

Crumbs from the table

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[0 : 00] Amen. We're a local congregation of God's people in Brighton, but we very much aren't the only! local congregation of God's people in Brighton.

Hover in a big city. We praise God that there are many churches around which are preaching the gospel. And as a church family, we're part of FYEC, Fellowship of Independent Churches, which joins us to various churches nationally.

We're also part of more local Sussex Gospel Partnership, which joins us to gospel churches around our county. And there's a few of them on our doorstep.

So we know we're good friends of Grace Church. We often join together with them. We often are mindful to pray for Southern Cross over in Port Slade. And Phil and I have gone to preach there in the past.

And also Park Hill at Queen's Park. I remember when I arrived at the church, we were particularly supporting their preaching ministry and wondering, how is the church going to keep going?

[1 : 12] How are they going to be led on to the future? And actually, we were really committed to praying for them. And we don't want to lose that commitment, which is why this evening Mark is here to join us.

So do you want to just come to the front, Mark? It would be great for people to meet you. I guess some of us may have been to your induction service, which is, when was that?

September, I think. September. So a little while. Yeah. I should go. Can you just tell us a little bit about yourself?

I don't know what you're going to say. Yeah. I don't know either. Other than your name is Mark. My name is Mark. Well, I wasn't brought up in a Christian home. Can you hear me?

Can you hear me without the mic? You need the mic, yeah? A few feet. It feels a bit topky. A bit deaf. A bit deaf. Shall I speak slowly then to you? Yeah. Okay.

[2 : 13] Yeah. I wasn't brought up in a Christian home. I had no inkling for religion at all, actually. The secondary school, which was in my area where I lived, I wouldn't go because it was a church school.

And not only because of all uniform, but I got told you'd have to carry a Bible. I weren't going to be listening to any Bible thumping. So if you would have said to me, when I was 16, I became a Christian, it was the last thing on my mind.

But God is good. So I was 24 and a half when I became a Christian. It happened very quick. I was talking to you. It's too much to go into now. But God saved me. God opened my eyes.

God revealed himself to me. God has been gracious, merciful, faithful. And it's been quite a few years now. I live in Crawley. I went to Free Bridges Free Church.

Some of you might know that. It's near this station. I was there for 20-something years. I actually got saved at Crawley Community Church, which is a member of the New Frontiers International. So it was a charismatic church I got saved in.

[3 : 10] I went to an Anglican church where I lived for 18 months, which I didn't expect to do that either. We used to borrow their baptistry. And I'd been a bit, what's the word, unsettled at Crawley Community Church.

I went there and we were cleaning out the baptistry. And I didn't want to go there. But I actually got baptised in their baptistry. And the vicar's wife was saying, oh, where do you live? And she kept going on about, oh, if you live in a parish, you should come to the church.

And the worst thing is I left that church with this sort of like feeling in my heart thinking, no. And then I kept bumping into the vicar. You know, he just kept being round every corner. I thought, this is, maybe God is speaking.

So I went there for 18 months, which was then quite different. And then I felt after about 18 months I should move on. And I went to Free Bridges Free Church, which is an FIC church, because I knew somebody who was an elder there.

So I wasn't quite sure what I was going to expect in a Free Church, non-charismatic. But I stayed there for 20-something odd years, though. And then I've been to Park Hill since. Probably somewhere in the middle of the Anglican church and the charismatic church.

[4 : 11] Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Well, I read lots of the Reformation and lots of Puritans. So I guess I've got a Free Church background without realising it.

But I liked John Calvin and all the Puritans. Thomas Manton, Thomas Watson. John Owen. All that sort of stuff. Good guys. Thomas Goodwin. Yeah.

George Twinnock. So how did you end up at Park Hill? How did I end up at Park Hill? Well, we just got this email randomly in our email box saying, could you send anybody to preach, please?

So I was picked. So I said, would you like to go and do it? I thought, well, in for a penny. And I always prepare sermons from scratch.

I never take an old one out of the things. I prayed about it. I went there. I didn't know what I was going to expect and didn't know anybody there. Yeah. It went really well first time.

