

Communion

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Date: 05 February 2006

Preacher: Duncan Macleod

[0 : 00] Just like to say good morning everyone and welcome to our service. This is a communion service and that being so, there will be no children's address this morning.

The younger children should be in the Sunday school and the rest, if you are happy just to stay in for the service, then that would be great to have you join with us.

There is also another information here, it is a correction to the information about the meeting in Gilcaston South, which is shortly next Saturday.

The why and how of evangelism event starts at 10 o'clock, not at 10.30 as written on the information sheet. And if you plan on going, please let Jonathan Cook know.

So, a warm welcome to all of you and especially to any visitors who are here with us this morning. We worship God by singing to his praise from Psalm 65 on page 82.

[1 : 07] And the tune is Dunfermline. In Zion's praise awaits you, Lord. To you our vows will pay. To you all people will come near.

You hear us when we pray. Psalm 65, verses 1 to 5 on page 82. The tune Dunfermline. Psalm 65, verses 1 to 5 on page 82.

Psalm 67, verses 1 to 5 on page 82. CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

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CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS In the earth's silence to come As we are the hope of quietness And the leaders of all Let's pray.

Lord, we would seek to praise you This morning as we gather together In your name to offer you worship. We pray that our worship might be Truly in spirit and in truth And that we might know that We are filled with blessing As we gather together in your house.

[4 : 04] We thank you that in Christ Your people are blessed with all Spiritual blessings in heavenly places. And today we ask that as we Sit under your word and around your table That your blessing might be ours.

We pray that you would make yourself known to us Through your word. That you would impress upon us The wonder of our salvation. That we might be found here Returning thanks to you For who you are And for what you've done for us.

And seeking grace to apply the principles of your word To our own lives from day to day. That we might share you with others. And that in us and through us You might reveal yourself to many As the God who would have them to Accept your great salvation.

We pray that you would minister to Each and every one of us. And that you would help us To lift up the name of Jesus Christ. That he might truly be Exhausted here today.

That he might draw us To himself. We pray that We might Fix our eyes upon Jesus. Look full in his wonderful face.

[5 : 18] For the things of this earth Might grow strangely dim In the light of his glory And grace. And may we be so caught up with him As not to even Have any time to think Of anything else During our time together in worship.

And may we go on from here Better equipped To serve you from day to day In our different Places of Abode And in our different stations in life.

Remember the congregation here Minister to them Lead and guide In relation to who you would have As their new pastor. In the meantime We ask that the work here Might continue And that it might indeed go From strength to strength.

Remember all who are involved In any way In the work and witness Of the congregation Within this community. And grant that together We might be able to appoint many To the Lord Jesus Christ.

Remember those Who for different reasons Cannot be present with us This morning. We think of all Who are unwell Of all who for The reasons known to themselves Are unable to be healed.

[6 : 28] And we commit Each and every one of them To you. We pray also For any who may be Backslidden For any who may have Wandered away And long for their restoration. Remember all families Represented.

We commit all To you Including children And think of The little ones Who are being ministered To from week to week In Sunday school In the congregation here.

We would not only Pray for ourselves But we would pray For all who are gathered As we are Across the churches Of this city And wider community Across the churches Of our land And indeed Across the world.

And we thank you That if we are in Christ Then we belong together To one another As those who belong to you. Bind us together Then we pray O Lord More and more With the cause Of Christian love And hide your face From our every sin In Jesus name And for his sake.

Amen. We now read And hear God's word In the gospel According to Luke. Luke chapter 23 I'm reading from Verse 26 Luke 23 And we read From verse 26 Down to verse 34 It's a short reading But it's a reading That focuses Our minds Very much On what happened When our saviour Went to the cross.

