

# 3.11.24 am

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Date: 03 November 2024

Preacher: Duncan MacPherson

[ 0 : 0 0 ]     Good morning everybody. Privileged to be here again today and to be able to worship the Lord together.

A special welcome to any visitors who are here. And as usual we'll have a cup of tea and coffee at the end of the service just in the room here. So please do stay if you are able.

I'll just highlight a few things for people. Well, the service this evening at 6pm will be taken by Stuart King. So do remember Stuart in your prayers through the day.

And then at 7.30 tonight there's the last meeting of Hope for Life led by the Faith Mission down in Leverborough. So that's follow-up meetings, the summer tent mission that took place last year.

And that's in the Leverhulme Community Hub at 7.30. And there's also a special meeting of prayer organised by the Lords of the Observance Society up in Stornoway and Keith Street at 9pm tonight.

[ 1 : 0 3 ]     If you're interested in going to that. And next Sunday is Remembrance Sunday. So therefore the service will begin at the earlier time of 10.50.

So please make sure you're in before 10.50 next Sunday. That would be great. And I have an intimation to read regarding a congregational meeting which will take place this coming Wednesday, the 6th of November at 7.30pm.

At their meeting in September, the Kirk Session agreed that the number of elders should be increased by up to two. This would raise the number of elders in the congregation to 12. And the Kirk Session is proposing that the following two men are appointed to the office of elder, Mr. Stuart King and Mr. Richard Killer.

Both men preach within the congregation and other congregations within presbytery. And have been entered onto the list of approved preachers that is held by presbytery. And it's normally expected that those preaching in other congregations hold the office of elder.

The election and ordination of office bearers requires both the approval of the Kirk Session and of church members. One of the methods of election approved by the free church is that the Kirk Session may propose certain names to communicant membership at a congregational meeting for their approval.

[ 2 : 2 5 ]     And on securing the agreement of majority to proceed to the ordination. The Kirk Session has therefore appointed a congregational meeting to take place on Wednesday, the 6th of November at 7.30pm.

When the names of Mr. Stuart King and Mr. Richard Killer will be proposed to the communicants for election and ordination to the office of eldership. So I encourage everyone, especially all the members, to come along to the meeting here on Wednesday night.

The usual prayer meeting time of 7.30pm. And because we expect more people to be present, we'll be meeting here within this room. And there will be no Zoom connection, as is usually the case.

So please make every effort to come this Wednesday for 7.30pm. So let us worship God and let us sing to his praise from Psalm 8.

Psalm 8, that's a great psalm, looking at just how wonderful the Lord is. How excellent in all the earth, Lord, our Lord, is thy name, who hast thy glory far advanced above the starry frame.

[ 3 : 43 ] From infants and from sucklings' mouth thou didst strength ordain. For thy foes cause, that so thou mightst the avenging foe restrain. Let's sing the whole of this psalm to God's praise.

How excellent in all the earth, Lord, our Lord, is thy name, Who hast thy glory far advanced above the starry frame.

From infants and from infants and from sucklings' mouth thou didst strength ordain.

For thy foes cause, that so thou mightst the avenging foe restrain.

When I look up unto the heavens, which thy own fingers raved.

[ 4 : 58 ] Unto the moon and to the stars, which were by thee ordained.

When, say, I, what is man that ye remembered is by thee?

Or what the son of man that thou so kind to him shouldst be?

For thou a little lower hast, him than the angels made.

With glory and with dignity, the crown it has his head.

[ 5 : 56 ] Of thy hands worked thou made sin, Lord, all under speed didst lay.

All sheep and oxen, yea, and beasts, that in the field do stray.

Fowls of the air, fish of the sea, all that pass through the sea.

How excellent in all the earth, Lord, our Lord, is thy name.

Let's pray. Lord, our God, we come to worship you this morning as the living and the holy God.

[ 6 : 58 ] The God who is the creator of the heavens and the earth. And we marvel once again as we look around at creation and see what your hands have made. And, Lord, we thank you that in the midst of that you are yet mindful of us as we were singing in that psalm.

And, Lord, why indeed should you be good to us? For, Lord, we come recognizing that there is no good within us by nature. But, Lord, we thank you that you sent another man, a perfect man, the Lord Jesus Christ.

You made him a little lower than the angels. And he lived upon this earth. And he died upon a cross. And now he is exalted to the highest place at your right-hand side.

And, Lord, because he is exalted and he is there, we can come into your presence without fear. And, indeed, we can come into your presence with delight. For, Lord, you have made us new in Christ, given us a new life that we could not have taken for ourselves.

But that, Lord, comes from him. And, Lord, we pray that you would enable us this day to remain in the vine. And, Lord, to drink deeply from all that he has to give us.

[ 8 : 15 ] We thank you, O Lord our God, that as we meet, there are people meeting throughout the islands and throughout our nation. And throughout the world to praise your name. And, Lord, we pray for your blessing upon each and every meeting of believers.

