

20.9.26 am

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Date: 20 September 2026

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0:00] Good morning everyone. A warm welcome to the service this morning. Those who are in the building and also those who are watching online.

! It's good to see every one of you and those who are visiting especially. It's nice to have you with us. A lot of our people are away today so I was expecting a very sparsely attended service today but it's good to be encouraged to see you with us.

So if you're able to stay behind at the end of the service there's tea and there's coffee and you would be most welcome to join with us there. For the visitors there's quite a few children here. There is first praise, prayer, children's talk, second praise and then the children head out to Sunday school in Cresce and you are very welcome to join them in that.

One or two notices. I'm not going to go through all the notices that were on the screen. Just to remind you that there's no service here this evening. The Scalpy communion is on over this weekend and so the congregation we have the chance to go and join with the folks in Scalpy this evening.

In case you think I'm having a night off, I'm actually in Garibust tonight but you are all welcome to go to Scalpy. Prayer meeting this Wednesday will be taken by Cammie. I'm over in Garibust setting up a vacancy committee over there on Wednesday evening so I appreciate your prayers for that.

[1:28] The service is next Sunday. The morning service will be taken by myself, God willing. The evening service is a Gaelic service. James McKeever will take that one and then afterwards there's a fellowship and we'll hear about the work of Heb Alpha in that fellowship.

Communion weekend as well. A date for you to put in your diaries. The 2nd to the 4th of October. We have Derek Lamont with us for that weekend taking the English services and we have the Reverend Donald Dollar, McDonald for the Gaelic.

And the details are on the screen there. But just to be praying for that. And there are more than likely some in the room or who are watching at a distance who are trusting the Lord but haven't yet come to the table.

Please be encouraged to come and speak to me or any of the elders in advance of the communion. Let's now begin this time of worship and we're going to sing to God's praise.

We're singing from Psalm 51. Psalm 51, it's a prayer, it's a song of repentance. As we come before God we remember that He is holy and we are not.

[2:40] And we confess our sin and ask for His cleansing. So Psalm 51, verses 7 to 13. Do thy with hyssop sprinkle me, I shall be cleansed so.

Ye wash thou me, then I shall be whiter than the snow. We'll stand to sing to God's praise. Do thy with hyssop sprinkle me, I shall be cleansed so.

Ye wash thou me, then I shall be whiter than the snow.

Of gladness and of joyfulness, make me to hear the voice.

That soul is very good, which thou hast broken me, rejoice.

[4:07] All mine iniquities brought out, thy face high from thy sin.

Create a clean heart, Lord, renew. Arise, let me within.

Cut me not from thy sight nor take thy holy spirit away.

Restore me thy salvation's joy. With thy peace let me stay.

Then will I teach thy ways unto Those that transgressors be And those that sinners are Shall then be turned unto thee Well, let's unite our hearts in prayer together. Let's pray.

[5:59] Our heavenly Father, we thank you for your word that we have sang. And we would echo the words of the psalmist as we come into your presence.

We ask, Lord, that you would draw us near to yourself as we bow before you. And as we confess our sin.

We say with the psalmist that we are one of those who are transgressors. Then will I teach thy ways unto those that transgressors be And those that sinners are shall then be turned unto thee We confess, Lord, before you that we are sinners.

We don't stand outside of this psalm. We can very much enter into it. And we confess our sin this morning. Even as David confessed his sin in that psalm.

We confess that our hearts often are cold. Our minds are full of this world. The good that we want to do often we leave undone.

[7 : 12] The evil we don't want to do so often we find ourselves back in. And so we say with the psalmist, we say with the apostle Paul, That we are sinful, that we are wretched.

But we thank you that we have a savior in Jesus. We thank you that that psalm points us forward to the one whose blood would be sprinkled. The one whose blood would be shed.

And we thank you that when we trust in Jesus, When we ask for cleansing in his blood that was shed on the cross, We are forgiven. And every sin that we have committed, Every sin that we are struggling with presently, Every sin that we will commit in the future, We thank you that for those who trust in Jesus, We are cleansed.

We are made righteous in and through him. We thank you that he is able to wash away every transgression, Every blemish. But not only that, We thank you that he is able to clothe us with the righteousness of Jesus.

