

# Crowned with thorns

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[ 0 : 00 ] well good morning everyone and a very warm welcome to everyone who joins with us in our morning worship today our minister and his family are away from us for two Sundays and we pray God's blessing upon them and their respective families as they holiday together we pray that God would revive them and renew them in their minds bodies and spirits and that they were to have traveling mercy's coming back home to us to take out the mantle of the gospel that God has entrusted to them the evening service will be in Gaelic and will be taken by our fellow elder Mr. John McSwain Scarfie and we pray God's rich blessing on John as he brings us God's word the services next Sunday

Gordon McLeod will lead the morning and evening services the first part and Reverend Gordon Thompson will pitch at both these services the prayer meeting on Wednesday at 7 30 as usual on zoom and it is very encouraging for us to see the number of people who gather at the prayer meeting and we pray God's rich blessing on that time and I think that is all we have to intimate at the moment we shall know sing to God's praise and glory from Psalm 22 and we will sing from verse 23 down to the verse 28 praise ye the Lord who do him fear him glorify all ye praise ye the Lord who do him fear him glorify all ye the seed of Jacob fear him or that Israel's children be but he despised not not abhorred the afflicted's misery not from him hid his face but heard when he to him did cry within the congregation great my praise shall be of thee my my my my my my my shall it and shall be filled, they also praise shall give.

And to the Lord that do him seek, your heart shall ever live.

All ends of the earth remember shall and turn the Lord unto.

All kindreds of the nations to him shall homage due.

[ 4 : 48 ] Because the kingdom to the Lord doth a pertain as his, likewise among the nations the governor he is.

Let us now unite our hearts and minds in prayer. O most gracious and ever-blessed God, we thank you for the wonderful privilege you have bestowed upon us to gather together as one in the Spirit on your own holy day.

This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. It is a day that reminds us once again that the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ rose triumphant over death and the grave and that he is alive forevermore in the power of an endless eternity.

And we thank you, Lord, that we are enabled to draw nigh unto thee at this morning hour of worship and prayer.

And although we cannot join together to worship corporately in your holy house, yet through the Spirit we are joined together as one.

[ 6 : 33 ] And we pray, Lord, that each one of us would be conscious of your own closeness and nearness. That you are nearer to us than hands or feet, that you are nearer than even the very breath of our nostrils.

And we thank you this day, Lord, for all you have done for us in Christ Jesus. That in the fullness of time you sent the darling of your bosom into this sin-stained world and that to seek and to save sinners such as we are.

We praise you, Lord, for all you did in this world, the wonderful miracles you perform in healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, and stopping the ears of the deaf.

making the lame to walk, raising the dead back to life again. And when your ministry here on earth was over, you went steadfastly to Jerusalem and to the cross at Calvary.

And there in our place and in our stead, you laid down your life. No one took your life away from you, but you laid it down of your own free will.

[ 8 : 02 ] And we thank you, Lord, that you took the punishment that we deserve into your own body on the tree of Calvary. And we praise and thank you that this morning the cross at Calvary is empty and the grave is empty for our Savior rose triumphant over death and the grave on the third day.

And that he has at this very moment interceding on our behalf with groanings unutterable. And as we come before you this morning, we come with in our weakness and in our frailty.

We confess, Lord, our own sins and our own failings before you. We sin against you in our thoughts, in our words, and in our actions.

And if any one of us say that we sin not, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But we pray, Lord, that you would search our hearts and that you would take away from us everything that would stand between ourselves and thyself.

Oh, that you would create within us a clean heart and that you would renew a right spirit inside. A spirit that would honor and glorify and magnify your holy name.

[ 9 : 33 ] For you are worthy of all our places. And we thank you, Lord, that we can come with boldness to the throne of your grace and of your mission.

where we may receive mercy and grace to help us in our time of need. And you know, Lord, our time of need is at all times.

Every moment of every day we need you. Without you, we are nothing and can do nothing. We cannot utter the next word. We cannot draw the next breath.

We cannot take the next step. We are completely and utterly dependent upon thyself. We are like the church of old coming up from the wilderness of sin, leaning on her beloved.

And as the days and as the years go by, we find that we need to lean more and more upon thyself. O Lord, we thank you for all you have done for us and for all you continue to do for us.

