

# Alasdair Macleod 1/918

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[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you for the opening few verses of this chapter. This morning we're going to continue through to verse 17 of this chapter. And so we're going to read from the beginning to verse 17 of Romans chapter 8.

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Because through Christ Jesus, the law of the Spirit gives life, who gives life to set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires. But those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.

The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God.

[ 1 : 21 ] It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh, but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you.

And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness.

And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation, but it is not to the flesh to live according to it. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you receive does not make you slaves so that you live in fear again. Rather, the Spirit you receive brought about your adoption to sonship.

[ 2 : 30 ] And by him we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs.

Heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ. If indeed we share in his suffering, in order that we may also share in his glory. We're going to leave our reading there.

We do pray God will help us understand it as we study it in a few moments' time. We're going to again going to bow our heads as we come before God in prayer.

Heavenly Father, we pray that you would give to us something of the vision that you see of this world round about us. We know that with the busyness of our lives, we can become engrossed in our lives and in our routines to the extent that we forget that we are living among a people who are heading for a lost eternity.

A people made in your image. A people possessing a never-dying soul. A people who, if they continue on the road that they are on, will be at a distance from all of your goodness in hell and instead will face you in wrath.

[ 3 : 51 ] We pray that the spiritual realities of what is around us might be made clear to us. And that you would give to us a genuine burden for those who are still headed for a lost eternity.

Were it not for your initiative and for your great intervention in our lives, then we likewise would be headed for a lost eternity. But we thank you, we praise you, that through the witness of your people, through the power of your word, through the way in which in providence you got our attention,

through the conscience that you have built into each soul, that you brought us to a position of knowing what it was to repent, to turn from our sin, and to throw ourselves onto the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so we pray, Father, that your people here, that your people everywhere, might realise the opportunities that we have. And that we might realise that time is short. Help us, we pray, to be wise to the opportunities you give to us.

Help us to have the right words to share to those in our families, to those whom we live beside, those in the community, those whom we work with. Help us to have the right words to share that would point them to you.

And we pray that with the wisdom and with the words that you can give, that you would give to us a winsomeness of character, as we share something of the love of Christ Jesus to them.

[ 5 : 17 ] Father, we know that so many in this broken world are lost and they know it, and yet so often they see no correlation between their lostness and their desire for contentment and satisfaction.

They see no link with anything that the church has to offer. But we pray, Father, that you would help your people to go out from this place and from every congregation of God-fearing people throughout this nation to tell men and women, boys and girls, that there is satisfaction to be found, that there is contentment to be found, that there is acceptance to be found, that there is forgiveness to be found, and that there is a life lived to the full available in Christ Jesus.

So help us, we pray, to have a genuine burden for this area and for our nation, that you would come and move in power, and we pray that you would do so for the glory of your name.

We pray, Father, for every soul in this building today. As you know each situation, as you know every reaction to each situation, we pray that you would minister to us.

Only you can potentially correct us and train us and teach us and encourage us and comfort us and direct us. Only you can do that to a diverse group that we are.

[ 6 : 35 ] And yet we pray, Father, that you would, in your mercy, meet each one of us at the point of our needs today. And if it is to be encouraged, we pray that you would encourage us. And if it is to be corrected, we pray you would correct us.

And if it is to be trained and to be taught, we pray that that's what you would do. And that you would speak to each one of us, young and old alike. We thank you, Father, for the young ones that are with us today. And we pray that you would be with them.

And that you would help them as they grow up in a very confused world, to know that there is truth that is non-negotiable. That there is truth that cannot be taken away or diluted.

And that there is the truth that's found in your truth, your word. So lead us, we pray. Give to us, we ask, ears that would hear your voice speaking to us. Give to us minds that would be able to understand and process your truth.

And we pray you would give us hearts that we might be able to respond by faith to what you're saying to us in your word. Hear our prayers, we ask. Cleanse us from every sin, we pray. In our Saviour's name.

[ 7 : 33 ] Amen. Before we study some of these words, we're going to sing in Psalm number 32. We're singing from the beginning of Psalm 32. We're going to sing to the end of the double verse, Mark 5.

That is six stanzas. This is a psalm that speaks about the forgiveness that's available and the blessing, the happiness, the contentedness that comes from knowing that we are forgiven by God. O blessed is the man to whom is freely pardoned all the transgressions he has done, whose sin is covered. Psalm 32, from verse 1 to the end of the double verse, Mark 5.

