

Saturday Evening 3.10.26

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Date: 03 October 2026

Preacher: Reverend Derek Lamont

[0:00] Good evening everyone. A warm welcome to the service this evening. It's good to see everyone and it's good to know also those who are watching online.

! One or two notices just to remind you that the service is tomorrow at the usual times at seven, seven, seven, seven at all, at 11 o'clock and six o'clock with a fellowship after the service in the evening.

Derek will speak a little about how the Lord has worked and continues to work in his life. The collection tomorrow night will be for the Sparkle Sisters and if you don't know who the Sparkle Sisters are, Derek will maybe just say a minute's worth about who they are and we'll hear more maybe about that tomorrow as well.

The last thing to say is that the session remains open and we were very pleased to welcome Agnes Cross and Rebecca. I was going to say MacLeod but I think she's Morrison now into membership in the congregation yesterday.

But for those who know the Lord, who trust the Lord, who haven't yet professed faith in Jesus and want to come to the Lord's table for the first time, the session will be open this evening and we'd be delighted to meet with anyone.

[1:24] I think these are all the notes. Derek, again it's great to have you with us and we look forward to God speaking to you this evening. Thanks David.

Very servant-hearted congregation. You've lifted the poop at my six inches since last night after my blindness.

So, either servant-hearted or you thought maybe he'll actually see his notes tonight and make sense of what he's saying. But just a word to say that Sparkle Sisters has a ministry that began in St. Columbus a number of years ago.

My wife and some of the other women in the congregation were looking for a way to serve those in particular need in the city. And they began a ministry among homeless women and women survivors of abuse, domestic abuse.

And it's kind of grown and flourished and it's become its own charity. And Katrina, my wife, was up with two of the girls two weekends ago, I think, in Lewis.

[2:35] And they were completely blown away. The two women who shared their testimony and shared about what God has done in their lives. And they loved it. They'd never been to the islands before, so it was a great blessing for them.

And people were very generous and kind and were very grateful for that ministry in Edinburgh. So, thank you and thank you for considering it as an option tomorrow evening.

So, it's great to gather together again and we're going to praise God this evening. We're going to praise him in song. We're going to praise him through his word, through prayer and considering the word of God this evening.

And we're going to begin by singing, Be Thou My Vision. And singing is an amazing reality. Singing praise to God. And revelation, which speaks about the end times and beyond, is full of singing.

And so, we'll praise God now, recognizing that it will be something we will do in glory eternally. So, if you're able, please stand to sing, Be Thou My Vision.

[3:46] Be Thou My Vision. Be Thou My Vision. Be Thou My Vision.

Be Thou My Vision. Be Thou My Vision. Not the all else to be saved that thou art.

Thou my breast, Lord, my day or my night. Wake, Lord, sleeping, thy presence my light.

Lead of my wisdom, love my true word. I ever with thee, love with me all.

Love my great Father, I thy true Son. Thou in me dwelling, and I with thee on.

[5:09] Be thou my God, whose shield soar for the fight. Be thou my dignity, thou mighty light.

Thou my soul's sheltered, thou my high tower. Raise thou me heavenward, O power of my power.
Riches I heed not, nor unempty praise. Thou my inheritance, thou and always.
Thou art thou only, first in my heart. High King of heaven, my treasure, the Lord.
High King of heaven, after victory won. May I reach heaven's joys, O bright and star.
[6 : 31] Heart of my own heart, whatever before. Still be my treasure, O ruler of all.

Father God, we give thanks for the great words that we've been singing, drawing us into the presence of God in praise and adoration, and recognizing your lordship, your being ruler as a magnificent, righteous, holy, good king.

And we thank you that you are indeed the only one that's worthy of our worship this evening, and that we have been created to worship you. We thank you for who you are.

We thank you that there is mystery in the character of God, and that we can't put you in a box. We can't ever tick a box saying we know all there is to know about you.

We recognize that you have revealed to us what we need to know, but there is an infinitude of knowledge that is yet untapped that we will never truly be able to comprehend.

[8 : 03] Remind us this evening that we are mortal and we are finite and you're infinite. And forgive us for the times that sometimes we shrink you down to a very small level.

Enable us, Lord, this evening to recognize, even as we look around us in this beautiful part of the world, and yet a tiny part of the earth.

