

11.11.24 am Remembrance Sunday Service

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Date: 10 November 2024

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0:00] Good morning. Good morning. Welcome to the service this morning. We're going to begin this time of worship, and we'll sing to God's praise. We'll sing from Psalm 46, Psalm 46, verses 1 to 1, verse 7.

God is our refuge and our strength. In straits of pleasant day, therefore, although the earth remain, we will not be afraid. Then at the end of verse 7, the Lord who posts upon our side doth constantly remain the God of Jacob, our refuge, us safely to maintain.

We'll stand to sing to God's praise. God is our refuge and our strength.

In straits of pleasant day, therefore, although the earth remains, we will not be afraid.

Though hell summits the seas, because the waters soaring may, I've troubled thee, I've troubled thee in all the hills, my swelling seas to shake, the river is through streams to guide, the city of our God, the holy place, when the Lord most high at its abode.

[2 : 20] God in the midst of her doth dwell, nothing shall her remove.

The Lord to her, and help her will, and thou try to remove.

[illegible]

The Lord of hosts upon our side doth constantly remain.

The Lord of chief of self-refuge hath saved me to maintain.

[4 : 03] Let's pray for a moment and then we'll read some passages from God's word as we approach eleven o'clock to observe the silence.

Lord God, we thank you for your word which we have sung that reminds us that you are a refuge in our strength. We thank you for your word which we will read and meditate upon. And we ask that you would open our hearts that we may receive it.

And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Jesus said in John 14 to his disciples when they were anxious and troubled, Jesus said, Peace I leave with you.

My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled. And do not be afraid.

Isaiah 40 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary and his understanding no one can fathom.

[5 : 23] He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary and young men stumble and fall.

But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary.

They will walk and not be faint. Isaiah 43 But now this is what the Lord says, He who created you, O Jacob, He who formed you, O Israel, Fear not, for I have redeemed you.

I have summoned you by name. You are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you. And when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned.

The flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. Romans 8 If God is for us, who can be against us?

[6 : 35] He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also along with him graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen?

It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns Christ Jesus? Who died more than that? Who was raised to life? Is at the right hand of God?

And is also interceding for us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble, or hardship, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

As it is written, for your sake we face death all day long. We are considered as sheep to be slaughtered. Knowing all these things, we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

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

[7 : 49] Can I ask those who are able now please to stand as we observe two minutes of silence. Amen. .

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

We will remember them. We will remember them. Please take a seat. Again, let's bow our heads and let's unite their hearts in prayer.

[10 : 34] Amen. We thank you, Lord, that you are our refuge, that you are our strength.

We thank you that we have security, that we receive peace even in trouble, even in distress when we come to you.

We thank you that you are our Father in heaven. We thank you, Lord, that we are our God who is sovereign, the God who is almighty.

And yet the God who is personal, the one who calls us to come to him. And we thank you, Father, for sending your son Jesus into this world.

And we thank you that he has opened up the way so that we can come in prayer, knowing that we will be received, even though we are sinners.

[11 : 34] And we thank you that we are our sinners. Jesus is the Savior of sinners. And as we come in his name, seeking forgiveness that is received through the cleansing of his blood on our hearts, we thank you that we are received.

We ask, Lord, that you would bless us and that you would bless us as we seek to worship you. We thank you that within this service of worship, we can pause and we can take time to remember those whom we have loved, those whom many of us can remember, those who laid down their lives.

So that we could have life, so that we could have peace, so that we could have liberty. We are conscious that all those who served in the First and Second World War have now passed from this community into eternity.

And we pray for those who grieve for them. And we pray for those who grieve for them. And as we remember them, we give thanks, Lord, to you for all that they sacrificed so that we can be in the comfort and peace that we enjoy here today.

So we ask, Lord, that you would be close to those who grieve. We pray for the loved ones of those who fell in service, those who were damaged physically, psychologically, in years of conflict.

[13 : 21] We pray for families today who still live with the anxiety of loved ones who serve in the armed forces in different places around this world.

We ask that they would know your peace. We pray for those who struggle today, those who have returned from tours of service and who battle with the anxiety, with the horrors that do not leave them, having gone from the fields of war back to a place of peace.