And we pray, Lord, that the combined praise would be as a fragrant offering in your sight. We pray, Father, for your blessing upon our minister who is preaching in South U.S. this weekend.

And we pray for your blessing upon the congregation there as they meet around your table. We pray, Lord, that they would see Christ more clearly. And that, Lord, lost sinners would be drawn to him.

We pray, Father, for your blessing upon Gordon as he preaches in Carloway. And ask, Lord, that your hand would be upon the congregation there. And that you would build them up and strengthen them.

And we pray, Lord, that you bless Stuart as he leads us in worship tonight. That, Lord, you would have a word for our own hearts. Father, we thank you that as your gospel goes out into the world, the name of Christ is exalted and lifted up.

[ 9 : 26 ] And we pray, Lord, that he would be honored in many places today. We thank you, Lord, for all those who are watching online who are not able to come out.

But you have given us technology whereby those who are ill are able to yet join in with your people. And we pray, Lord, for those who are sick, who are linked with our congregation.

And ask, Lord, that your healing hand would be upon them. That, Lord, you would give them grace to bear up through times of illness. And that, Lord, even in the midst of suffering, that, Lord, they would know your presence with them.

And perhaps especially so. And that, Lord, they may be able to take the opportunity to spend more time in prayer. Lord, we pray that you would make us all spend more time in prayer.

And rejoice at being in your presence. We pray for your forgiveness for being so prayerless at times. And we pray, Lord, for your forgiveness for not spending time in your word as we should.

[ 10 : 35 ] We thank you, Lord, that it is indeed the source of eternal life. And, Lord, we pray that it would be the most important book in our own hands and in our hearts.

And, Lord, we ask from the youngest to the oldest in the congregation that you would speak through your word to each and every one of us. We pray, Lord, for your blessing upon our nation.

We ask, Lord, that you would bless those in government over us. We pray for our king, that, Lord, you would bless him in the role that he has. And we ask that you would speak to his heart this day through your word.

Lord, we remember the United States as it approaches its election with all the potential trouble that there might be there. And we ask, Lord, that in your mercy all things would pass peacefully.

And we pray, Lord God, that your hand would be upon other countries where people come to choose their governments. And ask, Lord God, that they would choose wisely.

[ 11 : 40 ] That you would give people wisdom. And that that wisdom would come from your word. Lord, we pray again for Ukraine this day. We thank you, Lord, that in the midst of war, many people are crowding into churches to hear your word.

We thank you, Lord, that pastors are preaching the truth. And we thank you, Lord, that people are being saved. And we pray, Lord, that in this time of distress, the whole nation would call out to you.

And that, Lord, in your mercy, you would bring this war to an end. We thank, too, of the war in Gaza. And we pray, Father, that that would be ended quickly.

That, Lord, those who want to kill one another today would yet become brothers in Christ tomorrow. For, Lord, we know that the enmity that exists between men and men ultimately has its source in sin and in alienation from you.

And we pray, Lord God, that you would build up your church in Israel and in the Middle East. We thank you that there are many coming to Christ these days. And we pray that your spirit would multiply that number.

[ 12 : 50 ] Lord, we ask for your blessing upon our time here. We pray, Lord, that you would give us hearts that look to your word. And that you would enable us to concentrate upon it this day.

And, Lord, we pray for your blessing upon us. And give us spirits of praise, we ask. In Jesus' name. Amen. Okay, boys and girls, are you coming down to the front?

Amen. How are we all doing today?

You're good? That's great. So if you remember how David started the service last week, he started with an apology. Do you remember what the apology was for?

No, it's quite hard when you have to think back a whole week. He was apologizing because he hadn't had a chance to look and see if there were any visitors. And that was because he had his glasses on his head.

[ 14 : 02 ] And he was saying he was getting to an age where he couldn't read a book up close with his glasses because he was starting to get long-sighted as well as short-sighted.

And when he had his glasses on his head and he looked up the congregation, he could just see this big blur. So people, as they get older, they find it harder to read books.

And what you see is your mum and your dad will gradually hold books further and further away until they have to get glasses. Now, I still, to this day, don't actually have to wear glasses to read a book.

And I was really quite proud about this and quite glad that I didn't have to use glasses because it's a bit of a trouble and I'm great for losing things. But one day I had a problem with my right eye and I thought I'd better go and see the optician about this.

So I went up to the store and away and had a chat. And the guy says, do you have reading glasses? And I said, no. And he says, OK, we'll do this wee test on you. So he covered up my left eye and he says, now look at the board over there and tell me how much you can read.

[ 15 : 08 ] And I looked and I went, oh, here. And I said, I can read the top line, but I can't read anything else. And he said, right, swap to the other one. And this one was slightly better and I could get like three lines down.

