

Thursday 5.5.16 evening

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Preacher: Rev. A.I. MacDonald

[0 : 0 0] well good evening and a warm welcome to the service this evening it's good to see everyone and it's good to have the reverend and the cian mcdonald with us over the course of this weekend and the reverend john murdo mcdonald and we welcome them both to the the communion weekend we look forward to hearing god's word through them intimations just to say that the services tomorrow will be 12 noon in gaelic and that will be in a cian that will be preaching and 7 p.m in english and that service will be led by the reverend john murdo mcdonald and we'll be back in the community center tomorrow and we'll be there over the course of the next few days of the weekend just also to say that the session opened this morning and if there are those who know and who love the lord and who wish to profess their faith and come to the lord's table for the first time this weekend please wait behind come and meet with the session just in here at the end of the service we'll pray for a moment our heavenly father we again thank you that we are here in this place this evening we thank you for the opportunity that we have to worship you in this place and we thank you that freedom that we have in this country to come together and to open your word and to lift up the name of jesus we thank you that you're promised that whatever your people gather even two or three in number you will be present with us and so we thank you that we have that assurance that wherever we are where we meet in the name of christ you are present and we ask lord that you would be lifted up that you would touch our hearts lord that we would be led by your spirit and that all that we say and do and all our thoughts as we meditate upon your word be glorifying to your great name hear our prayers cleanse us from sin and bless your servant in the sea and as he leads us now in worship and we pray these things in jesus name amen as we begin our worship i just like to thank your minister for having me here and for the welcome he has already given me he was once an elder with me in the east church in inverness and the other minister of the reverend john murder was at probation or so i think they've just ganged up on me to bring me back here to give me a dose of my own medicine may the lord bless us anyway in the purpose of our meeting to exalt and glorify our lord jesus christ we're going to begin our service by singing to god's praise from psalm 65 psalm 65 and we shall sing verses 1 to 5 that's six stanzas from psalm 65 verses 1 to the verse mark 5 praise waits for thee in sion lord to thee thou's page shall be o thou that hearer art of prayer all flesh shall come to thee and to their tribe o god of our salvation thou in thy righteousness by fearful works unto our prayers thine answer dost express therefore the ends of all the earth and those afar that be upon the sea their confidence o lord will place in thee these verses of psalm 65 praise waits for thee in sion lord to thee thou's page shall be praise waits for thee

in sion lord to thee o love that hearer heart o prayer of flesh shall come to thee o love that hearer heart of prayer all flesh shall come to thee Iniquities I must confess Preve against me do But as for our transgressions The virtue which shall thou Blessed is the man whom thou dost choose And mayst approach to thee That he within thy course, O Lord May still not well there be We surely shall be satisfied With thy abundant grace And with the goodness of thy house In of thy holy place O God of earth's salvation O in thy righteousness Thy fearful words unto our prayers Thine answer dost express Their holiness upon the earth And those afar that be Upon the sea their confidence O Lord will praise you Let us unite our hearts in prayer Let us pray Eternal God Whose glory goes beyond Any expression Of all that we might conceive For you are high and lifted up Beyond our humanity Beyond the whole of creation You are the omnipotent one You are the one who not only has That great power But you are the one who sees Even every detail of every life

[8 : 23] Not even a little sparrow falls That you are not aware of it Such is the greatness Of your very being That the angels of glory Exalted in your presence Do veil their faces And do acknowledge The glory of your holiness We come before you this evening Privileged That you have called us To know you To know your very being Through the testimony Of the creation But to know you In the intimacy Of your saving grace In the passion Of your Son And Lord our God In him In whom you delight We would seek To delight

