

I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to Repentance

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Date: 12 March 2023

Preacher: Malcolm Macdonald

- [0 : 00] Welcome to service this morning as we come before God in worship we pray that he would bless us together under the sound of his word.
- We're going to begin singing some verses of Psalm 51, Psalm 51 from the beginning and we're going to sing to verse 7.
- Psalm 51.
- I shall be whiter than the snow and so on. We can sing these verses. Psalm 51 from the beginning. After thy lovingkindness, Lord, have mercy upon me.
- After thy lovingkindness, Lord, have mercy upon me.
- [2 : 02] For thy compassion they brought out on my equity.
- Me cleanse from sin and truly watch from my iniquity.
- For my congratulations, Lord, have mercy. My goodness, my sin I ever see.
- Can't live thee only a horizon. And thy sleep vote, please share.
- that when the gifts of Jesus and Pranger and violence Amen.
- [3 : 58] Amen. Amen.
- Amen. Let us join together in three.
- Let us pray. Amen. The eternal and ever-blessed God as we come before you. At this time we pray that you would bring your own presence home to us.
- So that we would not think that we are simply conducting an act of worship with a God who is not present. A God who is remote from us.
- A God who is disinterested in us. But rather that we would understand that there is never a place where you are not to be found.
- [6 : 08] That you are a God who is omnipresent. The God who is the God of this heaven, this earth, this world and any other world that may exist that requires your presence.
- And even those places where we imagine the expanse of the universe to be something remote and undistinct and with no living creature to show interest in anything that goes on there.
- And yet if we believe that you are God who is not to be found. We believe that you are God who created all things. We must also conclude that just as surely as you created this world, you also created other worlds also.
- You created the planets, the stars. You created the moon and the sun. And you created all things. And if it means all, it means all.
- So help us to appreciate the greatness, the vastness of your being. You cannot be embraced within the circumference of our limited understanding.

[7 : 37] We try and assemble our thoughts and bring them to bear upon the mysteries that your word presents to us. And we foolishly conclude that we can contain God within that limited space.

And we know that there are many individuals who occupy this world at the present and in the past. And no doubt in the future if such exists that they have a vast capacity for knowledge and for assembling it and retaining it.

And yet in some of these people's experiences they do not contain God or in any way think of God as being something that they can believe in or put their trust in.

But we give thanks for those who have such a marvelous capacity for knowledge and its retention.

For the power to reason and the power to understand the way this world functions and what lies behind it and what lies within it.

[9 : 13] That amongst such there are those who have put their trust in God. And it does not fly in the face of their own reason or rational understanding of how things work.

So help us to believe that we are in the presence of God. Worshipping a living God and believing your ability and will to bless us far more than we are willing to seek that blessing.

Remember each one of us here today. Bless our service together. Bless the word that we will read. That we have sung and will sing. Bless our thoughts upon it and enable us to grasp the truth as it is meaningful to ourselves.

To understand that you are speaking to each of us personally. Not just as those who are here while you speak to others. Some may think that they are in this company but yet they are not part of that company in the sense that they believe that you have anything to say to them.

We know that that is not so. Because your word decrees otherwise. That we cannot in any way be in the presence of your word without it accomplishing that which you have purposed for it.

[10 : 42] We pray that you would remember all who are unable to be with us because of the infirmities of the flesh. Those who are unwell. Those who are suffering from the effects of old age.

Some confined to their homes. Some confined to homes appointed for their care. We pray for your blessing upon them. We remember those in hospital and pray for those who are responsible for caring for the sick.

In these places and those who are being cared for within these places. Bless doctors and nurses and all who are given these gifts to do for the needy.

What they cannot do for themselves. Remember the grieving and sorrowful amongst us. From time to time your voice is heard. Sometimes from afar and sometimes in close proximity to ourselves.

Sometimes closer than we would ever wish it to come. Lord help us to recognize we are body and soul. Flesh and blood and that which we see will often make us think that we are permanent fixtures on the sin of time.

[12 : 03] But that is the foolish heart that says that to us. Remember all who are here who may have thoughts that are meaningful about their own eternal destiny.

Sanctify these thoughts to them we pray. We ask that you would remember those who proclaim the gospel today. And remind all manner of people that there is a saviour in heaven and there is a need for him.

And that they may hear the word that would encourage them to put their trust in such a saviour. We pray for the congregations this weekend that are remembering the death of Jesus Christ until he come.