And he said to me, he said to me afterwards, he said, I knew as soon as you came in and you said to me, you didn't need glasses to read with, but you must be short-sighted. He said, because anybody your age, if they can read a book, is actually short-sighted.

And he said to me, now you're still just legal for driving a car. And the rule is that you need to be able to read a number plate at a distance of about 25 metres.

So he said to me, you better get a pair of glasses for driving. So he gave me a prescription. I got a pair of glasses. And now when I'm driving, I put my glasses on.

And the first time I put them on, I thought, oh, this is really good. And I was driving down the street and I thought, this is amazing. You know, I spent all these years complaining at how small the signs are these days.

[ 16 : 11 ] You can't read the writing until you get up close. And the glasses transformed my ability to drive. So the rest of you can be really happy that I've got a pair of glasses while I'm driving there.

And it was especially when I was driving in the darkness, I found I could see things much more clearly. Not least of all, the deer. Because I would be driving along and somebody would say to me, watch out for that deer.

And I'd go, where is it? And then suddenly I would see it. But I was always seeing it like a second later than they were. So these glasses were absolutely wonderful. And it's really good. I can see everyone very clearly now.

If I lift them off, I can still recognize you, but your faces are a bit fuzzy. So it's amazing. I went through all these years. I've been gradually getting more short-sighted. And I hadn't even noticed it.

And I thought, it can tell us a lot in terms of our own spiritual life. Because if you think today, you'll go back to school tomorrow and you'll meet people in the world.

[ 17 : 13 ] And there'll be people out there who tell you, you're looking at the world all wrong and looking at the Bible. We don't need the Bible at all. And we can see the world perfectly clearly. And we can live perfectly happily without having the Bible, without having God's Word in our hands.

But they're like I was in that they're actually seeing the world wrong. And it's all fuzzy and unclear. And in fact, the Bible speaks more strongly of people who don't believe in Jesus.

Can you think what word the Bible uses to describe someone who is not following God's Word, who is not in Christ? It's linked to your sight.

It actually says that we are blind. It talks about us being blind by nature. So that's even worse than not being able to see properly. But the great thing is God has given his Word.

And if we look into his Word, that helps us to see into our own hearts. To see the sin that is there. It enables us to repent of that sin and trust in Christ.

[ 18 : 20 ] And then to look out at the world and see the world through God's eyes. And therefore how we should live in this life. So remember that.

Hold on to your Bible and read it clearly. And that will help you to see very clearly. Rather than look out in the world and see it all fuzzy. Okay? We'll say a very short prayer.

Lord our God, we thank you for your Word. We thank you that Jesus is revealed to us in the Bible. Enable us, Lord, to see Jesus this day.

And to see our need of him. And to trust in him. Give us grace, we ask. To repent and put our faith in him. And to live for him and for his glory. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Our next item of praise is hymn 1209.

[ 19 : 17 ] Hymn 1209. My heart is filled with thankfulness. To him who bore my pain. Who plumbed the depths of my disgrace. And gave me life again.

Who crushed my curse of sinfulness. And clothed me with his light. And wrote his law of righteousness. With power upon my heart.

And this is some of the themes that we'll be thinking about later on in church today. As we look at Christ pictured for us in Isaiah. So let's sing the whole of this hymn to God's praise.

Amen. Amen. Amen. My heart is filled with thankfulness. To him who bore my pain.

Who run the depths of my disgrace. And gave me life again. Who crushed my curse of sinfulness.

[ 20 : 19 ] And clothed me with his light. And clothed his law of righteousness. With power upon my heart.

My heart is filled with thankfulness. To him who walks beside. Who floods my weaknesses with strength.

And causes fear to fly. Whose every promise is enough. For every step I take.

Sustaining me with arms of love. And clouding me with grace. My heart is filled with thankfulness.

To him who reigns above. Whose wisdom is my perfect peace. Whose heavenly thought is love.

[ 21 : 32 ] For every day I have on earth. Is given by the King. So I will give my life my all.

To love and follow him. Whose

And we shall read down to the end of chapter 53. Isaiah 52 at verse 13. See, my servant will act wisely.

He will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. Just as there were many who were appalled at him, his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness, so will he sprinkle many nations and kings will shut their mouths because of him.

For what they were not told they will see and what they have not heard they will understand. Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

[ 23 : 15 ] He grew up before him like a tender shoot and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering, like one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised and we esteemed him not.

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities.

The punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

[ 24 : 20 ] By oppression and judgment he was taken away, and who can speak of his descendants?  
For he was cut off from the land of the living, for the transgression of my people he was  
stricken.

He was assigned a grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.

After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied. By his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.

Amen. And may God add his blessing to this reading of his word. We shall sing now from Psalm 22, singing in Gaelic.

I can count all my bones. People stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them and cast my lots for clothing. But you, O Lord, be not far off.