This evening Afresh And to delight In the celebration Of all that he has set Before us Through Calvary's cross And his death For sinners Such as we are And we ask O Lord our God That you would be Lifted up among us In the crucified Written Saviour That we may come Into that spiritual Frame of mind Which was bestowed Upon others When you came in Among them And you took The bread And the marks Of the nail prints Were in your hands And the bread That was broken Spoke of that Broken body That was testified Through even These marks Of the death Of Calvary And we pray Lord our God That we might Come to see The wonder Of our salvation Afresh And that we might Behold The glory Of your grace And that we might Marvel again In appreciation Of all that you have Done To lay hold Upon Such as we are To appreciate The glory Of your humiliation That you should Come down In the form Of a servant Not only To wash our feet But to wash Our souls And so we bless You Lord For the fountain That was opened For sin And for uncleanness For it is To that fountain That we must Hurry this evening Afresh For we are found In your presence As those who are Aweighed and found Wanting Those who are Under conviction Even when we come Before your presence As those who are Ashamed Before you For how little We have made Of the privileges That you have Bestowed upon us And the grace That you have Revealed to us Lord our God We ask you That you would Take us afresh That you would Assure us Of your mercy And forgiveness That you would Liberate us From all that Binds us With guilt And fear With anxieties And with all In which we have Come short of your glory And rebelled against you For we are found This evening Afresh as those Who have gone astray In so many ways And we pray That we would know That the shepherd Is seeking And that the shepherd Is calling And that every other Voice might be still This evening Except the voice Of him Who spoke Creation Into being And who In the word Made flesh Speaks to us That word Of consolation And comfort That calls us To his footstool As his children Lord our heavenly father We pray That you would Give us That boldness That is born Not out of Arrogance of spirit But born out of That kinship That your holy spirit Sets within the hearts Of all who are [13 : 27] True seekers Before you And draws them To you And enables them To call you Father Lord we pray Therefore That you would Move among us Move within us Speak through us And speak to us And grant O Lord That this time Of worship Might be a Hallowed hour And that We would Lift our eyes Even On this Mount of Celebration That we might See what others Saw On the Mount of Transfiguration For after the glories That were revealed To them Jesus Was the focus Set before them Enable us Therefore To look to him Alone For we are Broken cisterns We are Broken vessels Without him

We are Unable to do Anything That does Of eternal Benefit We might Do much That man May glory In But without Him Without The son Of man Without The king Of kings And lord Of lords The savior Of sinners We can Do nothing Lord Enable us Therefore To find Our relationship With him Renewed And that We might Bear testimony That he Within us Is indeed The hope Of glory We ask It all In Jesus Name And for His sake Amen Psalm 130 We sing Together Psalm 130 Lord From the depths To thee I cry My voice Lord Do thou Hear Unto my Supplications Voice Give Unattentive Ear Down To the Last Verse And Plenteous Redemption Is ever Found With him And from All his Iniquities He Israel Shall Redeem Psalm 130 The whole Psalm Lord From the Depths To thee I cried My voice Lord Do thou Hear Lord From the Dead To thee I cried My voice Lord Do thou Hear Ich

To the Who Doth Lord Hear O Lord, should serve in equity, but get with thee.
For give the sins not fear the man has given.

[17 : 18] I wait for God, my soul will wait.

My hope is in His word. More than may God, for more than watch.

My soul waits for the Lord. I say, Lord, on may God to watch.

The morning light to see. Let Israel hope in the Lord.

For with His mercy be. And precious redemption is severed by within.

[18 : 49] And from all His iniquities, He Israel shall redeem.

Amen. Now let us hear God's word as we read it from the gospel according to Luke chapter 15. Luke's gospel chapter 15. And we shall read that from verse 11.

Luke chapter 15 from verse 11. Jesus continued. Jesus has just told them two parables or two illustrations.

One to do with the lost sheep, the other the lost coin. And at verse 11 we read further. Jesus continued. There was a man who had two sons.

[20 : 03] The younger one said to his father, Father, give me my share of the estate. So he divided his property between them.

Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had set off for a distant country. And there squandered his wealth in wild living.

After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country. And he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs.

He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating. But no one gave him anything. When he came to his senses, he said, How many of my father's hired men have food to spare? And here I am starving to death. I will set out and go back to my father and say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

[21 : 22] I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired men. So he got up and went to his father.

But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him. He ran to his son through his arms around him and kissed him.

The son said to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.

