

That you would use him That you would speak Through him That he would know The help of the Holy Spirit That he would Sense your presence That he would sense That he is among Brothers and sisters In Christ In this place And we pray for Sheena And for the family Back in America And we ask your blessing Upon them

And the congregation In Jackson That you would be working In that place As we pray That you would be working Here in this place So we commit Ourselves We commit This weekend To you And we ask Lord That you would lead us And guide us That we would worship you In spirit And in truth We pray for Any tonight Who would desire To be here But who can't be Some who are in hospital Some who are at home And who are housebound Those who may be struggling Those who may have responsibilities That take them elsewhere And for all who have the desire To be here But who are unable to be here We pray that you would bless them And that you would draw near to them Where they are We pray for many more Who have The opportunity Who have the health And the strength But have no desire At this time And we ask Lord That you would awaken The hearts of those Who are still lost That you would create So thirst For Christ We ask Lord That you would be with Those in particular need We continue to remember Those who are grieving In our community And we ask that they would be comforted That they would know The comfort of God That they would know Their hearts being bound up You are the God Who is able to bind up Broken hearts And so we bring them to you In prayer And we pray now That you would go before us In this time Help us we pray Fix our eyes upon Jesus For we pray these things In his name And for his sake Amen We'll sing again To God's praise We'll sing this time From Mission Praise 988 The words on the screen How deep the Father's love for us How vast beyond all measure That he would give his only Son

[16 : 48] To make a wretched treasure How great the pain of searing loss The Father turns his face away As wounds which are the chosen one Bring many sons to glory Behold the man upon a cross I sit upon his shoulders Ashamed I hear my mocking voice Call out among the scoffers

It was my sin that held him there Until it was accomplished His dying breath has brought me high I know that it is finished Not lost in anything No gifts, no power, no wisdom But I will boast in Jesus Christ His death and resurrection Why should I gain from his reward I cannot give an answer But this I know with all my heart

His wounds have made my ransomNING Psalm 22 and we'll read from verse 1 to verse 21.

To the choir master, according to the dough of the dawn, a psalm of David. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer. And by night, but I find no rest.

[20 : 02] Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you our fathers trusted, they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried and were rescued.

In you they trusted and were not put to shame. But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people.

All who see me mock me. They make mouths at me. They wag their heads. He trusts in the Lord. Let him deliver him. Let him rescue him, for he delights in him.

Yet you are he who took me from the womb. You made me trust you at my mother's breasts. On you I was cast from my birth.

And from my mother's womb you have been my God. Be not far from me. For trouble is near, and there is none to help. Many bulls encompass me, strong bulls of patience around me.

[21 : 08] They open wide their mouths at me like a ravening and roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax.

It is melted within my breast. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws. You lay me in the dust of death.

For dogs encompass me, a company of evildoers encircles me. They have pierced my hands and feet. I can count all my bones. They stare and gloat over me.

They divide my garments among them. And for my clothing they cast lots. But you, O Lord, do not be far off. O you, my help, come quickly to my aid.

Deliver my soul from the sword. My precious life from the power of the dog. Save me from the mouth of the lion.

[22 : 16] You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen. Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us.

We'll sing again now to God's praise. And in case you're increasingly worried, after we've sung this psalm, I will sit down and hand over to David.

So we're going to sing from Psalm 51, this great psalm of repentance. And we'll sing from verse 7 to verse 13 of the psalm. To the tune St. Kilda.

Do thou with hyssop sprinkle me? I shall be cleansed so. Ye wash thou me, and then I shall be whiter than the snow. Down to the end of verse 13 to God's praise.

We'll stand to sing. Well, let's sing. Well, let's sing. Well, let's sing. Well, let's sing. Well, let's sing.

Well, let's sing. Well, let's sing. Thou with his soft sprinkle me, I shall be cleansed so.

[23 : 24] Yea, wash thou me, and then I shall be whiter than the snow.

Of gladness and of joyfulness make me to hear the voice.

