

Sunday Service ~ March 9, 2025

Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

Welcome & Prayer

“Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. ² Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.” That's how the writer of Psalm 90 begins his song. Looking back. He says, when I look back, God has been with me from the beginning. And because of that God is worth of our praise. As we end 2022, we can say the same thing. God has been good to us. And that is a good enough reason to come and worship him this morning.

But the writer ends his Psalm by looking forward. *“May the favour of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us— yes, establish the work of our hands.”* He asks that God and his favour would rest on him & that God would continue to do his work within us. And that is something we can ask as well as we start 2023. May your favour rest on us. Complete the good work that you have started in our lives. And that would also be another good reason to come to worship God this morning. To ask that he would be with us in the days to come. So, worship and prayer. Thanks, and supplication. Singing and reflection. All things God is calling us to do as we meet together in person or in spirit, this day. Let's us pray.

Lord you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Thank you for that. We praise you that you are completely rock solid. Not changing in love, justice, compassion, judgement or holiness. Help us to learn more about you as we meet together today. We ask that your favour would rest upon us today. That you would work in us through your Holy Spirit, as we listen to your word, as we open ourselves up to you in prayer, as we admit that we are again sinners in your midst, as we have fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Forgive us. Change us. Mould us. Make us. So that we can be the people of God in this place going forward. And we ask this in Jesus' name.

Song – Hallelujah to the King of Kings

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7uGw7WB1cg8>

<p>1. Maker of the heavens and earth Exalted by the roar of a multitude: “Salvation and glory and power Belong to our God”. The cry of hallelujah resounds The fullness of time shows his victory Justice and truth are revealed His wisdom adored.</p>	<p>2. Praise the Lord you servants of God All who fear him come, whether small or great Fall before his throne in awe And worship him Blessed are those who will feast At the glorious banquet of God himself; The wedding of the Lamb has come His bride is now here</p>
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Chorus: Hallelujah to the King of Kings
Hallelujah the Almighty reigns
Let us all rejoice and give him
all our praise, our praise.

Bible Reading – Matthew 10:1-25 (NIV)

“Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. ² These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. ⁵ These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not go

among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. ⁶ Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. ⁷ As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give. ⁹ "Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts— ¹⁰ no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep. ¹¹ Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave. ¹² As you enter the home, give it your greeting. ¹³ If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴ If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet. ¹⁵ Truly I tell you; it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town. ¹⁶ "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.

¹⁷ Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. ¹⁸ On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time, you will be given what to say, ²⁰ for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. ²¹ "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. ²² You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. ²³ When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes. ²⁴ "The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

Announcements

Focus for Month: Love for one another. How do we grow in our love for others? It comes from a realisation that God first loved us. "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God And loves God... this is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." So, thinking deeply about God's love is the best way to grow in your love for others.

Camp Weekend. This weekend is our annual Church camp with over 137 people from across all of our 3 services going. With that many people away please keep an eye out for jobs to be done.

Turn the tide: How we can live as Christians in a world that is becoming more and more pornified. Learn more about the effects of porn and ways to combat it. Come because you have a problem, your friend has a problem, your family member has a problem or you want to do something that will help others in the Church. Saturday 29th March 2-4:30pm. Newcastle City Church. Run by Outgrow ministries on behalf the local Presbyterian Churches

Charlestown Presbyterian FC Player Registration Player registration is now opened for the Church men's and women's team. If you're interested in joining or know someone who might be interested in playing one of our teams, please contact Sam Taylor or Cheryl Gillard.

Charlestown Redevelopment. There will be a congregational meeting straight after each of our morning services NEXT SUNDAY 16th March, to discuss the budget and borrowings needed to finance the Charlestown Redevelopment. Please read the documents prepared by the Session and have your say on the proposed motions.

Offerings. Every month we let our congregation know how the monthly offerings are going as this is the most critical financial figure in achieving our overall budget.

