



The Free North Church Inverness

a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland

A GUIDE TO SUNDAY WORSHIP

11 am – Sunday 21st June 2020

Today's Service is conducted by ETS student Geoff Murray.

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This is a guide to our Sunday morning service. The service is streamed online at 11 am on the Free North YouTube channel (and is then available afterwards for catch-up or to watch again):

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjxeX18IKP4grKdqWEt2dgw>

WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP (Psalm 150)

Praise the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens.

Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness.

Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre,

praise him with tambourine and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe,

praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals.

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Amen.

PSALM 95:1-6 (Scottish Psalter)

O come, let us sing to the LORD:

come, let us every one

A joyful noise make to the Rock
of our salvätion.

Let us before his presence come

with praise and thankful voice;

Let us sing psalms to him with grace,
and make a joyful noise.

For GOD, a great God, and great King,
above all gods he is.

Depths of the earth are in his hand,
the strength of hills is his.

To him the spacious sea belongs,

for he the same did make;

The dry land also from his hands
its form at first did take.

O come, and let us worship him,

let us bow down withal,

And on our knees before the LORD
our Maker let us fall.

Tune: Land of Rest (CM).

Recorded at St Columba's Free Church, Edinburgh.

PRAYER, LORD'S PRAYER & TALK TO CHILDREN

HYMN: CHRIST OUR HOPE IN LIFE AND DEATH

What is our hope in life and death?

Christ alone, Christ alone.

What is our only confidence?

That our souls to Him belong.

Who holds our days within His hand?

What comes, apart from His command?

And what will keep us to the end?

The love of Christ, in which we stand.

O sing hallelujah!

Our hope springs eternal

O sing hallelujah!

*Now and ever we confess
Christ our hope in life and death.*

What truth can calm the troubled soul?
God is good, God is good.
Where is His grace and goodness known?
In our great Redeemer's blood.

Who holds our faith when fears arise?
Who stands above the stormy trial?
Who sends the waves that bring us night
Unto the shore, the rock of Christ?

O sing hallelujah..!

Unto the grave, what will we sing?
"Christ, He lives; Christ, He lives!"
And what reward will heaven bring?
Everlasting life with Him.

There we will rise to meet the Lord.
Then sin and death will be destroyed.
And we will feast in endless joy
When Christ is ours forevermore.
O sing hallelujah..!

Sung by Ann MacRae. Words & Music Keith Getty, Matt Papa. CCL License 616262. CCL Streaming 324811.

BIBLE READING: 1 Samuel 25:2-39 - read by Mairi MacAulay

² A certain man in Maon, who had property there at Carmel, was very wealthy. He had a thousand goats and three thousand sheep, which he was shearing in Carmel. ³ His name was Nabal and his wife's name was Abigail. She was an intelligent and beautiful woman, but her husband was surly and mean in his dealings – he was a Calebite. ⁴ While David was in the wilderness, he heard that Nabal was shearing sheep. ⁵ So he sent ten young men and said to them, 'Go up to Nabal at Carmel and greet him in my name. ⁶ Say to him: "Long life to you! Good health to you and your household! And good health to all that is yours!" ⁷ "Now I hear that it is sheep-shearing time. When your shepherds were with us, we did not ill-treat them, and the whole time they were at Carmel nothing of theirs was missing. ⁸ Ask your own servants and they will tell you. Therefore be favourable towards my men, since we come at a festive time. Please give your servants and your son David whatever you can find for them.'" ⁹ When David's men arrived, they gave Nabal this message in David's name. Then they waited. ¹⁰ Nabal answered David's servants, 'Who is this David? Who is this son of Jesse? Many servants are breaking away from their masters these days. ¹¹ Why should I take my bread and water, and the meat I have slaughtered for my shearers, and give it to men coming from who knows where?' ¹² David's men turned round and went back. When they arrived, they reported every word. ¹³ David said to his men, 'Each of you strap on your sword!' So they did, and David strapped his on as well. About four hundred men went up with David, while two hundred stayed with the supplies. ¹⁴ One of the servants told Abigail, Nabal's wife, 'David sent messengers from the wilderness to give our master his greetings, but he hurled insults at them. ¹⁵ Yet these men were very good to us. They did not ill-treat us, and the whole time we were out in the fields near them nothing was missing. ¹⁶ Night and day they were a wall around us the whole time we were herding our sheep near them. ¹⁷ Now think it over and see what you can do, because disaster is hanging over our master and his whole household. He is such a wicked man that no one can talk to him.' ¹⁸ Abigail acted quickly. She took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five dressed sheep, five seahs of roasted grain, a hundred cakes of raisins and two hundred cakes of pressed figs, and loaded them on donkeys. ¹⁹ Then she told her servants, 'Go on ahead; I'll follow you.' But she did not tell her husband Nabal. ²⁰ As she came riding her donkey into a mountain ravine, there were David and his men descending towards her, and she met them. ²¹ David had just said, 'It's been useless – all my watching over this fellow's property in the wilderness so that nothing of his was missing. He has paid me back evil for good. ²² May God deal with David, be it ever so severely, if by morning I leave alive one male of all who belong to him!' ²³ When Abigail saw David, she quickly got off her donkey and bowed down before David with her face to the ground. ²⁴ She fell at his feet and said: 'Pardon your servant, my lord, and let me speak to you; hear what your servant has to say. ²⁵ Please pay no attention, my lord, to that wicked man Nabal. He is just like his name – his name means Fool, and folly goes with him. And as for me, your servant, I did not see the men my lord sent. ²⁶ And now, my lord, as surely as the Lord your God lives and as you live, since the Lord has kept you from bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hands, may your enemies and all who are intent on harming my lord be like Nabal. ²⁷ And let this gift, which your servant has brought to my lord, be given to the men who follow you. ²⁸ Please forgive your servant's presumption. The Lord your

