

THE SIGN OF JONAH

Peter Hay, Presbytery Word for week commencing Sunday 17 August 2025
Transcription of recording, slightly edited

Good morning, everyone. It is amazing to see you all together and to rejoice in our fellowship together and our fellowship in the word. This morning, I am going to be speaking from the article that we prepared on 'The sign of the Son of Man'. I am going to look at this by not just following through the article. I am going to look at it in relation to four key points of focus. Each of these points of focus will be devotional applications and pastoral implications for us.

The first one is *receiving* the sign of the Son of Man. The second point that I am going to look at is *joining* the sign of the Son of Man. The third is *having* the sign of the Son of Man in ourselves, and the fourth point is *being given* as the sign of the Son of Man. The four points are: receiving the sign, joining the sign, having the sign in ourselves, and being given as a sign.

Let us start our consideration of this subject from Jesus' statement on the sign of the Son of Man. Jesus was ministering in the region of Galilee and He was asked by the scribes and Pharisees to provide them with a sign. They were asking Him to give this sign to verify that what He was saying was from God, and that He Himself was from God. This is what He said to them in response. This is Matthew 12 verses 39 to 40. It says, 'An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.'

They are looking for a sign because they are wanting some verification about the word and about Jesus. Jesus said, 'A wicked and adulterous generation is looking for a sign like this. The only sign that is going to be given is the sign of Jonah.' He connected that sign to Himself as the Son of Man.

The sign of Jonah describes Jonah's personal experience of and connection with the sign of the Son of Man. Jesus was not joining the sign of Jonah. Jonah's experience and his interface with the whale was him being joined to the sign of the Son of Man, which is Christ's death, burial and resurrection. When we receive and are connected to the sign of the Son of Man, we also become this sign to others. It becomes the sign of Peter, or the sign of Gavin, or the sign of Lisa, as much as it was the sign of Jonah. The point I am trying to make is that Jonah was carrying in his body this sign. That is what the Lord wants to do for us too - to join us to the sign of the Son of Man and to give us to this generation as a sign. Through our daily fellowship in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (death, burial and resurrection is a travail), we are growing up and we are revealing Christ. Through the testimony of our life, Christ is being publicly portrayed as crucified among those to whom we are sent.

The first focus that we are going to take is the need to *receive the sign of the Son of Man*. I want to say that most of you will have been born into covenant homes. That being true, we still all have to *receive and experience* the sign of the Son of Man. We actually have to know that and have that testimony ourselves. We note that Jonah, before he had this experience with the great fish... (I am not sure whether it was a whale. I think that is what we mostly guess. It just says 'a great fish'), ...we know that he was already a prophet, and he was already a citizen of Israel; so he is part of the kingdom. The point that I am trying to make was that he was not wicked and he was not an unbeliever. In fact, he was quite gifted and functional; but that was not his salvation. His salvation was not in his gift or function. It

was found in his connection to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

Jonah's testimony begins with a direction from the Lord - a command to go and do something. He is told to 'Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it for their wickedness has come up before Me.' Jon 1:2. Let us note that when the word of the Lord comes to us, it is coming quite practically, and it does have a specific obedience in view. You can hardly get a more specific direction than to go to this city. This was a word defining a work of obedience that belonged to Jonah's sanctification. When the Lord is speaking to us, it is also defining an obedience for us. It is coming and it is delivering to us a pathway that we are to walk in because it is light; and we are to walk in the light. The point is that this word that is being given to us from Christ, defining an obedience, is coming from the cross. It is the word of the cross where Jesus finished that obedience. It is actually a word coming from the finished work of Christ.

When Jesus is answering the scribes and Pharisees who are wanting some verification that they should be obedient to Christ's word, He said, 'A wicked and adulterous generation seeks for a sign' to compel them to be obedient. A question we need to ask is, 'What does it mean to be adulterous?' I think we can get what evil or wicked means. But what is an adulterous person? When Jesus answered this question, He was not speaking to people who were not identifying themselves as part of the covenant. He was speaking to the church of the Jews. He was talking to people who identified as a covenant company.

