

Christmas Family Service

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Preacher: Rev Calum M Smith

[0 : 0 0] We're going to read our first passage on the little booklet. It's on page 3. We're going to read in Isaiah chapter 1. We're going to read from verse 15 to verse 20.

So it's on page 3 of the little booklet, so if you're using the church Bible, you'll find it around page 684. Isaiah chapter 1. And we're reading from verse 15 down to verse 20.

So Isaiah here is speaking about God's people in his day, which was about 700 years before Jesus came. So we're looking back a long way, and he's speaking to his people who were in trouble.

And we see a little bit of why they were in trouble in these verses. They had forgotten God. So we're going to read from verse 15 to verse 20. When you spread your hands, I will hide my eyes from you.

Even though you make many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves. Make yourselves clean. Remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes.

[1 : 1 0] Cease to do evil. Learn to do good. Seek justice. Correct oppression. Bring justice to the fatherless. Plead the widow's cause.

Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.

If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land. But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

May God bless that reading to us. It's where our Bible verse for yesterday came from. Verse 18 there, where it speaks about our sins are like scarlet, yet they shall be as white as snow.

Now what's your favorite thing about Christmas time? Anybody want to give me an answer? What's your favorite thing about Christmas time? Just shout out an answer to me. You don't have to put up your hand.

[2 : 1 2] Anybody want? Christmas dinner. Christmas dinner. Food. That came from both sides of the pews there. Food's very important at Christmas time.

Anything else? What was that? Presents. Yes, presents are also important as well.

So there's lots of different things. They're important for Christmas. Food and presents. Nobody mentioned snow. Anybody want a white Christmas? Snow can be fun, but it can also be dangerous.

There's two sides of snow. It can be good fun. When I was younger, seems a long time ago now, but I remember when winters were a lot more snow than we seem to get now.

And I remember one winter in particular where there was so much snow, the street on which I lived was blocked with the snow. And a digger had to come and dig out the snow off the road so we could start to get out in the cars again.

[3 : 16] It's hard to believe that maybe. And yet, when I say to my parents, when I speak to my parents about it, they say we used to have even more snow. Remember my mother saying that once when she opened the front door, she couldn't get out because it was just a wall of snow.

There was that much snow. And we don't seem to get as much snow in the winter now. But when we do, it can be good fun. We like to go out maybe sledging or building snowmen or having snowball fights and these kinds of things.

And today we're going to be thinking about snow in the service. Thinking about snow, but think about in particular just how white, how bright snow can be.

When there's a lot of snow around and if the sun comes out, it can be so bright, you sometimes have to wear sunglasses because it can be so blinding. And that's the kind of description that we see of the snow here in Isaiah.

Isaiah chapter 1 verse 18, Though your sins are like scarred, they shall be as white as snow. They're going to be bright. They're going to be clean. And this verse reminds us of two things.

[4 : 22] One is, we've got a problem. There's something wrong. Because it's speaking about sin. And sin is a problem for all of us. It's like a dirty mark that it leaves in our lives.

But it also reminds us too that we need something or someone to take away our sin. And that's what we've been thinking about at the Christmas club.

This idea of sin being dirty and we need someone to wash our sins away. Now, very often in church I wear a nice white shirt.

Nice clean white shirt. And I've got another one here. Nice white shirt. But there's a little problem with it. You see, when you have a bacon roll in the morning and you put tomato sauce on your bacon roll, it can sometimes make a little mess.

So I'm not sure what's going to happen to this. How are we going to wash this away? But I couldn't wear it today. I don't think it's too dirty.

[5 : 28] And that's what sin is like. Sin is like that tomato sauce. It's just on us. It makes us dirty. And we need something to wash our sin away.

And one of the songs we sang at the Christmas club yesterday, it spoke about this. And it said in the song, What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

And it sounds a little bit strange that. How can our sins be washed away with blood when blood seems to be dirty? Well, what it's saying is that Jesus came to pay the price for our sin.

The way our sin is washed away is by Jesus giving himself, giving his life for our sin. And that's what this verse is speaking to us about.

Though our sins be like scarlet, though our sins be so dirty in our lives, Jesus came to wash our sin away. And that's what we're going to look at as we go through the sermon this morning.

[6 : 31] There's going to be three little things we're going to look at. But before we come to the first one of these, which is Jesus predicted, we're going to sing together first. We're going to sing in Psalm 51.

And again, you find this on the little booklets on page 4. Or if you're in the Psalm books, page 281. It's the Scottish Psalter version.

