

# A Prayer Remembered

*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: 30 October 2022

Preacher: Rev Donald A MacDonald

[ 0 : 00 ] . Could I welcome you to the service of worship.

Before we commence our worship, there are two items I have been asked to intimate. First of all, there will be a meeting of the Vacancy Committee next Tuesday, Tuesday the 1st at 7pm, followed by meetings of the Deacon's Court and Kirch Session.

That is God willing. And then, apparently there is an error in the bulletin. You may have noticed it, you may not.

The service next Lord's Day is not at 11.30, it's at 12 noon. As are all the services on the Lord's Day. Let us worship God by singing to His praise from Psalm 34.

Psalm 34 God will I bless all times. His praise my mouth shall still express.

[ 1 : 30 ] My soul shall boast in God. The meek shall hear with joyfulness. Extol the Lord with me. Let us exalt His name together.

I sought the Lord. He heard, and did me from all fears deliver. They looked to Him. Enlightened were, not shamed were their faces.

This poor man cried. God heard, and saved him from all his distresses. The angel of the Lord encamps, and round encompasses all those about that do inhere.

And them delivereth. Let us sing these verses. God will I bless all times. God will I bless all times.

God will I bless all times. Edge of Hymn Lee? To him. God will I bless all times. Jesus Christ, my judgment.

[ 2 : 41 ] God who is Israel. My soul shall boast in God that me. ft.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Amen. Let us engage in prayer.

[ 4 : 44 ] Amen.

Thank you. Bless the community at large. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[ 8 : 11 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Thou canst draw near to them in the solitude of their own homes, in residential care, in hospital wards or wherever their lot is cast, that Thou art able to draw near, to bless, to speak words of comfort and uplift and strengthening to their souls.

Bless the children who attend Sabbath school. Bless those who give of their time and energies to instruct them in the teachings of Thy Word.

O grant, O Lord, that Thou would raise up from among them those who would be a future generation in this part of Thy vineyard.

[ 9 : 27 ] Bless the congregation during this time of vacancy. Lead them to one of Thy choosing, one who would pastor the flock, one who would be a true under-shepherd under Thine hand, leading them into the rich pastures of Thy truth.

Grant, O Lord, that Thou wouldst give them unanimity of mind and heart, as they seek Your mind in this duty that is placed upon them.

Grant Thy blessing upon all who go forth in Thy name this day, here and elsewhere to the ends of the earth. Prosper Thy cause.

Lead us and guide us as we further wait upon Thee. Cleanse in the blood. In Jesus' name we ask it with forgiveness of sin.

Amen. Amen. Now just a word to the younger listeners. Did you remember to put your clock back?

[ 10 : 48 ] Did you gain much from an extra hour? Or did you not notice the hour that was extra? It's one thing about time.

It passes very quickly, doesn't it? I'm told that for the very first time in five years, Big Ben has been turned back.

Apparently it was undergoing repairs on the first time in five years. It has been turned back. Well, when I was youth age, it was a long time ago, I looked forward to this hour going back.

In my day there was no mobile phone, there was no iPad, there was no computers, but we had books. An extra hour to read was very precious.

But you know, the Bible has much to say about time. In fact, there is one verse in the Bible, and it may be termed, A Bible Gospel Alar.

[ 12 : 02 ] Maybe you could find out where it is written. And what it says is this, It is high time to wake out of sleep.

Maybe that sounds familiar. When your parents come to wake you in the morning, particularly as we're entering into the winter months, and you have to go to school, and you're snug under your blanket, and you don't want to get up.

And mom and dad say, It's high time to wake out of sleep. Well, the Bible says that too. But the Bible is not speaking of sleep in the natural sense there.

It is speaking of sleep in the spiritual sense, where people are fast asleep under the sound of the Gospel.

The Bible also reminds us of the need to redeem time. Now that tells us time is short.

[ 13 : 10 ] When you're young, you think you've got a long, long time. 20, 40, 50, 60 years. Do you know, when you get to my age, and you look back, you wonder how quickly the time has gone.

Because it seems condensed into just a very tiny space. And so, although you may think that time is long, the Bible says there's an urgency about time.

And we're asked to make the best use of our time. And the best use of our time is to serve the Lord Jesus Christ by trusting in Him alone for salvation.

That's applicable not just to those who are in Sunday school and young, but to every age group in society. We are asked to redeem the time.

And the word redeem, to buy back. How do you buy back time? Because once it's gone. So, make use of every moment to serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 14 : 26 ] Let us again sing to His praise from Psalm 103. Psalm 103. At verse 3.

All thine iniquities, who doth most graciously forgive, who thy diseases all, and pains doth heal, and thee relieve.

Who doth redeem thy life, that thou to death mayest not go down. Who thee with loving kindness doth, and tender mercies crown.

Who with abundance of good things doth satisfy thy mouth, so that even as the eagle's age, renewed is thy youth.

God righteous judgment executes for all oppressed ones His ways to Moses, He is acts, made known to Israel's sons.