What does it mean to be adulterous? We have been teaching on this for some time from the book of Romans. We have been redeemed from the curse of the Law through the crucifixion of Jesus, so that we might receive the adoption and be married to Christ as part of His bride. There is a redemption

that has been made. There is a deliverance from a bondage, and we have been yoked to (or we have a covenant with) a husband called Christ because we have been made part of a bride. Would you agree that a bride has been married to a husband? We are adulterous when having been set free to be married to Christ as part of His bride, we embrace another covenant or are yoked in some other way. That is what adultery would be - joined to something else and someone else when you have been married to Christ.

The Scriptures are full of examples of the types of yokes that we can find ourselves in bondage to. For example, we can be yoked with unbelievers. That is 2 Corinthians 6 verses 14 to 16. We are not going to read it - just note it down. That is a yoke. We get yoked this way through the conversations and activities in our households and with our friends who are not sanctified. They are not within the parameters or on the basis of the faith that we have received in hearing the word. As we engage in these conversations, we become vulnerable to the deception of Satan. We become deceived away from simplicity. A mark of being in bondage would be complexity. We think that our mixed endeavours... (which are the evidence of delusion or deception) ...we think that our mixed endeavours and thoughts are godly; but we have departed from the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus. That is 2 Corinthians 11 verses 2 to 4.

Another alternative yoke can be our desire for pleasure, the evidence of which is our conflict with others. This is James chapter 4 and verses 1 to 4. It says, 'Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure, that war in your members?' I always used to read this, and I thought that what it meant was that I really want to play cricket on Saturdays, but I have to go to working bee. So, I am at war in myself and then I am at war with my wife Lisa who says we should be going to the

working bee. But I really want to go to cricket, because that is what I will find pleasure in. The word 'pleasure' here actually means 'fame', 'renown' or 'a name'. The wars and fights come from among us because of our desire to name ourselves - to have an expression, to have a renown that is acknowledged by others. The acknowledgement of our name and renown would be receiving a sign - someone confirming that my name that I am projecting is true. 'Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure, that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss.'

Does this not sound like prayer? Asking. It is not asking by the Spirit through intercession and travail. It is asking with a whole agenda in view, petitioning the Lord to bless what I believe will be pleasure - my renown, my name, who I think I am. That is what James says. 'You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.' That is a desire for a name, or to be heard. What does James call us when we do that? 'Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?'

What are the indications then that we are adulterous, making these pursuits? The most obvious indicators are *complexity*, because we have been drawn away from the simplicity that is in Christ; *intensity*, because there is a heat and a drive that we have to find ourselves a particular way; and *partiality*, because we go and find a conversation with some people, but not with others, depending on how we think the sign will come.

Now for our early young adults (I am talking to those who are from about 16 and a half up to 19, even 20), you are going to exhibit

intensity and some complexity. These are normal implications of the transition from childhood to adulthood. This does not mean you are adulterous. As the apron strings are being cut and you are beginning to feel the weight of accountability for your own life, you can feel a bit at sea. You can feel a bit untethered, because all a sudden, you are having to take account for your life (and you are knowing that you need to), but you have a whole lot of questions about what that accountability is going to mean, and you feel a bit unsettled. You can feel a bit complex; you can start to behave a bit complexly. That is okay - but not forever.

It is not uncommon for you to question things, react to life and others, and say things that you do not actually believe, as you endeavour to find your bearings. Some people will withdraw - and a lot of this would be temperamental. Some people will deviate to things that they know is not their obedience, but they are wanting to break out. Others will be a bit provocative because they are wanting someone to come down hard on them and secure them. They will say things like, 'I do not believe in God anymore.' Which is nonsense. Of course you do. You would not be saying it if you did not believe there was a God. Can you see there is this heat and drive? That is not the adultery that I am talking about. I want to say that when you are feeling like this, you need to talk it out. You do need a place of conversation. I am going to talk about where you can find that conversation. Sometimes you need someone to pull you back to your senses and just say, 'That is rubbish. You should be doing *this*.' That is helpful for you.

However, in this phase of life (and then for all of us), it is time to seek the Lord and learn to be yoked to Him. If you seek security in places you know appeal to your pleasures, the yoke you choose will eventually be adulterous. We know, younger young adults, that you are in a time of transition, but if in

that time of transition you seek to find yourself through pleasure and you react to the people who are able to secure you to your sanctification, in the end that will be the way you engage with life. You *will* become adulterous.

