



Scripture tells us and calls us to see in children a sign of the kingdom of God. Catherine, today, as we look at her, is a living sign that God welcomes us without condition, lavishing love and grace on all who come to him with empty hands and open hearts.

I hope you come today with empty hands and open hearts like Catherine. I'm going to give thanks for Catherine. Let's turn to God in prayer and give thanks now.

And then Phil and Alex are going to make some promises and I'll invite you to make some promises too. Let's give thanks. Father, we thank you for this beautiful child, this gift.

[ 7 : 04 ] Lord, all good gifts come from you. And so we thank you today for all that Catherine is today, all the potential that we see in her and all that you have purposed even before she was born.

We thank you that you named her, you knew her even before she was there in the womb. We ask you, Lord, to surround her with your love and goodness.

We pray that we'd be able to love her well here as a church. We give you thanks for Catherine, a gift to us today. Amen. She did start yawning at that point.

I think I was just going on slightly too long. Now, we've got some questions to ask you. So if you come to the mic so we can hear your answers, that would be great. So, Alex and Phil, gosh, my eyesight's really not getting very good.

This could be interesting. Alex and Phil, do you thank God for the gift of your child? And do you accept the joy and duties that parenthood will bring? We do.

[ 8 : 08 ] Alex and Phil, do you promise to bring your daughter up within the Christian community and, by God's grace, so to live that she will be nurtured by Christian love?

We do. Brilliant. Ah, now, Buzz and Joey. Now, we've got Buzz. Where's Joey? He was around. Do you want to come up as well? Well, he can do it from there if you like.

Just say yes. Okay. Oh, he's coming. He's coming. Come on up. Great. Well done. You come up here. Now, at the end of what I just say, you're to say yes. It's basically you're going to love your sister.

Is that all right? Yeah? This could be tricky. Okay. Get ready for this, boys. You ready? You ready? So, Buzz and Joey, will you promise to love and help care for your sister?

He's jumping. He's jumping. I think that's a good response. Yes. If you can do that response when you're asked, you know, the little dance, that would be good. Lovely. Moving on.

[ 9 : 12 ] So, now, I think this is a question for members of this church. So, if you intend to be here over the coming months and years, then this is one you can answer to. And if you can do it heartily, that would be good.

You can do a little dance if you want to. So, gathered here as members of this congregation and as representatives of the wider church of God, do you promise to offer Catherine, that's a lovely child, and her family your love and support and being faithful in prayer, will you share your faith with her by word and by example?

We will. Fantastic. Thank you. And I think it carries on one more. So, here we go. I now am going to hold this lovely girl. Thank you.

Oh, thank you. Oh, goodness. You are lovely. Oh, dear. I'm not sure I'm supporting the head quite right. She can support her own head by now. Can she support her head now?

Okay. So, that's okay. So, would you like to... Oh, hold on. What's... So, we give... Thanks for... Yes. So well prepared.

[ 10 : 19 ] I apologize. It's all good. Do you want to just wave to her first? I think... I think most of them waved. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Oh, you're waving back. That's nice. Yeah. So, we'll just say a prayer. So, if you want to perhaps lift up a hand to join with this prayer. So, I'm just going to lay hands.

So, Catherine Vivi Joan Brown, we greet you in the name of the Lord and welcome you into the community of God's people.

Catherine, we rejoice for you as God's gift to us. Grow strong in the knowledge and love of God. And we pray that you will be a disciple of Jesus Christ, following him through the waters of baptism and in a life of faithful witness, bearing the fruit of the Spirit.

The Lord bless you. The Lord keep you. The Lord make his face to shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord himself turn his face towards you and give you peace this day and always.

[ 11 : 35 ] And all God's people said? Amen. She's lovely, isn't she? Yes, very good. So, this is a card. Oh, this is a card here. And this is a book that I think you're familiar with.

Thank you. So, and I think we ought to say hello to her, don't you? So, if you can smile, wave, dance as I come around. Do you want to come with me, boys, as we show off your sister? Is that okay? So, I want responses. I don't want any hard hearts. Yeah, there you go. That's lovely, isn't it?

Come on, Jackie. You can do better. That's it. Yeah. Yeah. Come on, you can wave. It's okay. Here we go. Excellent.

Oh, there's a head teacher there. Be careful with that one. Yes. And, sorry, I won't do upstairs. I need to come down next time.

[12:37] So, come on, come on. You've got to go for it. This way. Yeah. Excellent. Excellent. Oh, look at that. Wonderful. And these are going to be grandparents too soon as well.

So, there we go. And down here. Hey. Hey. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Wonderful. Wonderful. Excellent. Now, I think I must give back. Oh, dear. Phil's not catching up with me. I must give back this lovely girl. And perhaps you can say hello to her more later.

And we invite Phil's dad out now to pray for Catherine. Just get this on. Is it on?

It's on. Marvellous. You caused me to shed a little tear on my wife. Let's pray, shall we? Father, we draw near to you.

