

John 19

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 11 March 2018

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

- [0 : 0 0] Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this day. We thank you for this new opportunity that you give us to come together in praise and in prayer in that spirit of worship.
- And Lord, we ask that you would enable us to be like the Apostle John was in the Isle of Patmos, that he was in the spirit of worship on the Lord's day.
- We ask, Lord, that you would give us hearts that would truly be praising you, and we pray that you would help us, Lord. We come as the disciples did of old, and we ask that you would help us and that you would teach us to pray.
- And we thank you for all that we have sung in the hymn, that we have sung together. We thank you that truly, Lord, you are worthy of all our praise and you are worthy of all our worship.
- We thank you that you are our Redeemer. You are the one who has bought us with a price. And we have sung, Lord, of that price, the blood that was shed to break the power of sin.
- [1 : 1 4] We know your word tells us that without the shedding of blood, there's no forgiveness of sin. But we thank you that we remember each time we come, together as a congregation, we remember that Jesus shed his blood so that our sin could be taken away.
- We thank you that the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. Lord, as we gathered here last weekend, and as we sat and saw the table with the bread and the wine, we don't have the visual aid today.
- We don't have the signs in front of us, but we pray that once more, our minds would be taken to that cross of Calvary where we remember that our Savior laid down his life and shed his blood so that we could be forgiven of our sin.
- And so, Lord, we pray that you would minister to each one of us. We thank you, Lord, that you know us. We thank you that you know where we are in our minds.
- You know where we are in our hearts. We thank you that you minister to us as individuals. We ask, Lord, that you would meet with each one of us in this place.
- [2 : 3 6] We pray for any here this morning who have not yet given their lives to Christ, those whose sin still is not paid for. And we pray that they would not hesitate one day more, but, Lord, that they would confess their sin, knowing that when we confess our sin, you, Lord, are faithful and you are just.
- And because Jesus died, you have promised that our sin will be taken away from us as far as the east is from the west when we come in faith and in repentance.
- So for any who have not yet come, we pray that they would hear the voice of Jesus even speaking to them today and that they would respond by asking for that forgiveness and giving their lives to Christ.
- We pray for salvation to come into the lives of some in this place today, that those who walked in here lost and in darkness would walk out of here saved and with the light of Christ in their lives.

And for those, Lord, who are your people, we thank you that you are the one who seeks us and you are the one who saves us and we thank you that you are the one who sustains us.

[3 : 55] We pray for any who are struggling at this time, who may be struggling to hang on, spiritually speaking. We thank you that you, Lord, have promised that you will take hold of us and you will never let us go.

And even when we may lose our grasp on you, we thank you that the Savior has promised that there is no one and there is nothing who can snatch us from your hand. And so we pray, Lord, that for those who feel distant, that they would know the hand of Christ, the hand of the Father, holding them and the everlasting arms around them.

We pray for those who may have wandered from you. And Lord, we pray that you would draw them back. As we return to you, we are promised that you will return to us.

And so, Lord, we ask that you would minister to those who may be wayward and that you would draw them back into that intimacy with yourself.

We pray for those, Lord, today who are grieving, our loved ones lost in past months and in past years. Minister your comfort to them, we ask.

[5 : 11] We pray for those who are in hospital and who are receiving treatment. We think especially of Joan McCaskill. And we ask, Lord, that you would bless her, that you would uphold her, that you would lay your hands of healing upon her.

And we pray on for Murdo in Glasgow and we thank you for the progress that he's making. We ask, Lord, that he would continue to know your healing hands upon him and that the cancer that he's struggling with, we pray that it would be removed in these weeks to come.

We pray on for Mary's brother, Neil Lachie, in hospital and we ask that the infection that he's struggling with would leave him and that he too would be brought back to the full recovery.

So hear us, Lord, we pray in our prayers. Help us, Lord. We thank you for this place. We thank you for this day where for the first time for some of us we meet and we ask, Lord, that in this place where we meet for some of us for the first time that we would know your presence, that we would know your peace, that we would know that hush of the Holy Spirit ministering to us and amongst us.

So hear our prayers and take away our sin. Be with those who meet like us in different congregations. We think of the congregation in Scalpy and the Church of Scotland today as they gather around your table and we pray that the blessing that we ask for ourselves, they also would know as you minister amongst them.

