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

[ 10 : 40 ] And it became the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Because those who planned the job. And the project. Those who started building. Forgot that they needed a foundation under the building.

So they built on soft ground. And the more they built up. The more the tower began to lean over. So it became the Leaning Tower of Pisa. And today it leans over by four degrees.

Which means at the very. Between the ground and the top of it. There's about four meters of a difference. In the way that the tower is leaning over. And the lesson from that is. That unless you and I believe in Jesus.

At the very beginning. And put our trust in him. Then no matter what else we do. Our lives will be just. Like the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Ready to fall over.

So it's important. To start by believing in Jesus. And having that foundation. For your young lives. And the other thing to do with. The Tower of Pisa is.

[ 11 : 42 ] That they started rebuilding again. To try and finish it off. And instead of taking the building down. And starting with a foundation. They started making adjustments. Halfway up the building.

So they tried to straighten it. In the rest of the project. So the Leaning Tower became the bending tower. And actually because of what they did. At last. It looked worse than it did. At the very beginning.

And the lesson from that is. That although your teachers can help you. And teach you. And though your parents can do the same. Unless you start with believing in Jesus.

No one else can help you to. Have your life the way Jesus wants you to do. If you put your trust in Jesus. And believe in him today. Then you're starting in the right place.

And your parents can help you. And your Sunday school teachers can help you. And you learn the teaching of Jesus. And your house. Your life will grow strong in Jesus. As you put your trust in him.

[ 12 : 40 ] So remember. The project. Jesus is building his church. Made up of people like you and me. Remember the promise. If you hear and do what he says.

Then your house will be safe. You'll be secure. Like a house on a rock. But remember the Tower of Pisa. Those who started building. Started wrong. And because of that. The building was wrong forever.

Make sure today. You believe in Jesus. And then everything else. Will work out for you. And God himself. And Jesus himself. Will teach you how. To live your life. And with trust and prayer.

God will help you to do that. And that God will bless you. As we go to your teaching classes. This morning. Let's now say the Lord's Prayer together. Our Father.

Which art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth. As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts.

[13:37] As we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom. The power and the glory. For ever. Amen.

Let's turn now to praise God. This time from Psalm number 145. The long meter version of the Psalm. And at verse number 8. It's on page 444. Psalm 145.

The long meter version. At verse number 8. And the tune is Warrington. The Lord our God is gracious. Compassionate is he also.

In mercy he is plenteous. But not wrath and anger slow. Psalm 145. The long meter version. From verse 8 to the verse mark 14. To God's praise. The Lord our God is gracious.

[15:20] Thy works so great to be afforded. Thy saints, O Lord, thy name shall bless.

The glory of thy kingdom's show shall thee and love thy power tell.

As soon as I shall shall be its name, O Lord, thy kingdom's grace that God exce.

Life in the man, the name that all, it doth through ages all remain.

The Lord, a fuller, fuller, fuller, fuller, the cast and grace that God exce.

[16:48] Amen. Let's turn now to hear the word of God in the New Testament in the Gospel according to Matthew and in chapter 16.

The Gospel of Matthew chapter 16 and beginning a reading at verse number 5. Let us hear the word of God.

When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread. Jesus said to them, watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

And they began discussing it among themselves, saying, we brought no bread. But Jesus, aware of this, said, O you of little faith, why are you discussing among yourselves the fact that you have no bread?

Do you not yet perceive? Do you not remember the five loaves for the five thousand and how many baskets you gathered? Or the seven loaves for the four thousand and how many baskets you gathered?

[17:52] How is it that you fail to understand that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of the bread, but the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, who do people say that the Son of Man is? And they said, some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.

He said to them, but who do you say that I am? Simon Peter replied, you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered him, blessed are you, Simon bar Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ. From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

[19:20] And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, far be it from you, Lord, this shall never happen to you. But he turned and said to Peter, get behind me, Satan, you are a hindrance to me, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.