[8 : 02] As they led him away They seized Simon From Cyrene Who was on his way In from the country And put the cross On him And made him Carried Behind Jesus A large number Of people Followed him Including women Who mourned And wailed for him Jesus turned And said to them Daughters of Jerusalem Do not weep for me Weep for yourselves And for your children For the time Will come When you will say Blessed are the Barren women The wombs That never bore And the breasts That never nursed Then they will say To the mountains Fall on us And to the hills Cover us For if men Do these things When the tree is green What will happen When it is dry The two other men Both criminals Were also led out With him To be executed When they came To the place

Called Fiskal There they crucified him Along with the criminals One on his right The other On his left Jesus said Father Forgive them For they do not know What they are doing And they divided up The clothes By casting Loss And so on We pray that God would add His own blessing To that reading From his word We now sing From Psalm 145 On page 444 The second version Of the Scottish Psalter Psalm 145 On page 444 We are going to sing Verses 8 To 14 And the tune Is Warrington The Lord our God Is gracious Compassionate Is he also In mercy He is plenteous But unto wrath And anger Slow Good unto all men Is the Lord Over all his works His mercy is Thy works All praise To thee afford Thy saints O Lord Thy name Shall bless Verses 8 To 14 To the tune Warrington legislation Are we God Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[12 : 38] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. And raise us up again.

I'd like to turn with you this morning to words you find in the passage we read in Luke chapter 23. Luke chapter 23 and at verse 34.

Jesus said, Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.

At our preparatory service last night we mentioned that Jesus spoke seven times from the cross. There were three words of affection.

[13 : 46] We looked at one of these last evening when he addressed his mother and said to her, Dear woman, look at your son.

He addressed John and he told him that Mary was his mother. We saw his care for his own even as he hung there on the cross.

This morning as we look together at this word of affection, Father forgive them for they know not what they do.

We see his care, his concern, even for those who are putting him to death. What a wonderful saviour he is that he should, even as he himself is suffering there on the cross.

Pray for those who have put him to that cross. What a wonderful example of love. As he pray for his enemies.

[14 : 54] As he pray for those who nailed him to the tree. What an example for us to follow in relation to any whom we may know and who may be ignorant of the truth of the gospel and even

hostile to it.

I want this morning to think of these words with you for a few moments. And first of all to reflect on the intercession.

Jesus is here interceding. Pleading on behalf of others. Pleading, praying on behalf of many who never prayed for themselves.

Of course, in a very real sense, the prophecy of Isaiah is here being fulfilled. Isaiah chapter 53, that wonderful passage that speaks of the sufferings of Christ, tells us that he makes intercession for the transgressors.

And although it is true that we as his people today, who still transgress, have in Christ one who lives forever to intercede for us.

[16:16] Nonetheless, the focus of our verse this morning is on the fact that even there on the cross, he was making intercession for those who were putting him to death.

And in so doing, he is surely setting a wonderful example for us to follow. An example that Stephen followed when he was being stoned as the first known Christian mortal.

What did Stephen say? Even as he was being put to death, he asked God that he would not lay this sin at their door. He prayed, in effect, for those who were putting him to death.

Even as the Saviour prayed for those who were putting him to death on the cross. Stephen's prayer was wonderfully answered, in that among those who were putting him to death was a young man, by the name of Saul of Tarsus, later to become the Apostle Paul.

Jesus' prayer was answered too. In that those who were putting him to death, many of them later came to realise what they had done, and came to know him as their own Saviour and Lord, even although they had crucified him on the cross.

[17:38] And in relation to ourselves this morning, is it not the case that it was our sins that sent the Saviour to the cross of Calvary?

Is it not the case that it was while we were still ignorant, while we were still sinners, while we were still his enemies, that Christ died for us? How thankful we ought to be this morning, that he interceded for us, as he hung there on that tree, and that he intercedes for us now, at God's right hand.

And how much of an incentive that ought to be, to us to pray for others this morning. To pray for those who may be far away from God. To pray for those who may have forsaken the paths of righteousness.

To pray for those who may themselves be utterly unable to save themselves. To pray for them as our Saviour did. To follow our Lord's exalted.

And not to give up praying for anyone, for as long as they're on mercy's ground. We often discover as we journey through the Christian life, and experience different relationships with different people, how important it is that we do not give up.

[18:59] How important it is that we persevere, in praying for others. In seeking God's grace for others. And even although at times our own circumstances may be such, as might excuse us, for being so caught up with them, as not to have any word of anyone else.

