

PM Psalm 51, 1 John 1:1-10, Luke 13:22-30 More of Christ

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Date: 19 November 2023

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- [0 : 00] To follow along with the reading tonight, turn with me then to that psalm we've been singing, Psalm 51. And we'll read the psalm. Its heading is a psalm of David when Nathan the prophet went to him after he had gone into Bathsheba, an event I'm sure many of us will be familiar with in David's life where he commits adultery and sins.
- Psalm 51. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love. According to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions.
- Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I note my transgressions and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.
- Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.
- Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness. Let the bones that you have broken rejoice.
- [1 : 25] Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
- Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.
- Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.
- O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it. You will not be pleased with a burnt offering.
- The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Do good to Zion in your good pleasure.
- [2 : 26] Build up the walls of Jerusalem. Then will you delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings, and whole burnt offerings. Then bulls will be offered on your altar.
- We thank God for his word. We'll turn with me in the scriptures then to the book of 1 John. So the first letter of John, and to chapter 1.
- 1 John 1.
- 1 John 1.
- 1 John 1.
- [4 : 24] 1 John 1. 1 John 1. 2 John 1. We make him a liar and his word is not in us. My little children, I'm writing these things to you so that you may not sin.

But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father. Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins. And not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

And by this we know that we've come to know him. If we keep his commandments. And if you turn over then to the book of Luke.

And to chapter 13. And we're going to read some words of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Where he answers a question that is posed to him. About who will be saved. So Jesus went on his way through towns and villages.

[5 : 28] Teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem. And someone said to him. Lord, will those who are saved be few? And he said to them.

Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door.

And you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door. Saying, Lord open to us. Then he will answer you. I do not know where you come from. Then you will begin to say.

We ate and drank in your presence. And you taught in our streets. But he will say. I tell you. I do not know where you come from. Depart from me.

All you workers of evil. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. When you see Abram and Isaac and Jacob. And all the prophets in the kingdom of God.

[6 : 23] But you yourselves cast out. And people will come from east and west. And from north and south. And recline at table in the kingdom of God. And behold.

Some are last who will be first. And some are first who will be last. Amen. So as we turn to the scriptures tonight then.

We're going to be doing something a little bit different. Shall we say. I'm, as some of you will know. A little bit of a fan of J.C. Ryle.

And if you don't know who he was. He was an Anglican evangelical. Who lived in the 1800s. He's best known for being the first bishop of the city of Liverpool.

A position he was appointed to in 1880. At the age of 64. And a position he held until shortly before he died in 1900. And he left a significant body of writings behind.

[7 : 22] A lot of which is kept in print by the Banner of Truth. Who, as I'm sure most of you know, I work for. Well, this evening I'm going to do something which I hope he would have approved of.

But something that's a touch different. And I've got a part of me that likes to think that maybe it was something he himself once did. So, if you were here this morning, you'll know that this morning was what I would consider to be my norm, so to speak.

In the sense that we took a passage of scripture. One passage of scripture. And we attempted to expound that passage. And to look at the lessons from that passage. And tonight we're going to do something a bit different.

Because we're going to be looking at four different texts. And we'll seek to expound those four different texts. And the point of what I'm trying to do tonight is to remind us of what the gospel is.

And what it is that Christ has done for us. And you might be asking, well, what's the relevance to Ryle? Well, the relevance is this. Just a few weeks ago I was on holiday with my wife.

[8 : 28] And we visited a small town village, really, in Suffolk called Stradbroke. And in Stradbroke is one of the churches that Ryle ministered at before he went on to Liverpool.

And while he was there, he was responsible for a fairly significant renovation of the church. They rebuilt a lot of the church. And one of the things that was done was the replacing of the roof timbers in the roof. And on the crossbeams of the roof timbers, because they're in a sort of A-frame, on the crossbeams of the roof timbers, Ryle had some verses painted on there.

And they're beautifully done. And if you're like me, you go into a place like that. And you have to go and stand in the pulpit that J.C. Ryle once stood in. So you go up there and you stand in that pulpit.

And as you look down the church, you can't help but see these roof timbers right in front of you with their verses on them. And it's those verses, there's four of them on the four main roof timbers.

It's those four verses they want us to consider tonight. Because as I stood there a few weeks ago, I looked out and I saw those four verses and I thought, you know, that makes an outline of a sermon.