Bless them in their remembrance of the sacrifice for sin once offered to make satisfaction to a holy God.

We pray that you would bless their remembrance. Bless those who do so by faith. May their faith be nurtured and encouraged. We pray for those who have yet to put their trust in Christ.

[13 : 17] Even though they may have so done in a measure. Yet they are trembling and uncertain with regard to the knowledge that they have. Whether it is indeed a saving knowledge or not.

Open the eyes of their understanding we pray. Even if such are amongst our own people here. Encourage any to look unto Jesus as the one who initiates faith.

And who conducts faith until it reaches its ultimate end. Which is the safe haven that awaits those who are Christ's.

When he ushers them into their long home. To be with him which is far better. We pray for all who are nearing the end of their earthly journey.

And we pray that those who are like some in the eleventh hour. With sin darkened souls.

[14 : 20] That they can come to know God in Christ Jesus. Those who are in the eleventh hour. Even on their deathbed. Assailed by doubt.

As the enemy of the soul. Conducts his last throws. In their hearts and minds. So it seems to us. An incredible situation to be in.

That the saint of God. Who has had a lifetime of. Walking in the footsteps of their loving master. That rather than being conducted by angels.

Into the peace of God. That is without equal. That they will be in the storms. And in the trials. As they make their way there.

We pray that you would be near to them. And keep them from the enemy. And we ask that with all certainty. That you are able to drive him on his heels.

[15 : 20] And we pray that you would bless the gospel. To the four corners of the earth today. Remember our nation that has neglected it. Forgotten much of what was proclaimed by it.

Remember our parliaments. That were once known. For the many that were part of the law making. Body of men and women.

That they feared the Lord. And that was to be seen. In the way that they conducted themselves. In public and in private. Now there are so few.

And that few are constantly under attack. As if what they are. And what they believe. Is to be despised. Lord help us to bear all who fear thee.

To prayer. And to bear each one of them up. As individuals. And collectively. As a believing people. Remember the royal household.

[16 : 26] The king and his family. Remember the various nations of the earth. With their parliaments. And where they are. And where they are. The republicans.

Or kingdoms. We care not. Because there is but one king. That is King Jesus. And you are lord.

And king over a sovereign. Over all things. Remember these nations. Especially. Where there are turmoil. Where there is turmoil. And trouble. Where there is war.

Where there is. The aftermath of war. Where there is. The suffering. That arises out of. Of this world.

Under the curse of God. And trembling. At the approach to judgment. Where there are earthquakes. And storms. And all kinds of natural disasters.

- [17 : 24] That are harbingers of. The day that will come. Which is the great day. And the dreadful day of the Lord. Hear our prayers. Grant to his wisdom.
- To wait upon you. Even in our meditations. Cleanse from sin. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
- Amen. I am going to read. From the scriptures. Of the New Testament. And the gospel. Of Jesus Christ. According to Luke. The gospel. Of Jesus Christ.
- According to Luke. Chapter 5. And we can read. From verse 16. To the end. Luke chapter 5.
- Verse 16. And Jesus withdrew himself. Into the wilderness. And prayed. And it came to pass. On a certain day.
- [18 : 23] As he was teaching. That there were. Pharisees. And doctors. Of the law. Sitting by. Which were come. Out of every town. Of Galilee.
- And Judea. And Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord. Was present. To heal them. And behold. Men brought in a bed. A man which was taken.
- With a palsy. And they sought. Means to bring him in. And to lay him before him. And when they could not find. By what way. They might bring him in.
- Because of the multitude. They went upon the housetop. And let him down. Through the tiling. With his couch. Into the midst. Before Jesus.
- And when he saw their faith. He said unto him. Man. Thy sins are forgiven thee. And the scribes. And the Pharisees. Began to reason.
- [19 : 19] Saying. Who is this. Which speaketh blasphemies. Who can forgive sins. But God alone. But when Jesus. Perceived their thoughts.
- He answering. Said unto them. What reason ye. In your hearts. Whether it is easier. To say. Thy sins. Be forgiven thee. Or to say. Rise up and walk.
- But that ye may know. That the son of man. Hath power upon earth. To forgive sins. He said. Unto the sick. Of the palsy. I say unto thee. Arise. And take up thy couch.
- And go. Into thine house. And immediately. He rose. Up before them. And took up that. Whereon he lay. And departed.
- To his own house. Glorifying God. And they were all amazed. And they glorified God. And were filled with fear. Saying. We have seen strange things. Today. And after these things.
- [20 : 16] He went forth. And saw a publican. Named Levi. Sitting at the receipt. Of custom. And he said unto him. Follow me. And he left all.
- Rose up. And followed him. And Levi made him a great feast. In his own house. And there was a great company. Of publicans. And of others.
- That sat down with him. But their scribes. And Pharisees. Murmured. Against his disciples. Saying. Why do you eat. And drink.
- With publicans. And sinners. And Jesus answering. Said unto them. They that are whole. Need not a physician. But they that are sick.
- I came not to call the righteous. But sinners. To repentance. And he said unto him. Why do the disciples of John. Fast often. And make prayers.
- [21 : 12] And likewise. The disciples of the Pharisees. But thine eat and drink. And he said unto them. Can you make the children. Of the bride chamber. Fast. While the bridegroom.
- Is with them. But the days will come. When the bridegroom. Shall be taken away. From them. And then. Shall they fast. In those days. And he spoke also.