Amen, this is the word of God, we trust that he will bless to us our reading from it. Let's once more bow our heads in a word of prayer. Our gracious God, rejoice in you and in the way you have breathed out your word that gives us a revelation of the great God that you are.

And we are thankful to you for the way in which you sent your Son to give us that great final revelation of your glory, of your beauty, and of your purposes for this world.

We rejoice today in the oppression of your Son that we read off through the pages of the Gospels. We are thankful to you for this coming into the world and the marvel and the beauty of it.

We are thankful to you for the life that you lived. We are thankful to you for his teaching, for his example, for every aspect of his ministry. We are thankful to you for the death that he died in our place.

[20:44] We are thankful to you that you brought him back from the dead. And we are thankful to you that today he is at your right hand. And so we worship you in his name.

We give thanks to you for him. And as we do consider your word together, may you help us so that we will understand that we are truly in the presence of the only true and living God.

And every word that you speak to us from your word, may it come into our hearts without authority and without power. And may we sense your claim upon our hearts and lives.

And may we understand something in the depths of our beings. That your power brings about a change. That it begins a great transformation.

That it gives direction to us in this world. That it gives to us the great prospect of your glory. And help us, O Lord God, to experience that anew this day.

[21:44] Perhaps experience it for the first time. And set our feet in that way. On the rock which is Christ. And enable us to live our lives as those who stand secure.

Through faith in his name. So that when we do face the storms of life. The pains, the sorrows, the afflictions. All of the sufferings of life.

That we do come face to face with them. That we know that we are secure in you. And secure upon that rock. And know that no one can pluck us out of your hands.

That you will keep us safe. Bless every heart before you here today. Bless every desire after you. And satisfy every need we do ask. And give us all to know our satisfaction.

In Jesus Christ, your son. Bless our congregation, our people. Be merciful to us we do ask on this day. May you bless your word to all those who gather with the people of God.

[ 22 : 44 ] May you bless your word to all those who join online. May you bless your word to those who are confined in their homes. Who are isolated and who are sorrowful perhaps in life.

May you give to them the comfort of your presence. May you come and dwell with them in their isolation. And fill their hearts and their homes or wherever they might be.

With a sense of the reality and the presence of God. Encourage them wherever they are before you. Comfort the grieving we do ask. We pray that you will bind our broken hearts. That you will be near to all today.

Who have an empty place in their home and in their hearts and lives. May you give to them a sense of you standing with them. Of you being with them as the Lord who is their shepherd.

And in that valley of the shadow of death. May they fear no evil because you are with them. May you walk with them and bless them during these days. Bless our wider island communities.

[ 23 : 43 ] We pray for the blessing of the gospel of the day. And of your Holy Spirit to come and to accompany your word. Make your name great through the ministry of the gospel.

Across this whole land today. Wherever your word is preached may it be blessed. May lives be changed. May towns and cities and communities come to take heed to what you have to say.

And to make you through your word and by your power turn us around to yourself. That you may fear your name in every area and level of society. In our royal family.

In our governments. In our parliaments. In our local authorities. Wherever there is authority placed by you. May the fear of your name be in people's hearts. And may they guide us as people of this nation.

And of our communities. Guide us in the ways of God. Bless the wider world. We pray for your word to be blessed as it goes forth across the world today. We remember the parts of the world where there are pains and sorrows.

[ 24 : 44 ] Where lives have been lost here in this past week. In tragic circumstances. We pray for your comforting presence for those who have lost. And we ask that you will sustain and uphold them.

We pray for the places where there is conflict and strife. And war. That you will bring all of these things to an end. That you will cause your peace to descend. And cause lasting peace to be achieved.

And may the peace of God indeed dwell in all the nations of the earth. Even on this day. As we commit our world to you. And so we pray that you will hear us. That you will be merciful to us. That you will continue to guide us as we wait upon you in this time of worship.

Bless your word as we ask. And hear our prayer. For we ask all these things for Jesus' sake. Amen. Amen. We are now going to turn to praise God once more this time.

