

13.11.22 am

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Date: 13 November 2022

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning. Good morning. A warm welcome to this Remembrance Day service today. Remembrance Day service today. You're especially welcome. You're especially welcome.

There's tea and coffee at the end, and please, if you're able to stay behind, it'd be good to get the chance to enjoy fellowship together. We're going to begin this time of worship, and we're going to sing to God's praise from Psalm 46, and we'll sing from verse 1 to verse 7.

As we approach 11 o'clock. God is our refuge and our strength, and strength a present aid.

Therefore, although the earth remove, we will not be afraid.

We sing from verse 1 down to verse 7. The Lord of hosts upon our side doth constantly remain. The God of Jacob is our refuge, us safely to maintain. We'll stand to sing to God's praise.

God is the refuge and our strength, in streets of present aid.

[1 : 1 0] Therefore, although the earth be good, we will not be afraid.

Though hell's a mist of seas be cast, Though water soaring may untroubled be.

Yet o'er the hills, by swelling seas do share, A river lives, through streams do glide, The city of our God, The holy place, Wherein the Lord Most high hath is adored.

God in the mist of her doth dwell, Nothing shall her remove, The Lord to her, and help her will, And not right airy do.

The kingdom race should march us lead, The kingdom's movement, Where the Lord God uttered.

[3 : 2 4] His voice the earth did melt for fear, The Lord of hosts upon our side doth constantly remain.

The God of Jacob's our refuge Are safely to maintain Just read a few passages from God's word As we approach 11 o'clock These minutes of remembrance At the end of the psalm that we sang Psalm 46 verse 10 Be still and know that I am God Among the heathen I will be exalted I on earth will be exalted high

Our God who is the Lord of hosts Is still upon our side The God of Jacob Our refuge forever will abide In the words of Jesus in John 14 Spoken to troubled disciples Jesus said Peace I leave with you My peace I give you I do not give to you as the world gives Do not let your hearts be troubled And do not be afraid Isaiah 40 Do you not know, have you not heard?

The Lord is the everlasting God The creator of the ends of the earth He will not grow tired or weary And his understanding no one can fathom He gives strength to the weary And increases the power of the weak Even youths grow tired and weary And young men stumble and fall But those who hope in the Lord Will renew their strength They will soar on wings like eagles They will run and not grow weary They will walk and not be faint Isaiah 43 But now this is what the Lord says He who created you, O Jacob He who formed you, O Israel Fear not For I have redeemed you I have summoned you by name You are mine When you pass through the waters I will be with you And when you pass through the rivers

They will not sweep over you When you walk through the fire You will not be burned The flames will not set you ablaze For I am the Lord, your God The Holy One of Israel Your Saviour Then at the end of Romans 8 The Apostle Paul says For I am convinced That neither death nor life Neither angels nor demons Neither the present Nor the future Nor any powers Neither height nor depth Nor anything else In all creation Will be able to separate us From the love of God That is in Christ Jesus Our Lord And just remembering The words of Jesus In John chapter 6

[7 : 2 8] As the crowds Went away from him And Jesus turns to his disciples And he says to them Will you also go away? And their response to Jesus Was to whom else Can we go?

You alone Have the words of Eternal life Can I ask now For those who are able Please stand As we observe Two minutes Of silence Please stand Through Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Please take a seat.

[10:06] Thank you. And let's come to God again in prayer. Thank you.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this gift that we have of your day. We thank you for the privilege that we have to be able to come into this place, your house, without fear, not anxious in our hearts because of the threat of bombs and guns.

We thank you for the peace and the steadiness that we enjoy at this time and have enjoyed for many years in this country.

And we remember this day that that peace came at great cost. And Lord, we give thanks this day for the lives of so many that were laid down to procure the peace that we enjoy today.

We think of those whose names are inscribed on the war memorial along the road. And all that these names speak to family lines that have continued.

[11:33] We think of those who think back on grandparents and those in the distant past who sat with them and who left from these shores to go to a place of conflict and never returned.

We pray for those who have memories of grief, their own grief and the grief of their parents and grandparents. And we pray, Lord, for those who laid down their lives in war but who lived on after the years of war.

And we think of Donald and Harris House. Others like him across the islands as they think back.

And as they have memories perhaps that still are haunting to this day.

And we ask, Lord, that you would draw near to them. That you would bless them. That you would comfort them. That you would strengthen them on this day. We praise you for that great love.

That is demonstrated in the laying down of a life. That you would love. And as we remember so many who lived in these communities. We remember our Lord Jesus.

[12:53] Who said greater love has no one than this and he laid down his life for his friends. And we thank you that we become friends of God when we put our faith in Jesus.