[6 : 47] All these things we pray together the forgiveness of our sins in Jesus' name. Amen. Boys and girls, would you like to come forward, please? How are you all today?

All doing fine? Good stuff. Good stuff. Well, do you know what I thought I would show you today? I don't have it with me.

I don't have it in my hands, but my hands are on it. I want to show you this table and this lectern, I think, as well.

What do we use this for? What do we use this for? You can see it, John. Putting stuff on it. We put our Bible on it and I put my notes on it to help me as I try and think through what the Lord has given me to say on a Sunday.

Sometimes the bread and the wine will go on it. So this is like a, people call this a communion table. And what I wanted to tell you about, and some of you as well, is where it came from.

[8 : 06] This wasn't always a communion table. these bits of wood weren't always for putting your Bible on. Do you know where they came from?

Tell us, Ailey. Well, they did come from God all the way, if we take it all the way back. It's God who made it all. But this wasn't always used for this.

Do you know where this used to be? not the dump, no. It's a dangerous business asking questions of this crowd.

John Roddy? Did you put drawers in there? I didn't put drawers in there, but I'll tell you who did put drawers in there. Where's Adrian? Where is he? I can't find anybody in this new space.

I used to know where you all were. I'm totally confused now. There he is. Adrian put drawers. drawers in this space. It's actually Adrian who made this table.

[9 : 13] This table and this lectern with this lovely cloth that John Norman and Nanny got for us. You can say thank you to them another day because they're not here today.

This table and this lectern used to actually be in the same place. It was the bar. In the past, people would come in here and they would put their glasses down and they would do all kinds of things in this place, but it wasn't used for putting your Bible on and it wasn't used really for worshipping God.

But now it's been converted. converted. So this table and this lectern has been converted from being a bar to being a place where we can put down our Bible and we can listen to what God is saying to us.

And that's kind of special, I think. It's nice to think about the fact that God has used Adrian and others to carefully dismantle one thing and use it to make it into another that will glorify God.

And boys and girls, the Bible talks not just about this being converted, but what else does the Bible talk about being converted? What do you think?

[10 : 46] What do you think the Bible talks about? What else needs to be converted? Katie? Well, ourselves, don't we? There's a chapter in the Bible, Acts 15, where Paul is speaking and he speaks about people who were converted once they were far away from God, but now they're close to God and the reason for that is because their sins have been taken away.

So boys and girls, whether you are very young and small, or whether you're a bit older and a bit bigger, I want to ask you all a question.

Are you converted? Are you converted? I hope so. Because God wants to change our hearts.

He wants us to go from being boys and girls and men and women whose hearts are full of sin to having hearts that are full of Jesus.

Because he promises that when we trust him, when we come to him and when we pray and when we ask him to take our sin away, we truly mean it.

[12 : 09] And if we turn away from our sin, he's promised that he will take our sin away. He's promised that he'll come in to our lives, he'll come in to our hearts and he'll convert our hearts from hearts that were far from him to hearts that are absolutely for him.

And you know, when our hearts are changed, then our lives begin to change and people start to say, that guy's different.

They're kind of converted from the way they used to be. I wonder what's going on in their hearts. Then when they ask you, then you can say, let me tell you about Jesus.

And we'll pray about that, will we? Heavenly Father, we thank you for the Bible and we thank you for those that were written of in that passage in Acts 15 whose lives and hearts were converted.

And Lord, we pray that you would be at work in each one of our hearts. We thank you that you have made us for yourself. And even though sometimes we go our own way and we go far from you, we thank you that you've promised that if we turn away from our sin and if we turn to you, you will take our sin away and you'll make us converted people who you can use to even show other people Jesus and all that he can do for them just as he has done so much for us.

[13 : 54] So help us, we pray, whether we're very young or whether we're a bit older, to simply ask you this morning to take our sin away and to come into our hearts and to begin to change our lives so that we are converted to being more and more and more like Jesus.

And we ask this in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. We're going to sing now, we're going to sing now Mission Praise 272.

The words are also on the screen. See, if you've understood all that, boys and girls, if you've understood that you need your sin to be taken away and you need Jesus to come into your life, God is already at work in you and he's asking you to trust him.

If you want to become a Christian, after he draws us like that, we have to say, okay, I want to decide now to follow Jesus. If you could turn in your Bibles, please, to John chapter 19.

this is God's word. Later, knowing that all was now completed and so that the scriptures would be fulfilled, Jesus said, I am thirsty.