[ 15 : 29 ] Let us sing these verses. All thine iniquities, who doth most graciously forgive. O thine iniquities, who doth most graciously forgive.

o n■a should be forgiven. I will no longer reign.

He is the verses and all through our prayer. Blessed Muy facilidad y pura Para ser Honogado Go the new God to you and plente for mercy is the our who can refer Who with theuliis gishid?

The salvage upon thy kingdom I love you riesgBluc■ ■■■■ziah You Is He is our main Lord to his sons.

Let us now read from the New Testament, from the Gospel according to Luke, chapter 23. The Gospel according to Luke, chapter 23, and we may read at verse 26.

[ 18 : 16 ] And as they led him away, that is, as they led Jesus away, they laid hold upon one Simon of Cyrenia, coming out of the country.

And on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus. And there followed him a great company of people and of women, which also bewailed and lamented.

But Jesus, turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.

For behold, the days are coming, and the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bear, and the pups which never give suck.

Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fallen us, and to the hills, cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

[ 19 : 19 ] And there were also two other malefactors led with them to be put to death. When they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left.

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment and cast lots.

And the people stood beholding, and the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others, let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him and offering him vinegar and saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek and Latin and Hebrew, This is the king of the Jews.

One of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

[ 20 : 41 ] But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost thou not? Dost not thou fear God? Seen thou art in the same condemnation and we justly.

For we receive the due reward of our deeds. But this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. And it was about the sixth hour, And there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

And the sun was darkened, And the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, Into thy hands I commend my spirit.

And having said thus, He gave up the ghost. Amen. And may God bless to us that reading from his truth.

[ 21 : 55 ] Let us again sing to his praise from Psalm 103 and at verse 8. Psalm 103 and at verse 8. The Lord our God is merciful, And he is gracious, Long-suffering, And slow to wrath, And mercy plenteous.

He will not chide continually, Nor keep his anger still. With us he dealt not as we sinned, Nor did requite our ill.

For as the heaven in its height, The earth surmounteth far, So great to those that do him fear, His tender mercies are.

As far as east is distant from the west, So far are thee from us removed, In his love all our iniquity.

Let us sing these verses. The Lord our God is merciful. The Lord our God is merciful, As■■■■ kut, I'mpannt it as you suffer, Your God is merciful, Would make us feel free, Like us and may we wait until after the■■■, Until sometime becomes you, How is heyah love, What is heyah love?

[ 23 : 25 ] More tre burph, W forms of my loving■■ie, How is heyah love, which ye■■lich of faith, Who intends on thein, Whor whom of money mayow, Hoe you have diseable, You areikum, Hu – To other animals, Come Teams, You areole, V ■■■■■,■■■ala, You are alumni, With us alive, And Hit them, letter armed in its height, You are our God is merciful, There isn't going on the right, And shall Skype, He will not shine on day the day, nor keep His hand still.

With us He will not as we sing, nor keep We atmanguage day, for our You Aviful ■■.

so is oh Let us now turn to the Lord.

Let us turn to the passage that we read, Gospel according to Luke chapter 23, and we may read again at verse 42.

And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

[ 25 : 55 ] I think I can say with every confidence that most, if not all, have heard of the account of the crucified lawbreakers who were put to death on crosses on either side of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The account in Luke's Gospel sets before us his recording of proceedings at Calvary.

A place where the eternal Son of God in our nature gives himself to death in the room and place of his people.

There is much that is told us by Luke about these final hours prior to the death of Christ.

Much that ought to make us all ask the question, Why did this person, Jesus Christ, have to die?

[ 27 : 01 ] For whatever else we might learn from the narrative, there is surely the lesson that the wages of sin is death.

Death is the penal price for sin, not just the separation of soul and body. You know how some people welcome death in the sense that they believe it is the antidote to suffering.

It is the final release as they see it. So you have those who are supportive of what is euphemistically called assisted dying.

But if you reflect for a moment, you will see that death for the Lord Jesus Christ was not a release.

It was a penalty he had to endure in order that salvation be offered. Yes, to sinners.

[ 28 : 08 ] But more, that sinners who trust in him alone for salvation can enjoy the certainty, the assurance of salvation.

His sufferings were penal. His sufferings were extremely intensive. But I come back to this.

He gave himself to death. It was a willing act on his part. And Luke also tells us of the final hours of two men.

Two men whose lives had been intertwined over a period. We don't know for how long. They had befriended one another.

Except that they both appeared to have been part of the underworld criminal membership. The long arm of the law had ultimately caught up with them.

[ 29 : 13 ] And they were sentenced to death for their crimes. And to begin with, they both seem to share the same attitude to Christ.

Matthew's Gospel tells us, The chief priests mocking him with the scribes and elders said, He saved others. Himself he cannot save. If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross.

We will believe him. He trusted in God. Let him deliver him now, if he will have him. For he said, I am the Son of God.

And Matthew goes on to say in his account, The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

However, as we shall see, one of these came to save in faith. But the other did not.