SONG CONTINUES SONG CONTINUES SONG CONTINUES

Now if we turn back to Isaiah chapter 52. And I want to look today at verse 14. And especially the words in the middle of that verse.

His form was marred beyond human likeness. And it's not something prior to studying this. That I gave any thought to at all.

The first 39 chapters. Are largely speaking about God's judgment upon Israel. And upon the nations. And in that context.

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That they may be ever hearing. But never understanding. And ever seeing. But never perceiving. And so it's a really really difficult book. To deal with.

The very thought. That the preaching of God's word. Should turn people's hearts ever harder. Because God had decided. Not to save. That generation. In Isaiah's time.

[ 32 : 58 ] And yet in the midst of that. God brings in. The idea of a servant. Which very helpfully. By coincidence. As David was preaching on. From Matthew 12.

Last week. Verses. From the beginning. Of chapter 42. Here is my servant. Whom I uphold. My chosen one. In whom I delight.

I will put my spirit on him. And he will bring justice. To the nations. Israel was called. To be God's servant. But had failed miserably. In that role.

And so here in Isaiah. You have this idea. Of the servant. Being introduced. And of a servant. Who was going to. Fulfill God's law. A servant.

Who was going to be. A light. To the nations. And we have. The servant again. In 49 and 50. And here we have. This section.

[ 33 : 53 ] In 52 and 53. Where we can see. The whole purpose. And the activity. Of the servant. Laid out before us. See my servant.

Will act wisely. He will be raised. And lifted up. And highly exalted. And. Throughout this section. To the end of chapter 53.

We have this amazing. Depiction of Christ. Upon the cross. More than. 700 years. Before he actually came. To bear the sins.

Of his people. And to undo. All the sin. That had come into the world. And if we look closely. At the verse. The verse is just in front of us.

We can see that. The words that I read. His appearance was so disfigured. Beyond that of any man. And his form marred. Beyond human likeness. It's like words.

[ 34 : 48 ] That ought to be in brackets. Because it's giving an extra explanation. To what comes just before. And just after. Where it says. Just as there were many. Who were appalled at him.

So will he sprinkle many nations. And kings will shut their mouths. Because of him. A massive contrast.

In the way. People would look upon the cross. They would be appalled at him. And yet. He would sprinkle many nations. And kings. Would shut their mouths.

Because of him. Appalled. Is a really strong. And a powerful word. And in scripture. It is often used. When we're talking about devastation.

In Leviticus 26 and 32. God says. That he will lay waste the land. And the enemies of Israel. Will be appalled. When they look at it. If his people.

[ 35 : 45 ] Go away. And break his covenant. In Jeremiah. 19. And verse 8. God speaking of Jerusalem. He says.

I will devastate this city. And make it an object of scorn. All who pass by it. Will be appalled. And will scoff. Because of all its wounds. So we have the same.

Word here. Appalled. Being applied. To God's servant. And yet. God's servant. Was going to sprinkle the nations. Sprinkling.

In the Old Testament. Speaking. Of cleansing. From sin. And also of protection. From judgment. This is what the servant. Was going to come. And do. And more marvelously.

Not more marvelously. But equally marvelously. It tells us. That kings. Will shut their mouths. Because of him. If we think for a minute.



- [ 36 : 40 ] About the power. That kings have. And the power. That they had. Particularly in those days. One of the most important things. Of a king.
- Is he speaks. And everybody else. Remains silent. If you are invited. To see the king today. One of the first things. That his. Attendance would tell you.
- Is you are not to speak. Until the king speaks to you. And here we have a situation. Where people. Who are absolutely appalled.
- At this figure. Upon a cross. At just the desperate sense. Of God's judgment. Upon him. We are now going to. Close their mouths. And be quiet.
- In his presence. What a change. Surrounding the same incident. And all this happened. Because of the disfiguring.
- [ 37 : 36 ] And the marring of Christ. Beyond human likeness. So if we dig. Into. This term. This term. Especially. Thinking of being marred.
- Beyond human likeness. Some of you may have. Versions. Of scripture. That. Use. Being marred. Beyond that of any man. And marred.
- Beyond human likeness. Because it's the same. Word. But it's just been translated. In a slightly different way. In the NIV. Be. But marring itself. Is a very short. But incisive word.
- And it speaks of damage. Being done to something. And damage. Particularly being done. To something. That could be considered beautiful. Or even perfect. If you think.
- If. If you go into a quarry. And you blast some rock. Off the side of the quarry. The quarry isn't marred. Because it's just a quarry. But if you were to then. Blast away.
- [ 38 : 34 ] At a sculpture. And knock chunks of it. You can say quite clearly. The sculpture has been marred. Because of the damage. That has been done. Similarly.
- People may have a very strong. And a good reputation. But that reputation. We say has been marred. Because of something. That they did. Think of King David.
- And his adultery. That marred his reputation. As a good. And a powerful. King. And often. When something has been marred.
- It is absolutely impossible. To repair. Even if you can do the best job. On it. On a sculpture. Say. You would see the lines. Where. The piece had been broken off.
- Or someone can work. For many. Decades. After. Doing something terrible. And yet. People will always remember. That one thing. That marred their reputation.
- [ 39 : 31 ] Marring. Is something. That is really powerful. Has a big impact. And here. We're talking. About. A marred. Saviour. We're talking about him.
- Being disfigured. Beyond that. Of any man. As we're. We sang a few verses. Out of Psalm 22. But there's various verses in there.
- Which speak quite clearly. About the disfiguring. Of. Christ's body. As David wrote that psalm. He was looking ahead to Christ. Upon the cross.
- Speaking of being poured out like water. In verse 14. And he could say. My bones. Are all out of joint. My tongue. Sticks to the roof of my mouth.
- In verse 15. In verse 16. They have pierced. My hands. And my feet. And in verse 17. Of Psalm 22. He said. I can count.
- [ 40 : 26 ] All my bones. The picture there. Of Christ. Being disfigured. Upon the cross. The damage. That is being done. To him.
- But then also. We have the sense. Of him being marred. Beyond human likeness. And as we are reading there. From Matthew 27. In the account. Of the crucifixion.