Let's remember that it was at such an extreme moment, in his own experience, that our Saviour prayed for those who were putting him to death.

As we saw last night, he was not so caught up with his own circumstances as to neglect the needs of others. And we ought to follow his example in that respect.

And how thankful we ought to be today, as those who are conscious ourselves, that we continually transgress his law, that we have an advocate at God's right hand, Jesus Christ, the righteous.

So that when we sin, which we do all the time, in thought, in word, and in action, the Scriptures tell us that if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[20:18] He is interceding for us, even as here he interceded on the cross for those who are putting him to death. The second point I want to highlight here is that in this intercession, he is in a very real way identifying himself with us, perhaps more than ever before.

We know that from the incarnation, he was one of us. He was like us in every way. But the point in time to get to this, that as Jesus lived in this world, there were many times when he himself pronounced forgiveness in relation to other people.

And of course, the religious found fault with him for that. They found fault with him for forgiving people's sins. But here on the cross, the focus is not on Jesus forgiving our sins.

The focus here is on the importance of his Father forgiving us our sins. At this moment, he who knew no sin is made sin for us.

He is identifying himself with us, our sinners, to the extent of becoming sin for us. So that along with us here, he is asking for Father's forgiveness.

[21 : 46] The focus is not on his own willingness or ability to forgive, but on Father's willingness and ability to forgive.

And this morning, as God's children here, we too can identify surely with Jesus in that it is Father's forgiveness that we ought to seek.

Of course, we seek Father's forgiveness on the basis only of what Jesus has done for us. But here he identifies with us to the extent that along with us, it is to Father that he turns.

And it is from Father that he asks that forgiveness be given. This morning, God is a forgiving God. God wants us to experience his forgiveness for ourselves on the basis of what his Son has done in our room and in our place.

[22 : 50] But the third point that I want to highlight is the ignorance of those for whom Jesus prays. He says, Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.

they were unaware of the fact that they were crucifying the Lord of glory. The scriptures highlight the awfulness of sinning against light, of willful rejection of Christ.

Even although for such there can still be forgiveness. But here, Jesus is emphasizing the fact that they didn't really realize what they were about when they handed him over to be crucified.

And you know that is still so true. The world that puts Christ to the cross, the world that says about Jesus, away with him, away with him, crucify him, crucify him, is a world that doesn't realize the enormity of their sin.

And doesn't realize the magnitude of what they are guilty of. Men and women are unaware of the fact that it is the greatest sin that they can possibly commit.

[24 : 19] The sin of rejecting the Son of God. We know that it is ultimately the sin that leads to hell. The perseverance in rejecting the Saviour.

In saying we will not have this man reign over us. There are multitudes who don't realize the significance in a spiritual sense and in an eternal sense of the sin of rejecting the Saviour, the seriousness of it, the awfulness of it, the enormity of it.

And our hearts should go out today to those who are rejecting the Saviour. And our hearts should be full of compassion and concern for them, even of Christ's voice.

Christ doesn't just pray for his friends. Christ prays for his enemies. And he asks us to do the same. He asks us to pray for those who are opposed to him and who may be opposed to us because of him.

And he asks us to remember that they are ignorant and to pray to the Lord that their ignorance might be dispelled, that they might come to acknowledge their need of him and come to accept him as their own Saviour and Lord.

[25 : 37] So here they are sinning in ignorance and Jesus is praying for them. And we too must continue to pray for the multitudes who in our day are ignorant of the way of salvation, ignorant of the gospel, ignorant of the fact that they themselves stand under the just condemnation of God.

How our hearts should be moved by the realisation of their ignorance, even as whose heart is moved with compassion, even as he hangs here on the cross.

And the next point that I want to bring out from this text is the immensity of the need of these people. They need to be forgiven and they don't even realise it.

Father, he says, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing. And that immense need of forgiveness is one that is common to us all.

We've all sinned and come short of the glory of God. We're sinners by nature, we're sinners by choice, and we all need, desperately need, the forgiveness of God.

