

AM John 14:15-31

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Preacher: Rev Douglas Cranston

[0 : 0 0] Welcome to Morning Worship. Can I take this opportunity? I'm wishing you a very Merry Christmas and when it comes a Happy New Year.

Probably this year hasn't been everything that we had hoped it would have been, but we are where we are by God's grace. I was actually intending phoning Norman up to see if the service was going to go ahead this morning.

We had to come through very, very wintry, thick snow conditions to get here and then we turned off the motorway and everything was as clear as a bell.

So hopefully we'll make it back here this evening. This evening, what I want to do is something just a wee bit different. It's really to try and get us to think as a church what we're about and what we're doing.

Our cars get annual MOTs, but very seldom does the church get an MOT. And this evening, what I want to do, and it probably will be a shorter service this evening, is just to try and focus our minds on what are the biblical priorities for a church.

[1 : 1 7] And just to think ahead about all the things that we're hoping to be and to do under God as a church and as a fellowship.

We've got new elders that by God's grace will be ordained and that will be a new phase of life in the church, a new phase of leadership in the church.

But, of course, our leadership should not always be geared to the new elders, but should always be geared back to what the Bible teaches us and what we should be as a church.

So this evening I'm going to use some passages in the Bible for us to just do a check, a health check of what we're about as a church and as a fellowship.

And this morning what I want us to do is I want us to focus on peace and obviously a Christmas theme, but how does the Bible teach us, what does it teach us about what true peace is and where we find it and how it will be evidenced in our life.

[2 : 3 5] And I thought they would be two good balancing topics for us to consider on this last Sunday of what has been a pretty dreadful year for so many.

Prayer meeting. Our brother Robert here is going to be taking the prayer meeting on Wednesday at 7pm along with Bible study.

A piece of very good financial news. We're so thankful to the Lord for the encouragement that two trusts have responded to the application for grants with offers totaling £10,000 towards the total estimates of £21,000.

So is that the total is £21,000 and that's almost half? Is that right? Those are the estimates. Yeah, oh yeah, those are the estimates, yeah. I mean, what building estimates are like, yeah, yeah.

So, you know, if those estimates work out, almost 50% in grants. It was seemingly mentioned last week that Deacons Court felt that it would be appropriate also for the congregation to be given an opportunity to make contributions towards the cost.

[3 : 53] And please, if you want to do that, put any gifts in the collection box in an envelope marked fabric fund. The Communicate members have given their overwhelming support to David, Jonathan and William Kenyon as being suitable for eldership in the congregation.

And the Kirk Sessions' next meeting is in mid-January when the arrangements for their ordination will be made. And we give thanks to God that he has raised up these three men and the congregation has, under God, identified them as being suitable to offer spiritual leadership, discipline and oversight of the congregation.

My colleague David Parker will, by God's grace, conduct worship next Lord's Day at 11 o'clock and at 6pm.

These are all the intimations. We praise God with Psalm number 91 to God's praise. Class of the ■ Of Him that is the mighty shall abide.

I know the Lord, my God, will say, He is my lettered shield.

[5 : 54] He is my fortress and my God, And in Him trust my will.

Assured of Him, He shall be saved And give deliverance.

From the smart I'll follow, I'll spare, And from the noisome pestilence.

His feathers shall be high, My trust under His wings shall lead.

His faithfulness shall be a shield And the heart of the earth.

[7 : 11] The full says in their heart, There is no God.

They are corrupt. They do abominable deeds. There is none who does good. The Lord looks down from heaven On the children of man To see if there are any who understand, Who seek after God.

Oh, that salvation from Israel Shall come out of Zion When the Lord restores the fortunes of His people. Let Jacob rejoice.

Let Israel be glad. Let us unite our hearts in prayer. Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, We come to the end of another year.

As we bow before a God of eternity, We realize these human divisions Are of little significance to you. But you are the God who established pattern And order in our lives.

[8 : 32] You gave us six days in which to work And a seventh in which to rest And to worship and praise you. You gave us the seasons that speaks of a God Who is consistent and in control.

Where one thing systematically follows another By your great hand And by your divine counsel and will.