Thus, O these very bones which thou hast broken, may rejoice.

All my iniquities slaughtered, life is high from my sin.

Create a clean heart, Lord, renew a right with me within.

[24 : 44] Pass me not from thy sight nor take, Thy holy spirit away.

Restore me thy salvation's joy, With thy priesthood he saved.

Then will I teach thy ways unto Those that transgress her feet.

And those that sinners shall then be turned unto thee.

Amen. To focus our attention together on the gospel accounts of the various groups that gathered around the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[26 : 32] So tonight we'll think about the soldiers who nailed our Savior to the tree in all their brutal efficiency. And then tomorrow night, God willing, we'll look at the mockers, the scoffers, who stood looking on, pouring their insults at the Lord Jesus as he hung there in agony.

Then, Lord's Day morning, as we gather around the table, there are the robbers nailed, one on the left and one on the right on either side of our Savior's cross.

What a contrast. Those two men present in their very different responses to the Lord Jesus. And then Sunday evening, we'll look at the two unusual mourners who come to take down Jesus' body and prepare him for burial.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. And so that's our plan for this weekend. And I would plead with you for your prayers for God's word as it goes out over the course of these days that we have together.

We're looking at each group. First of all, not to learn from their example, though there are doubtless many lessons to learn from the example of each of these men as they respond to Christ.

[28 : 01] But our great priority, I think the priority of the gospel writers who record these stories for us, our priority needs to be to see how the words and the actions of these different groups clustered all around the cross teach us about Jesus.

And what was really going on that fateful Passover outside the city walls of Jerusalem two millennia ago.

And so with all of that in mind, let me invite you now to take your Bibles in hand once again and turn with me to John's Gospel, chapter 19. John chapter 19.

We're thinking about the soldiers who performed the grisly business of executing the Lord Jesus Christ. And as we read the passage, we're going to think about four themes together.

So do have these four themes in mind as we read the scriptures. First, we'll think about their cruelty. Here is the depravity of the human heart on full and appalling display.

[29 : 15] Cruelty unmasked. Then secondly, we'll think about kingship. The one that they brutalize and torture and kill is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

And we get to see in this scene something of the true nature of Christ's kingship. So cruelty unmasked. Kingship revealed.

Then thirdly, as we watch the soldiers strip the Lord Jesus of his clothing and cast lots for his garments. We are reminded of the price that was being paid to afford a covering for our shame.

So cruelty unmasked. Kingship revealed. And a covering provided. And then finally, we'll hear both from John, the author of the gospel, and from the soldiers themselves who performed this grisly act.

We'll hear a confession that is required of us all. And so these are the four headings as we read the scriptures. Be on the lookout for them. Cruelty unmasked.

[30 : 39] Kingship revealed. A covering provided. And a confession required. Before we read the passage, let me invite you to bow your heads with me. As we seek the Lord's face to help us as we

read his word.

Let us pray. Oh Lord our God. Send us now, we pray. The spirit of Christ. To take of what is his. And make it known to us. Give us ears to hear. What your spirit is saying to your church. For we ask it in Jesus' matchless name.

Amen. John 19. Beginning at verse 1. This is the word of God. Then Pilate took Jesus.

And flogged him. And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns. And put it on his head.

[31 : 45] And arrayed him in a purple robe. And they came up to him. Saying. Hail. King of the Jews. And struck him.

With their hands. And then turn to verse 16. Verse 16. So he, Pilate.

Delivered him, Jesus, over to them. The Jews to be crucified. So they took him. And he went out bearing his own cross.

To the place called. The place of a skull. Which in Aramaic. Is called Golgotha. And there. They crucified him.

And with him. Two others. One on either side. And Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote an inscription. And put it on the cross. It read. Jesus of Nazareth. The king of the Jews.

[32 : 47] Many of the Jews. Read this inscription. For the place where Jesus was crucified. Was near the city. And it was written in Aramaic. In Latin. And in Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews.

