

Isaiah 55:3-5

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 14 August 1994

Preacher: Rev Murdo Alex Macleod

- [0 : 0 0] Let us turn now to resume our studies in the Prophecy of Isaiah, Chapter 55. The Prophecy of Isaiah, Chapter 55, reading at verse 3.
- The Prophecy of Isaiah, Chapter 55, reading at verse 3.
- And for the Holy One of Israel, for he hath glorified thee. And in dealing with the first two verses of this chapter last Sabbath evening, we dealt with the great and glorious gospel invitation that the verses contain, the description they give us of those who are invited, the offer that was extended to them, and the transaction that they were asked to undertake.
- And we noted that the theme of these verses was really the glorious freeness of the gospel invitation.
- And that if we are going to avail ourselves of the offer that is extended to us, we must, as these words tell us, become debtors to the grace of God.
- [2 : 0 6] We must come in all our own hopeless and inadequate emptiness and receive what is freely offered to us.
- And that offer was brought to us in the words of verse 1. With the water that God offers, the milk and the wine that he presents.
- So that our needs spiritually may be met. And that we would come to experience and enjoy lasting, meaningful satisfaction from himself.
- Presuming that theme, I want to deal with tonight with you as we look at these verses, the appeal that God makes to us, enforced by the words of verse 3.
- Incline your ear and come unto me here, and your soul shall live. And then look secondly at the certainty of the blessing that he offers to us.
- [3 : 2 3] I will make with you, I will make an everlasting covenant with you. And the sure mercies of David.
- And then look thirdly at the credentials of the Saviour that is presented to us. He is brought before us here as a witness and a leader and a commander.
- And then finally, look at the kingdom over which he rules as king and commander.
- The nations that are given to him are no reason why they become his. First of all then, this appeal is enforced.
- First of all, incline your ear and come unto me here, and your soul shall live. Now, will you notice here two things in particular.
- [4 : 3 3] You'll notice the importance of the ear. How often the Bible commends that attitude to us.

the psalmist expressed in this way I will hear what God the Lord will speak he will speak peace unto his saints on the great messianic psalms psalm 45 the church for which Jesus was to die is encouraged to hearken unto her Lord to bend her ear close to his lips the new testament tells us that it is through hearing that faith comes and here you have the same emphasis exactly incline your ear bend your ear down close to my lips say the Lord hear and your soul shall live now as you and I read the Bible as we listen to the gospel even as we try to meditate upon divine and spiritual things you know that our minds tend to stray to other things there are many voices in this world clamouring for our attention and this is a thrust of the of the passage here the way in which the chapter opens the masses are pictured running to and fro scurrying all over the place listening to various voices which are offering so many things to them and they're pictured as giving their all that they might find lasting meaningful satisfaction and the Lord comes to these people and he says to them look listen listen to me give ear to what I have to say to you and that's what the gospel is all about the gospel bids us here the gospel is a message for each one of us it has something to say to us no matter how old or young maybe you may be no matter what circumstances you may be found in tonight the gospel has something to say to you the most important voice you can hear is the voice of the living God and that is why it's important for us to listen to what he has to say and what does he have to say to us and this is the second thing that these words have introduced to us and cry in your ear and come unto me hear what I have to say to you and your soul shall live these words emphasize the uniqueness of the gospel of the Lord

Jesus Christ it tells us without any shadow of doubt that there is no lasting satisfaction to be found anywhere but in that which he offers that the most important person who can speak to you is the Lord himself it emphasizes and I use this word advisedly the intolerance of the Christian gospel because it excludes any other way of salvation or of life any other channel of blessing is excluded by God himself listen to me he says there are many many voices coming for your attention but I plead with you listen to me there are many people standing at these stalls in the marketplace say to you in the marketplace of life come to me but I say to you come to me and that is why the uniqueness and the exclusiveness and the intolerance of the gospel call is emphasized by these words there is no other remedy

God calls people to himself he presents to them a specific end he just doesn't say to the people to you and to me in our sinfulness in our lostness he just doesn't say you're lost you're looking for satisfaction in the wrong places you're looking for satisfaction in the wrong direction he doesn't say to us go out with yourself he directs us to a specific end come unto me here and your soul shall live I the context tells us I am the water of life I will feed and nourish your soul I will give you spiritual exhilaration you will delight yourself in the riches of what and the richness of what