These six stanzas. And we'll stand to praise God. To Romans chapter 8. We read the first 17 verses.

Last evening we were able to study the opening two to three verses there of the passage that reminded us of the great freedom that we have. We are freed from the condemnation that was ours by nature and by practice.

[ 8 : 41 ] Now we need not fear that because there is true, genuine freedom on the part of the believer because of what Jesus Christ has done. There's no condemnation for us because he took our condemnation for us.

And so the rest of the passage moves on to describe what life is like on the basis of our freedom. And that's what I want to begin this afternoon. We're not there yet.

This morning. There's been hundreds of books written over the decades since the horrors of what to place at the Nazi concentration camps were found out by the Allied forces.

One of the latest books that's been written, what's a bestseller this year, is a book that's entitled *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*. You'll know that everyone in a concentration camp had a number tattooed onto them.

And this is a book that tells the story of Leil Sokolov and his girlfriend at the time and later wife Gina. So the book goes through, it's a very moving book, it goes through how they managed to begin a relationship in Auschwitz and how the relationship managed to survive and even thrive in Auschwitz.

[ 9 : 50 ] And then it goes on to say how later in life, once they managed to escape near the end of the war, how they found each other, how they married and how their life unfolded.

What's particularly interesting about the book though is towards the end of the book, there's a number of pages that are devoted to their only child, their son, telling about the impact that their experiences in Auschwitz actually had for them.

And so in the light of what they had gone through, he explored a little bit about how their life was shaped now with the freedom that they had. He cites a very important example.

So Leil Sokolov, the husband, the father, he was in the textile industry and when his son was 16 years old, the business that he had started foreclosed, it went bust.

And it resulted in their family home having to be sold. And he said he vividly recalled that a 16-year-old, with the sign being erected outside that the house was now for sale, his mum inside packing up their belongings and she was there singing away.

[ 10 : 58 ] And so as a 16-year-old, his life is about to be turned upside down, he went to his mum and said, how can you possibly, possibly sing when all this is taking place? And he said that her response was quite marked with a huge smile.

She said, when you've been and lived through the evil that we lived through, there's nothing that you can't face. So on the basis of our experiences, of their experiences, now their freedom has shaped the way they live.

And that's the axis I want to take into a passage like this today. Because it would be very interesting if individuals who knew me and who knew you, before you experienced the freedom from condemnation, the liberation spiritually that we have in Christ Jesus, if they were asked, what were we like before this liberation came about, and what are we like now and what are the differences? What would they say? I mean, we'd love them to say that there is now more love evident in our lives or more joy or peace or patience, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

These graces that were seen in perfection in Jesus Christ. We would love them to say that the difference, their liberation spiritually, the freedom they now have, the difference that is in their life is that they're now so much more loving and patient and kind and gentle and all these things.

[ 12 : 21 ] When it comes to me, I wonder would they say that? Because if other people see these things, it's frequently that we don't see these things because what we see is a battle.

What we see is our failures. What we see is this never-ending struggle between the flesh and the spirit. And we see time after time how we make mistakes and how we lose little battles within this war between the flesh and the spirit.

And this passage that unfolds for us, this life lived free from condemnation, articulates something of that battle that is raging within the life of every believer.

However, this battle between the spiritual and the sinful. And it's a battle that at times can leave us deflated. It can leave us discouraged.

We want to have our minds lived in the influence of the spirit, but so often it's the influence of the world around about us that shapes what we do. We know what we want in a right spiritual mindset, but all too often, that's not what we experience.

[ 13 : 33 ] And so we sometimes bring this battle, we reduce it down. It's a battle between us and sin. When actually, this passage says it's more nuanced than that, because it's actually a battle between God the Holy Spirit living in us and sin.

That in this battle that we're engaged in, in this tension that's there between the spiritual and between the sinful, we are not on our own. That we have one who is with us.

And we have one who is guiding us. And we have one who is indwelling us. And so the first truth that we're going to study from this passage this morning is that very truth.

That we have God the Holy Spirit living within us. Dwelling within us. So that we have become, in the words of another part of the Bible, God's temple.

And there's quite often a good degree of confusion as to how we understand God living within us. But it is as a consequence of the condemnation being taken from us, through Jesus, that we are now indwelt by God's Spirit.

[ 14 : 47 ] So for a few moments this morning, let's unpack what this means. Now some of you may have been on this course. Some of you may have heard of the course. It's called Two Ways to Live, The Choice We All Face.