We remember them. And we ask that you would help them, many who struggle. And we pray for those whom you have called to be chaplains, paddies in the armed forces, those whom you have called to take the message of the gospel forward with.

We pray for those who meet with those in the forces who are much more conscious, perhaps, than we are of how fragile life is. And we ask that as they share the message of Christ, that hearts would be open and that souls would be saved.

We ask now, Lord, that you would continue with us in this service. We pray for our country. You have told us that we are to pray, not just today, but week by week, for those that you have allowed to be in authority over us.

[15 : 00] And so we pray for the prime minister. We pray for the king. We pray for all those who are in positions of authority in our nation. And we pray for those who are in positions of authority in other nations, too, as we see change in politics, as we see and feel much in the way of instability in the global sense.

We thank you that you are our God and that you are sovereign and that you are still on the throne. To help us to trust you, we pray. We ask now that you would go before us, take away our sin, and help us, we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Boys and girls, it's good to see you all. You've done very well being quiet. You want to come over here as usual? Thank you. How are you all doing today?

Good. You did very well being quiet for that time. Can I ask you a question this morning? Can you tell me, if you look around the church just now, and even look down at yourselves, can you tell me this morning, is there anything different to usual?

And I'll ask a phrase of this morning. Because we're wearing poppies. You're wearing poppies. Yeah, and as we look around, there's lots of different people who are wearing poppies.

[16 : 49] Maria said as she was coming in, I forgot my poppy this morning, but I'm a walking poppy. I've got a red coat and a black dress. So there's lots of people who are wearing poppies.

Do you know why we wear poppies? Finley? To remember the war. We wear poppies so that we will remember and we won't forget lots of different people, soldiers, who laid down their lives so that we could be safe.

Tell me this. Why do you think the poppies are red? Why do you think they're red?

Finley? The blood. The blood. It's a sad thing to remember, isn't it? But there were lots and lots of people in the wars and they died.

And so there was blood in the wars. And we remember so many people whose blood was shed and who died. And why did they do that?

[17 : 59] They did that to keep us safe, didn't they? Because they knew there was a threat. But why do you think they wanted to fight to keep the country safe?

For their families. And why did they want to do that for their families? What do you think they felt for their families? And their friends?

Well, they felt sad because it was a danger. So they went out to fight to keep them safe. And why did they want to keep them safe? It's a very simple answer. And you know what? It's because they loved their families.

And they loved their friends. They loved all these people who knew that they weren't safe. Now, listen to what Jesus said.

So Jesus is speaking to his disciples in John chapter 15. And Jesus said, Greater love has no one than this, that he laid down his life for his friends.

[19 : 08] And we're remembering today, boys, many people who laid down their lives for their friends and their family. Can you think of one more person who laid down his life so that we could be friends of God forever, so that we could be safe forever?

Emily? Jesus. And we often talk, don't we, about Jesus' blood. And Jesus went to the cross and his blood was shed.

And it says in the Bible that his blood can wash away our sin. because of all that Jesus did, we can be safe forever.

So let's remember Jesus. Let's trust Jesus. and let's pray now and speak to Jesus. Lord God, we thank you for this day and we thank you for the fact that we can remember so many people who laid down their lives so that we could be safe, who loved their country and their family and their friends so much that they were willing to go to danger so that they could be safe.

And we thank you above all for Jesus, the one who laid down his life, who went to the cross so that we could be saved from our sins and so that we could have life that was everlasting.

[20 : 37] Help us, we pray, to remember and to trust Jesus. And thank you, Father, for loving us enough to send him. And we ask all this in Jesus' name. Amen.

We're going to sing now and we're going to sing the words on the screen What Gift of Grace Is Jesus, My Redeemer? Amen.

Amen. There is no more for heaven, thou to give.

He is my joy, my righteousness, and freedom. I step past love, my deep and fabulous fear.

Jesus, O Lord, my heart is so lonely, Jesus, for my life is only up to live.

[21 : 50] O how strange can be right, I can sing, all is mine, yet not I, but through Christ in me.

Night is dark, but I am not forsaken, for by my side the Savior, he will stay.