[5 : 06] I didn't realise they'd put the, they'd tried a few other things to take the place forward. And it wasn't really seeming to be a fit. So they thought they'd just throw out the net and try and get a preacher.

So who came? And they said when they first met me, they thought, hmm, it's probably because I stayed for a cup of tea and a biscuit with them and asked them some questions about themselves. Because I'm not going to miss a free cup of tea.

But they said when I preached there, it seemed that I knew what was going on. I was thinking, well, it does pay them to pray before you actually, you know, pick a sermon. So it just grew that way, really.

And so you've been there sort of full time, is it? Yeah, yeah. Nine months I've been there. So what happened was I went there. Oh, hang on. So it's 25 last year, wasn't it?

24. I think it was June 24 was the first time I went there. And then they started saying, could I give some more time? And I'm working full time. I'm an elder at another church. I'm the bookkeeper at another church.

[6 : 04] Well, no, I got rid of it by then, by God's grace. And I did it for 18 years. So, you know, I must have been glum for a punishment. But I went there. So I said, OK.

I spoke to my brother elders and we talked about it. And I got a more deeper conviction. They only had one problem. They had got no money. But I had saved up some money.

And I was working for Royal Mail. I was thinking of leaving there on a couple of occasions. But God's grace kept me there. And then it started to dawn on me. And then they started to feel the same way.

And I said, well, we could give it a year and see how it goes. So we're nine months in. We did a memorandum of understanding that we have to give each other three months.

So that time is now. So you need to know where we are now, don't you? Well, yes, I guess that leads us on to... Nicely. We want to pray for you guys. And we want to keep praying for you guys.

[7 : 01] Do you want some highlights of what's happened? What's the big prayer point then? Oh, the big prayer point is to pray that the Spirit of God will come and he will save and convict people. Oh, amen. Because that's the only way it's going to grow.

Amazing. You know, I've seen a number of people who are on the fringe of the church who are loosely connected with it. I think with things like COVID.

And they've got mental health issues, et cetera. And they live alone for a lot of time. They get into a slourd despond. And over this nine months, I've seen them really come alive.

People are saying they look like completely different people. God has been working with them. I meet with some of them. I ring with some of them. We leafleted before Easter. We thought we'd get 500 leaflets and see how far we'd get.

We leafleted. And we had somebody come along. Hey. And they were down Tilston Street. So Park Hill, if you know where it is, going towards the opening of Queen's Park. Tilston is the next road.

[8 : 01] So she came. And I was saying to them, look, we need to see God do something before the end of March for me to think, well, it's worth staying here. So, of course, God in his great style in

March had the lowest attendances throughout the month.

I think this isn't going very well. And then Easter, I'm there. I go out the door. I just try and chat to anybody who goes by and say morning to them. Because I never knew what went on in churches. So at least they can see I haven't got an eye on my forehead and all that stuff. And so Good Friday, I'm there. And there's all these people start walking in. So we had about four or five visitors and people who come here and there.

So we were over 20, which is huge for us. Wow. Because we had nine last week. But then. Doubled in size. Yeah, we doubled it. And on Easter Sunday, we had the same amount of numbers, but different people coming along as well.

And everybody felt really blessed with the services. So that sort of gave us encouragement. And then we were looking at the finances. And we had a bit of a, there was a bit of misunderstanding. [9:06] We've got a guy who was an accountant. And the two people who asked him, they didn't really check with each other. They'd heard correctly. So he worked out what they had after six months. And they thought it was a year.

So if you can work that out, they thought, oh, we haven't really got any money. So I said, I said to the church at the end of February, I said that if we were a human entity, we're down the creek without a paddle.

End of. But you know what? We belong to God. So we should pray to God that he would do something. So we had a meeting today. And it was planned to sort of say, given the full story, how bad it is.

Because anyway, it turns out they worked out they'd had a misunderstanding of each other. So it was good news. Because I worked in the bank for a while. And whenever we had a sale of some stock, and if you couldn't deliver it, you were in big trouble.

Or you could win. Because you'd have to do a buyback. And then when you came to sell it, if they sold a £10 a share, if you sold it at £8, you've lost £2.