We look at Jesus on the cross as we are called to, And we see our sin as he became sin for us. But we thank you that as we look at Jesus, In his ministry and his life, That sinless, perfect life, We are given the assurance that that life, That perfection, that righteousness is given to us, That we are clothed with all that he has done.

[8 : 44] And when you look upon us, Father, As those who are trusting in Jesus, We thank you that we are accepted, That we are blessed, That we are received, As your children.

So enable us, we pray, to rejoice in the Gospel. We pray for any today who have not yet asked for forgiveness of sin. And we ask that even in these moments, That Holy Spirit, you would show them, That you would show all of us, That we are sinners in need of a Saviour.

And we pray that we would cry out in the words that Jesus taught us through that parable, To say, Lord, have mercy upon me, the sinner. So we thank you for the death of Jesus in our place.

We thank you also, And especially for the fact that, Jesus did not remain dead, But he rose from the dead. Death could not hold him. And on the first day of the week, We remember that he is risen, That he is the living Saviour, That he is the one who takes our struggling prayers, And puts them together, And presents them perfectly, At the throne of grace.

He is the one who makes intercession for us. And he is the one who promised, Because I live, You too shall live. And we thank you that when we trust in Jesus, We have life in abundance.

[10 : 06] We have life, Where every morning we wake up knowing that we have purpose, That we are loved, That we are secure, That we are made for your glory.

And we pray that we would day by day, Live out that first catechism, That says, That man's chief end, That is to glorify God, And enjoy him forever.

So bless us Lord, We pray, And help us, On this day, Receive us, As we come, And worship before you. And help us with all our struggles.

We pray for those who are struggling this morning. We pray for those who are grieving. We are always conscious of those whose hearts are sore. And as a congregation, We can see amongst us, And we can feel that sense of loss, As we remember those who once sat with us, In past months and weeks, And even years, And who have gone on ahead of us.

And for those who are grieving, We pray your comfort. We pray for those who are struggling, In their minds with anxiety, With depression, Those who are battling, With things that are unseen to everyone else, But seen by you.

[11 : 26] And we ask Lord, That you would help them, That you would help us all, Meet us at the point of our need. And we pray for those also who are, Who are rejoicing. We thank you that in Christ, We have one who lived amongst us.

The word became flesh, And made us dwelling, With us. We thank you that we can look and see Jesus, Coming alongside those who are struggling, Ministering to those who were sick, Comforting

those who were grieving, And also rejoicing with those who were rejoicing, At the wedding in Cana, We see Jesus there.

And we pray, Lord, For Dahl and for Ruthie. We thank you that they're here with us today. We thank you that as they begin their married lives together, They are in the place of worship. And we ask that you would bless them, Day by day, As they acknowledge you, That you would direct their path. We pray that their marriage, Would bring glory to Christ, And that they would know the joy of the Lord, Each day, As they walk together, With each other and with you.

So bless them, Lord, We pray. And the families here, We ask that you would bless them. And as they come together, That they would be great joy, And that there would be that sense that you are with them, And that you are with us.

[12:47] So hear our prayers, Take away our sin, Lead us, guide us in worship, We ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Boys and girls, Would you like to come to the front, please?

How are you guys all today? Good. Good to have some visitors with us today. Are you enjoying your time in Harris? Yeah. Do you wish you could stay here forever? Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. We can make that happen. No. Now, what have I got to show you today? Well, I will show you something in a minute.

But I want to test your memories first of all. Can any of you remember, What happened here, On Friday? And if you look around, I think, There are more fairy lights here than usual.

I think. A wedding. There was a wedding. Who said that? It was a wedding. Who got married?

Uncle Dol. Pardon? Uncle Dol.

[14:03] Uncle Dol got married. And was there anybody else involved? Ruthie. So, Uncle Dol and...

What's she called now? What's she called now though? She's called Aunt... Auntie Ruthie. She's called Auntie Ruthie.

And they got married. So, I've got a couple of pictures on the screen. Because I didn't think they were going to be here today. We should maybe get them to come out here and stand.

Look at that. Look at Smooth Dol. And Ruthie there. There was a wee bit rainy on the way out. But that wasn't a problem. They were still smiling.

So that was a picture after they got married. Was that over in Stornoway? Yeah, I could tell that because you're not smiling as broadly as you were in Harris. And is there another picture as well?