[13:38] We know that you are a transcendent God. But you've humbled yourself. You've come down. Father, we think of Job.

He said that you'd brought him down to the dust. We thank you our Lord Jesus went into the dust of death itself to redeem us. Our God and Father, we just commit to you, Phil and Alex and Catherine. We want them to live for you. To live their lives out for you. And we commit Catherine to you that she may not be conformed to this world. But that she might be transformed by the renewing of her mind.

We ask you, Father, that Phil and Alex might teach them your word. And bring her up to be godly. And live for you. We commit this to you. In our Saviour's name.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you so much. That was wonderful. Excellent. Now I think Alex is going to now play. Which is rather exciting.

[14:47] Not all mothers have to do this. But this is a song that Phil and Alex have chosen. I think you'll be very familiar with the chorus. Perhaps slightly less familiar with the verses.

So can I invite you please to stand. And we're going to sing. One day when heaven was filled. Living he loved me. Dying he saved me. Let's worship God. One day when heaven was filled with his praises.

One day when sin was as black as could be. Jesus came forth to the born of a virgin.

Dwell to box men. My example is he. Living he loved me. Died he saved me.

Verried he carried. My sins are away. Rising he justified. Freely forever.

[16:13] One day he's coming. All glorious day. One day they led him on power as mountain.

One day they nailed him to die on the tree. Suffering anguish, despised and rejected.

Bearing the sins. Bearing the sins. My redeemer is he. Living he loved me. Dying he saved me.

Buried he carried. My sins far away. Grinding he justified. Grinding he justified. Freely forever.

One day he's coming. All glorious day. He's coming. He's coming. He's coming. He's coming.

[17:18] He's coming. We've got some lovely flowers. And my intention was that they would be handed out during this song. So we need to do that now. So if you've got a mum here to begin with, and you want to give her some flowers, could you come out now?

And I'll give you some to give to her. And then we're going to hand them round so you can be an older person who's got a mum and you want to take some flowers. So there we go. Take them back to your mum.

There you go. There you go. There you go. And perhaps we'll carry on playing. That's it. Lovely.

They could conceal him no longer.

One day the stone rolled away from the door. Then he arose. Oh, the death he had conquered.

Now he's ascended. My life has more. Living he loved me. Dying he saved me.

[18:26] Buried he carried. Buried he carried. My sin far away. Lying he justified. Freely forever.

One day he's coming. Oh, glorious day. One day the crown there will stand for his father.

One day the skies came. His glories will shine. Wonderful day my beloved one's dreaming.

Glorious Savior this Jesus is mine. Living he loved me. Living he loved me. Dying he saved me.

Buried he carried. Buried he carried. My sins far away. Rising he justified. Freely forever.

[ 19 : 31 ] One day he's coming. Oh, glorious day. One day he's coming. Oh, glorious day. One day he's coming. Oh, glorious day. One day he's coming. Oh, glorious day.

Oh, glorious day. Oh, glorious day. Amen. Do take a seat. And I think if you are a lady here, and you haven't yet got some flowers, there are some more being given out now, so we want any ladies going away without some flowers this morning.

Now, we're inviting a lady up. Where are you, Sarah? There she is. Now, Sarah, we want to honour Sarah. She often is out looking after our babies and very, very young children.

And if you want to go on this chair, is that okay? And I'm going to ask her a few questions. Today, we're going to be looking at consistent spiritual practices that build our confidence as believers.

And so I thought we'd ask somebody who I admire in the way she's bringing up her children. And I thought we'd ask her some questions about what spiritual practices the Braithwaite have within their home.

[ 20 : 45 ] I hope you're not feeling too much pressure. She has made some cakes here, which I have to say I do applaud as a necessary, no, not a necessary requirement, but here we go. What, first of all, Sarah, what motivates you to grow your family's spiritual life?

And I'm going to then get the microphone ready for you. Thank you. Hello. I have to say, I'm saying this, but obviously, it's Byron and I in our family, so it's both good for us.

We know that, if you know the Catechism, it says, our purpose is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. That's the only bit I know, actually. And we don't follow the Catechism, but we do follow what it distills of what God has told us in his word.

And so, Byron and I, we believe that as a family, our greatest joy and our highest purpose is fulfilled as we get to know God more, as we get to love him more, and as we pray to him and read his Bible and his word.

And so, that's what motivates us, because we believe that that's so important. And it looks different for everybody. It looks different in every family, just as these cakes are delicious cakes, but they are different.

[ 21 : 59 ] Okay. So, what does that look like for the Braithwaite family? If I were to be watching you, what would actually happen? Right. So, I've thought of five things, hence five cakes.

Shall I hold this? Yeah. Oh, you need them to do. I've done probably, yeah. Okay, shall I hold that? Oh, thank you. So, I think you might be wanting to pick things up, mind you? No? Oh, sorry. Sorry. So, number one, we find it really, really helpful if we can build a routine, otherwise we forget.