And the earth being a tiny part of the cosmos, and the cosmos being a tiny part of the universe, just the magnificence and the marvel and the constant new exploration that is done of this universe that reminds us that we can't ever fully grasp the God who created it.

And yet in Jesus Christ, we have God in the flesh and the greatest mystery of all that is revealed to us.

And so we praise you. We praise you that you've made us. We praise you that you've not abandoned us. We worship you as the creator and as the saviour.

[9 : 17] And we marvel at so much. Forgive us when we fail to marvel. And help us to recognize that you alone are worthy.

So we give thanks this evening for being able to gather together. We give thanks for being able to sing and to sing praise together. We thank you for the beauty of song, the beauty of psalms and spiritual songs, and the beauty of being able to do that together.

We often think of times when in our lives we've been greatly encouraged in song, greatly built up, coming together shoulder to shoulder with our brothers and sisters, when we've felt down or broken or sad or joyful and been able to express all these different things as we've praised you.

And so we give thanks for our voices this evening that's enabled us to sing and for our willingness to sing and to sing and to sing and to sing and to sing. And so we thank you for our willingness to be here to praise you on a Saturday evening. We give thanks for all that we receive today, even, all that we have sometimes taken for granted.

And we thank you above all for Jesus Christ and for the Holy Spirit who has enlivened us through faith, the repentance and faith to come and know you and understand you.

[10 : 37] We thank you for this celebratory weekend of praise and of remembrance. Thank you for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and its place in our worship lives.

We thank you that you've not forgotten us and that you know that we often forget you, so you ask us to remember. And so we pray that over these days we would remember you more and more, not just in this public act of worship, but in our lives, in our daily walk, in our thinking, when we get up and when we go to bed and when we work and when we interact with our neighbours and friends and colleagues.

And in all that we do, that we would not only be worshipping in these times here, but also as living sacrifices in our lives. Remind us that you know our hearts and may we come with the humility that that enables us to have when we think of our own hearts and yet we think of the willingness and patience and condescension and compassion of Jesus to us.

And we pray that our eyes would be opened in a new way tonight by your word and through your spirit. And as we have prayed for blessing, may we know that this evening.

We seek by your strength to worship in spirit and in truth. Enable us so to do, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to sing praise again to God this evening.

[12:11] And it's a Gaelic psalm, Psalm 105. I'll maybe just read the first verse in English, if that's okay. Give thanks to the Lord and call on His name.

His wondrous deeds to the nations proclaim. Sing praise to Him and His exploits record. Let all those who seek Him rejoice in the Lord. Verses 1 and 2 of this psalm to God's praise.

Sing praise to Him and His name.

Sing praise to Him and His name.

Sing praise to Him and His name.

[14:06] Sing praise to Him and His name.

Oh Oh Oh

Oh I'm going to read together from the old testament from a psalm as we did last night from the book of psalms time from psalm 100 a very well-known psalm to us uh psalm 100 a psalm for giving thanks make a joyful noise to the lord all the earth serve him with gladness serve the lord with gladness come into his presence with singing know that the lord he is god it is he who made us and we are his we are his people the sheep of his pasture enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise give thanks to him bless his name for the lord is good steadfast love endures forever and his faithfulness to all generations this is god's word we give thanks for the freedom and the privilege to read his word together we're going to sing again to god's praise this time how deep the father's love i don't know what number it is in the book but i think it will come up anyway the father's love for us how deep the father's love for us o'er the water's love for us the son of the child of the God beyond all measure, that he should give his only Son to encourage his treasure.

And in the pain of searing loss, the Father turns his face away as words which are the chosen one bring many sons to glory.

Behold the man upon a cross, my sin upon his shoulders, ashamed I hear my walking voice, caught out among the scoffers.

[18:58] It was my sin that held in there until it was accomplished.

His dying breath has brought me life, I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything, no gifts, no power, no wisdom, but I will boast in Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection.

Why should I gain from his reward? I cannot give an answer, but this I know with all my heart, his wounds have paid my ransom.

Now before turning back to the Psalm 100, we'll pray briefly again together.

[20:30] Let's bow our heads in prayer. Father, as again we draw before you in prayer, we confess our need of you and we confess our sins before you.

We recognize that you will see far more than we do of our own heart. And we ask for forgiveness sometimes for the shallow understanding we have of our own need, the casual relationship that we have with you, the ease with which we drift from you and the way that we can often live our lives independently as kings and queens of our own hearts.