[15:02] Look at... Oh! That was one I think that we're just about to kiss. Yuck! So...

That's what happened on Friday. It was a good fun day. It was a great day. And Dol and Ruthie, they got married. Now... What do you think happened next?

After Friday? Did Dol just say, Well, Ruthie, that was a nice day. And we had a good dinner at the Caber Fae. And it was nice in the church.

It was nice to see you for the day. Right, I'm off to get my shanty stuff together. I've got a game to play in Grenarchert. So, I'll see you sometime in the future. Is that what they said?

Did they just wave goodbye and say, See you sometime? Maybe in a few weeks? No. What happened? They got married.

[16:03] They got married and then what happened? Did they just say, Cheerio, bye? What happened then? Who said that? They stayed. Come on.

Alexander. They stayed. They stayed together, didn't they? And all through the wedding day, even though there was lots of people there, wherever Ruthie was, Dol was chasing after her.

It's the way it's going to be, Dol. And they were always together. And today at church, just like they were all these years ago, they're still sitting together.

Once Dol came at first, Ruthie was sitting with her mum and dad and then she'd come in about late and there'd be a spare seat and, Oh, there's Dol. And that happened for a few weeks and then David Cameron said, I think something fishy's going on here.

He's the first to call it. And so they're still sitting together and they're together and that's what they want. They love each other, they trust each other and they're staying close together.

[17:13] Now, boys and girls, when you become a Christian, it's a bit like, it's a bit like a marriage, actually. Because when you become a Christian, you trust in Jesus and you love Jesus and he says, I want you to come to me.

When we become Christians, we come to Jesus and he says, I want you to stay close to me. So all the disciples, how many disciples were there in the Bible?

see them going, but remember and pray for them as they go.

[24:37] We're going to read now from God's Word. Matthew chapter 26. We've been studying in Matthew's Gospel over a while now and we are in Matthew chapter 26 and we are reading from verse 17 through to verse 35 this morning.

He said go into the city to a certain man and say to him, the teacher says my time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.

And they were very sorrowful and began to say to one another is that I Lord? He answered he who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me.

Judas who would betray him answered is that I Rabbi? He said to him you have said so. Now as they were eating Jesus took bread and after blessing it broke it and gave it to his disciples and said take eat this is my body.

I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink out with you drink out new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives then Jesus said to them you will fall away you will all fall away because of me this night for it is written I will strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered but after I am raised up I will go before you to Galilee.

[27:27] Peter said to him even if I must die with you I will not deny you. And all the disciples said the same. Amen and may God bless our reading of his word to us we'll sing again now to God's praise from Psalm 32 Psalm 32 the first two verses two stanzas of the psalm O blessed is the man to whom is freely pardoned all the transgression he hath done whose sin is covered blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not his sin and in whose spirit there is no guile nor fraud is found therein.

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[33:24] And especially as we think of the Church of Scotland and the Free Presbyterian Church and the church over in Scalpe, as they gather around the Lord's table today.

We pray that they would know your blessing. We think also of John Lachey and Barbas as he preaches and as they come around the Lord's table also. And we pray that they would know your blessing, your help, and your presence with them.

So hear our prayers. Help us as we look to you. And we ask all this in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. Matthew chapter 26 verses 17 to verse 35.

If you've got a Bible with you, or a Bible that you can see on your phone or whatever, it would be helpful probably for you to be looking at that.

Because we'll just be stepping through and staying close to the text this morning as we go through this section. Where are we in terms of the studies?

[34:37] Well, we're in the final days, even hours, of Jesus' life on earth. And at this point, Jesus, he isn't performing miracles and preaching to thousands as we have seen him doing in earlier parts of the Gospel.

Jesus, at this juncture, is spending precious time with his disciples. But Matthew has just told us in verses 14 to 16, which we didn't read.

Matthew has just told us that one of the twelve disciples, Judas Iscariot, he was working hard behind the scenes to arrange for Jesus to be handed over to those who were in authority.

knows fine well that the plans they have for Jesus are plans to kill him. So the rest of the disciples know nothing about what Judas has been up to, but Jesus knows exactly what's going on. Jesus knows how close his death now is. Jesus knows that Judas has the 30 pieces of silver that he had been given in his pocket. And the question is, what would Jesus do? What happens next?