But the father said to his servants, Quick, bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.

Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again.

[22 : 30] He was lost and is found. So they began to celebrate. Meanwhile, the older son was in the field.

When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him, What was going on?

Your brother has come, he replied, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.

The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, Look, all these years I have been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.

[23 : 35] But when this son of Yuzh, who has squandered your property with prostitutes, comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him.

My son, the father said, You are always with me and everything I have is Yuzh. But we had to celebrate and be glad because this brother of Yuzh was dead and is alive again.

He was lost and is found. May God bless to us this reading of his holy word and enlighten our minds in all that you would share with us.

Let us again unite our hearts before God. Lord our God, we bless you this evening that you have given us the opportunity of sharing in your praise and in your word.

And we bless you, Lord our God, that you afford us also the opportunity of coming together to pray not only for ourselves but for others.

[24 : 54] that you invite us to bear one another's burdens and so to fulfil the law of the one who bore the burden of all his people.

Who bore such a burden that even the angels of glory could not enter into the nature of that love that goes beyond our understanding.

Love divine, all loves excelling. We bless you, Lord our God, this evening for the many ways in which you have dealt with each one of us here.

We thank you, Lord, for prayers you have answered. We thank you for prayers that you have answered in a different way from the way we were pleading.

Lord, Lord, for the many ways in which you have answered. And even if sometimes we are left with a wounded heart and a hurt spirit and we don't understand what you were doing when you were answering your prayers the way you did.

[26 : 15] And yet, Lord, we believe that someday you will bring us to a fullness that will see what you are doing and that the hurts and the wounds of your people were not meaningless in the light of your eternal glory and all that you are going to share with them ultimately.

And we pray, Lord, this evening for those who are wounded. Some are wounded in body through illness or bereavement in spirit.

And some are wounded because they are persecuted in other lands and they are suffering for the cause of Christ. And they are maligned and abused in many ways.

Some are imprisoned. And there are children in the world whose fathers have been killed because they were true to Jesus. They were in this land in previous generations.

They're now in other lands. And yet your kingdom is advancing and your work is going on and the glory of Jesus is being spread throughout our world.

[27 : 31] For he is the victorious one. He is the conqueror. We bless you, Lord, for all that you are in the triumph of your Son and in the triumph of all who are bound to your Son.

And we bless you for him. We pray, Heavenly Father, this evening for all that concerns us in our daily lives. we pray for this congregation of your people.

People who have gone through many different experiences in recent days. Who have been hurt in many ways because the Gospel has been hurt in our land.

And we bless you, Lord, our God for your faithfulness to them. And we thank you, Lord, for all who stand in the light of your word.

And we pray your hand upon each of them. Upon this people, upon their minister, David, and upon the elders and all who share in the responsibilities of the congregation.

[28 : 39] We ask your blessing upon their families. We pray, Lord, for their children. We ask your hand upon each one of them. And we pray, Lord, for all that is going on in our communities.

When you are calling us, Lord, in the light of your word to stand by the one who is the word made flesh. And who was obedient to the death of the cross.

Lord, we owe him so much. And we are forever his debtor. And we pray, Lord, that you would ever keep us faithful. Hear our prayers for all such congregations.

Not only here, but throughout our islands and highlands and lowlands. Lord, God, look upon us in your mercy. And we pray tonight, Heavenly Father, for the soul of Scotland as a people.

And, Lord, we see so much. So much that is departed from you and from your word. And even when we look at the elections that are taking place and the disgrace that marks even those we look to in our day and generation.

[30 : 01] Lord, have mercy upon us as a people. And look upon us in the compassion that looked down and saw sheep without a shepherd.

Lord, Lord, our God, there are predators about our land and feeding on the very corpse of our people. Lord, our God, look upon us and revive us and reclaim us.

Hear our prayers, Lord, for all that touches our lives here. Hear our prayers, Lord, for other congregations throughout this island and throughout different denominations.

We pray for them all. We pray, Lord, for those we left behind. Lord, hear us and help us and grant your blessing upon us all.