And so we thank you for time and for season. And we thank you for a time when we come to the end of a year When once again we can look back And see that you are God And there is no one like you.

That you have everything in your hands And that you have all things under control. That from chaos you brought order. And we cry out to you Lord God That we might have a fresh understanding At the end of this year Of how your grace and your mercy And your goodness to us Have been very apparent in our lives.

And that that awareness That apparentness Will cause us to turn to you once again And to give you glory, thanks and praise For all that you have done.

[9 : 56] Lord God as we come to the end of a year We look back over those 12 months And we think if in many ways We had known what was ahead Would we ever have been able to endure that thought?

Of a year of chaos Of a year of illness for so many people Of a year when our lives have been dominated by the virus A year when we have been separated from people That we love the most and care for A year when the simple of pleasures Of embracing our grandchildren And our children And our brothers and sisters And our friends Have been so cruelly and terribly Taken away from us When we have found ourselves In so many cases alone And isolated And father we pray And we thank you that You have brought us safe thus far And that grace will lead us home Father give us an understanding

Of your sovereignty Of your will Of your purposes So that we might lift our heads That we might lift them high That we would look up To the one true and living God And give you praise And glory Stand in wonder and amazement Father you have told us And taught us To trust And to obey And we pray that our worship Might be the evidence Of our commitment To trusting you And to obeying you Father we look back And we look back At our failures And our sins Over these past 12 months Not least when

We have become afraid When you told us Not to fear When we have become confused When we should have looked To the fact that You have all things In your hands When we have neglected Relationships because They became difficult To sustain When we have been Over selfish When we have lost Respect for others When we have failed To care and to be generous When we have become lazy Unneglectful And neglectful Of the things of God In the name of Jesus Christ

And through the power And confidence Of the gospel I declare to us all That if we ask forgiveness From our sins And repent of them And as we turn to Jesus Christ In saving faith The gospel declares That our sins Have been forgiven They have been dealt with On Calvary's cross Through the shed blood Of the Lord Jesus Christ And we rise Ransomed Healed Restored And forgiven Who like thee A saviour is Heavenly Father We thank you then For our gathering Here this day We pray for your Blessing upon us And we ask this In the very precious name Of the Lord Jesus Christ Amen The next item of praise

[14 : 25] Is 124 Give of the Lord And all in our sight Let his mercy And all the Lord be here And we say Lord, God And the Lord And the Lord They must be fear And when their wrath Against us reached his eyes I'll be happy So in their sight We would have been

And fell on fire fire Over our heads The forest would have fallen The waters could have And rid us of all But praise the Lord For he did not serve us free And has not left us To their cruelty We have been Just as an actual bird Of all the world

Let us be set free The just, still, is God We are at liberty Our help is in The kingdom of the Lord Who may be And bless By his word Now boys And get on Yeah We've been thinking about Peter Remember?

Yeah Been thinking about a few of the disciples But we were thinking about Peter And I said to you next time I was here We were going to just think about something else That happened to Peter Well This happened Not at Christmas time But at Easter time This happened to Peter And what had happened was That on Easter morning Some of the women Who were looking after the disciples And who were caring for them And cooking for them And doing all those kind of things They had gone to the tomb Remember Jesus had died on the cross He had been crucified And he had died on the cross And they had taken him away And they had taken him And buried him In a tomb Now It wouldn't be like The way we buried people When we put them into the ground What would happen in those days is There would be a big rock And somebody would have Cut out the tomb and the rock

And there would be a great big stone That would be rolled over the front of the tomb And what they did was They used to dig a trench So that the stone could be rolled Across that trench And some of the women were told Had gone on Easter morning And had gone to attend the grave Just like we would put flowers At a gravesite They were doing something similar to that And when they arrived there They discovered That the stone had been rolled away And that the tomb was empty That Jesus wasn't there What an amazing thing to happen Somebody who was dead And they went to look after that person's grave And they discover That the tomb's empty Now They were not very sure at first What had happened And