And so, whatever that routine looks like, it will be different for everybody, but that's so helpful to help us not forget to do these important things. Reading and sharing the Bible together as a family.

The other thing that we have learnt is really, really helpful is if we, Byron and I, share our own spiritual life with our children. It's not a secret, is it? Our quiet times and things, they're not secret magical things that we do.

We can share it. The third thing is that we draw on other people. And right now, I'd like to honour my mum and my dad. They bless us incredibly. Some of you know them.

[ 23 : 01 ] They read the Bible and pray with my children every morning because they take them to school, because I'm at work. And this blesses us incredibly. Now, not everybody has that possibility.

That's fine. But all of us, or many of us, know people or family members who can help us. We don't have to do it by ourselves. So, I just want to share that. Draw on people around you.

The fourth thing is use resources. I grew up abroad. There weren't very many things you could buy to help you or you could find. There wasn't the internet. But here, there are so many things.

You can find so many ideas. We really like some of the devotional resources. They're so helpful and we use them. So, make use of it. You don't have to reinvent the wheel. And the fifth thing, I'm nearly there, is we know that all that we do, do it all for the glory of God.

That's what God says in the Bible. And so, all that we do is worship and all that we do is love for God. And we try really intentionally to build that into the fabric of our lives.

[ 24 : 05 ] So, that thought that you might have, say it. So, for example, earlier this week, I nearly ran out of petrol. That was quite stressful. I was with Daniel in the car. And rather than just that arrow prayer, I asked Daniel to pray us to a petrol station.

And he did. And then we together thanked God for helping us through that situation. Or we might, yesterday we went to Cliveden and we thanked God together for his amazing creation. So, building everything in.

Wow. Isn't that helpful? So, can you remember number one? There's little pictures. There's little pictures. Yeah, the first one was, do you remember?

Routine. Have a routine. Secondly? Share your life. Share your life. Thirdly? Go on. Draw on others. Draw on others.

Fourthly? Use resources. Use resources. Fifthly? Do everything for the glory of God. Everything for the glory of God. Yeah. Excellent. Here. Think about that. Now, if that's the cake, I rather like icing.

[ 25 : 08 ] So, what's the icing? Yes. So, that was the essential things, right? That was the cake. If you're going to eat cake, you have to actually have cake. But the icing, you don't need it. But it's very exciting, isn't it?

And it's very memorable. So, there are lots of things that we do that they're not essential, but they are exciting and they are memorable. Things like Christian camps that the children go on.

Clubs that the children go to. Different traditions that we have chosen, spiritual traditions that we have chosen for our family around Christmas and Easter, for example.

Now, those things are not essential, but we have found that as we have done them year on year, that the children remember them and it's been a really special impact, actually.

Excellent. So, that's the icing. Well, I think that's brilliant. Don't you? Shall we give a clap? That's wonderful. There are some cakes upstairs for afterwards.

[ 26 : 05 ] Oh. I was just thinking I might get rewarded with a cake. Anyway, there we go. Thank you very much, Sarah. Thank you, Sarah. That was wonderful. Thank you so much. And I think we're just going to invite the children to go out to their groups.

But I think, Sarah, could you pray for the children as they go? And perhaps the musicians could come at this point. Just either. Dear Lord, thank you for our children and thank you for all the people who are leading and teaching them today.

Please be with them as they go. Please speak to them and may the children speak to you too.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Well, shall we stand and perhaps the children and young people could go to their groups.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in his wonders. Look full in his wonders. Look full in his wonders. Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in his wonders.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in his wonderful face. Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Turn your eyes upon Jesus.

[ 27 : 09 ] Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Jesus look full in his wonderful face and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace Turn your eyes to the hillside where justice and mercy embraced Then the Son of God gave his life for us and our measureless debt was erased Jesus, to you we lift our eyes Jesus, our glory and our prize

We adore you, behold you, our saviour ever true Oh Jesus, we turn our eyes to you Turn your eyes to the morning And see Christ the Lion awake What a glorious dawn, fear of death is gone For we carry his life in our face Jesus, to you we lift our eyes Jesus, our glory and our prize We adore you, behold you, our saviour ever true Oh Jesus, we turn our eyes to you

Turn your eyes to the heavens Our King will return for his own Every knee will bow Every tongue will shout All glory to Jesus alone Jesus, to you we lift our eyes Jesus, to you we lift our eyes Jesus, our glory and our prize Jesus, to you we lift our eyes Jesus, our glory and our prize

We adore you, behold you, our saviour ever true Oh Jesus, we turn our eyes to you Oh Jesus, we turn our eyes to you Let's pray Heavenly Father, we praise you that we can come to you in prayer only because of what you have done Through the sacrifice of your only son, Jesus Christ May our prayers today glorify you Father God, we pray that you bless every mother, grandmother, great-grandmother