Continue with us now and pardon us, Lord, for all in which we come so short in bearing the burdens we ought to shoulder with him who bore our burden.

[31 : 13] We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. We sing now in hymn number 122.

Hymn 122. Come, Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire.

Let us thine influence prove source of the old prophetic fire, fountain of life and love.

Down to the last verse, God through himself we then shall know if thou within us shine and sound with all thy saints below the depths of love divine.

Hymn number 122. Come, Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire. come, Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire.

[32 : 31] Let us thine influence through source of the old prophetic fire, fountain of life and love.

come, Holy Ghost, our good life. The prophets wrote and spoke and knock the truth thyself the key have sealed sacred book.

Expand thy wings, celestial dying, verse His order still is good, and let there now be light.

God through himself we then shall know, if thou within us shite, and sound with all thy saints be o'er the depths of love divine.

Let us turn together to the passage we read in Luke chapter 15. And we shall read from verse 28.

[34 : 55] Luke chapter 15, reading from verse 21. The older brother became angry and refused to go in.

So his father went out and pleaded with him. Let's ask God's blessing on our meditation together. Lord our God, we walk this evening along the road of life. Some of us might be perplexed, but we would all wish and pray that you would walk with us in such a way as you walked the Emmaus Road so long ago.

You have done it for us on past occasions. We cannot presume upon you, and yet we wait upon you and ask your blessing, enlightening your word, enlightening your souls through your word, and encouraging us in all that you are, in Christ the Saviour.

We ask it for his sake. Amen. Now we look this evening at this fourth illustration that Jesus gives in this chapter.

[36 : 37] This son who is part of this household. I am sure we would all, in a sense, rather listen to the testimony of the younger son.

It's far more exciting, isn't it, to go off to the far country and to live in a wild way, and then, when all is gone, to come home and meet with the wonder of God's grace that was experienced by this young lad.

But this evening we look at his older brother, the boy who would not go in. He would not go into the celebration.

And there is a sense in which that is where we are gathered here. We are here for a celebration.

We are celebrating what Jesus did for sinners.

And we gather as sinners. We gather as prodigals. But sometimes there are prodigals who are reluctant to go in.

[37 : 54] There is no doubt that this older son was also an erring son. And that this son was also a lost son.

As we shall see together. A young man who somehow couldn't take part in what was going on, as Jesus puts it, in that context.

Perhaps we might also say, well, what he is really getting at here is the scribes and the Pharisees. Because they were the ones who stood apart.

And who did not want to celebrate what Jesus was doing. When he was coming, when he was eating with tax collectors and sinners.

And when they were critical of him in the way that we find at the very beginning of this chapter. The tax collectors and sinners were all gathering round to hear him.

[39 : 05] But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, this man welcomes sinners and eats with them. A kind of celebration.

A kind of celebration. Where do we stand in the light of our celebration. Is there perhaps alive and well within us an element of the older brother?

Let's look at it together. And there are five headings. And you're probably saying he usually is very long winded. And usually he only has three.

We're in for a long night. Well, we'll do it quicker. We will. Anyway, let's look at this. First of all, we see the man who denies his father's passion.

He denies his father's passion. He cannot understand the father's joy because his brother has come home. After all, what choice did his brother have?

[40 : 21] His brother had used up all his resources. He had lost all his friends. He was in the pigsty, not in the palace.

And it's from the pigsty he made his way home. What else could he do? Remember a long time ago, talking to someone who, when a renegade passion was converted.

Now this passion was well educated, well brought up, well versed in the Bible. But unconverted.

And that man said, as he made reference to this, Druth and Dona note, who had become to Christ and whose life had been transformed.

Well, you know, he needed something like that. He needed something like that. There was no rejoicing.

[41 : 28] There was no excitement. There was no really part or understanding why the ancients should be rejoicing.

Because a down and out had come back and had really found a place with the father. You see the same kind of spirit in another incident that is recorded for us in Luke's gospel.

And we find it in Simon the Pharisee's house. And there is a gathering there. There's a kind of celebration there. And Simon thinks we'll have the celebration.