And this is a psalm that speaks about our sin. But it also speaks about our sins being washed away. So we're going to sing Psalm 51, verse 5 to 10.

And you see in verse 7 there, it speaks about us being washed. Do thou with hyssop sprinkle me, I shall be cleansed so. Yea, wash thou me, and then I shall be whiter than the snow.

So we're going to stand to sing, verse 5 to 10. And at this point, the younger ones can go out to the tweenies during the singing. So we'll stand to sing to God's praise.

[7 : 31] Bluetooth Bluetooth Bluetooth Bluetooth Bluetooth In guiltiness and sin Behold our in the inward heart With duty I live art Our wisdom, our child, make me know Within the hidden heart

To the wicked soul sing the lead I shall be blessed soul They watch the dream And then I shall be whiter than the snow O God, Son of Joyfulness Make me to hear the voice That's all this very full switch That's broken may rejoice

All my iniquities, O God By faith I hold myself Behold our iniquities, O God Arise, O God Amen We're going to look at the first part of our sermon today And it's Jesus predicted that we're going to think about And this is based on our reading in Isaiah Chapter 1, verse 15 to 20 Jesus predicted What does the word predict mean?

It's like trying to guess in some ways What's going to happen Some people like to try and predict the football scores They look at who's playing who And they try and predict what the score is going to be And it's not always easy to get that right Others try and predict what the weather is going to be like They look at the charts And they look at what's happening And they say, well, it's going to be windy Or it's going to be dry It's going to be sunny They try and predict the weather But again, it's hard to get that right as well There's so many things we can try and predict But in many ways, what we're trying to do is guess what's going to happen But when we look at Isaiah And as we think of what Isaiah was saying in his day He was predicting Jesus But not in a way where he was guessing what was going to happen You see, when he was looking at this He was telling something that was certain

Something that was true Something that was sure and guaranteed Because God was giving him a message Isaiah was what we call a prophet That is someone who came with a message to tell the people from God So everything that he was predicting came to pass And it's amazing when you think of Isaiah He lived 700 years before Jesus was born And yet, throughout Isaiah's writing All you see is him speaking about Jesus in many different ways Isaiah 53 is a very famous chapter Where it speaks about how Jesus would die for our sins And you've got other passages like Isaiah 9 or Isaiah 6 That talk about Jesus' birth And here in chapter 1 we're seeing in verse 18 How Jesus is being shown even here When speaking about our sins

[12 : 48] That will be dirty like scarlet They will be whiter than the snow This is because of what Jesus is going to do But Isaiah was writing to the people Because the people were in trouble And what trouble were they in?

They had forgotten about God They had forgotten about God And back in the days long before Isaiah There was a man called Moses And in a book in the Bible, Deuteronomy Moses warned by God the people Saying, be careful In chapter 6 of Deuteronomy verse 12 Be careful, take care lest you forget the Lord Because the people are going to have so many different things It's like Christmas had come for them They got everything that they wanted They went into a land as is described Flowing with milk and honey They had everything that they wanted in life And yet they forgot God And that's something that happens again and again and again And it happens with us Do you forget God?

Hands up if you forget God There's times I have to say I forget God We all do We all forget God at some times Because we think we can do without Him We can manage fine on our own And we can forget how important God is Because it's always a danger to us And especially as we think of Christmas time A time when we're supposed to be thinking about The wonder of Jesus coming into the world How amazing it is that Jesus was born And yet we can get distracted We can forget about Jesus Jesus who was promised to us Somebody put it like this To see Christmas through its wrappings Becomes more and more difficult every year So Christmas becomes so busy Whether it's food or presents Snowmen or sledging These things can be fun and good and right But the danger is that we forget about God

And so that's why we were doing it at the Christmas club yesterday We were doing all kinds of different crafts and different stories Reminding ourselves of just how precious Jesus is Remember you did your snow globe Did you all make these?

You all got them switched on at home? Yeah? Or did anybody give away to somebody else? Or did you have it yourself? Now the important thing on this is The verse that's on it Because the verse is this verse from Isaiah Though your sins are like scarlet They shall be as white as snow So there's a reminder to us So we are helped not to forget Jesus was predicted by Isaiah He was saying that Jesus is going to come 700 years after he said it That promise, that prediction came through Jesus came into the world And why did Jesus come?