[ 10 : 39 ] And we pray that you would go before us every step of the way, that you would keep us close to yourself, that you would keep us humble at your footstone, and that we would continually be found looking away from ourselves and looking unto thee, you are the author and the perfecter of our faith.

As one of old said, to whom else can we go to for the saving of our souls? Save unto thee alone you have the words of everlasting life.

And this morning, I knew, Lord, we pray for our congregation, for all those, Lord, who are still on the outside of the fold, they are so numerous, the young, the old, and the middle-aged.

They are in their own homes and in their own families. They are in their neighborhoods and in their surrounding islands and highlands. Yes, Lord, even to the ends of the earth, men and women, boys and girls.

And we pray, Lord, that the touch of your spirit may be upon their hearts and souls, drawing them to yourself, O that you would take your sons from afar, your daughters from the ends of the earth, that we would see your kingdom extended with power, your name glorified and lifted up, and your people blessed.

[ 12 : 10 ] O that we would see wonderful things done in the name of your son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and that this day would indeed be a glorious day for the extension of your kingdom.

We pray, Lord, especially for those who are old and are not able to come out in these pandemic months.

We pray, Lord, that you would be very near to each one of them, that you would sustain them and uphold them, that you would be with them, the friend that is stick us closer than any other, the one who is able to do for them far above anything that we could ever ask or even think.

We pray for our minister who is away from us at this time and his family on a well-deserved holiday break. We pray that you would bless them and their respective families as well.

We pray that you would bring them home safely to us again to take up the mantle of the gospel that you have entrusted to them. And we pray, Lord, that you would bless them and bless the congregation.

[ 13 : 34 ] Each one, Lord, we pray for them and ask that your blessing would be resting upon them and that you would undertake for each one of us at this time.

We pray, Lord, for your servant who takes this morning's service, that the action of your spirit may be upon him, that he would be conscious of your own, of you undertaking for him and strengthening him as he proclaims your word.

And we pray, Lord, that your word would indeed go out with power, touching the hearts of many, bringing them to a saving knowledge of yourself.

And we pray for Ian and for his family. We ask your blessing to be upon each one of them as we commit them to you. And we remember our brother John McSwain as he takes the evening service in Galilee.

We pray for the unction of your spirit to be upon him as he proclaims the word that you have laid upon his heart. And so, Lord, we pray that as your word is proclaimed in all denominations of your church this day, to the ends of the earth, we pray that the good seed of the gospel that has been sown and will be sown, that it would be watered by the prayers of your praying people, and that you would give the increase in their own good time.

[ 15 : 13 ] And so, Lord, we pray that you would go before us now, that you would prepare us for whatever you have in store for us, that you would keep us at all times looking unto thee, the one who is able to do in us, for us, and through us, far abundantly above anything that we could ever ask of things.

Bless us now, we pray thee, shine on us the light of thy countenance, and grant us thy peace. Take away from us the sin that so easily besets us. And all we ask, along with forgiveness of our many sins and failures and shortcomings, in Jesus' name, we pray for this sake, amen.

Good morning, boys and girls. It's good to be with you this morning. You probably don't know me, but I think you probably know my sister, my sister Peggy. I'm quite sure you do know her.

I've got a story for you today, and as far as I know, it's a true story because it was told to me by a minister friend of mine, and it's about boys and girls in two villages over in Lewis, I think possibly maybe Carloway and Shawpost, and they used to argue about which village had the best football team, and they decided there was only one way to kind of find out which was the best, and what they did was they agreed that they would play a game of football, I don't know, was it five asides or seven asides, and they would have a game, and they knew if they were the best team, the best village.