In Psalm number 118. In Sing Psalms. It is on page 156. And we are singing at verse 15. Psalm 118 at verse 15.



[ 31:30 ] And because of that, Many people are gathering around Him. He is an attractive person Because of what He says and what He does.

But Jesus wants to highlight that Finding Jesus attractive is not enough. And there are times through the gospels That there are junctions and crossroads At which Jesus calls upon the people To declare their relationship with Him.

And today we want to take that crossroads And place it in our own hearing. And understand that today Jesus and the gospel Is taking us to one of these crossroads To help us Answer questions.

And to help us show who we truly are And what we really think. And so from these verses I want to think of kingdom faith And kingdom formation.

And I want you to notice first of all The kingdom faith. And the kingdom faith Comes to light In the challenge That Jesus gives to His disciples.

[ 32:45 ] A challenge which He first of all Addresses to those Who are not the disciples. Who do the people in general terms Say the Son of Man is? There He is.

There is His identity. He is the Son of Man. He is that end time figure Prophesied by Daniel In Daniel 7 That was going to come To save and to judge the world.

And Jesus identifies him With the Son of Man. And in the build up of His ministry Up until this point We see at different stages That He makes Himself known As the Son of Man.

We see that in the parables In chapter 13 The Son of Man Is the one who sows the seed. The Son of Man Is the one who Sends His angels To gather out of the kingdom That which is evil And the lawbreakers.

He has built up The sense in His ministry That He is the Son of Man. And here He is Asking the question With regard to the people In general Who do the people say That the Son of Man is?

[ 33:51 ] And when we hear the response We come to understand That their faith And their following of Jesus Is entirely superficial.

He's an interesting person. That's great. He does amazing things. That's great. He is attractive Because of the way In which He cares for people. That's great.

He performs great miracles. He becomes attractive. They are interested. The crowds are following Him. But who do they really think He is?

And their response is Some say John the Baptist. Others say Elijah. And others Jeremiah Or one of the prophets. They recognize That He's a messenger of God.

They recognize That He could be One of these key figures That John the Baptist Who has come And perhaps Who has raised from the dead. The Elijah That Malachi promised Would come Before the great And terrible day Of the Lord.

[ 34:52 ] The Jeremiah Who spoke to the people In their distance From God And preached repentance To them And asked them To come back to God. It could be one of these Or one of the other prophets Who foretold About the kingdom of God.

A general interest In the oppression of Jesus. And as God asks you The same question today Who do you say That the Son of Man is?

You are here today I'm guessing because Of a level of interest. Of a level of attraction. Of a level of commitment To the teaching of Jesus.

To the claims of Jesus In life and in worship. And in every area In which we live life In the world. There's a sense In which you have An interest In the gospel.

An interest in Jesus. And a joy perhaps In hearing The message of Jesus In the gospel. But today Is that as far As your understanding Of Jesus goes?

[ 36:02 ] You haven't yet reached The point at which Genuine faith Does come to light. The moment towards That sense of attraction And interest To reach the point Of personal relationship With Jesus.

Who do you say That Jesus is? Because genuine disciples Make a clear confession. And Jesus turns To the disciples And who do you say That I am?

And instantly Simon Peter Replies You are the Christ The son Of the living God. He recognizes Who the person is And he recognizes Why he is here.

He is the son Of the living God. God is working In the world He is active In the world Through the passion Of the Lord Jesus. Jesus is God With us.

He is the son Of the living God. And he is also The Christ. That is the Anointed one. The son of David. The God's king That he had promised To send.

[ 37:14 ] Who was going to Sit on God's throne. Who was going to Establish peace Between God And a lost world. Who was going to be A priest who would Sacrifice himself.

The anointed one Is the Christ of God. Genuine faith Captures both Of these elements. And it's not that Genuine faith Knows everything.