[15 : 24] A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, it is finished.

With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. Now, it was the day of preparation and the next day was to be a special Sabbath because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath.

They asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus and then those of the other.

But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.

The man who saw it has given testimony and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth and he testifies so that you also may believe.

[16 : 32] These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled. Not one of his bones will be broken. And as another scripture says, they will look on the one they have pierced.

Later, Joseph of Arimathea and Pilate asked for the body of Jesus. Now, Joseph was a disciple of Jesus but secretly because he feared the Jews.

With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about 75 pounds.

Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it with the spices and strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden, a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid, because it was the Jewish day of preparation, and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us. Callum, I believe, is going to lead us in prayer in Gaelic. Thank you.

[18 : 18]

.

you hang out a lot to , EU■■■x a black woman was Huhn You know so the hipp Vienna s the street The ■■■■■ful god ..and if the American had children glad them..

..do not perfect,■■ not perfect.. .. scent of making them■. ..■ don't have luced..

.. chess permeables.. .. smell. except for at work and faith and theology.

[19 : 44] I found this people today and I will bring■■■■ all the things that Sahup is different.... Now because of many people, even in times, I will have to take some simple■■■... I mean after ■■■■■■■ of these people a bit who will touch we seek lesbians...

...I speak föräv history. Too much for them. My father is a man who continued to come to a village and used all the enseñanza on his place and thousand people had moved.

He faced and offered him to run and drink from ran out of Spain and saw him always turned again after 1 hour and he had saved from their whole village.

Hella'd reasoned with old man who■■ came from because of Spanish and became with the child. Those who have come to ■■■■ somebody else and have decided to granting an angel back to youtube and keep turning to these who like us.

We can restore their families. We need to resign them and then the mess grows in their heart.

[21 : 04] I had not been forced smallcciones. I would skip to the Church of Estonia-Wil Amen.

We sing again to God's praise. This time from the Psalms. Psalm 19. Psalm 19. And we sing in Gaelic.

Verses 7 and 8. And then verse 14. These verses in Gaelic.

To God's praise. We remain seated to sing in Gaelic. Amen. Amen. Thank you. Amen. term in glory, Oh, yeah.

Oh, yeah.

[23 : 50] Oh, yeah.

Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

[25 : 30] Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

[26 : 36] Oh, yeah.Per a smoke tam Kliez Thank you.

Heavenly Father, we ask with the psalmist that the words which from my mouth proceed, the thoughts sent from my heart, accept, Lord, we pray.

These words, accept and be at work, Lord, in our speech and in our thoughts, in our responses as we come before your word.

Lord, you have promised, Lord, that your word will not return to you empty, but it will achieve much that you determine. And we ask, Lord, that you would achieve much for your glory, for our salvation, for our assurance, for our comfort, for our direction as we meet with you just now.

So clear from our minds all that would be a distraction. Stir our hearts. And Lord, as you call us, we pray that you would give that equipping power of the Holy Spirit as we seek you.

[28 : 38] And we ask this in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. If we could turn back to John chapter 19, please.

I thought it was remarkable, actually, that the last sermon that I preached in the hall where we met together in the Sunday morning was a sermon when we were looking at Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus.

And then the first sermon that Roddy Morrison took on the Thursday evening here, unbeknown to him and unbeknown to me what he was going to preach on.

But he took exactly the same focus and preached the same sermon except a whole lot better. So the Lord is speaking when we have these kind of coincidences.

And so we're actually going to turn back today and look another time at this section of God's Word from the end of John chapter 19.

[29 : 56] One program that our girls love to watch on television, probably some of you watch it as well, is that program Portrait Artist of the Year.

Anybody familiar with that program? No? Nobody? Oh well, that's a good start. There's one or two here. Portrait Artist of the Year. And for those who haven't seen it, what happens is we have these amateur artists and they're given a canvas and they're given a certain amount of time and they have a subject that is going to be the portrait that they're painting and they begin to work.

And so the camera and the presenter kind of talks you through this whole process where these artists are sketching away and they're going through their work.

And when they begin and they start to mark the page and they start to put the lines on, it looks absolutely nothing like the portrait of the person that's in front of them.

But as time goes on and further lines are added and then some shades come in and some colors are brought into the canvas, you start to see that this is resembling the subject that they were given.