[9 : 39] And the four verses are these. By grace are you saved through faith. That's Ephesians 2.8. We have an advocate with the Father, which is 1 John 2.1, which we read a minute ago.

We have redemption through his blood. And that's from Ephesians 1.7. And then the final one, the fourth one, is Luke 13.24 that we read a minute ago. Strive to enter in at the straight gate.

As I say, you can't help but see that when you stand in Ryle's pulpit. And I wonder if perhaps once upon a time, Ryle looked down there, saw those, and thought that's a good outline for a sermon.

And perhaps he preached that sermon. But let me ask you a question. A couple of questions. If you're a Christian here tonight, do you want to see Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ?

Do you want to see the man, the God-man Christ? Do you want to know more of him? Do you want to know more of what he's done for you?

[10 : 41] Do you want to be more like him? And I would trust that if you're a believer here tonight, then you would say yes, yes, yes to those questions. A resounding yes.

Because it's true, isn't it? We should know the incarnate Christ if we're a Christian. And we should know him as our saviour and our friend. We shouldn't just know Christ as some kind of an idea.

Some kind of a philosophy or a theology or a religion. But we should know Christ as the God-man who he was. And who he is now, the risen Christ.

I think we can get sidetracked sometimes by, and unabsorbed, by theology and the doctrines of Christianity. And sometimes we fail to see Christ.

It's a failing. Now don't get me wrong. Theology and doctrine are vitally important. And if you know anything about the banner of truth, you'll know that I wouldn't do the job I do if I thought that they weren't important. But you see, the most important thing though as believers is that we should see Christ.

[11 : 45] That we should know Christ. That we should have a personal relationship with Christ. That we are united with Christ. Because without union to Christ, then theology and doctrine are nothing.

They're pointless. They're nothing more than academic exercise. It's a bit like a preacher who could stand in the pulpit and explain a passage of scripture to us.

And if that's all they do, well they haven't preached, have they? Because they haven't proclaimed anything. They haven't proclaimed Christ. All they've done is lecture.

Or read an essay. Yes, a preacher must explain. A preacher must teach in the context of the scriptures that are being examined. But a preacher must show Christ.

A preacher must proclaim the truths of the gospel. And as we leave a church at the end of a service, we ought to be able to say to ourselves, What did we see of Christ today?

[12 : 48] What vision of the Lord Jesus Christ did the preacher give to me? And if the answer is he didn't really give me any vision of Christ, well that man hasn't preached. And it's what I'd like to do tonight.

I want us to see more of Christ. To see more of his love for us. More of his compassion for us. More of his suffering. More of his victory.

And maybe tonight there's somebody here who is not a believer. And maybe tonight for the first time in your life, you'll see Christ as the one who offers salvation.

The one who alone can save you from your sins and can make you right. With an almighty, holy, sinless God. I'm just coming back to Ryle for just a moment.

There's one other text that you can't avoid when you go into his pulpit in the Scrabbook Church. There's quite a wide ledge that runs around the pulpit in the church. And there's a text that is carved into it.

[13 : 49] And it's the text, Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel. 1 Corinthians 9.16 And you know that's a good reminder for any preacher. It's a good text to have front and centre whenever a preacher goes into the pulpit, isn't it?

It's a compunction to preach the gospel. Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel. And what is the gospel? Well it's Christ, isn't it? It's Christ.

That's the gospel. So let's come to our first verse then tonight. This first beam that you see from Ryle's pulpit. For by grace have you been saved through faith.

Ephesians 2.8 Well of course that verse carries on and it goes on into verse 9. Ephesians, Paul writes, Not only have you been saved by grace through faith, but this is not your own doing.

He writes, It's the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no man can boast. And in many ways this is the heart of the gospel, isn't it? And this is talking about grace.

[14 : 53] Grace is absolutely the heart of the gospel. And this is the gospel that we're compelled to preach. God's grace towards us. Not man's works, but God's grace towards us.

This is the gospel. There's lots of different ways of trying to explain grace. It's, we could say, it's God's favour to the undeserving. It's God giving something to those who don't deserve anything from him.

And in a sense, that contrast, doesn't it, to something that you might be given that you do deserve. But that is not saving faith.

We don't deserve it. So we haven't been given it by God because of anything we've done to deserve it. It's something that God gives to people who don't have any reason to expect anything from God.

Because if we had anything that we had done to deserve salvation, then this gift is not a gift anymore. It's not a gracious gift. It's a reward.