Because as we Follow the story We will see that Peter later on Can't understand Why Jesus must die. Let that be far From you. Genuine faith Makes a confession Confession A confession That needs to be Understood more And more In learning from Jesus But today The key is For you and for me In the response To this challenge Is do we truly Recognize That Jesus Is God with us And that he is God's Messiah Whom God has sent To save us And that today He is the anointed one At God's throne On God's right hand And that from there He reigns the world And from there He is working In the lives Of his people.

Genuine Faith Identity The key elements That set him apart Not just as a Great teacher Not just as a Great carer A great shepherd Of people But as someone Sent By God In God's Design and plan To save People like you And me To save Sinners The challenge What is your Response And don't In answering The question Today Don't think That The inadequacy Of your knowledge Of Jesus Means that You can't Have genuine Faith Because When we come To faith In the Lord Jesus It's then We begin The journey Of learning From Jesus He is our Teacher And we become The pupils We become The disciples We are on A steep Learning curve

From the time That we come To believe In the Lord Jesus So don't Let the fact That you don't Know everything About Jesus Make you decide That you can't Have genuine Faith The question Is Who do you Think Jesus is Do you see Him In this way God with us Do you see Him As God's Anointed One Who is Saviour Of the world The kingdom Faith And remarkably As soon As Peter Makes that Confession Jesus Comes to Affirm him In his Faith The very Thing that Perhaps you And I Are looking For today You want Jesus to Confirm that You are A believer That you Are a Child of God And get Here The role Is reversed The responsibilities On the disciples First of all To say

[ 40:30 ] Who they think Jesus is And then Comes Jesus To Peter And says to Him In verse Number 17 Blessed are You Simon Bar Jonah For flesh And blood Has not revealed This to you But my Father who Is in Heaven Blessed Are you Blessed In the sense Of being Deeply happy Because God's End time Salvation Has come To dwell In your Heart And by The confession That you Have made You have Confirmed That you Are in Possession Of that Very Salvation That God Has promised For his People Blessed Happy Joyous A deep Seated Contentment And in The affirmation He reminds Peter That it Was not Possible That he Could have Discovered This for Himself Throwing Attention To the

Fact that Salvation Is by Grace Alone What does Jesus say To Peter Flesh And blood In other Words Not you Or anyone Else Flesh And blood Has not Revealed This to You But my Father Who is In Heaven A Revelation From God I Has not Seen Nor You Heard Neither Has it Come Into The Heart Of Man Paul Says The Things That God Has Prepared For Those Who Love Him But God Has Revealed Them To Us By His Spirit It Is A Revelation You Are Happy Because God Has Revealed This To You And Now Let Me Tell You You Have Said That I Am The Christ The Son Of The Living God And In The End Of That Verse I Tell You You Are Peter Peter In His

Confession Has Identified The Lord Jesus And Jesus In Response Has Identified Simon Son Of Jonah As Peter The One Who Is Sennoned Peter Later On In The Gospel Of Mark In The Bible He Identifies Simon As Peter A New Name A New Life A New Beginning A New Name Given By The Person Who Has Authority And The Person Who Has The Authority Which Demands The New Life Of The Person Who Has The New Name The Kingdom Faith And let Me Tell You Today That there Is Nothing More Powerfully Life Transforming And Self Satisfying Than To Hear Jesus Christ Affirming Our Discipleship In This Way Coming

Into Our Very Hearts And Saying I Tell You Who You Are I Tell You That My Father Has Revealed This To You And I Tell You That You Are Blessed And That's Where Jesus Wants To Take Us All Today And Challenging Us With This Question Asking Us To Examine Our Hearts And Our Lives And To Bring Us To That Place Where We Will Put Our Trust In Him And Discover The Blessedness Discover The Joy Discover The Relationship And Find Our Contentment In Him Kingdom Faith Do You Have It Today And As Jesus Now Saying To You I Tell You You're Mine I Tell You're Mine To Follow Me To Be My Disciple I Tell You You're Precious To Me I Tell You I Will Be With You

