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Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Good morning. A warm welcome to the service this morning. Those who are visiting with us, there might be one or two, especially good to see you. And if you've been away for a wee while and you're back today, it's good to see you as well.

The intimations, I don't have a copy, but if we just flick through them, Mary Catherine, that would be helpful. Evening service tonight, 6 to 7 as we carry on going through the life of Abraham now. Ladies' Fellowship tomorrow evening and Little Fishers and Road to Recovery on Tuesday. Usual time, usual place. Prayer meeting on Wednesday, particular Thanksgiving theme, it's Thanksgiving week.

So prayer meeting on Wednesday, we'll have that Thanksgiving theme. And there'll be a meal, congregational meal on Thursday, God willing. That's at quarter past six and you got the chance to read that.

I don't think I got to, I didn't get to read it, I wasn't quick enough. But Thanksgiving meal, there it is. Thursday at half past six, sign up sheep for supplying food in the foyer. Hospitality team three on duty.

[1 : 03] All very welcome to come and share in a Thanksgiving meal together. And remember the opportunity there is to give donations to the food bank. And please take a note of that and help if you're able to.

No jam, connect or rooted this week. You're on holiday, boys and girls. So you'll be doing various things. Services next Sunday. I'll be taking the morning service, God willing. And the evening service at six. We would usually have, it's Hamish Taylor that is taking the evening service. We would usually have a fellowship on the last Sunday of the month. But I'm conscious that Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the faith mission are over in Graver doing the follow-up from the tent mission. And there's a fellowship, evening service and fellowship there on the Sunday night.

So to allow people to go over there and to give them the encouragement of that. And for us to be encouraged with them, we won't have a fellowship next Sunday night. But I would encourage those who are able to go over to head over that direction.

[2 : 04] And I think there's CDs of Kevin Norman at the door and Jenna. And you have the church cleaning there as well. And I think these are all the notices.

So let's begin this time of worship. And we'll sing to God's praise. That paraphrase of Psalm 23, Mission Praise 1008. The Lord's my shepherd, I will not want.

The Lord's my shepherd, I will not want.

He makes me lie in pasture tree. He leads me by the still, still waters.

His goodness restores my soul. And I will trust in you alone.

[3 : 09] And I will trust in you alone. For your endless mercy follows me.

Your goodness will lead me home. He guides my ways in righteousness. And he annoys my head with oil.

And my cup it overflows with joy. I free store his pure delight.

And I will trust in you alone. And I will trust in you alone.

For your endless mercy follows me. Your goodness will lead me home.

[4 : 15] And though I walk the darkest path. I will not fear the evil one.

For you are with me and you're broad and staff. And I will trust in you alone.

And I will trust in you alone. And I will trust in you alone. For your endless mercy follows me.

Your goodness will lead me home. Let's unite our hearts in prayer.

Let's pray together. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for that psalm that is paraphrased in the verses that we have sung.

[5 : 26] We thank you for the promise of that psalm that was penned maybe a thousand years before Jesus came into this world.

A promise of one who would come to be the shepherd, the good shepherd. The one who would be able to give us satisfaction, true deep satisfaction in life that we can find in no other place. And the one who would be able to give us safety as we pass at the end of life through death into life that's everlasting.

We thank you that that was the promise of what was to come in the Savior. And we thank you that in Jesus that is what we realize. We thank you that Jesus said in the New Testament, I am the good shepherd, the one who lays down my life for the sheep.

And we thank you that the promise that Jesus gave to those who believe in him is a promise of everlasting life. I give them everlasting life, says Jesus, and no one can snatch them from my hand and no one can snatch them from the Father's hand.

[6 : 39] So we praise you, Lord, for these truths which we return to time and time again. And we praise you for the comfort and the strength that they give us, especially when we are conscious of death in the community.

And we pray for those who are grieving at this time. We have been praying for them and we continue to pray for them again this morning. And we ask that you would draw near to them. We think of Elaine in Stockinish and Andrew and Donald. And we pray for Peggy and for Lydia and for Rory. And for Donald's wife, Julia, and little Bear, his son.

And for all of the family, the sisters, and those in the community who were friends of Dalalic and who cared for him.

Those who went in to nurse him and had such fondness for him. We pray for all who are grieving that you would give them comfort, that you would give them strength. And we pray for Ross here with us this morning as well.