We're called, we know, Lord, to be living sacrifices, but we know the trouble with living sacrifices is they often crawl off the altar. So forgive us when we do so and forgive us for the things we know about that we do consciously or maybe sometimes fall into, but also the attitudes of our hearts which we can maybe hide sometimes from ourselves even, but definitely from others.

Forgive us for the pride that separates us from you and judges others. Forgive us sometimes for the bitterness that holds on to things that we should let go of and seek forgiveness for and forgiveness to.

Forgive us for the lusts and the impurities of our hearts and above all, just for the selfishness that we have so often, which help makes us live sometimes the opposite of your prayer, which is, Lord, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

[22:14] And so often we battle with just doing our own will and ignoring yours. So we ask for forgiveness and we give thanks as we confess our sins that you're faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

And grant us the humility that comes from that to remember in our prayer life, not just pray for ourselves and for our church and for our neighbors and our communities, but to pray for this big world in which we're a part, which we feel so helpless to change so often.

And yet we can bring our small requests to you and also our great requests. And so we do pray for this world which reminds us every day of both beauty and brokenness.

And maybe particularly in national news and in world and geopolitical events, there's so much brokenness, so much inhumanity, so much brutality, so much horror, so much pain and suffering, so much division as the ruler of the kingdoms of this earth wreaks havoc with people's lives where we see pride and arrogance and ignorance of world leaders who will not bow the knee to Jesus and who feel impregnable and that they are impossibly strong.

We pray, Lord God, that you would bring leaders to our nations that are not seeking their own glory and are not abusing their people's lives by their hunger and thirst for power.

[23:57] We think of many different places in the world where there's brokenness and war and division and separation, whether it's in the Middle East or in Ukraine and Russia or in different parts of Africa where there's some brutal, brutal realities that never seem to make the news in our country.

We pray for places like North Korea where it's so dangerous to even think about professing Jesus Christ and China, but also in different parts of the world where there's so much that must grieve you when it grieves us.

So, Lord, we pray for our nation. We pray for our leaders. We pray for those in authority over us. We ask that you give them humility and wisdom. Pray for our local leaders and that the same would be true of them. And we pray for ourselves this evening as we come to your word that you would give us a sense of the living God speaking through his word and that we would be touched by the reality of what you're saying to us and that we'd be moved to pray and rejoice.

We pray that you would speak into the hearts of each of us tonight, however we come. Pray for those that come with broken hearts, with hidden fears and insecurities, with doubts, with concerns, with difficult circumstances, with burdens about family members or loved ones or about their own health or about their own circumstances that may seem overwhelming.

May they find comfort and strength from the God who cares and the God who listens this evening. And prepare us for your day tomorrow and all that we look forward to.

[25:45] And we ask and pray that you prepare our hearts for sitting at the Lord's table together and the privileges and the benefits of that. So hear us now, Lord, we pray. And we pray that your spirit would guide and teach us and lead us into all truth this evening as we open scripture.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. So for a little while this evening, we are going to look back at Psalm 100, a very well-known psalm.

I'm sure there's nothing new that I'll be able to say about this psalm. But I hope that the spirit will challenge and move us and encourage us this evening. I think one of the fundamental realities of life for us is giving thanks.

And maybe as parents, teaching our children to give thanks. It's one of the first things we do, really, isn't it? And we live our lives giving thanks when someone opens a door for us, when someone sets a meal before us, when we're given a gift, when someone does us a favor, when we get help in a crisis, when we look after the grandkids, when we cover for someone.

It's basic humanity, isn't it? That we say, well, thanks. Thanks for that. Thank you. And it's such a beautiful thing. And we love it. And I'm sure if you're like me, you get annoyed when people don't say thanks.

[27:05] It's a basic thing. And you can kick yourself if you go away from a situation where you say, I haven't thanked that person. I haven't acknowledged it. And I haven't registered that sense of gratitude that we have for someone and for what they've done.

I think it's basic, not just to Christianity, it's basic to humanity. humanity. And we look for that and we get annoyed by it. Even I like when I come up to the highlands or to the islands and you do single track roads and someone acknowledges you when you stop to let them pass.

I always get a bit angry if someone doesn't. I say, what are they doing? They're not acknowledging you when they give thanks. And maybe as Christians, we recognize in lots of different ways giving thanks, even things as simple as grace at meals.