Jesus was flogged. First of all. And that was. No ordinary flogging. With just a whip. They would have bits of bone. Tied to that whip.

Ripping chunks of flesh. Out of him. They put a crown of thorns. Upon his head. And that was a crown. That would not have been. Placed gently. I'm sure. It would have been. Forced upon him.

The soldiers. We saw in that account. They mocked him. As they had that. Stick in his hand. And the crown of thorns. On his head. And then they spat. On his face. And certainly.

[ 41 : 23 ] In those times. And even today. The obvious thing. If you spit. In someone's face. That is a complete. Rejection. Of who they are. And of their position. Of any authority. That they have.

Often. If you have. A revolution. Goes on. People will spit. In the faces. Of those who were ruling. Before. So here we have. The soldiers.

Doing that to Christ. And it tells us. That they took his staff. And beat him. On the head. Struck him on the head. Again. And again. And.

In John 19. And 3. It tells us. That they struck him. In the face. Many blows. Going into Jesus face. I remember. A friend of mine.

At school. He had. Someone else. Came up to him. And gave him. One mighty hit. In the face. Because he wasn't. Pleased at having. Been on the receiving end. Of a bad tackle.

[ 42 : 17 ] In a football game. The next day. His face. Was so bruised. And swollen. It was as if. That side of his face. Wasn't human. And here we have.

Christ. And the. Before he went. To the cross. Being struck. In the face. Many times. And his face. Would have been. Totally swollen. And.

Beyond. Recognition. As he went. To the cross. He was pierced. With a spear. When he was on the cross. And prior to going there. The priests themselves.

Spat on him. And struck him. With their fists. So you have this. Combination of guards. And priests. Taking the various. Chances. To. Beat Christ up.

And. In Isaiah 50. We have. Another image. Of Christ. Upon the cross. And telling us. A bit more information. About what went on there. Isaiah 50.

[ 43 : 14 ] In verse 6. I offered my back. To those who beat me. My cheeks. To those who pulled out. My beard. I did not hide. My face. From mocking. And spitting. His beard.

Was pulled out. And the very thought of it. It would be enough. To give people. A bit of trauma. I think. If you pull someone's beard. Out again.

The blood. That would come out. The bruising. That would happen. It would be just. Absolutely terrible. And it would have got to the point. That Jesus himself. He would have looked.

Like he was no longer human. When he went on the cross. It's worth thinking. In the passing. Another reason. Why it is not good. To try and create.

Any representation. Of Christ. On the cross. Because you see. The pictures that are there. It tends to be. A bit of blood running out. But you can visibly. See a human face.

[ 44 : 09 ] Whereas this. The reality was. For Christ. Was he was beaten. To a pulp. To the point. That you would be. Struggling to see. That he was human.

When he was on the cross. Now we know. That in scripture. So often. Physical reality. Is given to us. In order to represent. A spiritual reality.

So why then. Was Jesus. Marred. Beyond human likeness. I think the only. Thing. Or decent reason. That we can conclude.

With respect to that. Is that. That. Is the ultimate destination. That sin. Takes you. Sin. Robs you. Of your humanity.

And every. Man. Woman. And child. Is marred. Because of the marring. That's caused by sin. Sin. Itself. Is not an entity. On its own.

[ 45 : 05 ] It requires. Something. Or someone. To work on. The Dutch. Theologian. Herman. Baving. Described it. As a deletion. A removal. Of what is good.

In humanity. A good comparison. Today. Would be something. Like vandalism. Vandalism. Only exists. Because we have. Nice things. That can be vandalized.

