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Amen. Amen.

We'll sing from Mission Praise 799. The words on the screen.

All I once held dear, built my life upon. All this world of years and wars to own. All I once thought gain, I have counted loss, spent and worthless now compared to this, knowing you, Jesus.

[16:05] All I once held dear, built my life upon. All this world of years and wars to own.

All I once thought gain, I have counted loss, spent and worthless now compared to this, knowing you, Jesus.

Knowing you, Jesus. Knowing you, there is no greater thing.

You're my all, you're the best. You're my joy, my righteousness. And I love you, O Lord.

Now my heart's desire is to know you more, to be found in you.

[17:13] I know you more, to be found in you. I know you more, to be found in you. I know you more, to be found in you. What I could not earn, all surpassing gift of righteousness.

Knowing you, Jesus. Knowing you, Jesus. Knowing you, there is no greater thing.

You're my all, you're the best. You're my joy, my righteousness. And I love you, Lord. And I love you, Lord.

Oh, to know the path of your risen life. And to know you, Lord. And to know you in your sufferings.

To be gone, my friend. In your death, my Lord. So with you to live, I'll never die.

[18:24] Knowing you, Jesus. Knowing you, there is no greater thing.

You're my all, you're the best. You're my joy, my righteousness. And I love you, Lord.

If you could turn now in your Bibles, please, to Ecclesiastes chapter 4.

Ecclesiastes chapter 4.

We got as far as verse 3. The last time we were in Ecclesiastes before Christmas. And we're picking up at verse 4 this evening.

[19:37] And Solomon, the writer, remember, is looking in on the world. And he's trying to make sense of the meaning of life.

And why we do what we do. And so he writes at verse 4. Then I saw that all toil and all skill and work come from a man's envy of his neighbor.

This also is vanity and striving after wind. The fool folds his hands and eats his own flesh. Better is a handful of quietness than two hands full of toil and a striving after wind.

Again, I saw vanity under the sun. One person who has no other, either son or brother. Yet there is no end to all his toil. And his eyes are never satisfied with riches.

So that he never asks for whom am I toiling and depriving myself of pleasure. This also is vanity and an unhappy business. Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil.

[20:40] For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, and has not another to lift him up. Again, if two lie together, they keep warm.

But how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Better was a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king, who no longer knew how to take advice. For he went from prison to the throne, though in his own kingdom he had been born poor.

I saw all the living who move about under the sun, along with that youth who was to stand in the king's place. There was no end of all the people, all of whom he led.

Yet those who come later will not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and a striving after wind. Amen.

[21:40] And may God bless the reading of his word to us. We're going to sing again now to God's praise. And we'll sing from Psalm 23, the whole of the psalm. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.

He makes me down to lie in pastures green. He leadeth me in the quiet waters by. Psalm 23, the whole psalm. We'll stand to sing to God's praise. Psalm 23, the whole psalm.

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want. He makes me down to lie in pastures green. He leadeth me in the quiet waters by. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.

He makes me down to lie in pastures green. In pastures he He leadeth me The quiet waters by My soul he doth restore again And be to walk the way Within the paths Of righteousness In forest good name say Though I walk in death's dark mail

Yet when I fear the hill For love art with me And thy rod Has stopped me Come for still My table love Has furnished In rest of my foes My head thou dost With oil anoint And my cup overrose In death's

unversy

[ 24 : 27 ] All my life Shall surely follow me And in God's house Forevermore My dwelling Grace Shall be Just as we turn back to Ecclesiastes chapter 4 Let's pray Heavenly Father We thank you for Your word that we have sang We thank you for that psalm And the blessing That there is As we read it And as we sing it And as we experience it In our lives We thank you that Jesus Your son

Is the good shepherd The one who laid down his life For the sheep And we thank you that When we are trusting in Jesus We are not in want But we have everything that we need In Christ We think of the The words of the Apostle Paul That we've Sang a paraphrase of The fact that When we are Knowing Jesus We have everything We think On all the things That we perhaps chased In the earlier part Of our lives And the things that sometimes We can be distracted by again This world's riches And yet we Acknowledge Lord That they're But rubbish In comparison With knowing Christ And we pray That each one of us Would know Jesus here And if there's anyone Who doesn't Lord That even tonight We would hear The invitation to come And to be in Christ And for those who are in Christ We pray That you would draw us closer That we would experience