Well, let's just step through the verses. The first thing we see is that Jesus makes preparation for the Passover meal. That's point number one. The second thing we'll see is that Jesus, with his disciples around him in this wee upper room, he makes predictions of failure for the disciples, what they would do next. The third thing we'll see is that Jesus, he institutes the Lord's Supper.

[36:49] He lays down what will happen in the Lord's Supper, what will happen as we gather around the Lord's table, as we will do, God willing, in a few weeks' time. And the last thing we'll consider as we close is the invitation that is extended to us to come to the Lord's table. So first of all, we have the preparations that are being made for Passover, verse 17. Now on the first day of unleavened bread, the disciples came to Jesus saying, where would you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover?

Passover. Now when we're under pressure, when we are anxious, when we are aware of something just big up ahead of us, the last thing that we're thinking about is a meal and festivities. And we might think that Jesus would have bigger things in his mind at this point than the preparations that need to be made for a meal. We might expect Jesus just to shake his head and say to the disciples, just give me some space, give me some peace just now, as he tries to process all that's ahead of him.

But no, Jesus is intent on making preparations for the Passover, because Jesus knows that this meal, the Passover, it was a sign. It was a meal that pointed forward to the cross.

It tells us in verse 17 that we just read that the timings here, this was the first day of unleavened bread, and that was the day when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb.

[38:52] And as the people in that place, so many people who were gathered into that place at that time, this was all that was being thought about. On this day, lambs were sacrificed, and as they sacrificed the lamb, they remembered how God had saved his people in Egypt through the blood of the lamb.

You can go back to Exodus chapter 12, and you can read that story. Remember, the angel of death is passing over. Houses that were sprinkled by the blood of the lamb, they were spared death, they were given life.

So that's what they were remembering. As the lamb was slain, they were looking back to how God saved, how God delivered his people. But the question we must ask just now is, how did the Passover meal, that points them so far back, how did it point to Jesus? And John tells us that in John chapter 1 verse 29. Remember, when Jesus begins his public ministry, John the Baptist sees him coming, and he declares in John chapter 1 verse 29, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. And so, Jesus knows the Passover is pointing forward to his sacrificial death.

On the cross, Jesus, the Lamb of God, he would be sacrificed, and his blood would be shed, so that the sins of everyone who believed in him could be taken away, and they, we, could be saved.

So, Jesus makes sure that all the necessary preparation for the Passover meal was made. He said, verse 18, to the disciples, go into the city to a certain man and say to him, the teacher says, my time is at hand.

And even that little phrase, we could have a sermon on that phrase. My time is at hand, says Jesus. He knows the timings of everything. He knows everything that's going on. Everything that is happening is under the sovereign control of Jesus. Remember what it says in John, no one will take his life from him.

[41 : 34] He will lay it down at the right time. And this was the time. Teacher says, my time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.

and the disciples, did as Jesus had directed them. And they prepared the Passover. I have to watch my time here, but I can't help thinking about that certain man.

Jesus said, go into the city to a certain man and say to him, the teacher needs your house. who was a certain man?

We don't know who he was. But he gave Jesus his house. And little did he know that his house would become the location for the first ever communion meal.

Can you imagine him thinking, well, it's just a house. Just an hour. So he gives it to Jesus. And it becomes such a significant occasion.

[42 : 51] And that should encourage us. It should challenge us. Jesus, he comes to us and he asks us to give him our lives. We think, what will my life achieve?

More than you can imagine. Sometimes he comes and he says, give me a few hours. What can I do with a few hours? Not much, but Jesus can do a lot.

Sometimes he says, I want your house. I want you to invite somebody around for a meal. I want you to tell them about me. And he can do amazing things with certain men and women and boys and girls.

I must move on. Preparation for the Passover. The second thing that we come to in this section is predictions of failure. Verse 20, when it was evening, Jesus reclined at table with the twelve.

and this is a special moment in many ways because this is the last time that Jesus will be together with his disciples.

[44 : 09] He spent all this time with them over these three years. They're constantly with him. so much memory, so much blessing, so many precious times.

This is the last time that he will be together with these disciples. And so it was special. But it was also painful because Jesus had some difficult things to say to them.