I labor on in weakness and rejoicing, for in my need his power is displayed.

To this I hold, my shepherd will defend me, through the deepest valley will lead.

For the night has been gone, and I shall overcome, overcome, yet not I, but through Christ in me.

[22 : 54] Fate I dread, I know I am forgiven, for Jesus sure the price in past be paid.

For Jesus bled, I suffered for my pardon, and he was raised to overthrow the grave.

To this I hold, my sin has been defeated, Jesus, now, how dare my sin All the chains are released, I have seen, I have seen, I have seen, yet not I, but through Christ in me.

With every breath, I long to follow, Jesus, for he has said that he will bring me hope, And day by day I know he will renew me Until I stand with joy before the throne To this I hold, my hope is glory, Jesus All the glory evermore to him When the race is complete Still my lips shall repeat Yet not I but you rise to me Still my lips shall repeat Yet not I but you rise in me

Okay boys and girls if you head to Sunday school remember to pray for them as they go And if we could turn in our Bibles please to Matthew chapter 12 Matthew chapter 12 One notice just to highlight actually before we do so there was notices on the screen before the service I'll maybe take a moment to go through them in the evening but not just now but for those who might be out in the morning and not be back in the evening there's a congregational thanksgiving meal

[25 : 57] Saturday 16th November which is next Saturday I think at 6.30pm sign up sheet for food in the foyer and team one is on duty Matthew chapter 12 and we'll read from verse 15 down to verse 30 so we see in this chapter that there is conflict Jesus has been healing he's been preaching he's been doing amazing things and the Pharisees hate it and so they are plotting the death of Jesus and it says in Matthew chapter 12 verse 15 Jesus aware of this withdrew from there and many followed him and he healed them all and ordered them not to make him known this was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah behold my servant whom I have chosen my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased

I will put my spirit upon him and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles he will not quarrel or cry aloud nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets a bruised reed he will not break a smouldering wick he will not quench until he brings justice to victory and in his name the Gentiles will hope then a demon oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought to him and he healed him so that the man spoke and saw and all the people were amazed and said can this be the son of David but when the Pharisees heard it they said it is only by Beelzebul the prince of demons that this man casts out demons knowing their thoughts Jesus said to them every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste and no city or house divided against itself will stand and if Satan casts out Satan he is divided against himself how then will his kingdom stand and if

I cast out demons by Beelzebul by whom do your sons cast them out therefore they will be your judges but if it is by the spirit of God that I cast out demons then the kingdom of God has come upon you or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods unless he first binds the strong man then indeed he may plunder his house whoever is not with me is against me and whoever does not gather with me scatters Amen and may God bless that we do of his word to us we're going to sing again now to God's praise we'll sing the last two verses of Psalm 46 Psalm 46 verses 10 and 11 in Gaelic be still and know that I am God among the heathen I will be exalted

I on earth will be exalted high our God who is the Lord of hosts is still upon our side the God of Jacob our refuge forever will abide these two stanzas of Psalm 46!

NINGNINGNING .

[30 : 29] .

Oh, it goes the whole heat. Oh, it goes the whole heat.

Oh, it goes the whole heat.

Oh, it goes the whole heat. Oh, it goes the whole heat.

Oh, it goes the whole heat. Oh, it goes the whole heat.

[31 : 38] Oh, it goes the whole heat. Oh, it goes the whole heat.

Oh, it goes the whole heat. Oh, it goes the whole heat.

Oh, it goes the whole heat. Oh, it goes the whole heat.

Oh, it goes the whole heat.

Oh, it goes the whole heat.

[33 : 04] If you could turn back, please, with me to Matthew chapter 11. Matthew chapter 11.

Sorry, 12. We'll pray as we go there. Heavenly Father, we thank you for the words of the psalm that we've been saying. We thank you that you are the God of Jacob.

And you are still our God. And we think back to our studies in the evening. We think about Jacob and how far short he fell in so many different ways of how flawed he was, of how evident it was that he was a sinner.

And yet we thank you that you showed to him grace. We thank you that you still show us grace. We are sinners. We fall short. But we thank you that we can call you our God and our Savior if we are trusting in Christ.