[7 : 52] And for the family here, for Ruth and for Ewan and for Livy. And we pray for Ross as his dad has passed away and as they anticipate the funeral over these next few days.

We pray for strength to get through all that's ahead of them. And we pray for strength and for wisdom as they think about the days ahead. And all the responsibilities of that.

We thank you, Lord, that we can come to you in prayer. Seeking a strength that we cannot find in ourselves. But a strength that comes from heaven. We thank you that as we struggle to see the way through in life, we can come to the one who is the God of all wisdom.

Asking that you would guide our path as we acknowledge you. And we thank you, Lord, that we can carry each other to you as well. That we can uphold each other in prayer.

We ask, Lord, that you would be also with Kenny as we think about Kenny and Scalpy. As his mother, Mary, comes towards the end of life.

[9 : 03] We ask that you would minister to her. Even though she is in an unconscious state. We thank you that the Holy Spirit is able to reach those that we are unable to reach.

And we pray for her that she would fear no evil. But that she would know the presence of Jesus with her. In all the time that she has ahead of her. And for Kenny and for all the family.

And for all the people that we are in the world. And for all the people that we are in the world. And for all the people that we are in the world. And we pray that you would strengthen them. And that you would give them to know that you are God. And that you are with them. We thank you that Jesus is our saviour.

We thank you that when we face the reality of death. As we feel so strongly at this time. We have one to look to. The one who alone has the words of eternal life.

And we pray that you would help us to look to him. To put our faith in Jesus. To call upon the name of the Lord Jesus. And to have that promise as a promise for us.

[10 : 06] A promise of life that is eternal. Amen. We pray that you would be with all those who are struggling with different things. Those who would desire to be with us.

And who are ill. We bring them to you Lord. And we ask that you would meet them at the point of their need. We pray for those who battle with addictions. And anxiety. And depression.

We ask Lord that you would minister to them also. As we think of them in our mind's eye. We pray that they would know the touch of the great physician.

That they would feel the compassionate arms of Jesus around them. And we pray for those also who are well. Who are healthy.

And who have no desire to come to the Lord Jesus. Or to come to this place and give worship to Christ. And we ask Lord that you would awaken their hearts.

[11:04] We don't look down on anyone. Because we know that the awakening and reviving work that goes in deep within our souls. Is not a work that we do ourselves. But it's the work of the Holy Spirit.

Who wakens us up. And shows us our sin. And calls us to come to Christ. So we ask Lord for those who are absent. We ask that you would draw near to them.

And that you would bless them. Those who desire to be here would know your presence. And that sweetness of being in the presence of Christ.

And for those who have no thought. We ask Lord that you would awaken them. And draw them to yourself. We ask that you would lead us and guide us. In this hour of worship.

And in this day of worship that's been set aside from all other days. Help us to see it as the gift that it is. Help us to take time to be in your presence. Help us.

[12:05] As it says in Isaiah. To wait upon the Lord. And to know that renewed strength. That comes from remaining in Jesus. To hear our prayers.

Bless the wee ones as well. As we hear them. We're thankful for their voices. We're thankful for them being with us. We recognize them as an answer to prayer. And we pray that you would bless them.

And that they would grow up to know you. And trust you. And for all of us Lord. We come to you and ask that you would meet us. In this day that we would encounter the living God. Hear our prayers.

Take away our sin we ask. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Boys and girls. Would you like to come out please? Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Look, lost, passionate means that you're afraid to go. You can't quite make it, but I can see she's trying to get on the move. How are you all today?

[13:11] Good. You're a bit quiet. How are you today? Good. You sound like you're needing a holiday. You're looking forward to it? Yeah. Good stuff. Something to show you today.

Any idea what this is? Christy? A ticket for what? It is a ticket. It's not a ticket for a plane. Good guess though.

Michael? Michael? Do you scan it?

You do scan it. It says that QR code. It's got a QR code on it. Do you know what it's for? Where it's for getting? Is it a receipt? It's not a receipt, no. It's a ticket.

To get through the push door things. It's not to get through the push door things, but you're getting closer. Shawnee? The thing in the thing.

[14:06] The thing in the thing. Can you translate that for me, Sean Drawdy, please? You put the thing in the thing. You put the thing in the thing. Okay, we've got that. Exactly.