And I do wonder sometimes if it's a dying practice among Christians to give grace at meals, maybe specifically, particularly in public places, whereas it can be such a gentle, powerful and sweet thing to do.

When I was growing up in our house, we also, we weren't allowed to leave the table until we had returned thanks. And I suspect that is more or less altogether died out.

[28:22] But again, a nice thing, giving thanks and returning thanks. And so as we come to this psalm this evening for just a few minutes, it's good to, I hope it's not inappropriate on a Saturday

night of a communion, to think about giving thanks.

Maybe we're more used to doing that after communion weekend, but good thing to be prepared in giving thanks. As we think about our lives as Christians on a daily basis, you know, who do we give thanks for?

Do we give thanks for the breath that allows us to be here this evening, for the home that we come from, for the security that we enjoy, for the health that we have, most of us, for long periods of our lives?

And all of these things are so important and none more so, obviously, than giving thanks for the person of God and for the grace of God and for the salvation of God, which we'll come on to think about for a moment.

But it is interesting in the world in which we live, isn't it, that, you know, where many people around us are not believers and who don't give thanks to God, but how quickly people will blame God for all the wrong things that happen.

[29:38] Now, I know that's a complex argument and the reality of evil and the origins of evil are deep and complex for us to consider.

But often for people, I think it's a classic deflection from considering God in their lives and it's an easy excuse. Well, no point, you know, God is, if God is so great, why is there so much evil?

And yet the reality is remaining in prayer so much of the evil that we see around us is human beings being brutal and wicked to one another. But along with that kind of confusion about the reality and the origins of evil, which we can look at biblically, it's interesting, isn't it, that people, quick to blame God for all the bad things.

But what about the good things? Do they ever consider these things in their lives as patience or as goodness? I often wonder who atheists or agnostics, rampant atheists, who despise Him in many ways and live their lives to reject Him, who they give thanks for, for all the good things when they're so quick to blame the God they don't even believe in, for all the evil in their lives, for their long lives, for fine wine and for wealth and for health and for their God-given intelligence that they use to resist Him and deny Him.

How can they explain these things? How can they blame God on one hand but never thank Him on the other? It's an irony and a paradox in their lives.

[31:16] But we are to be examples of people who give thanks to God for their lives and obviously more so in Christ for forgiveness.

So for a few minutes I just want to look at this psalm and acknowledge Him and maybe each of us in our own way will have to consider seeking forgiveness for the times that we have taken Him for granted when we haven't returned thanks or worse when we've ignored them altogether.

And I'm sure if we're honest with each other we will recognize there are times you know that I mean I think and the parables often reflect human nature don't they? The ten lepers who were healed and Jesus says where are they all?

Where are they all? Only one of them came back to say thanks and they were healed by God and it's a it's a challenge isn't it to us? Is there times in our lives where God is looking reverently speaking God is looking down and saying where are they?

When are they giving thanks for all the good not just human everyday goodness and graces that we have to give thanks but above all for Jesus and for the gospel which is of course one of the reasons we celebrate the Lord's Supper as we consider Him tomorrow.

[32:35] So this is a great and well known psalm for us a psalm where we're called to thankful worship and just to think of one or two reasons that we're given here in this psalm for why we thank and live our lives in thankful adoration to God which is such a great thing isn't it?

Thankless children or thankful children. Well humanity is made for it. Make a joyful noise to the Lord all the earth.

The whole earth is called to give thanks and to praise the living God and that is an imperative it's an imperative actually that God puts out to all the world which obviously is ignored by much of the world but we as believers through Jesus Christ are called to give thanks to God in worship and with our lives and as we do so we do so with a longing that all things aren't right that there's far more people outside of the church here in Harris this evening than there is inside that there's a whole multitude of people that have no desire to thank God tonight so when we praise them with thanksgiving it's with a sense of at least in some way a sense of longing and a sense of hurt and a