The Kingdom Faith Secondly We See In The Passage Kingdom Formation Verse Number 18 I Tell You You Are Peter And On This Rock I Will Build My Church On This Rock Rock What Is This Referring To Referring Back To What I Want Us To Think Today That There Is A Multi Layered Foundation On On The House That Jesus Building And The First Part Of That Foundation Is The Fact That The Rock Is Christ That Is What We Saw From Matthew 17 In The Children's Address If You Hear My Words And Do Them You Will Be Like A Wise Person Who Builds His House On The Rock The Rock Which Is Christ The Rock

[ 45 : 33 ] That Peter Speaks Of In His First Epistle The Very Peter Who Was Here Speaks About The Church Being Built On The Foundation Stone Which Is Christ Christ Himself Is The Rock There Is No Church Apart From The Rock Which Is Christ There Is No Leaning Tower Of Pisa There Is No House Built On Sinking Sands Or On Soft Mud It Is Built On The Unshakable Rock Which Is Christ As The Eternal Son Of God Unbreakable Immovable Who Stands Forever Sure But Along With That The Second Layer Is The Rock Of Peter's Confession Where And How Is Jesus Going To Build This Church He Is Going To Build It With Those Who Make The Same Confession As Peter And Place Them On The Rock Which Is Christ And We Have Multi Layers In The Super Structure

That We See The People Of God Make The Same Confession And We See The Sub Structure Which Is Jesus Who Is The Rock Of Our Salvation And Jesus Is Saying On This Rock On This Multi Double Layered Rock On This Rock I Will Build On This Rock I Will Build My Church And The Church The Are The Called Out Ones The Ecclesia Called Out From Amongst

Others And That That Is What Jesus Is Doing Always Through The Gospel Calling People Out Of The Darkness In Which They Live Calling Them Into His Kingdom Coming With His Power And Making Them Willing In A Day Of His Power Building His Church With These Very Living Stones!

As Peter Describes Them In 1 Peter Chapter 2 That We Are Built! Up As We Come To Him We Are Built On The Corner Stone On The Foundation Stone Which Is Christ Built Up As A Spiritual House And Today Jesus Continues That Building Project It's According To God's Design It's Forming His Family That's What His Kingdom Is Like It's Not A Building As We Worship In A Building Today It's A Building With Living Stone Says Peter People Like You And Me Who Have The Spirit Of God In Our Hearts The Spirit That Has Made Us The Living Children Of God On This Rock I Will Build My House I Wonder

Today If You're Part Of This Great Building Project I Wonder Today If If You Responded To The Powerful Irresistible Call Of Jesus In The Gospel Come To Me Believe In The Lord Jesus Christ And You'll Be Saved The Powerful Claim Of God Which Is Irresistible Not In The Sense That It's More Powerful Than You But Irresistible In The Sense That It's The Most Attractive Thing That You'll Ever Hear!

[ 49 : 33 ] Together To Come From Where You Were Without Christ As Your Saviour To Be In A Place Where Christ Is Your Saviour It's The Easiest The Best The Most Blessed Step That You Can Ever Take Have You Heard The Call Have You Come To Make The Same Confession Giving Expression To The Genuineness Of Your Faith And Giving Expression To The Very Fact That Jesus Christ Is Indeed Precious And That In Accord With God's Design Your Heart Has Been Changed Your Eyes Have Been Opened Your Mind Has Been Enlightened And You See Jesus As The Light Of The World In Whom You Trust Wholeheartedly And Completely The

Kingdom Formation And As We Move On Jesus Wants Them To Know That They Are Secure They Felt In Secure In The Days Of Jesus Because Of The Growing Enmity Around Jesus We Feel Insecure Ourselves In The World Which Is So Much Against The Gospel And Wants To Silence And Exclude Us In Life And Wants To Persecute Us For Holding On To The Truth It's A Place Where We Can Be Fearful And Where That Fear Can Cause Us To Stumble And Paralyse Our Faith So That We Keep Our Faith Privately In Our Hearts Jesus Wants To Tell Them The Gates Of Hell Shall Not Prevail Against It There Are Two Cities With Two Powers With Two Gates Access