We thank you that we are saved. Not because of what we do. But because of what he has done on our behalf. We acknowledge with thanksgiving that it's his blood that brings us forgiveness of sin. It's his death that gives us the opportunity to take hold of that eternal life. It's his sacrifice that enables us to have eternal peace.

And eternal freedom. So we thank you, Lord, for the memories of all who have gone before us in time. And we thank you for the Lord Jesus who died and who rose from the grave.

And promised resurrection life to all who believe. So bless us, we pray. We pray for each other at this time. We pray for the little ones.

[14:02] We thank you for their gentle voices that we hear in this place just now. And for the joy that that brings to us. And we pray for peace for our time.

And we pray for peace for their time. That they would not know the horrors of war in their lifetime. And that they would know the continuation of the freedom that we enjoy today to be able to come together in the name of Jesus.

We pray for them. We pray for those that you have set an authority over us in government, both national and local. We pray for our king, Charles.

giving thanks for the long service of his mother over many years. So she pointed us to Jesus. And we pray for our king asking that he too would look to Christ.

And depend upon him. So hear our prayers. And continue with us in this service. Help us to be in the spirit of worship on your day.

[15:08] And we pray these things in Jesus' name. And for his sake. Amen. Boys and girls, I think if you can maybe come out just now.

And we'll have a wee think about things. Thanks. Thanks. How are you all today? You all okay? Now, boys and girls, as you look around the church today, is there anything that looks different to normal? Henry?

People are wearing these red poppies, yeah. A lot of us are wearing these red poppies. And what can you tell me about the poppies?

What do you know about the poppies? Henry, your hands up again. Yeah, so after the war, where there had been so much fighting and so many people had fallen and died, in a big field or in fields, what they saw was these flowers starting to grow and they were the poppy flower, these red

flowers.

[16 : 39] And that reminded them of the fact that life was coming through. Lives had been laid down, people had died.

But people had died so that those who would come after them would have life. So that was one of the things that they thought about. And with the poppy as well, what does the poppy remind us of, do you think?

Reminds us of the war and it reminds us of what happened in these fields. But what colour is the poppy, did you see? When we look at it? It's red, yeah.

And what does the red in the poppy make us think of? Fraser? Well, you're getting one step ahead of me. But yeah, that's the right answer.

But the red in the poppy, it makes us think about blood, doesn't it? Because in the war, and it's so important that we remember the war, there were so many people who died.

[17 : 43] Their blood was shed. And they died. Why do you think they died? It's because they, John Rory? So we could live.

So that we could have freedom. And what do you think made them do that? Do you think it's because the government, I know that there was a thing that came out from the government saying, you're called up when you have to go to a war.

And they were probably scared. Because there was guys who were very, very young. Maybe just like 16 years old. And they were getting called away from places like Harris to go and fight.

And knowing that they probably wouldn't come back. And so they got called up. But what do you think was in their hearts that made them go to war?

Michael? Faith, yes. Henry? Pardon? Well, no. I'm not thinking about that just now. But when they thought about their families, and they thought about brothers and sisters and mums and dads, who were in a place of danger, why do you think they went to war?

[18 : 54] John Rory? And why did they want to do that? To protect them. And why did they want to protect them? Because they loved them.

So there's this huge, big love that they felt for their family and their friends. And that's what caused them to go out and be so brave on the battlefield.

So the poppies remind us of the blood that was shed in so many lives. But when we think about those who laid down their lives, we're thankful for them.

We must remember them. But who do they point us to? Fraser? Fraser? Who do they point us to? We think about the blood of those who fell. But who else's blood do we think of when we think about the poppy? Michael? Jesus' blood. Because he laid down his life so that we could have peace and life that lasts forever.

[20 : 01] And why did he do that? He did it because he loves us. So today, we have an interest in the blood of those that was shed in the past in war.

And we have an interest in the blood of Jesus. Because he died to save us. And we're going to sing about that now. And can it be the hymn is going to come on the screen in just a second.

Mission Praise 33. And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Saviour's blood. Died he for me who caused this pain?

For me who him to death pursued amazing love. How can it be that thou, my God, should die for me? So let's sing this hymn and let's think about the blood of Jesus that saves us from all sin that we trust in him.

