

At the Cross

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Date: 23 February 2020

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Good morning and a warm welcome to the service this morning and a special welcome to those who are visiting with us today.

It's good to have some visitors with us. Those who are here for the first time also are very welcome and those who have been away for a wee while and who are back with us again today.

It's good to see some of those also. There's tea and there's coffee at the end of the service just on my left and please if you're able to stay behind to have tea and coffee please do so.

It would be good to get the chance to enjoy fellowship together. The services today at six o'clock tonight we have the Gaelic service and that will be conducted by John McSween and usually we would have an English fellowship at half past seven and the notices say that but actually there's a change to that.

I hadn't realised it was a leave of a communion and so as we've done in the past rather than having an English fellowship at half past seven we'll have the opportunity to go to Leverborough to join with them.

[1 : 08] So there'll be a service here for those who come together to worship in Gaelic and for those who are able to please be encouraged to go to the service in Leverborough and it's at six I think tonight in Leverborough and there's a fellowship after that and the preacher will be the Reverend Calumian McLeod who is in Crossbost.

So that's tonight. Youth fellowship. Youth fellowship will meet as usual here and so please take note of that. You can see in the course of the week there's some things that are happening as usual.

Road to recovery, the little fishes, the ladies Bible study and you've got details of these there. This coming Wednesday we have a special service and you have the intimation there on the sheet.

Gordon is taking over as the youth discipleship worker for the presbytery here and the commissioning service which truly is the start-up service for Gordon will be held here on Wednesday at half past seven.

James McKeever who's the moderator of presbytery will preach and take that meeting and it's a chance for us to come around Gordon and to be thankful to God for leading him to that position and to pray for him as he begins to take that position up.

[2 : 34] A couple more intimations. You can see the rest there and I'm going to leave you to read the rest of these on the sheet at your own convenience but two more things that didn't make the sheet. One is a notice that comes from John Angus and it's just to ask for volunteers for this coming Saturday the 29th of February from 10am.

There's some work that needs to be done outside the church and there is some work that needs to be done inside the church before the communion weekend and so volunteers from 10 o'clock this Saturday it would be good to have a few.

Another one from Peggy here and that's just to say that those who wish to donate bedding or teddies to Romania please have them to Peggy by Saturday 29th of February.

We have a lift from Glasgow from here to Glasgow for these things and it would be good to have them in place by Saturday the 29th of February.

I think, I'm not 100% sure, but I think these are all the intimations. Let me just say as well that our own communion is in a couple of weeks time now and for those who know the Lord, who trust the Lord and who have not yet professed faith in the Lord as their saviour, there's the chance to do that at the communion weekend and please be encouraged to come and speak to myself or any of the elders or indeed come forward during that weekend.

[4 : 13] Over the course of the weekend we'll have the Reverend Paul Murray from Kinloch who'll take the Gallup services, Mark McLeod from Leverborough who'll take the service on the Thursday night and then from the Friday through to the Sunday night, the Reverend Gordon Thompson who you'll remember from the tent mission, the Glaswegian, very bubbly, friendly man.

He's coming to take the services from Friday through to Sunday. So let's be praying for that weekend in advance of it. And these I think now are all the intimations.

So let's worship God and we begin by singing from a psalm. We sing from Psalm 22 in English and we sing from verses 1 to verse 4 of the psalm.

Psalm 22 verse 1 to verse 4. This is a psalm that looks forward to the cross of Jesus. It's a psalm that was written many hundreds of years before the cross of Jesus.

But it points forward to one who would come and who would be forsaken by God in order that we can be saved. And so this is a psalm that we stand to worship God as we sing.

[5 : 33] Psalm 22 verses 1 to verse 4. My God, my God, why hast thou me forsaken? Why so far art thou from helping me and from my words that roaring are?

We'll stand to sing to God's praise. Let's close our eyes, let's bow our heads and let's unite our hearts together in prayer.

Let's speak to God in prayer. Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you that we are able to call you our Father.

You are the God of heaven and earth. You are the God who is holy. And we recognize that we are people who are not holy. We are people who sin. And yet, Lord, we thank you that you have made it possible for us, even in our broken, sinful state, to make an approach to you.

Because we pray in Jesus' name. Not in our own name, but in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son and our Saviour. We thank you that we are the Lord.

[6 : 45] And we come not holding up our own religious CVs. Not claiming to have works of our own that would qualify ourselves to come into your presence.

But we come looking forward to that cross that we are pointed to in the psalm. We come looking to and trusting in the finished work of Christ.

We thank you that he is the one who came from heaven to this broken world. And we thank you that he came to seek and to save sinners.