Budget Offerings for January	\$37,583
Actual Offerings for January	\$29,736
Deficit for January	\$7,847

New City Catechism – Question 10. What does God require in the fourth and fifth commandments? Fourth, that on the Sabbath day we spend time in public and private worship of God, rest from routine employment, serve the Lord and others, and so anticipate the eternal Sabbath. Fifth, that we love and

honour our father and our mother, submitting to their godly discipline and direction. Scripture: Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and you shall keep my Sabbaths: I am the LORD your God. (Leviticus 19:3)

Upcoming Dates

- Swansea Ladies Morning Tea Monday 10am, 10th March, Chanel Café, Swansea
- Women's Paint n Sip, 2-pm March 15th, Charlestown Presbyterian Church.

Pastoral Prayer

Pray for Afghanistan (Population 43 million, Christians, thousands). Most Afghan Christians are converts from Islam, and practising their faith openly is **impossible**. If converts are discovered, the family, clan, or tribe may try to preserve its “honour” and deal with the convert through **pressure, violence, or even death**. Please pray that God protects secret believers in Afghanistan who must hide their faith. That God will change the hearts of the Taliban and release those in prison. For thousands of Afghan refugees to find new hope and community.

Pray for Matt Wigney: Give thanks that he has been able to use his Physiotherapy skills at the hospital and to participate in Bible Studies with people caught up in drug and alcohol abuse. Pray for him as he runs some Physio training and helps with Bible lessons for boys at an orphanage. Help him to build relationships and be bold in sharing about Jesus.

Pray for wisdom for our Church as we try to keep the main thing (Jesus) the main thing in the midst of a redevelopment, flea infestation of the manse, congregational meetings, budgets, rosters and many good programmes to run.

Pray for greater social cohesion in our community. At the moment we seem to be divided over so many things. Let's pray that we can work together for the communities good and that we can grow in our thankfulness for all God has done for us as Australians.

Bible Reading – Matthew 10:26-42 (NIV)

²⁶ “So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ²⁷ What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. ²⁸ Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. ³⁰ And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. ³² “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. ³³ But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven. ³⁴ “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to turn “a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—³⁶ a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.’ ³⁷ “Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸ Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it. ⁴⁰ “Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. ⁴¹ Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. ⁴² And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.”

Song – Search me O God <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYVMuuXITAE>

1. Search me, O God, and know my heart today
Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray
See if there be some wicked way in me
Cleanse me from every sin, and set me free
2. Search me, O God, and know my heart today
Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray
Listen, see if there be some wicked way in me
Cleanse me from every sin, and set me free
3. Lord, take my life, and make it wholly Thine
Fill my poor heart with Thy great love divine
Take all my will, my passion, self and pride
I now surrender, Lord, in me abide

Sermon – Mission 101 (Stephen T)

Dick Lucas was the rector of St Helen's Church Bishopgate for many years and as one of the founders of the Proclaimers Trust Lucas trained many gospel preachers over a number of decades. One of his principles in teaching the Bible was "He's not talking to you, Stupid!" This principle is that you can't just apply every verse of the Bible to your own life. You have to understand its context first.

So, Jesus words to the rich young ruler "*Go and sell all you have and give to the poor*" isn't a call for all of us to hand all we have over to the Salvos but it does challenge us to make sure that we don't put our riches before Jesus and if we are doing that, then some radical giving might be needed. Or Song of Songs 1:2 telling us "*Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. For your love is better than wine*" doesn't open the door for strange men to ply us with alcohol and to kiss us all on the lips.

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"He's not talking to you stupid" is a way of stopping & seeing what the initial context of the Bible's teaching is. And we definitely need to do that in Matthew 10:1 we read that "Jesus called his twelve disciples to him & gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease & sickness." Then to make sure we get what he is saying Matthew names all the 12 disciples before saying "These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions

You see these instructions are not initially for us, they were given firstly to the 12 disciples. And we can see that because Jesus says

- Verse 6. "*Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans.* ⁶ *Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.*" Later when he sends out his disciples, he tells them to make disciples of all the nations, but here it is just one nation, Israel.
- Verse 7. "*As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.'*" Well Jesus hadn't died and been resurrected so the kingdom of God hadn't yet come, it was near, whereas now we need to preach the message of grace that Christ died for your sins and you need to put your trust in him for all that he has done for you.
- And in verses 9 & 10 "*Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts—¹⁰ no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep.*" But later on, Jesus tells his disciples in Luke 22, "*When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?*" "Nothing," they answered. ³⁶ He said to them, "*But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one.*"