[19 : 24] Then somebody told them An angel told them That Jesus had risen from the dead And the first thing they did was They went right back to the disciples And told them that Jesus had risen from the dead Now we're told that Peter Was one of those disciples And John And what they did was They effectively said We're going to go to the tomb And the Bible tells us That they kind of had a race To see who could get there first And John tells us That he won that race He was first To get to the tomb But Peter Came later And John were told Although he was there first Didn't go into the tomb But Peter did He went right into the tomb And found That the tomb Was empty And found out That Jesus Had risen from the dead Now here's a question That I used to ask people Quite often

Why do we think The stone Was rolled away Now a lot of people Give the wrong answer To that They say it was rolled away So that Jesus Could get out of the tomb No it wasn't If Jesus Could rise from the dead He didn't have to Roll the stone away To get out of the tomb The stone Was rolled away So that people From the outside Could get into the tomb And see that it was empty And that Jesus Was no longer there Now why was that important?

Well it was important You see Because people like Peter And some of the other disciples That we've been thinking about They were to spread the news That Jesus was no longer dead But that God had raised him From the dead And that he was alive And you know The reason that we're here On a Sunday And on a Sunday morning Is to remember That special day When Peter walked into the tomb And found That Jesus Was alive That he was no longer dead That he had risen From the dead And that's why We're here on a Sunday That was So important And so crucial To those first disciples And to the faith And to knowing That the faith Was real And historical That we still remember

Easter morning Today Even though it's Christmas We're here today Because of Easter Because Peter Went into that tomb And started to spread The news And that's what Jesus Wants us to do He wants us to be Like Peter People who believe That Jesus Has risen from the dead And who want to tell others About the faith That they had Coming from that Historical moment When Jesus Rose from the dead So I hope you remember That part of Peter's story We've learned quite a lot About Peter And we'll Understand that he was Very important In terms Of the Christian faith Now we're going to Read our Bibles And we're going to Turn to John's Gospel Chapter 14

And we're going to Read from the 15th verse The Gospel of John Chapter 14 And we're going to Read the Word of God Together This is The Word of God If you love me You will keep my Commandments Jesus said And I'll ask the Father And he will give you Another helper To be with you Forever Even the Spirit Of truth Whom the world Cannot receive Because it neither Sees him Nor knows him You know him For he dwells With you And will be In you I will not Leave you As orphans I will come To you Yet a little While And the world Will see me No more But you Will see me Because I

[24 : 09] Live Just as we've Been thinking About with Peter And what he Discovered Because I Live You also Will live In that day You will know That I am In my Father And you In me And I In you Whoever Has my Commandments And keeps Them He it is Who loves Me And he Who loves Me Will be Loved By my Father And I Will love Him And manifest Myself To him Judas Not Iscariot Said to Him Lord How is It That you Will manifest Yourself To us And not To the World And Jesus Answered Him If anyone Loves me He will Keep my Word And my Father Will love Him And we Will come To him And make Our home With him Whoever Does not Love me Does not Keep my Words And the Word that You hear

Is not Mine But the Fathers Who sent Me These Things I have Spoken To you While I Am still With you But the Helper The Holy Spirit Whom the Father Will send In my Name He will Teach you All things And bring You to Remembrance All that I have Said To you Peace I leave With you My Peace I give You Not as The world Gives Do I Give To you Let Not your Hearts Be Troubled Neither Let them Be Afraid You Heard Me Say I Am Going Away And I Will Come To you If you Loved me You Would Have Rejoiced Because I Am Going To the Father For the Father Is Greater Than I And now I have Told you Before it Takes Place So that When it Does Take Place You May Believe And I Will No Longer

Talk Much With You For the Ruler Of the World Is Coming He Is No Claim On Me But I Do The Father Has Commanded Me So that The World May Know That I Love The Father Rise Let us Go From Here And then A few Verses From The Book Of Philippians Chapter 4 Just A few Books Further On From Where We Are In John Philippians Chapter 4 Verse 4 Where We Pick Up Paul's Teaching In This Letter This Is Again The Word Of God Rejoice In The Lord Always Again I Will Say Rejoice Let Your Reasonableness Be Known To Everyone The Lord Is At Hand Do Not Be Anxious About Anything But In Everything By Prayer