With the finest of your spiritual blessings today Confirm in her heart and spirit the work of her hands And the love that she has so freely given to those children under your care Validate her worth daily So she has no reason to doubt whether she is loved Valued and cherished in the eyes of her Heavenly Father We thank you for creating each mother with a unique combination of gifts and talents We thank you for the sacrifice of self each mother gives for her children We pray that you give each mother strength Help her to see in every mundane task The eternal cosmic significance that you place on motherhood Help her to understand that the most radical, world-changing events May be happening anonymously in her home Lord, we pray for single mothers

[ 32 : 23 ] Help each of your precious daughters to remember that although they are parenting alone You have not left them nor forsaken them We thank you that you see each of them and love them Lord, if they are weary We pray and ask that you send them a godly sister in Christ To hold up their arms in the battle Just as Aaron did for Moses Lord, thank you that you care about every big or small thing that concerns them Place a hedge of protection around each single mother and her children, Father We thank you that you alone are their provider Lord, we pray for healing for those who have been hurt by relationships with their mothers That were intended to be loving and nurturing We pray for those who are grieving and mourning the loss of their mothers, especially on this day Lord, may they know your presence, your comfort, and your peace

Thank you for the good plans you have in store for those who still wait to be a mother And we pray for those who have been unable to have children May these women see that in every woman there is motherhood Whether it's a niece, nephew, cousin, friend's child, mentee, student, or even an elderly parent who needs care Will you please give each of these women someone that they can love and disciple?

Thank you for the numerous spiritual children you have given so many spiritual mothers and mentors We pray for all these women that you create in them a deep sense of your protection and trust So that worry and fear will disappear as they place their loved ones into your care Let each woman know that every prayer she has prayed And every encouraging word she has spoken on behalf of her loved ones Has been transformed into sweet, fragrant offerings before your throne Whisper deep within her the sweet words she longs to hear from you That nothing can ever separate her from your love Help her to nestle daily into the promises of your word Standing with faith on the things you declare are true Let her know that you reward faithfulness But that true success doesn't lie in her accomplishments or accolades

Let her rest in the knowledge that she has done all she can And that she and those she loves truly belong to you Bless these precious women today with renewal With joy, with grace, with wisdom and with great peace We ask this in Jesus name, Amen We'll remain seated as we sing Be Still for the Presence of the Lord Be Still for the Presence of the Lord The Holy One is here Come bow before Him now With reverence and fear

In Him no sin would ne■■ bound We stand on holy ground Be still for the Holy One Be still for the presence of the Lord The Holy One is here Be still for the glory of the Lord He is shining all around He burns with holy fire With his render he is crowned How awesome is the sight Our radiant king of light

[ 37 : 15 ] Be still for the glory of the Lord He is shining all around Be still for the power of the Lord He is moving in this place He comes to cleanse the tears To minister his grace No one to hold for him In faith received from him Be still for the power of the Lord He is moving in this place

And as we're seated Waiting on God's word We just ask Loving Father We ask that we'd be more and more aware Of your power Your presence Your goodness In our lives Working through us Touching others We pray for this Thank you that you are near And you speak You heal You restore You forgive We receive from you this day We're hungry Lord for your word We pray as Mark reads it We would Take it in To our souls We would stand on this word We would trust it

More than our own imaginings And as Andrew preaches May we hear you speaking To us Through Andrew What an exciting morning To hear from God We wait on you Amen The reading is from The Gospel of Matthew Chapter 7 From verses 24 to 29 This is the parable Of the wise and foolish builders Jesus said Therefore everyone Who hears these words of mine And puts them into practice Is like a wise man Who built his house On the rock The rain came down The streams rose And the winds blew And beat against that house Yet it did not fall

Because it had its foundation On the rock But everyone who hears These words of mine And does not put them Into practice Is like a foolish man Who built his house Who built his house On sand The rain came down The streams rose And the winds blew And beat against that house And it fell With a great crash When Jesus had finished Saying these things The crowds were amazed At his teaching Because he taught As one who had authority And not as their teachers Of the law Amen Well good morning everyone Thank you so much Mark For that reading We're continuing Our series today Looking at How we can build confidence

On our front lines The places where God has called us To be his light And be his hands And feet Monday through To Saturday Every week And today we're exploring How being consistent Can help us Have confidence In those front line situations Now the passage That was read to us Is very

familiar To many of us We may well know it well From children's Bibles Or from Sunday school As a child Many of us can probably sing At least one children's song About this parable But my prayer is That God would speak To us afresh Today Through these words These words to us So let's look together It would be helpful If you have the Bible Opened in front of you On page 972 From Matthew chapter 7 Beginning at verse 24 So Jesus here Paints a picture Of two builders Two houses And two storms

