

9.3.25 Communion Sunday Evening Service: THE CONSEQUENCE OF THE CROSS

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Date: 09 March 2025

Preacher: Reverend Iain Macritchie

[0 : 00] Good evening, a warm welcome to the service this evening and again a special welcome to those who are here from different areas. It's good to see some from different areas and there's tea in there's coffee after the service.

There's a time of fellowship this evening where we've got refreshments and also we're looking forward to hearing a little more from Ian. I'll ask him a few questions and then after he's preached and asked a few questions eventually you'll be able to take a breath and relax.

Just on behalf of all of you I'd like to thank Ian for the ministry over this weekend. He's been a friend of the congregation for a long time and we very much enjoyed being under his preaching over this weekend.

So thank you Ian for being with us. Reminder also that there is a retiring collection and that is for the work of Slavic Gospel Association in Ukraine.

If you're able to give to that there's the opportunity to do so. And just a final thanks as well to those who've given time and food for the fellowship tonight and for various portions that came into the manse over the last few days as well.

[1 : 12] My jacket doesn't fit me at the best of times and it's definitely uncomfortable tonight. So thank you for your generosity over the weekend and I'll hand over to Ian again. Thank you.

Good evening friends. It's good to be with you this evening and thank you for your warm welcome over this weekend. It's been a real delight and a privilege to be with you. And once again of course the head of hospitality is unsurpassed.

It's really great to be with you as old friends. And we pray that we'll know God's blessing over the days gone by and also this evening as we come to worship him. We're going to do so singing to his praise from Psalm 40.

This is in Gaelic, Psalm 40. I'll read it in English. I waited for the Lord my God and patiently did bear.

At length to me he did incline my voice and cry to hear. He took me from a fearful pit and from the miry clay. And on a rock he set my feet, establishing my way.

[2 : 19] He put a new song in my mouth, our God to magnify. Many shall see it and shall fear. And on the Lord rely. We'll sing these three verses now to God's praise.

I waited for the Lord my God. Amen. Amen.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[4 : 14] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[6 : 44] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Let's join to unite our hearts in prayer. Let's pray.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

[9 : 14] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

[13 : 22] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. And forgive us. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[16 : 37] Think you know what came to save.

Till on that cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied.

For every sin on him was laid. Here in the death of Christ I live.

In the ground his body lay, light of the world by darkness slain.

Then worshiped forth in glorious day, up from the grave he rose again.

[18 : 04] And as he stands in victory, since precious God sits grip on me, for I am his and he is mine, bought with the precious blood of Christ.

God is mine. No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the power of Christ in me.

From life's first cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny. need, no power of hell, no scheme of man, can ever burn me from his hand, till he returns or calls me home, here in the power of Christ I stand.

God's stand. Well friends, let's turn now to read God's word from the gospel of Matthew chapter 28.

That's the last chapter in Matthew's gospel, Matthew 28. We'll read the whole chapter together.

[19 : 41] Let's hear the word of God. Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow.

And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the woman, Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.

He is not here, for he has risen as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead.

And behold, he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him. See, I have told you. So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy and ran to tell his disciples.

[21 : 01] And behold, Jesus met with them and said greetings. And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, Do not be afraid.

Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me. While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place.

And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said, Tell people his disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.

And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble. So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him. But some doubted.

[22 : 07] And Jesus came and said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

And behold, I am with you always. Amen. We pray that God would bless to us this reading of his own holy, inspired and inerrant word.

Before we come back to that chapter together, we're going to sing once more this time from Psalm 130. Lord, from the depths to thee I cried, my voice Lord, do thou hear, and to my supplications voice, give an attentive ear.

We're going to stand to sing, if you're able, the whole psalm to God's praise. Lord, from the depths to thee I cried. Lord, from the depths to thee I cry, my voice, Lord, do thou hear, unto my supplications voice, give an attentive ear.

Lord, who shall stand with the whole Lord, should mark iniquity, but yet with thee forgiveness is that fear thou mayest be.

[24 : 24] I wait for God my soul that wait, my hope is in his word, for I am in that for morning watch, my soul waits for the Lord.

night In mercies be, A twenty-year redemption Is ever found with him, And from all his iniquities

Israel shall redeem. Amen.

Do not be afraid, For I know that you seek Jesus Who was crucified. He is not here, For he has risen as he said.

He has risen as he said. At a time of communion, We can often think that perhaps The most important focus for us Is the cross, And so it is, In many ways.

[27 : 12] But the reality is that the cross Is not the whole story. Because the cross, Without the cave, Would mean that the gospel Would be null and void.