So we ask, Lord, that you would enable us to be trusting in Jesus this morning. And we ask all this in Jesus' name and for Jesus' sake. Amen. We've been working through decent sized chunks of Matthew's gospel week by week.

[34 : 26] We've been taking maybe a chapter or half a chapter and stepping through the verses. What I'd like to do today is a bit of a surprise to me. I want to slow down.

I want to zoom in on half a verse, a statement that Jesus makes. I had a very different sermon prepared for this morning.

And sure, you're going to have to delete the headings that flashed up on the screen. Because the sermon that I had prepared kind of drifted away from me on Friday. And this word was kind of laid heavily upon my heart.

So we're zooming in on half a verse. It's verse 30. It's the word of God for today for us. Jesus says, whoever is not with me is against me.

Whoever is not with me is against me. So that's our text for today. It's the word of God specifically.

[35 : 32] This is the word of God the Son, Jesus. Jesus, we have a record of the words that he spoke.

He spoke them 2,000 years ago in a place that was far away from here. But this is a word that is for us. Every one of us here today.

So three points. The first point is that this is a word for whoever. The second point is that this is a word that was spoken in times of war.

And the last point is this is a word that is calling us to be with Jesus. So that's hopefully giving Stuart enough time to scribble.

This is a word for whoever. Whoever. This is a word spoken in times of war. And this is a word that calls us to be with Jesus.

[36 : 44] So first of all, it's a word for whoever. And that just takes us to the first word in the verse. In verse 30, Jesus says, whoever. In the older versions, I think it says he.

But when you drill down into the text, the he is not a masculine he. It's a he that encompasses everybody. So the better translation here is found in the ESV.

Whoever says Jesus is not against, is not with me. Is against me. Sometimes we can be listening to a person speak on an occasion, on an event somewhere.

But what they're saying, although we're hearing it, we know it's not specifically for us. So for example, you could go and watch the Commonwealth Games, the Olympic Games.

You can be sitting in an arena, in a stadium, watching athletics. And we hear the words through the PA system as this race is about to begin.

[37 : 53] On your marks, get set, go. But we're not going to jump down from the top tier of the stadium, make our way to the track, and start running. Because we recognize that the words that are being spoken, although we're hearing them, they're not for us.

They're for the athletes. Not for the spectators. But this word that Jesus speaks is a word for whoever.

It's not a narrow word. It's not an exclusive word for a select few. No, Jesus is speaking out to, as it says in verse 23, all the people.

He's speaking out to all the people back there and then. And Jesus is speaking to all the people here in this room today. He's speaking to all the people that might watch this.

Live or afterwards. We can't see them, but God can. We may not have known that we were going to be here this morning. But God knew.

[39 : 09] And so this word that Jesus spoke, he is still speaking to all the people here today.

So Jesus says to us, listen. Stop mapping out the next week. Stop drifting off into dreams of different kinds.

Jesus says, listen. This is for you. I want you to hear what I'm saying. And we should never lose that sense of wonder.

As we just pause for a moment. We should never lose that sense of wonder that the God of heaven and earth would choose to speak a word to you and to me.

Some minor league celebrity could walk along the streets of Harris and go and buy some tweed. And if they actually stopped some reality TV star and spoke to you, you'd be saying, I'm amazed they spoke to me.

[40 : 22] It's amazing that some minor league celebrity or some low league sports star might take a second and speak to us. But the God of heaven and earth has chosen to speak a word to you and to me.

And it's to every one of us. It's whoever. There's no one who's beyond the boundary of the word whoever.

So no matter who we are, no matter where we've come from, no matter what we've done, no matter what's in our past, no matter what we are engaged in in the present, no matter what we are plotting for the future, this word from Jesus is a word for whoever.

It's a word for you. So listen. Secondly, this is a word that was spoken in times of war. We've been looking back over these last few days.

We'll look again tomorrow and remember times of war. We've been remembering days where there was fierce conflict, where battles raged across nations.

[41 : 52] And during these times of war, when a prime minister or when a president or when a king spoke, because of the seriousness of the time, the words that they spoke carried great weight and they were listened to.

Now let's remember as we listen in to this word that this word is a word from Jesus. Jesus. And he is above every president, no matter what they may think.