A parable unto them. No man putteth a piece. Of a new garment. And garment. Upon an old. If otherwise. Then both the new.

Maketh a rent. And the piece. That was taken out. Of the new. Agrieth not. With the old. And no man putteth new wine. Into old bottles.

Else the new wine. Will burst. The bottles. And be spilled. And the bottles. Shall perish. But new wine. Must be put. Into new bottles.

[22 : 10] And both. Are preserved. No man. Also having drunk. Old wine. Straight away. Desireth new. For he saith.

The old. Is better. Amen. And may the Lord. At his blessing. To this reading of his word. And to his name. Be the praise.

Well boys and girls. I hope. That you'll be able. To go to. Your Sunday school. Today. We. We have light. But only natural light.

And we're glad of it. It's amazing. How. Dependent. We are. Upon. The. Wonders. Of modern science. And when they go wrong.

We. We really. Struggled. But. Those of you. With hearing aids. Probably. If you're. If you're. Depending on. The microphone.

[23 : 07] It's not going to work. So you'll have to switch back. To. Whatever device. You use. To hear it. Ordinarily. That's just a bit of advice. I don't know how these. Things are. But.

Anyway. For boys and girls. You're going to be looking. Today. I hope. But. Another miracle. And there are many miracles. That.

That you find. In the Bible. That Jesus was. Responsible for. And we read about. Some of them. Here today. But this miracle.

Is not in the New Testament. But in the Old Testament. And it's. I would say. In a whole. Host of different miracles. A number of them.

Although. There's only one. That really stands out. That is. When. God. When. God. Led. Led. His people. Out of. Egypt.

[24 : 06] And took them. To the Red Sea. And. The Red Sea. Opened. Before them. And. They were able. To walk across. The Sea.

Now. That is something. That the Bible. Tells us. Happened. And it's amazing. How many people. Who even. Believe. Themselves.

To be Christians. Who try. And explain. Something. That God. Did. Miraculously. And give.

A natural. Explanation. For it. And. I'm sure. If you try. Hard enough. You can find. Natural. Explanations.

For. Many. Of. The miracles. That Jesus. Did. And. Some people. Insist. That that's. The only. Explanation. But.

[25 : 03] I said. There were. Several. Things. That happened. The main. One. I suppose. Is. The parting. Of the Red Sea. But. If you read. The story. Carefully. You find.

In that. Story. Of. The children. Of Israel. That. At that point. In the telling. Of the story. God. Performs. Ten.

Miracles. He sent. Ten. Plagues. Into Egypt. And. The Egyptians. Are affected. By these. Plagues. The last.

One. Of these. Plagues. Is the plague. Of death. Of the firstborn. The angel. Of death. Passes over. The. Kingdom. Of.

Egypt. And. Every. Household. That are not. Believers. In God. Are affected. By it. Because. Those who. Believe in God.

[25 : 58] Are prepared. So that. When the angel. Of the Lord. Comes. They are protected. In the way that God. Gave them. Protection.

But that's. A whole host. Of different things. And they're all miracles. And then. As opposed. To some miracle. That. Pharaoh.

Allowed. The children. Of Israel. To leave. He permitted. Them. To leave. And they go away. And. They know. Where they're going. And yet.

Miraculously. God. Directs them. On. A route. That takes them. To the Red Sea. Ordinarily. They would have. Followed. A path.