[15 : 59] Because we had forgotten about God It was like we couldn't find a way back to God by ourselves But Jesus came to show us that way You think of the little lights in here It shines bright Switch off the lights in here And you'll be able to see these lights very clearly But Jesus is described as the light of the world And he came to shine into the darkness of our sin And show us the way back to God Though our sins be dirty like scarlet They shall be white as snow if we put our trust in Jesus But the question with that is Do we want Jesus in our lives?

Do we want to be right with God? A man called Augustine He put it like this He said there's three different ways That we can look at sin in our life And he said the first way is this Lord make me good But not yet Is that you today?

When you may be thinking about God You're saying Lord I want to be good But not yet Because I want to go and enjoy life Well that's a dangerous thing to do Another way of putting it is like this Lord make me good But not completely In other words I want a little bit of room in my life Where I can be good for God But I can also have a little bit of what I want for myself That's not the way either He said the third way is the way to go He said Lord make me good And the only way for that is By being washed of our sin By being as white as snow By putting our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ Jesus was predicted by Isaiah That he would come into the world To save us from our sin What we couldn't fix He came to fix for us

To take our sin away So long before he came Jesus was predicted It wasn't a guess It was something sure Something true And that's what we're going to look at Secondly as we're going to read Our second reading in Matthew's Gospel And here we're going to see How what Isaiah predicted Became true In Matthew chapter 1 Verse 18 to 23 So you'll find this On your little booklet On page 5 and 6 And also if you're using the church Bible It's the first book in the New Testament Around page 973 So Matthew chapter 1 And verse 18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ Took place in this way When his mother Mary Had been betrothed to Joseph Before they came together

She was found to be with child From the Holy Spirit And her husband Joseph Being a just man And unwilling to put her to shame Resolved to divorce her quietly But as he considered these things An angel of the Lord Appeared to him in a dream Saying Joseph son of David Do not fear To take Mary as your wife For that which is conceived in her Is from the Holy Spirit She shall bear a son And you shall call his name Jesus For he will save his people From their sins All this took place to fulfill What the Lord had spoken By the prophet Behold The virgin shall conceive And bear a son And they shall call his name Emmanuel Which means God with us So Jesus was Predicted by Isaiah But now we see Jesus And pronounced means telling

[20 : 15] That something has come to be To be Mary and Joseph And Mary was going to have And look at the way This child is Pronounced there As the angel spoke to Joseph In verse 21 And you shall call his name Jesus For he will save his people From their sins And you see how that connects With what Isaiah was saying Isaiah was saying And as Isaiah It's quoted there at the end In verse 23 So what we're saying is Everything Isaiah said Has come true So he's predicted And here we see pronounced So Isaiah said that our sin Is like scarlet Our sin is dirty But that our sin Can become white As snow And here we see how Because Jesus was coming And it says in verse 21 For he will save his people From their sins He will save his people

From their sins People have often made They've tried to tell people This is what is going to happen And in many different ways They thought they would get it right For example in 1926 The man who invented To make televisions He said that They're not going to become They're not going to take off Are going to have them Well look at the world today How long have you got television In your house?

Most people will have televisions Don't they? And yet somebody once pronounced They're not going to take off They're not going to be popular Nobody's going to want them And now everybody has them Same with computers In 1943 A man who was chairman of IBM A big computing company Said the world market for computers Will be how many do you think?

How many did he predict That would be computers made? How many? Anyone want to have a wee guess? Shout out Give me a number Have you been reading my notes?

It was Five I'm sure you're not reading my notes Five computers he predicted Imagine how many computers are in the world today Thousands Millions of computers What about phones?

[22 : 50] In 1980 somebody said Phones aren't going to take off I reckon there will be about Maybe a million people in the world Who will have phones one day Well In this year It's reckoned that 70% of the world's population Has a mobile phone How many people is that?

It's nearly 6 billion people Have a mobile phone And somebody had said Maybe only a million people All of these pronouncements are made And they're thinking This is going to be what happens But yet here we have a pronouncement I see I made a prediction And Matthew here is making this pronouncement Through this angel who spoke to Joseph That Jesus is come And he will save his people From their sins How many people will he save?

Will it be just a few? A small number? A small number? No It will be a great number A number beyond anything we can imagine Because he will save anyone Who puts their trust in him That is the pronouncement It's pronouncements that the angels Made to the shepherds In Luke chapter 2 A verse we so often look at At Christmas time Luke 2 verse 10 and 11 The angel said to them This is to the shepherds Fear not For behold I bring you Good news of great joy That will be for all the people For unto you is born this day In the city of David A saviour who is Christ the Lord A saviour is born A pronouncement is made Jesus has come And he has come to save us Think of snow When you see it lying

And the place is white with snow It looks like there is just A large great big pile But snow is made up Of little snowflakes Thousands and thousands And make this great big pile of snow Have you ever caught A snowflake in your hand?