So the boys and girls took it really, really seriously. They were training and they were practicing, they got park ready, they got one of the dads to cut the grass on this flat bit of ground on a croft, and a few days before the game was meant to happen, they were out there and they got some sand and they lined it, and they got some fence posts and they put goals up, and some corner flags, and they were all ready, all set for the game, and one of the teams, they thought it'd be a really good idea if we could have the same colour, so they got their mums and dads to buy them white t-shirts, and of course they were all set and all ready for this big game, and I'm sure the night before the game, they were really nervous and excited and could hardly sleep, so the day of the game came, and they were all ready, and they arrived, and they did their warm-up, and the game was ready to start, and then they realized something, something that they had forgotten, they forgot to bring a ball, one team thought the other team would bring the ball, but it ended up that no one brought the ball, now, you can't play football without a ball, after all the hard work they put in, getting the park ready, the one thing that was missing, the most important thing was they didn't have a football to play football with, now, as the story goes, one of the boys ran back to his own house, got a ball, and the game was able to be played, but he mentioned forgetting the ball, they forgot the most important thing, they were so caught up in the planning, and in the preparation, that they forgot the most important thing, and boys and girls it's very easy for us too to do that, there was nothing wrong with what they were doing, they just forgot the most important thing, and so it is for us, we need to remember that the most important person in the whole world who has ever lived and who lives is Jesus, and we mustn't forget him, he is really, really important, we mustn't forget all that he's done for us, we mustn't forget to ask him into our lives, we mustn't forget to let him get his way in our lives, you know, if you haven't already done it, you can maybe think about doing it today, the most important thing that you can ever do in life, is to ask

[ 19 : 35 ] Jesus into your life, you can ask him into your life today, you can make him the most important person in your life today, you have lots and lots of things and that's great and that's good, but if you don't have Jesus, you don't have the most important thing, so let's pray together for a wee while, loving God, we thank you that you love us, that you care for us, we thank you that you sent Jesus to be our Lord, to be our Saviour, and Father forgive us if we forget him, Lord we acknowledge that he is the most important person in the whole whole world, and Father today we ask him to come into our lives, and we pray that every day we might make him the most important person, that we might follow you, Lord we pray this in Jesus name, Amen.

Our first reading this morning comes from Genesis, Genesis chapter 6 and verses 6 to 24. When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some of it and ate it.

She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realised that they were naked, so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, where are you?

He answered, I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid. And he said, Who told you that you were naked?

[ 21 : 44 ] Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat? The man said, The woman you put here with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate it.

Then the Lord God said to the woman, What is this you have done? The woman said, The serpent deceived me, and I ate. So the Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals.

You will crawl on your belly, and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers. He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

To the woman he said, I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing. Your pain will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.

To Adam he said, Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, you must not eat of it. Cursed is the ground because of you.

[ 22 : 58 ] Through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken.

For dust you are, and to dust you will return. Adam named his wife Eve because she would become the mother of all the living. The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

And the Lord God said, The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever.

So the Lord God banished him from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the garden of Eden, cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

And then reading in the gospel, in Matthew's gospel, reading in chapter 27 verses 27 to 31. Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers round him.

[ 24 : 28 ] They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him.

Hail, King of the Jews, they said. They spat on him and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they had mocked him, they took off his robe and put his own clothes on him.

Then they led him away to be crucified. Amen and may the Lord bless to us. These readings from his own holy word. If you and I had a task and that task was to save the world, what kind of person would we look for to accomplish that task?

I think probably it would be someone like a James Bond figure, someone who's suave, sophisticated, ingenious, someone who's attractive, someone who has access to all the latest gadgets.

And of course we all know that James Bond has fulfilled his mission on a number of times. He's saved the world on numerous occasions. Christians. Well, that's what happens in the films anyway.

[ 25 : 53 ] And how different it is however for the Christian. How does God save the world? Do you realise that the Christian is the only person in the whole world who claims to have as his or her leader a crucified king?

Because it's a crucified king that as Christians that we follow. You see, the world is so impressed with power and achievement, tangible and visible manifestations of it.

But the greatest display of power and achievement is found as we look to the helpless Lamb of God who hangs on a cross. The Jews, they demanded miraculous signs, that was their James Bond.

the Greeks, they looked for wisdom, that was their James Bond. What does God do? He provides us with Christ crucified.

It's him that God Jehovah says in the Old Testament, behold my servant. And it's the servant, son of Jehovah, who says, not my will, but thine be done.

- [ 27 : 13 ] Service and powerlessness is the badge of his life in this world, and it's also his greatest motivation as he goes towards the cross.

It's ironic, therefore, in the reading that we read earlier, that the soldier should haul him before Pilate in the trappings of kingship, with a purple robe on his back.

with a thorny crown on his head. That the son of God in his service as saviour should be presented to the Roman governor wearing the insignia of royalty.