That's exactly what it is. Yeah. What did you get? The police said you were out of town. The police didn't say I was... Well, let me just tell the story. So, I was on holiday in Aberdeen.

The girls will be cringing still when they remember this. We were on holiday in Aberdeen. And we went out shopping to this place called Union Square.

Big shopping centre. There's a huge big car park beside it. So, you know, like these car parks.

You've been... Union Square. You can check it out later. Yeah. Checking my facts.

It's not a big thing. So, we went to the car park. And there was a barrier. You know, like there is.

Drove up. And it opened up. And you've got to pull the ticket first.

[15:07] Then you get through. We did our shopping. And then we went back to the car. So, we all got into the car. And I followed the signs to the exit.

And what I thought... Because, you know, in some of these car parks, most of these car parks now, you get to the gate and it says £10 or whatever it is.

And you just flash your card or your phone. And it pays that contact list and it goes up. But anyway, I drove to the gate. And the barrier was down.

And I put the ticket in. And I was expecting it to say £6 or whatever, please. And do you know what it said? You have not paid.

Return to the payment station. And I thought, oh, that's a bit of a pain. So, I went to reverse. But when I went to reverse, what do you think happened?

[16:07] Katie? There was about 10 cars behind me. And so, the girls were like, oh my goodness. This is so embarrassing. Oh no, what are we going to do?

And I was thinking, I haven't got a clue what we're going to do. And Aberdonians are not renowned. Is there any in here? For their great patience. And within two or three seconds, we're starting to hear, eh, eh, eh.

Come on. You know, we're wanting to. So, I thought, I don't know what to do. So, I had a closer look at the wee box thingy that you were talking about, Shawnee. The thingy put in the thing. And there was a button on the thing. And it said, press this if you need help. So, I pushed the button. And this voice came through the box saying, can I help you?

And I said, well, I don't know if you can see me. But I'm the car that's at the barrier. And I thought I could just pay at the barrier. But I can't seem to pay. And I was going to reverse and go and pay.

[17:14] But as you can see, hopefully, there's about ten cars behind me now. And I don't, I'm from Harrison. I don't know what to do. I don't normally come here. I'm on my holidays. And I don't know exactly what to do.

And she went, well, I can see your problem. And you haven't paid. And this is an amazing thing for an Aberdonian to say. But on this occasion, even though you haven't paid, I'm going to let you through.

And so, up went the barrier. And I breathed a sigh of relief and drove through. So, that's the story. You know, I couldn't get through. I hadn't paid for my ticket. And so, I had no right to get through.

So, what did the woman show me? What's the word?

She didn't show me faith. What's the word? Kindness. Kindness is one word, yeah. Katie. Kindness. What's the word?

[18:19] Somebody over there's got the word I don't know. Not forgiveness. Begins with gift. Not gratefulness.

Lois. Grace. Grace. She showed me grace. Grace. Because grace is when someone treats us in the way that we don't deserve.

I didn't deserve to get through, did I? I hadn't paid. But she showed me grace. You know, I should have got my money out and I should have paid the ten pounds or whatever it was.

I hadn't paid anything. But she let me through. Now, who shows us grace? Mary?

God shows us grace, doesn't he? See, when we think about heaven. When we think about heaven. God. In our hearts, we know that we have sinned, don't we?

[19:23] And can sin get into heaven? If we've got sin in our hearts, then we can't get into heaven because sin can't get through into heaven.

So you could say, a bit like me in the car park, the barrier's down. But who is it that came into this world to help us with a sin? Tell us, Michael, what did he do?

What did he do? He died on the cross. And what did he do when he died on the cross? Why did he die on the cross? To forgive us our sins.

It says in the Bible that he paid the price. The punishment for our sins. The price that I was due because of all the sins I've committed, Jesus has said, I'll pay that for you.

The punishment that I'm due because of all the wrong things I've done, Jesus went to the cross to take that away. And if we trust him, if we call out to him and say, will you help me?

[20:30] Will you save me? Then the gate to heaven goes up. And he lets us in. So the question, I want to just ask a very simple question of you, all of us, just as we finish.

And the question is, have you asked Jesus for help yet? You know, if I hadn't pushed that button in the car park and said, please help, I might still have been there with a thousand cars behind me.