We thank you that he is the one who came from heaven to this broken world. We thank you for his life that we see as we open the Gospels. A life that was pure. A life that was innocent.

A life that was sinless. A life that he lived on our behalf because we confess that we are not able to live it. And we thank you for the death of Jesus.

[7 : 48] A death which he willingly went into. To make it possible for us to be saved. We read in scripture that the wages of sin is death.

And we see Jesus pay the price for the sins that we have committed. In order that we could be offered the gift of God.

Which is eternal life. So help us Lord we pray. As we bow before you. As we seek to make our approach to you.

To know that we are received in Christ. And help us Lord we pray to know. In the stillness of this place this morning. In this hour where we come with that intention.

And that expectation that we will meet with you. Help us to know in our hearts and our inner being. That you are here with us. That's the promise of Jesus.

[8 : 48] That where two or three meet. In his name he will be present. And that to bless. But we pray that not only would we know that. In our minds. Because the Bible tells us so.

But we pray that we would feel that. In our hearts. And that we would be encouraged. As we know the presence of Jesus. And Lord as we know the encouragement of coming alongside each other.

Do not get out of the habit of meeting together we are told. But encourage one another. To help us Lord to encourage one another. In worship.

As we fix our eyes upon Jesus. And enable us to know the power of the Holy Spirit. As the word of God is read. As we meditate upon it.

As we. As we come and praise. And as we sing words. We ask that they would connect with what's going on in our hearts. And we pray that we would know that you are moving amongst us.

[9 : 50] So receive us in Jesus we pray. Cleanse us from all our sin. Every wrong doing. Every wrong thought. Every wrong word.

Every thing that we have done. Which we know is against you. Everything that we have left undone. Which we know we should have attended to. We pray that you would forgive us for these things.

And we ask that you would cleanse us in the blood of Jesus. Empty us also of all that would focus on ourselves. And give us eyes we pray.

That we would see Jesus. For we pray these things in Jesus name. And for his sake. Amen. And. We'll turn now in our Bibles. The words are also on the screen.

Mark chapter 15. And we'll read the section. From verse 21. Down to verse. 39.

[10 : 49] We've been going through Mark's gospel. For quite a long time now. A number of months. And we come. And we come. This morning. To this section. Where Jesus.

Is on the cross. Place that we've been saying. Of. So Mark chapter 15. And. We see here. Jesus. Carrying his cross.

And then. A man. Simon. From Cyrene. Being forced to carry the cross of Jesus for him. As he. Is collapsing under the weight of the cross. Mark 15.

Verse 21. A certain man. From Cyrene. Simon. The father of Alexander and Rufus. Was passing by. On his way in from the country. And they forced him to carry the cross.

They brought Jesus. To the place called Golgotha. Which means the place of the skull. Then they. That's the Roman soldiers. They. They offered him wine.

[11 : 48] Mixed with myrrh. But he did not take it. And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes. They cast lots. To see what. Each would get. It was the third hour.

When they crucified him. The written notice. On the charge. Against him. Read the king. Of the Jews. They crucified. Two robbers with him. One. On his right.

And one. On his left. Those who passed by. Hurling insults at him. Shaking their heads. And saying. So. You. Who are going to destroy the temple. And build it in three days.

Come down from the cross. And save yourself. The same way. The chief priests. And the teachers of the law. Mocked him. Among themselves. He saved others.

They said. But he can't save himself. Let this Christ. This king of Israel. Come down. Now from the cross. That we may see and believe. Who was crucified with him.

[12 : 46] Also heaped insults on him. At the sixth hour. Darkness came over. The whole land. Until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour. Jesus cried out.

In a loud voice. Eloi. Eloi. Lama. Sabachthani. Which means. My God. My God. Why have you forsaken me?

Then some of those standing near. Heard this. They said. Listen. He's calling Elijah. One man ran. Filled a sponge. With white wine vinegar.

Put it on a stick. And offered it to Jesus. To drink. Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes. To take him down. He said. With a loud cry.

Jesus breathed. His last. The curtain. Of the temple. Was torn in two. From top to bottom. And when the centurion.

[13 : 44] Who stood there. In front of Jesus. Heard his cry. And saw. How he died. He said. Surely. This man. Was.

The son. Of God. Amen. And may God. Bless. That reading. Of his word. To us. If you could turn back.

Please. Now. To the passage. That we read. In Mark. Chapter 15. Just as we go there. Let's take a minute. More. And let's pray. Heavenly Father.

Again. We thank you. For your word. We thank you. That you're the God. Who. Who speaks to us. Not only. Are we able to. To come to you. In the name of Jesus. But we thank you. That we have.