We'll invite Jesus. And then along comes this woman. And everybody knows that there is a tale to this woman. And there she goes and she starts pouring expensive perfume over Jesus.

She is there weeping and wiping his feet with her hair. And what's all this about? Well, Simon thinks, you know, if Jesus was a real prophet, he wouldn't put up with this.

[42 : 45] He had no understanding of what that woman's spiritual condition was all about. He had no understanding of why Jesus should receive such a passion.

What he actually said was, if he knew what kind of woman this was, he would not let her near him. He cannot be a prophet. Otherwise, he would know.

The fact of the matter is that he did know. And he knew a lot more than Simon the Pharisee knew. And here is a man, and he is denying his father's passion.

He cannot understand why this passion. Why? Because, you see, his father's love has never gripped his heart.

What has gripped his heart? What is gripping his heart is his own faithfulness. Look at what he is saying. I have slaved.

[43 : 47] Isn't that what he is saying? I have never disobeyed your orders. I have been slaving for you. And so his own service, his own faithfulness, his own respectability, is, as if it were, inoculating his life.

Guarding his life in such a way that he has no insight into his father's passion. He is living in the same house as his father.

But he doesn't share his father's passion. He doesn't share the outlook. Simon the Pharisee could not share in what Jesus was doing.

And that's what we find here. He denies his father's passion. But there's something else here too. He dismisses his brother's petition or his condition. He doesn't go as far as to say, Well, father, tough him out. But his attitude to his brother is such that he's not waiting with his father, looking for his brother to return.

[45 : 12] There's no expectancy there from him. There is no prayer that would say something like, Father, take him back home again.

Please help me to pull him in. Do we share the spirit of the elder brother in such a way that we do not pray for the salvation of others?

Because that is really what is in the father who is looking out to the far country each day and who is waiting and who is willing to meet with the son that is coming home.

He is looking for him. Why? Because there is expectation there. Was it Spurgeon who said to a student who had been preaching and he said to him afterwards, Did you preach with expectation? And what he meant was did he expect people to respond? Is there expectation? I remember at one stage in my ministry when people came to a prayer meeting on a Wednesday night there were those there who were expecting newcomers.

[46 : 46] they were expecting newcomers and they were excited when there was a new one in the prayer meeting. Is there a mere of expectation in those spiritual lives?

Or has the expectation somehow died? I challenge you tonight you hear you profess Christ you pray for people is there someone that you were once praying for regularly but somehow you've lost your appetite?

perhaps even because of something that person has done perhaps even because something came between you in such a way that that person doesn't matter to you anymore that's the time to pray that's the time to recapture that spirit of expectancy and of expectation because that is a measure of your part in the father's passion and in my and a measure of my of my relationship to God the father as well.

This man this young man was not waiting with his father for this boy's return. but also he is denying kinship with his brother because you see he doesn't say my brother what he says is this son of yours this son of yours is really as if he were finding thought with the father as well as with the son

who has returned.

Are there times and it's as if we were arguing with God himself are we sometimes perhaps and we have become even in a way we think that our integrity might even be greater than God's Paul the apostle what does he have to say about the Jews what did the Jews do with him when they sought to kill him they were after him to such an extent that God's protection on the apostle Paul was to put him to prison because that's where he was safe and that's where actually he fulfilled the work God had for him to do writing these epistles that we preach from regularly and that is part of our Bible but God was protecting him from the Jewish people because the

[49 : 58] Jews had refused his preaching in the synagogues and he turned away from the synagogue and he was preaching to the Gentiles and they were infuriated and yet what does Paul have to say by the Jews who insulted him and had murderous intentions about him well listen this is what he says I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart for I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers those of my own race the people of Israel what is that echoing well it's echoing a man who was stunned outside Jerusalem his name was Stephen and this man Saul of Tarsus had at that time been looking after that crowd he was looking after the wardrobe while they were murdering