It wasn't until I said, please help, that I got help. And it says in the Bible, in Romans 10, everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

But we have to call on his name. We have to pray and say, please, will you take my son away?

Please, will you let me into heaven? And if we do that from our hearts, he promises that he will.

So let's pray now and let's ask God to help us. Let's close our eyes, put our hands together and let's pray. Lord Jesus, we thank you for the Bible and we thank you for the fact that in the Bible you tell us the truth very simply about who we are and how much we need you.

[21:47] We thank you for the Bible and thank you for the Bible and thank you for the Bible to God.

to the world to take our sin away from us. And at the cross, if we believe in you, our sin goes from our hearts to you where you paid the price for it.

And your rightness, your perfection goes into our hearts as we trust you. We thank you that the second we say, please, Lord, save me.

Please take my sin away. We have the promise that you will save us. And when we get to the end of life, the gate to heaven will open and we will get in.

So help us, we pray. And hear us as we do ask, even very simply at this time, please save us, Lord Jesus. And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

[22 : 51] We're going to sing now a very simple children's hymn. There is a green hill far away without a city wall where the dear Lord was crucified who died to save us all.

And it says, one little bit I want to read for you. It says, there was no other good enough to pay the price of sin. He only could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in.

We'll stand to sing God's praise. there is a green hill far away without a city wall Where the dear Lord was crucified, who died to save us all.

We may not know, we cannot tell, what pains he had to bear.

But we believe it was for us, he hung and suffered there.

[24 : 26] He died that we might be forgiven, he died to make us good.

That we might go at last to him, saved by his precious blood.

There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin.

He only could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in.

Oh, dearie, dearie, has he loved, and we must love him too.

[25 : 25] And trust in his redeeming blood, and try his works to do.

Amen. Just as well, you're thin, Farrakhan.

Sitting in the front row. Remember to pray for them as they head off to Sunday school. Amen.

Amen. And we'll turn in our Bibles now, please, to Luke chapter 23.

Luke chapter 23. And we're reading from verse 26 through to verse 49. So we see at this point that the unlawful trial has progressed.

And Pilate has given in to the pressure of the religious leaders in the crowd to give the order for Jesus to be executed, to be crucified. And we read now this very brief account of the crucifixion.

[27 : 01] This is God's word. As they led him, that's Jesus, away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.

A large number of people followed him, including women, who mourned and wailed for him. Jesus turned and said to them, Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me.

Weep for yourselves and for your children. For the time will come when you say, Blessed are the barren women, the wombs that never bore, the breasts that never nursed.

Then they will say, To the mountains, follow us, and to the hills, cover us. For if men do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry? Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed.

When they came to the place called the skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals, one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.

[28 : 08] And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, He saved others.

Let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One. The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar and said, If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.

There was a written notice above him, which read, This is the king of the Jews. One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him.

Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us. But the other criminal rebuked him. Don't you fear God, he said, since you are under the same sentence.

We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong. Then he said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

[29 : 11] Jesus answered him, I tell you the truth. Today you will be with me in paradise. It was about the sixth hour.

And darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. For the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Jesus called out with a loud voice.

Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. When he had said this, he breathed his last. The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God.

And said, surely this was a righteous man. When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away.

But all those who knew him, including the woman who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things. Amen.

[30 : 14] And may God bless that reading of his word to us. We're going to sing again to God's praise. Psalm 73, verses 23 and verse 24.

We remain seated to sing in Gaelic. Nevertheless, continually, O Lord, I am with thee. Thou dost me hold by my right hand and still upholdest me. Thou with thy counsel while I live will me conduct and guide.

And to thy glory afterward. Receive me to abide. These two verses of Psalm 73 to God's praise. The premiers opens.

To sorts of praise. To the angels and wings. To the ages in Gaelic, To the ages in Gaelic.

Thank you.