[ 42 : 21 ] Jesus was masterful At using everyday examples To teach deep things Of God He was trained As a carpenter So he would have Appreciated things Which were important In the construction industry Having the right materials Working with the right materials Using the right techniques To construct something Which would last And wouldn't just fall apart Now the first builder That he describes Builds his house On foundations Of rock The second builder On foundations Of sand Now I don't know If any of you Have been to an estate agent Recently looking for a house To rent Or to buy Or even looking to Sell your house Now you look at Details on the webpage Or you get one of these Glossy pamphlets From the estate agents With pictures of the house Inside and out By the way How is it that they always Get the house To look so much bigger Than what it really is In real life I never quite understood that But you get details

Of the house You get how many bedrooms How many bathrooms Reception rooms How many square feet It is What kind of heating It's got Even these days You get an energy Efficiency rating For the house What you won't find In the estate agent's Information Is anything About the underlying Geology What are the foundations Built on This is invisible To anybody looking At the house Or living in it Or thinking of living in it But actually It's very very important The two houses That Jesus described Are very similar In their appearance That we assume In their construction But the fundamental difference Lies under the surface Hidden from view One is built onto rock And one is built onto sand Building into rock Is hard Laborious Labor intensive Time consuming I've been involved In a number of Construction projects Water supply projects In Africa Where foundation trenches

Had to be dug Out of rocky ground All by hand In one project There was five miles Of trench That had to be One metre deep Into very very Rocky ground And we were having To replace pickaxes On a weekly basis For the labourers Who were doing This work of digging Because the act Of digging down Into this rocky ground Was literally wearing out The solid steel Of the metal Of these pickaxes On the other hand Digging into sand Is quick It's easy And it's fun Have you ever spent time On a beach On your holiday Digging holes Digging trenches Digging channels In the sand It's great fun Isn't it Why is it so much fun Well one of the reasons Is that because For very little effort You can achieve a lot You can dig large holes Very quickly And it's really Very satisfying Why is it that we Don't tend to Dig holes If we go out On a picnic In the Chiltern countryside In a field Or in a wood Well there are A number of reasons But one of the reasons Is that it just Wouldn't be that much fun Because it would be Really hard work Digging into the kind Of ground That we have Around here

And we soon Realise After a couple of digs That it really Isn't worth our while Digging anymore Because it just Takes too long So two houses One has foundations Which were difficult And slow And laborious To dig The other Was quick And easy But as we know This isn't about Houses It's about us Jesus is saying Something about us The wise builder Stands for people Who hear Jesus' words And put them Into practice While the foolish builder Stands for people Who hear Jesus' words But doesn't put them Into practice Now notice here The distinction Isn't between hearing And not hearing The distinction Is between Those who do something About it And those who just hear All of us Who are here today In this place Are hearing the word of God You've all heard The word of God Some of us Would do something About it There are two storms The first storm

Is described in verse 25 Rain Rising floodwaters Winds beating Against the house The second storm Is described in verse 27 Rain Rising floodwaters Winds beating Against the house The two storms Are identical Now some Christians Are surprised That they experience Difficulties the same As everybody else Don't think that If I follow Jesus And do things his way Bad things Won't happen to me I won't experience Difficulties The same storm Hits the wise builder's house As the foolish builder's house That's very clear here Now I think If we heard this parable By itself We would assume That the rock Stands for trusting In God's truth And his ways of living And the sand Stands for shifting Material things That we might Put our trust in And that the storms Of life Are the storms That we all face At one time or another Could be sickness Relationship difficulties

[ 47 : 25 ] Financial problems Bereavement But if we look At the context Of this parable Some of those assumptions Are challenged This parable starts with Therefore In verse 24 So it links to What was said Before So to truly understand it We need to have an appreciation Of what was said Before that Turn with me to verse 21 It says Not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord Will enter the kingdom of heaven But only the one Who does the will Of my Father Who is in heaven Many will say to me On that day Lord, Lord Did we not prophesy In your name And in your name Drive out demons And in your name Perform many miracles Then I will tell them plainly I never knew you Away from me You evildoers These verses 21 to 23 Challenge our assumption About the storm The builders face These verses refer to That day It's talking about Judgment day

It shows that the storm Hitting both houses Refers in the In the bigger Wider sense To the ultimate storm Of God's judgment Back near the beginning Of the Bible In Genesis 6 God decided to flood The world In judgment Remember the story Of Noah One man Noah And his family Are saved From that storm Of judgment And that flood Of judgment How?

Well he hears God's word God's word Says to him Build a massive boat And Noah And Noah thinks I'm in the middle Of a desert And I've been told To build a boat Well Noah doesn't Say to his family Let's gather around And examine these words Together They could have Sat and had a discussion About it Admired these words Of God And talked about How much they Appreciated this Wonderful plan The marvellous And bold Design for the boat The beauty Of the cypress wood The waterproofing pitch The wonderful scale Of this structure 135 metres long 23 metres wide They could have Talked about all that And then done nothing But they didn't do that Noah heard God say Build me a boat What did he do?

