

Acts Chapter 1 v 1 - 14

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[0 : 00] Well, a very good morning, everyone. It's good to be here to worship our God together. My name's David. I'm the pastor of Gisbury Evangelical Church. I've done a swap with Barry this morning. Barry's over in Gisbury.

If you're wondering where he's gone to, he's over there taking the service there for me this morning. But we trust and pray that God will bless us here and wherever his people are gathering together. Just some words from Scripture. The Apostle John, writing in the book of Revelation, said, Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand.

They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they were saying, Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise.

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea and all that is in them saying, To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, Be praise and honor and glory and power forever and ever.

[1 : 19] And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped. What a picture that is, isn't it?

All of creation bowing before the throne of God and worshipping. Well, this morning we are here to worship and to praise our great God and King, our Saviour Jesus.

And we are going to start by singing together number 302. Jesus is King and I will extol Him, give Him the glory and honor His name.

He reigns on high, enthroned in the heavens. Word of the Father, exalted for us. Let's turn to the Lord in prayer.

Let's pray together. Amen. Father God, as we bow before your throne this morning, we come knowing that we are approaching the Holy One, the High and Uplifted One, the One who is exalted in every possible way.

[2 : 45] You are the one that the angels bow before and worship constantly, crying out, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty.

And Father, as we come before you, we are amazed that we can even draw near to you because you are so holy and righteous. And we, O Lord, as we look into our own hearts, we see that we are sinners.

We fail you. We rebel against you. We disobey you. And yet still, O Lord, you are patient and long-suffering towards us. And in your great mercy, you have sent your one and only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to be our Savior.

And He has left that throne of heaven and He has come into this world, even though He knew He would be rejected and despised by men. Even though He knew that He would go to a cross and suffer and die.

Yet He came. And we are so glad that He came. We are glad because we know that through the Lord Jesus Christ and through His death on the cross, our sins can be dealt with and we can be brought into that new relationship with you.

[4 : 05] So not only can we call you our great God, but we can now call you our Father. Father, and we would rejoice that we are now, as the people of God, we can call ourselves the children of the living God.

And Father, we thank You for this. We thank You for this new relationship that we have with You.

And we thank You that You have given us Your Holy Spirit to fill our hearts and minds, to help us as we live in this world.

Lord, we thank You for the joy that there is in being a child of God today. Lord, we thank You for the good news of the gospel that You have entrusted to us.

But we thank You too, Lord, that that word of the gospel is such a thrill to our hearts too. We constantly are reminded of Your amazing love for us, that amazing grace that there is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

May we never lose the thrill and the wonder that there is in being a child of God. And may we live, O Lord, to Your praise and Your glory today.

[5 : 14] Lord, we've just been singing that tremendous hymn, Jesus is King, and I will extol Him, that we will give Him the glory and the honour that is due to His name.

Help us to do that, Father, in every circumstance. In every word, every thought, every desire of our hearts. Help us, O Lord, to worship and serve You.

And as we have come into this place this morning, Father, with this desire of honouring You and pleasing You and worshipping You, so we would pray that You'll stir our hearts even further and lift us up into Your presence, so we will know Your smile upon us, that we will hear Your voice speaking, and that, O Lord, we would have ears to hear and wills to obey.

O bless us here this morning, then we pray. And what we pray for us here in Whitby this morning, Father, we would pray for all Your people, wherever they are gathering today in this country and indeed around the world.

We ask, Lord, that where Your people are gathering together around Your Word, seeking Your face, Lord, we pray that You would be active, that You would bless, that You would build Your church and the name of Jesus would spread far and wide.

[6 : 34] Lord, hear our prayers, we ask, for the glory of Your name. Amen. I'm going to read from the book of Acts and chapter 1.

I'm just going to read the first 14 verses of Acts chapter 1. This is what God's Word says.

In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day He was taken up to heaven.

After giving instructions to the Holy Spirit, to the apostles He had chosen. After His suffering, He presented Himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive.

He appeared to them over a period of 40 days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while He was eating with them, He gave them this command.