I offer to you I am your satisfaction remember remember how he put it through the prophet through one of the minor prophets you have destroyed yourself he said to us through Hosea but in me in me you can be recovered and restored my people he said through Jeremiah have committed two evils they have forsaken me the fountain of living water and have few not for themselves cisterns broken cisterns that can hold no water come unto me the God of Revelation the God of the Bible the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ the God who created us who has given us being who has sent his word to us who speaks to us through the word the God who sent his son into the world that he may die that he may die for sinners like you and me this is the God who bids us come to himself and who says there is no other way in which you can find life and meaning and fulfillment and satisfaction you remember that Jesus reiterated the same words

[11 : 55] I am the way the truth and the life no man cometh unto the Father but by me and we shouldn't be afraid to use such words as the intolerance of the Christian gospel because it won't tolerate any other way for a lost sinner like you and like me and thirdly the verses the words bring before is this that when he speaks in this way he speaks as one who offers life to us incline your ear and come unto me here and your soul shall live he is the fountain of life and he offers life life for you and for me in our alienation in our spiritual barrenness in our spiritual separation from himself what is life well let

Jesus define life for us you know the best definition of life is in John 17 verses on the lips of Jesus this is eternal life that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent and the word know there means this that they might have a loving living relationship with thyself by faith that they might be united to thee that they may know thee personally as their own the only living and true God all other gods are idols done which blinded nations fear but our God is the Lord this God the God who has revealed himself in his word and this is where you're going to find him in his word as he presents himself and life is to be in living contact with him so that his life may flow into you soul through the channel of faith that you may be restored into the friendship and the fellowship of God which you and I have forfeited by your sin so look at the way now in which this appeal is enforced by God

O everyone that thirst come ye to the water and he comes with his enforcement bend your ear down to my voice listen to me come to me that you may have life let me stop there for a moment how interested are you in what God has to say to you how interested are you in the word that he has put in your possession the Bible that you handle in this church tonight the Bible that you have in your home and inside your bed how often do you listen to him has your ear been open to his voice can you say and may I say this tonight to youngsters here to boys and girls you remember what the boy Samuel said when the Lord spoke to speak Lord for thy servant heareth is this your response to the voice of God and clung your ear and come unto me hear and your soul shall live the second thing that the verses bring before is this the certainty of the salvation that is offered

I will make an everlasting covenant with you even the sure mercies of David now here is a guarantee from the lips of the almighty himself to the person who comes he bids us come to himself specifically and if we come he gives us a specific and a sure and a certain promise I will make a covenant with you even the sure mercies of David now this is a reference to the chapter we read part of which we read here tonight the second Samuel chapter 7 where God gave a specific promise to David I he says will establish your kingdom and in the verses we read in

Luke chapter 1 in the promise that Gabriel gave to Mary the same thing is reiterated that the kingdom that is a spiritual kingdom that God had in you was established in the seed of David who was Jesus Christ who was to come from Mary his kingdom would be established forever now God made this covenant with David I will establish my covenant with you with your house and your seed will remain when David was more rest on his death bed he was reviewing his life and he referred to the night or to the day that God had spoken to him concerning that promise now as you know

[17 : 50] David had a very turbulent history his family for example didn't turn out all that well and he may have wondered as he reviewed the past and he contemplated the future how this promise could be fulfilled to his seed because they certainly weren't following apart from one or two the certainly weren't following in the ways of the law and he looked back over his neck and he remembered this promise and he said this though my house be not so with God yet had he made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure the promise of course as the new testament tells us had reference to the coming Christ and the meaning of it is this God says to this people he says to us tonight I made a covenant with David I fulfilled

David of the new testament and the Lord Jesus Christ I have established my kingdom in him and on the basis of the work that he came to perform and that the work that he fulfilled I made that promise to David but we know from the Bible that God made that promise to David son namely the Lord Jesus Christ he made that promise to him from all eternity God promised the son in the covenant of redemption that by coming that if he came to die in obedience to the father's will he would give him a kingdom and that promise is sure and steadfast and established right throughout the