This book. In front of us. Which we. Believe is inspired. By God. The Holy Spirit. And which. Which shows us. Jesus. We thank you. That you are the God. Who. Who takes the.

[14 : 39] The verses of. Of what's before us. And brings them with power. To our hearts. To our lives. And we ask that. Today. As we bow before you.

And as we ask Lord. That you would meet with us. That you would speak to us. Speak into our hearts. We pray. And show us. More and more. Of our need of Jesus. And more and more.

Of the wonder. Of. Who Jesus is. And what you have done. For us Lord. And through Christ. So empty our minds. Of all that would distract us.

We pray. And fill us with the Holy Spirit. That we may. Have a fresh encounter. With the risen Christ. We pray for the children.

As well Lord. We thank you for them. And we ask that. As they hear the. The message of the. The good news. Of Jesus. Spoken simply. That you would open their minds.

[15 : 33] And their hearts. That they would. That they would believe. And that they would know more. Of your love for them. And your care. Of them. In this world. Where. There are so many things.

That are threatening to them. We thank you Father. That you are the God. Who cares for us. We thank you. That we can. Bring. All the things.

That worry us. And concern us. To you. We sometimes sing. What a friend we have in Jesus. All our sins. And griefs to bear. What a privilege. To carry everything. To God.

In prayer. We do pray for those. Who are struggling today. We pray for those. Who. Who have been struggling. With their health. Some. Who are in hospital. At this time. We think of Danella Barker.

Especially. And we ask Lord. That she. Awaits treatment. That you would. Make that treatment. Possible. At the right time. And we ask that.

[16 : 29] Your hand. Of healing. Would be upon her. And that you would. Give skill. To those who. Who care for her. At this time. And uphold Scott. And. Sean. And. Katie Morag.

And the family. As they. Wait anxiously. At this time. Help them. To be much in prayer. And to know your peace. Pay for Ian Davidson. Back home now.

And we ask that you. Would strengthen him. That you would. Encourage him. And Shona. And that you would. Continue to. To watch over them. At this time. And for others. Who. Who are.

Struggling with. With illness. In their homes. For some. Who are lonely. For some. Who battle. With addictions. And who. Who. May be down. Cast.

In their minds. And in their situation. At present. We. We bring them to you. And we ask Lord. That you would meet them. At the point of their need. And that you would. Uphold them. We pray for those.

[17 : 24] Who meet around your table. This morning. In Leverborough. And we ask that. As they take the bread. And as they. Take the wine. That they truly would remember. Jesus. And that they would.

Know your presence. And that they would know. Your peace. And that they would be built up. Through your word. As it's brought to them. So. Be near to them.

We ask Lord. And for those in the church. Of Scotland. This morning. In Leverborough too. We pray for them. And for. For Chris Morrison. As he's. Ordained as an elder. This morning. We ask that your hand. Would be upon him.

And that you would bless him. And keep him close to yourself. And enable him to serve you. Within that congregation. There. We pray for Gordon.

As he prepares to begin. This new chapter in ministry. And we ask Lord. That you would use him. And that you would make him a blessing. And we ask that he would. Guide many.

[18 : 18] Who would. Be. Seeking to. To reach out. To the young people. In this. In this region. With the news of the gospel. May God.

Gordon be an encouragement. To them. And may you give him. Wisdom. That he may bring to. To those around these islands. As to how we can reach out. With the treasure of the gospel.

That has been. Entrusted to us. So hear our prayers. And continue with us. Lead us. And guide us. We pray. As we open. Your word now. And we pray all these things.

Together. With the forgiveness of our sins. In Jesus name. Amen. Mark chapter 15. Just one small section. Of Mark's gospel. That we. That we read this morning.

But. Mark's gospel. Indeed. All the. The gospels. Matthew. Mark. Luke. And John. The four gospels. At the beginning. Of the new testament.

[19 : 15] They're eyewitness accounts. They're historical records. Of what people saw. Sometimes we. We open up the bible. We're not quite sure.

What the genre is. What we're reading. But when we look at Matthew. And Mark. And Luke. And John. What we're seeing. Here. Is. Is eyewitness accounts.

Of what people saw. And what people heard. About. Jesus. This is a record. Of. Of what was going on. During the ministry.

Of. Of Jesus. And. And what's unusual. About. The gospels. All of the gospels. Is how much time. Is devoted. To. Providing.

A record. Of the events. Leading up to. And then the event. Of Jesus. Death itself. If you pick up. A biography. Of any. Famous person.

[20 : 11] Whether it's a politician. Or a sports person. Or. Or whatever. But. If you pick up. A biography. Of a. Of a person's life. That's written. After they've died. And you'll find that.