He is above every prime minister. He is above every military commander. He is above every king. This is a word from Jesus. In our day, we have become accustomed to living in a culture that devalues, that drags down the name of Jesus.

We live in an age where we are continually seeking to demote the person of Jesus, to call him just another religious teacher or a philosopher or a good man.

But Jesus is not just a good man. He is the God-man. He is the king who is above all kings.

[43 : 18] He is the name above all names. He is the son of God. And he spoke this word, this text that we're looking at in times of war, times of spiritual war.

And we see that just if we look beyond the verse that we've zoomed in on, we can see that the context into which Jesus speaks was a context where there was conflict.

The Pharisees, for example, who are all over the page in this chapter, they were the most powerful men in that place at that time. And they were determinedly openly and diabolically against Jesus.

Verse 14 makes clear that the Pharisees went out and they conspired against Jesus how to destroy him. So they hate what he's doing, they hate what he's saying, they hate the attention that has been drawn towards Jesus and they are plotting to kill him.

So there's warfare going on here. And then if we think beyond the Pharisees and we think about not just the visible but the invisible, at this time as Jesus walked the earth, there was more demonic activity at that time than there ever had been before and there ever has been since.

[44 : 52] So we can step through the chapters and chapter by chapter we're reading accounts of demons railing against Jesus and being cast out. There's clashes continually between those who are demon possessed and Jesus.

There is an intense period of conflict which makes perfect sense because when God the Son comes into the world, then the kingdom of darkness comes under fire.

And so there's this intense period of spiritual warfare. It's a time of war. Jesus is speaking not in times of peace but in times of spiritual war.

And for those here who are Christians, sometimes I think we forget that we are still living in times of spiritual war.

until the day that Jesus returns, until the day that Satan is thrown into hell, this world will be a place of spiritual war.

[46 : 07] The apostle Paul knew that. He wrote in Ephesians chapter 6. In fact, just turn for a moment with me please in your Bibles to Ephesians chapter 6.

Ephesians chapter 6. God, through the apostle Paul, addresses the church in Ephesus, he addresses the church in Tarbert, Lord.

And he says to those who are in Christ, finally be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Paul is using war language here to remind the Christians then and now that we are in a war. Therefore, says the apostle Paul, take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

[47 : 30] Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

In all circumstances, take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one, and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit with all prayer and supplication.

today, we remember with great thanksgiving that we are living in times of peace for our nation.

We are enjoying living in a time of peace in our locality. Bombs are not dropping. The guns are falling silent.

but we need to remember, Christians, that we are still in times of spiritual warfare. So if we are not going to fall, if I am not going to fall, I need to be praying every day.

[48 : 44] we need to be putting on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the devil and his attacks.

So this is a word for whoever, point number one, this is a word for all of us, it's a personal word to you and to me. This is a word that was spoken in times of spiritual war, and because that war rages on, it's a word that still applies, it's a relevant word for today.

And finally, this is a word calling us to be with Jesus. This is a word that is calling us to be with Jesus.

When war breaks out, usually, it's between two nations. That's how it begins. But very often and very quickly, conflict escalates, it grows, and other nations get involved, and we end up having to choose which side we will be on.

Switzerland was the exception. nation. Switzerland was a nation that had a policy of remaining neutral. They would not pick a side in World War I or World War II.

[50 : 19] But Jesus says to us here in this verse, when it comes to the spiritual battle, there is no Switzerland. world war in this world.

Jesus says, and hear this, wake up to hear this, whoever is not with me is against me. So in this room this morning, there are some who are with Jesus, and there are some who are against Jesus.

these are the only two categories. And Jesus is saying to us, choose your side.

Choose your side. With Jesus, or against him. There's an Old Testament version of this in Joshua chapter 24 verse 15.

God speaking through Joshua, he says to all the people, choose this day whom you will serve. Can I ask everybody, Christians included, as we look in your lives, as the people who work with you look in your life, can they see whom you are serving?

[51 : 51] Is it evident? Is it obvious? From the way that you're living, from the way that I'm living, whom I am serving? Choose this day, whom you will serve.