The point being these instructions in Matthew 10 were for the 12 disciples for a specific mission trip they were about to take but underlying these instructions are principles that will apply to this mission trip and every other mission trip. This is Jesus first sustained teaching on missions. It is his Mission 101 course. And they are helpful for those going on mission trips and for those who are involved in Jesus' mission. Which should be us as well. So instead of giving you a free pass to let your thoughts wander for the next 20 minutes or so, it will do the opposite. It will challenge us to do Jesus' mission, Jesus' way. Not our mission, our way. So, as we read through Matthew 10, we will see Jesus 10 principles for mission, starting with

1. Mission is shared (Verses 1-5a)

"Jesus called his twelve disciples to him & gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.² These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him."

Up until now Jesus had done all the teaching, healing, leading, in fact all the mission. But the times were a changing. Through a combination of theory & practice Jesus was about to send his 12 disciples out into the mission field. At the end of the last chapter, they had been told to pray for workers and as they prayed, it dawned upon them that they were the workers that they were praying for. Friends sometimes it is a dangerous thing to pray, isn't it?

But now Jesus looks around and chooses Hercules, Socrates, Apollos, Billy Graham, Mother Theresa and William Carey to go out and continue his mission. Not he doesn't! He chooses a bunch of fishermen, a tax collector, a zealot, even a betrayer to go out to represent him. For mission is not a one-man band, it is always shared. And in this case, it will land on the shoulders of this dirty dozen. And notice he sends them out two by two to help and support each other. And he raises up the first mission team so there would be a bond between them as they together do the work that Jesus is calling them to do together.

The first principle is that mission is shared. It not just the job of the leader, the evangelist, the professional. Its all of our responsibility. It is not an optional extra, it is at the heart of what Jesus has called us to do. And as we do this together there is bond that forms between us. I've seen that in a working bee, or a mission trip or while ministering to the youth group. But a shared mission also needs to be a

2. Singular Mission (verses 5b -10)

"Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans.⁶ Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.⁷ As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.'⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons."

What is at the heart of mission? The singular vision that God is growing the His Kingdom. And he does that using the same message that John the Baptist proclaimed. The same message that Jesus was proclaiming. The King has come! The powerful rule of the King of Kings is now here. And this king has control over the diseased, the dying & the despised. And that message is still at the heart of our mission. It's not about me or you, it's about Jesus Christ.

"Freely you have received; freely give." God has graciously given you access to this kingdom, so share that passcode with everyone you meet.⁹ *"Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts—¹⁰ no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep."*

Keep your focus on the task. It's easy to get bogged down on what you need for any given task. When I go on mission to Vanuatu for example it takes days and days of preparation to book airfares, accommodation, get the local currency, connect with people about what we are doing & organise materials. But these guys need to keep the main thing, the main thing.

Don't worry about food or clothing, God will supply your needs. The more you have, the harder it will be to trust God for your daily bread. But the less you have the more you will need to trust Him. So just go. He will provide for your daily needs. Besides if others see your simplicity, your urgency, your dependence upon Jesus they will soon see the gospel isn't about wealth or power or security, it's about trusting in Jesus. That will mean that the way you go embodies your message that we need to completely put our trust in the Lord Jesus.

Don't you think that's a great principle not just for the 12 disciples but for us as well? Fleas, buildings, meetings, staff, spreadsheets, emails, gardens etc can easily take over my thinking. The tyranny of the urgent fills my gaze instead of the reasons God has put me here on earth for. You see we are here to partner with Jesus to help grow the kingdom at home, at work, as well as throughout the world. That is our singular mission, our shared mission and it affects thirdly where we

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3. Stay (verses 11-15)

¹¹ "Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave. As you enter the home, give it your greeting. If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you."

This principle states don't shop around for the most comfortable option. Get to where you are going and see what doors open up before you. For God is the one who will go before you to open up various doors. And give that house God's peace. But if the situation changes, treat them and that village like the pagans, shake the dust off your shoes. Have nothing to do with them. "For I tell you it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgement than for that town."