[7 : 49] Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift of my Father, the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

Then they gathered round Him and asked Him, Lord, are You at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel? He said to them, It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

After He had said this, He was taken up before their very eyes and a cloud hid Him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as He was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.

Men of Galilee, they said, Why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus who has been taken from you into heaven will come back in the same way as you have seen Him go into heaven.

Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath-day walk from the city. When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying.

[9 : 17] Those present were Peter, John, James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James, son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas, son of James.

They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. May the Lord bless His Word.

Amen. I just want to read to you a few words from 2 Peter, chapter 1, but we'll be going back to Acts 1 in a minute.

But 2 Peter, chapter 1, this is what Peter writes. Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who, through the righteousness of God, our Savior, Jesus Christ, have received a faith as precious as ours.

Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.

[10:25] Through these, He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith, goodness, and to goodness knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control, perseverance, and to perseverance, godliness, and to godliness, mutual affection, and to mutual affection, love.

For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But whoever does not have them is short-sighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election, for if you do these things, you will never stumble, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Tremendous words of encouragement. We'll see how that works into Acts in a minute. Let's just bow in prayer. Father, we want to thank You that You are the God who speaks to us today.

[11:47] We thank You that we need to hear Your voice. We need to have You leading us and guiding us and directing us because we know so often and so easily we take the wrong path. So we pray that Your Spirit will guide us through Your Word this morning, that He will instruct us, and that He would help us as we would seek to grow and to live for You.

Just bless us in Your Word, we pray, and make it live and transform our hearts and minds so that we live for Your glory now. And we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Well, this morning I want us to think particularly around the verses that are found in Acts 1, but bearing in mind the words that we just read from 2 Peter 2, and that it's important for us because what we are looking at really is how we should be living now today.

It might seem a strange thing, but we know how to live today, don't we? I think not sometimes. I think not. It's good for us to be here this morning as well because I don't know if you'd noticed in the news recently, the world should have ended.

We shouldn't be here at all. We should have had this big collision with Planet X and should have wiped out life completely. Well, we seem to be still here this morning, don't we?

[13:03] Why do we keep getting these people telling us the world is coming to an end and these great disasters are happening? Because one day it's going to happen. One day it really is going to happen.

And every time I hear these people saying it's going to be on such and such a day, I know it's not going to happen because, as God says, nobody knows when that's going to happen. But it reminds me that God has also said it is going to happen.

And we need to be ready for when it does happen. And that's really what the Scripture's all about. Making us ready for that one great day. Because on that one great day, amazing things are going to happen.

For the pet sakes of God, we are going to be taken into the presence of Jesus and we are going to be there forevermore, praising and worshipping, just like we read from Revelation, around the throne of God, worshipping and adoring the King of Kings forevermore.

And that's something to really look forward to. But on the other side of that, that same day will be a day of judgment and wrath and disaster and doom for those who don't know the Lord Jesus Christ.

[14:10] Now, as much as I don't like to think about those things, because it really is heartbreaking, but that is the reality. And that is what God says.

And so we are living in a day, while that day is still to come, how far down the road of history, that we don't know. But that day will come. And what Scripture wants us to know is to make our priorities right and get ready for that day.

There's an old recipe about chicken stew. I don't know if you've come across this one, but the author of the recipe says, first, chicken. Anything else for chicken stew doesn't matter.

If you haven't got chicken, you can't have chicken soup. Bible is all about, number one, first thing, priority. Because everything else is worthless, unless you've got that one thing.

Here in Acts 1, the author, Theophilus, he also wrote the book of Luke. And Luke tells us here in Acts 1, he starts off by saying, the former account I made of Theophilus, of all that Jesus began to do and to teach.

[15 : 23] He's saying, I wrote to you and told you about the life of Jesus. I told you that Jesus was the Son of God. I told you that the Son of God has come into this world, that he did miracle after miracle.

I told you some of the stories that Jesus told. I told you how he was betrayed. I told you how he was nailed on a cross.