[31 : 32] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[34 : 12] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Jesus and all that Jesus did on our behalf and we pray that we would sense that you are with us and we pray that we would know that encounter with you in this time that we have and what we pray for ourselves here we pray for the children in the Sunday school, we pray for the churches around us here and across the nation and all nations wherever the word of God is opened and Christ crucified is preached we ask Lord that you would be working to lift up Jesus and that many would come to him and we pray this in Jesus name and for his sake, Amen One of the promises that we have when we come to church is not only that we'll meet each other but that that Jesus will meet with us and that's a promise I think which we should we should have in our minds every time we come to gather whether it's just two or three of us or whether it's a hundred all of us Jesus has promised in Matthew 18 and verse 20 for two or three gather in my name I am with them to try to keep that in our minds when we come to a prayer meeting or when we come to church God is with us the power of the Holy Spirit the risen Lord Jesus is with us we can expect to encounter not just each other but we can expect to encounter Jesus when we are in this place and what I'd like to think about today are the encounters that various people had with Jesus as Jesus went to the cross and it's a remarkable thing when you when you read this short section from Luke's gospel Luke is describing the most significant event in all history and yet the brevity with which he speaks is is incredible and Jesus as he is on the cross we might expect

Luke to go into graphic detail as to how physically he suffered and yet it's like there's a curtain drawn over all that we see very little in the way of description about the sufferings of Jesus but what Luke focuses on more than the the event of the cross and the sufferings of Jesus he focuses on the encounters the responses of people who are around the cross to Jesus and we'll look at four of them if we have time today the first person that we see encounter Jesus as he heads in the direction of Calvary is Simon from Cyrene and secondly we see Jesus around him as there always seemed to be was a large number of people there were crowds and the third thing we'll look at or the third pair of people we'll look at are two criminals as they encounter Jesus and respond to Jesus and finally we'll listen to the words of this centurion this trained killer as he responds to what he saw that was so different in Jesus so first of all we see Simon of Cyrene and how he encounters Jesus verse 26 as they led

Jesus away they seized Simon from Cyrene they that's the Roman soldiers they seized Simon from Cyrene who was on his way in from the country and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus so here's a man Simon he's travelled 800 miles from Cyrene in northern Africa to attend the Passover and people like him they would they would use their life savings on a trip like this they would have every detail of what they were going to do in this Passover festival all planned out and so likely Simon he'd arrived in the place of Jerusalem he likely had his day all marked out he had places to go he had sites to see he had people perhaps that he had arranged to spend

some time with and an encounter with Jesus was not on his agenda it wasn't in his diary and yet in God's providence and God's order of things

[39 : 42] Simon is intercepted by the Roman soldiers he is seized against his will and he is forced to carry the cross of Jesus now that tells us in the first instance something about Jesus it tells us something about how Jesus was suffering physically and remember Jesus has had nothing to eat now since the night before the last supper and having been arrested we like to hear the weak cries I know it stresses out the mums though not so much the dads so as we see Simon he's forced to carry this cross it tells us something about the physical weakness of Jesus he's had no food since the last supper he's he's been arrested he's had no sleep since the arrest he's been interrogated by the religious leaders they dragged him in front of

Pilate he's questioned by Pilate and then he's pushed in the direction of Herod makes fun of him more questions he's sent back then to Pilate more questions he's been beaten by the temple guards remember struck in the face repeatedly he's been even more brutally beaten by the Roman soldiers who flogged him which usually killed most people but Jesus is still alive but he is tired he is weak and although he is about to carry the weight of the sin of the world on his shoulders he is not physically strong enough to carry the weight of the wooden cross beam now what do we know about Simon and how this encounter with

Jesus affects him well Luke doesn't say too much but if we were to cross reference other gospels Mark tells us that Simon is the father of Alexander and Rufus and Paul in his writings after the crucifixion he as he writes to the church in Rome he speaks about Alexander and Rufus who were members of the church in Rome and Paul at the very end of the letter in Romans 16 he sends greetings to the mother of Rufus who was almost certainly the wife of Simon so when we put these pieces of the jigsaw together although we can't be 100% sure it looks like this unexpected encounter with Jesus led to faith in fact it led to salvation not just in the life of Simon but in the whole family of Simon so in the darkness you could say of all that was going on on the road to Calvary in this hard providence in this really difficult challenging thing that had been imposed on Simon on that day God was at work and you know that's often how God works and you don't need me to tell you that sometimes it's in the things that we never expected to have to deal with and God works through them sometimes it's in the most difficult unwelcome things even that hit us in life that God actually draws really close and works in our hearts you know Simon did not expect to meet Jesus on this day he was just going through the religious ritual of attending the Passover and maybe for someone today here yeah you expected to be in church you made plans to be in church but maybe there's someone here who although you expected to go through the ritual of church you didn't expect to meet