Bible you have referenced to it we sang one of them here tonight in psalm 2 another great messianic psalm where you brought as it were into the course of eternity God saying to the son I have established I have made a sure decree thou art my son ask of me and I will give the heathen for thine inheritance and whatsoever the God promised to the son we know that God fulfilled it and whatsoever the son asks of the father we know that God gives it to him that's a picture the clear picture that the Bible presents to us of relationship between God the father and God the son he has made an eternal covenant with Christ on behalf of his people eternal in its origin and everlasting and sure in the blessings that he has promised now then God says to you and to me if you listen to me and if you come to me the blessing that you will receive is as sure as the promise that

I gave to David and to my son what further assurance do you need tonight I know full well that when people think of coming to Christ when the claims of Christ are presented to them the gospel there are many difficulties standing in the way many obstacles will you receive me is it too soon for me to come am I too late to come do I not have to feel better than I am or do I not have to be better than I am many things that the devil will say to you that are totally wrong and God says this to you you come and the blessings the mercies that you will receive are as sure and certain as the promise that I fulfilled to David and that I fulfilled to my son I will enter into a covenant with you I will give you these blessings these covenant blessings

I will secure them to you the offer is free it is also certain and sure of fulfillment mercies the sure mercies of David who in all this world's history knew better the mercies of God than David what is mercy I know the word here is in the plural let me try to explain the word mercy to you mercy quite simply is this God in his greatness and in his love coming into the experience of a poor lost helpless sinner to lift him up we ever seen a wee child learning to walk taking the first few faltering steps perhaps being encouraged by his mother or his father to come he takes a few steps and then falls flat on his face begins to cry and the best solace for that child is for the mother just to lift him or her up in her arms and to comfort her that's mercy

[23 : 26] God lifting you up God raising you up from the spiritual death in which you are lying God enabling you by his power to respond to his own claim you say tonight I can't come I haven't got the ability I haven't got the resources I got nothing well my friend mercy is for you I will give you the sure mercy of David to support you to encourage you to succor you to surround you and then you will say of the mercies that God has given you as you reviewed your life as the psalmist did looking back goodness and mercy he said have followed me all the days of my life the certainty of the offer that is extended and then thirdly the credentials of the saviour that is presented behold

I have given him for a witness to the people a leader and a commander to the people you and I are asked to focus or attention on this person behold that's the many other word behold look at this consider this take this in dwell on this three things that are true about the saviour to whom you're invited he is our witness he's our leader and he is our command now you know the new testament speaks very fully of Jesus as a witness he is in revelation chapter 1 and chapter 3 he is the faithful and the true witness I am he says the faithful and the true witness Paul writing to Timothy to that young minister tells him he says you witness is a good confession in this unbelieving world and remember and remember the example you have the Lord Jesus Christ who witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate and

John tells us the confession that Jesus made before Pilate the witness that he gave this was the witness to this end he says to Pilate Pilate seems to say to Jesus who do you think you are what do you know that I don't know what can you tell me oh says Jesus to Pilate to this end was I born and for this cause came I unto the world to bear witness to the truth to bear witness to the truth what is truth says Pilate I am the faithful and the true witness you know a court of law there are many witnesses who are cited to appear some of them their credibility is very doubtful indeed on the testament they give no case no case could be argued on the basis of their testimony but here's one who bears witness to the truth and whose witness is unerring it is thrown he tells the truth concerning the father philip said to him lord he said show us the father he said have been so long time with you and

I saw not known the father whosoever hath seen me hath seen the father he witnesses in his own word to the truth concerning God there are some people heard of late even men in the church who are not very sure about the truth they are not very sure about God they don't know where he is if they would only listen to him as he speaks in the world they would have no doubt concerning who God is and where God is and what God is and what he has done and what he is doing and what he is going to do he witnesses to the truth concerning God he tells the truth concerning himself I am the son of God I am the truth the way and the life I am the saviour of the world there is no other saviour but me he tells the truth concerning ourselves and concerning your plan he reminds us that sin has destroyed us sin is a reality in the world it has come into the world it has come into your life you were born and so was

I we sin daily in thought word and deed he tells us the truth concerning ourselves he doesn't make any bones about it he never tells that you're better than you are he tells you the truth and then he tells the truth about salvation the salvation that he has come to purchase that he died to procure he comes as a witness to the truth with light into our darkness and so he says to us with the timelessness of the promise that he gave in the days of his flesh learn of me if you want to know the truth and there's no small part of the joy of salvation referred to here in verse 2 let your soul delight itself in the rich of the gospel it is no small part of the joy of salvation to listen and to learn from him who bears witness to the truth it is exhilarating it is humbling