Bob Dillon sang, I don't know, was it in the 70s, you've got to serve somebody, maybe the devil, it may be the Lord, but you've got to serve somebody, and you are serving somebody, so whom will you serve?

Asks Jesus. And there will be no conscientious objectors when it comes to this decision, this battle, there will be no neutral state, there's no third category, they're either for Jesus, or we're against him.

Hendrickson, the commentator, says, in the struggle between Christ and Satan, neutrality is impossible, you have to choose a side. And Jesus calls us to be with him, and that is a recurrent call.

The first call to the disciples, I've said it so often, was a call to be with him. If we rewind just a few verses to the end of Matthew chapter 11, we hear the call of Jesus that we spent considerable time on, and it was a call to come to him, to be with him.

[53 : 30] Jesus says, come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. And the whole of the gospel call, the whole of this book, the whole of the Bible, is a call to be with Jesus.

And Jesus is saying, if you're not with me, you're against me. So as we think about our response, as we come to a conclusion, why should you and I come to Jesus?

Why should we want to be with him? Well, there are many, many reasons. We could go on for a couple more hours on that answer, but I want to just give you three reasons, and then we're finished.

The first reason that we should come to Jesus, the first reason that we should want to be with Jesus is because he loves us. Because he loves us.

We want to be with people who are loving towards us. We want to be with people whom we know are loving, people that we know we can trust.

[54 : 51] And there is no one who loves us more than Jesus. There's no one whom we can trust more than Jesus. How do we know that Jesus loves us?

How do we know that we can trust him? Well, the children would tell us, the cross is where we see the extent of the love of Jesus for us.

We could have sung the hymn, here is love, vast as the ocean, loving kindness as the flood, when the prince of life, our ransom, shed for us his precious blood.

Who has love? We'll not remember. He loves us. Jesus came to this world.

He left glory. He left heaven. He left that place where he is enthroned. He comes to this world knowing that he would be despised and rejected.

[55 : 53] He comes to this world knowing that he would suffer, that he would die, that he would be nailed to a cross to take the punishment for our sin, and yet he still comes to this world.

That's how much we know he loves us. John 3, 16, you know it off by heart, for God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him, another wide word, whoever, whoever believes in him, should not perish, but have eternal life.

1 John 4, 10, and this is love, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his son to be the propitiation, the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

John 15, 13, we read it with the children, greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Why should you come to Jesus? Why should we want to be with Jesus? Because he loves us. He loves us enough to die for us. The second reason that we should want to come to Jesus, that we should want to be with him, is because he has won the war.

[57 : 27] he has won the war. Alistair Begg, in his reading notes on Friday, I think it was, said this, the war is over and victory is assured.

Battles may still go on, but they cannot affect the war's ultimate conclusion. Jesus has won the war.

war. Sometimes when we are Christians and we are going through the battles, we feel weary. Sometimes we feel like giving up, but we need to remember that if we are with Jesus, then the enemy of our souls, the one who attacks us, he is defeated at the cross.

Sin, death, hell, Satan, was defeated. There's no question about the outcome of this war.

It's won. The question is, which side are you going to fall in this war? Colossians chapter 2 and verse 13, the apostle Paul says, when you were dead in your sins, God made you alive with Christ.

[58 : 45] He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us, he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross, and having disarmed, listen to the language of war there, having disarmed the powers and authorities, having disarmed Satan, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

The war is won. Yes, the battles are still going on, but the war is won. We're going to sing in just a few moments.

Now the daylight flees, now the ground beneath, quakes as its maker bows his head, we've been taken to the cross, curtain torn in two, the dead are raised to life, finished, the victory cry, this, the power of the cross.

The battle was won at the cross. Oh, to see my name written in the wounds, for through your suffering I am free, death is crushed to death, life is mine to live, won through your selfless love, this, the power of the cross.

There's no question, no matter what it looks like in this world, no matter how much it feels like those who are Christians are just being battered down, there's no question about who wins the war between darkness and light, between death and life, between God and Satan.

[60 : 31] Satan is defeated. The light was not overcome. By the darkness, John 1.