And it shows us of his amazing love for us. So let's sing this hymn Now theu of Jesus I'm telling me that I should gain An interest in the Savior's mind Died he for me who caused his pain For me who lived to death pursued Amazing love, how can it be That thou, my God, should strive for me Amazing love, how can it be

[22 : 03] That thou, my God, shouldst die for me Tis mystery or immortal eyes Who can explore this strange design In vain the firstborn set of trice To serve the depths of love divine Tis mercy on, let earth adore Let angels' minds inquire no more Tis mercy on, let earth adore Let angels' minds inquire no more He left his Father's throne above

So free, so infinite is grace Empty himself of all our love I'm glad for Adam's helpless race Tis mercy on him and son free For all my God, he found me Tis mercy on him and son free For all my God, he found me Long my imprisoned spirit lay Fast bound in sin and nature's night Thine night in use

Thine night in use a quickening rain I walked the dungeon flamed with light My chains fell off, my heart was free My bones went forth and followed thee My chains fell off, my heart was free I rose, went forth and followed thee No condemnation now I dread Jesus and all in him is mine Alive in him, my living hand I'm clothed in righteousness divine Bold I approach the eternal throne I claim the crown to Christ my own Bold I approach the eternal throne I claim the crown to Christ my own I claim the crown to Christ my own Amen Amen Well just as the boys and girls go through to Sunday school If I could just highlight one or two intimations As usual, there's various things happening in the course of the week that you'd expect Evening service at six Ladies fellowship at the usual time, usual places Little fishes and Road to Recovery on Tuesday Prayer meeting on Wednesday On Zoom and in person here in the church Clubs on Friday as usual Jam and Connect and Rooted One request in terms of Connect Joanne is doing decoupage I've now figured out how to say that And if you've got any jam jars That would be helpful for Friday So anyone who's got jam jars Please could you drop them into the church Before Friday for the Connect Club That would be helpful Services next Lord's Day by Taken by myself, God willing And there'll be a Thanksgiving meal Thursday 24th of November At 6.15pm There's a sign-up sheet for supplying food in the foyer Hospitality team three on duty There's an offering uplifted for the Harris Food Bank Donations of cash or goods for distribution would be welcome [27 : 18] So please take note of that Thanksgiving meal And take note also of the opportunity to make donations of cash or goods on that day The Deacons Court did make a donation towards this A few, maybe a month or two back But it's a great opportunity to add to that And to help practically at this time For those who are going to go to the meal There's a wee sheet here that you can take at the front Just to keep your eye on the different things that would be helpful to donate to the food bank I think these are all the intimations And we'll turn now to God's Word We'll look to Luke chapter 23 Luke chapter 23 And we'll read from verse 1 to verse 25

Of this chapter This is God's Word Then the whole assembly rose and led him That's Jesus Off to Pilate And they began to accuse him Saying We have found this man subverting our nation He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar And claims to be Christ A king So Pilate asked Jesus Are you the king of the Jews?

Yes, it is as you say Jesus replied Then Pilate announced to the chief priests and to the crowd I find no basis for a charge against this man But they insisted He stirs up the people all over Judea by his teaching He started in Galilee And has come all the way here On hearing this Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean When he learned that Jesus was under Herod's jurisdiction He sent him to Herod He was also in Jerusalem at that time When Herod saw Jesus He was greatly pleased Because for a long time He had been wanting to see him From what he had heard about him He hoped to see him perform some miracle He plied him with many questions But Jesus gave him no answer The chief priests and the teachers of the law Were standing there vehemently accusing him Then Herod and his soldiers ridiculed and mocked him Dressing him in an elegant robe They sent him back to Pilate That day Herod and Pilate became friends Before this they had been enemies Pilate called together the chief priests The rulers and the people And said to them You brought me this man as one Who was inciting the people to rebellion I have examined him in your presence And I have found no basis for your charge against him Neither has Herod For he has sent them back to us As you can see He has done nothing to deserve death Therefore I will punish him And then release him With one voice they cried out Away with this man Release Barabbas to us Barabbas had been thrown into prison For an insurrection in the city And for murder Wanting to release Jesus Pilate appealed to them again But they kept shouting Crucify him Crucify him For the third time He spoke to them

Why? What crime has this man committed? I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty Therefore I will have him punished And then release him But with loud shouts They insistently demanded that he be crucified And their shouts prevailed So Pilate decided to grant their demand He released the man who had been thrown into prison For insurrection and murder The one they asked for And surrendered Jesus To their will Amen And may God bless that reading Of his word To us Let's pause for a moment And pray Again Our heavenly father We thank you For the The word of God As it's opened before us We thank you for the encouragement

[32 : 05] That we receive As we sing That psalm Psalm 46 Where we are reminded That you are the God Who is on our side The God who is with us The God Who is our refuge And our strength The one That we can go to In times of trouble And in all times And we thank you For the passage

Before us today Where we see The The cost Of our salvation Where we see The reality Of what needed To happen In order for us to Take refuge And find strength In you We see Jesus Your son Our saviour I've been nailed To a cross In the verses Ahead of us We hear the shouts Of the crowd Demanding that he Be crucified And we see that In accordance With that strange