sense of recognizing that things aren't right we're worshipping in foreign territory in many ways we're worshipping against the tide we're doing things that other people aren't doing on a Saturday night especially we're in a strange place for the world to consider and so when we worship we worship with this sense that all things are not right because there's so many people not here and so when we worship we don't just worship kind of in an insular way and give thanks that we're here and it's great we worship with a sense of hurt sometimes because of who isn't here and who isn't giving thanks just as we feel hurt if our children or those around us don't give thanks for even everyday things because he's worth shouting about he's worth making a joyful noise for and in a sense even this evening in our worship and every time the church of Christ gathers together in worship it is a testimony it's a testimony to a watching world or a world that isn't watching even that this is something that everyone should be doing there is a there's definitely a test there's a witness in public worship isn't there it's not something that we should be ashamed of or something we do in secret it's something that has a public element to it that the world will look on and be convicted by because all the world is called to worship and make a joyful noise and so there's a recognition that we're called to do this and it is a joy for us so to do acknowledging him as saviour and God and indeed actually that one day one day the world will be inhabited by worshippers in the new heavens and the new earth so there's a future element to it in the same way as the Lord's Supper is not a kind of funeral service it's not just a service of remembrance for someone who's dead but someone who's risen and ascended and will one day return so there's a future element to the Lord's Supper it's not the great feast it's not the great final feast it's just pointing forward to something greater and so worship now that we do here is there's a sense in which it reminds us of a much greater day a much greater day

I am with a young lad who has become a Christian in the church who's recovering from a recovering addict and he's an avid Man United fan and he goes down to the games sometimes but he sent me a video the other day I don't know if you saw it the other day there was 60,000 people in Old Trafford recently a worship service it was I think it was mainly African churches in Manchester who gathered 60,000 people worshipping and he said oh this must be what heaven sounds like and I said well it'll be that times a million because that in a sense is what we're looking forward to is unbridled worship where the heavens and the earth will be filled with those who are worshipping so there's an evangelistic aspect to our worship now as we think about bringing all of God's people and call the elect all being called now so there's an evangelistic sense which it points forward to a great day you know it's great to see nearly all the seats filled here but think about it one day just think about what it will be like to worship and praise God in all his glory make a joyful noise to the Lord all the earth and that will be the reality one day the great reality that we're looking forward to which I hope is encouraging when we struggle sometimes with the smallness of our churches and the few people that worship and not here and not in Hope Church but sometimes when the singing's really bad and we think oh it doesn't sound that great and isn't that encouraging one day it will just blow our minds to be worshipping him so it's very much a call to all the earth and as believers

I think we're called to sing and have a song of joy in our lives verse 2 serve the Lord with gladness come into his presence with singing and I think that's a great command that we're given by God here now there are times undoubtedly times when we sing laments when we sing sad songs and that's absolutely right and in fact some of the most powerful times in our lives will be when we sing sad songs sometimes at funerals isn't that the case tremendous power and strength you get from singing sad some of the laments of the Psalms which are great because a lot of the modern songs that we sing often don't have that element but yet they're tremendous for us because there are times of deep, deep sadness but even in our sadness in the Psalms we have in the Old Testament they're not sad without hope but there are times when we suffer and we don't know why but we trust and we know that He knows and we know that He's with us and we know it will end and so we can sing praise even in sadness but there is also much reason and maybe we dwell too much on the negative side that there is much reason to serve the Lord with gladness and come into

[39:54] His presence with singing much reason to be joyful if you're a Christian this evening much reason much reason for you to be joyful and to consider and rejoice in Him both in praise and in serving singing with joy is a great thing and it's an encouraging thing and we shouldn't be afraid to express that in our praise because it's a command that we're giving but also serving Him with true gladness serve the Lord with gladness is part of our worship we know that we come together and we serve Him by coming to worship but our lives is a recognition also we saw that before of worship and we are to serve Him in our lives with true pleasure and gladness the word gladness here is a

word that is used in the Old Testament for the kind of response that the people of God had when they went up to festivals and there are lots of festivals in the Old Testament times of celebration times of thanksgiving times of joy when they came together and they put aside their work and they did things together in celebration to the living God with happiness and with joy and we're told here to be people who come into His presence and who serve the Lord with gladness

I know sometimes I serve the Lord with a scowl obedience is like medicine how often are we in our lives like the big brother in the parable ha!