Death has been crushed. Jesus has won the war at Calvary, and the resurrection proved it, and when Jesus returns, every eye will see that he has won the war, he will come back in triumph, and every knee will confess it, that he is Lord, triumphant, victorious, supreme Lord.

the question is, is he your Lord? He is the Lord, he is triumphant,!

He is triumphant, but is he your Lord? Is he your Savior? Are you with him? God, he is with him?

Why should we come to Jesus? Why should we want to be with Jesus? Because he loves us, because he has won the war, and finally, because to be without Jesus is to be without hope.

[61 : 59] hope. To be without Jesus is to be without hope. All of us have been given something that the scholars call free will, and that means that Jesus will not force us to come to him.

so you and I all, we have a decision we have to make. I've had tiresome conversations with some people about, well, if Jesus wants to make me a Christian, he'll make me a Christian.

No, no, he'll show you your sin, and he'll tell you that he is the Savior, and he'll call you to come, but you have to decide. You have been given the free will to determine whether you will come or whether you will not.

And if you determine not to come to Jesus, if we determine that we are not with him, then we are by default against him.

Alistair Begg in his notes this morning said, Satan is behind all sin, and before anyone is born again of the Spirit of God, they actually belong to his domain.

[63 : 33] That's what Jesus is saying. As much as we might not like it, as much as there may be people here this morning looking for a third state, looking for a third category, Jesus says there is no third category, there is no fence to sit on here, there is no man's land, whoever is not with me, says Jesus, is against me.

And if we are against Jesus, we are with the enemy of Jesus, we are with the devil. And if we are with the devil, we choose the losing side.

We use our free will to choose the losing side, will be eternal. We will be eternal.

What will happen to Satan? Ultimately, eventually, what will happen to Satan? Well, he will be cast, he will be cast into hell. Revelation 20 and verse 10 says, the devil was thrown into the lake of fire.

This is what John sees. This is what's going to happen. The devil was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night, forever and ever.

[65 : 03] A lake of fire is the picture. Torment, pain, suffering that never ends, that's the picture.

That's what will happen to Satan. And that's what will happen to everyone who chooses to be with him. And against Jesus.

To be without Jesus is to be without hope. But if we are with Jesus, Jesus promises that he will share his victory.

with all who are with him. And what does that victory look like ultimately? It looks like heaven.

It looks like a place, Revelation 21, where death shall be no more. Neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore.

[66 : 12] more. That's what it looks like eternally, to be with Jesus. Looks like heaven.

A place where it says in Revelation 23, God himself will be with them. whoever is not with me, is against me, says Jesus.

And Jesus is calling at least somebody, in truth, everybody, although everybody may not be hearing this.

Jesus is still calling us to come to him, to be with him. Why should we come to him?

Because he loves us. Because he has won the war, and because there is eternal hope, resurrection hope, if we are with him.

[67 : 33] We'll pray. Heavenly Father, we pray that you would take the word of God, the word that Jesus spoke, the word of the Holy Spirit, inspired Matthew to record, the word that comes to us, and the power of the Holy Spirit today.

We pray that you would take it and press it into each one of our hearts and minds and lives. We pray that you would help us all to see that we are either for Jesus or against Jesus, with him or without him.

And we ask that if there are those here who are without Jesus, those here who are by nature still against him, we pray that you would give the vision to see that, God, that you would give us the will that we would repent and that we would come to the one in whom there is eternal hope, the one who died and rose to save us.

And we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. We will sing to conclude and we will sing the words of Mission Praise 1217, which takes us to the cross, the power of the cross.

ChristNING sin for us took the blame o'er the wrath we stand forgiven at the cross

[70 : 04] O to see the pain written on your face bearing the awesome weight of sin every bitter thought every evil need running your blood stained by this the power of the cross Christ became sin for us took the blame o'er the wrath we stand forgiven of the cross love the day my peace love the ground beneath wish does this make her by this hand cut and torn in two tell your ways to lie finish the way we come this the power of the cross

Christ became sin for us took the blame o'er the wrath we stand for even after us the wrath of the cross the cross the the cross the cross the for through your suffering I am free death is crushed again life is mine to live walk yourself as long there's the power on the cross son of God sleep for us water love water cross we come forever now the cross and may the grace of our

Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forever more Amen