Design That we have sung of Jesus willingly Went To that cross To suffer And die So that our sin Could be forgiven The innocent one In the place Of the guilty The saviour In the place Of sinners Give us eyes To see that We pray As we meditate Upon your word Help us We ask Be with each of us Here And we pray For those Who are absent From us today Those who are Struggling for Different reasons And we We bring them To you In prayer Also We pray for Neil Cameron Today We thank you That in the course Of this week He has come Through surgery We thank you That it seems To have been Successful And as he Travels From Inverness Back to Home today We ask That you Would be Near to him That you Give him Safety and Travel That you Would increase His strength And we ask

That in due Course We would See him Once more Encouraging Us With a smile And his Words at the Door We pray For him We pray For KTAC And the family Asking that you Would bless Them And enable Them to know That you are Close to them In this day We pray for Others Lord Who are Struggling We pray for Dolalek From Stockinish As he Is now In Bethesda We pray that You would be Near to him As he approaches What looks like The end of Life We pray That he would Know your Presence with him That he would Know your Peace That your Word That he has Heard so Much over The years Would be Brought Back to his Mind and his Memory and The power Of the Holy Spirit We thank you That you are Able to Minister to Us Holy Spirit Even when We are In a Subconscious State So we pray For him And for Elaine And we pray For Andrew And for Donald And for Their families Minister to Them We pray At this Time We thank You for Hannah Being back With us Today After a Spell In hospital And we Pray for Your hand Upon her That you Would strengthen Her We pray For Kathy Campbell In hospital Still That you Would guide And that you Would direct On the way Ahead there And that And that you Would continue To know That contentment Of being In your Presence And we Pray for Kenny's Mum From Scalpy Mary We thank you For her Coming out Of hospital And for the Measure of health And strength That she Has And we Pray that you Would bless Her And that she Too would Know Your hand Upon her For good And many Others Lord as Well That we Can think Of Who wrestle With different Things Some known To us Others

Not known To us But known To you We bring Them to you In prayer And ask That you Would meet Them And that you Would meet Each one Of us At the point Of our need So hear Our prayers And continue With us We pray Comfort Those who Are grieving Increase The strength Of those Who are Weak And open The hearts Open the Eyes Unblock The ears Of those Who still Do not Hear The call Of Jesus And we Pray these Things in Jesus name And for His sake Amen We'll sing Now two Verses The last Two verses Of Psalm 46 In Gaelic Be still And know That I am God Among the Heathen I Will be Exalted I on Earth Will be Exalted Higher God Who is The Lord Of hosts Is still Upon our Side The God Of Jacob Our Refuge Forever Will Abide We'll remain Seated to Sing These verses To God's Praiseove

[37 : 20] The happier if we get impatient.

SONG PLAYS SONG PLAYS SONG PLAYS
SONG PLAYS SONG PLAYS SONG PLAYS

If you could turn please with me to the passage that we read in Luke 23.

SONG PLAYS Now it's important for us when we're going through a study to every now and again just kind of hit pause and remember what we're reading.

[41 : 10] We've been going through Luke's gospel for quite a long time. And let's just for a second go back to the very beginning of Luke's gospel and remember what this actually is.

Luke chapter 1 and verse 1.

So as we look at Luke's gospel, we've got to remember that this is a report.

It's an account that has been carefully investigated by Dr. Luke. And he's writing specifically for this character that we know little about called Theophilus.

So as we take Luke's gospel in our hands, we have this image of a man, Theophilus. And he's struggling.

[43 : 07] And he's struggling.

There's a wrestle going on. There's a swing between faith and doubt, between belief and unbelief. There are some here this morning, and I'm quite sure that you're still undecided, unsure about Jesus.

And Luke, in his gospel, he writes to people just like you. And what we'll see today is various responses to Jesus in the passage.

We'll see the responses of Pontius Pilate, because he's forced to make a decision about Jesus.

And we'll see the response of Herod, again, as he is brought before Jesus.

[44 : 33] We'll glance again at the crowds as they gather around Jesus, and we'll see Barabbas and his response to Jesus.

So we're going to think about various responses to Jesus in the time that we have today. But before we get to that, I want to think, first of all, about what Luke is teaching us very clearly in this passage. And that's the fact that Jesus is righteous. So two points today. First of all, the righteousness of Jesus.

And secondly, responses to Jesus. And coming in at verse 1, we see that it's the righteousness of Jesus that's been come into question.

It's been called into question as Jesus is brought before Pilate. Jesus is on trial. So we see in verse 1, it says there, The whole assembly rose and led him, that's Jesus, off to Pilate.