Death. Because. They knew. Where they were going. But the path. That they were going on. Was going to take them. Through the land. Of the Philistines. And God. Miraculously.

[26 : 53] No other way for it. He directed them. Out of the way. They would have gone. To the Red Sea. Now the reason. He did that. They probably.

Didn't understand it. But God. Knew. That. They had been so long. In Egypt. They had never. Encountered. In their lifetime. What it was like. To. Take a baron.

Against. Soldiers. Who were trained. In battle. And that's what they would encounter. If they had gone. Through the land of the Philistines. And God. Spared them that.

By. Miraculously. Guiding them. To go to the Red Sea. Again. That. He. Led them. To that place. By way of miracle.

He put. A cloud. Before them. By day. And a pillar of. Fire. By night. That wasn't.

[27 : 48] Something that was ordinary. It wasn't. Something that was. Explained. In natural ways. That's the way. He. He guided them. He put. The angel of the Lord.

Before them. Directing them. In this way. And then. Shortly afterwards. He. Put the same cloud. On the same pillar. Behind them.

To hide them. From the eyes. Of the. Pursuing. Egyptians. So. When you look at this story. I'd like you to read it for yourself.

See. How many things. Happened. That are extraordinary. It's a good thing for you to do. On a Sunday afternoon. Take your Bible. Read these chapters.

For yourself. And see how many. Miracles. You can count. Maybe when we read the story. We only think of one thing. That God does. But God is always at work.

[28 : 46] In different ways. Sometimes we. We lose sight of. The things. That he does. Because we're so taken up. With the great things. And we say. Well if it's not a big thing.

It's not God. That's not true. Sometimes. God. Work in ways. That. That we cannot. Probably. Do not. Want to believe. That it's him.

But it is. Anyway. The big miracle. Moses. Is told. Hold out your hand. He said to Moses. And. The sea. Divided.

There was a wall. Of. Sea. On both sides. And the. Children of Israel. Were able. To walk across. With their. Feet dry. An east wind.

Blew from. All night. And this is. What happened. And some people say. Oh well. That's the reason for it. The east wind. Brought about this. Natural occurrence. Which was so rare.

[29 : 39] But. But maybe it happened. Before. Maybe it happened. Afterwards. Maybe not so. So. Major an event. But. We're told in the Bible. God did this. He parted the sea.

It was as a wall. Around them. And the children of Israel. God's people. Walked across. With their feet. On dry ground. And after they were across safely.

God. Again. Performed a miracle. He slowed the Egyptians down. Who were chasing after them. Because. They regretted. They had lost their free servants.

They had lost their slaves. They would be lost without them. So they went after them. And they thought they would catch them. And bring them back. But God. Had other ideas.

So when they were. Across. On the sand. On the dry bed of the sea. The walls. Of the sea. Came down on top of them. And we are told.

[30 : 38] That they were drowned. And. God. Did that. God did that. Because. Not because. He. He was.

He was. A vindictive God. Or because. He was. An angry God. But because. He was a holy God. And because. He was a holy God. The defiance.

Of. The Egyptian. People. Against. The name of God. And the people of God. Was something. That he said to them. That he would not allow.

To happen. Or to. Go without. Punishment. The story. Is of a God. Who is mighty. To do great things. And the miracles.

That he does. Are there. In the Old Testament. As surely. As in the New. But you know. That he does miracles. Today. He does miracles.

[31 : 32] Today. In bringing. Sinners. Who are dead. In trespasses. And sin. To life. We'd like to see him.

Do more of it. But there are. Sinners. Today. Who are. Spiritually. Dead. Unable. To. Hear. God's word.

Or answer. To the word of God. As it comes to them. But God. Brings him. To life. And that's a miracle. And any person.

Who has. Experienced that. Knows it's a miracle. Because they know. How dead. They were. And if they don't. I don't believe that they're alive.

Today. If they don't know. How dead they were. Once. If they don't remember. How dead they were. Once. I think there's something. Far wrong with them. I don't think they've ever.

[32 : 28] Enjoyed. The privilege. Of God's miracle. Performed. In their experience. Well I hope. Boys and girls. That you will. Not only. Be an eyewitness.

To miracles. And I think. There are people here. And that's all you've been. You might know people here. And you remember. What they were like.

Before this miracle. Took place. And you look at them now. And you say. Well. Something happened. In that person's life. They're no longer. What they were.