The cross without the empty tomb, Would mean that for all of us here tonight, We would have no hope. And so really what we have in these words Is perhaps one of the most significant Narratives in the whole of Scripture.

The reality is that Should the whole Bible be here, And yet these words be missing, It would be no use to us. We might as well close it And go home.

Because what we have here, Friends, tonight, Is something that's completely unique To the Christian faith. Many other world religions, They believe in the immortality of the soul, Yet few of any believe That the body that we have now, The body that you are in tonight, Is the same body That we will have in the world to come.

Yet the resurrection of Jesus Christ, It begs to differ. For those of you who are here For the first time tonight, On Friday evening, We thought about the cause of the cross.

[28 : 36] The cause of the cross being sin. On Saturday evening, We saw the call to the cross. A call that had within it Mockery that was mixed with majesty.

This morning, We focused in on more of that majesty As we thought about the curtain And the cross. And tonight, As we consider the text before us, Friends, We're going to conclude our communion weekend By considering the consequence Of the cross.

The consequence of the cross As we see it here In the resurrection Of Jesus Christ. The reality of the fact That tonight, We don't worship a God That is dead, But one who is very much alive, Having ascended up on high.

C.H. Spurgeon said that To take away, If we take away the resurrection, What remains of the gospel? The resurrection of Christ, And the consequent resurrection Of his people, Is the keystone of the arch Of the Christian system.

And if that be removed as a myth, The whole building falls. So if we take that stone Of the resurrection away, Our whole faith, It crumbles to nothing.

[29 : 57] So that's why tonight, It's important. It's important for us To be mindful of the fact That the resurrection Is central to our identity In Christ.

But yet it's something That mankind has struggled with. Mankind, For all of time, Has found it difficult To come to grips With this thought.

Even in biblical times, The notion of the resurrection From the dead, It's something that's seen A pushback, Resistance. We see that in Acts 17.

We see that sceptical attitude Of the Greeks Towards the resurrection Of the dead. In that chapter, We read of their reaction As they hear Paul Preach this glorious truth.

Now when they heard Of the resurrection Of the dead, Some mocked. We see the mockery again. And the reason for this Was that being imbibed In the philosophy of the day, The Greek philosophy of the day, They considered really That the body that they were in Was just a shell.

[31 : 06] And that when we die, The shell is got rid of. It's a temporary shell That's not to be coveted For any more time Than we have here In this earth.

And so really the thought, The very thought For this shell, This shell, This body, And for soul To be reunited, For the body To be revived.

It's a notion That they themselves Would have scoffed at. Perhaps to be expected For those who didn't know Jesus. But what we don't expect Maybe is What we see before us In the narrative tonight.

Where we see Two of the closest Of the followers Of the followers Of Jesus Who themselves Struggle with believing In the possibility Of the resurrection Of the dead.

Let's look at verse 1 together. Now after the Sabbath Toward the dawn Of the first day Of the week Mary Magdalene And the other Mary Went to see The tomb.

[32 : 14] We know that From other accounts These women They come with A desire in their hearts A longing in their hearts They've loved Jesus They've followed Jesus They've been with him Through thick And through thin And now here As a gesture Of love And of kindness And of sincerity They want To anoint his body Yet a gesture That in reality Was misplaced They had As I said Been with Jesus Time and time again They'd heard his teaching They knew the fact That Jesus was to die That he would rise again On the third day They'd heard it What was the point Otherwise Of them following this man?

Yes He was a great teacher And healer Yes He was one That they had come To deeply love Yet If he was now one Who was permanently Dead in the grave The stark reality Was that Jesus Wasn't who he said He was That he simply Wasn't God And so standing Aback As we look On this gesture This act of kindness We see that it's Misplaced It's misguided It's founded Upon misunderstandings And yet these women Along with the disciples They couldn't Grasp this reality They seem at this point To be bound Only to the physical Realities of what Has taken place Why was this?