And Supplication And Thanksgiving Let Your Request Be Made Known To God And The Peace Of God Which Passes All Understanding Will Guard Your Hearts And Your Mind In Christ Jesus Finally Brothers Whatever Is True Whatever Is Honorable Whatever Is Just Whatever Is Pure Whatever Is Lovely Whatever Is Commendable If There Is Any Excellence If There Is Anything Worthy Of Praise Think About These Things What You Have Learned And Received And Heard And Seen In Me Practice These Things And The God Of Peace Will Be With You Amen And May God Bless To Us These Readings Of His Holy Word And To His Name Be Praise And

Glory Give Let's Again Unite Our Hearts In Prayer Let Us Pray Father As The Believing People Of God As The True Church Of Jesus Christ You Have Told Us To Mourn With Those Who Mourn And Rejoice With Those Who Rejoice And As We Look Back On A Joy And The Brightness That These Young Children Bring

[29 : 11] Into All Our Lives And Not Least And Indeed Highlights As A Fellowship As We Rejoice In Seeing New Life About Our Fellowship Here Father We Thank You For All These Children We Love Them And We Are Commanded To Love Them And We Want The Best For Them We Want Them To Grow Up In The Admonition Of The Lord But We Want Them To Know That We Care For Them And We Love Them And They Are Important To Us

God For For Children For The Friend Father Just Like We Said We Probably Would Never Have Been Able To Endure The Thought Of What This Year Was Going To Hold If We Had Been Told In January some of us would be very fearful of what these children are going to experience in 20, 30, 40 years time and yet if this world lasts that long we know that they are your children, that they are covenant children and we pray, we pray, we pray that you will keep them in perfect peace whose mind has stayed on thee and as covenant children Father we are bold to pray for their salvation we are bold in laying before you the truth of your gospel and the truth of your sovereign covenant commitment and say that it is our earnest prayer

Father that these children will come to saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and that the grace and promise covenant promise of their baptism will come to fruit by your grace and in your good time eternal God we think of those who are feeling unwell at this time for those who are sick for those who are facing times of real struggle with their health and we just pray Heavenly Father that they might know you and they might know the peace that comes from knowing you we again Heavenly Father pray for our Queen and the members of our household we thank you for her and we were greatly encouraged Heavenly Father to see how with respect to other faiths but with great boldness in her declaration of the Lord Jesus Christ as the light of the world and as the hope of the world and we thank you for her and for her very clear messages over these past few years that focus on the gospel and on the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ and we pray that somehow that by your grace people who perhaps would never listen to a church service would never read a Bible have heard her message and the testimony of the place that your son has in her life and we do pray Heavenly Father that you will bless that witness before you Heavenly Father she's an ordinary human being but she is also a vehicle for your gospel and your grace to be declared to the nation we pray for our Prime Minister and for our First Minister we pray Heavenly Father that you will bless them and sustain them and the difficult decisions and the difficult road that they have to walk in these days we again give you thanks for the positive news about vaccines that seem to be being rolled out with little side effects that might cause concern and we just pray Heavenly Father for our nation as they embrace this vaccination process we thank you for doctors and nurses who will be asked to give a little bit more and a little bit extra of time when they have already been under great demands for many months and we just pray that they will know our gratitude towards them and we pray that as we engage with them we will do so with respect and honour towards them and we just pray Heavenly Father that that whole thing will go without any technical or medical or logistical error

Father we do cry out to you we know that these vaccines are a gift a mercy from you and we pray Heavenly Father that there will be nothing that will take place that will cause us to doubt that this comes from you and is good Heavenly Father Father we pray for ourselves as a fellowship we thank you for the confirmation of these three young men to be our leaders here in this fellowship we pray that as they go through a period of preparation that they might do so with a sense of what it means to become a servant to become a minister a servant of the people we pray Heavenly Father that you will equip them and their families for the task ahead as they seek to serve you and serve this church and serve the people of this church in this capacity as leaders Father bless our time now as we turn to praise you once again and then to consider your word may we look to your word and to your word alone for peace and hope and truth in Jesus our Saviour's name we pray

Amen Psalm 30 I think we're going to sing five verses is that right William? Yeah five verses Yeah Good man Psalm 30 to God's praise Praise God Thank you electrocuted me You did Jab If you Can Let Heard earth heal.