[27 : 01] Our own righteousness will never be sufficient, and our own efforts will never suffice. But the scriptures speak of the forgiveness that can be ours on the basis of Christ's finished work.

and how today we ought to praise God that there is forgiveness, even for the vilest offenders who truly believe. We'll focus on this tonight more as we reflect on the thief who, at the last moments of his life on the cross, turned to Jesus, and was assured that there was a place waiting for him that

very day in paradise.

But this morning, in application of this truth to ourselves, the fact is that all of us by nature have a need that is quite immense, and that no man can meet, least of all ourselves.

We need to be convinced of our own utter inability to save ourselves, our own utter inability to get right with God, that we might, in our need, call upon him, that we might, in our need, ask him to forgive us, even as Jesus asks here that they might be forgiven.

And the forgiveness is only because of what he has done for us. And Jesus knows, even as he prays for those people, that it would only be on the basis of what he himself was doing at that very moment, for them, that their needs could be made, and that their immense need could be satisfied.

[28 : 52] The scriptures tell us that we all need salvation, we all need God, and the scriptures tell us that in Christ God has provided all that is necessary for that great spiritual and eternal need to be made.

so that today, if we seek first the kingdom of God and her righteousness, all these other needs that we have will be looked after, will be ministered to as well.

Our God shall supply all our need according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. Today, we are here coming to the table as those who have recognized the immensity of our own need as sinners before God.

But the next point that I want to highlight is the infinite nature of his love for them. Just think of it. These people are put into death.

These people are guilty of the most awful crime ever perpetrated by humanity, putting the thoughtless, sinless Son of God to the tree.

[30 : 10] And there, instead of being met with by a hostile reaction on the part of the Lord, they are met with by this infinite love, which is in his heart for them, and which goes out towards them, and which expresses its love so wonderfully in this prayer.

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Christ doesn't frighten them, with judgment and condemnation and hell.

Christ doesn't condemn them, even though they have condemned him. No, Christ's heart goes out towards them in love, despised by them though he is, rejected and hated by them though he knows himself to be, nonetheless at this most awful moment, even in his own experience, he prays for them.

He demonstrates his love for them by asking God to forgive them. He doesn't hold it against them, he rather asks the Lord to be merciful to them.

Such is the nature of the infinite love of God. God is utterly unconditionally. It does not depend on anything that is in us.

[31 : 43] It has nothing to do with our worthiness. All of us are unworthy, every single one of us. There won't be a worthy man or woman at the table today.

Our worthiness is not of ourselves. The scriptures warn us, yes, against participating in the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner.

But the scripture does not say that any of us are worthy in and of ourselves. It is not on our worthiness or lack of it that we are to focus this morning, but on whose worthiness as our Lord and Saviour.

And whose worthiness is demonstrated in the love that he shows for us, in that here on the cross, whose infinite love is expressed, even in these words of affection that we're looking at this morning. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him might not perish, but have eternal life.

[32 : 54] God commends, demonstrates, advertises, placards, his own love for us, in that whilst we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

And it is that love that is being expressed here by our Saviour, as he uttered these wonderful words of affection. And it is that love that speaks to us today through the gospel.

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute his sin. God this morning looks on his people in Christ and accepts them in him.

Salvation is his gift which he wants us to receive. And our salvation this morning is not dependent on anything that is of ourselves, but solely on him who owes love and on what he has done for us in love.

and here this morning as we prepare in a few moments to come to the table, it is on the basis of this prayer that we are coming, because this is a prayer that not only embraced the multitude of unworthy men and women who were guilty of sending the Saviour to the cross on that awful day, but it's a prayer that embraces us too, who in our day and generation were once among those who said about Jesus, away with him, away with him, crucify him, crucify him, but who are now among those who by God's grace have come to understand that it was love that nailed him to the tree, that it was out of love that he gave himself for us, and that it is in love that he has prepared for us today, all the feast of fast spiritual food that is there spread out for us on the gospel table, and that it is in love that he has given us the

[35 : 03] Lord's supper as a means of grace, by which we will grow in grace, and in the knowledge of him who is our Saviour and our Lord, so that as we reflect on these words, and as we reflect on the one who spoke them, we will all be reassured of the relevance of these words to ourselves, so that as we come, we will be completely captivated by him, by who he is, and by what he has done for us.