He got his hammer And his saw And he started Building a boat As crazy as it Must have seemed To everyone else Around him In the middle Of that desert When faced With the storms Of judgment Noah put God's words Into practice Now back in Matthew 7 The storm Is the storm Of God's judgment What about the rock And the sand?

Now in verse 21 Jesus contrasts Two groups Of people Who will stand Before Jesus On judgment day Verse 21 Not everyone Who says to me Lord, Lord Will enter the kingdom Of heaven But only the one Who does the will Of my father Who is in heaven The two groups Are not Believers And unbelievers All of them Are believers But only some Of them Will enter The kingdom Of heaven The ones Who have done The will Of the father The others Protest Didn't we Prophecy In your name Didn't we Drive out demons Didn't we Do miraculous Things And Jesus Tells them Very bluntly Tragically I never Knew you Now we assume That the sound Of the second Builder Referred to Transient Shallow Worldly Pursuits That we might Put our trust in But these verses Show that This also refers To religious Activity We could have Praised Jesus With our mouths And had profound Spiritual experiences

[ 50 : 58 ] And done ministry And served in the name Of Jesus And yet we had No solid Foundations This is a warning Against putting Trust in our ministry And our religious Achievements And our spiritual Experiences The sand The sand Doesn't just Represent worldly Confidence It represents Religious confidence Too It's saying that If we don't Know Jesus If we're not Really in relationship With Jesus Even being religious Even being a bible Teacher Even having a Successful ministry Is sinking sand Knowing Jesus Is the one issue On that final day Those people In verse 22 They convinced Themselves that They were being Obedient to God By doing this Outwardly spiritual Stuff But Jesus here Is saying that The essence Of hearing his Words and putting Them into practice Means knowing him Being in relationship With him This teaching

Comes at the end Of a section Of teaching That we call The sermon On the mount In the gospel It's radical Instructions for How to live According to Kingdom values We were looking At part of it Last week With the young People in the Salt and light Session on Sunday morning It's really Difficult and Challenging teaching It says things Like don't get Angry with people When they Annoy you Always let your Yes mean yes And your no Mean no These are really Really difficult Things to put Into practice But the sermon On the mount Is all about Kingdom life And at the Centre of the Kingdom Is the king And it all Drives us back To king Jesus The only one Who is able And did Live the perfect Life that's Described in the Sermon And it shows us That we need Him and him Alone to enter The kingdom You see Jesus Himself is the Ultimate content Of the sermon On the mount We might come

To church every Week and hear His words and Say what great Teaching this is Amazing And yet we're Not living in a Daily relationship With him So the story Of the two Houses confronts Us with a

Decision The storm is Coming Some of us Will face More storms Than others In our everyday Lives But there is One storm We will all Face None of us Can avoid it It's the storm Of God's Judgment When we meet Jesus After we die Or when he Comes again Whichever Happens sooner That will Happen But there is One place Of safety The rock If we build On the rock It means It doesn't mean That we'll never Experience the rain And the wind But through the Judgment of the Waters We can cling To Jesus Our rock And be saved Without Jesus We are on Sinking sand Well let's see How the people At the time When Jesus Spoke this

Responded Look with me At verse 28 When Jesus Had finished Saying these Things The crowd Were amazed At his teaching Because he Taught as one Who had Authority And not as Their teachers Of the law The people Who hear Jesus speak Were amazed Because of his Authority He said earlier Everyone who Hears these Words of mine Jesus unapologetically Puts himself In the position Of the law Giver To respond To his Message Is to Turn To Jesus And when We turn To Jesus Accepting His Authority In response We declare His authority By the way That we live Let's read on Just briefly Into chapter 8 Chapter 8 Verse 1 Says When Jesus Came down From the Mountain Side Large crowds Followed him A man With leprosy Came and Knelt before Him And said Lord If you are Willing You can Make me Clean Jesus Reached Out his Hand And touched The man I am Willing He said Be clean Here's a man Outside the Kingdom Outside of The camp He's heard About the Coming Judgment What does He do He runs To Jesus Jesus reaches Out to him He touches The untouchable He cleanses The unclean And this Friends Is our Great hope By nature We're all Unclean We can't Meet the Standards Of the Kingdom There's only One who Can live Like that Perfectly And we Need to Submit To him And perhaps You've never Done that Someone Said to me Once I've heard All this About Jesus And it Makes sense But I Just can't Take that Step Of believing And trusting Him And I've Said Well you've Heard what Jesus Teaches Try praying Jesus If you're Real Help me To live This way And then Start living As if Everything Jesus says Is true And see