Or seen it land on your jacket? Every snowflake is different Not any one snowflake is like another Each one has its own design Each one is different It's amazing to think When you think all the snow That falls in the world And every snowflake is different Yet that's just like us There are billions of people in the world And yet every one of us is unique Every one of us is different And yet Jesus sees us all And he knows us all And he came to invite us to himself That we might know the forgiveness of our sin Isaiah 1.18 Though your sins are like scarlet They shall be as white as snow How?

[26 : 07] Because Jesus came to save his people From their sins His people We are his people when we put our trust in him He knows us each one by name And he calls us to himself When you get a present Or a Christmas card It often says two And your name will be on it So you know it's for you Well, when Jesus gives us this great gift He puts our name on it as well He has come to save his people From their sins And we are his people If we put our trust in him Do any of you have an advent calendar?

Yeah, you're all working your way through it What day are we on now? Fourteen There's not many left now I've opened fourteen already this morning After I made the mess with my bacon roll And as you work your way through your advent calendar What are we doing?

We're counting down, aren't we? That's what we were doing at the Christmas club last year The adventure club that we had It was all about counting down to Christmas And that's what we do every year We count down to Christmas But the danger is That as we're counting down We forget what Christmas is really about Because remember what we're counting down to Is a reminder to us That Jesus came into the world To save us from our sin To wash away our sin Jesus is so, so precious He has been predicted And by Isaiah It's been pronounced In Matthew and Luke And these other gospels And the third thing we want to see The final thing we want to see just now Is Jesus proclaimed And we're going to read our last part of scripture Which is in 1 Timothy!

Chapter 1 Verse 12 To 17 So further on In the New Testament 1 Timothy Chapter 1 You'll find it around page 1193 Of the church Bibles We're going to read verse Chapter 1 Verse 12 To 17 Here we see a man called Paul Thanking God for all that he has 1 Timothy Verse 12 Of the little booklets I thank him who has given me strength Christ Jesus our Lord Because he judged me faithful Appointing me to his service Though formerly I was a blasphemer Persecuted and insolent opponent But I received mercy Because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief And the grace of our Lord Overflowed for me with the faith And love that are in Christ Jesus

The saying is trustworthy And deserving of full acceptance That Christ Jesus came into the world To save sinners Of whom I am foremost But I received mercy for this reason That in me as the foremost Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience As an example to those who are to believe in him For eternal life To the king of ages Immortal, invisible Only God Be honour and glory Well Jesus came to live in this world He was born into this world But ultimately he died in this world He died on the cross And that is what he had to do To wash our sin away But although he died It wasn't the end You see for Jesus to show his power over sin Something else was to happen

[30 : 20] After he died On the third day after He rose from the grave He is alive And to this day A risen saviour And who will come And this is the saviour that Paul This man who wrote 1 Timothy This is the saviour he came to know And Paul as you see in some of the ways He describes himself here In his past he did many bad things But in verse 14 it says The grace of our Lord The grace of our Lord Overflowed for me With the faith and love That are in Christ Jesus This amazing gift that Jesus gave to Paul And gives to all his people Faith and love That are in Christ Jesus So this is how Paul Was able to describe him This great gift That Paul received Faith What faith in Jesus gave to him Was this new life

This new way Of living And in verse 15 He then says The saying is trustworthy And deserving of full acceptance That Christ Jesus Came into the world To save sinners Of whom I am foremost Of whom he sees himself As the worst of sinners Is proclaiming Jesus to others Proclaiming Jesus When we get a great gift We want to share it What did you get for Christmas Hands up if you remember Well a few people remember Not everybody does It's amazing how quickly What you got for Christmas What about two years ago Or three years ago Ten years ago You forget Don't we We often forget What we got for Christmas And it's the same With Jesus We often forget

What Jesus has done for us He had forgotten Jesus In his past He thought he was a good person Because he was forgetting Jesus But now that he's known Jesus And what Jesus has done for him He's proclaiming He's telling others That this Jesus is amazing This Jesus is wonderful This Jesus is a saviour He can save us And so he's making it known He's sharing If you were at the club yesterday You were decorating cakes How many cakes did you decorate?

