

The Most Perfect Gift

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 20 December 2020

Preacher: Rev Malcolm Macdonald

[0 : 00] and as we come together to worship God, it's my privilege to be with you and our privilege to see God's face as we come together in worship here in this building and together with any such as join with us through the live stream. We're going to begin with the words of Psalm 27 from Sing Psalms.

I'll read from the beginning of the psalm and the words that are going to be sung are from verse 4 to 6. So reading from the beginning of Psalm 27 in Sing Psalms, the Lord's my Saviour and my light, who will make me dismayed. The Lord's the stronghold of my life, why should I be afraid?

When evildoers threaten me to take my life away, my adversaries and my foes will stumble in that day. Although an army hems me in, my heart will feel no dread. Though war against me should arise, I will lift up my head. One thing I'll plead before the Lord, and this I'll seek always, that I may come within God's house and dwell there all my days, that on the beauty of the Lord I constantly may gaze, and in his house may seek to know direction in his ways. For in his dwelling he will keep me safe in troubled days. Within his tent he'll shelter me, and on a rock me raise.

My head will then be lifted high above mine enemies, and in his tent I'll sacrifice with shouts of joy and praise. From verse 4. One thing I'll plead before the Lord, and this I'll seek always.

O Lord, and this I'll seek always. O Lord, and this I'll seek always.

[2 : 22] O Lord, and this I'll come within the ■áριο, and this I'll seek everyday moment for a single day.th A. HAY gone, O Lord, and this I'll seek always.

O Lord, I am in my kingdom of my ■■ intoxicación,■■ eu■■i glass, and this I'll seek always. O Lord, I am ben?

O Lord, and this I'll seek always. The beauty of the Lord, I constantly make it.

And in His heart, make me to know, I can't believe it.

For in His dwelling, He will be, He's in His love of grace.

[3 : 38] Within His dwelling, He will be, and on our own, He will be.

My heaven, He will be, and on my heavenly.

And in His name, God's hand will find, with charge of joy and grace.

Let us come before God in prayer. Let us pray. O Lord, our God, as we meet together in Your name, we do so ever conscious of the need that we have to be sensitive to Your presence and to be desirous of Your hand to be upon us as we seek to worship.

We look for the guidance of Your Spirit that we may be emptied of self and filled full of the wisdom that is of divine origin.

[5 : 21] That wisdom which comes from Your Word, and as we are led into it, to seek from You that which is in accordance with Your revealed will for us.

We pray Your blessing upon our gathering, thankful that we are met around Your Word, and that Your Word is a living Word, that it speaks to us always.

It speaks to us where we are, not where we think we are, or where we would like to be, but where we are in fact. And this is the mystery of Your Word, that no matter when and no matter where, this Word is in our hands, upon our lips.

It is a living Word. It has a vivifying content.

It enlivens and quickens. And even those who are Your people, who have experienced the ministry of the Spirit for a long time, they are amongst those who came to know the Lord Jesus Christ, perhaps many, many years ago.

[6 : 48] And they are able to acknowledge that the day came into their experience when they were quickened, when they were made alive, when they were born again, when they came to rest upon Jesus Christ and received from Him, the life that only He could impart.

And yet in their lives, as they have lived them in this world, they have known the fluctuations that every one of us can experience, the highs and the lows, the ups and the downs of life, the extreme heat of fellowship with God and the fullness of knowing what it is to have that God as our God and have that Christ as our Lord and have Your Spirit to be our mentor and guide.

But other times, we have been far distant. we have been guilty of sin that has taken us away from You.

And we have experienced that coldness that can only be put right by Your own intervention. So wherever we are today, we pray that You would minister to us, that You would remind us that You want us to be close to Yourself and that You want us to be trusting and believing and receiving from Your hand what will enrich our lives.

We pray for this congregation and we pray that You would bless them as individuals and collectively. we give thanks that whatever burden they may carry, whatever it is that may be part of their experience of life today, that You may intrude Yourself upon them in a meaningful way and that they would not feel it an intrusion, but that they would be welcoming and receptive to Your presence and that You may speak to them out of Your loving kindness, reminding them that You are their God, reminding them that You only wish them the best and that You desire for them that they would go on with You until such time as they will be ever with You in Your presence.

[9 : 28] We pray that You would remember any amongst the congregation who may be unwell at this time. We pray that You would visit the sick and heal those who are able to be healed.

And for those for whom healing is not possible, may You remind them of the fact that there is a physician to whom they can go who has undertaken not just to heal their hurts in this world or to bind up our wounds or to bring physical recovery, even mental recovery when it is required, but that You have promised to provide for us that wholesome health that is eternal, which is the result of our relationship with Yourself.

For those in Christ will never be out of Christ. Those that have put their trust by faith in You are assured that the day will come when His promise will be fulfilled and realized in their experience, as indeed ours, that You have promised to take them to be where You are and there they will not be removed.

So we ask that You would bless Your people with all their variant needs. We pray for those who are yet to be numbered amongst them, if there are any present or if there are any listening or watching, that You would remind them that there is a God in heaven who desires to have them for Himself and that His word to us is come unto me.

And that can only be responded to with one or other of responses that we do what You say and we come or we turn our back upon that invitation of Your grace.

[11 : 32] So pour out Your Spirit upon us as a nation, as a people, as an island, as a community and as a congregation. And we pray that You would bless Your word as it goes out today wherever Your word is preached and proclaimed.

We give thanks for the circumstances of the congregation of this present time that You would remember them as they anticipate in a short period of time if it is Your will to have a pastor set over them once again.

We ask that You would bless them as a congregation and Ian and Connie as they come to minister to them as a pastor over a congregation.

May their knowledge of them encourage them to believe that they are in the Lord's will and may You be pleased to bless the ministry as it begins.

We pray for all the congregations of our presbytery. We pray for all the congregations of the land for Christ is lifted up and may His name be blessed.

[12 : 48] We are living in difficult times and in recent times we have been given encouragement and hope to see that the current pandemic which is raging may have may have that the of know and you may Am have known and mother other going to