Jesus maybe there's someone and you're beginning to hear the voice of Jesus you're becoming conscious that God is beginning to speak to you he's drawing near to you he's showing you the cross this thing that made no sense to you in the past he's showing you your sin and how much you need that cross he's calling you to believe as it seems that Simon did to the first encounter that we see with Jesus on the road to Calvary is the encounter of Simon as he carries the cross of Jesus a difficult thing to be asked to do but something that in all likelihood caused them to come to faith in [45 : 24] Christ secondly we see here the crowds look at verse 27 a large number of people followed him Jesus including women who mourned and wailed for him and this kind of thing often happened it was regular crowds often crowds of women who were more compassionate than the men they would follow those who had been sentenced to death as they went in the direction of the cross and they would have drugs with them and they would give them drugs on the end of a sponge just to ease the pain slightly of compassion for these poor souls who were suffering and that's the scene here the crowds they're weeping for Jesus there's a real emotional response amongst this large number of people towards Jesus and that's not a bad thing that's actually a good thing it's good to be moved emotionally as we see

Jesus so you think about the incarnation we're going to have a month of that as we think about the incarnation the coming of Jesus into the world it's good to be moved emotionally about that that God would so love us that he would break into this world to save us and it's good to be moved as we go through the gospel messages and read about healings and read about those who were so troubled in their minds and who were under spiritual darkness and whom Jesus touches and they're set free their lives are transformed as we read these accounts it's good to be moved emotionally as we look to the cross and think about that scene where Jesus suffers and dies in this nation this

narrative of the passion you know it's good to be touched in our emotions and we often are touched in our emotions especially when we're part of a crowd but that's not enough to save us to be moved emotionally especially when we're sitting in these chairs that's not enough to save us and we know that because

Jesus reaches out to these crowds and he reaches out to them to challenge them and to call them to be saved if you look at verse 28 down to verse 31 there Jesus turns to them and he says daughters of Jerusalem don't weep for me weep for yourselves and for your children for the time is coming when you're going to say blessed are the barren woman the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed then they will say to the mountains follow us and to the hills cover us for if men do these things when the tree is green what will happen when it's dry so Jesus he makes this speech he reaches out to these crowds they're weeping for him and Jesus turns to them and he says don't weep for me weep for yourselves and weep for your children because judgment is coming as Jesus comes close to the cross with the prospect and the reality of all the physical and spiritual sufferings that he was beginning to feel just now even at that time he's still thinking about others he's still thinking about those who are around him and he can see their hearts and he can see even though there's tears falling from their eyes their hearts are unsaved and so he preaches to them in great love and yet it's a message of judgment

Jesus says to them there's judgment coming you need to be prepared for that what the crowds didn't understand was that Jesus was about to face judgment for sin on the cross Jesus was about to face the wrath of God for the sin of all those who believed in him but even in that crowd there were many who didn't believe in him there were many who wept for him and felt sympathy for him but they didn't believe in him and we can see that later on in verse 48 because it says there when all the people the crowds who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place they beat their breasts emotion and then they went away so for many of the crowds they watched intently there's high drama there's the most intense emotion as they're caught in that moment in that crowd and then they go away they're unchanged they just get on with life and that's going to happen here today in all likelihood you know there's some who who may read this narrative that Luke has scripted there's some who may look in the direction of Jesus as he hangs on the cross and suffers and dies and we may even feel something in our hearts whilst we're in church we may be touched as we sing the songs but then by two o'clock it's forgotten tv's on the world cup wall chart is out the Yorkshire puddings are rising and everything we heard everything that touched us has been snatched away it's the way it was with the majority of the crowd moved emotionally but unchanged spiritually but that's not the way it was with everyone all those who knew him verse 49 including the woman who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things so there's some who didn't go home they stay there they're very much affected by everything that they are seeing they're still watching but they're at a distance and Jesus is calling them to come close Jesus is calling them to act he's calling them to come to him in faith in order that they will escape the coming judgment and that they will receive salvation and you know that's the message that comes to us today through this section nothing has changed about the message that Jonah preached to [52 : 56] Nineveh and Jesus preached to Jerusalem judgment is coming to use Jesus words in verse 31 the tree is drier today than it ever has been before we're closer to the day of judgment than we ever have been all of us will have to stand before God we don't know what day it's going to be but all of us will have to stand before God and if we are to escape wrath and find mercy if the gate to heaven is going to go up and we're going to receive entrance in we have to listen to Jesus we have to call upon the name of the Lord Jesus we have to believe in Jesus we have to come to Jesus tears won't save us sitting in a crowd won't save us there's no magic dust on the chairs that's going to save us but we have to do what Jesus called the crowds there to do and that was come to him believe in him call on him so there's the there's the crowds there's