It's an evangelistic course that summarises the good news of the Bible in six little drawings that helps people have a bit of a framework for explaining the message of the Gospel to family or to friends.

Now the title of that course, Two Ways to Live, The Choice We All Face, is shaped largely by the teaching of Jesus. Because Jesus was quite clear, there are only two ways. There's the broad road, or there is the narrow road.

That we will be separated at the end of time, we will either be a sheep, or we will be a goat. There's no third option, there's no middle way, there is just only the two.

There's two ways to live. Now what we have in this passage here, is we have God's Word shining a spotlight on the two possible ways that individuals live in this world.

[ 15 : 51 ] So God's Word tells us about what we are like, and why, tells us what this world is like, and why, tells us what God is like. The spotlight in these passages tells us which of the two ways are we living in this world.

So the first way is the way that's described here as those who are living according to the flesh, or those who are living according to the sinful nature, as it were.

I'm using here the 2011 edition of the NIV, it's what we use at home. It's only a Bible I took with me, I forgot you were in a different one. So there might be a slight change in terminology, it's the same ultimate thrust that's going along here.

We're talking about the first way to live is to live according to the sinful nature. In other words, we live our lives absorbed by the things that we see and hear and feel and experience in this world and that is it.

That as far as we are concerned, all that we can experience is all that we can know. So God is, in many ways, just disregarded because it's the here and now, it is this world that becomes the focus.

[ 17 : 04 ] we can summarise the thinking of this living our lives according to the sinful nature by a number of songs. Whether it's an old song, we may call it an ancient song, or Sinatra, whether he did it my way, through to some of the modern songs that we have.

You can think of Taylor Swift, she wrote a song called Blank Space. Don't worry, you're not missing much if you've not heard it. This song, Blank Space, it's about just this self-absorbed life that disregards everybody else and anything else apart from her.

And so, the life lived according to the sinful nature is a life lived where this world is everything. And so, it tells us as you look in your Bibles at verse 7 that the mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God.

So this mind, this outlook, this world view that is shaped by what we see, hear, feel and experience is a mindset that reacts against the very notion of God that is not simply ambivalent or not really care less if there is a God or if there's not but actually rejects God, the very notion of God, the very mention of God.

You know, think how many of the commentators in the media how they react with such a sneering disdain if God is mentioned in some kind of answer that somebody would be giving in an interview, for instance.

[ 18 : 36 ] You know, it's that total disregard, that hostility towards God wants nothing to do with God or what is really. Don't even want God to be mentioned. We'd ideally live in a world, in a country where the very mention of God was illegal.

and following from that, obviously, it says that if the flesh is hostile to God, it doesn't submit to God's law. And so the very notion of bringing what the Bible says into the narrative of the conversation in our generation today, well, that's just dismissed instantly.

When we are engaging with people, trying to explain to them the message of good news and we quote the Bible to them, many people, their hackles just go up because the Bible has no authority to them.

Over many years, the whole notion of the Bible being changed and adapted and diluted in its teaching as a human document means that the Bible has got no authority and so it's instantly rejected.

And so the consequence of having this mind that's hostile to God, that rejects God's law, means, verse 8, that those who live in the realm of the flesh, they cannot please God.

[ 19 : 49 ] Now, of course, that doesn't really register because that doesn't really have any impact. Don't please God, don't really care. And so that is an outlook that is described here as one of the two ways to live.

Now, before we progress down this road, we need to stop at this point and say, we are not talking here about obnoxious people. We are not talking about people who cause harm to children or pets or people that we would instantly think, well, they're horrors.

We're talking about people who can be very pleasant. We're talking about people who can be very diligent at work. We can talk about people who can be very good neighbours. We're talking about people who you can trust that they're going to do what they say they're going to do.

We're not talking obnoxious individuals here. We're talking about individuals that you and I would engage with on a daily level. yet their lives are absorbed by life here and now.

And so the very notion, mention of God or his word or his ways or his claim upon their lives instantly dismissed. Now I don't know whether or not Richard Dawkins fits into the category of being a nice pleasant neighbour and a good colleague or a trustworthy individual.

[ 21 : 09 ] He doesn't at times come across as being a particularly pleasant individual but he does sum up the outlook that this passage speaks about with this worldly living, living according to the flesh, according to the sinful nature.

He was asked in a conversation one day about how he would express the meaning of life and the purpose of life and how that would be something that he would try to live to.