Probably. Ninety-nine percent. Of the book. Will be devoted. To the person's life. And achievements. And there may be. Just one or two pages. At the end.

That say something. About the death. Of the person. And yet. If we look at Mark. Specifically. What we see. In Mark's gospel. Is that.

Almost. Forty percent. Of the text. Of the words. That are in Mark's gospel. Almost. Forty percent. Of it. Focuses.

On the death. Of Jesus. Not the life of Jesus. But the death of Jesus. And that. Underlines.

[21 : 08] For us. The importance. The significance. Of Jesus death. And today. I want us. Once more. To focus. On the death of Jesus.

Christ. And I want to consider. Two things. In the time that we have. Firstly. I want to think about. What could be seen. At the cross. As Jesus died.

And the second thing. We'll look at. Is. What could be heard. At the cross. As Jesus died. So first of all. What could be seen.

At the cross. As Jesus is crucified. And. The point. I want to make. Here. Is that. For some hours. Of the day.

On the day. Of Jesus. Crucifixion. Nothing. Could be seen. During the day. Around the cross. Of Christ. Nothing. Could be seen.

[22 : 06] Darkness. Came over. The whole land. Look at. Verse 33. We have it. In the. Text. Before us here. At the sixth hour.

Darkness. Came over. The whole land. Until the ninth hour. It's my. Translation here. What you had on the screen. I noticed. Was slightly different.

The screen has done. The hard work for me. But. We wonder. What the sixth hour. And what the ninth. Hour. Mean. But. The sixth hour. To the ninth hour.

These are the hours. Where we would expect. The sun. To be highest. In the sky. These are the hours. Where we would expect. There to be the greatest.

Light. Scorching. The land. The sixth hour. Was. Was twelve noon. The ninth hour. Was. Three in the afternoon. And during.

[23 : 01] These hours. We would expect. In that place. In the ancient. Near east. The sun. To be. Absolutely. Blinding. The people. During these hours. And scorching.

The land. With. With heat. And yet. On this day. As Jesus dies. There was a chill in the air. As the sun was hidden. And darkness. Came.

Over. The whole. Land. So what could be seen. At the cross. Very little. What was going on here. In some of the. The scientific.

Minds. Would say. Well clearly. This was. Some kind of a. A solar eclipse. But it. But it. Couldn't have been. A solar eclipse. One scholar.

Not a biblical scholar. But one scholar. Writes. About the science of this. The biblical details. Do not accord. With an eclipse. A solar eclipse. Could not have occurred.

- [23 : 55] On or near. The Passover. When Jesus was crucified. And would have been. Too brief. To account. For three hours. Of darkness. And some of us.
- Know that. To be true. Some of us. Have experienced. A solar eclipse. I remember being. In Krakow. On the day. That. There was a solar eclipse. And.
- It was the strangest thing. As the light. In the middle of the day. Faded. And these people. Had these funny glasses. And were. Were looking. In the direction. Of the sun.
- There was. Just a. A few moments. Of. Of this. Eerie. Kind of. Of darkness. But not three hours. To this.
- Couldn't have been. A solar eclipse. So what kind of darkness. Was this? Well this was a. Supernatural darkness. And that. Should come as no.
- [24 : 49] Great surprise to us. All. Through Jesus. Life. What was going on. Around him. Through him. Was supernatural. And we could.
- Flick back. Through Mark's gospel. And do a scan. Of. Of the things. That were going on. In and through. Through Jesus. He was. Healing the sick. Those who. Who had no cure.
- Lepers. And one. Touched from Jesus. And they were cured. Woman. Who. Who. Who. The woman. Who was struggling. With the issue of blood.
- And who'd spent. Everything she had. Going from doctor. To doctor. With. With no hope. She touches the hem. Of Jesus garment. And she's. She's cured. It's. It's supernatural.
- He casts out demons. With a. With a word. He feeds thousands. From one little boy's lunch. He stills the sea.
- [25 : 47] With a word. These are not. Natural things. These are. Supernatural things. That mark. Jesus life. And now when Jesus.
- Faces death. Again. Supernatural things. Are happening. And if you're a Christian. You must believe. In the supernatural. Our God.
- Is a supernatural God. He does not fit. Into the categories. That we. Understand. He. He has no beginning. He has no end.
- He is eternal. We cannot. Grasp that. It's not something. Our. Our natural. Finite. Minds. Can. Can.
- Can take hold of. We just have to accept it. By faith. The creation. We read about. In Genesis. God spoke. And something.
- [26 : 45] Came into being. Something wonderful. Came into being. Where nothing was. Everything about. About creation. Is. Is supernatural. And as we look at.
- The life of Jesus. Born of a virgin. Supernatural. His life. His. His ministry. The miracles. The.
- The death of Jesus. The resurrection. Of Jesus. All these things. That mark Jesus. Life and death. And resurrection. They're supernatural things. So when you and I pray.
- We should. Expect. That God. Is still. Able to do. As Paul puts it. In Ephesians 3. Immeasurably more. Than all we ask.
- Or imagine. Our God. Is still. Able to move. In supernatural. Ways. Perhaps we need to.
- [27 : 43] Remember that. And let that. Shape our prayers. And our expectations. So what was God saying. Through the supernatural darkness.
- What did this. Darkness. Speak of. Well it spoke of God's punishment. If you think back to. To Exodus. Which is likely.