He needs to tell them that they will fail him. So there's three predictions of failure that Jesus makes. Prediction number one is Judas Iscariot's betrayal.

Israel. Verse 20. When it was evening, Jesus reclined at table with the twelve. And as they were eating, he said, Truly I say to you, one of you will betray me.

And they were very sorrowful and began to say to him one after another, Is it I, Lord? He answered, He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me.

[45 : 20] The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.

Judas, who would betray him, answered, Is it I, Rabbi? Jesus said to him, You have said so. Now, note first of all here how unexpected this betrayal was.

When Jesus tells the disciples about the betrayal, it says in verse 22, they were very sorrowful, but not one of them looked in the direction of Judas.

There was no eye contact between the disciples saying, I think it's him. I've always had my suspicions about him. There's no trace of that.

None of them looked in the direction of Judas, but they all, except Judas, they all said, Is it I, Lord? They come to Jesus and they say to Jesus, Will you search my heart?

[46 : 37] Is it me? And that's a good response from these disciples. They realize they are sinners. They realize that they can fail.

They realize that they can fail. And so they say to Jesus, Search my heart. Is it me? They examine themselves. They don't look at everyone else.

That's what eleven of the twelve disciples say to Jesus. Is it I, Lord? What does Judas say in response to Jesus' prediction? Well, he almost says the same thing as the rest, but not quite. Judas, notice, doesn't address Jesus as Lord because he is not willing to submit to him as Lord. Instead, Judas calls Jesus Rabbi, a teacher.

Verse 25, is it I, Rabbi? Asks Judas. And Judas knows it's him. He has the thirty pieces of silver in the bag.

[47 : 52] And Jesus says, yes, it's you. You have said so. what could Judas have done at that point?

That moment that Jesus says to Judas, you have said so, it's you. What could Judas have done? Well, he could have repented.

At that point, he could have repented. remember like David did. In 2 Samuel chapter 12, we find David, he had fallen into sin.

He was far from God, and God sends Nathan the prophet to David, and he tells David, you are the man, you are the sinner, it is you. And David sees himself, he sees his sin, and it breaks him, and he repents, and he writes Psalm 32, and he writes Psalm 51.

So, Judas has opportunity in that moment to confess his sin, to repent, to be forgiven, to be born again. Weerspeed, the commentator, says, Jesus had already hinted to his disciples that one of their number was not truly with him, but now he openly spoke about a traitor in their midst.

[49 : 23] However, he did not do this just for the sake of the disciples, but more for the sake of Judas. Jesus had kissed Judas, and washed his feet, and now he was giving Judas another opportunity to repent.

But Judas does not take it. And so Jesus says, of Judas, it would have been better for that man if he had not been born.

It's chilling words. J.C. Ryle says, this saying teaches plainly that it is better never to live at all than to live without faith and die without grace.

To die in this state is to be ruined forevermore. Except a man be born again, he will wish one day he had never been born at all.

So prediction number one is the betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot. Prediction number two of failure is the desertion of all the disciples.

[50 : 52] Verse 30, And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them, You will all fall away because of me this night.

For it is written, I will strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered. So this prediction, this prophecy of Jesus, it goes back to Zechariah chapter 13 and verse 7.

That's where the quote comes from. And on the cross, what would happen? Well, on the cross, Jesus, the good shepherd, he would be struck.

He would suffer because of our sin. And Jesus predicts that when that happens, when he is struck, when he comes under the wrath of God because of our sin, the flock of disciples that were called to be with him, they would disperse.

They would scatter. They would fall away. When Jesus dies, he's telling the disciples, you will have scattered.

[52 : 15] But that's not the end of the story. Jesus promises in verse 32 that when he rises from the dead, he will gather them up again. But after I am raised up, he says, I will go before you to Galilee.

So, failure number one, the betrayal. Failure number two, the desertion. And that's all the disciples. And prediction of failure number three is Peter's denial.

Verse 33, Peter answered him, though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away. Now, just five minutes ago, Peter is humble.

He is ready to believe that he could betray Jesus because he says to Jesus, talking of the betrayal, is it I? Is it me? He sees that he has the potential to sin in that way.