[16 : 02] But that is not what salvation is. Salvation is God's gracious gift. If you had time to read Ephesians 1 and 2, we could have seen clearly set out for us by Paul that if you're a Christian, your salvation indeed is not something that comes from you.

But rather, God in his sovereignty has worked in you. Chapter 2, verse 1, you were dead in sins. That means you're incapable of making yourself alive. But if you read on there in chapter 2, you come into verse 5, but God in his mercy and grace towards you made you alive.

He made you alive. You were dead. He made you alive in his grace and mercy. And our salvation comes about how? Well, it comes about through faith.

But again, that is a gift of God. Our faith isn't a work that we do. Sometimes people say that faith is a work. Well, it's not. Faith is a gift from God.

And Paul emphasizes this. If you read on into verse 9 there, he tells us there's a reason for this. There's a reason why our faith is not a work that we do. It's so that we cannot boast.

[17 : 17] You know, we're human beings. And we're all too quick, aren't we, to boast about what we've done. About our achievements. About what we know.

God made us. God understands us. God knows what we're like. God knows we're very prone to boasting about our achievements.

So what does he do? Well, he puts in place a plan of salvation. And in that plan of salvation, he makes sure that there is nothing in there that will enable us to boast about what we did to secure salvation.

His plan of salvation means that we do nothing. God did it all. Now you sometimes find, if you look at commentaries, theologians get a bit tied up discussing what exactly it is that Paul is referring to when he says, this is not your own doing.

And they say, is he referring to the gift of God? Verse 8. Or is there this grace that is a gift? Or is it salvation that is a gift?

[18 : 26] And they get a bit tied up with some of these things. And to be fair, Paul's Greek leaves things a bit open for discussion. But I would suggest to you, it doesn't really matter. They can discuss that all they like.

Because God's grace, by definition, is a gift. That's what grace is. So by definition, God's grace is a gift. And if salvation is given by grace, which it is, then it too must be a gift, mustn't it?

And if the means of that salvation is faith, which it is, then that too must be a gift. And in the context of verse 9, that faith that affects salvation has to be a gift.

Because otherwise we could boast about it. So the glorious truth then of the gospel, number one, beam number one, by grace are we saved through faith.

And there is nothing there that is our doing. But our second verse tonight, second beam as you look down that church, 1 John 2, 1, we have an advocate with the Father.

[19 : 32] And you know, in many ways, that verse is a wonderful follow-on to the truths of the first verse. This is the good follow-on to the good news of salvation. We're saved, yes.

But what about after that? What comes next? And to understand this, we need to look at the context of what John is writing in 1 John.

And the first thing we need to understand is that John is writing to Christians. He's writing to believers. He's speaking to people who he knows. And he knows something about these people.

He knows they're Christians. That's the implication of the first four verses there that we read in chapter 1. He's writing to believers. It's repeated again in chapter 5, verse 13, where John is closing his letter and he writes there, These things I've written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God.

So he's writing to believers. But there's a problem. There are false prophets at work. And there is, of course, the famous passage in chapter 4 of 1 John about testing the spirits.

[20 : 37] And if you look at the whole book of 1 John and you try to piece things together, you start to get a picture of what was going on. There were false teachers. And these false teachers were teaching that they had no sin.

It was a denial, possibly, of the original sin in man or it may have been a denial of continuing sin in believers. But they certainly were saying that as believers you have no sin.

And whether it was continuing sin they were denying or original sin they were denying, it doesn't really matter. And the reason it doesn't matter is that both of those are wrong. Both of them are wrong.

The Bible couldn't be more clear. We read Psalm 51. We are not born innocent. It's there in Psalm 51. We're not born innocent. It's there again in Romans 5 and 3 for instance.

We're born sinful. We don't need to be taught how to sin. It's in our very nature to sin. Anybody who's ever had children knows you don't need to teach your children to sin, do you?

[21 : 44] It's in their nature. It's human nature. But also, we're not perfect when we're converted. We don't somehow flip a switch and become sinless when we become a Christian.

We never become sinless in this life. That's not something that is possible for us. And even the apostles struggled with sin.

Paul, for instance, I'm sure you know, he writes about his ongoing struggles with sinfulness in his life. And you see, John here, in verses 9 and 10, is correcting or trying to correct this view of sinlessness.

And he's pointing out the great truths of the gospel as he does so. Verse 9, if we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness, he writes.