If there were. No buildings. Or properties. There would not be. Vandalism. Sin. Is like that. It takes. What is good. And is beautiful.

In humanity. And it corrupts it. It destroys it. And if you take it. To its ultimate. And logical end. The ultimate destiny. Of anyone.

Who remains in sin. Is to end up. Beyond. Human likeness. And that is the picture. That Christ. Was presenting to us. As he was hanging.

[ 46 : 02 ] Upon the cross. It's one of the biggest. Deceits of the devil. To have people think. That they become. More human. By sinning.

How many people. Look at Christians. And laugh. And think. You're missing out. On the good things. The reality. And the joy. Of being human. When the true reality.

Is that they themselves. Have been deceived. And all the time. They're going deeper. Into the slavery. Of sin. And deeper. And held more tightly. Bound.

By the chains. That sin. Puts on them. Now. There may be folk. Here today. Asking. Well. How is it. That we get.

To this point. Of going. Beyond. Human likeness. Is this not just. Taking things. A little bit. Too far. But if you think. Of Jesus. Speaking to the Pharisees.

[ 46 : 58 ] And John 8. And 44. He said to them. That they were like. Your father. The devil. And he described. The devil. As being a murderer. And a liar.

From the beginning. If we think. Of the devil. Himself. How would. Any of us know. That he was.

In fact. An angel. Unless scripture. Had told us that. When we think. Of the holy angels. We see them. Worshipping God. In God's presence. And when God.

Sends them. To earth. With special works. To help. His people. Or to declare. Things that are going. To happen. They are amazing.

Creatures. Always working. For the good. Of mankind. But then. The devil. Is a complete opposite. He attacks. Human likeness. From the very.

[ 47 : 52 ] Beginning. He set out. To cause. The fall of man. And succeeded. And one of his. First acts. Was to inspire. Cain. To kill. His brother. Abel. And.

He. Himself. Had a major role. In the death. Of Jesus. Upon the cross. As he inspired. Wicked men. To do wicked things. And put Jesus.

To death. The devil's. Aim. Is. For the destruction. Of man. Each and every man. Woman. And child. That he can manage.

Why is that? That is because. Each and every one of us. Carries the image. Of God. Around with us. Jonathan Edwards.

The great American theologian. Pointed out that. Satan was created. As the highest. Of all the angels. In heaven. He was the greatest. Created.

- [ 48 : 48 ] Being. He was second. Only. To God. Himself. And he was in charge. Of them all. And yet. He rebelled.
- Against God's. Will. For. For him. And Edwards. Puts the view. That his rebellion. Came about. Because. He learned.
- He had been created. To serve man. And. He just was not. He could not. Accept that. That he would be asked. To serve. A lesser being. We are so much lesser.
- In many ways. Than the angels. When you read. Of what they can do. In scripture. But there is one thing. That the angels. Don't have. And that is. That they are not.
- Created. In the image of God. They don't have. The image of God. Within them. And here we have. The devil himself. Wants to destroy.
- [ 49 : 45 ] That image. It is quite a thought. That every time. A new child is born. There is a new image. Of God. Brought into the world.
- That speaks. To the devil. Of his own corruption. And his own sin. And therefore. As he goes on. And on sinning. And sinning.
- He is heaping up. Ever more. Judgment upon himself. As he fights against. The image of God. That he sees. When Jesus was speaking. To those Pharisees. He said.
- You belong to your father. The devil. Like father. Like son. And ultimately. Anyone. Who has the devil. For their father.
- Anyone who is a slave. Of sin. When they leave this world. Will end up like. Satan himself. All grace removed. Sin will be left.
- [ 50 : 40 ] To work itself out. In its entirety. The judgment. Of God. Will be brought. Upon that sin. Look at the judgment. Of God.
- In Isaiah 53. Verses 4 and 5. He was pierced. For our transgressions. He was crushed. For our. Sorry. Verse 4. He took up.
- Our infirmities. And carried our sorrows. Yet we considered him. Stricken by God. Smitten by him. And afflicted. But he was pierced. For our transgressions.
- He was crushed. For our iniquities. The punishment. That brought us peace. Was upon him. And by his wounds. We are healed. We have. Christ.
- Clearly stricken. By God. Crushed. By him. For our iniquities. If you do not.
- [ 51 : 33 ] Come. To Christ. While you're on this earth. You will be stricken. By God. And crushed. By him. In eternity. That is the simple reality.
- Of what this passage. Is telling us here. But the wonderful thing. Is that. That does not have to be. The destiny. For anybody. Each and every one of us.
- Needs to be saved. From going beyond. Human likeness. Christ went there. Physically. Upon the cross. The question arises.
- Did he go there. Spiritually. And the answer. We have to say. Ultimately. Is no. His appearance. And his form. Were marred.
- But spiritually. He remained. Pure. And whole. His spirit. Was not. Crushed. His spirit. Was not. Put beyond. Human likeness.
- [ 52 : 31 ] How then. Can he save. In these circumstances. Is. Isaiah 53. In verse 6. The Lord. Has laid on him. The iniquity.
- Of us all. We have this. Wonderful picture. Of God. Taking our sins. And putting them. Upon Christ. Upon the cross. If we just think.
- For a minute. Of. Sin. And the rebellion. That it is. And how. The ten commandments. Stand before us. As. God's will. For our lives.