[36 : 56] For wrote me, I receive You. And the purifying storm I have.

O Lord, you brought me from the grave and saved my soul from death.

To holy God, sing to the Lord, sing out with a heart who longs when you recall His holy name, let grace Him and rejoice.

His right and the right, the moment past, my God is still in our space.

O cheers with us through the hour of the night, join us with glory's grace.

[38 : 42] Amen. Let's just pray for a moment. Father, may your word speak to us, O Lord.

Shows yourself, shows ourself, shows the Saviour. May your word speak to us, O Lord.

Amen. Well, as I was preparing this sermon a couple of weeks ago, I became very conscious of the fact that I was going to be preaching this on the last Sunday of the year.

And as I said in my prayer, I think in the terms of an eternal God, these first and last Sundays are probably of minor significance, if any.

But for us, they are clearly landmarks. They are marks which we have determined our history and our time for thousands of years.

And it is good to have these kind of, what used to be called Covenant Sundays, where we just take a little step back, and where we think and we reflect and we turn to God's word to speak to us in this moment, in this day and in this generation.

[40 : 16] And obviously it's around Christmas time and there is this struggle that goes on between the whole commercialism of Christmas and the reality that for so many, the real meaning of Christmas has been absolutely and completely and utterly lost.

To the extent that you could probably go out, maybe not this year, but in previous years, out onto our streets and ask people why we have Christmas. And the reality is that many of them will not have a clue that it actually relates to the birth of Jesus Christ.

But I don't believe that for people within church circles, I don't believe that a distorted secularism is the biggest problem for people who would regard themselves as religious, who would be involved in the life of the church.

But rather, the problem is for many that Christmas has been sentimentalised and that sentimentalisation has diminished the true message and the power of what Christmas is about, that the God of eternity, the second person of the Trinity, should come into our humanity in all its fullness.

I suppose that's recognised in some way by the statement that always irritates me at Christmas time, that it's for the children.

[42 : 05] It's about the children. Well, it's not about the children. It's maybe about a child. But it's not about the children.

And when I, in my mind, put that together with this ending of the year, I try to think and reflect about what really are the issues that are out there, that has arisen from these last ten months.

And I think there are two aspects of that. The first aspect is fear.

I think what we see can, and the way people are reacting and some of the mayhem that's out there, can truly be allocated to the fact that people are afraid.

And the second aspect of that is that the reason for their confusion is that their lives are built on shallow ground.

[43 : 23] I suppose it goes back to the wise man who built this house on the rock and the foolish man who built this house on the sand. I don't think there has been a year in my lifetime where it has become more apparent and obvious whether the person I'm talking to has a life that's built on the rock or a life that's built on sand.

And so, and it's always disturbing to look into a pastor's mind about how he began to think and prepare. I then, as we should always do if our lives are built on the rock, went back to the Bible.

And what I found very interesting as I was reading through a lot of the Christmas material that's in the Bible is that one of the key aspects that suddenly shouted out at me is how often in the Christmas narrative we get a message that is twofold.

Do not be afraid and be at peace. And the message about do not be afraid and be at peace for I bring you glad tidings of great joy that in the city of David a saviour has been born who is Christ the Lord.

Do not be afraid, a saviour who is Christ the Lord. Nine months prior to that when the angel came and communicated the truth to Mary that she was going to be with child that Jesus was going to be put into her womb the first thing that the angel said to her is fear not.

[45 : 53] And when we come to the 14th chapter of John obviously, you know, in that sense unrelated almost at the opposite end of the life of Jesus it is set in the context of Jesus is now about to leave his disciples for in John's terms the time is near the time, the time, the time John always talked about the time and now the time is now near and he's trying to communicate to the disciples that even when he is not going to be there that the Holy Spirit is going to come in his place he will go to heaven and he will send the Holy Spirit that will be the very presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in our lives.