[45 : 37] So the whole assembly, that was the Sanhedrin. And we've come across them already in our studies. These were the most powerful men, Jewish men of that day and in that place.

And they approached Pilate. Now Pilate, Pontius Pilate, he was the procurator. He was the man who had the authority to grant the decision to have Jesus executed.

The Jews couldn't do that themselves. They were under governance. They couldn't just make a decision and crucify someone. They had to seek the approval of Rome.

And so that came through Pilate. And we see them approaching Pilate with various charges to bring against Jesus. Now if you were to glance back at chapter 22 and verse 71, when these same men are trying to incriminate Jesus, the charge that they get him on is the charge of blasphemy.

Once they establish that Jesus is claiming to be the Son of God, they say, we have enough. We have enough to incriminate him, so let's take him off and let the legal proceedings begin.

[46 : 50] But when they come to Pilate, who is acting on behalf of Rome, Pilate, he's not interested in any of the religious nuances.

Pilate couldn't care less what they said about their religion. So they have to approach Pilate from a different angle. And what they say to Pilate is that Jesus is causing a political unrest.

They began to accuse Jesus, verse 2, saying, We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Christ, a king.

So what they're saying to Pilate is, This Jesus, he's a political terrorist. He's a revolutionary. He's a threat to Rome.

He's trying to undermine the whole Roman system. He's trying to pull it down. And one of the ways he's doing that, Pilate, is he's trying to stop us paying our taxes.

[47 : 59] So what they do here is they just make up a charge. They know Pilate is not going to be persuaded by the charge of blasphemy, so they have to find something else.

And they come in at this angle. They say, Jesus is trying to stop the payment of taxes. But we know, and they knew, that that was blatantly false.

Because if you go to chapter 20, you don't need to go there just now. Just read out the account from chapter 20. These same men come to Jesus with a trick question.

And they say to Jesus, Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Jesus saw through their duplicity and said to them, Show me a denarius. Let me see a coin.

Whose portrait and inscription are on it? Caesar's, they replied. Jesus said to them, Then give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.

[49 : 00] So Jesus clearly taught, and they'd heard it with their own ears. Jesus clearly taught that taxes should be paid. Jesus clearly taught that those who were in positions of authority, they should be respected, not undermined.

And so the whole assembly, as they approached Pilate, they know that these charges that they're bringing, they were false. And Pilate knew.

And Pilate repeatedly said, that these charges against Jesus were false. They would not stick.

Pilate repeatedly said, that Jesus was innocent, that he was righteous, that he was not guilty of

what they were coming at him with.

You can look at verse 4, verse 14, verse 22. Three times Pilate says, what you're saying is rubbish. But still, the legal process against Jesus is forced forward in this hour when darkness reigns, as Jesus termed it.

there is a determination to kill Jesus. But what we need to see here, and what Luke is repeatedly showing us, is that Jesus is righteous.

[50 : 32] He's not guilty. as this process continues, what we see at this stage and as it continues, is that Jesus is righteous.

Yes, he's been punished, but he's not been punished because of some guilt in him. Jesus has been shown here to be in the wrong, but it's crystal clear that he's not in the wrong.

Jesus is going to die here. But what Luke wants us to see is that Jesus is not dying for his own guilt. He was completely guiltless.

He was completely sinless. and he needed to be. Because we know from the beginning of this gospel that Jesus came to be our substitute.

Jesus came to live the righteous life that you and I can't live. Not one of us in this room today are righteous.

[51 : 50] We're all guilty. We're all sinners. And Jesus came to live that life that we could not live, that we cannot live, that we will not live.

And so we need to see here he is righteous. Pilate could see it. The guys who were after him could see it and they hated it. But we need to be very clear that Jesus is righteous.

He lived a righteous life that we could not live. He came to die the death that we deserved to die.

And so what we're seeing here, what we're going to see here as it continues, is that the righteous one is standing in the place of the unrighteous.

the sinless one is being treated as if he was a sinner. The innocent one is being treated as if he was guilty.

And he's standing there for us. 2 Corinthians 5.21 we often go to, for our sake, he, God, made him, Jesus, to be sin.

[53 : 16] who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. The righteousness of Jesus is the first point.

We need to see that. And the second thing we come to in this passage is the responses to Jesus.

And as we go through these responses, let's think about where we fit into this.

Because we see four responses to Jesus in this section. And the first response is that of Pilate. And Pilate's response to Jesus is cowardice, basically.

You know, Pilate is a coward. And that's very clear as we watch the way that he manoeuvres in this account.

As we watch Pilate in this conversation, this dialogue with Jesus, we can see that it's Pilate that's on trial, not Jesus.

[54 : 30] Pilate is the one who's squirming. Pilate is the one who is nery. And we see this majestic composure on the part of Jesus.