Where. And. The only explanation. That's. Really. Worth making. Or believing. Is that something. That happened. Happened.

Because of God. And what he did. But it's one thing. Being a witness. To it. It's another thing. Experiencing it.

[33 : 24] And that's what I would want. For you. Each one of you. That you would experience. The miracle. Of God's. Saving grace. In your life.

We're going to sing. As you go out. To Sunday school. Verses from Psalm 139. Verse. Seven.

Psalm 139. Verse. Seven. From thy spirit. Whither shall I go? Or from thy presence fly? Ascend thy heaven.

No thou art there. There if in hell I lie. Take I the morning wings. And dwell in utmost parts of sea. Even there Lord. Shall thy hand me lead.

Thy right hand hold. Shall me. If I do say that darkness. Shall me cover from thy sight. Then surely shall the very night. Above me. Be a slight.

[34 : 22] We'll sing to verse 14. From thy spirit. Whither shall I go? From thy spirit.

Whither shall I go? Or from thy presence fly?

Ascend thy heaven. Though thou art yet. There if in hell I lie.

Take I the morning wings. When sanguine.

In utmost parts of sea. If there Lord. If there Lord.

[35 : 27] Shall thy hand me lead. Thy right hand hold.

Shall me. If I do say.■ manage. Bye. While must have done. When darkness shall me.

wizards. sistone may■ fain as light, yea, darkness I have known from thee, but night, O shine and day, to thee the darkness of the light, are both of mine your head.

For thou possess it has my reign, and thou hast the mercy.

When I was in my mother's womb, enclosed walls by thee, thee with my grace are fearfully and this remittance.

[37 : 44] Thy works are marvelous, and I dwell my soul, and I dwell my soul, and I dwell my soul, and I dwell my soul, and I dwell my soul, and I dwell my soul, and I dwell my soul, and we're going to read verse 32.

I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

I don't think there is a preacher who preaches the gospel at any time in their life that they're not persuaded that there is a need for the message of the gospel to be heard and believed.

I would sincerely hope that that is the case, that anybody who is under the impression that they are called to preach the gospel, that they do so because they are convinced that the gospel is something that people need to hear.

And if that thought is not there, then they should try some other job, try some other activity, because the preaching of the gospel has in its heart the understanding that there is a need for the sinner to hear about salvation as it is in Christ Jesus.

[39 : 52] And I suppose the longer you preach the gospel, the more convinced you are of that. This week, again, I was standing at that graveside and it's something that as a minister of the gospel, I have to do from time to time.

And I do make it my business at that moment as we stand with family and friends of whoever it is whose body is being laid to rest in the grave, I try and speak to all who are present about the need for salvation because of this one thing, that that person that is being laid to rest is now no longer my business.

I can't speak to that person anymore. If I knew them or not, I can't. It's beyond my reach. I can't bring the gospel to them.

I can't speak of Christ to them. I can't tell them anything that they now know for themselves that the grave is not the end, that death is not the end.

It is the end of their experience of living in this world and the eternal experience is something quite different.

[41 : 37] But I find so often when I stand there trying to to the best of my ability to speak to the people who are there about Christ, the only thing that I can resemble it to is if I look at these gravestones around me and I were to take a rubber ball and throw it against these stones, you know what would happen.

The ball will come straight back at you. Well, that's how I feel my words are so often. People are there so hardened in their sins, so hardened in their thinking that they have it all in this world and the world to come has nothing whatsoever to say to them.

But that is not the way it is. The grave is not the end. It is where the dust will be put to rest because there is a day coming when Christ will come to judge the world and those who are in the grave will rise and they will hear the words of Christ commending them or condemning them.

And what we do in this world before that time is all important. I read recently in the late Mulder Macaulay's book he is talking about the coming of the gospel to these islands and he is saying there were at that time in the 1800s 1900s there were ministers of the gospel there were preachers who were employed to preach the gospel they preached God's word they preached the truth of God but many of them the word was not meant to quicken or enliven those who were under it what he said under their preaching was none were killed and none were made alive and what he meant by that was the preaching of the gospel is meant to stir you up but is meant to make you think about your soul it is meant to make you think about your relationship with