Now you older young adults, you should be well over that. If you still have difficulty with the simplicity that is in Christ, then you need some deliverance from an unhelpful yoke. You need to learn to take the yoke of Christ upon you and to learn from Him and to cease finding your instruction and direction elsewhere.

Adulterers and adulteresses are unable to be simply obedient. Their minds race with all the caveats and concerns regarding the word - its delivery and its implications for us, all of which are then punctuated... (Do you like that word? I have a few of those in here) ...punctuated by judgements of ourselves and others. This orientation to the word and the fellowship of the word leads to weariness. We start to become fatigued. We are fatiguing because we carry burdens that do not belong to us or accountabilities that do not belong to us. We also carry griefs that are the fruit of poor mental health. Do you see all the reasoning? That is what Paul said. Our minds are redirected away from the simplicity in Christ and all we have is our own reasoning interfacing with what we hope are signs to confirm our own way. It becomes a fatiguing predicament. We are unaware of our condition, but importantly, we become unaware of its impact on others. We are becoming asleep.

This is exactly what happened to Jonah. He was disobedient to the word. It says that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord. When the turmoil of the judgement of God coming upon him was bringing everyone else into peril, where was he? Asleep at the bottom of a ship. That is ultimate weariness. We know that Jonah made his way to Tarshish in Spain, and the Lord sent a great

wind on the sea, bringing the boat and its passengers into jeopardy. It is amazing that Jonah, in the midst of this, is asleep.

What does it mean that he was asleep? Jonah was oblivious to the effect of his carnal conduct. Can you see that weariness leads to being asleep? And not only do you not recognise that you are in turmoil, you do not recognise that you are bringing turmoil on others as well. Others are actually getting caught in the fray here. Certainly, the captain of the ship urged Jonah to wake up. I love the way that Jonah records this because this is Jonah's testimony here, which is a lovely thought. Jonah chapter 1 verse 6 says, 'So the captain came down to him, and said to him, "What do you mean, sleeper?" ' Now I love that thought because he is asleep, and the captain is saying, 'What do you mean?' as if Jonah is talking in his sleep. He is hearing this gibberish coming out of Jonah's mouth. He is going, 'Wake up! We are dying here. If you do not wake up, you are going down with this ship with us! Wake up! What do you mean, sleeper?' Can you see that sometimes our conversation can be the fruit of talking in our sleep? Does anyone here sleep-talk? It comes across as gibberish sometimes, but very adamant. 'Arise, call on your God; perhaps your God will consider us, so that we may not perish.'

The beginning of illumination for Jonah was to recognise this peril. It was to recognise that he was actually under judgement here and also that this judgement that he was under was now rolling over others. Now if Jonah had not acknowledged that he was under the judgement of God, he would have died in his rebellion and he would have been the cause of the death of those who were with him. That is a fairly sobering point. When the Lord comes to arrest us, we do actually have to acknowledge firstly that we are under the judgement of God.

At Jonah's direction, the mariners picked him up and threw him into the sea, causing the

tempest to cease. By charging the sailors to throw him into the sea, Jonah was confessing that he was rightly dying under God's judgement in the sea of His forgetfulness. Can you see that Jonah's direction to the sailors was the same acknowledgement as the thief on the cross who received some illumination? He said, 'Hold on a minute! I do fear God here, (seeing as though I am under judgement rightly), but this Man is with me, and He has done nothing wrong.' Can you see that that is illumination? He could not see that before. Instead, his conversation was full of reproach on Christ.

Note Jonah's prayer: Jonah was acknowledging that going into the water was actually his fellowship in the judgement of God. In Jonah chapter 2 and verses 3 to 4, Jonah is telling the sailors, 'Throw me into the water!' But this is what he is praying: 'For You cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the floods have surrounded me; all Your billows and your waves have passed over me. Then I said, "I have been cast out of Your sight. Yet, I will look again toward Your holy temple." ' Now who is the Holy Temple next to the repentant thief? Jesus Himself. Can you see this man, Jonah is acknowledging that he is under the judgement of God, but who does he see with him? Jesus Himself.