And how often. They are broken. Constantly. And yet. This. Is what. Was laid. The charges. That were laid. Against Christ. Are breaking. God's law.

Continually. Scripture. Speaks to us. Of. Of. Our righteousness. Our righteousness. As being. As filthy rags.

[ 53 : 26 ] And. We stand there. Guilty. Before God. Himself. Our righteousnesses. Are as filthy rags. If that's. How we are. In a righteous form.

What are all our unrighteousness. Is like. And on the cross. God took. Our filthy rags. And placed them. Upon Christ. All the sins.

Of. Rebelling. Against God's will. Of refusing him. To worship him. Before other gods. Of making gods. Within our heart. And worshiping them. Instead.

This was laid. At Christ's account. Upon the cross. The one. Who had. Worshiped God. Perfectly. Every. Second. Of his life. While on earth.

And constantly. Through. Eternity. He had never. Misused God's name. And yet. The most. Powerful. Blasphemies. And.

[ 54 : 23 ] Abuse of God's name. Was laid to his account. Upon the cross. Jesus. Jesus kept the Sabbath day. Perfectly. Was in perfect communion. With his father. But he. Was charged.

With being a Sabbath breaker. Constantly. He was charged. With rebelling. Against his parents. With murder. With adultery. All of that. And everything else. Linked to the law.

Was laid to his account. That he might save his people. From their sins. Just think. Of all those. Filthy. Rags.

Of our sins. Being piled. Upon Christ. Metaphorically. It was as if. God could no longer see. Christ himself.

And that Christ. Was no longer human. In God's eyes. All that God could see. Was the sin. Of Christ's people. Christ remained pure.

[ 55 : 18 ] In spirit. Because he had a pure spirit. And a pure soul. But we must also remember. That it was. A human soul. That Christ has. And he suffered.

In entirety. In his humanity. Upon the cross. And. Isaiah 53 and 11. Tells us quite clearly.

That he suffered. In his soul. After the suffering. Of his soul. He will see the light. Of life. And be satisfied. The very thought.

Of being in hell. For eternity. Is dreadful. For anyone. Who takes their sins. There with him. But in. Christ's place. We have one. Who had no sin.

And yet he became sin. For us. Think today. When we hear of injustices. In the justice system. People go to prison.

[ 56 : 14 ] And in one sense. Prison itself. Is dehumanizing. It takes away. What you are. What you could be. As you pay your debt. To society. But.

The guilty person. Is justly there. But the people. Who suffer most. In prison. Are the ones. Who shouldn't be there. Because the justice system. Has charged them.

With crimes. They didn't commit. Think of Christ. In all his purity. Of soul. Bearing all those sins. Upon himself. On the cross. That must have been.

A lot worse. Than anyone. Who justifiably. Had those sins. Charged to their account. But it was in that way. That.

Christ was able. To pay the price. For our sin. That we ourselves. Need not be marred. Beyond human likeness. If we think.

[ 57 : 12 ] Of how we can apply. These words. First of all. I would say. That given that Christ. Has been marred. Beyond human likeness. Think of his love.

For lost sinners today. That he would go. To that end. In order. To save people. Like you. And like me. Scripture tells us.

That there is no sin. That he cannot forgive. Except the sin. Against the Holy Spirit. All your other sins. Can be forgiven.

No matter how despicable. And how terrible they are. Those sins. That are taking you. Beyond human likeness. Christ bore them. So that you.

Do not need to carry them. With you. And I'm. I personally. Am convinced. That the sin. Against the Holy Spirit. Is the sin.

[ 58 : 11 ] Of rejecting. The work of the Spirit. In your heart. Calling him. To Christ. So often. As David has said.

There can be people. Have a great interest. In the gospel. And then. Nothing happens. Or they make a decision. To reject that truth. And it can be impossible.

To engage them. In spiritual conversation. Again. Their hearts. Have become hard. And they have sinned. Against the Spirit. So just think today.

What a crime it is. To reject Christ. When he has gone. Beyond human likeness. There is. Probably no greater sin.

Than to say. That his sacrifice. Is not good enough. But if you are. Outside of Christ today. And you. Refuse.

[ 59 : 06 ] To put your faith in him. You are effectively saying. Your sacrifice. Was not good enough. That being the case. Ask yourself.