[29 : 33] I was at an induction service in Glasgow last Friday evening induction service of Mr. Ian Smith inducted to Crow Road I sat in that building that night a very short service taken by the moderator of the Glasgow Presbytery and and the I can't remember when my soul thrilled so much under the simple moving persuasive presentation presentation presentation of the truth I don't know of any experience on earth that is more satisfying to my soul and as I said are more exhilarating than having the word explained and learning learning what you didn't know being presented yet again with the truth concerning the glory and the greatness and the majesty and the transcendence of God above all gods the message of the salvation that he has provided for us here is someone who witnesses to it my friend no one that he says listen to me and don't you be foolish enough to be drawn away by other voices which will say to you that they have a message for you that they are the truth this is the truth he is also a leader a leader you know that if he was born to bear witness the truth he was also born to lead he's a born leader he leads from death to life he says come unto me that you may receive life if you come to him you will be under his guidance he will lead you and guide you so the psalmist for example says in psalm 25 oh lord be my leader and my teacher guide me in the way that I should go show me thy ways oh lord thy path so teach thou me do thou lead me in thy truth therein my teacher be he he guides in the path of grace he guides as the psalmist tells again beside still water he guides us at times into ways that we don't understand he leads in a way that we know not and in ways that we have not understood there are times when us leading is most perplexing perhaps most trying in your life you say like job lord

I don't know where I'm going I can't understand my providence but you know it you see there's a thing about this leader he knows where he's leading you there are some people and you don't lead them you don't know on earth where they're going to lead you and have they led you they don't know how to lead you out of the problems which they have led you that's a problem in the world may I say to you young people tonight with all its allurements and its enticements it offers you so many things but if you give yourself to the world you don't know who that's going to lead you it may lead you into disaster and total disaster and destruction but give yourself into the hands of this one and he will lead you from grace ultimately to glory you will never lose through following him and though the way may be perplexing and difficult at times well at least you've got this assurance here is one who leads and who never leaves those who are led you know there are some people in the world tonight who are leading people into death and destruction they give them the means whereby they will destroy themselves and they lead them to it while they go away and enjoy the profits that they themselves make think of what someone has referred was the drink parents and the drug parents of our day who are leading millions to destruction here is one who leads to life and ultimately to all its glorious and blessed fullness and glory itself he leads graciously he will lead those gently that are with young he leads supportingly he leads encouragingly he leads that he may deliver and that through his leading you may ultimately triumph and as I said and as the psalmist tells in psalm 84 he will give grace and glory and will withhold no good from them that live uprightly and you know before the bible closes in revelation we're given a wonderful picture of the lamb who is also the shepherd leading even those whom he has brought to glory he leads them even tonight to fountains of living water he will never cease to be your leader if you put your hand in his and then thirdly he is also we are with it here a commander

I have given him as a witness and a leader and a commander to the people the idea here is this you just do not enroll in the school to become as pupil as he teaches you you just aren't added to the flock as he leads you by still water but you also enlist in the army over which he is commander in chief and the picture the new testament gives us of this commander he says he is no armchair expert he isn't a commander who sends the troops into battle and awaits the outcome of the conflict himself he is there with them he leads as the commander the writer to the Hebrews gives a wonderful picture of this person he speaks of him as the captain of our salvation and what he says is this he is made perfect in sufferings now of course that doesn't mean to say that there was ever a time when he was not perfect what it means to say is this that he has learned the meaning of leading by being in the conflict himself

I'm sure that those of you who are in the army and who are engaged in conflict would have far more trust in being led by a man who had been through it before than being led by someone who like yourself was a rookie or a novice and that's the point here this is the commander who has been in the conflict he was in this world as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief he was in this world in conflict with the devil and with the world itself and with all the enemies of the cross he knew what it was to meet with opposition and difficulty he knew what it was to be persecuted to be ostracized there was no one in this world who knew all these things better than him and here is now the commander you've got problems yes you would like to follow him you would like to come you would like to be led but how will you contend with the difficulties which inevitably will follow when you think of the type of person you are you haven't got the resources you're so timid you're a bit backward you would love to be in the army of