Said to Pilate. Do not write. The king of the Jews. But rather this man said. I am the king of the Jews. Pilate answered. What I have written. I have written.

When the soldiers. Had crucified Jesus. They took his garments. And divided them into four parts. One part for each soldier. Also his tunic.

But the tunic was seamless. Woven in one piece. From top to bottom. So they said to one another. Let us not tear it. But cast lots for it.

To see whose it shall be. This was to fulfill the scripture. Which says. They divided my garments among them. And for my clothing. They cast lots.

[33 : 46] So the soldiers did these things. Standing by the cross of Jesus. Were his mother. And his mother's sister. Mary. The wife of Clopas. And Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother.

And the disciple. Whom he loved. Standing nearby. He said to his mother. Woman. Behold your son. And he said to the disciple. Behold your mother. And from that hour. The disciple took her.

To his own home. After this. Jesus knowing. That all was now finished. Said to fulfill the scriptures. I thirst. A jar. Full of sour wine.

Stood there. So they put a sponge. Full of the sour wine. On a hyssop branch. And held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received. The sour wine. He said. It is finished.

And he bowed his head. And gave up his spirit. Since it was the day of preparation. And so that the bodies. Would not remain on the cross. On the Sabbath.

[34 : 46] For that Sabbath. Was a high day. The Jews asked Pilate. That their legs might be broken. And that they might be taken away. So the soldiers came.

And broke the legs of the first. And of the other. Who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus. And saw that he was already dead.

They did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers. Pierced his side with a spear. And at once there came out. Blood and water. He who saw it.

Has borne witness. His testimony is true. And he knows. That he is telling the truth. That you also may. Believe.

For these things took place. That the scripture might be fulfilled. Not one of his bones. Will be broken. And again. Another scripture says. They will look on him.

[35 : 41] Whom they have pierced. Amen. Amen. And we praise God. That he has spoken. In his holy inerrant words. Let me.

Let's think first of all. About cruelty. Unmasked. When we read the gospel accounts. Of. The brutal treatment.

Of. Jesus Christ. We are right. I think. To recoil. In horror. That the callous contempt. For human dignity. The torture. The mockery.

The casual violence. That seem to sit. So very lightly. On the shoulders. Of these soldiers. Who inflict it. But.

Perhaps. Because we don't know their names. Or their stories. Or maybe. Because we can't handle. What they've done. As we read. The accounts. Of the crucifixion.

[36 : 38] We rather tend to skip. Just a little too quickly. Past these men. And their actions. They are. Anomalies. We tell ourselves.

They must be monsters. Monsters. Because. We would never do. Something like this. And so. Since. We're not like them. They're monsters. We're not. They've done this terrible thing. We would never do such a thing. We really don't need to pay much attention. To their words.

Or to their works. I read an article. As I was preparing. To preach. I read an article. In the New Yorker magazine. By a journalist. Called Paul Bloom. And he was discussing.

The Nazi. Murder machine. Of the Holocaust. And how is it. That this. Such a thing. Could happen.

[37 : 35] That human beings. Could do this. To one another. And he said. Early psychological research. On dehumanization. Looked at what made the Nazis.

Different from the rest of us. The assumption was. To do something. That they did. They must have been unusual. Particularly wicked human beings. Not like the rest of us.

So. What is it that was different about them? But psychologists. Now. Bloom says. They now talk about. Here's the phrase. The ubiquity.

Of dehumanization. That is to say. We all do this. We all do it. That is certainly how these soldiers. Were able to do.

What they did. In fact. Verses one through three. Tell us. They did what they did. They crucified Jesus. With considerable. Amusement. On Friday.

[38 : 31] They beat Jesus. They whipped. Jesus. They pushed. A crown of thorns. Down into his scalp. Up. And they made a joke of Jesus.

And then they drove nails. Into his hands. And his feet. And then when their shift was done. They went home.

And kissed their wives. And ate their supper. And played with their kids. And slept soundly in their beds. As I call it.

