

Faith Mission Meeting

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[0 : 0 0] As I reckon, the only good thing about being up here is you get to take your mask off, and that must be a good thing. It's a privilege to be with you. Thank you for the warm welcome.

I really appreciate that and for the opportunity to come again and to visit Barvis. It's always a privilege and a joy. And as Myrda was saying, we have wonderful and fond memories of the time here and give God praise and all the glory for what He did.

And so we do remember you in prayer and count it a joy to be able to share together this evening. Just wanted to share a little bit, bring you up to date with what's been happening.

It's been a difficult time for us all, and we are thrilled to be able to be back out and on the go again. That wasn't happening for quite a long time. We were stuck with Zoom and doing recordings for churches, for videos, for YouTube and what have you.

And just to get away from that and to get back out meeting real people again. This is the way it should be. And I couldn't wait.

[1 : 1 9] And we are thrilled to be doing that now. And the way is opening up more and more, and we're planning ahead quite a little bit. And so that is good. More recently, we did a number of drive-in events.

We were across here on the island last year, and you perhaps know a little bit about that. We had a good time. But then in December of last year, we did a number of drive-in carol services.

Of course, it was lockdown, and the churches weren't able to open. And so we were able to step in the gap, as it were. And a number of churches who would normally have carol services got the truck along, and we did open-air drive-in carol services.

And that went really well. We were out most weekends in December, Friday, Saturday, Sunday. Wonderful opportunities to share the gospel there from the side of the truck.

And actually, there was a number of people came along, and local Christians would have told us that there were people coming into these drive-in events that they would never see in church.

[2 : 3 0] And so that was encouraging. And there we are in lockdown, wondering, how can we really reach out to people in the present climate? But yet, God opened up a way.

He opened up a door, and we were able to do that. One of the drawbacks to the drive-in events compared to a tent mission is you don't have interaction with the people because they come along in their cars, and they listen to the gospel, and they leave.

But we have to trust God that his word, when it goes forth, will not return empty, and he will work out his plan and his purpose for it in his good and perfect time.

And so we rest in the assurance of that. Our job is to be faithful in sharing the word and praying that God will indeed bring the increase. And so it was encouraging in some of the places to see people coming along and just enjoying the freedom in their own cars.

No masks, able to sing along when all these things weren't allowed at the time. And so God opened up a way, and we were so thankful to him.

[3 : 44] More recently, we're back out again doing door-to-door visiting, and most of the places we've done drive-in events and so far, we're visiting around villages and small towns and that, inviting people along, of course, but trying to take opportunity to share the gospel as we go.

And you don't need anyone to come and tell you how great the need is, but you know what? Door-to-door visiting brings it home afresh, and it brought it home afresh to me, the desperate need that there is in our land for the gospel.

Because the majority, the large majority of people we meet are not interested in this gospel. They're not interested to hear really about Jesus.

And for many places today, if you manage to say something at all to people about the Lord Jesus Christ, that's actually quite good.

If you have a really good conversation, that you could go and say, well, I just really felt that that person was really interested and was drinking in what I was trying to share from God's Word.

[4 : 57] That today is very rare. But it's not rare to hear, I'm not interested. I'm not interested. I'm not interested. Door after door after door.

The need is great. And the gospel is the only hope for our land. We need to spread it. We need to somehow or another be out there with it, as we are told to do in God's Word, to go out into all the world and bring the gospel to every creature, to whoever we can.

And what a privilege that is to be able to do that. Recently, we were over in Uist. We had made a few attempts to go over to Uist in the past, but for one reason or another, it just wasn't working out.

Until just August passed there, we were able to go to Uist for two weeks. And that was just a really good time. And you know what I mean when I say there was just a sense from the very beginning that God was in it.

You know what that means, don't you? And there was that sense from the very beginning in Uist that God was in it. And there was a lot of people praying. And we were getting word back before we ever went that the churches were praying, and individuals were praying, and they were really looking forward to this time of mission.

[6 : 28] And so we were able to go, and we praised God for that. We started in Burnery. We were doing drive-in events, midweek meetings, church services, and something on most nights, every night of the week, in fact, apart from the Saturday nights.

Drive-in in Burnery. And we began visiting around Burnery. And we had good conversations, and a good number of people came along there to the drive-in.

The little car parking area by the community centre was pretty full that night. And then there was the midweek meeting in Kilmure Church of Scotland. And the free church folks, they were able to join in that night.

And you know, that was just an amazing night. When people came together, and you know about that as well, don't you? People coming together to pray. And that was an encouragement, because just on the back of lockdown, and as far as these folks could tell, that that hadn't happened before.

And what a joy that was. 31 at the prayer meeting, instead of perhaps about 8. And then the following Wednesday, we had a joint prayer meeting in the free church. And I think most of the, whatever fellowships, churches that are in the area, they all came together that night.