Yet, he himself was the one who had entered Jerusalem a few days earlier riding on a donkey. He himself chose to veil his kingship, even at the very moment of his birth.

As he was born in squalor, and also luckily as he hung on the cross, as twelve regions of angels waited, armed and ready for the merest wink of his eye to signal their advance towards the place where their commander stood bound to a cross.

- [ 28 : 30 ] Out of eyeshot of the Romans and Jews alike, the resources of the eternal kingdom awaited his signal. But, of course, it did not come.

Instead, the chief officer of heaven contented himself with being made the object of the drunkard's song, the soldier's lottery. The world mocked and laughed and scorned and made him a king of the vilest sort.

world. However, we know that at the present time, that a crown of glory adorns his royal head. Today in heaven, he wears a crown of splendor and of victory.

But in order to bear that golden symbol of sovereignty, he had to be made lower than the angels. That is how the Lord appears to us in the courtroom of Pilate, on his way to glory, via that path of thorns.

What I want us to think about for a few moments is what is that thorny crown a symbol of? What is it that it represents? Well, the first thing I think that it represents is the hatred of the world against him.

- [ 29 : 57 ] They platted, we read here, they platted or knitted thorns together into a crown. And it was malice and hatred that were woven together into of the strand, its twist, its turn of its manufacture, driven by wickedness and a desire to destroy him.

There was no love, only hate, no sympathy, only scorn, no concern, only contempt. The hands that crowned the Prince of Glory with thorns were motivated only by self-interest and bloodlust.

And what is so tragic is that having come to his own, his own received him not. These were his people, of the same Jewish stock and with the same blood running in their veins.

With them he entered into the legacy of the Old Testament revelation. He told them time and time again about the law of Moses and how it fitted in with him. He explained to them the hymns of David that spoke of the Messiah, the one that was to come.

And the same is true of the visions of the prophets. He shared all this with them. His message had sought to convey the truth that in him the word incarnate, that the written word had actually found its fulfillment in Christ.

- [ 31 : 34 ] Their tragedy was that they had heard so much yet they could see so little. A number of years ago I heard a story of a Christian who was at university and she was attempting to evangelize one of her flatmates and the flatmate was quite intrigued and the Christian got her to read the Gospels and after reading the Gospels all she could say was how could anyone do that to a person?

Yet it didn't change her life. She had sympathy but there was no change. And I suppose there is a real solemn warning here for us is there not?

That we can have things explained to us we can know the truth but unless we take that truth for ourselves and apply it to our own lives and unless it brings us to the Saviour it is of no use to us really.

Those people who put that crown of thorns and he said those in the crowd who bade for his blood they knew it all but yet the Saviour that was sent to them that the scriptures had spoken about that he himself had shared with them about was now being crucified by them and the darkness had shrouded their hearts and clouded their judgment spilt over into the vile list of hatred he was crying with thorns because there was no room for him in their thinking in the thinking of a world divorced from God the hatred is of the same essence as the sin in every human heart that has not been touched by the Saviour's love and the Saviour's grace the world still hates him has no time for him ridicules him the crown of thorns also speaks of humility the crown spoke of his great love and humility for them to put it on his head meant that he bowed low

I'm sure some of you over the years have seen footage of coronations or maybe have watched coronations live in the past the king and the queen or the queen they're seated on the throne and the crown is placed upon their head usually by a bishop or a high ranking cleric there's to be no hint in that whole coronation of the king or the queen submitting because the king the queen is going to be the ruler of the nation yet what did David say about Jesus he says in psalm 113 and verse 6 who is like the lord our god who dwells on high who humbles himself to behold the things that are in the earth heaven is his throne yet heaven came down to earth he was rich beyond measure and beyond compare yet for our sake he chose to become poor the crown of thorns wasn't placed on

[ 35 : 05 ] Jesus by raised hands but by virtue of a bowed head the king of kings humbles himself even to death even death on a cross you see the father's will for him was that he should lose none of the people that he had given him but to raise them up at the last day but there was to be no raising up for them unless there was the corresponding bowing down of Jesus himself there was no exaltation without Jesus humbling himself he was made sin that we might be made righteous our exaltation is in contrast to his humiliation our glory indeed is rooted in his shame the price of our release was him being bound with cords both of love and justice to the path of humility that took