Simon thirdly we see two criminals verse 32 two other men both criminals were also led out with him to be executed when they came to the place called the skull there they crucified him along with the criminals one on his right the other on his left Jesus said father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing and they divided up his clothes by casting lots the people stood watching and the rulers even sneered at him they said he saved others let him save himself if he's the Christ of God the chosen one the soldiers also came up and mocked him they offered him wine vinegar and said if you are the king of the Jews save yourself and there was a written notice above him which read this is the king of the Jews and again just note there how incredibly short

Luke's description of the crucifixion for thousands of years this event has been prophesied this was the gate through which salvation would come and Luke describes the crucifixion in four words in the English it's actually only three words in the Greek there they crucified him no graphic details of physical suffering you know if you want a greater insight into how Jesus suffered you need to go to Isaiah 53 or Psalm 22 that's where we see how Jesus suffered and yet in the epicenter of all that suffering we hear again Jesus not thinking about himself but thinking about the people around him reaching out to the people around him and reaching out to his father in heaven as he says in verse 34 these words of the most amazing grace father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing so that's what happened and then

Luke in this section he takes the camera he doesn't focus on the excruciating sufferings of Jesus but he takes the camera and he sharpens the focus on these two criminals hanging either side of Jesus and both men saw the same thing both men saw Jesus suffering there they both had the same view and they both read the same sign that Jesus is the king of the Jews and they both heard the same prayer they both experienced the same grace of Jesus as he said these staggering words father forgive them they don't know what they're doing and yet in these two criminals their responses as they encounter Jesus could not be more different verse 39 one of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at Jesus aren't you the Christ save yourself and us but the other criminal rebuked him don't you fear

God he said since you are under the same sentence he sees his sin we are punished justly he says for we're getting what our deeds deserve but this man this man has done nothing wrong then he said Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom and Jesus answered him I tell you the truth today you will be with me in paradise now we might wonder what actually does this have to do with us what does this scene from 2000 plus years ago with these two criminals that we know very little about what on earth has it got to do with us and the answer is it has everything to do with us because what happened at

[59 : 08] Calvary on that day is happening right here right now this instant this present tense in this place what happened in Calvary is happening all over again because we through Luke's testimony here in these verses we are brought to Calvary Luke is an eyewitness in a sense we are taken to that place we're looking in on this scene at Calvary we see Jesus hanging there we read the same sign that Jesus is the king of the Jews we hear the same prayer we're struck by that same sense of the amazing grace of Jesus towards sinners as he offers forgiveness through that prayer and yet like the two criminals we're in one of these two positions what was going on in the heart of these two criminals is happening right here right now because there are some here who are with the criminal who was completely unaffected by grace there are some here perhaps and we are insulting

Jesus just with our lack of interest our mind is somewhere else we're planning out next Thursday we're thinking about the next thing we want to buy we're determining within our will that once again this week we will not believe so like the thief on that cross we see Jesus hanging there we're heard of his grace again we turn away unaffected we insult Jesus from our hearts and yet there are others in this room and we're with the criminal who was saved because we see our sin and we are actually hearing this message of grace and we're believing that Jesus is the saviour king we see our need of him we see the wonder of what he's doing and the shedding of his blood to forgive our sin stained hearts we understand that this is a work of salvation that Jesus is doing and we say to

Jesus as the criminal on the cross said to Jesus will you remember me I'm a sinner I need your help Jesus will you remember me so the question I suppose is which criminal are you are we with the one who was totally unaffected just brushes this whole thing off no interest no love for Christ no sense of our need no faith or are we with the criminal who says I now see that I have a saviour Jesus will you save me last encounter very briefly is that encounter with the centurion it was now about the sixth hour that's twelve noon and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour for the sun stopped shining and the curtain of the temple was torn in two