[7 : 46] 41 there at the prayer meeting. And one of the elders in the church said to me afterwards that they would need to go back quite a long time there before they remember 41 at a prayer meeting.

But that's what God can do. And you know, people were encouraged. And the singing was good. And the men were there praying. And that was a wonderful time. At the drive-in events, folks were coming along.

There was, I have to be very careful what I say, because this is live streamed. And so we're just so grateful to see people coming.

Perhaps that hadn't been able to come or go out to church for quite a long, long time. And they were there and in church regularly since. And so that's a great joy to see that happening, to see God touching lives in various ways, to see his people encouraged, and just getting a lift.

And that's so desperately needed, I think, in the present climate that we're in. Because generally, Christians, I think, they're a bit discouraged. We've all been affected in some way by the lockdown and by the virus.

[8 : 57] It's affected us all in some way or another. And we just need encouragement, don't we? We need that lift. And I think that happens when we perhaps begin to work together beyond Sunday morning.

If you're able to meet on Sunday morning, Sunday evening, on Wednesdays, that should be a minimum. But, you know, we need to be getting beyond that, don't we? We need to be starting outreach work.

We need to be getting out there with the gospel. And I think that was a great encouragement to the churches there and used. Just seeing things happening, visiting around, seeing people coming along, and it just give a fresh impetus for gospel work there.

Not that it's not happening. It is happening. And we're privileged that we can get alongside churches, not to do anything different, but just to give a help, just to give some strength and time and energy to the work of sharing the gospel that's already going on, and prayerfully looking to God to bring the increase.

So I know that you were praying for us, and we're very grateful for that, and we want to thank you for your prayers. Of course, we were up in Holcirk. That's the most recent outreach we did.

[10 : 13] I hadn't really done much work up there before. We visited around the whole of Holcirk. I wouldn't have believed there were so many houses there. When you just drive through it, you don't realize when you go down off the main street, there's just loads of houses.

And we knocked on just about every door in Holcirk and got very mixed responses, and then put a driving event on on the Sunday afternoon. And there were not a large crowd come along, but there were folks.

They came along there, and there were some people that perhaps wouldn't normally go to church, and that gave local Christians who are keen a chance to get alongside people like that and chat to them and encourage them and hopefully keep up a contact.

And so we just praise God for what he has been doing. After we go back from here, and Lewis is not able to be across just now.

He was down with Gordon last weekend in Glasgow in Greenock actually doing a mission over a weekend, and that went very well. And Lewis is preaching up in Lough Inver this coming Sunday.

[11 : 19] But then on the last two weekends of the month, we're out in Tyree. We hadn't been out there for some time, and it's great getting back out there again.

So we're taking services in the Church of Scotland each of the Sunday mornings, and then we have gospel meetings in the evenings through most weeknights and Sunday evenings as well.

Really value of prayer, please, for Tyree. It's a place where God had worked in the past, where many people had come to know him, but yet the need is so great tonight on the Isle of Tyree, like it is in many places, and which is long to see people drawn in, and long to see people under the sound of the word, with hearts that are softened, and that there be a cry out to God Almighty.

And so thank you indeed for your prayers. Justin and Carol Cummings down in Fort William. Justin has just become chaplain for the local Shinty Club, and that has afforded him great opportunities to speak to the management of the team and players as well and try and get alongside some of them, which he is doing.

They're involved with people with addictions and difficulties, mental health. There's all kinds of things going on, and they're trying to get alongside people to minister to them, to help them, to pray with them, to encourage them, and it's not an easy work.

[12 : 51] Carol has not been able to get back into the schools yet, and so she would love to be able to get back into the schools to bring the word to the children as well. So thank you so much for praying, and thank you for the privilege of being able to share with you.

I want just to turn and share a few thoughts from the passage that Murdo has read for us and looking at this passage.

Well, all was going very well for Joshua and the children of Israel as they crossed over the Jordan River and went forward and took the great city of Jericho, a city that was closely shut in, that nobody could get in and nobody could get out.

And we all know what happened, don't we? That the walls crumbled with a shout, and that great, mighty city was taken, and things were going well.

Morale would have been good. They were going forward. They were getting on well. But then it all seemed to suddenly change when they went forward to take Ai.

[14 : 03] And there were sin in the camp. They were told by God in chapter 6, verse 17, and the city and all that is within it shall be, this is Jericho, shall be devoted to the Lord for destruction.

Only Rehob the prostitute and all who were with her in her house shall live because she hid the messengers whom were sent. But you keep yourselves from the devoted, the things devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them, you take any of the devoted things and make the camp official a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it.

But all the silver and gold and every vessel of bronze and iron are holy to the Lord. They shall go into the treasury of the Lord. See, there was a problem.