More of the blessing And more of the joy And more of the peace More of the contentment More of the rest That we receive As we are in close walk With you We ask Lord That you would Speak to our hearts And that you would Minister to us Applying the word To our own lives And the power Of the Holy Spirit We pray for Gordon As he preaches This evening In Leverborough And as The Church of Scotland And the Free Church And the APC Come together For that service We pray that They would be blessing And that you would Give Gordon The words to say And that Jesus would be Lifted up In the midst And many would be Drawn to him We pray for the YF Tonight as well And we ask Lord For safety For any who might Travel to the meeting And we pray That you would be With these young ones We thank you For the desire That they have To come together Around your word We thank you Lord

For the evidences That we believe Of your spirit At work In the lives Of some of these Young ones And we pray That in their Early days That they would Remember you That they would Trust you And that they Would know Your hand upon them We pray again For them this week With exams Coming up We pray for those Who prepare to go Back to college And university We pray for those Who remain here And continue in courses As well And at a difficult And busy time Of the year We pray that you Would help them To look to you To lean upon you And to trust you As they work We pray that You would be with Those who desire To be here tonight But who can't be Many who are ill At this time Some who Are struggling With their mobility Some who will be Wrestling with The difficulty Of the weather As well And we ask Lord that You would bless Each person That has the desire To be here But who can't be

That you would Minister to them In their own homes And for others Who perhaps can be But just have no desire We pray for them And we ask Lord that you Would draw near to them We don't look down On any such person Because we confess That we have often Been there with them And so we ask Lord that you Would touch Their hearts As we pray That you would Touch our hearts We pray For those who are Out on the roads Tonight And who will be Out tomorrow morning In the early hours That you would Keep them safe We thank you for them We often take For granted Those who Keep our roads Clear Those who Respond When there is An emergency Those who Minister to us In our medical Need We pray for all Those that you Have given That ministry To And we ask Lord that you Would bless them And equip them Especially over This season We pray now That you would Continue with us And that you Would go before us And that you Would speak to us Take away our sin We pray

[ 29 : 30 ] Empty us of self Fill us with the Holy Spirit Help us to see Jesus We pray this In his name And for his sake Amen Boys and girls A few of you here Can I ask Do any of you Young ones Maybe some of the Older ones Can answer this too Do any of you Play darts Put your hand up If you play darts I think Katie Had just like a Finger No no She didn't have a Finger No No darts players Here See darts is Beginning to be Something that Is popular again I think I probably Watched the highlights For the first time In my life I think I watched The highlights Of a darts game Just about Maybe a couple Of weeks ago There was a Young guy A 16 year old Guy called Luke Littler Who looks like

He's going to be The new world Champion He came second In the world Champion In the darts Competition But he is Causing there To be quite A star And people Are starting To watch Darts again Now I say this Because When I came To study This chapter Ecclesiastes Chapter 4 In my

own Mind It's structured A little bit Like a Dark board And the sermon Is going to be Structured A bit like A dark board A lot of Hebrew texts Have the kind Of structure Where the main Point Is right in The middle You know We tend to Think when we Write That the Main point We'll outline It at the Beginning We'll Summarise it At the end And we'll Kind of make An argument In the middle Part But in the Hebrew text There's a Whole lot Of argument In the Surrounding Area But the Main point Very often Is right in

The middle It's in The bullseye And if you Think about Ecclesiastes 4 In that Kind of way The bullseye In Ecclesiastes 4 And if you've Got it open In front of you You'll find it Helpful The bullseye Is verses 9 to 12 That's the Positive That's the Main thing That we're Aiming to Get to And all The verses Around it Show us How much We need The bullseye How much We need To be In verses 9 to 12 So for the Sermon Just to Give you The structure Of it I want to Look at all The other Verses First All the Things that Solomon As he As he Looks at The world And as he Gathers his Thoughts Together He makes Many remarks About Negatives Things that He sees That are Meaningless So I Want to Think about These Things First And then We'll Try to Finish on The bullseye Verses 9 to Verse 12 So Four points