[ 56 : 00 ] What happens If we have Made that Decision We need to Think about Getting properly Anchored To the Rock And this Is the Daily Digging Down The Working Investing In our Relationship With Jesus This Is the Bit That Like digging Foundations Into Solid Rock Is Hard Grind Every Day Anyone Who's Married Knows That you Have to Work hard At a Relationship For it To thrive Some of You know Miriam and I celebrated Our wedding Anniversary Last week 21 years Now by Coincidence We ended Up buying Each other The same Card Well there Were his And hers Cards One Husband And one Wife And they Had the Same Design On them And Independently We went To the Same Card shop And bought The matching Card for Each other Now that's Quite encouraging It shows Something that You know Maybe we Know each Other We know What we Like But you Know it Takes time To know The other Person in A relationship To really Get to know Them Deeply I couldn't Just kind Of sit And listen And be Told about What Miriam Is like And think That I Know her I have

To spend Time with Her Regularly To get To know Her In any Relationship We have To invest In the Relationship We have To spend Time We have To dig Deep This is The consistent Practices That we've Been reading About in The confidence Devotionals If you've Been reading Those as You've received Them on the Emails over The last Few days If you Signed up For those Now when I learned To drive I was Taught this Mantra And I Expect many Of you When you Were taught To drive Were taught This Mirror Signal Maneuver Anyone Remember That Mirror Signal Maneuver So the Principle is Before you Do anything When you're Driving a Car Whether it's Taking a Turning Approaching A roundabout Or pulling Out from A parking Space You check Your mirror And then You put Your indicator On and Then you Do the Maneuver Now you Need to Get that Consistent Practice Right To pass Your test And to Be safe When you Go out Driving On the Road Now for Us in Our Christian Lives It's Consistent Spiritual Practices That keep Us fixed

On the Rock That help Us grow Daily In our Relationship With Jesus And it's Those Which Ultimately Will Give Us Confidence When we Face Whatever Situations We Face On our Front Lines Deuteronomy 11 Verse 18 To 20 Says Fix these Words of Mine In your Hearts And minds Tie them As symbols On your Hands And bind Them On your Foreheads Teach Them To your Children Talking About them When you Sit at Home And when You walk Along The Road When you Lie Down And when You get Up Write Them On the Door Frames Of your Houses And on Your Gates We need To be Daily fed By god's Words If we have Children we need To teach our Children god's Word we need To show them How god's Word makes a Difference in Our life to Talk about it And

I'm So grateful To byron And sarah For the Example That you Set And for What sarah Shared this Morning about What you Do in Your family Life To do Those Things To remind Your kids Daily Of the Good news

Of god Of the Promises Of god Sharing Things Just in The day To day Situations You know It says There in Deuteronomy Teach them To your Children When you Walk Along The road When you Walk Along The road Or when You're Driving When you're Driving Your car And you Run To us Having A routine Spending Time to Read the Bible With those Close to You Every day Talking About Things Relating It to Your Everyday Life You know I shared With my Kids The other Day I'm Feeling Just a Bit Anxious About This Thing That's Happening Today Could you Pray For me Sharing About what's Really Going on Being Honest About how We're Feeling And Praying For Each Other And Using Resources Available To Us There are Lots Of Resources As Sarah Said Whether We're Parents Whether We're Whatever Stage Of Life We're At Books Of Daily Readings Bible Apps Bible Study Guides And We Need To Be Talking Daily To Those Closest To Us About How We Put It Into Practice We Talked A couple Of Weeks Ago About The Import Of Studying With Others We Talked About Life Groups And We Also Need Regular Time Of Prayer By Our That Was Jesus Consistent Pattern Going To A Place Where He Could Be By Himself To Spend Time With His Father We Need Time Alone With God To Nurture Our Relationship We Need To Find A Place Where We Can Do That Daily Regularly Spending Time Getting To Know Jesus Through The Bible Spending Time Getting To Know Him Through Prayer These Are The Consistent Spiritual Practices That We Need To Stay Grounded On The Rock Well Let's Turn To Our Rock Now As We Pray Let's Pray Together Lord Jesus We Thank You So Much For The Way You Spoken To Us This Morning We Thank You For The Way You Teach Us

[ 61 : 02 ] About Yourself We Thank You That You Are The Rock We Acknowledge That Sometimes We Try To Build Our Lives On Other Things And Put Our Trust On Other Things Sometimes Things Which Are Of This World Sometimes We Try To Build On Our Experience Build On Our Experience Of Things Which Which Seem Good And Which Seem Spiritual Our Spiritual Achievements Or Services Or The Experiences That We've Had These Things You Know They Sound And They Feel And Good And They Look But Do