So again the context is the identity of Jesus his living presence in our lives and again the legacy that Jesus is leaving his disciples is the legacy of peace he did not want them to be afraid and again none of this should surprise us that peace and the Lord Jesus Christ are related together go back to the Old Testament to the prophecy of Isaiah as he spoke about the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ that a son will be given and the government will be upon his shoulder and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor Mighty God Everlasting Father and here it is again Prince of Peace again in the teaching of Romans as Paul begins to develop the gospel and teach and preach

Jesus Christ he says in Romans 5 that we have been justified by faith and that through that faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ and similarly in Ephesians 2 14 and 16 for Christ himself is our peace he has made us his thus making peace and reconciliation between God and man so in the context of Jesus' teaching here it is peace that is connected to the Lord Jesus Christ so what I want to do in the time left is just tease out what is the aspect of that legacy now what we have to understand first of all is what is the nature of a legacy now some people will ask you well what is the legacy of Jesus and they might answer it's something like the Great Commission well the Great Commission was not the legacy of Jesus but it was the commandment of Jesus it was an instruction of Jesus about what the disciples then had to do go into all the world and the second other thing that the legacy is not sometimes people would say that the legacy of Jesus Christ is the eternal life that's not the legacy that's a promise for the future a legacy if any of us have been fortunate enough to receive a legacy is something we receive now when someone has gone has died the other thing that this peace that is this legacy is not it's not anything to do with the absence of war to put it simply the peace that is associated with the person of the Lord

Jesus Christ that we receive as a legacy from him is not something that we would win the Nobel Peace Prize if we had it nor is it some kind of philosophy of the world where the atheist would say que sera sera whatever will be will be and I'm comfortable with that that kind of laissez-faire Jesus makes it very clear that the legacy that he is offering the peace that he is offering is not as the world gives now we should not be afraid in this modern sophisticated world we should not tire to say that at the very essence of the gospel is something supernatural we are dealing here with miraculous we are dealing here with something that is unique with something that is extraordinary so that's what peace isn't so what is it well as we read through

John 14 it is again very clear and very simple that we can see that it is intricately linked with the gift of the Holy Spirit with the third person of the Trinity the Holy Spirit is a vital aspect and source of this peace that we will see is what Jesus has been referring to from verse 18 onwards of chapter 14 I will not leave you as orphans I will come to you yet a little while and the world will see me no more but you will see me because I live you also will live peace peace that is the legacy of

[54 : 35] Jesus is absolutely and essentially linked to the indwelling of the third person of the Trinity in our lives our human lives our human beings our bodies have become the indwelling place for God by the spirit not as the world gives so nothing out with that can possibly be the same so if somebody makes the claim that it is the same then we must be clear that it's not they're wrong and Jesus in those ways tells us that I am the way the truth and the life whatever else this piece is it is found nowhere else in the universe than in a saving relationship with the

Lord Jesus Christ through the gift of the Holy Spirit but we need to be even more specific because what we need to then say is now that we understand what that is how is it going to manifest itself what is it going to look like in your life and in mine now you see that that's always a vital question for the believer to ask whether we're talking about biblical holiness or conversion or the peace of God which passes understanding which is uniquely ours the question we've got to ask is how does that present itself and if you think about it there is a penetrating logic there a convicting logic if we are as

Jesus says and as the Bible teaches we are actually indwelt by God in our lives and the unconverted man and woman is not indwelt with God above everything else that should make a difference and it should make a difference with regard to this vital legacy of peace well the first understanding that we have is that this peace that is the legacy of Christ brings us peace with God that's what Romans 5 and 1 makes very clear therefore since we have been justified by faith we have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ couldn't be simpler couldn't be clearer we have peace with

God if you remember back if you were here and I think every one of you were when I was talking about Nicodemus one of the things that I referred to was the sinner's worry well this is the opposite of that this is the believers peace that through the saving death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross and as that now applies to us as we embrace God's grace in saving faith we are now at peace with God and that peace comes despite the fact that we now have a very clear understanding that God hates sin that's what the cross tells us that's why Jesus has shed blood on the cross that's what it tells us that God hates sin what we see in Christ and the cross is what we deserve because of our sin but because