An anthropologist. One said. Humankind. Ceases. At the border. Of the tribe. When they're not like us.

We can dehumanize them. And then it doesn't matter. How we treat them. That's what the soldiers did. Jesus. Not really as human. As we are. He's one of them.

[39 : 33] Not one of us. And because he's one of them. And not one of us. We can do monstrous things to him. That we would never do. To one another. We dehumanize them.

So that we can get away. In the case of the soldiers. Literally with murder. It's what the Nazis did. It's what these soldiers did. But we must not excuse ourselves.

Because it's what we do too. The phenomenon. Seems inescapable. Bloom wrote in that article. I was mentioning. Google your favorite.

Despised human group. Along with words like. Vermin. Roaches. Or animals. And it will all come. Spilling out. Some of this rhetoric.

Is seen as inappropriate. For mainstream discourse. But wait long enough. And you'll hear the word. Animals. Used even by respectable people. Referring to. Terrorists. Or to Israelis.

[40 : 29] Or Palestinians. Or to undocumented immigrants. Or to deporters. Of undocumented immigrants. Such rhetoric shows up. In the speech. Of white supremacists. But also.

When the rest of us. Talk about white supremacists. The point is. We all do this. Them. Those ones. We.

Dehumanize them. And excuse ourselves. The soldiers. Did it to Jesus. But as we read this passage. Aren't we in danger. Of doing it to the soldiers too.

They're monsters. Not us. We're not like them. But the point. I think John is making. Is actually to show us. Just how deep.

And dark. And twisted. The ordinary. Human heart. Really is. We recoil.

[41 : 26] From the wickedness. And ugly violence. Perpetrated. By these soldiers. Because we think. We're better than them. And we would never.

Descend. To such ugly depths. But we are wrong. In Mississippi. Where I serve. We have a dark. And ugly history. Of racial prejudice. And there were many lynchings. Of African Americans. In my state.

And the most shocking thing. About those lynchings. For me. Was that many of them. Were perpetrated. On a Sunday afternoon. By people spilling.

Out of majority. White churches. Because those people. Are those people. And not our people. Our treatment of them. Poses.

[42 : 25] No conflict. In their minds. With their devotion. To the Lord Jesus. Fine. Upstanding. Pillars. Of the community.

Who were in church. One minute. And murdering. A man. And hanging him. From a tree. The next. Without any. Cognitive dissonance. Any conflict. In their minds. Or hearts.

Or consciences. John's point. I think. Is not. That these soldiers. Were unusual. Monsters. John's point. Is.

This is us. This is me. This is you. Behold. The man. Upon a cross. My sin.

Upon his shoulders. Ashamed. I hear. Whose voice. Their voice. Those people. I would never. Do this. I hear.

[43 : 21] My mocking voice. Call out. Among the scoffers. It was my sin. That held him there. Here is.

The depravity. Of the human heart. You're a sinner. Me too. And sin. Is exposed. Here for us. To see. In all. Its ugliness. And its brutality.

Cruelty. So first. Cruelty. Unmasked. Secondly. I want you to look at the passage. And notice. Jesus. Kingship.

Revealed. After Jesus. Was flogged. In verses. Two and three. The soldiers. Chillingly. They make of Jesus. A plaything. For their amusement.

Don't they? Adding. Shame. To his physical agony. Look at the text. What does John say? They twisted together. A crown of thorns. And put it on his head. And arrayed him.

[44 : 15] In a purple robe. The robes of a king. And they came up to him. Saying. Hail. King of the Jews. And they struck him. With their hands. On the lips. Of his Roman torturers.

Verse three. And in the denials. Of his Jewish antagonists. Do you see it? In verse 12. And again. Later. In Pilate's verdict. In verse 14.

And in the written notice. Nailed above his head. On the cross. Verses 19 through 21. Actually seven times over. Jesus is named.

In John 19. King of the Jews. Suppose if you were. Doing a Google search. Or using Bible software. Or doing. Some work. And doing a search. For the subject of. Messianic kingship. In the Bible. It might flag.