God will certainly make a lasting dynasty for my lord, because you fight the Lord's battles, and no wrongdoing will be found in you as long as you live. ²⁹ Even though someone is pursuing you to take your life, the life of my lord will be bound securely in the bundle of the living by the Lord your God, but the lives of your enemies he will hurl away as from the pocket of a sling. ³⁰ When the Lord has fulfilled for my lord every good thing he promised concerning him and has appointed him ruler over Israel, ³¹ my lord will not have on his conscience the staggering burden of needless bloodshed or of having avenged himself. And when the Lord your God has brought my lord success, remember your servant.' ³² David said to Abigail, 'Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me. ³³ May you be blessed for your good judgment and for keeping me from bloodshed this day and from avenging myself with my own hands. ³⁴ Otherwise, as surely as the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, who has kept me from harming you, if you had not come quickly to meet me, not one male belonging to Nabal would have been left alive by daybreak.' ³⁵ Then David accepted from her hand what she had brought to him and said, 'Go home in peace. I have heard your words and granted your request.' ³⁶ When Abigail went to Nabal, he was in the house holding a banquet like that of a king. He was in high spirits and very drunk. So she told him nothing at all until daybreak. ³⁷ Then in the morning, when Nabal was sober, his wife told him all these things, and his heart failed him and he became like a stone. ³⁸ About ten days later, the Lord struck Nabal and he died. ³⁹ When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, 'Praise be to the Lord, who has upheld my cause against Nabal for treating me with contempt. He has kept his servant from doing wrong and has brought Nabal's wrongdoing down on his own head.' Then David sent word to Abigail, asking her to become his wife.

SERMON – 1 SAMUEL 25 – MISTAKEN IDENTITY:

We need to find our identity in Jesus and nowhere else. There are three great tests of things worth shaping your identity around: The Joy Test, the Life Ruling Test, and the Eternity Test. David and his men had protected Nabal's flocks and shepherds, but Nabal was so in love with his money that he did not want to repay David. Nabal's name means fool, and he treated his servants, his wife Abigail and David like a fool. His heart within him died when his wealth was given away. It literally killed him to part with his money. We all battle with things that rule us. Power, respect and wealth can destroy us if they become the ultimate thing in our life. David was ruled by his desire for honour, explaining his anger with Nabal. It took Abigail's humble and generous intervention to soften David's heart, leading him that only God is in a position to judge. This story is no mere morality fable. The Bible was not written to show us how we can act the hero. Rather every page points us to Jesus as the real hero and only Saviour. Our identity must be shaped by our relationship with Jesus. He is the best Master, so find your identity in him! Remember the three tests? Does Jesus give deep and lasting joy? Read John 4, as he offers a woman springs of eternal life! Is Jesus worth a place ruling at the centre of your life? He is the only Master who died for his subjects! Does Jesus alone give eternal life and fruit? What will it profit you if you gain the whole world and lose your eternal soul? Look in faith to Jesus Christ the greatest Master, the one who brings his people constant joy and hope, assurance and peace.