Verses one to four, look at the assembly coming forward with their charges. They're trying to force Pilate to pronounce that Jesus is guilty, because they need that order.

Pilate, as he's cornered here, as he's pressurized to give this order for crucifixion, he's not convinced that he should give the order.

He's not convinced that Jesus is guilty in any way, shape, or form. Jesus, in speaking of Jesus, in verse four, Pilate says, I find no basis for a charge against this man.

And the crowds are listening. And the religious leaders are listening, and they don't like that answer.

And Pilate, as he feels the pressure of those who are leaning in on him, and as he feels the pressure of the crowd, as the unrest within the crowd becomes more and more audible, he realizes that if he sticks with this decision not to crucify Jesus, he's going to be unpopular.

[55 : 53] And then he hears that Jesus is from Galilee, and he thinks, ah, Galilee, I can get out of this decision.

So he sends Jesus off to Herod, and we'll look at that in a second, but very, very quickly, Herod sends Jesus back. And once again, Pilate has a decision to make.

and once again, he tries to avoid it. Verse 15, he affirms repeatedly the innocence of Jesus.

He says, there's no guilt in this man, there's no basis for these charges, why would I give an order for execution? Then he says this very strange thing, in verse 16, he says to them in verse 16, I will punish him.

He's done nothing to deserve death. He's innocent. So what will I do, says Pilate, the man of justice, I will punish him. I will flog him brutally, and then release him.

[57 : 20] But by now, the crowds are absolutely frenzied, and the streets are shaking with this chant of crucify him, and Pilate is still under pressure.

He still has to make a decision about Jesus. And in verse 22, he makes one last attempt to avoid having to give the order for crucifixion, but in verse 23, you can see the crowds are still insistent, and Pilate has to make a decision.

And so he decided for the sake of his own popularity, he decided in order to have a more comfortable reign and rule, he would just go with the crowds.

and he would reject Jesus. So Pilate, what does he do? He rejects Jesus. And we can sense here, he didn't want to.

Pilate can see here through the deceit of these religious leaders, and Pilate can see enough about Jesus to know that he's no ordinary man. Pilate was terrified of Jesus.

[58 : 40] Pilate's wife had said to him, in a dream I've been warned about this man, have nothing to do with his execution, have nothing to do with him. And so Pilate is in this dilemma, he doesn't know what to do, he doesn't want to give the order, he doesn't want to reject Jesus, but he's too scared to side with Jesus.

and so he sides with the crowds, and he gives the order to crucify Jesus, he rejects him.

And I wonder if there's anyone who can identify with this today. I think likely there are many people even in this room who try and try to put off making a decision about Jesus, because it's going to be costly.

So we hear the call of Jesus to trust him, to follow him, to profess that our faith is in him, but we know it's going to be costly, we know that there'll be people who will perhaps laugh at us, there'll be people who will freeze us out, there'll be people who will have a lower opinion of us if we decide to come out as Christians, and so we don't want to make a decision about Jesus, we look for a fence to sit on, but the trouble is there's no fence.

You're either with him or you're against him. We look for some kind of neutral place where we can be undecided, but there is no such place where we're either decided for him or we're decided against him, we're either condemned or we're saved.

[60 : 29] And for some of us, when we're asked the question, what will you do with Jesus, we do what Pilate did, we try to take the focus off ourselves, we say, well, what about this one and what about that one?

Let's try and send Jesus and the decision about Jesus to some other place. I wonder what they'll do, I wonder what he'll do, I wonder what she'll do, and yet Jesus keeps coming back.

The decision that we have to make about Jesus keeps coming back, and today, once more, you are being asked the question through the word of God, what will you do with Jesus? Will you accept him?

Will you trust him? Will you give your life to him? Or will you reject him? Pilate, every one of us, in a sense, stands where Pilate stood.

And on the last day, on that day of judgment, every one of us will be asked the question, what did you do with my son, Jesus?

[61 : 45] Did you trust him? Did you follow him? Or did you reject him? And send him away?

Week after week after week. You might not have wanted to, but there was pressure, there was that sense of cost, and week after week after week, you rejected him.

The noise of the crowd was too loud. The pressure of those around you was too intense, so you sent him away. You know, it is costly to trust in Jesus.

And the reality is we may, in fact, we will definitely lose the approval of some. That's what Pilate feared. But what's worse?

To lose the approval of a few so-called friends, or to lose your soul eternally, as Pilate did. So the first response we see here to Jesus is that of Pilate, and because of cowardice, because he wanted to be approved of by the world, he rejected Jesus.

[63 : 11] Much more briefly, we see Herod. And the response of Pilate is cowardice. The response of Herod is a callous unbelief.