And I told you that he rose from the dead on the third day. And I told you, says Luke, that they are the things that all the prophets, all the Old Testament scriptures pointed ahead and said was going to happen.

So Luke is saying, all that Jesus began to do and teach, I've told you about. And if we're not sure what Luke has told them about, just go home and read the Gospel of Luke, and he will explain it to us.

But the reason he's writing this second book, the book of Acts, is to say that just because Jesus was no longer present, doesn't mean to say he wasn't at work.

[16 : 25] Because he is, says Luke. And Luke says, really, all that Jesus began to do and to teach. That is, he started something, he hasn't finished it yet.

And that's what the second book, the book of Acts, is all about. What Jesus continued to do after his resurrection. And what we have today is Jesus still doing things today.

Just because the Bible has been finished and no more books to be written, doesn't mean that Jesus has got nothing else to do. He is still doing it now. And how do we know that? Because you're here. I am here. And all believers are a testimony that Jesus is still at work today. Because the testimony of the believer is simply this.

I was a sinner. I was hellbound and condemned. But God in his infinite grace and his wonderful mercy has revealed Jesus to be the Savior.

[17 : 25] And he's opened my heart to that. And if you're a Christian, that's what he's done for you. So Jesus is still at work in our world today. And so Jesus, says Luke, began to do these things when he came.

He continued to do them through the Acts of the Apostles. And we can say he's still doing it now. Isn't that amazing? Jesus is not some dead figure of history of 2,000 years ago.

Jesus is alive and at work today. And really, says Luke, and as we looked in Peter, this is so important because this is the Jesus that we're going to meet one day.

He's the one either who's going to be our judge or he's the one who we're going to bow before and worship and adore forever around his throne. You see, what we need to know is that Jesus is not a dead figure from history.

He is a living Savior here and now today. And for you, if you don't know Jesus, his invitation still stands, come to me. Come to me.

[18 : 30] And I will give you rest. Rest for your souls. And Jesus wants us to know that he's alive and he can do that. Luke tells us here that he continued with them for many, many days.

In fact, in verse 3 it says, he presented himself alive, he showed himself to his disciples and to his friends for over 40 days, revealing himself to be the risen, living Jesus.

So many people today want us to think that Jesus didn't rise physically from the dead. It was just a spiritual thing. But Luke and the other gospel writers say Jesus rose physically from the dead.

He sat and had meals with them. I can't think of any spirits that would do that. But Jesus did. He says, I'm alive. He said to Thomas, touch me, you know, show that I'm alive.

Know that I'm alive. And that's the whole point. Jesus is alive. There was once a story in the Reader's Digest about a little boy called Billy.

[19 : 39] He had a cat that sadly got run over. And his mum just didn't know quite how to tell Billy this. But after a few days with the cat not being around, Billy eventually said to his mum, where's the cat?

And Billy's mum said, well, trying to comfort Billy, she said, the cat died but he's all right. He's gone to be with God in heaven. And Billy said, why on earth would God want a dead cat?

You see, God is not the God of the dead. He's the God of the living. God doesn't want dead things. He wants alive things. And that's why when we become Christians, we become alive.

That's why Paul can say in Ephesians, you who were dead in trespasses and sin, he has made alive. And we're never really alive until we know Jesus.

The question for us this morning is, how alive are you? Are you really alive? Not just sitting there breathing and sighing and all of those things, but are you alive to God?

[20 : 53] Because that's the priority. That's the number one thing. Being alive to God. And that's what the Bible really wants us to do, is be alive to God.

So the first thing that Peter and Luke want us to think about is simply this one great thing. Jesus is alive, that he's speaking to you today, and he wants a relationship with you today and forever. And until that one thing is in place, it doesn't matter how you spend the rest of your life, because you have no firm foundation to build him.

So, do you know this Jesus, who is alive, who presented himself alive, who showed himself by many infallible proofs, he says. Over 40 days he spoke to them and showed the power of God that he was alive.

But why is he alive? Why has he come back from the dead? Why does he still work now? Well, Luke tells us, because he's given us some great promises.