Where the minds of those present. On that day. Would have been going to. We could go to Exodus 10. And we see one of the plagues. That hit. Egypt. Egypt. And there was a plague of darkness.

In Exodus 10. It spoke about God's punishment. Against. Against Pharaoh. It spoke about. God's displeasure. Against this. Dictator. Who was.

Defying him. And he was. Oppressing God's people. So darkness. Fell. Over the land. And here. The darkness. That was surrounding the cross.

[28 : 40] Spoke about God's displeasure. It spoke about God's punishment. For what? For our sin. And on that cross. As we sang.

Jesus. Was now carrying. Our sin. Behold. The man. Upon a cross. We sang. My sin.

Upon his shoulders. And as my sin. Rested. Upon the shoulders. Of Christ. God's displeasure.

Enveloped. Christ. Darkness. Fell. Over. The whole. Land. J.C. Ryle. Says. The darkness. Taught. The exceeding.

Sinfulness. Of sin. In the eyes. Of God. God. The son of God. Himself. Must needs. Be left. Without the cheering. Light of day. When he.

[29 : 38] Became. Sin. For us. And carried. Our. Transgressions. So even if we can't see much. On the cross. We're to see.

That. We're to see. The thick. Darkness. The supernatural. Darkness. That enveloped. Christ. Was sin.

Induced. Was caused. By. By us. Not by him. And just as we move on. From this point. We can know another.

Thing about darkness. When. When darkness falls. We've experienced this. In the last few weeks even. We can be sitting in a room. All is bright. The power is cut.

And all of a sudden. We go into. Deep darkness. Our. Our vision is. Is taken away. But when our vision. Is taken away. And when darkness. Comes into. To our room.

[30 : 33] Every other. Sense is heightened. Everything. That is going on. Around us. We. We pick it up. With our ears. Our. Our hearing. Is. Is heightened.

Our senses. Are heightened. So that we can. So that we can. Pick up the things. That we would otherwise. Not see. With our. With our eyes. And so. We move. Now from. What could be seen.

At the cross. To what could be heard. At the cross. There's various things. That we note. From the text. That could be heard. At the cross. And the first of these things.

Is. Is insults. Insults. Could be heard. At the cross. Now the insults. That. That Jesus. Is subjected to.

They come before. The darkness falls. We thought about them. A little. Last week. The insults. That are directed. Towards Jesus. They come. First of all. From the passersby.

[31 : 29] Those who passed by. Verse 29. Hurling insults. At Jesus. Shaking their heads. And saying. So you. Who are going to destroy. The temple. And build it.

In three days. Come down. From the cross. And save yourself. To passersby. No compassion. No sense of.

Of. Of horror. At what they're seeing. In front of them. As Jesus suffers. And dies. But they. They just have a mouthful. Of insults for him. And then we have.

The religious leaders. And they. In the same way. Verse 31. The chief priests. The teachers of the law. They mocked him. Among themselves.

He saved others. They said. But he can't save himself. Let this Christ. This king of Israel. Come down now. From the cross. That we may see. And believe.

[32 : 27] Now. As you look at these two sets. Of insults. Do you note. The common theme. That comes through. Both. Of these. Barrages. Of insults.

The same thing. That they say. To Jesus. You have the passersby. And you have the religious leaders. And they have. A mouthful of insults. But the one common thread.

That. That. Is woven through. Both sets of insults. Is they say. Come down from the cross. Jesus. Come down from the cross.

Save yourself. And it was all scorn. And it was a cruel. Sarcasm. But these words.

Weren't original. These. These are words. That we've heard before. You cast your mind. Way back. To the very beginning. Of Jesus ministry.

[33 : 25] Remember he. He's baptized. In the river. And the spirit of God. Falls upon him. It's given such encouragement. And then he's out. Into the wilderness. And the devil attacks him.