And we see in Herod, in verses 8 and 9, that in contrast to Pilate, Herod wanted to see Jesus. Pilate couldn't get Jesus away from him quick enough.

He didn't want to see Jesus. He didn't want to have to make a decision about Jesus. But Pilate, he'd wanted to see Jesus for a while. When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because for a long time he had been wanting to see him.

From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform some miracle. He plied him with many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer. I think these are some of the most sobering words in the Bible.

Jesus gave him no answer. Jesus would not speak to Herod on this day. So why is this?

[64 : 19] Why did Jesus go silent on Herod? Because some of us might look in on this and say, did Jesus miss an evangelistic opportunity here? Did he have the chance to call Herod to be saved?

And he missed out on it somehow, but that that's not what happened. Jesus knew Herod's heart. And there was a season in Herod's life where he was listening to God.

Remember John the Baptist used to speak to Herod and challenge him and call him to repent, to change the way he was living and to look to Jesus.

And it says in Mark 6 and verse 20, when Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled, yet he liked to listen to him.

And so Herod had heard the truth about Jesus many, many times. Herod had heard many, many sermons from John the Baptist, that powerful speaker, but he didn't believe.

[65 : 32] And for every time that Herod heard the truth about Jesus and didn't believe, his heart got harder. And his ears started to close over.

And he saw and he heard less and less of Jesus. And now he has Jesus right in front of him. and he can hear nothing.

He feels nothing. And so Jesus says nothing to him. And there's a warning here.

Because our hearts can get hard like Herod's. You know, if you ever shake hands like I do at the door, if you shake hands with a bricklayer or someone who works with blocks, their hands are like leather.

They're hard as rock and you can stick pins in them. They won't feel it. They can pick up red hot dishes. They don't feel it because their hands are so calloused. Because they've been picking up block after block after block and over the course of time, this layer forms around the skin.

[67 : 01] And our hearts can get like that. For every sermon we hear, every time we pick up the word of God, we handle it, we hear the voice of Jesus saying, come to me, trust me, and we say, not today.

It's like another layer of unbelief comes around our hearts. And we can get to the point where we can see and hear nothing of Jesus.

We can get to the point where we sit in the place where Jesus is. And Jesus has promised to be with us today. Two or three of us even, if we were here meeting in his name, he says, I will be with you.

We can get to the place where we're sitting in an area where Jesus is, and the word of God is open. We hear nothing. We see nothing of our sin.

We see nothing of the beauty of Christ. And we feel nothing. We're planning next week's menu.

[68 : 17] Our minds are in the classroom. We're remembering the last song we heard. We're a thousand miles away.

And if that's you, your name might be Herod. Callous unbelief. That's what he'd got to.

Because week after week after week, he said, thank you, John, for the sermon. No, thank you, Jesus. Third point. The crowds.

And what we see of the crowds is they are changeable. They're fickle. You can track the crowds in the Gospel of Luke or any of these Gospels and to track the crowds is interesting and it's quite disturbing really.

Because they swing so wildly. A crowd always attracts a crowd. crowd. If four of us were to go out in that car park and stand looking up at the sky, it wouldn't take long before there was 40 all wondering what we're looking at.

[69 : 30] It's just the way a crowd works. And with Jesus, as he healed the sick and as he cast out demons and as he fed thousands, as he stilled the sea, as he even raised the dead, the crowds just got bigger and bigger.

They became more and more excited by Jesus. just a few days earlier, the crowds had been crying out for Jesus to be the king. Hosanna, they said. Let's have this Jesus as our king.

But now, just a few days later, the tune of the crowd has changed. The world has turned against Jesus and the cry was crucify him.

You know, it's not enough to be part of a crowd that moves around Jesus. It's not enough to sit in these chairs.

That won't save anybody. Crowds are fickle. our mood changes depending on what crowd we sit amongst.

[70 : 44] We don't get saved en masse. We get saved one by one. Think about the football ground. When you go to try to get access to a football ground, you buy your ticket and then you go to the turnstile and you get let in one by one by one.

Six people don't get through into Cali Park at the one time. It's one by one by one. An entry into heaven. Salvation through Jesus is one by one by one.

pilgrim. You have to do business personally with Jesus. You must come to Jesus as an individual. You must confess your sin.

You must ask him to come into your heart and be your savior and be your Lord. It's not enough to be in the crowd.

Crowds interchangeable. So we see Pilate, he's cowardly. So he sends Jesus away, gives the order for Jesus to be crucified.

[72 : 06] Because he's thinking more about himself and his comfort in this world than his soul in the torment of hell. Herod, callous unbelief.