Okay Do you remember what you were meant to do with them? One was for who? Me Me And one was for who else?

To give away to somebody Hands up if you gave me Hmm? Who ate their cake? Go on, be honest Hands up A few have eaten it, yeah Right, second Hands up if you gave a cake to somebody Oh, more hands are going up for that That's excellent Most people have given away their cake to someone else Because that's what it was about It was about sharing with others Give one to me That's fine But give one to somebody else Because then you can be able to share with somebody Might be a parent or a grandparent Somebody like that And so it's good to share It's good to tell others This is what I made for you And it's good as we see what Paul is doing here What he's doing is he's telling others about Jesus He's not keeping it to himself He's sharing it with others And as you read through the Bible What you see is Jesus being proclaimed Jesus being shared with the whole world

[34 : 22] So that people might know how precious he is Another of the songs that we sang yesterday Comes to mind for this One night into the darkness One star shining the brightest Heaven couldn't contain the greatest news Shepherds couldn't believe it Wise men wanted to see it God was sending his only son to earth Joy sing and shout it Tell the world about it God is with us That song is reminding us That we are to proclaim Jesus We cannot contain it Because Jesus is the most precious thing That we have in this world There are so many people When we think about what people make predictions about People try and predict their football scores Well sometimes then if their team wins They like to proclaim it They like to tell others That my team beat yours Doesn't happen for some often

But when it does They let you know They tell you that their team has won And there are so many things in life We love to proclaim We love to tell others about But what about when we hear Jesus proclaimed Do we listen?

Do we listen to Jesus as he is proclaimed here? And as we hear about Jesus Do we proclaim him to others? Do we share him with others? So a woman in the Bible She is often described as the woman of Samaria And she met Jesus at a well And when she heard about Jesus When she knew who Jesus was Even though she was afraid of many people in the village That she came from She went back She went back and she said this to them Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did Can this be the Christ?

She wanted to proclaim Jesus to others And what a reason that we have to proclaim Jesus And what he has done for us One of the songs we heard yesterday being played says Jesus paid it all All to him I owe Sin had left a crimson stain He washed it white as snow That's from this verse in Isaiah that we were looking at Though our sins are like scarlet They shall be whiter than the snow That is what we have If we put our trust in Jesus Are we forgetting Jesus just now?

Are we forgetting Jesus every day? Are we saying maybe not yet Or not completely Or are we saying Lord save me Lord take away my sin Jesus was predicted by Isaiah We were told that he would come Jesus was pronounced He was born into this world And he was called Jesus That he might save us from our sins And now Jesus is proclaimed Because he is able to save us all From our sin if we put our trust in him Jesus came that though our sins are like scarlet They might be whiter than the snow So may we all remember Jesus Today and in all the days ahead And may we know his blessing with us Let's just bow our heads in a word of prayer Lord our gracious God

[38 : 05] We do thank you that you are one who has promised One who has come We thank you that in Jesus we have the one who was called that name That he might save his people from their sins And we do rejoice in that good news And we seek to proclaim it to each other and to all around us That Jesus is the one we owe everything to For he came to save and help us to remember And not to forget how precious he is in the midst of everything else That we might be busy with That we might remember him And give thanks for him So hear us, go before us Pardon our sin As we ask all in Jesus name Amen We are going to sing in conclusion now Psalm 103 It is the Sing Psalms version If you are using the psalm book It is page 135 Psalm 103 We are going to sing from verse 8 to 14

It is on the back of the little booklets And this again a great psalm that reminds us of How Jesus, how the Lord is able to forget our sins As far as east is from the west So far his love has borne our way Our many sins and trespasses And all the guilt that on us lay We will sing verse 8 to 14 We stand to sing to God's praise The Lord is mercy, full and kind To anger slow and full of grace He will not constantly be true For in his anger I disise He does not punish our mischief Or give our sins their just reward

By the greatest love as high as den Towards all those who fear the Lord Towards all those who fear the Lord Towards all those who fear the Lord Towards all those who fear the Lord As God has eased his home the west, so far his love has borne away, our many sins and trespasses, and all the guilt that all has stayed.

Just as the Father was in child, so come us those who feel his pain, for healing then works we are done, and well he knows and he will play.

And well he knows and he will play. After the benediction I'll go to the door to my left. We'll close with the benediction.

[41 : 37] Now may grace, mercy and peace from God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, rest upon and abide with you all now and forevermore. Amen.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.