I think I have In the time That we have Tonight And the first Point That we have Is There's no Rest For the Envious No rest For the Envious And that's Verses Four To Six Solomon's First Observation He says Then I Saw That all Toil And all Skill And work Come from A man's Envy Of his Neighbour This also Is vanity And a Striving After the Wind The fool Folds his Hands And eats His own Flesh Better Says Solomon Is a Handful Of Quietness Than Two Hands Full Of Toil And a Striving After Wind So In Verse Four Solomon He Mentions The word Envy And the Thing with Envy I don't Think I Need to Describe What Envy Is Because Whether We're Three Years Old Or Whether We're Ninety Three We know About Envy The

Thing about Envy Is it Can Consume Almost Anyone There was That famous Quote From the U.S. Oil Tycoon Rockefeller He was One of The first Businessmen To Hit Oil And He Was Rich Beyond Words And He Was Earning More And More And More Money And One Day He Was Interviewed By A TV Reporter And The Reporter Asked Him You Have So Much Money Now Tell Me How Much Mr.

[ 34 : 00 ] Rockefeller How Much Is Enough And He Responded And He Responded By Saying Just A Few Dollars More See Envy Can Still Grip And Consume Those Who Are Super Rich Like The U.S.

Oil Tycoon But Envy Can Also Grip Those Who Have Next To Nothing And They're Looking On At People Who Have So Much More Than Them And They're Not Happy For Them And Envy Drives Them To Chace Them And Envy Can Come In Many Currencies Many Will Struggle With A Sense Of Enemy Because They Want More Money There's A Love Of Money But Envy Could Also Be It Could Also Come Out And It's Wanting A Better Job We Look At Somebody Else And They Have The Job That's Just Ahead Of The Job That We Have And We Want It So We're Not Happy That They Have It We're Consumed With Envy Because We Want To Have It Or We Might Look At Their Family

And Look At The Way They Get On So Well They've And They All Have A Smile And It All Looks So Peaceful And So Tranquil And We Think If Only My Christmas Had Been Like That The Reality Is Their Christmas Wasn't Like That Either They Just Got A Snapshot Of Two Minutes Of Peace But We Can Look At Another Family And We Can We Can Say If Only I Had That There's Envy Or We Could Look At A Nicer Car And Think I Wish I Didn't Have A Volkswagen Up I Wish I Had A Golf GTI Mark 2 Oak Green 16 Valve And Envy Drives Me To Say That When I Did The Children's Talk About The Golf GTI I'm Not Sure Who It Was That Said It To Me But They Said See When You Put The Pictures On The Screen I Was Sure You Were Going To Talk About Envy And I Could Have Very Easily Even Things Like He's Not Sitting In Front Of Me Tonight But Gordon's Hair Stuart Sitting But Let Me Tell You About Wednesday Night The Prayer Meeting The Kids Prayer Meeting Before The Main Prayer Meeting We Were We Were On The Kids Prayer Meeting And Lois And I Were In The Study And Just At The End Of It Once We Clocked Out Lois Said Dad I Said Yes She Said Do You Think Gordon Uses Really Expensive!

Product! To Keep His Hair Looking So Thick And Dark And I Said Lois I Don't Know I Don't Think So Sadly But There Was A Wave Of Envy That Crashed In On My Soul So Envy Comes In Many Kind Of Shapes And Sizes And In Verse 4 Solomon He Sees This Person Of Industry And They Are Working And They Working And They Are Working But What Drives Them To Work It's Not A

Desire To Do An Amazing Job It's Not A Desire To To To Make A Difference In The World What Drives Them To Work With Such Fury Is A Sense Of Envy They Want To Be One Up On The Next Guy Then You've Got The Contrast In Verse 5 And Solomon He He Points The Finger And He Shows Us The The Idol Person He's Just Sitting On His Hands He's [ 37 : 54 ] Doing Nothing And The Reason He's Doing Nothing Because He's Realized That He's Not Ever Going To Get As Much As The Guy That He Is Envy Towards And So He Just Gives Up He Taps Out And He Sits On His Hands And What We Find Him Doing In Verse 4 Is He He's Eating His Hands He's Eating His Own Flesh He's In A Self Destructive!