As Jonah accepted the reality of his judgement on account of sin, his death was joined to *Christ's* death. Can you see that? 'I have been cast out of your sight, yet now I see your holy temple.' It is not *just* Christ; it is the place of *offering*. He is being joined to a place of death, burial and resurrection. Jonah's death was joined to Christ's death, which means he was being yoked to Christ. This is Jonah's response to the invitation that Christ was making to him. Can you see this is the sign of the Son of Man coming to Jonah? We know that this invitation is in Matthew 11 verses 28 to 30. This is what we were singing earlier. It says, 'Come to Me all

you who labour and are heavy laden.' Would you agree that if we are labouring and heavy laden, we are becoming weary on account of yokes that do not belong to our sanctification? It is an amazing mercy that the Lord does come to us in judgement - but He is doing it to yoke us to Him. He is not doing it because He wants to see us lost. He is doing it for the opposite reason. We are already lost. He is coming to *find* us. 'Come to Me all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart.'

There is a demeanour that Christ has towards us, but He is asking us to join that demeanour in the place of judgement. '... for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.' This is the sign of the Son of Man coming to Jonah, and it is the way the sign of the Son of Man comes to us.

The Lord prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah, and this became the context of his burial with Christ. Going into the water is Jonah's connection to the *death of Christ*. In the first instance, the death for Jonah was judgement. That death is joined to Christ's death. Then a big fish comes and gets him and buries him. This is the *burial of Christ*. The belly of the fish was an unpleasant place. I do not know about you, but whenever I think of Jonah, I think of the pictures in the Arch books. Jonah has got a little chair there and he is reading his Bible, and it sounds awesome. I would not mind three days and three nights on my own just to take a bit of time. I do not think that is what burial was like. The belly of the fish was an unpleasant place. It was dark and no doubt repugnant. I found another word that is even better than repugnant - it is 'noisome'. That is stinky on another level. In addition to the lack of oxygen, it is quite possible that the digestive secretions of that animal's belly would have impacted on his physical body. I half suspect

he carried the scars of that when he walked into Nineveh, bearing about in his body the dying of Jesus.

The other thing to note about burial is he was totally constrained. I do not think it was a big room. I think it was a fairly tight and limiting context for him. Now this place of burial should have killed him. He should have drowned. Then he is in the belly of a fish, and it should have been a place that killed him.

However, Jonah was miraculously sustained by the same resurrection life that sustained Jesus as he journeyed through death, burial and resurrection from Gethsemane right through to the end of His journey. It was the same resurrection life that Jesus found in His mortal body that was sustaining Jonah now. This was because Jesus was with Jonah and Jonah was with Jesus. This is the yoke. The fruit of the yoke (which is actually the grace of God binding you to Jesus) is that you get the same capacity to endure the offering as Jesus had. This is the power of Eternal Spirit, granting to you resurrection life. This was true for Jonah, but it is true for you and me too. Initially, the context of burial can feel extremely lonely. If you have experienced this, you will know this is true. You will feel alone. However, because you are yoked with Christ, it is the place where you meet Him personally. You are alone, but you are *alone with Him*. The burial is the place where you meet your Lord and Saviour. He is the only One you can meet at that time. This is where we meet the Lord in secret. It is actually where we begin to learn how to pray in the secret place. I know the secret place is the house of God (and I am going to join these two things together in a moment), but I want to highlight that burial is a place of secret.

Jesus fulfilled all your works in secret. He did it through burial. That is what King David understood. This is Psalm 139 verse 15. He said, 'My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret and skilfully

wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.' The lowest parts of the earth are the place of burial. That is what Jonah testified. He had gone right down to the bottom (to the moorings of the mountains) and right there he found a secret. He found the secret that was being joined to the Lord, where Jesus Himself was finishing His obedience. Now all a sudden Jonah can learn *his* obedience.

We are moving now from the illumination of judgement to the illumination of what it means to be buried with Christ. When we have this illumination, our confession will be, 'Even though I go through the valley of the shadow of death, [That is a place of burial. What did King David say?] You are with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.' Psalms 23:4. That is amazing! Right at the place which seems the smelliest, the digestiveness, the most constraining, to be able to confess 'the Lord is with me. This constraint and this chastening are comforting me now. I am secure in all things.'