Stephen but now God has touched his heart and God has brought him into line in such a way that just as Stephen cried do not hold the sin against them what's Stephen echoing the one who was on the cross of Calvary you said father forgive them for they know not what they do have you or have I been hurt perhaps perhaps in the context of the church of Christ and all that has happened to you as a congregation or as an individual well nobody has tried to murder me as far as I know anyway but does my heart go out to them in the way that the apostle

Paul's heart is going out to the people of Israel is there that within our lives does this man who is dismissing his brother's condition denying his father's passion dismissing his brother's condition well what is he really worried about does he think well you know he spent his own share of the inheritance and now he's coming and he's dipping into my share because his share is gone but you see that's not how the grace of God works because the grace of God defies the measurements of men because the more the grace of God gives out the more as

Paul puts it where sin abounded grace abounded more if you wanted an illustration of it you have it in a bowl of meal the woman for the more she took out of the bowl of meal the more it filled up again and that's the way the grace of God is it abounds more and more and the more that God the father as it's depicted here took out of his inheritance the more the inheritance would grow just the same as it is true the more that you and I give to the Lord in the proper spirit the more the Lord gives us not in terms of wealth as the prosperity gospel says but in spiritual fulfilment and in spiritual enrichment so really by denying this to his younger brother what the elder brother was doing was spoiling or rather limiting his own share because the more that comes out of the gospel the more gospel there is to come out the more there is in the unsearchable riches of

God's grace because grace abounds beyond the limits of our sinful condition so here is what this boy could not understand he dismisses his brother's condition and the third thing is he discounts his father's provision he is discounting the riches that are in his father firstly it's seen in his stance of disobedience he would not go in and he believed he had reasons for not going in first of all he wasn't happy about those who were in have you met that the fellow who says you know I'm not becoming part of that people these people who celebrate the Lord's supper I know what they're like I've seen what they do when they're at work and so we can reason ourselves into justify our refusal to go in that's what this man is doing he is taking a stance of disobedience that's why the father will come out to him

[56 : 03] I will not be part of it and also it's seen in his sense of deprivation what has he in mind well he's a kind of exclusive fellow isn't he because what he really wants to celebrate is with me and my friends it's me and my friends that matter and you never gave a kid to us to me and my friends no what the gospel does for us is that it opens us out to a greater friendship to the friendship that is Jesus who said to his followers I do not call you servants I call you friends why because I'm revealing to you what my father is doing and therefore the friendship that is in Christ is always an open friendship it's not an exclusive friendship you heard the story about coming with us four come in and shut the door an exclusiveness that shuts others out well that's part of what this man wanted he denied his father's passion he dismissed his brother's condition he discounts his father's provision but he also discerns his father's pleading because his father has come out to speak to him

and that is what we find here that the father has come out to speak to him and is pleading with him is the father pleading with you and with me because the father here doesn't even say to him son the word that he says to him is my child even verse 31 where it says that my son in the

NIV the actual word in the Greek language there is my child it's a term of intimacy it is the father wooing him by all that he is and he is using a term of endearment and he is persuading him he is saying there's a compulsion here we had to celebrate the father he said we had to celebrate come ye blessed of the father and enter into my joy is what he says to us and that is what we find here and he is also pleading him about companionship this brother of you is what the father says here he is calling him into fellowship because it is in that fellowship that his heart will be enlarged can't you see that in the story of

Zacchaeus where is Zacchaeus heart enlarged and transformed it's because he listened to the invitation of Jesus and when Jesus has gone in with them and they are dining together it has such an effect on him that his heart expands and he says you know I'm going to give a lot to the poor and I'm going to restore the wrong things that I have done and those that I have cheated I'm going to bring reparation to them do we see ourselves in the light of that expansiveness that generosity that grows through Christ touching our lives is that the love that touches our lives when we read here of this father who is saying this brother of yours and he is calling him to see this why well because what has taken hold of this boy's life is what took hold in the first instance of the beginning of the Bible because Cain what did he say about his brother am I my brother's keeper and that's exactly what this man is saying am I my brother's keeper but who really is speaking all this story to us who is talking to us about this denial of the father's love and passion this dismissal of the brother's condition this discounting of the provision that the father has made and now discerning the father's pleading well the one who is speaking this is the real elder brother the real elder brother is none other than Jesus that's why we read in Hebrews chapter 2 verse 11 so Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers the contradiction of the spirit of Cain the contradiction of the spirit of the elder brother is in the one who is really the true brother and what would a true brother do well a true brother would go out looking for his brother because he is his brother's keeper