State That's The Point That's Being Made In That Section Weerspe The Commentator Says The Industrious Man Was Motivated By Competition And Caught In The Rat Race Of Life He Had No Leisure Time The Idle Man Was Motivated By Pleasure And Was Headed For For Rua And So There's Two Extremes In Verses 4 And Verses 5 And Solomon Concludes In Verse 6 That It's Better To Have Balance It's Better Not To Be Driven By Envy It's Better To Have Balance And Have Contentment It Kind Of Ties In With The Verse In Proverbs Chapter 30 Which Solomon Also! Wrote Proverbs 30 Verses 8 And 9 And It Says So The First Thing That We See In This Section Is That There Is No Rest For The Envious If We're Driven By Envy We'll Never Have Rest We'll Never Have Satisfaction We'll Always Be Working Or We'll Get So Exasperated We'll Do Nothing We'll Be Just Mobilized And Mobilized By This Envy That Consumes Us Second Point Here The Second Observation That Solomon Makes Is There's No Pleasure In Loneliness Verses Verses Seven And Eight Again I Saw Vanity Under The Sun Says Solomon One Person Who Has No Other Either Son Or Brother Yet There Is

No End To All This Toil And His Eyes Are Never Satisfied With Riches So That He Never Asks For Whom Am I Toiling And Depriving Myself Of Pleasure This Also!

Is Vanity And An Unhappy Business And Probably Most Of Us As We Read Verses Seven And Eight Can Think Of Someone Who Fits This Picture It Could Be A Relative Or A Friend Who Made It Big Who Who's Got Loads Of Money It Could Be A Celebrity Who's Been Interviewed In A Newspaper And They're Being Asked About Their Life And The People Or The Lack Of People That Are Around Them It Could Be It Could Be A Fictional Character I Was Reading Or I Was Listening To The Audio Book Before Christmas Of A Christmas Carol And You Can See Ebenezer Scrooge In Verses Seven And Eight He Has All This Money He Has This Hugely Successful!

[ 41 : 08 ] Business And He's Absolutely Alone He's Got No Pleasure In Anything That He Owns He's Got No One To Share It With There's No Pleasure In Loneliness God Has Made Us To Be Social Beings Genesis Chapter 2 And Verses 18 God Says Of Adam It's Not Good For The Man To Be Alone We Have Been Made To Be In Community We Get Encouragement From Being Together And That's Why If We're Healthy And If We're Mobile And If We're Not Snowed In It's Good To Be Here Together There Is Encouragement In Being Physically Together In The Room Rather Than Sitting Somewhere With A Screen On And Six Other Things On In The Background Remember One Evening When We Were Coming

Into The Road To Recovery Duncan McSween And I Were Just Wandering In And Peggy And Marion Actually Were Wandering Out They'd Been Doing Something In The Church And They Were Heading Out And Duncan Had A Chat Talking Away And Just Laughing And Then He Came In And I Was At The Kettle And He Looked At Me And He Says He Says You Know When I Came In This Evening I Didn't Fancy Coming Out And I Just Felt Quite Down But Just Two Or Three Minutes And He Says!

I Just Feel So Good Now And That's The Reality Of What We Can Do For Each Other There Is Encouragement In Being Together So We're Told In Hebrews Not To Get Out Of The Habit Of Meeting Together There's Encouragement Spiritually And There's There's Pleasure Relationally When We Share Life With Each Other When You Think Of You Enjoy A Good Meal You Taste Something And It's Delicious And The First Thing You Want To Do Is You Want To Tell Somebody You Want To Share The Recipe You Want Them To Taste It Too Or You Watch A Film Or You Just Finished A Box Series And You Really Enjoyed It So The First Thing You Do Is You You You You Should Watch This Because There's Pleasure In The Sense Of Doing Things Together But This Person That Solomon Describes In Verse 7 He Has No Other He's

Isolated He's Lonely And He's Working Furiously And He's Making More And More And More Money And Yet Verse 8 Says He's Never Satisfied With All The Riches He Has No Pleasure In It And Solomon Is Looking Into His Life And He's Asking This Man Why Do You Do What You Do