[31 : 12] And then eventually, as the brushes and the charcoal and the pens are set down and the artist says, finished, we can very clearly see what the artist intended us to see.

And I want to begin today by asking the question, what did Jesus intend for us to see when he cried out with a loud voice, finished?

And the answer to that question is that he intended for us to see his finished work of salvation. Finished work of salvation.

See, up until now, the people of God, they were looking for one who would save them from their sin. That was the promise of the Old Testament.

We could go all the way back to Genesis chapter 3. And in Genesis chapter 3, we read of the fall of man. And yet, we read on the same page, in the same verses, of the promise of God.

[32 : 27] Man fell into sin, but God promised there would be one who would come and who would save. There's a promise of salvation. And ever since Genesis 3, that same message was resounding.

That same promise kept on being preached through the Psalms. We are pointed forward to a Redeemer, to a Savior. And then with the prophets, we are pointed forward to, we are told of a coming Savior.

And as Isaiah begins to detail that out, as the Spirit of God leads him, we start to see the shades of salvation being added. Not only will one come, but the one who comes will suffer.

And he will die to save his people. Then as we go from the Old Testament into the beginning of the New Testament, with the Incarnation, you can think about Matthew 1 and verse 21.

When the angel appears to Joseph and speaks about Mary, his prospective wife, and the angel says to Joseph, Jesus, Jesus, by his own declaration, as he grows and as he begins to minister, he says in Luke chapter 19 and verse 10, that he came to seek and to save the lost.

[34 : 04] That was his mission. Not to just be the best teacher that ever walked onto the scene of time. Not just to be an amazing healer. Not to be a worker of miracles simply.

But he came with that specific mission. He was going to seek and he was going to save the lost. He said that he came not to live, but to die.

He said as he took the basin of water and washed the feet of the disciples, that he came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

And now in John 19, we see the Savior. We see Jesus. We hold him alongside Isaiah 53.

We have Psalm 22 open. And we see him suffer. We hear him cry out, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

[35 : 17] We see him give his life. But before he dies, before verse 30, where he gives up his spirit, he cries out with a loud voice, It is finished.

And with that cry, you could say the portrait of God's salvation was complete.

It was finished. The way to be saved was now open. Last Sunday morning, as Rory spoke to us about the curtain, which tore from top to bottom.

That tells us, as Christ cried out, It is finished. The curtain tore from top to bottom, showing that the way for sinners like me to be saved is now wide open.

Because the work of salvation, it was done. And that's our first point today. That is the work that is finished.

[36 : 34] And that's the work of Christ. The work that is finished. And just to bed that in, really, to make this point, I want to tell a story.

It's a story that one of the commentators, A.W. Pink, actually told. But apparently, it's a true story. And it's one, I think, that we can readily identify with in terms of the simplicity and just the nature of it.

It's a story about a farmer, a crofter, and a carpenter. And they were good friends. The farmer was a Christian. The crofter, he was a Christian.

He was following Christ. And his friend, the carpenter, he was not a Christian. He was a skeptic, I suppose. You know, he would come along to church.

He would have conversations. Christians, but very much skeptical about everything. And the farmer was burdened for his friend who wasn't yet a Christian.

[37 : 44] And maybe if I just hit pause there for a second. Christians, are you burdened for your friends who are not yet Christians?

Christians, are you burdened for members of your family whom you love and you spend so much time with but they don't yet know Jesus?

Are we burdened for this village which in large measure doesn't know Christ? are we burdened for those that we work with that we invest so much time with and in and yet they have no thought of the fact that they have souls and one day they will step from time into eternity and if they don't know Christ they're going to a lost one.

Well this farmer he was burdened for his friend the carpenter and one day as God gave him opportunity he was telling his friend the gospel.