Christ but you just can't overcome these things which stand in your way oh my friend this is your commander he will never place you somewhere where he hasn't been himself he will never ask you to do what he hasn't done himself never remember the story of George Washington I told you this before when he came across someone a platoon and he noticed that they were hauling logs up a steep bank from a river and the officers in charge were standing watching them on horseback Washington came along and he got off his horse went down and he joined the men and he started hauling the logs with them and he turned to the office and he said friend he says never ask your men to do something you wouldn't do yourself and there's the thing about this commander he will be with you lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world in the bitterest of the conflicts that you have to engage as a believer he is there to support and to encourage and to inspire and you remember also this that the commander gives command you are there to obey and this is the thing about the

[39 : 31] Christian life that he calls you to a life of obedience incline your ear come unto me hear and your soul shall live I will make a covenant with you and as the covenant head I will give my order to you and you will follow what I say to you and you will have to learn what Peter learned when he asked him concerning John Lord he says you've told me what awaits me what about him Peter what is that to thee follow thou me me witness the leader the commander finally the kingdom over which he holds sway and here God speaks to Christ himself in the words of promise behold thou shall call a nation that thou knewest not and nation that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God and for the Holy

One of Israel for he hath glorified thee now I think that these words are addressed so that people who hear the invitation will not be able to say oh that was to the Jews you know you hear that even today the gospel the Bible that's only for the Jews my friend it's not it's for you and for me for Jew and Gentile this invitation is applicable then to all because it's God I have given him a promise nations that he didn't know and nations that didn't know him shall come to him oh you say was it possible that there were nations that Jesus didn't know of course while he was in this world this promise is spoken of the glorified redeemer the son of God in our nature there were nations there are nations today that weren't there when he was in the world can't there weren't people then that people now he didn't know them in his humanity but they're coming to him today there were nations that didn't know him in this respect it may have been true of all the gentile nations they were as the new testament tells us aliens and strangers to the commonwealth of Israel they were outside the covenant promises to old testament

Israel but we know from the new testament that god has given to him the nations of the world nations that never heard of him have heard of him now and nations that haven't heard of him yet will still hear of him and they will come to him this is the salvation of the world he is the savior of jew and gentile the savior of the world and this is a gospel promise that must be fulfilled it will be fulfilled god's promise will never fail so they come from the north from the south from the east and from the west jew and gentile of every race every race and tongue and kindred they come to the same place and to the same person the savior of the world because and this is why because he said of the lord thy god for he and for the holy one of israel for he hath glorified thee now this is a wonderful thing worthy of a series of sermons in and of itself because as there was a

Scottish divine once who wrote a beautiful commentary on psalm 22 stevenson and he says of that psalm this there were two channels in which the mind of christ always won while he was in the world the one channel was this the glory of god and the other channel was the good of men remember these verses in psalm 22 where you have picked and i think it's true to say that you can apply this to jesus just before he died when he came out of the darkness that enveloped the cross and before he gave a spirit to the hand of the father he said this i have declared thy name in the midst of the congregation i have declared thy name to my brethren you see that's why it was in the world to glorify god and to die for men that he may purchase benefits and blessings and gifts for men and in being in the world suffering and dying he wanted to display the glory of god that is to display the wonder of his wisdom in providing such a salvation the glory of his justice and of his holiness and of his mercy and of his love and he displayed it in his death the glory of god is displayed more fully in the death of christ than in anything else and god's mind runs in the same channel he wants to glorify the son in bringing good to us and this is what the gospel is all about when the gospel is preached the glory of god is revealed and the glory of his son in his death in his resurrection and in his life tonight at the right hand of god the father that's the gospel and that's what brings good to men your kingdom will extend from sea to sea for the holy one of israel for he hath glorified thee just as jesus in this world to show the father glory so the father sent us the gospel of his son to show the son's glory what a glorious moment this is and all the nations of the world caught up in it and all the nations of the world still to be caught up in it and here are you and i tonight in storm away you one individual me another and the question for each one of us you have been caught up in this moment word has the voice of god come into you experience has he caused you to listen to him has he moved you to obey him have you placed your trust in this faithful and true witness have you put your hand in the hand of the leader and are you following the commander oh my friend what a tragedy if the gospel should come to you and you refuse this offer and it comes to all the nations of the world and they

accept it will you turn away yet again a deaf ear to the voice of your god let us pray oh lord have mercy upon us bless to us the word of thy grace do thou make it a savor of life unto life and enable us to rejoice in that thou art speaking to us yet again in the gospel make it a blessing to our hearts by thy grace for Christ's sake amen