I think it's Tim Keller probably some of you may have read some of his literature who quotes professor Ed Cloney who told a story that during the Vietnam War there was a family who lost a son in Vietnam and they never found out through official records whether he had been killed or not all that was said about him was that he had gone missing and his older brother left his job and left everything and took all that he had and for years wandered through Vietnam looking in the midst of all the conflict that was there looking for his brother who was an accountant for him and the enemies the Yet Kong and everyone knew him by one name the brother that's what they called him the brother why because he was seeking for his brother but who came seeking for his brother more than the one who is at the very core of the gospel because the one who is at the core of the gospel he is not ashamed to call them brothers we read in Hebrews 2 verse 11 but what we read in Hebrews 12 at its beginning is that he despised the shame and endured the cross in other words he took our shame upon himself because you see he was made sin for us on the cross of

[64 : 24] Calvary Martin Luther put it Jesus on the cross of Calvary was as if he was the biggest sinner there ever was because he was bearing the sin of all his people in his own being and the shame of their sin was upon him and it is in the light of what he bore for him that Paul writes to the Romans and says I am not ashamed of the gospel I boast in it I exult in it why because he who is our true brother who was rich and became poor for us is the one who peeps with us is there that spirit yet about us that says really when we hear the gospel when the testimony of the gospel speaks to us through others is there an element of anger is there an element in which we say

I will not go in because who teaches I will not go in who is the source of the anger it's the one who wants to destroy our souls and that's where the conflict of our life is are we disfiguring the father's profile the way the son was or do we see the one who was disfigured so that we might see the profile of God's love in him because he's the one who said he to Thomas when Thomas said show us the father that will be enough for us and Jesus said he who has seen the father us in me the heavenly father comes to us he sends his son to us and he is the one who is pleading with us and who has come out to us and who has expectations in the light of the call of the gospel come to me Jesus said all you are troubled and who are heavy laden who are troubled by your own anger by your own resentment who are burdened even by the sins of the past and reactions perhaps things we have said about God's people or even things we have said about the Lord Jesus and he is

saying to us tonight he is saying to us will you really go in will you really come and celebrate with us through this one who has given us himself and whose grace is sufficient for us the older brother became angry and refused to go in may God break down our reluctance and our resistance let us unite our hearts before him

Lord our heavenly father we pray this night that you would create within us through your word that which would be responsive to the offer of your grace and that we might begin to understand the nature of that passion that went to the depths of the darkness of forsakenness upon the cross that we might not be forsaken and that we might have fellowship with one another through him who sticks closer than our brother grant your blessing in him for we ask it in Jesus name amen we sing paraphrase 30 paraphrase 30 i think it's hymn 69 in the book come let us to the lord our god with contrite hearts return our god is gracious nor will leave the desolate to mourn down to the end so shall his presence bless our souls and shed a joyful light that hallowed morn shall chase away the sorrows of the night number 69 paraphrase 30 come let us to the lord our god with contrite hearts return come let us to the lord of god with contrite hearts return our lord is gracious nor will leave the desolate to mourn his voice commands tempest for and stills the stormy wind and though his arm be strong to smite tis also strong to save long hath the night of sorrow rain the dawn shall bring us life god shall appear and we shall rise with gladness in his sight our hearts if god we seek to know shall know and rejoice his coming light the morn shall be like morning songs his voice a steward upon the tender hair diffusing fragrance round and shirr the tersh in the spring and cheer the thirsty ground so shall his presence bless

our souls and shed a joyful night that the morn shall chase away the sorrows of the night now may grace mercy and peace from god father son and holy spirit one god rest and remain with us