And after a show he came up with the answer that the whole interpretation of life, the whole meaning for life is this, it is the progress of DNA. That was his thought through answer as to the meaning of life.

The progress of DNA. I don't know about you but have you ever heard such hollow words in your life? Picture yourself in a hospital and you're fighting for your life. You've got various different issues medically going around in your body and you're trying to think what is this all about?

What's the progress of DNA? Or you're going to speak to people who've just lived through some trauma, some tragedy. What's it all about? Why are we here? What's the progress of DNA? How utterly banal and hollow that would be.

[ 22 : 21 ] And yet the Bible maintains that there is a way of living that is hostile to God, disregards God's laws and God's ways and cannot please God absorbed by this world and in the words of 2 Corinthians 4 verse 4 blinded to the glory of who Jesus Christ is.

Let me ask you this morning, does this describe you? Are you an individual even if you're attending a church? You might be here to keep family, friends, neighbours happy.

But does it describe you? Well the other description here is of the life lived in the Spirit, with the Spirit or by the Holy Spirit.

In other words, the passage goes on to tell us that we are individuals who are indwelt by God and so therefore are not living our life alone.

Now the starting point for us to understand this whole notion of God living within us is when we think of God's work on our behalf we're not simply to think of God's work on our behalf as something that's happened in the past.

[ 23 : 27 ] It's good for us daily to go back to the source of our salvation that we do look back to that event that culminated the promises and prophecies of God at Calvary's cross where Jesus endured what we should have endured by rights as he died on that cross as he rose from the dead as he ascended into heaven.

But the work of God on our behalf is not simply a work in the past because God is working on our behalf in the present and not simply as we think of Jesus our Saviour praying on our behalf but God is working in the present because God is in us and God is with us and this is the promise that God

has given to us in his word.

Now I acknowledge there are times there are seasons when we are not necessarily aware in our feelings of God living within us and dwelling in us as his temple but that's the truth.

but it leads us to ask you a question well how is God in us? And so we go back to that night that Jesus was with his disciples for the final time and he told them a whole host of troubling news that he was going and they couldn't come with him and he's telling them not to be troubled and he's telling them that they are not going to be left as orphans.

They're not going to be abandoned and helpless and not knowing whether to go to the right or to the left because he promises them in these precious chapters from chapters 14 to 16 he promises them that good will come.

[ 25 : 08 ] He says in verse 7 of chapter 16 Very truly I tell you it's for your good that I'm going away because unless I go away the advocate will not come to you but if I go he will come to you.

And so you can imagine the disciples thinking well okay you've just dropped the bombshell of all bombshells you are going so we're not going to be with you and you're promising us you're not going to abandon us we don't quite get that but now you're saying it's for our good that you are going how can this possibly be?

How can we possibly have a better situation than having you with us so that when a question comes into our minds we can go and we can ask you or how can it possibly be better than watching you at close quarters to see how you react and why and to be amazed at the love and the truth and the justice and the mercy that flows from you how can it possibly be better how can it be for our good that you're not going to be there with us?

of course the only possible answer to how it can be better is that he's not going to be with us rather he's going to be in us so that wherever we go whether we are at 30,000 feet in the air in a plane whether we're at the furthestmost part of the globe in the opposite position to house wherever we go that Jesus is united to us through the work of his spirit that where the presence of our saviour was located to that time and to that space to that person for that period of time when Jesus walked on this earth now the presence and help of our saviour is in each one of his people wherever we are so we are so crossly bound to our saviour that the bible says that Christ is in us in us and that is the hope of glory and the reason that Christ is in us is that he has indwelled us he promised that his father and he would come and take up residence in the hearts of his people and the presence and power of the Holy Spirit is the means by which

Jesus takes up residence in our hearts because having the Holy Spirit within us that is the mode of having the obedient crucified risen resurrected exalted Christ dwelling in us linked to us united to us by faith in him and so that's why in a passage like this there is no distinction where it describes those in verse 1 who are found in Christ Jesus and those who in verse 9 are described as being in the Spirit there's no distinction there it's not that some of us are in Christ Jesus and some of us are in the Holy Spirit no because they're one and the same that the Holy Spirit is the living bond between Jesus and his people so if you are in Christ today you have Christ in you you are united to Jesus wherever you are wherever you go he's there now as is often the case when you try and have a very helpful piece of theology you would say how can we try and illustrate this to get it into our minds and believe it or not it was actually my five year old son who helped me with this he's at a stage that he's into superheroes