And a problem that Achan had taken some of these devoted things and kept them and hid them in his tent. And because of this sin, the sin against God, the whole camp of Israel was affected.

And they went from going from a major victory when all would seem to be going well. Now they're in a major defeat.

[15 : 20] And that's what caused it. We read in Joshua 7 at verse 11, Israel has sinned. They have transgressed my covenant that I commanded them and they have taken some of the devoted things they have stolen and lied and put them among their own belongings.

Therefore, the people of Israel cannot stand before their enemies. They turn their backs before their enemies because they have become devoted for destruction.

This is a very sad thing to have written about them when God says, I will be with you no more unless you destroy the devoted things from among you.

You see, there was sin. We live in a day when sin is not really rated, don't we? And even in many areas of the church today, we're living in a day when sin is really disregarded.

Committing sin is, it's not a big deal anymore. The commands of God in Scripture, it's like they're not that important anymore.

[16 : 39] And sin does matter. And to God, sin does matter. Things that would have been taboo in the past seem to be acceptable today.

And we have to be careful because we are not immune to getting caught up in this world that we live in and being influenced by the world that we live in.

And we have to be careful that we don't get into this trap of seeing sin as not that serious anymore because it is serious.

And sin brings consequences. And look what happened. The worst thing could have happened that the Lord was not with them. They could not stand before their enemies.

Therefore, the people of Israel cannot stand before their enemies. I will be with you no more unless the sin was dealt with.

[17 : 40] It had to be dealt with. They were defeated. There's consequences. And they were brought low. You just look at this whole situation and you think, well, that was just so unnecessary.

Why? But we're thankful in Scripture for the get-ups, aren't we? The get-ups in Scripture. In Scripture, chapter 7, at verse 10, the Lord said to Joshua, Get up.

Why have you fallen on your face? In verse 13, Get up. Consecrate the people and say, Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel.

So the sin had to be dealt with because there's serious consequences. And there were serious consequences for Achan and his family and all who belonged to him.

What blocked the victory for Israel that day had to be dealt with? Joshua said, Why did you bring trouble on us?

[18 : 50] The Lord brings trouble on you today. And all Israel stoned them with stones. And they burned them with fire and stoned them with stones. You see, sin is serious.

Sin needs to be dealt with. If there's known sin in our lives, it's serious. And it needs to be dealt with.

In Colossians 3, verse 5, it tells us what we need to do with sin. Put to death, therefore, what is earthly in you. Sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

On account of these, the wrath of God is coming. In these, you too once walked when you were living in them. But now you must put them all away.

Anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices.

[19 : 55] And I've put on the new self, which has been renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Sin needs to be dealt with, put to death, forgiven, washed, and cleansed.

We cannot go on with sin, unforgiving, sin that's undealt with. The sin was dealt with at the Lord's command.

And there's better times ahead. That's just the way it is, and we see that in the Word of God over and over and over again. And then the tone was different, you see, in chapter 8 at verse 1, and the Lord said to Joshua, Do not fear and do not be dismayed.

Take all the fighting men with you and arise and go up to Ai. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai and his people, his city, and his land.

You shall do to Ai and its kings as you did to Jericho and its king, only its spoil and its livestock. You shall take us plunder for yourselves, lay an ambush against the city.

[21 : 13] You know, isn't it wonderful how gracious and good God is? Although they had sinned against God, and yes, they experienced a defeat, but yet when the problem, when the sin was dealt with, the Lord once again was with them.

He was going before them. He had promised that Ai would be given into their hand. And not just that, that he said, you know, it's spoil and it's livestock.

You shall take us plunder for yourselves. Isn't God so good? Isn't God so wonderfully generous and good to us? But yet, how mindful are we of God?

How mindful are we of his goodness to thank him and praise him and to try and live lives that would be pleasing and obedient to him and to his word?

So what can we take away tonight from this passage? Well, there's ground to gain. We are, we too are in a battle and there's ground to gain.

[22 : 23] There's souls to be won. For their sin. You know, we can't expect to win. Joshua and his, the camp of Israel, they couldn't win.

There was no victory when there was sin. They were weak, they were feeble. They, they, they fled before their enemies. But yet, when the sin was dealt with, they knew great success.

They knew the Lord with them. They knew the Lord going before them. And something else that we see in this passage is that they went together.

You know, he says, do not fear, take all the fighting men with you. And so instead of the 3,000, there was 30,000. They went together.

There was unity. They were all involved in the battle. They were all involved in the fight. And so that's the way it needs to be for the church of God as well.

[23 : 33] That we would all be involved. That there would be unity. I couldn't help but thinking as I was reading this passage, what were the, what were the others doing when the 3,000 went out initially in the fight?

Where were the others or what were they doing? And you know, when it's, when they all came together, when they all went out, we need to be united.