For 40 days and nights. Jesus is tested. He's tried. He's. He's tempted. And as he's tempted. Do you remember what the devil said. To him.

Says in Matthew 4. And verse 5. The devil. Took him. To the holy city. And had him stand. On the highest point. Of the temple. If you are the son of God.

He said. Throw yourself down. Come down. If you are who you say you are. Come down.

Set aside the father's will. Listen to what I'm saying. Come down. Take a different course. And here.

[34 : 21] That. Same message. Is echoed through. Human tongues. And yet the devil is at work here. Saying to Jesus.

If you are who you say you are. Come down. Save yourself. But he couldn't.

Jesus couldn't save himself. And save sinners. And so Jesus. Would not. Come down. Until the work.

Of salvation. Was completed. It was. My sin. We saw. That held him there. Until. It was.

Completed. So we hear the insults. And we hear. Satan's voice. Through these insults. The second thing we hear.

[35 : 18] Around the cross. Is Jesus. Cry. It's Jesus. First cry. There's two cries here. And by now. The darkness. Has fallen. And at three.

O'clock. In the afternoon. The cry of Jesus. Is heard like a. A clap. Of thunder. That. That. That. Comes from within. That darkness. Verse 33.

At the sixth hour. Darkness. Came over the whole land. Until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour. Jesus cried out. In a loud voice. Eloi. Eloi. Lama.

Sabachthani. Which means. My God. My God. Why have you. Forsaken me? Now.

Why did Jesus. Cry this? This is the cry. Of Jesus. And it's recorded. For us. By Mark. It's what was heard. At the cross. But. We need to ask the question. Well. Why did Jesus.

[36 : 12] Cry this? And there's two answers. To that question. The first reason. That Jesus cried this. Is because. This is what he felt.

This was not. Some. Rehearsed. Cry. That was disconnected. From what he was feeling. Jesus. On the cross. Was feeling. The most. Excruciating.

Loneliness. Forsakenness. He has for these. Three years. Had his closest. Disciples around him.

He shared his life. With them. Judas denies him. Judas betrays him. Peter. He denies him.

The others scatter. He comes to the cross. He's absolutely. Alone. Alone. And now as he hangs on that cross.

[37 : 15] With our sin on his shoulder. With the darkness crushing in. Upon him. Even the sense of his father. And the spirit.

Is taken from him. And he feels. Utterly. Alone. For. Forsaken.

Something he has never known. Until this moment. Up until now. Jesus. Has lived in perfect. Communion. With. With God the father. And God the spirit. But now.

He is totally. Alone. And just a side note. That's what sin does. By the way. Sin takes us to that place. Of. Of absolute. Loneliness.

It drives a wedge. Between man. And woman. And boy. And girl. And God. Augustine. Wrote. Our souls. Are restless.

[38 : 14] Until they find their rest. In thee. Sin. Drives a wedge. Between us. And the only one. Who can give us. Rest.

And we end up feeling. Totally. Discontent. Unsatisfied. And alone. Sin. Sin drives a wedge. Between. Man and man.

And woman and woman. It causes the fracturing. The breakdown. Of our relationships. And. And it causes our hearts. To cry out. From that pain.

And here. Jesus. In a far more intense way. Than we could. Ever enter into. Is in the midst. Of that. Isolation. He is.

As the apostles. Creed puts it. He is at this moment. Descending. Into hell. And hell. Is a place of. Total. Isolation. I think that probably.

[39 : 09] Needs to be said today. By way of application. Hell is a. It's a real place. Jesus talked. About it. More than anybody else did. And hell.

Is not a place of. Of. Parties. And drums. And. Reconciled. Friendships. And. And music. It's a place of. It's a place of loneliness.

It's a place of sadness. It's a place where that. That feeling of. Of forsakenness. Never ends. And if we hang on to our sin. Doggedly.

And if we refuse. To have. Jesus. Then that's the place. That we will end up. That's the. The bad news. But the good news. For those.

Who have trusted Jesus. And for those. Who will trust Jesus. The good news. Is. For those. Who have handed. Their sin. Over to Christ.

[40 : 04] The cry of. Isolation. From Jesus. Is a cry of comfort. For us. He is crying out. He is. Feeling the full. Force. Of God.

Forsakenness. He is. Descending into hell. So that we will never have to. So Jesus cry. My God. He can't say. My father anymore. He says.

My God. My God. Why have you forsaken me? He cried out. Because that's what he felt. But the second reason. He cried out. That. That cry.

Is because. He was showing. That he was the Messiah. It's a cry. That's lifted. Straight from the psalm. That we sang at the beginning. Psalm 22. It begin.