[ 28 : 58 ] I thought I knew a little bit about superheroes but evidently not I'm learning not simply about dinosaurs a five year old son but also about superheroes and so I'm learning about superheroes and two in particular because there's a contrast between Batman and Spider-Man some of you in here might know this contrast some might not you're going to learn something today if you don't so Batman is a superhero who comes to the rescue of various different people in Gotham City now Batman does that because he's a guy who is well equipped he's a guy who is rich and so he's a guy who has all the latest gadgets at his disposal a pretty smart car to get him where he needs to get to and the way he comes to the rescue is that he makes use of all these various different gadgets all these various different weapons that he comes to the rescue and that is Batman Spider-Man Spider-Man's different because Spider-Man was bitten by a radioactive spider so the story goes any arachnophobics in here watch out and because he was bitten something that was on the outside then became part of him and so when

Spider-Man comes to the rescue when Spider-Man does what Spider-Man does it's not that he's grabbing a hold of things that are outside of him there is now something that used to be outside that

is now inside him and that is the basis upon which he acts as a superhero so if you're in Christ this morning you're not a Batman you're a Superman because what was once outside of you by nature and outside of me by nature is now inside of us by grace so that living inside of us is the power and presence of God the Holy Spirit we are united to Jesus Christ so that means whether you're working whether you're sleeping whether you're worshipping whether you're out for a run like your minister it doesn't matter what it might be you are united to Christ and there's not a point at which in your experience as a believer you will be disunited to Christ because he comes and takes up residence within you and the way you're united to Christ is through the presence of God's Holy Spirit within you so what does that mean for us well surely it's got a number of applications it means first of all when we're out doing serving living out the Christian faith we're not doing it on our own strength when you're asked to do something in particular perhaps maybe in an evangelistic sense things that we're not used to doing we feel so ill equipped to do that and we're not going on our own when you're going back into work in two days time and you're perhaps dreading going back into work in two days time something happened in the yard this week or in the office this week and you think oh man the very prospect of this don't even mention it just now it's only Saturday but you're not going in there on your own the other application of this that's very important is that we all realise that we regulate our behaviour in the light of who's present David's behaving because his mum and dad are here we all do that we all regulate our behaviour on the basis of who's about if we are united to Christ through the power and presence of his own

Holy Spirit therefore our behaviour is regulated we would be so ashamed if individuals who love us or who don't saw some of the things that go through our minds if they knew some of the motives that prompted our actions we'd be so ashamed if they saw some of the things that we saw did some of the things and saw us doing some of the things that we do we would make sure that wouldn't be the case wouldn't we so if we're thinking about these two ways to live and if we're indwelt by the presence and power of Christ how much of a regulator is that to how we live and of course we therefore will be the complete opposite to the mind governed by the flesh because instead of being hostile to God we will be so drawn to God we will be delighting in God instead of rejecting God's law we will be rejoicing in God's law we will be impacted by it and we will want to be obeying it and it's not the case that we're going to be no so heavenly mind we're going to be no earthly use the total opposite it's going to be the fact that we are going to have our hearts our outlooks our minds our words everything's shaped by the union that we have with Christ

Jesus through the presence of his spirit the spirit is the bond between Jesus and his people so that you are united to Jesus Christ one of probably the great truths that the church today needs to absorb is this whole truth of being united to Christ Jesus because that changes everything we're never alone we're never sent out ill equipped we have our God with us so there's two ways to live living according to the sinful nature living according to the spiritual nature let me ask you which one are you and if you are a spider man if you are indwelt by what was once on the outside and is now on the inside and that is power in you then what a privilege is ours this passage doesn't end there though I've seen our time is going from verse 14 onwards it reminds us not simply does the Holy [ 34 : 45 ] Spirit live within us but the Holy Spirit assures us of another wonderful truth and that we'll spend more time to explore this truth but the Holy Spirit lives within us and the Holy Spirit assures us of what assures us that we are the children of God and the Spirit look at verse 16 the Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children that we have received this adoption to sonship that we now have access to vocabulary that we call God not simply the creator God not simply the awesome power that has called this world into existence merely by the power of his word but we come before this awesome God not merely as a creature to a creator but we come as a child to a perfect heavenly father that we come to one with nothing to offer we come to one and we cry Abba