We're Going to Invite The Musicians To Come Up And Lead Us As We Reflect On This And Respond To God And We're Going To Sing Oh Lord My Rock And My Redeemer Let's Sing Our Praise To Jesus Who Is The Rock That We Can Rely On And Build Our Lives On Let's Stand And Sing Together To There Is There Is There Is No True Delight Is Found In You Alone Your Grace A World Too Deep To Fathom Your Love Exceeds The Heaven's Reach Your Truth A Fount Of Perfect Wisdom My Highest Good And My Unending Need O Lord My Rock And My Redeemer Strong Defender Of My Weary Heart My Sword To Fight The Cruel Deceiver And My Shield Against His Hateful Hearts My Song When Emoties Surround Me My Hope When Tides Of Sorrow Rise My Joy When Trials Are Abounding Your Faithful My Refuge In The Mind O Lord My Rock And My Redeemer Gracious Saviour Of My Ruined Life My My Guilt And Cross Laid On Your Shoulders In My Place You Suffered Led Led And Died You Rose The Grave And Death Uncomer You Brought My Bombs Of Sin And Shame You Rose The Grave And Death Uncomer You Brought You Brought My Bombs Of Sin And Shame O Lord My Rock And My Redeemer May All My Days Bring Glory To Your Name May All My Days Bring Glory Glory To Your Name

[ 66 : 43 ] Just a moment for us to stand in God's presence. What has Jesus said to you today?

How will you respond? Father, we ask your forgiveness when we've built on anything else other than the lovely, wonderful Lord Jesus.

Father, when we've spoken so convincingly, so powerfully about things that aren't that, forgive us. May the Lord Jesus be our strength, our song, and our very great reward when we see you in all your glory, still with the signs.

Of your wounds to win us, we praise you, we delight in you, Lord Jesus. We love you, we live for you, for there is no other.

[ 68 : 20 ] You've won our hearts, we give you our lives. Amen. Amen. Do take a seat. Just one or two notices, then our final song, and then please do join us for tea and coffee afterwards up in the main hall.

First of all, very tedious notice, but an important one. As you may know, as you came into the car park, if you parked your car next door in Eastern Street Car Park, the council is trying to get things

sorted.

And apparently sorting it is Ringo at the moment. And I think if you are in the car park, you do need to make sure that you pay using Ringo.

I sent you an email yesterday, we only found out about it the day before. We don't want anybody getting more than they bargained for today in terms of any kind of sanction against you.

So if you've got any questions about that, probably don't ask me, but ask somebody else. I checked this morning on Ringo, and it's at the car park. It's Ringo. Unfortunately, Alan, that is the wrong code.

[ 69 : 29 ] So if you talk to your colleague next to you, Stephen, he'll point it out. So if you do need to pay if you're in the car park by Ringo, and Stephen, I think, has got something he can show you.

And we may put it up at the end of the service to make sure nobody is not okay. So I think it's the old code, apparently, which says that as a new code. Sorry to be boring, but that's very tedious.

I apologise. Let's move on. Consistent spiritual practices. If you go onto our website and click on Resources, there is something called Holy Habits. And if you don't know what to do in terms of prayer or Bible reading, go onto that and then see how that leads you.

If you want to take away a booklet on try praying, if you haven't really prayed for a little while, then do take one of those with you today. Tonight is our youth service, and we encourage everyone to encourage our young people by coming at 6.30.

And we're looking forward to listening to Tim Feeney, who will be preaching. Can I remind you and give notice of two church members' meetings? The 21st of March is our annual church meeting, and we are calling a special church meeting related to the Living Stones project on the 28th of March.

[ 70 : 41 ] So please make those a priority if you are a church member. If you're not a church member and would like to be, then do talk to myself or Andrew. If you like breakfast and you're a lady, then Women's Breakfast is on.

I think there's 25 ladies already booked, so do make sure you don't miss out. Please book for that. And we're looking forward to hearing from Rachel Dillon about the work of the CAP Job Club in particular. And Rachel's a great speaker.

The Easter Holiday Club for Children has been open. We've been telling you about this. There are 70 children booked, which we give thanks to God for. And there are 10 spaces left.

Not all children of the church have yet booked. You can see there is a bit of a fight here now for those last spaces. So if you want your children to come, then please make sure you book them in. I think that's everything. Isn't that good? I bet you're glad. Thus endeth the notices. We're going to finish our time of gathered worship. We continue to worship during the week, of course, as we stand and sing.

[ 71 : 43 ] King of kings, majesty, it's him we serve. Let's stand and worship God. King of kings, majesty God of heaven living in me Gentle saviour, closest friend Strong deliverance, beginning and end All within me falls at your throne Your majesty, I have become I lay my all before you now In royal robes I don't deserve

I live to serve your majesty Earth and heaven worship you Love eternal, faithful and true Who bought the nations' ransomed souls From this heaven near to your throne All within me cries out in praise Your majesty, I have become I lay my all before you now In royal robes I don't deserve I live to serve your majesty

Your majesty, I have become I live to serve your majesty I live to serve your majesty I live to serve your majesty And a blessing as we go You might want to put up your hands to receive God of compassion, whose son Jesus Christ The child of Mary Shared the life of a home in Nazareth And on the cross Drew the whole human family to himself Strengthen us in our daily living That in joy and in sorrow We may know the power of your presence

To bind together to heal Through Jesus Christ our Lord Who is alive and reigns with you In the unity of the Holy Spirit One God, now and forever And all God's people said Amen Amen