Well maybe We don't know this But this is speculation But maybe They had Inadvertently Adopted the spirit Of the age The spirit of the day The Jewish tradition And that tradition Believed that The spirit of A dead person Wouldn't leave The body Straight away It would only be Four days After the person Had died That their spirit Would then leave After four days It was believed That because the body Had began to decay The spirit Couldn't recognise The body That it dwelt in Any longer And so it left That's what they believed And it could be We don't know That as we find here That the two Marys Coming to the grave Of Jesus In order to Anoint his body With spices It could be That they're doing So one more time Just before His spirit departed We don't know But what we do know Is that they expect To see his body

There And so here they are Coming to the tomb But it's not as Straightforward as that Because in verse 2 We see that Behold There was a great Earthquake There was a great Earthquake Now throughout Scripture friends We see do we not Earthquakes Time and time again Taking place Really at crucial points In redemption history You'll remember On Mount Sinai That the Lord Caused an earthquake Just before he revealed That law to Moses Exodus 19 God then sent A further earthquake On Mount Horeb When he revealed himself To Elijah 1 Kings 19 As well as this We also see Earthquakes being referred To in Matthew And Revelation As a sign Of the end times That the Lord Is soon To return And so Supernaturally Occurring earthquakes They serve

To highlight The events Of the Utmost Importance With the scene Before us here Tonight Being no Different An event That's so great That heaven Itself Comes down What do we see?

[36 : 03] We see that An angel of the Lord Descended From heaven And came And rolled back The stone And sat on it His countenance Was like lightning And his clothing As white As snow Once again We see An angel Attending To Jesus We've seen this At various points Of his life At his birth In his temptation In his agony In the garden Time and time again There's an angel There sent From heaven To strengthen Although not On the cross And that's interesting When the father Forsooked the son The angel Withdraws From him But now it's different It's different Because the angels They now resume Their role They display The very countenance Of something Of the glory Of heaven As that light Shines around them And I say Angels

Because there are Two angels We read of that In the other accounts Of this same event In John 20 We see that There's one angel At the head The other angel At the feet And what does that Remind you of Friends A scene that we've seen Even this weekend As we spoke Of the Ark Of the Covenant We thought about The two angels On the Ark Of the Covenant On the mercy seat There peering In to that law That's covered By that mercy seat And of course Christ is Our mercy seat We see these Two angels At either end Of the tomb Of the one Who by his Sacrificial act Of love Had become That eternal Mercy seat For you And for me A death That covered The law That we Could never Hope to fulfill And so we read Of this angel Rolling back The stone Of the tomb

Now This is interesting Especially for our Young friends Sometimes when we Hear of the story Of the tomb At Easter The stone being Rolled away From the tomb We think that's To let Jesus out Why was the stone Rolled away To let Jesus Out But that's not Why the stone Was rolled away Friends Not to let Jesus out Because in the Glorified body Of Jesus He didn't need To be let out Through any Physical exit So why was the stone Rolled away From the tomb Quite simply To let you And me In So that we can See that it's Empty To communicate That most powerful Of messages To communicate The consequence Of the cross The good news Of the gospel That death Has been Defeated

And of course As we come to Verse 4 We see that not Everyone sees This as good news We see in Verse 4 That for fear Of him The guards Trembled And became Like dead men These were the men Who had been given The one task To ensure that No one would come And try and steal The remains of Jesus To make it look As if he had been Resurrected They were scared That that would happen So that Even the religious Leaders of the day Who didn't believe In Jesus They knew something About this And so They set The guard At the tomb At the mouth Of the tomb To protect The remains And so When this rolling Of the stone Takes place We see that for these men This is not a moment Of joy Or of triumph But of fear Of dread

We read that they Shake violently It's almost It's almost as if Their own Whole bodies Are subject To an earthquake Themselves And then They become Like dead men A really vivid picture Paralyzed With fear You know what it's like When you're Frozen With fear You can't move And of course This stands to reason Because Those who've been Involved With this whole affair Whether it Be the lashing And whipping Of Jesus Within an inch Of his life Those who mockingly Called him To the cross Cruelly Nailing him there So that he would die That slow And painful death Or even these men Who are Who are guarding The tomb It stands to reason That they are Wilting And I think we talked About this another night That they are wilting In the presence Of light That's what light does For those who are In darkness

[41 : 05] It offends Maybe you remember A time being in church And the minister's Preaching And you're offended By what's being said Because The light has been Shown into your heart And as an unrepentant heart Maybe someone Who doesn't know Jesus As the light is Shining into that heart You react It's almost Hurting you in a way That you You push it You resist it And that's what we see This This Paralyzed With fear I wonder if there's Anyone here tonight That's paralyzed With fear With the light Of the gospel Friends you needn't be This is a light That will change Your life If only You will let it in But what about These women Well They've been so sincere Yet They've lacked Understanding But just listen to how

The angel addresses them In verse 5 Verse 5 But the angel said To the woman Do not be afraid For I know You seek Jesus Who was crucified He is not here For he has risen As he said Do you notice Friends The gentle rebuke There The way that Jesus Makes The way the angel Rather Makes His point He is not here For he has risen As He Said None of what Is happening here Should be catching you Off guard You should have Known about this You were told About this Jesus Made this Clear to you And we see that In Mark 8 31 He began To teach them That the son of man Must suffer many things And be rejected