Why Are You Living This Way And It's A Story That Could Be Told Over And Over Again There Are So Many Lives That Are Just Consumed With Work There's So Many Lives Where We Are Accumulating So Much Stuff And The Bank Account Is Climbing But As The Bank Account Climbs And As Promotion Is Reached The Number Of People Around You Just Reduces The Relationships That We Have Start To Break

Down Some Of The Richest Richest And Most Materially Successful People Are The Saddest Loneliest People And Solomon Looks In On That Kind Of Life And He Shows Us That There's No Pleasure In That Kind Of Life There's No Pleasure In Gaining The Whole World And Yet Being Absolutely Lonely And Isolated Solomon Is Saying To Us Don't Look At The Super Rich And The Super Successful And Don't Want Their Life Because There's No Pleasure In That Kind Of Life Think About Zacchaeus It's A Man Who Has Loads Of Money He's A Top Job He's A Tax Collector [ 45 : 43 ] He's No End Of Earning Capacity And Yet He's Miserable He's Climbing Up A Tree Because He Wants To See Jesus And That's Ultimately Where We've Been Pointed And We'll Get There In Just A Minute!

There's No Pleasure In That Sense Of Envy That's Driving Us To Accumulate More Because We've Been Made For More Than That We've Been Made To Be In Relationship With Each Other We've Been Made To Be In Relationship With God Our Hearts Are Restless Until They Find Their Rest In Relationship With God Third Point Third Negative Variation In The Translations Here Because The Hebrew Text I'm Told By The Scholars Is Quite A Difficult Text To Decipher But I'm Taking One Approach And You Can Just Follow Along With Me Verse 13 Better Was A Poor And Wise Youth Than An Old And Foolish King Who No Longer Knew How To Take Advice And In The ESV Certainly As I'm Stepping Through This We See Solomon Introducing Two Characters To Us And First Of All As We As We Look In Here We See A King And This King Once Was Wise And Powerful But As The Years Rolled On He Became To Use Solomon's Words Old And Foolish Once He Listened Once He Took Counsel And Now He Listens To No One And You Can Just Imagine Him Getting Frustrated The First Nobody Challenges Anything In His Way Of Thinking And Throwing All The Toys Out Of The Pram Losing His Temper He's Become Old He's Foolish He Doesn't Listen And Yet He Doesn't Step Down From The Place Of Power So That's Character Number One That Solomon Introduces Us To This Rich This Cranky Elderly King And Then In The Background There's Another Man And This Is A Wise Young Man And He's From A Poor Background He's Done Time In Prison And

It Seems That This Man Has Gone From Prison To The Throne And He Replaces This Once Powerful King Verses 14 And 15 For He Went From Prison To The Throne Though In His Own Kingdom He Had Been Born Poor!

I Saw All The Living Who Move About! Under The Sun Along With That Youth Who Was To Stand In The King's Place And So You Have The Second Character Who Goes From Rags To Riches He Goes From A Place Of Poverty To A Place Of Power And Popularity And In Verse 16 Solomon Says There Was No End Of All The People Or All Of Whom He Led So Solomon He Shows Us The Contrast Between These Two Characters And Yet He Gives Us That Shot Of Reality As He Continues Because He Says Yet Those Who Come Later Will Not Rejoice In So He Says This King Who Was In Prison And Who Is Released And Who Goes From Prison To The Place Of Power He Eventually Too Will Go From The Place Of Power And Back Down The Line Someone Else Will Replace Him He

[ 49 : 20 ] Will Have To Step Down He Will Be Out Of Favor He Will Be Forgotten And So Solomon He Concludes Surely This Is Vanity Also And A Striving After Wind And This Happens Everywhere We Don't We Don't Have To Look Just At Two Kings To See The Lesson This Happens In Business All The Time People Can Go From Being The CEO To Having A P45 All Because Of One Bad Decision This Happens In Sport You See Rising Stars On The Football Field One Bad Tackle One Injury And They're Off And They're Forgotten Even Ronaldo One Of These Days He's Going To Have To Retire Happens In The World Of Celebrity There Are People Who So