As a modern hymn writer put it, thinking of Jesus on the cross, thinking of him, and of all that he did for us, meekness and majesty, manhood and deity, in perfect harmony, the man who is God, Lord of eternity, dwells in humanity, kneels in humility, and washes our feet, Father's pure radiance, perfect in innocence, yet learns obedience to death on a cross, suffering to give us life, concrete through sacrifice, and as they crucify, praise, Father, forgive, wisdom unchangeable, God the invisible, love indestructible, in frailty appears, Lord of infirmity, stooping so tenderly, lifts our humanity to the heights of his throne, oh, what a mystery, weakness and majesty, bow down and worship, for this is your God, this is your God, as we come to the table, let us thank him, that he said, and still say it through the gospel, in relation to those who put him to death, and in relation to us,

Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing, let's bow in prayer, please. Lord, we thank you for those wonderful words, and we thank you that because Jesus prayed such a prayer, by your grace, we can be your children, and know you in Christ, as our Father in heaven, who has loved us with a love that will not let us go.

We pray today that as your children we gather round the table, we might be conscious of the infinite nature of your love for us, and that we might respond to that love, by trusting you more and more, by obeying you as the Lord, our God, and by seeking to live for you, day by day.

may we always testify to the world that we only love you because you first loved us, and may the world know that we are your people because of our love for you and for one another, and because of our love, even the love of Christ in our hearts, for them as well.

[38 : 34] Lord, grant it so for your glory's sake. Amen. We're going to sing now from Psalm 130, on page 175.

Psalm 130, it's on page 173, and the tune is Caroline. Lord, from the depths I call to you, Lord, hear me from on high, and give attention to my voice when I for mercy cry.

Lord, in your presence who can stand if you our sins record, but yet forgiveness is with you, that we may fear you, Lord. Psalm 130, page 173, the tune of Caroline.

Lord, from the depths I call to you, Lord, hear me from on high, and give attention to my voice, when I your hands beside, where my heart has begun.

Lord, in your presence will stand if you have sins before, on high, but yet our goodness is with you, that we may fear you, Lord, that we fear you, Lord.

[40 : 50] I wish my soul with God alone, my hope will be in his word, Lord, that we watch my now at this stage of the service, it's customary to say a few words as to who ought and who ought not to be at the Lord's table.

it is the Lord's table. It's not the table of any denomination of the Christian church. And being the Lord's table, it is therefore for all the Lord's people.

And that point has to be emphasized so that when the invitation is given to come to the table, it is extended to all the Lord's people who are in fellowship with any branch of his church in the world. Lord's love the Lord and who are members of other Christian denominations either in this country or abroad, that you will feel free to come and join with your brothers and sisters here as we seek to remember the Lord's death till he come.

There's an open invitation and it's extended to you if you belong to Jesus. But in order to ascertain what kind of marks we ought to be looking for, there are simply four points that I want to make and I

don't want to take any more than three or four minutes to make them.

[42 : 33] Based on the opening words of Psalm 16, Psalm 16 verses 1 to 4, we read, Keep me safe, O God, for in you I take refuge. I said to the Lord, you are my Lord, apart from you, I have no good thing.

As for the saints who are in the land, they are the glorious ones in whom is all my delight. The sorrows of those will increase who run after other gods. I will not pour out their libations of blood or take up their names on my lips.

I just want to mention four things. Verse 1, the importance of trusting in the Lord. Keep me safe, O God, for in you I take refuge.

In you I am continuing to trust. If that's you, then come to the table. You believe in God, believe also in me. Or as it could be put, in me also continue to trust.

trust. If you are trusting in God, the table is the place that you ought to be at this morning. Verse 2, this testimony.

[43 : 44] I said to the Lord, you are my Lord, apart from you I have no good thing. You know, that gets to the very heart of the gospel. There are many under the gospel who still think that they can come on the basis of some goodness that is of themselves on the basis of their own righteousness.