He says, if we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. We deceive ourselves. And remember, he's writing to believers. He goes on, if we say we have not sinned, we make God a liar.

[22 : 51] Because God says, we're born in sin. And if we read on into chapter 2 there, as we did, I'm writing to you, says John, so that you don't sin.

You see, what John is saying here is the whole point of the Christian life is that our life should glorify God and should bring honour to his name. And the whole point is that we shouldn't sin.

But John is pointing out that the teaching of the false teachers is in itself sin. And that they are teaching error. And so he's writing to these people to point out the error and to say, I'm doing this so that you don't sin.

Because by saying you have no sin, you make God a liar. That's sin in itself. But you see, John's also a pastor. John's a realist.

And John knows that believers still sin. But he knows something else too. And he knows that there is forgiveness of sin. And even when believers do things they shouldn't do and sin against God, he knows there is forgiveness.

[24 : 05] Why does anybody need an advocate? Well, an advocate is somebody, as I'm sure you know, who represents somebody in court. and he seeks to defend a person in court when they're accused of a crime.

We understand that, don't we? Well, for the believer, we're told the Lord Jesus Christ is our advocate to the Father.

And you see, he's uniquely qualified to do that role, isn't he? He's uniquely qualified to plead for our forgiveness because he is righteous. He is sinless. Now, I'm sure there have been many lawyers, advocates, who've pleaded the case of innocence for their clients when they themselves have been perfectly guilty of breaking a law.

Maybe even the same law their clients have broken that they're defending them for. But you see, in Christ, we have the perfect advocate. The perfect advocate. Because in Christ, we have the sinless one.

We have the righteous one. And he's advocating for us. He's advocating for those who he has saved, those who he has redeemed.

[25 : 18] But he does more than just plead our case before God. Because verse 2 goes on to tell us, he himself is the propitiation for our sins. He it is who can turn away the righteous wrath of God from us.

and he takes that punishment, that righteous punishment on himself. So you see, when believers sin, as we all do, because we know we're not perfect and we sin, we can be sure that we have the very best representation before God.

Not just one who can plead our case before the Almighty, but the one, the only one, one, who can not only plead our case, but can divert onto himself that righteous wrath of God that otherwise would be poured out on us.

Now, we need to be careful here, don't we? Because we could be sitting thinking, well, that doesn't matter then if we sin. Well, it does. There's no excuse for sin.

Although we have an advocate, although we have forgiveness, there's no excuse for us sinning. And Paul writes strongly, doesn't he, in Romans 6, against the idea that Christians can use the knowledge of grace and forgiveness as an excuse to continue in sinful behaviour.

[26 : 39] There is no excuse. We know that, don't we? But you know, to our shame, we continue to sin, don't we? So we're saved then by grace through faith.

A gift of God, that's our first glorious truth, and then the second is that although we continue to sin, we have forgiveness, we have an advocate with the Father. So we come now to the third roof beam, the third verse.

We have redemption through his blood. It's Ephesians 1, 7. And you see, this is exactly where we find out what it is that Christ did for us so that he could be our advocate, so that gift of salvation could be given to us.

we could say that this is what's at the root of God's grace. God can be gracious towards us because of this, and what is it?

Well, it's we have redemption through his blood. It's the blood of Christ. What's redemption all about, that word? What's that all mean? Well, redemption is all about defeating evil.

[27 : 45] It's defeating the devil. It's about defeating of death. It's about reversing the curse that Adam brought upon mankind as the penalty for his sins. It's about dealing with the alienation of God, the alienation from God, rather, that was inherent in man because of Adam's sin and is inherent in every person who is born today, in every person who lives today.

That's redemption. That's what redemption is about. It was brought about by Christ's death on the cross, by the shedding of his blood. He buys the redemption of his people.

You see, Christ died and he defeated Satan when he died. He defeated evil. Now, Satan fights on. Yes, Satan fights on, doesn't he?

We're very aware of Satan being active in this world. But you know what? He's in his death throes. The victory has already been won by Christ.

Christ defeated him on the cross when he died and then rose again. Christ died. He defeated death and hell. He purchased the victory.

[28 : 55] And if you're a Christian here tonight, excuse me, your salvation is secure. You no longer have to fear death. We have redemption through his blood. We've made spiritually alive through him.

Christ died. His redemption of us means that we can have fellowship with God. We're his children. He's our father. We can call him our father. He lavishes his love on us.