Begins with these words. My God. My God. Why have you forsaken me? It's a psalm. That points forward. To the Messiah. Yeah. It's a psalm. That enters into.

[40 : 59] Some of the sufferings. That the Messiah would go through. To save his people. And here. Although Jesus is gasping for breath. Although he's suffocating.

Under that crucifixion. Although he is in the most. Horrific pain. He cries out. In a loud voice. It says. So that the people. Around would hear. And believe.

My God. My God. Why have you forsaken me? And the Jewish people. Who were. Who were around the cross. They knew the psalm. I mean. We can grow up today.

And we have no knowledge. Whatsoever of the Bible. We. We hardly encountered the Bible. In the public square. But for the Jew. From the moment. They were. A child.

Right the way. Up. They knew these texts. By heart. They knew these. These psalms. They knew that. These were words. That pointed to the Messiah.

[41 : 53] They knew these texts. From Isaiah. And other places. That. That made clear. The Messiah would suffer. In this particular way. And yet. When they're. Confronted here. With such compelling evidence.

Of Jesus. Messiahship. They still would not believe. Instead. They mocked. Jesus. Some more. And they. They say.

He's. He's calling Elijah. Go and get a sponge. Go and get some. Wine vinegar. See if Elijah comes. Ha ha ha. When they're.

Confronted. With. With Jesus. They try to laugh it off. I wonder. Is there anyone here. Like that. This morning. Is there anyone here.

Who's grown up. With. These same texts. That. The people around the cross. Grew up with. Is there anyone here.

[42 : 49] Who's heard numerous sermons. About Jesus. And even known times. Perhaps in life. When. When it seems as if Jesus. Has grown. Very close to you. Attended to you.

And been gracious to you. And kind to you. And ministered to you. And yet today. As you look at his cross. You still.

Will not. Believe. And when people. On the way out. The church. Challenge you. Over that. You make light of it. Some quip.

Some wee joke. That's what they did. At the cross. So we have the insults. That we hear around the cross. We have the first cry of Jesus. We hear around the cross.

And then we have the. The second cry of Jesus. Verse 37. With a loud cry. Jesus. Breathed. His last. And again.

[43 : 47] We see something here. We've seen. In the run up to the cross. Jesus. Is in control of everything. Jesus. Life. Has not been taken away from him. He's laying it down.

Voluntarily. And even. Right down to the timing. Of his. His last breath. He's in control of it. And so he gave that loud cry. And he breathed his last.

What was the. What was the cry. Well. Mark doesn't tell us. But John tells us. John 19. Verse 30. Jesus.

Said. It. Is. Finished. And with that. He bowed his head. And gave up. His spirit.

It's another echo of Psalm 22. We sang it at the end. The last. Words of Psalm 22. Says. He has done it. Finished.

[44 : 44] The work that Jesus came to do. He came to seek and save sinners. And the work of. Of salvation. The work of making an end of our sin. And making it possible.

For us to take hold of the. Eternal life. That he is able to offer. It's finished. Jesus. Jesus. He is. He's breathed his last.

He makes that declaration. It's done. The price is paid. Tetelestai. Is the word.

It's the word. It's the word. That's used for an account. That was overdue. Being paid in full. And with Jesus. Final word. He is saying. The debt. Of sin.

That those who are trusting me. Once owed. It's written off. It's finished. Finished. I think some of us struggle. To hear that word. Finished. Some of us.

[45 : 43] Perhaps. Are still trying to. To save ourselves. With our. With our good work. Some of us. Like to. To dig out. Our religious CVs. And put them before God.

As if. This was a. A means. Through which God. Could accept us. And Jesus cried. Cuts across. All that. He says. It's finished. There's nothing more.

For you to do. There's nothing. That you can do. I have done it all. Says Jesus. All you have to do. Is repent.

Turn away. From your sin. And turn in faith. To me. The work is done. The price is paid. It's finished. In two weeks time. The. The Lord's table. Will be set here.

And. Will see the bread. And will. Will see the wine. And those who have trusted Jesus. Are called to come. And to take the bread.

[46 : 38] And to take the wine. And to remember Jesus. And. There's some perhaps here. Who have trusted Jesus. Many years ago. And who still.

When they. Hear the invitation. They. They hold back. And they say. Well I'm not good enough yet. I'm not. Worthy. Enough yet. To be able to come forward. I'm not. I'm not quite. I'm not quite.

Ready to come. And the cry of Jesus. Cuts across all that as well. Finished. He says. Everything. That was necessary. To make. Us. Good enough.

And to make us. Worthy. In him. Has been done. And if we're trusting him. We are. We are. Just called.