In this secret place yoked to Jesus, we begin to pray differently. Jonah prayed this way too. This is Jonah chapter 2 verse 6, 'I went down to the moorings of the mountains; the earth with its bars closed behind me [the 'earth and its bars' is 'being buried']; yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O Lord my God.' Now this is amazing! Jonah is beginning to confess. He is recognising he is still alive in this fish. He is starting to testify now of *resurrection life*. He is starting to speak by faith.

Here is a key point that I want you to catch. This faith then became the substance of what he was hoping for. Now what was his hope? His hope was for the resurrection that was Jesus' hope when He finished His offering journey. His hope was the *anastasis* and that hope was being delivered to Jonah because he was meeting Jesus personally. That faith was being drawn from the *anastasis*, and it was resurrection life for Jonah in his mortality as he believed for the obedience

that Jesus had finished for him. This was resurrection life in his mortality by believing. Faith drawn from the hope of the *anastasis* became the substance of his life in mortality.

The evidence of being buried with Christ... (you recognise you are with Him; you have taken your yoke upon Him; you are beginning to pray),... but the evidence that this is happening in your life is that you *come to rest*. We stop pushing against the sanctifying initiatives of the Holy Spirit. When we are yoked to something else, we are full of complexity, full of intensity, full of partiality, but when we are illuminated to and embracing the burial of Christ, all that flees away. You cannot go anywhere. It is like the Lord hedges us in and we just let go of it. We come to rest.

The expression associated with our complexities and our intensities and our fatigue ceases. Even though the circumstances may still feel a bit smelly, and we still feel a bit constrained, and it still feels a bit painful, we are illuminated to a living hope. We have recognised (because we have taken Christ's yoke upon us) ... we have recognised that we are not just with Jesus; we are with the One who has already been made in the image and likeness of God through resurrection. You come to rest because you go, 'I am in the place where I can be made like that.' That is resting in the hope that I will be made like Jesus.

This hope becomes the anchor of our soul, securing us to Christ's finished work. As we are illuminated to this hope, we obtain the same testimony of Jesus. This was Jesus' testimony in relation to His burial. This is Psalm 16 and verses 9 to 11. This becomes your confession too. It says in verse 9, 'Therefore My heart is glad, and My glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope.' We find relief from the fatigue and from the push that belongs to the intensity and all the poor mental health because of all the complexity and our flesh (He is talking about your

mortal body) is at rest in hope of the resurrection. Verses 10 and 11: 'For you will not leave my soul in Sheol [this is the place of burial], nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of *joy*, and at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.'

Now it is Jesus and I, and all a sudden we realise I am actually quite happy to be here with Jesus, and I am finding that I am near Jesus because I am receiving His word from His hand. The context of my connection is broadening from just Jesus now, to the fellowship of the presbytery. As we find Christ, we see that we are also joined to those who are yoked with Christ. This reality is marked by a change in the nature of our conversation and conduct, for we are yoked to Christ and to other worthy houses who are also yoked with Him.

This is a key point that I want to make about this awareness of our connection to one another, because the next fruit of burial after coming to rest and then beginning to find joy is that you can be *rooted and grounded in love*. You can only be rooted and grounded in love if you embrace burial. The seed has to go into the ground and be buried. What is the first thing that happens to a seed when it is buried? It generates some roots. Rooted and grounded in love is not just the gee-up saying, 'I am then going to love these people.' It is actually something that is birthed in you because you are joined to Christ here.

We are illuminated. We see that burial is a place where we are able to be rooted and grounded in love. We are no longer striving to find ourselves. The roots of a plant take hold once the seed has been buried, but they continue to grow and take root under the ground. It is the beginning point for germination, but the roots that secure us in Christ continue to grow under the ground. Burial is an ongoing implication of our capacity for love. This is the confession. This

rooted and grounded in love that is now in you is the confession of a person who is resting in hope because they are born of a living hope.

I want to come back on this point on the anchor of your soul. It is not that when you are embracing this experience of burial that you are lobbing an anchor into the Most Holy Place and holding on for dear life. It is the opposite. The anchor is anchored *in* you, and Christ is holding *you* with *Him*. You are not going anywhere. You belong to Him. He is your Lord, and you are now with Him forever. That is amazing. He secured you in Him. That is born to a living hope. Can you see why you come to rest? You are secure in all things. This is what Paul said about it in Hebrews 6 verses 19 to 20. 'This hope [the hope of the resurrection that we will be made in the image and likeness of God, like Jesus] we have as an anchor of our soul, both sure and steadfast, which enters into the presence of the veil... [where the Man is, who has been made in the image and likeness of God. He has secured you and He is drawing you in day by day - by death, burial and resurrection into that place. You are realising that hope every day because you are changing from one degree of glory to another into that image] ... where the Forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become a High Priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedek.' This is a person who is joined to becoming a sign of the Son of Man. Now we are *becoming a sign* to others.