[45 : 13] John 19. As a chapter. Especially full of references. To the kingship. Of Jesus Christ. But we wouldn't. Normally. Turn here. Not instinctively.

At least. If you want to learn. About the kingship of Jesus. You wouldn't go here. You would go. To places like. Philippians 2. 10 and 11. God has highly.

Exalted him. And given him. The name. That is above every name. That at the name of Jesus.

Every knee should bow. In heaven. And on earth. And under the earth. And every tongue. Should confess.

That Jesus Christ. Is Lord. To the glory of God. The father. That's talking to us. About Christ's kingship. His reign. His lordship. Or you might. Turn to Revelation 19. 11 through 14.

Then I saw heaven opened. And behold. A white horse. And one sitting on it. Called faithful and true. And in righteousness. He judges. And makes war. His eyes are like a flame.

[46 : 06] Of fire. And on his head. Are many diadems. And he has a name. Written on it. That no one knows. But himself. He is clothed. In a white robe. Dipped in blood. And the name. By which he is called.

Is the word of God. And the armies of heaven. Arrayed in fine linen. White and pure. Were following him. Now that's a king. That's a king. Mighty and triumphant.

And conquering. But this wretched figure. In John 19. His back. Lacerated.

By the Roman lash. His hair. Matted. In blood. His face. Red. Because of the long thorns.

Pushed into his scalp. This. Pathetic spectacle. Hanging between two thieves. Naked. In agony.

[47 : 08] The butt of ridicule. An object of universal scorn. That's not much of a king. King. But whatever.

Appearances. Might suggest. To the contrary. You know. This is precisely. The kind of king. This is the kind of king. That we really need.

And friends. His present. Glorious reign. On the throne of heaven. And his final. Triumphant. And. Victorious. Return. At the end. Of the ages. To judge us all.

They both rest. Actually. On this foundation. That the king. Died. The ignominious. Death of the cross.

So that sinners. Might live. He was plunged. Into the. Appearance. Of utter. Defeat. So that in his. [48 : 09] Destruction. The kingdom of darkness. Might be overthrown. He was. Immolated. And torn. That by his. Wounds. We might be healed.

He's. Not a tyrant. He's not a despot. He's not a dictator. He's not another. Political operator. Running for high office. He is a king. Who reigns. From a cross. Who builds. His kingdom. By his blood. Redeeming. For himself. A people. From every tribe. And language. And nation. He's a servant. King. The son of man. Who keep. Came to seek. And save. The lost. Who came. Not to be served. But to serve.

And give his life. A ransom. For many. It's because he's a king. Like this. That God. Therefore. Highly exalts him. Because he humbles himself. [49 : 06] Becoming obedient. Even unto death. That he is highly exalted. Because he loves. Like this. Suffers and dies. Like this. For us.

And for our salvation. That every knee. Will one day bow. And every tongue. Confess him. Lord. And yet. How like these soldiers. We really are. Truth be told. Aren't we. More impressed. By raw displays. Of human power. Than we are. With the man. Upon the tree. If we were picking. A king. Out of a lineup. We wouldn't pick him. We are. Glued. To our screen. At the rise. And fall. Of prime ministers. And presidents. We worry. And fret. As missiles. Fall from the sky. In the Middle East. We look. Anxiously. [50 : 02] To the great. And the good. To secure peace. Establish prosperity. And heal our world. But the crucified king.

Whose kingdom. Is not of this world. And whose subjects. Belong to every nation. And of the increase. Of whose government. And of peace. There shall be no end. Well. If he claims. Our attention. At all. Isn't it often. The case. That he only really gets. The dregs of our time. And the leftover. Of our lives. But look again. Would you at the crucified Messiah? Look at him. Who wouldn't bend their knee. To someone. To a king like this. Who loves his own. And having loved them. John says. He loved them to the end. He loved them all the way to. This extremity. [51 : 00] Of suffering. And sacrifice. Here is the master. Who stoops down. To wash his disciples feet. Here's the Lord of glory.