[10:11] You've got to give them money. If it's over the other way, it's good news. So it's like that this morning for everybody. It's actually, we've got more money than you expected. And we've got just about enough for me for a year.

Wow. That's me eating beans and toast, but it's enough for a year. But yeah, so yeah. And we can do some work on the building.

There's a wisdom called with the building, because the building needs everything done, really. It's knowing what is the priority. The wall at the back has got cracks in it on the outside, so it could be structural.

So we're having that looked at first. And the room downstairs, which could be used for stuff if it all took off. Because it's an amazing space. Oh, yeah. But not in good repair.

Well, it was built in 1895, isn't it? So it's quite an old building. And if you haven't been looking after it, all the windows are wood. And I believe there's some sort of order thing that the council have got on it.

[11:12] So if it's got to look like it is, it's not actually listed, but it's some sort of order they've got on it. So it's got to look exactly how it looks now. You can't just take it and put PVC windows in there.

So that's what's going on. Is there anything else? Oh, yeah. We've had answers to prayer as well. Very specific answers from God. I can't really go into some of it because it's sensitive.

But if you were asking God for a particular thing, you're thinking there's no way this is going to happen. And then it just walks through the door and it's bang, bang, bang on the head. So we've got lots of encouragements.

But as I said to him after we had our little financial thing, I said, I want growth. I'm not here to waste a year of my life. I'm here to see growth.

We've got an amazing God. We've got an amazing gospel. And if it had no consequences, yeah, we could be slowful. But it has consequences. For every single human being you look at, they are eternal.

[12:09] So that would be the prayer is that we would actually really have that in our hearts. But when we look at everybody, they need to hear the gospel.

And to believe that our God is a great God. I was preaching from one John. And the only thing I opened up, we were singing an amazing song, And Can It Be, Charles Wesley.

And I said, do you know about this man? Do you know what was going on in the nation? At the time, if you were to give it a newsreel today, you would call them all anarchists, what was going on in this country.

It was not safe to walk in the streets. Did you know that? So you see these little hoods and clap them. That was what it was like all the time. They would get drunk and they would go rioting. There were 150 offenses in which you could be hung in this nation to try and bring some law and order to it. In France, they had a revolution. We were going for a revolution.

[13:10] But we got a different revolution to what you'd expect. I was trying to explain to them the difference between being religious and being born again. I said, Charles Wesley went to Oxford with his older brother called John and another guy called George Whitfield.

Everybody know George Whitfield? Oh, you're treating them well. The amount of people called George Whitfield? Anyway, they belonged to the Holy Club. So they were deeply religious. Fasted twice a week.

Gave money to the poor. Visited the prisoners. But they didn't know God. I said they were called Methodists because it was a nickname. A derogatory nickname because they mapped it out. And they went off John and Charles to America thinking they were going to help them.

And George got saved. Saved. He became born again. Not religious. Born again. Christ lived in him. And God turned the nation upside down.

And I said, who closed the doors on him? The church did. Because he said, you've got to be born again. Born again by the spirit of God. So it's trying to encourage them.

[14:14] We've been in this place before as a nation. And God says, what did God say when Moses said, show me your glory? When he pronounced the name of the Lord, the Lord, the God who is merciful and loving, gracious, loving kindnesses.

Forgiving the sins to the third and fourth generation of those who love him. So we've got to rely that God is going to be gracious and merciful. If he isn't, Park Hill closes.

Yes. Praise God that he is. Yeah. And we've got to pray. Because if you don't pray, God can't answer something you don't ask for. And we would love to pray for you in a moment. But we've had a request that we open up to questions from the floor.

If anybody has any questions about Park Hill. Fire away. I did say to Mark beforehand, people are very nice and will be very kind. And if they're not, then Mark will hold me to that.

David. David. I'll give you a quick clarification. Like you said, you've had finances for a year for you. Is that from Steph? They're going to have to be a members meeting to make it official.

[15:25] It wasn't a members meeting. It was everybody. So we'll have to. So the problem is rather standardly. It's all day of year. Yeah. It's not from February or. Well, somebody said, why don't you start from April to March?