But now for Peter, his pride has risen back up. The old man is rising back up, and Peter is confident in himself. And Peter is such a real warts-and-all portrait of a disciple.

[53 : 33] Because we are so fickle, changeable. We are so ready to believe the best about ourselves, and the worst about everything else in the room.

And so, Peter looks around and he says, they might all fall away, not me. I can well believe they'll all make an absolute mess of this, not me.

You can count on me. Matthew Henry says, improper self-confidence, like that of Peter, is the first step to a fall.

There is a proneness in all of us to be overconfident, but those fall soonest and foulest who are the most confident in themselves, those are least safe, who think themselves most secure.

So, Jesus has to work in Peter, and Jesus confronts self-confident Peter, and he speaks directly to him, and personally to him, and lovingly to him, even though Peter is not willing to listen.

[54:45] Jesus said to him, verse 34, truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times, Peter said to him, even if I must die with you, I will not deny you.

And notice that Peter's sin then spreads. Sin does that. Peter's self-confidence fills the room. All the other disciples said the same.

They won't believe Jesus, they're following Peter. Pride has filled the room. three predictions of failure that Jesus makes in respect of the disciples in that room.

And let's just, as we finish this point, remember who's in the room. Who are these men who Jesus predicts will fail him so badly?

these are his disciples. Jesus has chosen them and Jesus knew them.

[56:05] He knew their past failures. He knew their present failures. And he knows their future failures. but he doesn't disown them.

He doesn't say, get out of here. I can't bear to look at you. He loves them. He holds them close. He ministers to them.

And he calls them to eat with him at his table. it's the most amazing picture of grace.

Our God is gracious. Our God is patient. Our God is abounding in love. We see it here. And there's such encouragement for us in this section because we know, if we know anything about ourselves, we know that we will fail like the disciples failed.

We have done, we are, and we will do. But Jesus does not cast us off. He cares for us.

[57:21] He calls us to come close to him. He loves us. He calls us to sit around his table.

Predictions of failure, preparation for the Passover, thirdly, the institution of the Lord's Supper.

Verse 26. Now, as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing, it broke it and gave it to the disciples and said, take, eat, this is my body.

drink of took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

I tell you, I will not drink again of the fruit of this vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

And these verses for us are so familiar. These words do not, they don't shock us, but they would have shocked the first disciples.

[58:34] That day in that room, the disciples, they knew the Passover meal so well, they understood every part of what was happening. They were familiar with all the words that were spoken, and they expected to be looking back to the Exodus, they expected to be remembering with thanksgiving what God had done to save some people far away many years ago.

But instead, Jesus, he points them forward, not back. He points them forward in this meal to what he was about to do on the cross, not to save a few in Egypt, but to save many.

from all nations and all generations. Jesus was speaking about you when he was saying these words.

He was thinking about you as he was stepping towards the cross. And notice again, as this Lord's Supper is instituted, notice again who is served at the first communion meal.

It's very imperfect disciples, people like us. Jesus serves disciples who are not worthy in themselves.

[60:06] They had proved that, they are proving that, and they will continue to prove that. They are not worthy. They are sinners. sinners. But Jesus serves them because they are going to be made worthy because of the death of Jesus.

grace. And that's the truth we need to take in. How many times have I sat and had conversations with people who are clearly Christians and said, why will you not come?

Because I'm not worthy. They say, of course you're not worthy. Just as they were not worthy. Jesus calls those who are not worthy in themselves to come and to remember him because he makes us worthy as we trust in him.

It's not our righteousness, it's his righteousness. So Jesus serves these imperfect, failing disciples.

And then there's Judas. Jesus served Judas Iscariot. We tend to ask the question at the door.
[61:23] You know, if somebody comes in and we don't know them, we would say, well, you know, are you trusting the Lord? Are you a member in the church somewhere else? Because we want to make sure that the people who sit at the table are trusting Jesus.

Judas was not. And Jesus can see his heart, and Jesus knows he's not. And yet he serves him. Why was that?

Why was Judas offered the bread? Why was Judas passed the wine? Well, I think that this is the last opportunity for Judas to turn back and repent.

But he didn't take it. one commentator green says, if Jesus was able to whisper in the ear of Judas, yes, it is you, then Judas must have been reclining next to him on the couch on which the Jews ate the Passover, and that was the most favored place.