Christ has died and because that now applies to us through saving faith we have peace with God Paul follows that up in Ephesians 2 12 he puts it like this you were once separated from Christ alienated stranger strangers having no hope and without God friends that is the biblical definition of one who is without Christ separated from him alienated from God strangers without hope and without God but back to Romans 5 because God gave himself and the coming of Jesus to die a saving death on the cross we now are part of the recipients of the legacy of

[59 : 58] Christ that brings peace with God peace with God and secondly peace with our fellow believers Galatians 3 and 28 Galatians Ephesians and Philippians Galatians 3 28 therefore there is neither Jew nor Greek there is neither slave nor free there is no male or female for we are all one in Christ that's the legacy of peace we are one with each other I'm a very keen sports person sadly now more a watcher of sport than a participator in it but sport was always very important to me and I've watched sport over the last few months become politicised with this black lives matter now black lives matter all lives matter and the whole notion behind what is really a political agenda is that somehow we're just all the same but the problem is we're not all the same we're all completely different and we're all completely selfish and the key to unity is not sloganism because we can slogan away but it never deals with the heart nobody's going to know the racist and what the racist feels in their heart when a black guy walks in to a room or a

Chinese person walks into a room or if you're in some ghetto in America that's all black a white person walks into that ghetto they can talk all they like but the issue is not what comes out of the mouth the issue is the heart and here's the issue if you walked into a church in first century Rome or Corinth or Galatia or Ephesus in what was a society divided beyond anything that we can imagine in today's generation you would be blown away by the thing that would be evident the minute you walked in that door and that is that in Christ there is no male or female there's no black or white there's no slave or free because you would see people of different colours and different races different social backgrounds you would see a master sitting next to the slave handing him bread and wine and embracing him as a brother and sister in

Jesus Christ because the peace of God is in their hearts there and there alone again in Christ that's the only answer to racial and social division and unrest because Christ transforms hearts he doesn't transform words he transforms hearts and lives and quickly and briefly just for completion the third area where peace is evident is that we are at peace with ourselves and that goes back to my observations about these last few months people are not at peace with themselves there's anxiety there's fear there's trouble there's inner turmoil going on in the lives of so many people things are just not right so what do you do you go to the one person in the world who can make it right and that's why so many people are failing to find the answer because we have created in our modern society the notion that there is a plethora of answers out there to whatever the problem is and that is a great deceit because there is only one answer and that is that relationship with the

Lord Jesus Christ and that embraces the legacy of Christ do not be anxious but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God peace I leave you Jesus said my peace I give you not as the world gives do I give to you let not your hearts be troubled do not be afraid that brothers and sisters is the legacy of Jesus let's pray Father we have a great desire in our lives to let the world know that

Jesus is the prince of peace the only way the only truth the only life of peace we see so many people around us who are troubled and confused give us courage in this generation to to declare to declare that the only means to watch peace is Jesus Christ and father of course we pray that that might be our experience and our rest and our foundation as we leave this year behind and as we head to a new year to an uncertain future that is in the hands of a certain God in Jesus name we pray Amen I just wish we could sing this last hymn together it was my grandmother's favourite hymn like a river glorious is God's perfect peace over all victorious by its quiet increase perfect yet it flows deep every day like a river glorious to God's praise like a river glorious is God's perfect peace over all victorious in its fighting increase perfect yet it's gone fuller every day perfect yet it's broken deeper all away say say say say among

[68 : 09] Jehovah arms are fully blessed finding as he promised perfect peace and rest he did did in the hollow of his blessed hand never folk can follow never traitors stand not a search of worry not a shade of care not a blast of hurry he touched the spirit there stay stay up on

Jehovah hearts are fully blessed finding as he promised perfect peace and rest every joy or triumph falleth from above traced upon our Daniel by the Son of Love we may trust him fully for us to do man who trusts in holy and finds in holy truth say the ones and all hearts are fully blessed finding as he conquers perfect peace and rest and may grace mercy and peace of the one true and loving

God Father Son and Holy Spirit rest and abide with each and every one of us this day and forever more Amen all I hope to see tonight folks thank you thank you