Who publicly degraded. And shamed. Seeks. The forgiveness. Of the soldiers. Who hammered the nails. Into place. Through his own flesh. Our king. Reigning. Right now. Today. At the father's right hand. Is a king. Who was mistreated. And dehumanized. And agonized. So that now. The one who rules. Over all. Is able to sympathize. With us. In our weakness. In our agony. In our pain. In our loss. Joseph Hart. What a wonderful hymn. Come ye sinners. And it sings.

[51 : 56] Jesus ready. Stands to save you. Full of pity. Joined with power. He is able. He is able. He is willing. Doubt no more. Full of pity. Joined with power. That's the kind of king. Who is revealed here. At the cross. There is a king. But a king like no other. Who reigns. Having secured. Redemption. At the great cost. Of his own life. Cruelty unmasked. Kingship revealed. Thirdly. There's a covering. Provided. Here. Come with me. For a moment. Would you. To Golgotha. Listen to the jeers. And the cat calls. Of the crowd. As they fill the air. Jesus. Staggers. Now. Into view. Bleeding. Exhausted. The other gospels.

[52 : 53] Tell us. Simon of Cyrene. Had been forced. To carry Jesus cross. Behind the two. Weak Christ. As they made their way. To the place of execution. And now they've arrived.

And Simon is relieved. Of his burden. The cross is thrown down. Jesus is stripped naked. And he's thrown down upon it. Quickly now. And with precision. And efficiency.

Someone from the Roman death squad. Wields the mallet. And with a few. Practiced blows. He punches the nails. Through. Our saviour's flesh.

Unmoved. By the agony. He can see. He has caused. Before he moves on. To do the same. For the other two. Prisoners. Who are being executed. Beside Jesus.

Our Lord's body. Now secured. They hoist. The cross upright. And with a dislocating. Jolt. They drop it. Into its stand. Their principal business.

[53 : 49] Now concluded. They leave the crowds. To enjoy the spectacle. After all these hardened soldiers. Have been there. Done that. They've seen it a thousand times.

Before. And to their spiritually blind eyes. There was nothing at all. Unusual. About the crucifixion. Of three more. Jewish men. And so to relieve their boredom.

While they wait for their. Latest victims. Finally to expire. They find a convenient spot. And they start to roll the dice. Gambling for Jesus garments.

In verse 24. You'll notice. John inserts a comment. He quotes. The passage we read. Earlier. From Psalm 22. At verse 18.

This was to fulfill the scripture. Which says. They divided my garments among them. And for my clothing. They cast lots. Now I think we're right. To be appalled. At the banality.

[54 : 49] Of this scene. Murderers. Playing a game of chance. To see who wins. The dying victim. Hanging behind them. To win his clothes.

But let's not allow the horror of the scene. To blind us. To the powerful picture of the gospel. That Jesus nakedness. Here on the cross.

Provides for us. You remember. I'm sure. The nakedness and shame. Of our first father. Adam. In Eden. When.

Adam sinned. His eyes were opened. You remember. And he hid from God. He said. Because he was naked. And he was ashamed. In other words. His sin.

Had made of his nakedness. A mark. An emblem. Of his shame. His guilt. In the sight of God.

Exposed now. Under the scrutiny. And judgment of God.

[55 : 46] But then. In Genesis 3. 21. We're told. The Lord God. Made for Adam. And for his wife. Garments of skins. And clothed them. That's.

The first reference. To animal death. In the Bible. God. Sacrificed animals. To provide a covering. For the shame. Of our first parents. The whole scene.

Is a hint. An indication. Of God's great purpose. And design. Right from the very start. To cover. Our sin. By the death. Of a substitute.

One that he was going to provide. Now we know. I'm sure. In the words of Hebrews 10. For. That the blood of bulls and goats. Can never take away sin. But the covering God made for Adam.