Father knowing that we will be listened to knowing that we have a relationship that's very different because this passage opens up for us something of the great truth of adoption that we have been given the full rights and privileges of being part of a family that was not ours by nature we weren't born into the family of God we are to be born again and the byproduct of being born again is that the condemnation has been taken from us we have been indwelt by God himself and we have been adopted into his family and so the presence of the Holy Spirit within us is one sign of that paternity test you know over the years you hear of high profile paternity tests where a woman is pregnant and the man she knows is the father is refusing to acknowledge the fact that he is the father and so

there is a paternity test that could be taken and they can find out medically scientifically whether or not that is the actual father and there have been various high profile paternity tests over the years well this if you like is a spiritual paternity test that the

Holy Spirit part of his precious role as he links us to our saviour is to assure us that we actually are a child of God that it's not simply that we are free from condemnation before a judge but there is an altogether closer more precious relationship that we now have where we are part of the family of God that he views us as a precious child and so when Jesus speaks in the gospel a bit of an earthly father is willing to do this how much more will a heavenly father if we know how to give good gifts how much more will a heavenly father give the gift of the spirit to those who need it and so we are adopted into the family of God and the test and the truth of that adoption and the test of that adoption is how we relate to God and how we live out that relationship with God and so the implications of what it is to be adopted is that we then become co-heirs with Jesus

Christ what was his by nature becomes ours by grace remember Jesus in John 17 I pray that my people will be with me and that I might see the glory that I had with you before this world began well we're not simply going to see that glory but we're going to be there going to be sharing in that glory what's his by nature is ours by grace through him and it tells us that this is ours as God's children that we're no longer slaves the relationship's entirely different a slave would have no right ever to the inheritance of the owner but we're not slaves and so we are connected to that inheritance we're going to experience that glory even though now we may have to share in the sufferings of knowing what it is with the cost of discipleship and the difficulties of living in connection with God in a world that has rejected God just as our Saviour did and so you have the Holy Spirit assuring us that we are part of the family of

God and so if you are part of the family of God there's certain things we do as a family as they're not there's things that we do as the family of God to reflect that we're his every family has their own particular idiosyncrasies don't they their own way of doing things their own things they do together as a family one of the things we do together as a family is we obey our Saviour he says yes we do remember what he's done hopefully we're reminded of it daily and we hopefully we'll forgive him for the days that we don't remember fully appreciate what Jesus has done but there's things that we do as a family to remember what he has done and he wants us he directs us he instructs us he commands us and if we're part of the family this is what we do you're part of the family you're indwelt by God's spirit on the basis of the spirit of God the benefits of what

[ 40 : 17 ] Jesus Christ has accomplished when sin was condemned in him these benefits have been applied to you you are now indwelt by the spirit connected united with Christ in that you are now part of the family this is what the family does the family remembers obediently and as they remember by taking the bread and taking the wine they make a testimony to all who are watching and to all who may hear that we have shared bread and shared wine as a family of God we're making a testimony that this is my saviour yes I don't have a fully rounded theology perhaps there's a whole host of things I need to learn there's a whole host of things the spirit needs to change in me to make me more like Christ but I'm part of the family because Jesus has forgiven me he has accepted me he took the condemnation for me so that yes people might condemn me for taking my place at the Lord's table but I don't care about that because Jesus took my greater condemnation before a heavenly father he took it for me and I'm now part of a family

I have brothers and sisters throughout the world throughout the ages and one day there's going to be the greatest family gathering that there has ever been and it's not going to be like some of the family gatherings we have in this world that family gatherings sometimes generate tensions generate tensions at Christmas time at weddings at funerals the family gathering that I'm going to be a part of through the generations all of God's people together united joyful delighting glorious as we focus on Jesus you see if you're part of the family you need to live as part of the family and so today if you are part of the family come and see the elders afterwards tell them how you became part of the family and take your place with the family tomorrow as you remember your saviour so a passage like this is so wonderful reminds us that there's now no condemnation that's been taken for us the benefits applied by

God's spirit to us who has taken up residence we are the temple of God we're not alone we are united to our saviour always and on the basis of that union with Christ on the basis of his work being applied to us we are part of the family the family of God whom we call our father what glorious truths from a glorious passage amen we're going to conclude by singing words from the hymn

number 1164 come o fount of every blessing tune my heart to sing your grace streams of mercy  
never ceasing calls for songs of loudest praise we're going to sing the three sections of this song  
and just remember as we sing verse three and as it reminds us and we're praying that God will bind  
a wandering heart to him and we're acknowledging we are prone to wander let's remind ourselves  
that we have within us the very presence of  
God dwelling in the presence of God