PRAYER

PSALM 103:1-4,8-11 (SING PSALMS)

Praise God, my soul! With all my heart
Let me exalt his holy name.
Forget not all his benefits;
His praise, my soul, in song proclaim.
The LORD forgives you all your sins,
And heals your sickness and distress;
Your life he rescues from the grave,
And crowns you in his tenderness.

The LORD is merciful and kind,
To anger slow, and full of grace.
He will not constantly reprove,
Or in his anger hide his face.
He does not punish our misdeeds,
Or give our sins their just reward.
How great his love—as high as heaven—
Towards all those who fear the LORD!

BENEDICTION (HEBREWS 13)

DIARY THIS WEEK

Sunday: The minister is taking a break this morning. Our guest speaker on YouTube at 11 am is Mr Geoff Murray. Geoff is married to Maddie, and they have a seven-month old son, Alasdair. Geoff studies at ETS and is a *Leader in Training* at Cornerstone Church. He will share his testimony in the evening fellowship tonight (Zoom meeting ID: 253 249 2745). The regular password or phone numbers can be obtained from Martin (office@freenorthchurch.org). You can also request a weekly email update from the Free North Church from Martin. The evening fellowship will also be shared on our YouTube channel.

Monday: *Christianity Explored* session 5 of 7 is at 8 pm (online the usual Zoom details for our Sunday and Wednesday Church Nights). Sandy Finlay leads the course (rfinlay@toucansurf.com, 01463 241765).

Wednesday: Prayer and Bible Study on Zoom at 7.30 pm (same log on as for Sundays).

Generation Prayer: Pray for our sister churches in St Andrews (ministers Revs Paul Clarke and Hamish Sneddon) and Lybster, Bruan, Latheron & Berridale (a vacant congregation in Caithness).

Next Sunday: Online Invitation Service & Sunday School Prizegiving at 11 am. Please invite friends and family.

NEWS & UPCOMING EVENTS

Mission Partners: We support **Patrick Jok**, who serves God in Juba, South Sudan. The Sudanese Reformed Church (SRC) feeds internally displaced refugees living in camps. They long to rebuild four churches destroyed by armed conflict and to build a mission house in Juba. Patricks family live in Kenya for security and to access education. Pray that their needs and the needs of the SRC will be met by our generous God. A June update is available from **Emma de Paula**, a UCCF Staff Worker in Edinburgh. Emma prays for a good response to *CU Hope* events, and for wisdom to resource student ministry in the coming year. She is thankful to all who pray for her. To cover her costs Emma is looking to raise an additional £10,000 in support. Send her an email at edepaula@uccf.org.uk. Donate to her support at: www.uccf.org.uk/give/emma-de-paula.

The Scottish Government has started to implement Phase 2 changes to lockdown. The public can now meet people from up to two other households. This must be outdoors, not involving more than two other households in one day and not more than eight people. This will permit greater connection and pastoral care. Places of worship remain closed for all gatherings. The Free Church has taken the collective decision not to open our buildings for private prayer. Gatherings for public worship will probably resume in phases 3 and 4. The Deacons' Court have established a planning and advisory group to prepare for a safe reopening, but this may not happen for some considerable time. We will continue to provide opportunities for online worship and fellowship as many will not be able to return to public services when they resume.

HERE TO HELP EACH OTHER

If you need help of any sort, we would love to hear from you. Contact the minister (07 506 006 459; angusmacrae1967@gmail.com), any elder or deacon, or the church office (office@freenorthchurch.org).

Giving to support the Free North: Donate through our website (PayPal logo at the foot of the page). To set up a standing order, post a cheque or to arrange for Gift Aid, please contact our congregational treasurer, Mrs Barbara Macphail, 31 Towerhill Avenue, Inverness, IV2 5FX. Tel: 01463 794622. Email: treasurer@freenorthchurch.org. We welcome donations to our *Development Fund* specifically to fund the post of Carrie Marlow our new **Women's Pastoral Worker**. Our deacons and elders have agreed to kickstart funding by each donating £250.