What unites us? Well, it's the word, isn't it? It's Christ. We are united in Christ. We are united. It's not unity at any cost.

It's unity through obedience to God's word. It's the word that unites us. And it's through this word and by his word that we can go forward.

We can go forward together. Oh, there might be slight little differences here or there. but we're united in Christ and in his word. We're holding fast to the word and there's no other way we can go forward.

[24 : 38] There's no other way that ground is going to be gained except when we're holding fast to this blessed, holy word that God has given to us. That's the unity that we need.

If there's disregard for the word, if we're not paying attention to what God is saying to us, if we're not living this kind of life then there'll not be victory.

There'll not be unity as it's meant to be according to the word of God. So Joshua and all the fighting men arose to go up to Ai and God chose, and Joshua chose thirty mighty men of valor and sent them out by night and the Lord was with them.

See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai and his people, his city and his land. Do not fear and do not be dismayed.

That's the courage we need, isn't it? And it's nothing of ourselves. It's not courage that we can bring about in ourselves because we don't have that kind of courage.

[25 : 48] But without the Lord and without that sense of him then we won't have the confidence to go at all and there'll not be the victory.

You know, in Psalm 24 at verse 3 it says, Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord and who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully, he will receive the blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

I wonder if we were tempted to compromise the truth thinking maybe it's just a wee thing.

I wonder if Achan thought that that was just a wee thing. Perhaps it'll never be noticed. Well, it is noticed and we know it was noticed and there's never such a thing as just a wee thing because things never stop at just a wee thing and you know, sin will always take us much further than we've ever intended to go.

It's just wrong. It's never a wee thing. It needs to be dealt with. It needs to be put to death, cleansed, washed in the precious blood.

[27 : 19] We need to keep short accounts with God that sin doesn't get a foothold. We need to go together. We need to be united. We don't need to be sitting at home.

We need to be in the battle. We need to be coming together and working. You know, I think we're in a day when there's many disgruntled Christians, aren't there?

There's a lot of complaining Christians today. I think this lockdown seems to have brought that out worse. But how about this? How about rather than complaining or being disgruntled, how about coming and saying, what can I do in this situation?

How can I help? What can I do? Really start praying to that end and whoever it is we're disgruntled with, pray for that person.

Pray for your minister and be a united people going out together, keeping short accounts with God. That's what I need. That's what the faith mission needs. We need to be doing that.

[28 : 32] Take the fighting men and arise and go. A united front. And there was no one missing. That our eyes should be towards him. That our lives should be living in obedience to him.

That we would have that confidence that the Lord has gone before us. That victory is to be expected. That ground will be gained.

You know, as the people of God, we shouldn't be on the back foot. We've got a great God. We've got the God of heaven who spoke and created all things.

But we limit him so often to our own just feeble minds and feeble way of thinking. And perhaps we look out and we wonder what can be done? Well, great things can be done.

When we're living the way God has called us to live. When we have love for one another. When we're united in the word. And we're working together for the glory of God.

[29 : 41] Great things can be accomplished. You know, it doesn't get much better than that, does it? May God help us to be this kind of people.

God did it for Joshua and he did it for Israel. And he's the same God yesterday, today, and forever. And you know, he can do it for the folks of Barabbas as well.

He can do it for the faith mission. We so much need God. Our land needs God. We need a visitation from God. We need to be his people, living for him.

Oh, that the victory will be won for his glory and for the sake of his name. Amen. We're going to sing Psalm 130 and then Murdo's going to come back and just take the rest of the meeting.

Psalm 130 says, Lord, from the depth to thee I cried, page 421 of the psalm book. Lord, from the depth to thee I cried, my voice, Lord, do thou hear, and to my supplications voice give an attentive ear.

[30 : 58] Now, I was just thinking about this, verse 3. It says, Lord, who shall stand if thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquity? There's nobody could stand apart from the next verse.

But yet with thee forgivenesses that feared thou mayest be. And that fear is a godly fear.
It's a fear that will make us careful that we live the way that he's called us to live.

That we'll keep short accounts with him. That we'll guard our lives against sin. There is
forgiveness that he might be feared.

We'll sing this psalm and then murder will come. Lord, from the death to me I cry my voice
Lord, to the ear up to my song Please About speak of ■ mist O Lord, choose glory and
equality.

But yet with me forgiveness is the fear, the weakness is.

[33 : 07] I wait for God, my soul thot weight, my hope is in His word.

O Lamb, may that foreboding watch, my soul wage for the Lord.

I say, O Lamb, may that to watch the morning light to see.

Let Israel open the door, for with Him mercy's been.

Atlantia's redemption is ever found within.

[34 : 45] And from all His iniquities, He is well-shout redeemed.

O Lamb, may that foreboding watch, my soul, may that foreboding watch.