Jesus called out with a loud voice father into your hands I commit my spirit Jesus is speaking with a loud voice these words of committal when we stand at a graveside we use the words of committal and Jesus here as he approaches death and he will decide when he dies he speaks his own words of committal he commits his life into the hands of his father he speaks with great strength because death will not overcome him he will lay down his life and when he had said this he breathed his last the centurion seeing what had happened praised God and said surely this was a righteous man to this last encounter with Jesus as he hangs on the cross is that of the centurion professional killer

cold blooded killer his soldiers and he with them had crucified thousands of men before so it's just the routine of every day but this death was different the darkness was different because at a noon day when the sun is at the highest and the places is at the brightest everything becomes dark a darkness that symbolized the judgment of

God swallows up the whole place as Jesus bears our sin on the cross and then news comes through that on the other side of town the curtain of the temple a thick curtain it was about as thick as a man's hand six inches thick it kept the ordinary man from entering the holy place in the temple and this curtain that kept everyone back from the presence of God it had been torn the second Jesus laid down his life this temple a curtain it tore from top from heaven to bottom to earth and it was a sign that the way into the presence of God was now opened because

[66 : 10] Jesus had done everything to take our sin away and to bring us into the presence of God and these extraordinary events that the centurion witnessed were visual aids to the extraordinary spiritual truths that were being worked out at the cross and I don't think personally that the centurion understood a whole lot of what was going on he may have understood a little but he knew something special was happening and he recognized in these moments that Jesus was not any ordinary sinful man but that he was a righteous man the centurion verse 47 seeing what had happened praised God centurions didn't praise God but this centurion as he looked to Christ he praised

God and said surely this was a righteous man and Mark goes a step further and tells us a wee bit more Mark tells us that the centurion who stood there in front of Jesus when he saw how Jesus died he said surely this man was the son of God and that's where we finished today we stand with the centurion looking to Jesus who suffered the darkness of judgment for us who opened up the way into heaven for us well that is if we believe in him and if we are able to say with the centurion from our hearts surely this

Jesus was a righteous man surely this man Jesus was the son of God the savior my savior the one who died for me that's where the centurion ended up I think and Luke I imagine as he pens this is thinking about Theophilus going I wonder does he see this yet does he see that Jesus is the son of God that he's the savior and God in the crowd of the holy spirit says to each one of us today do you see it do you see that this is this was the righteous man this is the son of God this is the one who offers to be your savior let's pray heavenly heavenly heavenly father we pray that we would indeed have encountered the lord jesus in these verses that we read today and we pray that you would give to us faith that we would believe that we would see what the dying thief who was saved saw that we would see what the centurion saw and that our hearts would be touched not simply that our emotions would be stirred before we go home and get on with life and forget about everything but we pray that our hearts would be touched and that we would be saved and we pray this in jesus name amen 671 in mission praise to finish 671 the words on the screen there is a fountain filled with blood drawn from immanuel's veins and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains we have this picture of the blood of jesus that flowed from the cross giving us that forgiveness if we believe in him the dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day and there may I as vile as he wash all my sins away we sing this whole hymn to

God's praise to conclude in his depth with blood drawn from Emmanuel's ways.

A sinner's right beneath the flood, who's all that guilty stands. Who's all that guilty stands.

[71 : 44] Who's all that guilty stands. A sinner who's all that guilty is. Who's all that guilty stands.

Who died in the free joys to see the fountain is daily. And there may I ask why lost he washed all my sins away.

wash all my sins away. Wash all my sins away. And there may I ask my last knee wash all my sins away.

dying dying on your precious blood shall never lose its power.

Till all the ransom church of God be saved be saved to sin no more. Be saved to sin no more.

[73 : 06] Be saved to sin no more. Till all the ransom church shall come be saved to sin no more.

more. Since my faith I saw the strength you were throwing wounds of pride.

Redeeming love has been my theme and shall be till I die.

In an old and sweeter song sing about to sing.

When this voice may sound in the grave. I silent in the grave.

[74 : 30] I silent in the grave. When this voice may sound the grave.

And 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.