That would take a bit of faith, wouldn't it? Where will we stay?" "No idea." "What should I pack?" "Don't worry about it." "Well, how much is it going to cost?" "Not sure, it could be anything!" Are you game? Yes, I believe that Jesus will provide, he always provides.

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4. Well then Speak (verses 16-19)

¹⁶ "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves." Normally the sheep avoid the wolves but this good shepherd is sending his sheep to where the wolves live. We will notice in the rest of the chapter that the sheep will be sent amongst religious packs of wolves, governmental packs of wolves, even family packs of wolves. That means be alert and discerning as well gentle and honest and winsome.

And they can't afford to keep quiet. ¹⁷ "Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them & to the Gentiles. But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time, you will be given what to say"

You see this initial mission trip is preparation for an even bigger mission trip where they will appear before kings and governors. They will not just stay among the Jews but will witness even to the Gentiles. And I am sure it will be safer for them if they say nothing but God Himself will give the words to say. Now this is not an excuse not to prepare your kids Church lesson or your bible study but it a promise that if you have to

witness for Jesus you are to look to him and depend upon him and he will give you the words to say. But how? Through

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5. The Holy Spirit (verses 19b-20)

²⁰ “For it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.” Didn’t Jesus say something similar in John’s gospel? John 14:16 “And I will ask the father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever.” And verse 26 “But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

God’s work done in God’s way will receive God’s provision. That’s what Hudson Taylor taught. Provision of accommodation, food, clothing, help and speech. And that’s what happens. At our last mission trip, we were going to the hospital to see a sick person who needed prayer & I was asked to say some words from the Bible and I was prepared for the first person. But not the subsequent times but each bed I was given the words, the right words to say & pray.

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6. Mission is shared, singular, staying, speaking, the Holy Spirit and it is about **standing**. Standing firm. Not matter what. For Jesus continues, ²¹ “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.”

This is not an easy task. You will be hated by everyone. Family maybe, governments certainly religious leaders, most likely. It is not an easy task that Jesus has in store for us. You will need to put on the armour of God in order to stand. The helmet of truth, the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes that will bring others the good news. But you must stand firm. The Lord will fight for you, your job is to stand. The Lord will do the convicting, our job is to speak. The Lord will provide the words, we just have to open our mouths.

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7. “Because the **student** is not above the teacher.” “Nor a servant above his master. It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!”

Jesus was persecuted so his followers will also be persecuted. Jesus’ teaching was rejected, so the student’s message will also be rejected. If we are following Jesus and he ended up at the cross, then guess what? We need to take up the cross and follow him no matter what.

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Preacher David Platt put it this way, “The reality we must face is this: The danger of our lives increases in proportion to the depth of our relationship with Christ.” Let me say that again. “The reality we must face is this: The danger of our lives increases in proportion to the depth of our relationship with Christ.” That’s a bit scary, isn’t it? And it might make us want to shrink back. To not be involved in Jesus’ mission. To not open our mouth. To not go anywhere or do anything for Jesus. Until we realise that the danger that we place ourselves in when we are faithful to the call of Jesus is nothing compared to the danger that we place ourselves in if we reject the call of Jesus. That’s ultimately is what we need to be scared of

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8. Scared (verses 26-33)

²⁶ “So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear,

proclaim from the roofs. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell."

There is no need to be scared of the people around you, the worst they can do is kill you. But for the Christian that will take you straight to the Lord, so that's not a complete and utter tragedy. Don't be scared. Don't be afraid. For the father will take complete care of us. And he rules us sovereignly ²⁹ "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care." And he knows us completely, ³⁰ "And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered." And he loves us deeply, ³¹ "So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows." ³² "Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven." But that doesn't mean you won't experience

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9. Strife & Sacrifice (verses 34-39)

³⁴ "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to turn "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— a man's enemies will be the members of his own household." ³⁷ "Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸ Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it."