And Eve. And all the bloody sacrifices. Down through all the years. Of the Old Testament. That followed upon that occasion. All pointed to. To this moment.

[56 : 45] That we're reading about right here. Here in John. 19. 24. When the second Adam. Who knew no sin. Was made sin for us.

That we might become. The righteousness of God. In him. Like Adam in the garden. Long ago. Jesus. Nakedness. At the cross. Was an emblem.

Of his liability. To the wrath. And curse of God. That was rolling. Down. Upon him. Body. And soul. Although in this case.

He endured it. Not for himself. But for us. He was unclothed. That we might be clothed. His nakedness was exposed.

That we might be covered. He was laid bare. To the curse. Of divine judgment. That I deserve. And you deserve.

[57 : 42] So that our sin. Might be hidden. Beneath Jesus. Blood and righteousness. Forever. The roll of the dice.

That day. At the foot of the cross. Fulfilling the scriptures. Is meant to teach us. Not just that God is sovereign. Even over the apparent randomness.

Of a gambler's throw. Bringing to pass his holy purposes. Long promised in Psalm 22. That is gloriously true. Of course it is. But much more than that.

That is happening here. This moment is meant to teach us. What that sovereign purpose. Promised long ago. In Psalm 22. Principally aimed.

To achieve. God. Purposed. To provide garments. For us. To clothe.

I've got rest for you. Come and be welcome. Come right now. Right now. Come. There's nothing to be done to find in Jesus a hiding place and a refuge except to believe.

Just believe. Trust me, he says to you. Right now, today, there's nothing else to do but to rest all your weight on him.

You can do that. Do it now. Mark 15, 39 tells us the centurion, probably the officer in charge of the execution squad, declared at the moment of Jesus' death when he cried, it is finished and breathed his last.

[65 : 43] The centurion declared, truly, this man was the son of God. That's what you have to do. That's what you have to do. Like the centurion presiding over the crucifixion, you need to change your mind about Jesus.

Jesus. He must no longer be the object of scorn or indifference or fear. He must become, today, the object of your trust.

Is he the object of your trust? Confess him, Lord. Believe. Whoever believes in his heart that Jesus is Lord and professes his lordship with his lips, Paul says, will be saved.

That's the promise. It is so simple. And you can rest all your weight on it. May the Lord enable us to do exactly that.

Let's pray. Our God and Father, your word exposes our sin, shows us that we are not the righteous, not the righteous, but sinners.

[66 : 54] How we bless you that it is not the righteous not the righteous, but sinners that Jesus came to call. We thank you that he died the just for the unjust to bring us to God.

And he calls us now to come to him and take from his nail-pierced hands the rest he obeyed he obeyed and bled and died to secure.

Some of us have been walking with Christ for years, decades, but we come at his summons once more to rest on him. All our hope, all our confidence on him.

Some of us have never. we've kept him at arm's length, we've played with our religion, we've toyed with our morality, but we've never surrendered and come.

O God, by your spirit's mighty work, grant that now, tonight, today, here, we, all of us, every one of us might come to rest on Christ and have all our sin covered forever beneath the robe of his perfect righteousness.

[68 : 23] For we ask it in his holy name. amen. We conclude our service by singing to God's praise, mission praise number 987, Here is love vast as the ocean.

Here is love vast as the ocean. Here is love vast as the ocean.

Loving kindness as the flood. When the grace of life are ransomed, shed for us his precious blood, who is God will not remember, who can cease to sing his praise.

he can never be forgotten through a dense eternal gaze.

All the light of crucifixion parted open deep and wide, through the floodgates of God's mercy, oh, now, vast and gracious died.

[69 : 54] Grace and love like mighty rivers, born in sense and from above, and there's peace and perfect justice, kiss the guilty world in love.

In your truth you do directly, by your spirit through your word, and your grace my need is meeting, as I trust in you, my Lord.

All your fullness you are pouring, you bring love and power on me, without measure, full and boundless, drawing out my heart to thee.

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