We're blessed beyond anything that we could imagine. We're God's people. You know, before the fall, Adam and Eve walked with God in the garden, didn't they?

But all that changed when sin came into the world. But you see, through Christ's redemption, through his blood, we can now walk with God once again.

That's what Christ has done for us. And the resurrection? Well, that's the proof of the victory won, isn't it? That's what tells us that we can be confident, that we can have a sure and certain hope of eternal life.

[30 : 04] That's what assures us that we do indeed have a living and an active advocate. See, Christ's blood brought our salvation.

Christ's blood made it possible for us to be saved. It made it possible that God could be gracious towards us and offer us forgiveness. It made it possible for God to give us a gift of faith.

Faith in the work of Christ. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith in the redeeming blood of Christ. Faith in our Saviour. What is it Paul writes in Romans 3?

He says, All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Were justified as a gift by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, he writes.

And Christ's redemption, you see, it means that even now he is the advocate with our Father. So we're saved by grace.

[31 : 06] We have a continuing advocate which we need because of our continued sin and we have redemption. All this is made possible through his blood. But then this takes us to the fourth of our verses this evening.

It's the fourth beam that sits there as you look down this church in Stradbroke. And so far, the first three beams, the verses really have been dealing with the truths of the gospel.

And they're glorious truths and they're things that anybody who's a Christian can read and believe and rely on. He can rely on these truths. They're reminders to a preacher standing in the pulpit of what God has done for them.

And likewise, if you're a believer here tonight, they're a reminder of what God has done for you. the reminders of what our salvation cost. That was the death of Christ.

It was the blood of Christ. What Christ had to do for us. They're reminders that there was nothing that we did to deserve salvation. And there's nothing that we can do, in fact, to enhance our salvation.

[32 : 18] Nothing that we can do to enhance our salvation. And they're a reminder of the vital, ongoing relationship we have with God. A reminder of what Christ continues to do for us.

And that means they're a reminder to us of our need to give thanks to God. We should always be praising him for his plan of salvation.

It's a marvellous plan of salvation. We should be praising him for his mercy, for his love, his faithfulness towards us. Perhaps most of all for his long-suffering towards us. Unworthy sinners that we are.

But you see, when you get to this fourth beam, things change. But the tact changes. We've got the words of Christ there in Luke 13. Strive to enter through the narrow door.

This is no longer you see something addressed to the believer, is it? The believer has entered through that narrow door already. And this is Christ in Luke 13 that we read earlier addressing the question of who will be saved?

[33 : 23] He was asked, who will be saved? And, well, the answer to that is it won't be those who Christ describes in verse 27 that we read as you workers of evil.

And you see, the thing is this, if you're not a Christian here tonight, then make no mistake, that's you that Christ is talking about. Because you've either passed through the narrow door that leads to salvation, or you haven't.

And if you haven't, then Jesus Christ, the Son of God, says, what about you? He says, you are a worker of evil. We've been thinking about the wonders, the blessings, of the gift of salvation, the gift of faith.

But you see, if you're not a believer tonight, those blessings are not yours. And so, the comfort of knowing that you have an advocate who is working for you before the Holy God, the almighty, sinless God, that comfort is not for you if you're not a Christian here tonight.

The amazing truth that we've just been thinking about, that Christ shed his blood for your redemption, that truth means nothing to you if you're not a believer tonight.

[34 : 37] It's effectively irrelevant to you. For all have sinned, the Bible says, all, and that's me and that's you, that's everybody here tonight, that's everybody out in the streets tonight of Dumfries, isn't it?

That's everybody in Scotland, everybody in the UK who could go on, couldn't they? All means all, it means everybody, I don't need to go on, all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, we're told.

But you see, there's good news and the good news is the message of salvation, isn't it? It's freely offered and it is offered to all. All can come to Christ and it's a message of repentance and faith.

But do you understand that you're a sinner? Maybe you think you're not too bad, not as bad as somebody else in the church over there that you know. Maybe you think that you're not as bad as the people walking the streets of Dumfries tonight.

I'm not that bad. There's a song back in the 80s that was addressing people who were not very tall and there was a line in the song that said, there's always someone shorter than you. Well, you could change that to be there's always somebody worse than you, couldn't you?

[35 : 47] You know, and I think even Hitler could point to others and say, I'm not as bad as them, I'm not as bad as Stalin. But you see, that's not the point is it, when it comes to God.