Quickly Move From Being Beautiful And Desirable To Being Past It And Of No Media Interest You Can Get Celebrities Who Are The Flavor Of The Month They Step Into The Jungle They Express One Opinion That's Out Of The Way Of The Current Thinking They're Done They're Finished And Solomon Is Qualified To Speak About This He's The Richest Wisest Most Successful Man In That Place At That Time And Yet He's Teaching Us That There Is No Security For The Ambitious And The Successful Because It All Comes To An End For Some Sooner And For Some Later So These

Are The Negatives No Rest For The Envious No Pleasure In Loneliness No Security For The Ambitious And Now We Come To The Positive Now We Come To The Bullseye And In Verses Nine To Verse Twelve We Can Summarize That As That There Is No Lack For Those Who Are In Christ Verse Nine Two Are Better Than One Because They Have A Good Reward For Their Toil For If They Fall One Will Lift Up His Fellow But Woe To Him Who Is Alone When He Lift Him Up Again If Two Lie Together They Keep Warm But How Can One Keep Warm Alone And Though A Man Might Prevail Against One Who Is Alone Two Will Withstand Him A Threefold Cord Is Not Quickly Broken Now You Might Read Through These Verses And Say Where Is Christ Where Is Jesus

In This Section And Strictly Speaking Jesus Is Not Mentioned In These Verses But Everything In This Book In Fact Everything In This Book Everything In The Bible Is Pointing Us To Jesus So In This Section There's A Lesson Which Applies To The Person At There's A Lesson In Each Of These Verses That Applies This At The Human Person To Person Relational Level Lessons That We Do Well Which Apply At The Human Level They Find Their Ultimate Fulfillment In Jesus And So As We Have Done In Each One Of These Studies We Want To Note To Note These Lessons And Follow The Thread Along Through To Jesus So Let's Just In The Time That We Have Left Which Is Just A Couple Of Minutes Just Five Minutes Or So Let's Just Step Through These Verses And Lessons To Help Us Appreciate And Rejoice The Blessings That We Have

If We Are In Christ So Verse 9 Two Are Better Than One! That's A Sensible Lesson We Would All Agree With That That's True In Business You Can Have More Impact As A Partner Than Being A Sole Trader And So There's More Reward But I Suppose In Business The Reward Will Depend On Who You Partner With Because There Are Some Partnerships That Are Formed That Fall Apart Because Of The The Lack Of Partnership And Any Reward That We Make In The Business World It Will Expire Ultimately Because It's Only As Good As An Experience In This World And Yet The Truth Is There Two Are Better Than One Because They Have A Good Reward For Their Toil [ 54 : 21 ] Now Take That Lesson And Think About Think About Jesus If We Have Jesus With Us If We Are In Christ If Jesus Is Our Saviour And Lord If He's Our King If He's Our Partner Then He's The Perfect Partner Because He is Good All Of The Time And He Is True And He Is Powerful And He's Kind And He's Gentle And He's Gracious And He's Loving And He's Unselfish And He Will Never Leave Us And He Will Never Forsake Us And The Reward That We Receive For All That We Do With Him In His Name For His Glory It Has No

Expiring Date It's An Eternal! Reward Verse 10 If They Fall One Will Lift Up His Fellow But Woe To Him Who Is Alone When He Falls And Has Not Another To Lift Them Up So Solomon Again He He Gives Us Another Picture He He Teaches Us Another Human Lesson And Let's Just Think About The Lesson For A Moment It's Not A Hard Lesson To Process Imagine Being On A Hill Walk Up The Back Of Gillivall And It Starts To Get Icy And You Trip And You Fall And You Break Your Ankle If You're On Your Own There's Big Trouble It's A Situation Of Woe!