But I agreed to stay there until July. So I'd be happy for it to actually start at the end of July. It should be a done deal in the members meeting when I've got my back turned.

Come on, find my suitcase. I'll put a pulpit. If people speak very loudly, Mark will hear and we'll make sense of it.

I know Parkham used to run a parenting public group in the past. And is it going again or not? Nothing's really much going on in that because the congregation is so small. And nobody, this is what we've been praying for. We've been praying that God will bring some mature Christians in who've got particular gifts because obviously we want to reach out.

[16:37] But it's still, I mean, I've been there nine months and it was, when you think about what it had been, it's getting people infused, getting people praying. But yeah, we want to bring everything back, but it's getting people who've got the time and the ability, really.

Because you could run around like a headless chicken doing everything. So it's pinpointing it, but yeah. Sort of a period of rebuilding, isn't it? Yeah, yeah. But yeah, we've had some key people come.

So we pray that God will bring some more. I was going to ask, really appreciate your seal and earnestness.

You need sort of people around you. Is that happening? Have you got people that can help you, support you, so you're not trying to do everything yourself? I don't do everything myself. I put the line in the sand.

As far as I'm concerned, my main duty is to pray. Then the word, then be with people. I thought, I'm not going down there. Someone said this, this, this.

[17 : 35] I said, well, if there's an appetite and people are going to help, yeah. But it's waiting to see, Phil, what comes along, what God will bring about. Because there's 101 things you could do. You've got to have the right people and the right resource.

But yeah, we need to. But I mean, my support is from Free Bridges still, as in people. You know, I've got some very good friends there and a lot of them are dedicated to praying. And you're still living up in Crawley, aren't you? I am, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. It's after to take off and be a need for me to be here. Yeah. And there are actually swings and roundabouts by being very close and being further away, like everything in life.

Any other questions before we move to prayer? I'll send me. You probably said this, but we came for a year. And now you've extended it.

Sorry? So I didn't extend it all year. It's not happened yet. They're waiting for a members meeting. You've not been there a year yet, have you? No. No, it's nine months.

[18 : 43] Yeah. Yeah. So when I'd actually officially start is up in the air, but it's going to be somewhere between now and the end of the year. Great. Of my time there. How do you feel about that?

Pleased in so many ways. Very humbled, actually, as well. God would want to use me. But, yeah, they're a good bunch.

They are outward looking. And we have some good prayer meetings on the Saturdays, especially. We do two prayer meetings, one online and one in person.

In person is always better. Yeah. We'll see how it goes. I'm hopeful. We've got, you know, God is the only one who can make it work. So it's been much in prayer.

And on that, oh, Steve. This is a different sort of question. I remember a year or two back and I was asking you about being an incorpore, becoming an incorpore charity.

[19 : 44] An IOC. Or CIO. That's the one. Yeah, I think they have done it. That was before my time. They were finishing doing it and getting, I know they've had to do two cents of accounts and stuff like that.

But, yeah, the deeds of the building and things like that, I don't have any idea what they're doing, really. But it has gone through as far as I'm aware. You can be thankful for that.

Can I? From what I've heard. Okay. I'm really thankful. It's an illegal thing, isn't it? Yeah. Good. Shall we pray? Yeah.

Be great for people to be praying for Park Hill. You're welcome to take a seat. Can I ask Phil to lead us off and then I'll close in prayer.

Open prayer? Yeah, open prayer. Yeah, that would be great. Thank you. Heavenly Father, we thank you. You are a great God.

[20 : 39] Nothing is impossible with you. We have prayed for quite a long time that you would bless Park Hill and make a thriving church.

We see things possible and things might happen and we still look to you as the God who nothing is impossible.

We pray that you will do whatever is necessary to make Park Hill a center of gospel. Witness effective in reaching out to that needy area.

Thank you for putting it on my heart to come and serve there. We pray that you will bless and encourage him in his own heart and soul.

We pray that there will be encouragements week by week and month by month. We particularly pray that you will send in those gifts that will enable the ministry to develop and develop strength and all around nature.

[21 : 48] So please will you hear our prayers for the church to grow and grow. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Father God, you have promised in your words that you will build your church and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. Amen. And Father, we pray that you would be doing that as it sounds like you are there at Park Hill.