Jesus is saying to his disciples, welcome to my world. My family turned against me. The sword was struck against me. The cross was given to me. And I am willing to lose my life so you can find yours. And Jesus didn't find this easy, he wept in the Garden of Gethsemane. He prayed for the cup to be taken away. He didn't like what was put in front of him. But it was not His will but God's will he obeyed & his sacrifice for you opened up the gift of eternal life. But the flip side is that following him although worth it, will cost us much. But it will be worth it.

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10. Shaped (verse 40-42)

⁴⁰ "Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward."

You see this mission is Jesus shaped. If they welcome you, they welcome him. If they give you a cup of cold water, because you are a follower of Jesus then they will get a reward. Because at the centre of God's mission is Jesus. At the centre of our mission is Jesus & he is not just teaching the disciples Mission 101, he is going with them & he will go with us as well.

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You see what Jesus is doing in Matthew 10 is preparing his disciples for a specific mission. But as he is doing that, he is laying the foundation and pointing out the principles for his future world-wide mission. He is preparing his church for their call to serve. That will start in Jerusalem, then go to Judea, Samaria and then to the ends of the earth.

You see Matthew's Church and our Church for that matter will not grow without mission. Evangelism must be at the heart of all we do and say. And so, we need to be raising up missionaries and evangelists. And the best way to do that is to have a mission shaped church here in Lake Macquarie. Where we share the work, where we are singularly focused on the preaching and teaching of God's word, where we speak words given to us by the Spirit. Where we stand firm, not scared by what is around us but willing to have our lives shaped by Jesus and being willing to make sacrifices for Jesus.

If we do that there will be constant stream of people who will not just stay here but go out and spread this gospel message far and wide. And when they go, we will back them to the hilt. We will back the Matt Wigneys of this world as he goes to Nigeria, the Phoebe Baldwins as she ministers to kids with QuizWorx, we will pray for and support our link missionaries. We will help finance our mission trips to Vanuatu. For we know not everyone can go but if there are those amongst us willing to go, they have our 100% support.

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In the words of William Carey, the great missionary to India, *"I will go down if you will hold the ropes."* You see not all can go; others stay and give. They hold the rope. They support financially; they support emotionally & they support prayerfully.

So, can I ask you are you holding the rope for anyone at the moment? Are you bearing the strain of backing them 100%? There are Christians all over the world who are currently being persecuted for their faith? There are people we know that are leaving home and going overseas to serve the Lord? And there are people like Andrew Mackie and Colin Wright who regularly go to Windale and David Robertson who is reaching out to the people of Hamilton who currently don't know Jesus. They have gone over the cliff on our behalf but they know they won't make it if we don't hold the rope while they are gone?

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Friends, eternal destinies are at stake here? Heaven and hell are being populated as a result of the preaching of the gospel? God has called us to the incredible privilege of being His ambassadors, His spokesmen, his disciples.

You see the church is not the county club at prayer, trivial, a take-it or leave-it institution to which your connection can comfortably remain casual at best. No, no, the church is the agent of Jesus Christ in the salvation of sinners. The great issue of eternity for men and women, boys and girls, is the business of the church and a business in which every Christian is vitally involved. That's the mission Jesus is calling us to. And these are the principles for you and I to be involved in that mission. As we heard last week, the fields are ripe with the harvest. Pray that the Lord of the harvest would send workers out into the fields.

Song – Live for the Kingdom https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89_LvReFill

<p>1. Hear the good news, repent and believe Follow the saviour and everything leave Taking the yoke that's easy and light Dressed for the battle equipped for the fight Learn from the master to sacrifice all Gladly obeying his call Live for the kingdom all of our days</p>	<p>Chorus. Now is the moment, the day of salvation This is the hour to be serving the king Bearing the gospel go to the nations Now is the time for our tribute to bring And live for the kingdom And give God the glory and honour and praise</p>
<p>2. Love one another, care for the lost Learn to live simply and carry your cross Jesus is near so stand and be strong Lift up your hearts in the victory song When you're mistreated be certain to bless Seeking his righteousness</p>	<p>3. Learn to pray daily your kingdom come And may your will on this earth soon be done Forgive our sins as we forgive Strengthen us while in these bodies we live So we might work for that glorious day When sin and death pass away</p>

Benediction

³⁸ Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it." (Matthew 10: 38-39)