To come forward. In obedience. To his call. The second cry. Of Jesus. Finished. Two more things. Very briefly.

[47 : 33] What else could be heard. You could hear. The tearing of the curtain. The curtain. Of the temple. Verse. Thirty. Was torn. In two.

From top. To bottom. What did that mean? Well the curtain. Was a. A curtain.

That. Came between. The place. Where God's presence. In the temple. Was most powerfully. Experienced. And. Where the people were.

There's an area. In the temple. Called the. The holy of holies. And only once. In the year. Could one person. The priest. Go forward. On behalf of the people.

Into. Into that place. Where. Where God was. Was. Was. Was. To meet with. With them. In a special way. There was a. There was a barrier. There was a curtain. That kept everyone else back.

[48 : 33] And when Jesus died. When the sin. That came between. Man and woman. And God. Was dealt with. The curtain.

Was dramatically. Torn. And the moment. That Jesus died. It was torn. From top. To bottom. Which was showing.

The fact. That. It was torn. By God. Himself. J.C. Ryle. Says. That. The curtain.

Taught. That the way. Into the holiest. Of all. Was now. Open. To all mankind. By Christ's death. It taught. That Gentiles. Non-Jews.

As well as Jews. Might now. Draw near. To God. With boldness. Through Jesus. The one. High priest. And that all. Barriers. Between man. And God.

[49 : 29] Were forever. Cast. Down. So the tearing. Of the curtain. Was God's. Way. Of saying. The way is open. The way is clear.

Come to me. Don't stay back. From me. But come to me. And find rest. And find peace. In me. One of the. One of the harrowing accounts.

That. Some of us probably read. In the. In the course. Of the week's news. Was the. The last post. Of. The girl.

Caroline Flack. Who died. A girl who took her own life. And in many ways. You know. As we looked at her. From a. A distance. She's a.

A girl who. Who seemed to have so much. Looks. And. Money. Popularity. And yet. The one thing.

[50 : 24] That's very evident. That she didn't have. By her own admission. Is rest. Don't you wish. She could have told her. About this torn. Curtain. Don't you wish.

She could have. Told her. That there is rest. And there is peace. For those who come to Jesus. There's no barriers. There's no curtains.

Of separation. If we see our sin. If we feel. That lostness. Jesus. Says. Come. The way is open. The way is clear.

We hear the tearing curtain. And finally. We hear. A centurion. A centurion. A centurion's profession. And when the centurion. Verse 39. He stood there.

In front of Jesus. Heard. His cry. And saw. How he died. He said. Surely. This man. Was the son. Of God.

[51 : 21] How much knowledge. Did the centurion. Have of the scriptures. Virtually none. He wasn't a Jew. He was a Roman. He didn't have the privileges. That the. The Jewish people had.

And. And knowing the. The texts of scripture. In fact. This is a. A man who was probably. Most unlikely. To. To believe. He was a. A trained killer.

He's an experienced soldier. A hardened man. In charge of a hundred. Roman soldiers. This is the kind of man. That we. We wouldn't expect.

To be moved by anything. Because he. He day by day by day. Just put people to death. And yet. When he stood there. In front of this man. Jesus. And heard his cry.

And saw. How he died. He believed. And having believed. Even though. It probably cost us. A whole lot more. Than we know. Immediately.

[52 : 17] This man. Made his profession. Of faith. Do you think. His pals. In the forces. Encouraged him. As he said.

Surely. This man. Is the son of God. I think. They said. Shoosh. You're going to lose. Your job over this. You're making a fool. Of yourself. But it didn't stop him. He saw.

He believed. And immediately. He made. A profession. Of faith. This man. Jesus. He is the Christ. And this was a sign. Of things to come.

This. Cross. Of Jesus. Would be the means. Not just of saving. This man. But many more. And the question. To finish with. Is. Is what about you?

What about us? We've seen. We've heard. Much more. Much more. Than this Roman soldier. Ever saw. And heard.

[53 : 15] But will we believe. But will we believe. And be saved. And if you do believe. Will you profess. That this Jesus.

Is indeed. The son of God. And your savior. We'll pray. Heavenly father. We pray. That you would give us. Eyes to see.

And ears to hear. What the Roman. Centurion. Saw. And heard. And we thank you. That we are promised. That when we. When we believe.

In Jesus Christ. That we. Will be saved. It's not about. What we do. In terms of our works. It's about. What Jesus did.

In terms of. His finished work. And our acceptance. Of that. By faith. So give us. That faith. We pray. That we may know. The salvation.

[54 : 09] And the rest. That comes from. Coming to Jesus. And we pray this. 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.