Jesus to the skull shaped mountain called Golgotha the crown also speaks to us of obedience Jesus bore the crown because he was commanded to do so not by any earthly ruler or soldier it wasn't the soldiers really who put the crown of thorns on his head they did it in space in time but all that had been planned way beforehand the crown of thorns you see is to be his cup and although the saviour's human frame trembles before it that cup he accepts and he does not recoil from his contents in his humanity yes he wishes that it was taken from him but the divine task has to be fulfilled and in obedience he accepts it there's a profound and divine mystery here co-equal with

God within the Godhead yet willingly accepts the role and the commission of a servant yes he was personally the father's equal but officially he becomes the father's subordinate his meat and drink is to do the will of God who called him to be the suffering servant now we need to remember that all the blessings to be secured for the church for the Christian as individuals they hinge completely on the fulfilment of the servant fulfilling his task in obedience there was none other good enough to pay the price of sin he only could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in he had to do it voluntarily he had to come and accept the constraints of servanthood he had to agree to be the substitute he had to accept obedience even obedience to death on a cross without it the task is not completed the task is not fulfilled but for the

Lord engagement with God's will and complete obedience to God's commands was a great issue that he did not shirk away from and he did it in full obedience to his father in heaven you see mankind law breaking is covered in his perfect law keeping our disobedience towards God covered by his obedience in relation to God that is how it works justice is satisfied at least at last that sword that God had put in the way as far as his relationship with the Christian is concerned is taken away and in Christ there is no condemnation for those who are in

Christ Jesus brought about by the obedience of the Son someone once said that creation shows us that God is above us the law shows us that God is against us Calvary shows God for us in Christ the obedient servant whose death covers all those whose sins he bore as he died on the cross and as he bore out transgressions and as he carried them away for us no wonder we cry out hallelujah what a saviour the crown spoke also of the saviour solitude as the sin bearer of his people no other head could wear this crown the very fact of the unique services called to fulfill singles him out as the sole worker of

[ 40 : 55 ] Calvary and to do that it meant that he had to go through the loneliness and tread that wine press alone yes he's amongst the rabble he's surrounded by soldiers he's crucified between thieves yet despite this and actually even because of it he stands alone as Isaiah says in chapter 63 and verse 3 he has come to tread that wine place alone no one can be with him and there is none to help you see if death is to be robbed of its sting Jesus must be the thief if the grave is to be emptied of its victory Jesus must overcome death it's a conflict too great for mere man because death robs us of our greatest potential it's a conflict that we could say is impossible for

God God cannot die but there is one there is the God man who can both die and overcome death in the very act of dying all this is bound up in the whole mystery of the incarnation when God becomes one of us in Christ and as he dies on the cross as he dies alone as he dies destitute the God man dies and wins our salvation for us he overcomes death he dies the perfect death for us he dies in a way that no other man could ever die he pulls out his soul unto death no man has ever died like this man cut off from the land of the living he enters the portals of death with a fixed purpose and with the universe waiting to see what he is to accomplish and all the interests of God and every person who has ever lived hinged on him at that hour there is a task here for which he alone is equal and the head marked out with thorny crown is alone fit to close it close in on that task as the only saviour and to achieve it he who was with

God had to become without God the curse of forsakenness which he experienced so the loneliness wasn't just the loneliness of not having people with him or around him supporting him part of that loneliness was that separation from God that moment that time on the cross as he dealt with our sin as he descended into hell as he bore the curse of our sin upon himself when God himself turned his face away from him and Jesus cried out my God my God why have you forsaken me sin could not have been dealt with if that had not been the case Jesus did have to tread that wine press alone we move on the crown is also the symbol too of God's curse on man's sin we read in

Genesis cursed is the ground for your sake that's what God says to Adam for your sake Adam cursed is the ground it will bring forth thorns and thistles oh Adam instead of yielding pleasant and attractive plants the ground will now give birth to thorns and thistles the first Adam has sinned the first Adam has failed the first Adam now walks on cursed ground handling thorns the last Adam comes to be made a curse and the symbol of the curse the thorns and the thistles become the mark of his sacrifice he not only walks on cursed ground he wears the curse on his brow and what was the essence of that curse it was a desertion an abandonment a withdrawal from the fellowship of the face of