By the elders And the chief priests And the scribes And be killed And after three days Rise Again Before we're Too harsh On the The lack of insight Shown here I suppose We We need to Pause And really Apply what we're Seeing here To ourselves Friends This is Important This chapter Is crucial To who we are As Christians And as we Pause and reflect We I include myself In this We neglect Do we not To reflect On the Consequence Of the cross The implications Of the resurrection For us What do I mean By that Well let's Think about The words Of Paul In 1st Corinthians 15 At verse 20 he Says this But in fact Christ has Been raised From the dead The first Fruits of Those who Have fallen Asleep For as By a man Came death

By a man Came also The resurrection Of the dead For as In Adam All die So in Christ Shall all Be made Alive But each In his own Order Christ the First fruits Then it is Coming Those Who belong To Christ In other words If we're Christ Tonight Yes Assure as anything Unless we're here When Christ returns Assure as anything There will be people Standing at your Graveside Mourning your death They will be At that place Where you are Laid To rest But yet That's not the End of the Story Because Christ Rising from From the grave For the Cave From the cave In this This glorified Body of his Is the first Fruits It's a wonderful Phrase The first Fruits The first Fruits Which tells us

That afterwards There's going to be A vast Harvest And that vast Harvest Is going to be You and me Tonight If we're Christ's When every Single soul That has died Will be united With their body A body that Will be perfected Never To part Again The confession Puts it like this The Westminster Confession The bodies of men After death Return to dust And see Corruption But their souls Which neither Die nor sleep Having an Immortal Subsistence Immediately Returned to God Who gave Them The souls Of the Righteous Being then Made perfect In holiness Are received Into the Highest heavens Where they Behold the Face of God In light And glory Waiting For the Full Redemption Of their bodies That's what's Happening just now The souls In heaven Are waiting

[46 : 09] Waiting For the Redemption Of their Bodies And it's not Just the Souls in Heaven It's even Creation Itself Creation Scripture's so Vivid in this Creation Is groaning Like a child With birth Pains Waiting To be Redeemed Waiting For that Curse To be Removed At the Last day Such as Are found Alive Shall not Die But be Changed And all The dead Shall be Raised Up With the Self Same Bodies The same Body That we Have now And none Other Although with Different Qualities Perfected Qualities Which shall Be united Again To their Souls Forever Friends This is Important As to Who We Are Tonight In reality It's a Difference Between A dead Cold Formal Religion That's What we

Have If we Don't Have This Hope If this Hope Doesn't Feature In who We Are As the Church It's All Formality It's All Cold And Dead Because It only Speaks Of Time And Not Of Eternity It's The Difference Between That Kind Of Religion That Is Bound To This World To That Of A Vibrant Dynamic Resurrection Religion That Is Founded On A Living Relationship With A Living God■■■■■ Speaking of the resurrection, a new chapter in cosmic history has opened.

And that should be an encouragement to us tonight. I'm sure there are those in here who are struggling with life. Those who don't know what next week is going to have in their experience, maybe with your own health, the health of a loved one, maybe waiting for a diagnosis, maybe you're struggling financially, maybe there are difficulties in your family, I don't know.

You might have all kinds of struggles. But imagine this was all you had. Just this life, just this world, nothing else to look forward to.

D.A. Carson says something that, on a first reading can sound insensitive. But when you really think about it, it's a message that's so full of hope.

[49 : 13] And he says this, it's not to dumb down what people are suffering, but he says this, he says, you are not suffering anything that a good resurrection cannot fix.

You are not suffering anything that a good resurrection cannot fix. Is that to make your suffering small? Far from it. Jesus knows the feeling of our infirmities.

He knows what it's like to suffer. But the point is this, that this is an encouragement for you in your suffering. That it is only for a time.

It is only for a season. And in fact, it's a token that you are the Lord, that you're sharing in the fellowship of his sufferings. He says to us, as his church, he says, in this world, you will have tribulation.

Not that you might, you will. Whatever that tribulation looks like in your life is different from one person to the next. My tribulation is not yours.

[50 : 15] Yours is not the person next to you. We all have our cross to bear, whatever that is. You will have tribulation, but fear not, for I have overcome the world.

And that's what we see here. We see that he has overcome the curse of death itself. And so these words of D.A. Carson, that you're not suffering from anything, that a good resurrection cannot fix, they're not insensitive.