For The People Of The City And The Doors Shut So The Enemy Doesn't Come In The Gates Of Hell The Gates Of Death Will Not Prevail Because Jesus As We See Going Forward In The Gospels He Dies For Our Sins He Gives Himself Over To Death He Is Raised From The Death Says The Same Peter In Acts Two Because It Was Impossible For Death To Hold Him And Now The Gates Of Death Will Not Have The Victory Or Prevail Against The Church Of Christ The Church Of Christ As A Whole And The Christian As An Individual The Kingdom Formation There Is No Better Place To Be Found In Today There Is No Saver Place To Be Found In Today And There Is No More Blessed And Happy Place To Be Found In Today Than

To Be We Have Kingdom Faith We Have Kingdom Formation And Finally We Have Kingdom Function How Does This Kingdom Work How Does The Church Work In The World Well We Learned Something About That From Verse Number Nineteen I will give you the keys of the kingdom.

It's a great statement. It's a mysterious statement. We know that keys are for letting people in and for letting people out and for locking the door for safety and for security.

[ 53 : 21 ] It is about going in and coming out the keys of the kingdom. In the Old Testament, we see that in the prophecy of Isaiah, that Eliakim is over the house of David, that he has the keys and that he has the authority to keep out and to let in those who are around.

And we read the Gospels, and we see in chapter 23 of this Gospel itself that Jesus is accusing the scribes and Pharisees to whom he's referring here.

He is accusing them of shutting the kingdom of heaven in people's faces, so that neither you enter your cells nor allow those who would enter to go in.

They had the keys of the kingdom, they thought. And they had their own standards, and they claimed to be the ones who allowed access into the kingdom and who said, no, you can't be in the kingdom.

And having the keys of the kingdom is further defined by Jesus. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

[ 54:32 ] And without expanding too much on that, we can think of the understanding of the rabbis in the days of Jesus as to what that meant.

And it meant simply that they were the ones who allowed or disallowed conduct. They were the ones who allowed or disallowed people to come in or to go out.

And they did so based on the Old Testament law and what they added to it. So there is the function. Allowed to come in or not allowed to come in.

Allowed to come back in or not allowed to come back in. That's the way in which the people in the days of Jesus would understand. And so today we're thinking of kingdom function.

What does that function look like for the church of Jesus Christ in the world and wherever we are ourselves? It looks like it has three elements that define it.

[ 55:33 ] It looks like there is a mission. There is a message to be proclaimed. There is the going to all nations and to make disciples of them, teaching them to observe the things that Jesus has commanded.

The church functions by proclaiming the gospel, by following on to the mission of Jesus. The church functions by admitting people into the church of Christ based on their confession.

If people make the same confession that Peter has made, then they come into the church of Jesus. They are admitted by the church to be part of this great building project.

It is a case of admission. It is a case of excluding and of including. The church has the duty and the right and the authority to do exactly that.

And the Kirk sessions do that for us. And the different courts of the church do that for us. And thirdly, there is the sense of looking after, of pastoring, of shepherding.

[ 56:36 ] And Jesus says to Peter in John 20, in examining him and questioning him, if he had love for him, Jesus said to him, go and tend my sheep.

Go and feed my sheep. Go and pasture my sheep. And so that the kingdom functioned with regard to the church itself is to fulfill that ministry on the part of Jesus.

to preach, to pastor, and to recognize genuine faith where it arises because of the grace of God and to embrace such people with genuine faith into the kingdom, into the church of Jesus, to grow up with the people of God so that the church develops and grows.

And that's what the church does in every generation. that is the church's responsibility to fulfill its kingdom function.

But I want to close by saying that the Christian also has a responsibility in fulfilling a kingdom function. and is based on this very principle on having the keys of the kingdom on whatever you bind on earth be bound in heaven and loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

[ 58:01 ] That principle Jesus applies to all of the disciples in John chapter 20 when he sends them out into the world and he tells them in similar words that as the Father has sent me so I send you.