That's not going to cut it with God. We don't compare ourselves to others. The only thing that matters is how we measure up to God's standard. That's quite clear. All have sinned.

Doesn't matter how good you and I think we are, God has already pronounced us guilty of breaking his laws. That's how we were born. And if you're not a believer here tonight, then I'd urge you to seek God.

That's what the prophet Isaiah writes in Isaiah 55. He writes, Seek the Lord while he may be found. Call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way. The unrighteous man his thoughts.

Let him return to the Lord that he may have compassion on him and to our God for he will abundantly pardon. That's glorious truth.

[36 : 49] Come to Christ. God will abundantly pardon. You see, what he's saying is seek God. And I think every Christian here tonight would echo those words, wouldn't he?

He would say that to any unbeliever. Seek God while he may be found. on the reverse side of that fourth beam in that church in Stradbrook there is another verse.

I don't know whether Ryle thought this through or not. I suspect he probably did because there's a very appropriate verse on the back of that fourth beam. Strive to enter in the narrow gate and what's on the back?

On the back of that is the verse God be merciful to me a sinner. That's a verse from the tax collector in Luke 18 it's the words of the prayer from the tax collector.

Strive to enter into the narrow gate you don't know how? Well this is a prayer that you can pray. It's a prayer that we all need to pray but particularly as an unbeliever you can start here God be merciful to me a sinner.

[38 : 00] And then you can add to that the words that are on the reverse of the second beam. And those words are from Psalm 51 that we read earlier and those words say create in me a clean heart O God.

Are you an unbeliever here this evening? We read Psalm 51 make them your prayer to God a prayer of repentance and a prayer of pleading for mercy. David came having sinned grievously against God and he wrote that Psalm.

We have that as a record Lord. And it's something that we can read it's something that we can pray we can sing along with David in days gone by and it's a prayer of repentance and it's a prayer of pleading for God's mercy towards us.

So as we draw to a close then I trust that this evening we've seen more of Christ we've seen more of his love for us we've seen more of what he did for us as he shed his blood that blood that redeems us as he shed his blood on the cross for our redemption there.

I trust we've seen more of his loving sacrifice that made it possible for us to receive the gracious gifts from God that as believers we have received and received day by day.

[39 : 18] I trust we've seen more of Christ and his work for us his ongoing work for us as our advocate pleading our case before the Father. That tells us you know of his love for us it tells us of his love for those that he redeemed that he shed his blood for speaks to his compassion towards us he cares for us he pleads for us he pleads our case as our advocate and if you're an unbeliever here tonight well Christ stands ready to save doesn't he and Christ stands willing to save you see he's all that you need he's done all that you need you can bring nothing to your salvation other than yourself you don't need to wait until you think you're more deserving of salvation because you never will be you can't think either that you're beyond hope of salvation sometimes that's a stumbling block to people oh God could never save me I'm way too bad but let me tell you something you're not you're not

I don't need to know what you've done I don't need to know what you've thought in your life all the bad things that you might think that would make you so bad that God cannot save you I don't need to know that I can confidently say you're not so bad that God can't save you and I can say that because we know something that is far more powerful than your sin and it's the redemption of Christ it's the shed blood of Christ that's way more powerful than the worst sin that any person can commit on this earth so we can come in repentance and we can pray to God for mercy I wonder did Ryle ever preach a sermon like this I don't know but I'd like to think that if he was sitting in the congregation here tonight he'd recognize the text and I'd like to think he approve but more than that you know we look to God don't we Ryle isn't our standard God's our standard and we look to God and we know that through his spirit he is here tonight

God is here God is present with us God is among us and we look to him don't we to approve his word to apply his word as we go out from this place and we then go on into the new week whatever that may bring for us Amen shall we pray our Lord and Heavenly Father we are humbled as we think of what Christ has done for us we are humbled as we think of what you have given to us and your graciousness towards us we are undeserving of anything from you and yet you before ever we existed you knew us before ever we existed you mapped out a plan of salvation and we thank you that if we come to you in repentance and faith that you can indeed work in us you can give us that gift of saving faith you can give us that gift of salvation we thank you that for those of us who know you here tonight you have done that in us you drew us to yourself worthless as we were we marvel at that we don't understand it but we thank you and we thank you for the work of

Christ and it's in his name that we pray amen out out to in us we have in us to
unfortunately and we okay sure us we we we we and I