He's listened to the call of Jesus so many times and said no thank you now that he can't hear anything and Jesus will not speak to him. Crowds are changeable and the last thing we see here is Barabbas.

And Barabbas in terms of the outward picture anyway, his situation he's converted. And we don't know what the heart of Barabbas looked like.

We don't know whether he was converted in the sense of being saved eternally, but his situation radically changed in that day. Barabbas was a guilty man, there was no question.

He's a terrorist. He was one who had been found guilty of murder. There was no question mark over Barabbas' guilt.

[73 : 11] And he's in prison, he's on death row, he's waiting for this cross that he will hang on. And Barabbas goes to his bed at night and he knows that he's a condemned man.

He's going to be executed. But then something happens in the night. There's a stir. This trial begins to progress against Jesus.

Barabbas. And in the morning, Barabbas, when he gets a knock on his prison door, discovers that he is now saved.

That night when he went to bed, he's condemned legally, awaiting crucifixion, but in the morning, he's saved. He's a free man.

And how can that be? Well, it's because of Jesus. And can you imagine Barabbas on the day of the crucifixion?

[74 : 20] Try to think of yourself in Barabbas' position on the day of the crucifixion. And he's standing there. a little after midday, and he's looking at Calvary, and he sees these three crosses.

And on the middle cross, he sees Jesus, the one who was released, the one that he was released because of.

And I wonder, Barabbas, as he looked there, I wonder, did he say to himself, that cross where Jesus is hanging, that was my cross.

That's where I was supposed to be dying. Because that's the truth of it. One commentator says, what an injustice it was to let a criminal go free and allow an innocent man to be put to death in his place.

However, that is what happened. And we can see in this tragic scene a picture of ourselves. We are all sinners. We have sinned in thought, word, and deed against the Lord Almighty, not just once, but many, many times.

[75 : 45] And an innocent man, the Holy Lamb of God, has been put to death death in our place. We're going to sing in just a moment.

Bearing shame and scoffing rude, in my place, condemned, he stood, sealed my pardon with his blood.

God, what did Barabbas do to deserve this? Well, he did nothing. He was saved by the grace of Jesus.

He was saved because Jesus stood in his place. And that's what's offered to us today. If we come to Jesus, if we believe in Jesus, if we ask for the grace of Jesus, we will receive it.

And then, as we read of the crucifixion, as we look to Calvary, as we see the cross, where Jesus died, we can say what Barabbas said, I hope.

[77 : 12] Bearing shame, scoffing rude, in my place, condemned, he stood, sealed my pardon with his blood. Hallelujah. What a Savior.

If you want to be saved today, this is the only way you can be saved. It's through the cross of Jesus. And if you can hear this today, then you're not where Herod was.

You still have opportunity to be saved by Jesus. Yes, there will be pressure. Yes, there will be disapproval.

You'll know something of what Pilate was fearful of. But what's the best thing? To face a little disapproval from those around us in the workplace?

face the disapproval of God in judgment on that last day and to be told by Jesus, depart from me.

[78 : 29] me. You rejected me when you had the chance of salvation. And now I must reject you.

Depart from me. I never knew you. What will you do with Jesus? How will you respond to Jesus?

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for the gospel message that Jesus, your son, came to this world to be our savior.

Never once did he sin. He lived that perfect righteous life that we could not live and he did it for us in our place. And yet the righteous one, the innocent one, was treated as one who was guilty.

The savior was treated as if he was a sinner. And we thank you that this was done for our salvation. We pray that you would help us to see this.

[79 : 55] I know my words cannot persuade anyone. Holy Spirit, we pray that you would strive with each of us, that we would hear the call of Jesus. and that it wouldn't be silence in our hearts.

And we pray that you would help us, knowing that we will face pressure if we side with Jesus. Help us not to be cowardly, but to put our faith in Christ, knowing that he is the savior.

To hear our prayers, take away our sin, grant us faith to respond in a way that will bring salvation to our souls and glory to your name.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll sing to finish 458 in mission praise. Man of sorrows, what a name. man of sorrows, what a name, for the son of God who came, ruined sinners to be claimed. Alleluia, what a savior. a savior. Melodized against shame, I'm ghost of faith, I'm mamped sure.

[81 : 35] His golden sovereign is is Veiled to my name, my heart, and sign, byèle gu■■■■, he she Lit has ta What ca Helpless we, sparkless Lamb of God was He, Full absorbent, glad in me, Alleluia, what a Savior.

Lifted up was He to die, If His finish was His cry, Now with heaven exalted high, Alleluia, what a Savior.

When He comes, our glorious King, All His once and once to pray, Then our new His song will sing, Alleluia, what a Savior.

Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and forevermore. Amen.