He was telling him just in these simple terms about the fact that Jesus came to this world and he lived a life that we could never live that sinless life and he died the death that we deserve to die that death for sinners and he said at the end of telling him that simple gospel message he says all you need to do my friend is trust him you just need to believe and you'll be saved but the carpenter he just wasn't convinced and he responded to his his pal he says surely I have to do something surely it's not as easy as that surely I don't just believe and say that I'm trusting and that's it surely I've got to do something and the crofter responded emphatically saying no you just have to believe

[40 : 01] Jesus has done it all and so the conversation came to an end crofter went one way the carpenter went the other way and he went away unconvinced still lost so the farmer hatched a plan so one day he got in touch with his pal and he says to him I need a new gate will you make it for me so the carpenter said yes of course I will and he began to make it and so it was finished he got in touch with the crofter and he says it's all done come and collect it so he collected it and the crofter says to him will you help me hang it in the field where it needs to go yeah no problem so they set the day and they went to the field and the gate was ready and it was ready to be put in position the farmer was already there the carpenter is coming towards his pal with the gate in his sight but the farmer has an axe in one hand and a saw in the other and as the carpenter gets closer to the gate he sees the farmer totally unskilled in woodwork and he's sawing away at the gate and he takes the axe then and he takes a swing at the gate and takes a hack off it the carpenter comes charging up the hill he says stop what on earth are you doing and the crofter says well I'm

I'm just adding a few cuts and scores to your work and the carpenter protested no it's already finished it's perfect as it is and with every swing and every saw you're spoiling it it's done and the crofter agreed and said yes you're right with every cut and every saw I'm spoiling it he says and that's what you're trying to do to the finished work of Christ by your miserable additions to it it is finished and at that point the carpenter he got it he understood he saw the work of Christ he saw that that work was indeed finished it was perfect it was complete it was sufficient and he believed true story and he was saved the carpenter needed a new gate but it was worth it the question

I want to ask is will you believe in the finished work of Christ is there anybody here this morning and you're trying to become a Christian through your good works and people say to you are you a Christian and you'll always say well I'm trying to be what on earth does that mean I'm trying to be are you trying to become a Christian through all your good works are you trying to become a Christian through your religious acts you're trying to become a Christian through an extensive Bible reading program and a course in prayer you're trying to become a Christian through your church attendance because if so stop it you're like a farmer swinging an axe at the finished work of the cross of Christ

Jesus said it is finished all the work required for you to be saved has already been done and all you and I have to do is believe the whole purpose of John's gospel and I see this almost every week that I'm in it because it's the key verse in the book John writes in chapter 20 and verse 31 we know it off by heart by now these things are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the son of God and that by believing you may have life in his name Jesus has done everything for you and I to receive eternal life Jesus has done everything for you and I to be assured of forgiveness of sin

Jesus has done everything to give you and I the assurance of salvation now we simply have to believe and let me say a word to those who do believe and particularly those who do believe and did not sit at the Lord's table let me ask the question why not why did you not sit there and maybe some will say because I'm not good enough and I'm trying to be better and I hope between now and the next communion to do better than I did between this communion past and the one previous maybe you're saying in response to that question because

[46 : 13] I'm not worthy and I'm trying to do various things and I'm trying not to do other things to make myself a bit more worthy so that I can take my place at the table if that's your mindset stop it the work of salvation the work that was required to make you and I worthy to make you and I good enough for God has been finished by Christ and so your calling and mine is to trust him on that and to remember him in that our calling is to believe and receive the grace that is freely offered to us in Christ through his finished work so there is the work that is finished that's the work of salvation and you and I need to believe and to receive the salvation that has already been paid for in the blood of

Christ the second point the last point today is the work that goes on and I think Ephesians 2 maybe just turn to Ephesians 2 for a moment Ephesians 2 and the verses 8 through to 10 I think help us to think this all through and get it clear in our minds certainly it does for me the apostle Paul as God inspires him writes in Ephesians 2 verse 8 for it is by grace you have been saved through faith and this not from yourselves it is the gift of God not by works so that no one can boast you can see that's point one we are saved by what

Jesus has already done we're saved by grace what is grace grace is grace God's riches God's salvation at Christ's expense that takes us to the cross where we hear Jesus say that work is finished we're saved by grace we're saved by receiving what has been done on our behalf that we could never do for ourselves but our work that's Christ's work the work of salvation but our work as those who are saved if we are saved that's a work that goes on we're not called to sit down in our chairs and put our feet up on the table and just relax for the rest of our days knowing that we're going to heaven whenever we're called we're called to work and Paul goes on to say that in Ephesians 200 verse 10 he says but we are God's workmanship created in

Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do these are not saving good works these are good works that we undertake because we are saved they're evidence of the fact that we are saved and what we see in Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus is we see them in verses 38 through to verse 42 we see them engaged in good works just look at these verses back to John 19 later it says Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus but secretly because he feared the Jews with Pilate's permission he came and took the body away he was accompanied by Nicodemus the man who had earlier visited Jesus at night Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes about 75 pounds taking Jesus body the two of them wrapped it with the spices and strips of linen this was in accordance with

Jewish burial customs at the place where Jesus was crucified there was a garden and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid because it was the Jewish day of preparation and since the tomb was nearby they laid Jesus there these two men at great risk and at great expense they are doing good works out of love for Christ in asking for the body of Jesus in taking the body of Jesus down from the cross in arranging the burial of Jesus they were doing good works and they didn't realize the significance the weight of the good works they were doing they simply honored Christ out of love for Christ but God would honor their good works beyond what they could have ever imagined so I want to think as we conclude why these good works were of such importance two reasons first of all they were used of

[51 : 51] God to fulfill the scriptures and secondly they were used of God to make the resurrection known so first of all these good works that these two men undertook they were used of God for such an important task in fulfilling the scriptures and we've seen this as we've gone through the passion narrative everything that happened everything about the sufferings of Christ from the upper room to the betrayal and the denial through the arrest and the mocking the rigged trial and all the way through to Jesus' death on a cross it was all foretold nothing was random it was all foretold we see time and time again the scriptures being fulfilled in the detail we've seen we've seen it already and we see it here again in this passage we see as Joseph of

Arimathea and Nicodemus stepped forward we see Isaiah 53 coming to pass they didn't see it but we see it Isaiah 53 in verse 9 this is the literal translation of the verse his grave was appointed to be with the wicked talking of Christ here his grave was appointed to be with the wicked but with the rich man was his tomb and little did this man Joseph realise it but as he gave Jesus his own tomb he was the rich man that Isaiah spoke of he was doing the good works that had been prepared hundreds of years in advance for him to do and there's application in this two points of application the first point is for those who might be sceptical here and it's to note this the bible can be trusted and history itself testifies to the fact that the bible can be trusted because how is it possible for these prophets and the psalmists to be able to speak in such detail about an event that was not even in existence six seven hundred years before it ever came to pass at the time that the psalm 22 was written crucifixion wasn't even a thing that was known and yet we see it in such detail we see the crucifixion in that psalm

Isaiah 53 they couldn't have known the Romans would have been undertaking such awful tasks and yet we read of it in every single detail and that I think gives confidence to us to say that the Bible can be trusted this is one of the commentators he says this is A.W.

Pink every important detail of the great tragedy had been written down beforehand the betrayal of a familiar friend Psalm 41 9 the forsaking of the disciples through being offended at him Psalm 31 11 the false accusation Psalm 35 11 the silence before his judges Isaiah 53 7 the being proven guiltless Isaiah 53 9 the numbering of him with the transgressors Isaiah 53 12 the being crucified Isaiah 22 16 the mockery of the spectators Psalm 109 verse 25 the taunt of non deliverance Psalm 22 7 and 8 the gambling for his garments Psalm 22 18 the prayer for his enemies Isaiah 53 12 the being forsaken of God Psalm 22 1 the thirsting Psalm 69 21 the yielding of his spirit into the hands of the father

Psalm 31 5 the bones not being broken Psalm 34 20 all these events he says plainly foretold centuries before they came to pass what a convincing evidence of the divine inspiration of the scriptures those who dismiss the scriptures as unreliable are those who never read them if you're a skeptic I'll leave it there take it put it in your pocket the Bible can be trusted and here's the second point in application here as we look at this and as we see all that was going on we can be encouraged by the fact that God is sovereign and God has a plan even when things look dark even when you're tempted to sink into despair as Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus likely were even when it looks as if it's all over

[57 : 48] God has a plan and sometimes when we can see virtually nothing of it God is doing the most amazing things so keep trusting him keep serving him even when you sometimes can't even see a glimpse of the good that God may do through your endeavors tem tim keller writes this god hates evil and suffering and has a plan that will defeat it but we can hardly see any of the plan it is hidden too deeply for us to see much of it at all the people around Jesus cross also shook their heads and said I don't see how God could bring anything good out of this and yet today we are here and last week we sat here at the table and we saw and we remembered and we worshipped God for all that he did bring out of the sufferings of Christ we see all that was happening to fulfill the scriptures in accordance with God's salvation plan so that sinners like you and I could be saved and amazingly God used Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus to teach us that lesson the work that goes on the good works that we are called to