[25 : 58] Father, thank you for bringing those people in during that Easter weekend. Thank you for Mark and the church getting those Easter flyers out. Thank you for that encouragement of people coming along.

And Father, we pray that you would be graciously drawing people into that place, but even more than that, graciously drawing people to the Savior through the witness of your people there. Father, as we've already prayed, we pray too that you would be raising up more laborers for the Harvestfield over there in Queen's Park. Please strengthen the church with mature Christians, with various gifts that are going to bless that body, Lord.

Father, please, would we continue to hear real great encouragements of how you're building this church.

Be pleased to use your people there for your glory. And please strengthen and encourage Mark in the labors that he's doing there. Thank you for the opportunity that it seems he's going to have to have another year there.

[27 : 08] And we pray that it would be many more years there if that's your will, Lord. And we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Please do send our love and sure Park Hill of our prayers, won't you?

That'd be great. Let's turn to the words. Let's turn to Mark's Gospel. Mark chapter 7. Mark. We're going to read verses 24 to 30 in just a moment.

But before we do that, let's just pray as we turn to hear from the Word of God. Father God, thank you so much that we have your Word open in front of us this evening.

And we ask, please, would we hear your voice speaking and help us to see and rejoice in our great Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. And we ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen. Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it.

[28 : 28] Yet he could not keep his presence secret. In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an impure spirit came and fell at his feet.

The woman was a Greek born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter.

First, let the children eat all they want, he told her. For it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs. Lord, she replied, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.

Then he told her, for such a reply, you may go. The demon has left your daughter. She went home and found her child lying on the bed.

And the demon gone. Something I've discovered since being a parent is these sorts of books. I've knit this one for the crash room, actually.

[29 : 38] That's not my. So this one's, that's not my monster. You go through it and you read, that's not my monster. Its eyebrows are too hairy and there's things for the little ones to touch.

And eventually you get to, that's my monster. Its ears are so fluffy. And then you get to touch nice fluffy ears. When we're reading this passage, And we read verse 27.

And we read Jesus saying, first, let the children eat all they want. He told her, for it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs. You'll be forgiven for thinking, that doesn't sound like my Jesus.

Because what Jesus is saying to this woman, effectively, is that she's a dog. And I say that because he is living amongst Jewish people.

And in terms of Jesus having mercy on people, he's saying, well, first let the children eat all they want. As in, let the people of Israel eat all they want. And then toss the crumbs of the bread to the dogs.

[30 : 52] We'll see more about why he says that in a moment. And we will see that our Jesus is here.

But it does feel uncomfortable when you take that verse on its own. Why are we here? Why are we in Mark 7, verse 24 to 30?

This passage is in my mind for communion because this is where a little phrase comes from in an Anglican prayer that's said during communion.

And sometimes I get us to say it. These words, we are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. You can probably see from the passage how that comes about.

But how do we get to that point? Well, Jesus leaves a Jewish area to go to Tyre, which is a Gentile territory.

[31 : 52] He's sort of hoping to be under the radar. We get that sense, don't we? In verse 24, he wants to keep his presence secret. But as is typical when he wants to try and keep things under the radar, someone or some people are coming to get something from him.

And in this particular situation, we've got this woman who appears in verse 25, whose situation is difficult. Her daughter, her little daughter, who she cares so much about, she's a mother who cares deeply for her child, was possessed by an impure spirit.

She's not getting better, her little daughter. She can't cure her. She can't find anyone to help her. She's desperate. Nothing except for the power of mighty God could help her daughter.

And she hears that one who claims to be mighty God is in the region. And so she comes and she falls down at his feet.

And she begs. I was reminded in preparation of times when we were younger. And if my brother or I got sick for some reason, I remember being so embarrassed by how my mum would pick up the phone to the doctor and insist we got seen for even the smallest sort of thing, she wouldn't take no for an answer.

[33 : 26] And that's surely what this woman is doing. She begs at Jesus' feet. I'm not going to take no for an answer. My little daughter needs help desperately. And it sounds like you're one that can help.