I've served you all these years what have I had from it? just tough difficult a sweat that's miserable obedience is difficult for us and we have this negative relationship with our Father in Heaven who we think is a hard taskmaster and He's not a joy to serve where is our glad and willing service to the living God rather than sometimes that miserable sense of well I ought to do this I better do this I should do this I don't really want to but I will because we have lost that sense of joy I love watching European athletics that were on this summer I'm not a great athlete and I don't do athletics but I loved seeing the joy of the winners when they won the race with all the discipline of this preparations paid off when they got a gold medal and you know in the race of life for us it's already been won it's very different from the athletics on the television where they are working and earning and receiving a gold for us the race is already won by Jesus Christ it's already been won we are simply asked to run alongside Him in our lives and enjoy the benefits of His victory and that's a wonderful and glorious reality for us

He's with us He's won the victory you don't need to go to the cross you don't need to pay the price you don't need to earn your way He's won these things there's much reason for rejoicing in our Christian lives and it's a sinful reality when we fail to do so as this psalm reminds us and of course as we will consider tomorrow in much more detail we have much joy because of the crucifixion because of the death event of Jesus because of His resurrection over death which means that death is not the end and that there is a great hope and a great life for us in Christ when He promises and He has made many promises and we need it's good to remember them that He will wipe away every tear every reason for despair every failing every shame every failure every estrangement from Him every fear of death we have Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and that's why we rejoice ultimately not because of ourselves and we don't go into the world saying I've got a great cause of rejoicing because I'm so good with God and I've done so much for God it's not we should never give that impression that rejoicing and praising we have is all the glory belongs to God and the deep joy that comes from knowing Him we watched a film as a church in the summer we did some different things at a church and we watched a film a Christian film called Show Me Your Glory

I don't know if any of you have seen that it's on Amazon Prime or something like that and it's really a film that speaks about the miraculous intervention of God in people's lives not everyday ordinary events but in really miraculous ways that God and it was you know it was it was very honest it was really great and it recognized these things don't happen every day but it was giving glory to God for the miraculous encounters you know there was a militant Muslim who was a bit like the Apostle Paul before he was converted whose life he was going around killing Christians and God Jesus revealed Himself remarkably to him when he was in prison at his lowest end it's a story of addicts and of prostitutes at the end of their life at the end of their tether really where they were hopeless where Jesus appeared miraculously to them whatever you would think theologically of these things it was very real and you know what really amazing about these things they all had a common thread when Jesus revealed

[45 : 58] Himself to them there was both kind of astonishing awe and wonder and light but also unspeakable joy unspeakable joy in the presence of Jesus Christ and His love which they recognised having been in utter and complete darkness and one of the most and I've just ruined this film for you because I've probably told you everything about it one of the most amazing things was a child who had cancer a small boy who had cancer and his parents were Christians and his parents basically gave him over to the Lord and said whatever you will do with this child Lord and I'll tell you what happened in the end but this little child was as bright as a button in hospital in the emergency in the ward in the room he had and there was a nurse who was not a believer who came into that room and would come into that room every day and say this is my happy place this was this was her happy place in the room of a dying boy of cancer of four years old and his Christian parents was happy about that and yet she who this girl who wasn't even a Christian longed to get into that room

every day when she was on duty because it was her happy place it was the peace and joy and miraculous reality and presence of God in that place that powerfully spoke to me and to many others who were watching so then even in the darkest days when we have no answer we know we're not abandoned we know we're not alone and our worship can be marked by joy how often are our lives marked by being misery guts moaning complaining grumbling these are marks of faithlessness not marks of trust and trust doesn't just come in the easy moments of life they come often in the darkest times of life so as believers we're called to sing lives have the song of our lives are to be songs of joy and that is because verse 3 reminds us we've experienced a changed heart know that the Lord know that the Lord

He is God the Lord being the Savior the Redeemer it is He who made us we are His we are His people the sheep of His pasture this is a psalm of testimony a psalm of trust a psalm of belief and that we can sing praise and joy in our lives because of what Jesus Christ has done He's our Lord He's our Savior He's changed our heart He's our great shepherd we are the sheep of His pasture we are His people He's our King that's what we acknowledge when we praise Him that's what we're saying this evening and maybe you're battling with that maybe you're struggling to profess Him as Lord maybe you're afraid of professing Him maybe you're afraid of sitting at the Lord's table for a million different reasons and yet He says that's what you're called to as someone who has put their trust in God and if you haven't He calls you to put your trust in God and know that you're His people and know that you're His sheep and the sheep of His pasture it's a wonderful thing it's a great thing we are His

He has committed this evening to transforming our hearts and how good that is how good that is if you know your heart how good that is as I think of mine how good it is to know that He is committed and He is promised to change our heart and to renew us and so we're called to listen to His voice as His sheep aren't we?