What kind of a saviour. Do you want to have? There is no other saviour. Nobody else. Can go beyond. Human likeness. There is nowhere else to go.

He has done it all. And salvation. Is there for everyone. Who will call upon his name. To believers. We can take great comfort.

In the fact that Christ. Has experienced. Every temptation. He has borne. He has borne. Every kind of sin. To wash us clean. No half measures. He has done everything.

That needs to be done. So. Anytime. That we are tempted. To think of carrying the guilt. Of certain sins. We just need to give them up.

[ 60 : 04 ] And. Trust. In Christ himself. Because he is gone. As then. The AV said. To the uttermost. In order to save sinners. Is God calling you.

To some act of service. For him today. There is nothing. That he can ask of you. That is too much. He can ask you. To give up your possessions. To be rejected.

By your family. To give up any sense of honour. That people might be willing. To give you. That is nothing. As compared. To Christ. Going beyond.

Human likeness. Finally. I would say. As I was thinking through this. I could think of a litmus test. To apply.

To yourself. If you are not sure. Whether you are a believer. Or not. And it. Goes back to. Our verse 14 there. And it is quite simple. When you look at the cross.

[ 61 : 06 ] Are you appalled. At what went on there. Or. Like those kings. Do you shut your mouth. And wonder. Have you been silenced.

Before the cross. Have you seen. The end of yourself. Have you come to the end of yourself. And seen that Christ. Is indeed.

The only way. The only way. When we get to heaven. Our bodies. Will be perfect. It is a great thought.

For people. As they get older. For people. Who have various. Infirmities. And weaknesses. In the body. The thought. Of the resurrection. From the dead. Our bodies. Will be perfect. The curse of sin. Will be removed. In eternity. But Jesus. Body. Will be eternally. Marred. In heaven.

[ 62 : 02 ] It will bear the scars. It does indeed. Bear the scars. Of having been on a cross. But the amazing thing. Is in God's providence. His scarred body.

Will be the most beautiful thing. That there is. In eternity. The very thought. Of marring. Being present. In.

Eternity. Is a difficult one. To get our heads around. Because the whole. Of scripture. Talks to us. About. The new creation. Everything. Being made perfect.

Perfect. But what we have here. In Christ. Is. In his work. Upon the cross. He came up. With a perfect salvation. For each. And every one of us.

And therefore. His scars. Will be there. In eternity. To remind us. All continually. Of. His perfection. In serving God. His perfect work.

[ 63 : 00 ] On the cross. And the fact. That he was willing. To be marred. Beyond human likeness. That we might not be. Is he your savior?

Or are you waiting. For another. Let us pray. Laura God.

We thank you. For your word. Once more. We thank you. For Christ. We thank you. That he was willing. To die upon the cross. For us. That he was willing. To be marred.

To such an extent. That. It was no longer possible. To see that he was human. But we thank you Lord. That was all. So that we might escape.

The just. Judgment. Upon sin. And Lord. To have. That promise. And that certainty. Of eternal life. In Christ. We pray Lord.

[ 63 : 56 ] That you enable us. And everyone. Who hears the gospel. Today. To take hold. Of Christ. To trust in him. To forsake sin. And to forsake slavery.

To sin. And to come into the freedom. That comes. In being a servant. And a slave of Christ. In whose name we pray. Amen. Amen. Our closing praise.

And his mission praise. 708. To God be the glory. The right response. To seeing who Christ is upon. The cross. Is to worship God.

To give him the glory. To God be the glory. Great things he hath done. So loved he the world. That he gave his son. Who yielded his life. And atonement for sin.

And opened the life gate. That all may go in. Verse 2. O perfect redemption. The purchase of blood. To every believer. The promise of God. The vilest offender.

[ 64 : 57 ] Who truly believes. That moment. From Jesus. A pardon receives. Let's sing this hymn. To God's praise. To God be the glory.

The great things he hath done. So loved he the world. That he gave us his son.

Who yielded his life. And atonement for sin. And opened the life gate.

That all may go in. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Let the earth hear his voice.

Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Let the people rejoice. O come to the Father.

[ 65 : 57 ] Through Jesus the Son. And give him the glory. Great things he hath done.

O perfect redemption. The purchase of blood. To every believer.

The promise of God. The vilest offender. Who truly believes.

That moment. From Jesus. A pardon receives. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

Let the earth hear his voice. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Let the people rejoice.

[ 66 : 52 ] O come to the Father. Through Jesus the Son. And give him the glory.

Great things he hath done. Great things he hath taught us. Great things he hath done.

And greater rejoicing. Through Jesus the Son. But purer and higher.

And greater will be. Our wonder. Our rapture. When Jesus we see.

Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Let the earth hear his voice. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

[ 67 : 47 ] Let the people rejoice. O come to the Father. Through Jesus the Son.

And give him the glory. Great things he hath done. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The love of God. And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Be with us all. Now and forevermore. Amen.