They are to go out and to live their life of discipleship to continue the work of Jesus to continue the work of Peter to continue the work of all of the apostles to continue the work of every succeeding generation of the church.

The Christian has a responsibility. And for all of us here today we recognize the responsibility of the church. But Jesus wants us to recognize our own personal responsibility.

That as surely as Peter embraced the mission and ministry of the church when he made this confession that so you and I are to embrace that same mission and that same ministry according to the way in which the Lord Jesus has appointed us so to do.

And we do so in three ways. We do so as the light of the world. You are the light of the world says Jesus. You don't hide your light under a lampshade under a bushel.

[ 59 : 22 ] You let it shine so that people will see your good works. There is no place in the function of the church of Jesus for people to have their faith in the quietness of a corner, a tomb.

It is the responsibility to live that life of faith in the public domain and to be the light that people will see that is connected to Jesus who is the light of the world.

The Christian has the important function also to be an influence for good in the sense that Jesus says you are the salt of the earth. You are to influence behavior not only within the church and within our homes but within our community and within the nation to which we belong and in our world.

We are to be the salt of the earth. Our lifestyle confirms our discipleship. It confirms also that we belong to Jesus and makes that clearly known in the world.

And that's the third thing that we have a responsibility for that kind of proclamation making known. And Peter says to his readers in 1 Peter chapter 2 you are a people for his own possession.

[ 60 : 44 ] That's your identity. That's the Christian's identity. So that you may proclaim the excellencies of whom we called you from darkness into light.

that's our functional responsibility. And God calls us today as the new Christian community or as the New Testament Christian community to fulfill our responsibility to be the light to be the salt and to be that influence that we may speak out the excellencies of our Savior.

It should be the most natural and easiest thing in the world to tell about the beauty of the Savior that we have loved and who has loved us.

And God, Jesus commands us today that we fulfill our responsibility and be the children of light as he has commanded. And in closing, those who belong to my generation at least will know Brian Clough, who was perhaps one of the greatest football managers in the last century in the 1970s and the 1980s.

And after losing a football match, he said this, we had a good football team on paper. And fortunately, the game of football is played on grass.

[ 62 : 10 ] And I think that in some ways captures sometimes the way we are as a church. We have a list of great names. but Jesus wants us to pray the gospel out on grass.

And that's where we fail. And so the faith that we profess and the grace that shines in our lives in the confession of faith is something that must work out on the playing field of the witness of the church and in the service of Christ.

And once we do that, the church is functioning the way that the great architect designed it and what a powerful influence the church is then when it's functioning as it should.

And so may God help us with kingdom faith, may help us with kingdom formation, and may help us with our kingdom responsibility as the quotes of the church of Christ in the world and as individual believers who are called to serve and to follow the Lord Jesus.

May God bless his word to us. Let us pray. Most gracious God, we do rejoice in you as the God who is our saviour, who by your power has redeemed us and reconciled us to yourself.

[ 63 : 26 ] Give thanks to you that you have done the work that we could never do. And help us today to stand on that foundation. Help us to live as those who are your children. Help us to show forth your excellencies, your salvation, your grace.

Help us to be practical and living witnesses for you and servants in whatever area of service you called us to work in. May you move our hearts and lives and enable us to serve you with joy for the glory of your name and for the good of your kingdom.

So hear a prayer and accept us for Jesus' sake. Amen. Chloe's Psalm is Psalm number 48a in St. Psalms.

It's on page 63. And we're singing at verse number 9. Psalm 48a at verse number 9 on page 63 on the Tunis Free Church.

We contemplate your steadfast love within your house, O God, for like your name, your praise extends through all the earth abroad. We stand to sing and after singing I'll go to the main door.

[ 64 : 41 ] After benediction I'll go to the main door. Amen. The praise extends through all the earth above.

All that you do is righteous, Lord, and Zion's joy is great.

and voy voy voy!

voy! voy Thank you.

To his circle forever new abides.

[ 66 : 41 ] Be his circle forever more. And to the end of time.

Amen. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forevermore. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.