Sheep know the Good Shepherd and they follow Him are called to listen to Him to hear His voice in His Word and preaching in the Bible as we open it in our conscience as it's moved and moved by His Spirit and taught by Him so that we get to that place where in our lives we hear His voice saying this is the way walk in it that we're told in Isaiah 30-21 and we're not alone that we're guided by Him what reasons for joy that is and in a world where there's so much insecurity so much that is unknown so much that we can't have any control over maybe especially when you're getting older and I'm getting older to know that there's no fear in death even though it's unknown to us in many ways but knowing that He walks with us in the valley of the shadow and that He will take us through it great reasons for joy and I think lastly as we just think about Him we remember tonight I hope before tomorrow that we'll be a people who give thanks to Him and bless His name which is really the end of the psalm you know enter His gates with thanksgiving

His courts with praise give thanks to Him bless His name how often does He say it it's only five verses and He just it's like a it's like a a fountain an overflowing word of thanksgiving and praise for the Lord is good His steadfast love endures forever and His faithfulness to all generations the Lord is good that is the foundational fundamental deepest truth in the universe that if we lose sight of we will lose our faith if God is not good we are damned if God is not good there is no hope and so in the darkest moment we can still and we must say God is good His steadfast love endures forever and that calls for faith it calls for trust it calls for the Spirit of God to renew us so we can see it I know unbelievers struggle to see that and I know that sin blinds us to it so often in our lives and maybe it is the case that we all need to pray more this evening that we can shout triumphantly that God is good and His steadfast love does endure forever and His faithfulness to all generations may it be that we can see that and that we can praise Him tomorrow and worship Him with adoration and sometimes it's a shame on us isn't it as Christians it's a shame on us if we are thankless children if we are thoughtless self-absorbed we shrug our shoulders at the cross and say

[53:18] I know it all when we think obedience is a drag and that we're missing out really on what really is life and when we blame God for everything being so tough and commitment being so unreasonable God is good and so my challenge to myself from when I preached this recently sorry in Leith and I preached last night the week before and I challenged the congregation to and myself each day to turn away turn our hearts from evil and from worthless things and turn our eyes from worthless things and I encouraged them to pray that daily and I then the next week encouraged them and I encouraged you and myself again to start every day giving thanks giving thanks for everything you have none of it is deserved and yet

He gives us it freely and fully and always go back to the cross especially giving thanks for that and join the Old Testament believers and the New Testament believers and all generations to pray for our hearts to be softened our eyes to be opened and to give thanks for Jesus Christ and for salvation not just as some kind of future proofing for the last day but that we've been born we've been born anew we've moved from death to life today today today we've been moved from death and our lives are to be worshipful testimonies to our world outside that there is a God there is a God to whom we're all accountable and we will all stand one day before and that it will draw people every conversation every chance meeting every happy event every sad experience through all the laughter and the tears that we're able to give thanks Amen let's pray Father God we ask and pray that you'd help us to give thanks help us to be a thankful people as we come to celebrate the Lord's Supper tomorrow to remember and to look back but also to look forward to plead your promises to remind ourselves that the Lord is good and help us to found our lives on that great reality that is expressed through your sacrificial love and the atoning sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and may we embrace you in that and give ourselves fully to you and we pray if there are any this evening who are maybe on the edge of that commitment may they just fall over into the arms of Jesus Christ and entrust their lives to this God who is so good and trust him for the questions and the doubts and the fears and the insecurities and trust him for the sins we feel can't be forgiven and trust him in his word and in his promises and in his goodness and in his grace and give all of us we pray thankful hearts we ask it in Jesus name

Amen well we couldn't really sing anything else other than Psalm 100 to close with having done and looked at that word so we're going to sing the traditional version of Psalm 100 and may we sing it with joy and thanksgiving and with just a deep sense of heartfelt gratitude sing to the Lord with cheerful voice him said with worth his praise foretell come ye before him and rejoice rejoice for that the Lord is God indeed with us our aid he did us make we are his strong he our feet and for his feet he doth us take who entered in his gates with grace approach with his!

approach with his course and tune praise God and bless his name always for it is his soul to you for why the Lord the God is good his mercy is forever sure his mercy is truth true all times were stood and shall promise to age tenure the grace of the Lord

Jesus Christ be with you and all God's people Amen. and and you and you