And in fact, in verse 28, she recognizes Jesus is Lord. Lord. And then Jesus says this reply.

This reply that I pointed out in verse 27. This reply that feels rather shocking. First, let the children eat all they want.

But it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs. Children being those amongst Israel and the dogs being the Gentiles. That's what Jewish people would have thought of the Gentiles.

They're dogs. See, a dog was a lovable pet for your average Jewish person. Not like today when you see people wheeling their dogs around in dog prams.

[34 : 35] We love our dogs. They're part of the family. We'll do anything for them. They're cute. But here, dogs are outside.

Dirty. Unclean. Unwelcome guests. You don't want a dog name. And so to call someone a dog was a great offense.

To take bread off children and give it to the dogs would be unthinkable. It would be cruel. Poor children.

But Jesus isn't simply insulting her. In fact, I don't think he's insulting her at all.

I think he's pointing to God's plan of salvation. We know our Bible as well. God's plan of salvation. Salvation first for the Jew and then for the Gentile.

[35 : 34] Abraham was called, wasn't he, to start the nation of Israel. Promises were given to him and his descendants. But there were always promises of blessing for the whole world.

Beginning with the Jewish people and spreading out across the world, across the nations, to every tribe, tongue, and language. And I think this woman has a bit of an idea of that.

I think she has a good theology. And so she's not prepared to give up. She believes there will be something for her from the Lord Jesus Christ. So she picks up Jesus' comment and she's not fazed by it, is she?

Verse 28. Lord, she replied, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs. Yes, sure, you don't take the bread away from the children and give it to the dogs.

But you do find children leave a lot of crumbs under the table. And if you're not sure they do, come round for dinner one day and you'll see that Micah really does leave a lot of crumbs under his little table.

[36 : 51] There is crumbs. In other words, in this context, there is some mercy, even for this woman. There is going to be blessing from the Lord Jesus for her.

She's theologically switched on. There is going to be blessing for her from the Lord, even if it's just a crumb of mercy. Because the Jewish people were always meant to be a light to the Gentiles.

A kingdom of priests to bring people to God. So surely there is some mercy for even me and my daughter, she thinks.

And Jesus sees in her reply what must be to him a wonderful faith-filled response.

Because he says, for such a reply. This is such an astonishing reply. There is some faith in this woman. This is genuine faith. There is some faith in this woman. No messing around.

[37 : 57] Then for Jesus. You may go. The demon has left your daughter. What a relief for this mum who's desperate for her child.

What a miracle. What a blessing. Verse 30. She went home and found her child lying on the bed and the demon gone. Jesus does show mercy.

And to be honest, I feel like for this woman who's just had her daughter's life transformed, it probably feels far more than just a crumb of mercy, doesn't it?

There is crumbs in plentiful supply. For even this woman who is an outsider, a Gentile. Two things that I think I'd love us to take away from this.

One not at all associated with communion. The other very much associated with it. I think we can learn from this instance. Persistent prayer.

[39 : 10] She's a mum who's coming there for her child and she won't go away. Until she gets an answer from the Lord Jesus. Jesus doesn't offer her anything really, does he?

In his reply in verse 27. And yet she continues. And I can imagine she would have stayed there for much longer if she had to. And so it's an example to us, isn't it?

Of the power of persistent prayer. Keep asking. Keep holding on to the Lord. Keep trusting that he is merciful. And surely he will show some, maybe even a crumb of mercy to me in my situation.

And I think this is particularly helpful for those who are parents. Who pray for their children. Who long that God would show mercy to their children.

Sometimes it's years of painful praying. Lord have mercy.

[40 : 23] Change my child's heart. Bring them to yourself. This passage I think says don't stop. J.C.

Ryle. In his commentary on Mark. Thinks the whole thing is about persistent prayer. And he says this to fathers and mothers. And I think it's hugely helpful. Fathers and mothers are especially bound to remember the case of this woman.

They cannot give their children new hearts. This woman could not heal her daughter. But they can give them Christian education and show them the way of life. But they cannot give them a will to choose Christ's service and a mind to love God.

And yet there is one thing they can always do. They can pray for them. They can pray for the conversion of proliferate sons.