Christ if you have one and if you don't in this passage we read Jesus was there he was condemned why was he condemned he was condemned because he dared to sit with those who were sinners he dared to sit in the company of those who were considered the dregs of society in the eyes of the spiritually pure and they condemned him for it and yet if you were to ask them what did you do for these sinners souls what did you say to them about their eternal destiny what did you say to them about their encounter with God did you say to them go on as you are

[45 : 20] I don't care remain in your ignorance I don't care go to my lost eternity I don't care that's exactly the way they were Jesus we are told came into the world to seek and to save the lost he came into the world as these words tell us to to bring sinners to repentance now that is the crux of the matter I realize that with the heating off it's going to be cold in here I'm not going to keep you long but I do want you to take with you thoughts concerning your own soul that Christ wishes you desires you commands you even to consider yourself a sinner in need of repentance in need of turning your back on your sin and turning your face to him and seeking salvation at his hand life but that thinking is not the thinking that we have in the

Bible that's not the truth that God lays before us in his world what is in the world is sin what sin does is affects a relationship preeminently with God you know when people even Christians talk about what is your Christianity all about what do you expect from your Christianity and they might acknowledge oh well sin came into the world and when sin came into the world what happened was we lost our happiness and we lost our our comfort and they think of all the things that they consider to be of import and they think these are the things that are going to be restored these are the things that are going to be brought back into the relationship of men and women who experience Christianity but I believe the theologian Rabbi Duncan was more accurate in his understanding when sin entered into the world the main thing that happened was this the relationship that existed between God and man was changed and that relationship is all important not your happiness not your comfort not the joys that life brings your way all of these things you may have or you may be without but if your relationship with God is not the way it should be that is what will be at the heart of the encounter that you have with him at the last

Jesus was speaking to men and women of every description he didn't exclude any but he wanted them to understand that salvation was his business well we understand I hope every one of you heard it often enough that we are sinners and I don't think we understand it all as much as we could or should I was trying to think about this and the experience of sin entering into the world as it applied to our first parents I've often said it and I don't mind saying it again I cannot use my imagination to think about life before sin in the experience of Adam and Eve because I've never had that experience

I have never been alive for one moment in this world except as a sinner under God's condemnation under God's judgment even even as an infant that's the way you were even before you're able to rationalize or reason the processes that affect your existence are sinful and yet our first parents Adam and Eve were placed in the garden of God by God to tend the garden to enjoy the garden to do all the things that God gave them to do and take delight in them especially to enjoy his company but then sin came and you read that story for yourself and you'll see how deliberate it is pointing out the way that sin entered into the heart of Eve and into the heart of Adam and how

God judged them individually and the curse was introduced to them they highlighted the effect of it it is almost like like the bell of doom ringing in their ears this is the fruit of your sin hear it now and you'll experience it all your life and you'll endure it all eternity unless you repent they were put out of the garden God did that he removed them from the very place that he had placed them and that was the consequence of their sin and we are reminded within the scripture that man and woman are under that displeasure of God I think it's an awful passage awful in the sense of what it says to us in the book of Ezekiel it reminds us of of a of the effect that sin has on on the lives of of people in the world who are under

[53 : 19] God's just condemnation Ezekiel chapter 18 it's quite a lengthy passage but it reminds us of of how God sees the sinner how God sees sin you see sin I see sin and we trivialize it we belittle it we think it of no consequence the soul that sinneth it shall die the soul shall not bear the iniquity of the father neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him but if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed and keep all my statutes and do that which is lawful and right he shall surely live he shall not die all his transgressions that he hath committed they shall not be mentioned upon him unto him in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die saith the

Lord God and not that he should return from his ways and live and so on you read it for yourself the great promise of the gospel the great blessing of gospel repentance repent ye repent ye why should you die saith the Lord well the question is have you repented would you know if you had repented do you know what repentance is well there's a difference between what is legal repentance and what's called evangelical repentance the two words legal and evangelical may give a hint as to what is meant by it you may listen to the gospel and repent legally for a time that is usually temporary

God's word says you're a sinner your heart says yes I am God's word says you should be sorry for your sin your heart says yes I am and there it ends that's the end of it you go on and the same sin and the same sorrow may well occur yet again and again and again but it's not meaningful it's not lasting it's not a sense of the sin that makes you feel your sorrow but that somebody has pointed it out to you I'm sure there are some of you here who have known what it's like to get up on a Saturday morning and you're full of recriminations and remorse because your head is splitting and your stomach is churning and you're thinking to yourself I must have had too much to drink and