[22 : 05] Look at verse 4. He says, you are to go back to Jerusalem and you are to wait for what? The promise.

There's a promise here, he says. I want you to go back to the upper room and I want you to wait there with all the disciples and the followers of Jesus, and I want you to wait there and stay there, he says.

It's not like the dog, sit, stay. Stay there until the Holy Spirit comes. There's a promise, says Luke, that God has made.

What promise is that? Well, Jesus himself spoke about this in his own ministry. He said, after I've gone back to the Father, I will send another comforter to you, the Holy Spirit.

And what's he going to do for you? What's the point of having the Holy Spirit in your life this morning? That's where Peter comes in. Listen to what Peter says.

[23 : 04] His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and godliness.

Through these, he has given us very great and precious promises. Through the mighty working of God's Holy Spirit who works in us, he says, he will help you live a good and godly life.

Not the way you used to live. Not even just the reformed character. Not even just turning over a new leaf. Not just making New Year's resolutions about living better and all those things.

But by his divine power, that is the work of the Holy Spirit, he transforms us into the people we should be. And that is so important because we must realize that as Jesus said, without me, you can do nothing.

We can't even live a good life without Jesus. That's why we need his divine power. That's the work of the Holy Spirit to transform us and make us like Jesus.

[24 : 15] And that starts off in our heads as he transforms our thinking and helps us to see things from God's perspective. perspective. So, Peter and Luke here both tell us that the important thing for them is to wait for God to fulfill his promise and to send the Holy Spirit.

Interestingly, as the disciples there on the mountainside, on Mount Olivet, they are listening to what Jesus is saying, they are understanding what he is saying, but their thoughts are turning to other things.

listen to what they say in verse 6. They said, Lord, I know what you're saying, but are you going to restore Israel to a nation at this moment?

Are you going to bring the glory back to Israel? Jesus is just talking about the power of the Holy Spirit coming to bless and build his church and they are not on the same wavelength, are they? Don't you find that sometimes? We are not always on the same wavelength of God. Our thoughts are not always his thoughts.

[25 : 29] And sometimes we think we know what God is saying, but really he's not at all, is he? I know if Jesus doesn't say yes or no, he just said, that's not for you to worry about. That's not for you to think about.

That will happen in good time. But he says, you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come and you will be witnesses to me.

You see, there are certain things that God said is going to happen, but he doesn't give us all the details. But what he does say is, that's not for you to worry about, leave that with God. You, however, and then he turns it back, not about distant things or things that we have no control over, because it's so easy to sit and think about things that you have no control over whatsoever, isn't it?

We can think and plan all our futures out. We can think and plan about what God is going to do in history and leading up to the second coming and we can have it all slotted in place.

[26 : 33] And we're so busy doing those things that we forget what we're actually supposed to be doing. And that's what Peter and the other disciples are being told here by the Lord Jesus in Acts 1.

He says, yeah, those things, Israel, leave that with God. You, however, you've got to do something else. And what is it that they've got to do?

Well, he says, when you've waited, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be witnesses. Witnesses.

That's what they've got to do. You see, it's all good knowing that Jesus is coming again. It's all very well knowing that the end of the world will come one day.

But what good does it do you? Why is God telling you these things? Is it so that we can sit and gaze up at the sky waiting for Jesus to come back on the clouds of heaven?

[27 : 29] No, it's not, is it? That's not what the church is here for. That's not what you are here for. You, says Jesus, will be my witnesses.

Where? In Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the other most parts of the earth. In other words, wherever you go, you are my witnesses.

Wherever you go, you will talk about me. Wherever you go, you will point people to me. That is our mission, says Peter.

Not to be the sky watchers. Not to be constantly lost in prophecy and all these predictions and people go astray, plotting and planning and making dates and showing themselves to be fools in the end.

That's not where we are and that's not what we'd be doing. Our focus, says the Lord Jesus Christ, to his disciples here, is to be his witnesses. And that's why Peter says in 2 Peter 1, he has given you his power so that you can be clearly living a godly life.