God used the work of Nicodemus and Joseph to fulfill the scriptures and finally God used the work of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea to make the resurrection known back in that culture there was no dignity and no care taken of the dead in this particular instance where someone had been crucified usually what happened history tells us is that the Romans having left the bodies on the cross for many days would eventually haul them down and they would throw these bodies into a mass open grave of the wicked and what happened after that no one really saw and no one to be honest really cared these were criminals these were wicked people so their bodies were just disposed of en masse this is what would normally happen to a crucified man his grave would be appointed as Isaiah testified to be with the wicked but Jesus' body because of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea

Jesus' body was carefully removed and it was anointed with spices 75 pounds worth which was the amount that would be used for a king not an ordinary person and his body was then wrapped in strips of linen and verse 41 tells us it was placed in a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid we hear Isaiah 53 with the rich man was his tomb and we know from the gospels that that tomb was sealed and it was guarded by Roman soldiers and that tomb went on to become the scene for the greatest news that was ever told and we're coming to it in the next chapter he is risen

Christ is alive the tomb is empty the grave clothes have been discarded and he is risen and God used Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus' good works he used their acts of faith he used their strips of linen he used this tomb that was given to Christ to showcase the resurrection he used this tomb to be the place from which we would first learn of the eternal victory of Christ I'd never thought about this before but if Jesus' body had been thrown into a mass grave as was the usual thing the resurrection could never have been verified but the good works of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus the tomb the strips of linen these became exhibits of evidence the testimony that was gathered at the tomb which was now empty became a testimony which authenticated the truth of the resurrection of Christ and the point here is they were faithful in doing what they could for Jesus but God used what they did in a way that was far more amazing than they could have ever have imagined or expected and you know that's our calling for Christians that's our work we're to do what we can for Jesus in the place that he has put us we are to be faithful in the little things knowing that he is able to take the little that we do the word that we share and use it in a way that's far more amazing than we could ever imagine remember the wee boy

Matthew 14 with a packed lunch Jesus said does anyone get any food and he puts his hand up and he says well I've only got a wee lunch five wee loaves and two fish what on earth could that do for so many people who are so hungry and Jesus didn't say you're right never mind that he said can I have it please give it to me so he took it and he used it to feed five thousand men and likely ten thousand women and children on top of that we're going to sing in just a minute little is much when God is in it it's only some spices Nicodemus might have said it's only some pieces of cloth that I've purchased it's only a tomb that I've bought

[65 : 49] Joseph might have said we're just doing the little that we can for Jesus but God saw it and God used it for these glorious effects here's the question what will God do with your life it's the point of your life what will God do with your life what will God do with your good works we're saved by the work of Christ on Calvary that's finished trust it but we're called to do good works the good works that we can for Jesus out of love for him and out of love for a lost world that needs to see him and hear about him and that's a work that goes on until Christ returns or calls us from the scene of time into eternity

I'll finish with the apostle Paul's words from 1st Corinthians the passage where he speaks at length about the wonder of the resurrection he says this thanks be to God he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ therefore my dear brothers and sisters stand firm let nothing move you and always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain so let's labor on for God's glory and pray that he will use even us in his work Lord God we pray that you would help us as we think about all that you did through

Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea in that act that is recorded for us in John's gospel we pray that you would work through us and in our lives in a way that will bring honor and glory to the name and the cause of Christ help us we pray in Jesus name Amen we'll sing to finish the hymn on the screen we'll think we have it in the books we've sung it here once before and the chorus of the hymn says little is much when God is in it Angus will play it through once and then we'll stand to sing in it please out and

To the harvest, give the ripen, there's a word for all to do. Hark the voice of God is calling, to the harvest calling you.

Let this match when God is in it, labor not for wealth or fame. There's a crown and you can win it, if you go in Jesus' name.

[70 : 02] But the place you go to labor, sin is small and little known. It is great if God is in it, and you not forget his home.

Let this match when God is in it, labor not for wealth or fame. There's a crown and you can win it, if you go in Jesus' name.

When the conflict here is ended, and the race on earth is run. He will say, if we are faithful, welcome home, my child will die.

Let this match when God is in it, labor not for wealth or fame. There's a crown and you can win it, if you go in Jesus' name.

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