I'm not sure what that word is. But someone can tell me later. Who will have their own way and run greedily into sin. They can pray for their conversion of worldly daughters. Who set their affections on things below.

[41 : 32] And love pleasure more than God. Such prayers are heard on high. Such prayers will often bring down blessings. Never, never let us forget that the children.

For whom many prayers have been offered. Seldom finally perish. Let us pray for more of our sons and daughters. Even when they will not let us speak to them about religion. They cannot prevent us from speaking for them to God.

What a wonderful encouragement from a saint of the past. Power of persistent prayer and particular encouragement for parents of children.

Secondly, crumbs of mercy. That's what she asks for, isn't it?

A crumb. Surely there's a crumb for me. Even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumb.

And if I'm a dog in this situation, surely I can eat a crumb.

[42 : 34] She was very much an outsider. No rights, really, spiritually.

No claims spiritually among the Jewish people to be religiously accepted. But she doesn't come here claiming her rights. She doesn't come here saying, look at me.

I deserve something from you. I deserve something from you. But she says, even dogs do get some crumbs. I might not be able to do anything to earn it, but I can surely have some.

Tim Keller says this of this passage. The woman is saying this. Lord, give me what I deserve on the basis of my goodness. She's not saying that.

She's saying, give me what I don't deserve on the basis of your goodness. And I need it now. And what she gets is so much more, isn't it?

[43 : 39] As we've said, her daughter is well. Jesus has been incredibly merciful to her and her daughter. And that's an example of how all of us should come to the Lord Jesus.

In taking this bread and wine, we show our unity together in Christ, therefore we ask that you only take the Lord's Supper if you're in good standing with this church or with your own local church. It's normal for people who are walking in fellowship with Christ and his church to clearly mark their entrance into spiritual life by means of another sign, the sign of baptism.

[51 : 40] Please talk to any of the elders this evening, Phil and I, if that raises any issues for you. Paul, in his instructions to the church in Corinth about this meal, says this.

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you. The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread.

And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, this is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

Extraordinary mercy that he shows to us in giving his whole self, his body, to die in our place.

Extraordinary mercy to his disciples as he breaks that bread and shares it, knowing that that bread, broken, symbolized his own body, which was about to die an awful death.

[52 : 57] And so we come pleading nothing, but the wonderful mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Perhaps just before we continue on in our communion service, just pause and come to the Lord Jesus.

Praise him for the mercy that he's shown to you. And maybe there's some lingering sin. You just want to confess that before him and thank him for his grace to you in that.

So a moment of quiet. And let's use that prayer that we mentioned.

The prayer of humble access. Do join with me in these words. We do not presume to come to this, your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies.

[54 : 52] We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table, but you are the same Lord, whose nature is always to have mercy.

Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat this bread and to drink this wine, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, that we may evermore dwell in him and he in us.

Amen. So as Jesus did, we'll break the bread and we'll share it together, remembering that he said, this is my body given for you.

Corrin will pass it around and our practice is to take a piece of bread. It's gluten-free, by the way.

Hold on to it and we'll all be together in a few moments. Amen.

Thank you.

[56 : 29] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Let's eat and remember the Lord Jesus together.

Thank you. Thank you.

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

[58 : 30] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. covenant in my blood. Do this whenever you drink this in remembrance of me. We'll take the cups, we'll do as we did with the bread, we'll hold on to it and we'll drink together as a sign of our unity in Christ. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Let's drink with thankfulness as we remember Jesus.

[61 : 16] Amen. Paul continues and says, For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

There's a sense in this meal, we're doing three things. We're looking back, remembering what Christ has done for us in the past. We're looking to the present, remembering it, being grateful for God's work in us now, and looking around and seeing that he's been gracious to so many of us, and we're part of his body, but also looking forward.

One day he's coming again. One day he's going to mercifully take us home to be with him forever.

What a wonderful thing. Maybe just two or three of us respond with thankfulness to the Lord Jesus for what he's done before we sing a final hymn.

Please lead us off in prayer. That would be great. Thank you so much.

our students now are saying in our community Lord we praise you and thank you Lord that you and them and you look at us however effective we are we know that