I must have said something done something been somebody and I can't remember where and you're saying never again never again and you're genuine in your statement maybe not to anyone else but under your breath you're saying that that's not repentance that's simply remorse that's simply feeling sorry for yourself that's simply identifying something that was wrong and you're trying to put it right in your own strength but it will not secure the favor of God because it is not something that has turned you to God you remain with your face away from God and it will take no well how long before you do the same thing again and how many people have had these same experiences legal repentance there's sorrow for sin legal repentance there's an awareness of danger perhaps spiritual danger but theologians will tell you that sin is seen at that moment from a selfish perspective it is you know

I hesitate to bring politicians into it but we've been heartsick of the likes of what is nothing other than a legal repentance from the mouth of those people who have been found out they've been found out and they come with their apologies and they come with their crocodile tears and they come with all kinds of excuses but is it heartfelt is it genuine is it something that makes them turn to God because of their weakness that comes from their sinfulness and inability to cater for it to deal with it without God's help is it ever acknowledged as such no fear no fear evangelical repentance is something that makes you feel genuine sorrow because of the sin itself because of the offense that it causes not you preeminently not others preeminently but God it is a sense of the offensiveness that there is to the eyes of a holy God your desire at that moment is to flee from your sin to God and to embrace him in the provision that he has made in the gospel by way of

[59 : 57] Christ that is genuine evangelical repentance why do you go to Christ oh because of your need of Christ yes you understand that but there is more in it than that for you no Christian who repents of their sin has anything other not just an understanding of who Christ is and what Christ has done for them but an understanding that their love for him is what must lie at the heart of their actions no ulterior motives one final thought have you repented if not why not Christ insisted that a sinner repent of their sin how will you know well

I'll tell you some of the things that will tell you that you're genuine your repentance is genuine I'll tell you what Christ does he breaks your heart he breaks your heart why does he want to break your heart because he wants to heal your heart and he knows that the best way of healing your heart is to break it and bring you to a sense of what your sin is in his sight he breaks the heart of the sinner so he can heal it he breaks it so that he can show you what your sin is like and how odious and how corrupting it is have you ever gone to the cross have you ever gone to the cross as a sinner who has yet to repent well if you were to go and if your eyes were on

Christ what would you see well the eye of the sinner who has experienced repentance would see somebody nailed to the cross and the sins that put in there were no other sins than your own the nail pierced hands and feet were nail pierced hands and feet by reason of not somebody else's sins but yours the crown of thorns that made his the blood stream down his face who put it on his head you the sinner whose sins he is bearing in his body they're your sins they looked upon him that was pierced and they mourned for him their mourning was the mourning of those who saw their sins on the body of

Christ sin that's repentance that's sorrow that's sadness and grief godly sorrow resulting in life and that's what we need Christ Jesus came into the world to seek and to save the lost to bring the sinner to repentance but he can do it he can do it and not only can he do it but he has to do it he has to do it for you he has to do it for every one of us every single one of us will go to that grave and that sins that arouse will be carried with us to the grave and we will answer to him for them if they are not confessed if they are not repented of if they are not laid upon his body on the cross they will be there to meet us on the great day of judgment and may

God bless these few thoughts let us pray O Lord our God we give thanks that your word reminds us of the need that we have to repent of our sins grant to us that evangelical repentance pour out your spirit upon us so that each one of us would cry out what must I do to be saved and seek that salvation at your hand open the eyes of our understanding that we cleanse from sin in Jesus name amen going to conclude singing some verses from Psalm 147 Psalm 147 from the beginning four stanzas praise ye the Lord for it is good praise to our God to sing for it is pleasant and to praise it is a comely thing God doth build up Jerusalem and he it is alone that the dispersed of Israel doth gather into one those that are broken in their heart and grieved in their minds he healeth and their painful wounds he tenderly abounds he counts the number of the stars he names them every one great is our

[66 : 20] Lord and of great power his wisdom search can none these verses praise ye the Lord for it is good praise to the Lord for it is good praise to our God to sing for it is blessed and done to praise it is our call his name God our beloved Jerusalem and the it is our Lord that the end is mercy of

Israel God gather into one those that are broken in their heart and grieve in mind he he does love he ■■■ during mind he counts the Number of the stars He is in Mary one

Great is our Lord And all great Lord His wisdom has come So may grace, mercy and peace From God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit Rest and abide with you all, never and always Amen