But this verse makes clear, and especially in the NIV translation, apart from you I have no good thing. All the goodness that we have to equip us to come to the table is from God.

And if that's your testimony before God, notice these words are addressed to God. I said to the Lord, you are my God. You are my Lord.

That's your testimony on your knees before the Lord. But all the goodness you have is of him. Then you come to the table.

You have realized what the gospel is all about. That it is the righteousness that is of God by faith that counts and not your own righteousness. God. The third characteristic in verse three is this.

[45 : 00] The psalmist takes delight in the people of God. As for the saints who are in the land, they are the glorious ones in whom is all my delight.

He takes delight in the fellowship of God's people. And that surely is what communion is about. Fellowship with God, fellowship with one another.

If whose people are your people, if their God is your God, if you take delight in the communion of the saints, of the people of God, then join with them at the table.

And the fourth point in verse four is this. He wants to turn away from everything that smacks of falsehood in worship. He wants to be genuine.

The sorrows of those will increase who run after other gods. I will not pour out their libations of blood or take up their names on my lips. He wants to turn away from everything that is false.

[46 : 00] He wants his worship to be real. He wants to be genuine as he comes to worship his God. And if that's you, if you want to turn away from everything that is false and artificial, from everything that is dishonoring to gather with God's people around the Lord's table.

So these are the characteristics that are brought before us in these verses. And if they're true of you, then come. And as I've already said, there's an open invitation to all the Lord's people to come to the Lord's table.

We're now going to sing from Psalm 118 and will remain seated as we sing from verse 15 to verse 21 and page 398 to the tune Warwick.

And as we sing those who want to come to join with those who are already at the table should make their way forward or across as the case may be.

Psalm 118 and from verse 15 to the tune Warwick and we sing to verse 21. In dwellings of the righteous has heard the melody of joy and health the Lord's right hand to have ever valiantly.

[47 : 27] a kingdom The Lord has held the Lord's hand, the Lord's hand, the Lord's hand and the Lord's hand in me.

The light, the light of the mighty Lord, left on the Word of the Lord's hand, the Lord's hand and the Lord's hand, the Lord's hand and the Lord's hand and the Lord's hand.

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For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God. After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, Take this and divide it among you.

[50 : 56] For I tell you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes. And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, This is my body given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way, after the supper, he took the cup, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed, but woe to that man who betrays him.

They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this. We read there that Jesus gave thanks after taking the cup and after taking the bread.

Let's give thanks too. Lord, we pray for grace today to give thanks, that we might realize the wonderful nature of the provision that you have made for us, and that we might be found truly returning thanks for it, and rejoicing in the salvation that is ours through Christ Jesus.

[52 : 16] We thank you for the body that was broken, and for the blood that was shed. And we marvel that the body was broken for us, and the blood shed on our behalf.

What a wonderful truth it is, that it was for us, in our place, for our eternal benefit, that he gave his life, even as a ransom, that we might be delivered.

We thank you, Lord, that he lay down his life of himself, that no man took it from him, but that he himself yielded it on the altar, in order that we might receive that life which is forever.

And we ask today, as we gather here, that all of us might be conscious of signs of spiritual life, in ourselves, that we might give all the glory for it to you.

Bless each and every one of us. Bless Brother Stephen, who is here taking part for the first time. And bless any who may be here for the last time, unknown to them and unknown to us, but known to you.

[53 : 33] Lord, there are many times when you remind us of the uncertainty of life on earth. And of how we can be called into your nearer presence at any moment. And we pray that we might be ready for that hour, whenever you call us, and ready as those who are seeking to live for you here, from day to day.

So bless us all together now, and make yourself more and more precious to us. To those who believe he is precious, may he be more precious to us today than all the world.

Take up the bread and up the wine, and grant that as we use it, it might speak to us of our Saviour's sufferings on our behalf, and in that way be blessed to each and every one of us.

Remember any onlookers who may not be participating, work in their hearts too, that they might be constrained to join with your people around your table for your glory's sake in their lives and in ours. Amen. We mentioned earlier that Jesus spoke seven times on the cross.