Jonah was delivered from the waters of judgement to a new day and to further spiritual maturity when the Lord spoke to the fish and it vomited Jonah onto dry land. There is a lot we can say about whale vomit, but we are out of time. This was his connection to the resurrection of Jesus. It is interesting that resurrection was connected to vomit through which he was established in his sanctification. As a son of God by

exanastasis, he had become the sign of the Son of Man?

You are yoked to Jesus. That is why you are coming up with him.

The confession of Jesus at the conclusion of His offering journey summarised as death, burial and resurrection was this: this is Isaiah chapter 8 verse 18. He is saying to the Father, 'Here am I and the children whom the Lord has given Me! [That is all the ones who have been yoked with Jesus on this journey, coming with Him] We are for signs and wonders [We, the sign of the Son of man and the sign of Peter] in Israel from the Lord of hosts, who dwells in Mount Zion, the city of the living God.' No longer adulterous - now a citizen of the bride. This sign which Jonah had become was expressed to the citizens of Nineveh through the word of judgement that Jonah had been sent to proclaim. We know that he was the embodiment now of this death, burial and resurrection. The point is that Nineveh was the next context of death and burial. He is taking the next step on His pilgrimage.

I want to finish in these last couple of minutes by encouraging you to be those who are seeking this pathway - seeking this way, to walk this way to become this sign. A person who has become a sign, walks by the Spirit in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus every day. This does not mean that they get swallowed by great fish or their equivalent every day. What it means is that they embrace their daily fellowship in the intercession and travail of Jesus. Your connection to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus as the pathway of your pilgrimage is through prayer by the Holy Spirit. Can you see that the travail that you join is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus?

They are obedient spiritual disciples, yoked to Christ. They continue to bear the testimony of Jesus. This is *Jesus'* testimony and this is *your* testimony. This is Isaiah 50

verses 4 to 6, 'The Lord has given Me the tongue of the learned [The 'learned' is a disciple who has been yoked to Christ because they are learning from Him]; that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary [as in I should know how to be given as a sign to the weary at work, at university, at school, in the body]; He [the Holy Spirit] awakens Me morning by morning. He awakens My ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God has opened My ear; and I was not rebellious [adulterous], nor did I turn away. I gave My back to those who struck Me [this is chastening as a Son] and My cheeks to those who plucked out My beard [it is dealing with the pursuit of pleasure as in our own name and renown]; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.'

As a generation of young people, this is the time to seek the Lord for this yoke - not just because you might be weary or immature, but because it belongs to the precious work of your name as a son of God. It is how you are obtaining this treasure. This is a morning-by-morning learning that belongs to discipleship. This is the season of life to give yourself to learn from Christ and to be and to obtain your justification.

We will finish with this passage. This is Lamentations 3 verses 22 to 30. If you are one of those younger young adults who feels a bit at sea, this is the passage for you. If you are one of those older young adults who should be past this and you are pushing against the goads of Christ's limit on you, this is the answer for you too.

A person who has been given as a sign, morning by morning, their ear is being awakened by the Spirit, to be able to speak a word to those who are weary. This is a morning-by-morning proposition too. 'Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassion's fail not. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion", says

my soul, "Therefore, I hope in Him." The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth. Let him sit alone and keep silent, because God has laid it on him; let him put his mouth in the dust [that sounds like embrace your burial] - there may yet be hope. Let him give his cheek to the one who strikes him, and be full of reproach.' Is that not the same as Jesus who said, 'I gave My cheek to be struck and My beard to be pulled out. I did not hide My back from chastening?'

I want to encourage you all today to the faith that belongs to responding to the Lord's initiative to you when He comes and says, 'Take My yoke upon you.' That yoke is your fellowship in His death, burial and resurrection every day. Ask for the Holy Spirit to wake you morning by morning to learn how to walk this way.