[28 : 41] The most powerful testimony that we can have in this world is a godly life. Having Jesus formed in me.

So that when people look at me, they don't just see me, they see Jesus. That's the greatest testimony. when people say, why do you live like that?

Why do you talk like that? Why are you always on about the Bible? Because it's about my Savior. It's about Jesus. And he wants you to know him too.

These are why we are still here, says Peter. This is why we are given the Holy Spirit, says Jesus, to be his witnesses.

Now the question for you and I again this morning is simply this. Are we doing that? Are we doing that? You see, again, it's so easy to say, well, I'm just so busy doing this, this, and this.

[29 : 44] I'm so busy in the church. I'm so busy with my family. I've got my work. work. All of those things are good and right. But they are secondary to your first main mission as a Christian, to be witnesses of Jesus.

That doesn't mean we give up work. It doesn't mean we turn our back on the family. It doesn't mean we stop coming to church. It means Jesus is the focus in everything that we do. And we live for him in all that we do.

So if he should come back before the end of this service, our thoughts are already on him. If he should come back when we're having lunch, our thoughts are still on him.

If Jesus comes back when we've gone back to work, our thoughts are still on him. You see, wherever we go, whatever we're doing, our thoughts are about him, being ready for him.

And again, this is important for us to make sure we have our first priority in place. Jesus, after telling them that he was going to be going away from them earlier, now we're told he goes from them.

[31 : 03] We're told that when he had spoken these things in verse 9, when he told them that the spirit was coming and that they were his witnesses, it must have been great thinking, well, Jesus is here.

He'll be watching with us, he'll walk with us, he'll go out into the fields with us, and then suddenly he's not there with them. As they listen to him, as they had their eyes fixed on Jesus, he just ascends into the sky and disappears through the clouds.

And you can imagine the sheer wonder, imagine them just standing there with their mouths dropping down thinking, what's that all about? the simple thing is this, isn't it?

Jesus has gone, where? Home. He's gone home. He's gone back to his father's house. He's gone and sat next to his father in glory.

And one of the great things about this is to think that one day, if we are trusting in Jesus, we are going to his home too. And we're going to see this same Jesus face to face.

[32 : 20] We're going to sit around the banqueting table with Jesus and we're going to worship him forever. That's a tremendous thought, you know. It really is. But the idea is simply this, it's our home we're going to.

This world is not our home. We're just passing through it. We're here for a short time. And then we move on. Are we ready to move on?

Whether Jesus comes in the clouds and takes us with him then or whether he calls us before that is not important. The important thing is that I am ready for that moment.

How can we be ready for that moment? How can you know you're ready? by knowing Jesus as your savior. That's why he came into the world in the first place, isn't it?

To give his life as a ransom for many. To die on a cross, to rescue us from our sin, to deliver us from the judgment that's to come, and to make us his children, and to take us home with him.

[33 : 30] That's the great mission of Jesus. That's what it was, that's what it still is, and that's why the invitation still stands to come. If you've got no money, come.

If you've got no hope, come. If you've got all of those, still come. Jesus invites one and all to come to him. Jesus is going to go in a way which is very strange and unusual.

He ascends to heaven and disappears in the clouds, and the great promise is that in exactly the same way as he went, he's going to come back again. And every eye is going to see him as he walks on the crowds.

But again, what are the disciples to do? They've just seen Jesus disappear. They've just heard the angels say that Jesus is going to come out. What are they to do? Verse 12.

Then, after these things, after Jesus is gone, after standing there thinking what do we do now? Then, they return to Jerusalem.

[34 : 40] Then, they meet in the upper room, and then they pray. You see, they listen to what Jesus said, and then they did it.

They did it. Jesus said go back and wait. So they do. how do they wait? They pray. And the great thing about prayer here is that it's with one accord.

That is, they are united together in prayer with all the disciples. All those who love Jesus have come together into their upper room, and they are praying.