Jesus did everything to show his love for Judas, but in vain. I wonder, is there someone here in that position?

[63:01] Is there someone here and Jesus has been whispering to you, and he's giving you chance after chance to repent?

It is possible this is your last chance today. Judas had a last chance. All of us will have a last chance.

Judas wasted his last chance. He walked his last And so the warning for us is that we will not walk out that door this morning like Judas did.

Institution of the Lord's Supper and finally the invitation to the Lord's table. And this is where we conclude just with that invitation. we look in Matthew 26 and we look back and we see the disciples as they come to the Lord's table and the question that hangs in the air that we have to answer ourselves is will we come to the Lord's table?

And I read a quote from J.C. Ryle which was of particular help I think in giving us guidance as to who should come. Ryle says are we in the habit of coming to the Lord's table?

[64:36] Are we thinking about coming to the Lord's table? And then he asks three questions that help us to know if we should come. Question number one, do we really understand what we're doing?

Question number two, do we really feel our sinfulness and our need of Christ? Question number three, do we really desire to live a Christian life as well as profess the Christian faith?

So taking Ralph's questions, let's just finish with these questions and think it through for the next two minutes. Question number one, if we are thinking about going forward to the Lord's table or if we are thinking of going and sitting again at the Lord's table, question number one is do we understand what we're doing?

What are we doing as we come to the Lord's table? well we're remembering the death of Jesus. We are remembering that his body was given and his blood was shed for us.

Question number two, do we really feel our sinfulness and need of Christ? Because that's what we confess as we come. As we come to the Lord's table, we are not confessing that we are better than anyone else.

[66:02] We're actually confessing that we realize that we are as bad as anyone. We're sinners. And we need a saviour. And so as we come to the table, we're saying, I am sinful, I need a saviour, and I believe, I trust that that saviour is Jesus.

He is my saviour. And the last question, do we really desire to live a Christian life as well as profess the Christian faith?

The disciples, eleven of them, not Judas, the disciples desired to live a Christian life.

They desired to professed Christ. And as he took the bread and the wine, that was their desire.

Were they able to do that perfectly?

No. And Jesus knew that. But he still said, come to the table. and if we desire to live for Jesus, if we desire to profess that our faith is in Jesus, as we go from here, out to our work, back to our homes, if our desire is to live for Christ, as Ryle says, in respect of the table, let them go forward and persevere.

[67:50] Let's pray as we close. Lord God, we thank you for your word, and we pray for your help as we go from here.

These verses, the scenes that we have been allowed to look in on and listen into, are areas where we are conscious of how holy you are, and how much you have done to save sinners like us.

We pray that you would help us to see afresh that we are sinful and that Christ is the Savior. And we pray that you would give us that desire to live for Jesus, a life that brings glory to Christ, even though we know we do fail and will fail.

that we thank you that where we fail, your blood, Lord Jesus, has enabled us to find forgiveness. So cleanse us, we pray, and give us the clarity to see who we are and who you are, to trust in you, and if we are trusting, we pray that you would give us the courage to come forward and profess that our faith is in Christ.

And we ask all this in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll sing to finish hymn number 237 in the red book.

[69 : 35] Not that that matters because the words are on the screen. 237, and it's a paraphrase of the verses that we were reading, so we can think on about what we have been reading as we sing to conclude.

Towards on that night when doomed to know the eager rage of every foe, that night in which he was betrayed, the saviour of the world took bread. And we'll sing the whole of this hymn.

Let's stand to sing to God's praise. Amen. Amen. To us on that night when good to know the eager rage of every foe, that night in which he was betrayed, the saviour of the world to bread.

And after thanks and glory give to him that gave in heaven and heaven that simple law is best he broke and thus to all his father spoke!

My broken body loves I give for you for all take eat and live and love the sacred bright renew That brings my wondrous love to you!

[72 : 09] God let in his hands the cup he raised and God anew he tant and praise while kindness his his wisdom and his blood and from his lives salvation flow!

My blood I lost for forth he cries to cleanse the soul in sin that lies in this the covenant is sealed and heaven's eternal grace is revealed with love to man this cup is brought let all partake the sacred draw through the latest ages let it pour in memory of my dying love and may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forever more Amen Amen