[54 : 55] We were looking last night at one of his words of affection, and we were looking at another of these this morning, and God willing, we'll look at his third word of affection this evening.

Jesus also spoke two words that remind us of his anguish as he hung there between the two thieves. My God, my God, he asked, why have you forsaken me?

We're here at the table this morning as those who know that he was forsaken in order that we might never be forsaken. And we're here today as those who want to acknowledge that his forsakenness was for that purpose in our lives.

How thankful we ought to be that he promises us that he will never forsake us because he himself was forsaken on our behalf.

On the cross, he also cried, I thirst. the one who was nailed to the tree was not only God but man. He was fully divine, he was fully human.

[56 : 15] And there on the cross, he thirsted. He thirsted as he suffered for our salvation. And today, there's a sense in which he still thirsts.

He thirsts for fellowship with us more and more. He wants us to be in fellowship with him. He longs to make himself more and more precious and personal to us.

And he wants to do that even through the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in which we are participating now. May Christ sanguish on the cross.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Christ sanguish on the cross. I thirst. Why did he thirst? He thirsted.

And it's worth going into what that means in more detail on another occasion. But he thirsted so that our spiritual and eternal thirst might be quenched.

[57 : 19] That our souls might be satisfied as we drink of him who is the water of life and feed our souls on him who is the living bread.

This morning, as we've gathered here around the table, we've gathered as those who praise God that his anguish was for us.

That it was in order that we might not suffer the anguish that our sins deserved that he suffered for us. What a wonderful Savior.

What a wonderful gospel that tells us not only of the nature but also of the necessity of his sufferings for our salvation.

As we read earlier on, Jesus, the night he was betrayed, took bread and gave thanks as we have already sought to do.

[58 : 16] and he broke the bread and he gave it to them saying, this is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way, after the supper, he took the cup saying, this cup is the new covenant in my blood which is poured out for you.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Three words of affection, two words of affliction or anguish, two words of accomplishment. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, it is finished. The prophecies made concerning Christ and what he was going to do were now fulfilled.

The purposes of God had come to pass us. His Son was there on the cross for our salvation.

The penalty due to us for sin was taken by him. The power of his enemies, the power of Satan, destroyed.

[59 : 46] Jesus finished the work that was given him to do. And it is because he finished it that we can be in fellowship with God.

It is because he did it all that salvation is offered to us and accepted by us as his free gift.

Then Jesus called out with a loud voice, Father, into your hands, I commit my spirit.

Jesus entrusts his spirit into the care and custody of his Father and sets us an example and sets us an example to follow that we too might commit our ways, commit our spirits to the Lord for time and for eternity.

as we go forward from here, let us do so as those who seek to follow his example even in committing ourselves into our Father's hands as he committed his soul, his spirit into his Father's hands as he hung there on the cross.

[61 : 13] He cried out with a loud voice. He was in complete command. He was laying down his life for us that he might take it again. Thank God today it was for us that he gave his life.

Thank God today that it was for us that he took it again that we might be justified, that we might be right with God and that we might go forward in fellowship with him for time and for all eternity.

All because of the cross on which the Prince of Glory died. May these thoughts be blessed to us as we rise from the table singing to God's praise from Psalm 72 and verse 17 to the end in the Scottish Psalter version.

Psalm 72 and from verse 17 to the end of the psalm to the tune Effingham. It's on page 314. Whose name forever shall endure last like the sun it shall.

Men shall be blessed in him and blessed all nations shall him call. more than the death .

[62 : 34] the sun cher überine states Me o'er or i'll re ■ alone but ever DD t'll peak t a elimin
CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

And blessed be this glorious name To all eternity.

The hope that is glory filled.

Amen. So blessed be. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Lord, we thank you for those wonderful words with which our service has come to a close. We thank you for all that we have remembered today and for all that we have realised in relation to your love for us.

[64 : 40] And we pray now that you would go with us into the rest of this day, into the rest of this week, and into the rest of our lives. And that you would help us to live for you who died for us day by day.

Bless us each one. And may grace, mercy, and peace from Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, be our portion today and forever.

Amen.