If You're On Your Own And There's No Mobile Phone And There's No! Connection And There's No One Close To You That's A Disaster Situation But If You Have A Fellow With You Then There's Help Because They Can Carry You They Can Support You They Can Go And Get Help If We're Needing Help And That's The Life Lesson If We're On Our Own We're In Trouble If We Fall And We're Isolated We're In A Situation Of Woe But If We Have A Fellow With Us Then There's Hope So How Does The Gospel Apply To This Well Think About The Fall We Did Fall Every One Of Us Has Fallen With With Adam We Fallen Into Sin And If We're On Our Own We Can't Get Up If We Are On Our Own This Evening In Our Sin In Our Fallen

State There Is Nothing Ahead Of Us Apart From Eternal Woe That's The Truth Of The Scripture That's The Bad News But The Good News Is That Jesus Has Come To Us And In The Gospel Jesus He Offers To Lift Us Up We Sang It This Morning In Psalm 40 If We Are In Christ If We Take The Hand Of Jesus Then We Have Salvation He Lifts Us Up He Puts Us In That Stable Solid Rock Place He Gives Us Security He Gives Us Hope That's Eternal In Christ In Christ Alone Our Hope Is Find We'll Sing In Just A Moment Or Two Let's Move On To Verse 11

Again Says Solomon If Two Lie Together They Keep Warm But How Can One Keep Warm! Alone So There's A Physical Lesson There Again Which Is Not A Hard Lesson To Figure Out I Always Move The Chairs After The Morning Service From Over There Or Somebody Does Because If All The Chairs Are Out On A Cold Winter's Evening I Can Guarantee When I Come In Here At Five Past Six There's People Sitting All Around The Edges Of The Church And Everybody In The on that

picture.

[ 59 : 23 ] If you're freezing and you're on your own, then you won't last long. But if you're with someone, then you can keep warm. And we can take that picture one step further as we think about the church.

The church is not a building. The church is people. If we try and do Christianity on our own, if we don't do church, or if we stop having fellowship, very quickly our hearts grow cold because we need the warmth and encouragement of each other like the coal in the fire remains warm.

The coal on the hearth very quickly is freezing. So we can take that verse, that principle, and apply it spiritually to the church, but we can take this verse further still because it leads us to Jesus.

The king and the head of the church. See, the warmth and the intimacy that our souls long for. We taste it when we're with each other, when we are Christians, but we experience it in fullest measure when we are in union with Jesus, when we are close with Jesus, when we have that sense of being in the presence of Christ.

In verse 12, finally, Though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him.

[ 60 : 55 ] A threefold cord. I can't say that. I've tried three times and I've failed three times. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Anna phoned me on Thursday night and she said, I've been invited to go out to a praise evening in Paisley, a church, and it starts at six and it finishes at twelve.

Do you think I should go? I said, what? No, I don't think you should go. You're coming back from Paisley at twelve o'clock on a bus on a Friday night on your own. Forget it.

You're not going. And the lesson here is a lesson in the verse that's perfectly sensible and easy to process.

If you're on your own on a bus from Paisley at midnight and you come under attack, you have little hope. But if there's two, then there's a better chance of being okay.

[ 62 : 00 ] And if there's three, the odds are better still. And if there's four or five or six or seven, the odds keep going up. But I suppose these odds depend on who the three are and how strong and how brave they are and how powerful the attacker is.

So these are the human lessons that Solomon is pointing out as he encourages us to not be isolated but be together. But as we think about the spiritual lesson, think about this.

What are the odds of us being overcome? If we are in Christ, if we are on our own, if we are apart from Christ, then we will quickly be overcome.

But if we are in Christ, will we be overcome? Well, listen to what Paul says in Romans 8 as we finish.

Paul says, If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

[ 63 : 15 ] Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died. More than that, who was raised, who's at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

As it is written. Remember, Paul is writing to those who are being slaughtered. As it is written, For your sake, for Jesus' sake, we are being slaughtered.

We are being killed all day long. We are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered. And then God says to Paul, No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

For I am sure, I am convinced, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

[ 64 : 39 ] So there's no rest for the envious. There's no pleasure in loneliness. There's no lasting security for the ambitious.

But there is no lack for those who are in Christ. So be in Christ. Come to Jesus.

And remain close to Jesus today and every day. And we'll sing now as we respond to this passage.

In Christ alone our hope is found. Mission Praise 107. is my light, my strength, my strength, my soul, this this this solid ground filled with fiercest strength and storm.

What lives of love, what depths of peace, when fears are still, when striving cease, I aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire to

aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire to!  
[ 66 : 34 ] aspire to aspire to! aspire to