God he who knew no sin becomes sin for us he has to wear this curse and he has to be worn out by this curse he has to bear it and it must be borne away Paul summarizes that for us in Galatians chapter 3 and verses 13 to 14 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us why that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ finally the crown also speaks to us of the full transaction which has been completed in Christ requiring no addition and securing in itself the full redemption for all of

[ 46 : 52 ] God's people the crown speaks of paid in full the head that bowed low under it is now crowned with glory and honor the royal diadem is placed on his brow in glory never again to be removed the crown of thorns is no more it has been dealt with all that it brought to mankind has been dealt with sin and guilt and death that's what he's purchased for his own for those who trust in his finished work of salvation that is what we receive from him on the basis of him carrying that crown of thorns for us he obtains for us a crown of life and that's promised in scripture for all those who love him for all those who submit to him for all those who give their lives to him that is the reward that is the payoff and the only reason that it's possible is because he himself was willing to wear the crown of curse for us because the lamb has worn his crown of thorns scripture tells us that he will return as a chief shepherd of his flock to give a crown of glory that will never perish will never fade away to his people■■■■

Ne in top those people in believe in the Are you still under the crown of the curse?

Separated from God? Under God's judgment, under God's wrath? Bearing the symbol of that curse that our forefather Adam made sure was going to be our portion?

Or do you await the crown of blessing? The crown that's it just speaks of. The crown that Jesus brings us and offers us now.

It is one or the other. There is no middle ground. We're either wearing the curse, the crown of the curse, and one day we will have to accept all that that is going to bring upon us.

[ 49 : 53 ] Or we wear the crown, the golden crown, the crown of life, purchased by Jesus through his obedience, through his suffering on the cross.

That crown that, to a degree we've already inherited, it's guaranteed, but we don't receive until that last day when we end up in glory with the Lord himself.

What a coronation that is going to be as God's people go through the portal of death into the presence of God to receive that crown of life, that crown that we've experienced to a degree here in this life, but that inheritance which will not fade away, which is preserved in heaven for us on the basis of Jesus.

And as we live in this world, as we go through life, we are assured, yes, of that eternal victory that is ours, that exaltation that will be ours.

But as well, we can expect the trouble, the hassle, sometimes even the hatred that Jesus himself experienced.

[ 51 : 17 ] We can experience it to a degree. We are like the master. We suffer to a degree in the way that he suffered if we walk in his footsteps.

In this world, we walk the footsteps, risking isolation, risking shame. We live in a world which no longer really has any time for Jesus, would happily crucify him again and again and again.

And I suppose our options are to keep silent, to just kind of blend into the background. But I don't think that's what he would want us to do. I think he would want us to stand firm, stand strong, accept the shame that it brings to us.

There is no other way for us. If we claim to follow our crucified king, we know full well what the world makes of our crucified king, what the world thinks of our crucified king.

But in the end, does it really matter? We thank God today for the life we've found in his crucified king, who will return to reign in victory.

[ 52 : 43 ] And as the hymn puts it, the head that once was crowned with thorns is crowned with glory now, a royal diadem adorning, the mighty, victor's brow.

Amen. May the Lord bless to us these thoughts on his word this morning, and may all the praise and honour and glory be to him. We're going to sing together that hymn, crown him with many crowns, the lamb upon his throne, hark how the heavenly anthem drowns, all music but his own.

now wake my soul and sing of him who died for thee, and hail him as thy chosen king through all eternity.

Crown him with many crowns, the lamb upon his throne, hark how the heavenly anthem drowns, all music but its own.

Awake my soul and sing of him who died for thee, and hail him as thy matchless king through all eternity.

[ 54 : 20 ] Crown him the Lord of life, who triumphed o'er the grave, and rose victorious in the strife for those he came to save.

His glory now we sing, who died and rose on high, who died eternal life to bring, and lest that death may die.

Crown him the Lord of love, behold his hands and side, rich ones yet visible above, in beauty glorified.

All hail, Redeemer, hail, for thou hast died for me, thy praise shall never never fail throughout eternity.

Go in peace and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, rest and abide with us all and with all those we love, now and forever more.

[ 56 : 04 ] Amen.