They're biblical. They're biblical because they're based really on the words of 1 Corinthians 15. Verse 51. Paul says here, Behold, I tell you a mystery.

We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. That's the way the Bible speaks about the death of the Christian. It's a lovely picture. A sleep.

A sleep in Christ. That picture of being woken up again. We shall not all sleep because some of us might be here when Christ returns. We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

[51 : 37] For this, and this is really bringing us into our sufferings, especially physical, spiritual, mental sufferings, for this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.

When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law, but thanks be to God who gives us the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ.

So that tonight, we are more than conquerors through Christ. And so you begin to see, friends, just reminded, we all need reminded, of the encouragement of the resurrection.

A victory that is ours because Jesus is alive. But I wonder, friend, on this Resurrection Sunday, remember every Lord's Day is a Resurrection Sunday, it's not just Easter Sunday, every Lord's Day is a Resurrection Sunday, on this Resurrection Sunday, do you have this Resurrection hope?

[53 : 06] Do you have that hope? All he asks you to do, friends, is to believe. It sounds so simple, but I know that for many of us, we struggle.

Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. And really believing is simply taking God at his word. That's what it is, that all that he's told us in his Bible, in his word, in the Bible, we put out amen to.

We say, yes, I believe it. I might not understand it, I believe it. I believe that you died for me. I believe that I'm a sinner. I believe that I need redemption.

I believe. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe that you are the only way of salvation.

Believing not in a Jesus who died, but in a Jesus who died and rose again. Believing in a Jesus who is as alive today as he ever was, so that by believing in him, you too might be alive in Christ.

[54 : 20] What does the hymn writer say? I'll close with these words. He says, God sent his son. They called him Jesus.

He came to love, to heal and forgive. He lived and died, to buy my pardon. An empty grave is there, to prove my Saviour lives.

And then one day, this is going to be all of our experience, we can put it as far away from ourselves as we like. And then one day, maybe tomorrow, maybe tonight, I'll cross the river.

I'll fight life's final war with pain. And then as death gives way to victory, I'll see the lights of glory.

And I'll know he reigns. Because he lives, I can face tomorrow. Because he lives, all fear is gone.

[55 : 18] It doesn't say all suffering is gone. All fear is gone. Because I know he holds the future, and life is worth the living, just because he lives.

Friends, that we would all know afresh, or for the first time this evening, the wonder of life being worth the living, or even, or should I say, and even, death being worth the dying.

why? Just because he lives. Let's pray. we thank you, Lord, for that amazing grace that is ours in Christ.

A grace that enables us from the depth of our being this evening to cry out, Hallelujah! What Christ, a Savior, a Savior. We pray, O Lord, that your Holy Spirit might truly be pleased to impress upon the hearts of all gathered here and online as well their need of such a Savior.

That you would show them the way of salvation. That you would convict, convince, and convert. that you would place that prayer upon their lips this night anew.

[56 : 45] Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner. You have passed by once again in your gospel. Tomorrow is not promised for any of us.

And so we pray that tonight would be the night where we are, if we are yet to do so, would come to that glorious place whereby we can say, Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine.

Be with us in our final item of praise. We give thanks for those who have led us in all manner of ways in the congregation. We pray that you would be with us in the fellowship and bless the food we're about to enjoy one with another there, seeking forgiveness for all our many sins.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Well, friends, we're going to conclude by singing that hymn, Because He Lives, I Can Face Tomorrow.

God sent His Son, they called Him Jesus. He came to love, heal, and forgive. He lived and died to buy my pardon. An empty grave is there to prove my Saviour lives.

[57 : 56] We're going to stand to sing to the praise of God. Amen. O God sent His Son, they called Him Jesus.

He came to love, heal, and forgive. He lived and died to buy my pardon.

An empty grave is there to prove my Saviour lives. Because He lives, I can face tomorrow.

because He lives, all fear is gone. Because I know, I know He holds the future, and life is worth the living just because He lives.

Hearts mean to hold a newborn baby, and feel the pride and joy He gives.

[59 : 26] But greater still, the calm assurance this child can face uncertain days.

Because He lives, because He lives, I can face tomorrow.

Because He lives, all fear is gone. Because I know, I know He holds the future, and life is worth the living just because He lives.

And then one day, I'll cross the river, I'll fight like Spinal War with faith, and then I'll stand His wagger victory.

I'll see the light of glory, and I know He lives. Because He lives, I can face tomorrow.

[60 : 54] Because He lives, all fear is gone. Because I know, I know He holds the future, and life is worth the living just because He lives.

Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, rest on and remain with you now, and forevermore.

Amen.