As we are to be witnesses for him, in the power of the Holy Spirit, how do we get to that point? We start here at the prayer meeting.

We start where we talk to God. We start where we commune and say to God, you have said you are going to give us, please give us. You have said we are to be your witnesses, help us to be that.

[35 : 48] You have told us to go, help us to go. Starts here in prayer. how important is prayer to you and me this morning.

It's our lifeline. More important than the very air that we breathe, as we communicate with the living God.

And it's so important to see this as well. It's with one accord, with united purpose, they are praying. They're not at different places. They're not praying for different things.

They all want the same thing. And what is it that they really, really want? They want to be used by God, but they want to be seeing God glorified in his people.

And so they will wait until it's fulfilled and they can do what Jesus said. God glorified today.

[37 : 01] But so often, little things get in the way of that and stop it from happening. I once read about a missionary, a man called Herbert Jackson, and he told how he was talking about a new missionary who had been assigned a car so that he would get around on the mission field.

But the only problem with this car was that it wouldn't start unless it had a push. So after pondering his problem for a while, he devised this plan.

He went to the school near his home, he got permission to take some of the children out of class and they pushed the car so that he could get going. After he made his rounds, he would park the car on a hill so that he could just drive down the hill and it would jump into gear and away it would go.

Eventually, however, ill health forced him and his family to leave and a new missionary came to take up the place of his work. And when Herbert Jackson was showing him around, he said, this is the car you've been appointed, but there's a problem with it and he explained what the problem was and how he got around that.

But the new missionary lifted the bonnet and he said, oh yes, I said, and he just did a little tinker there and the car roared to life. For two years, needless trouble, but instant change with a little twiddling.

[38 : 32] But aren't we like that when it comes to God's work? we find a little problem and we hang on to it at times, don't we? Instead of letting go of it and saying God can deal with that. Little things can trip us up and hinder us from doing the things that we know we should be doing.

And God speaks here and says, look, just pray about it, just talk to me about it. The little things I can deal with, big things I can deal with them too.

So wait for God in prayer. Don't try to do work without seeking him first. So as we leave this passage and as we leave the early church, as they are hearing what God has said and the promise of his Holy Spirit, we can say we're not waiting for the promise of the Holy Spirit anymore, because he has come and he lives in our hearts today.

And God says, I will never leave you anymore. I'm never going to forsake you. And what's more, he says, I am going to present you faultless before my throne. Peter, writing in his second letter, the last verse we read in chapter 1, verse 11, he says, you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

A warm welcome home. When we come to church, it's always nice to have somebody on the door, isn't it, to shake your hand and say, welcome, do come in, it's lovely to see you. And that's lovely, you feel part of something when that happens, don't you?

[40 : 07] You feel a little bit at ease. You're going to get much more than that when you arrive in heaven, says Peter. You're going to have such a warm welcome. And you're going to be there because it's your home, a rich, blessed welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

That's the promise. That's the hope that we have before us. And it all starts with that first building walk, knowing Jesus as Saviour and King and Lord.

Is he yours this morning? Do you know him as your Saviour and your King? you cannot live the Christian life if you are not a Christian.

Many have tried and failed. Step one to the Christian life, know Jesus as your Saviour.

Repent of your sin and turn to him. Step two, wait for God's direction. Step three, do what God says.

[41 : 21] Step four, welcome home. And I trust that each one of us will follow those simple steps to know Jesus and to live with him forever.

Amen. Father, we thank you that you have helped us to look into your word this morning. Thank you for the reminder about your son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is still the great Saviour of your people. Thank you for the reminder that you have given us your Holy Spirit to enable us to live a holy and godly life for you today. And we pray that we would live in the power of your spirit, sharing the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ wherever we go, and that we may point to him as our own personal Saviour and King.

Lord, we pray you would bless us then and equip us for our service for you. Keep our eyes lifted up and that glorious hope of the future day clear in our hearts and our minds, knowing that one day we will be with Jesus forever.

Lord, now may your grace, mercy and peace rest and abide with each and every one of us because we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen.

[42 : 38] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.