[ 30 : 12 ] Because of that, although they both died on account of being crucified, there was a huge gulf between the way in which each of these met death.

One had the blessed assurance of being with Christ. But the other had no such assurance as death robbed him of life.

Do you ever think about how you yourself will meet death? There is a huge solemnity about that moment when we pass out of time into the eternal realm.

Time that will be in all our lives unless Christ comes first. A time when we shall have to put off what the Bible calls the earthly tent house and pass into the eternal realm.

How shall we meet the last enemy? What might be the last words we speak, assuming that we are capable of speech?

[ 31 : 29 ] And that is not an assumption that we can make, because there is no guarantee that we will be capable of speech when we leave this life or even aware of what is taking place.

What will be our final thoughts as we leave this veil of tears? Will there be an excitement, an air of anticipation, that going to meet with Christ face to face?

Or will there be a sense of dread and great fear that we face the eternal judge? We know on the basis of biblical teaching that if in Christ our eternal destiny will be glorious, but if we are out of Christ it will be misery forever.

Well, however that might be, I wish to reflect with you on the last words of this man before he died. Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

His final words were a prayer. They are words which I believe have much to teach us. So three thoughts from our text today.

- [ 32 : 59 ] First, his prayer is a mark of spiritual life. Secondly, his prayer demonstrates faith and exercise.

And thirdly, his prayer reveals a depth of spiritual insight. First of all, his prayer is a mark of spiritual life.

The Bible teaches that prayer is the mark of a person who has experienced the new birth.

It is a mark of a person in possession of spiritual life. Let me illustrate from the Bible. You may remember how on an occasion the Lord spoke to a man by the name of Ananias.

The Lord said to him in a vision, Rise and go to the street called Straight at the house of Judas. Look for a man of Tarsus named Saul.

- [ 34 : 08 ] For behold, he is praying. That is recorded for us in the book of Acts. It is very evident from the response of Ananias that he was extremely reluctant to undertake this duty and go on this specific mission.

He was extremely skeptical about going into the company of Saul of Tarsus. And it is as if Ananias was questioning whether even the grace of God, mighty and powerful as it is, could ever have transformed the life of such a man.

So you find Ananias responding to the Lord. Lord, I have heard from many about this man. How much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem.

And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name. And do you remember the marvelous encouragement God gave to Ananias?

Go, says the Lord, for he is a chosen vessel of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.

- [ 35 : 35 ] A chosen vessel of mine. What a marvelous testament from God of this man, Saul of Tarsus.

A vessel, a container, that is filled by something out with itself. What became true of this particular vessel was that it was once so full of self.

But through the entrance of grace, that vessel was made empty. And as a mark of his emptiness, he prays.

You know, by and large, it is people who are actually aware of their emptiness who pray.

In the book of Psalms, you find the psalmist speaking along these lines, I stretch out my hands to you. His hands are empty.

- [ 36 : 41 ] An indication of the emptiness that he feels in his soul as he cries out to God.

I suppose to use another biblical illustration, those who engage in prayer are like the brothers of Joseph at the time of famine. Remember what was true of them?

They brought their empty sacks to this strange new ruler who presided over the storehouses that were full.

Well, that, I believe, is still an applicable image of believers to the present hour.

They come in their emptiness to the God of all grace. They come to him, to the Joseph of the New Testament, whose storehouses have an inexhaustible supply to meet their need.

- [ 37 : 45 ] Saul of Tarsus was praying as a mark of the infusion of grace into his life. So did this poor man, severely pained as he was.

There he is, hanging on a cross, a newborn child in the kingdom of Emmanuel. And he prays, remember me.

Now, what one must remember is that prayer is not something that merely marks out the newborn believer and then disappears.

Prayer is a constant in the life of the believer. And so, we ought to ask ourselves, what is prayer? Both the larger and shorter catechisms give similar answers to the question, what is prayer?

And I hope you are familiar with both. The larger catechism, prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies.

[ 39 : 01 ] Shorter catechism, prayers and offering up of our desires unto God for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies.

And when I reflect on these answers, it reminds me of a definition of prayer that I read many, many years ago in a book written by a man named Octavius Winslow.

Title of the book was The Work of the Holy Spirit. And there Winslow gave a concise summation of prayer.

Prayer is the expression of want, the desire of need, the acknowledgement of poverty, the language of dependence, the breathing of a soul that has nothing in itself, but hangs on God for all his wants.

I liked Winslow's definition of prayer then, and I still like it now, all these years later. God delights to hear the petitions of his children.

[ 40 : 21 ] His ear is open to their cry as the hearer of prayer. You know how mothers in particular, and I'm not denigrating fathers, mothers in particular, have an acute, sensitive ear to the cry of their infant.

So God's ear is sensitive to the cry of his people. And by way of encouragement, the Lord says to his people, let me hear your voice.

For your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely. It's quite a thought, isn't it? That the uncreated, infinite God meets with a created, finite being at the throne of grace.

Prayer then, is a mark of spiritual life in the heart of this man on the cross. And the gospel writer, as if to underline this fact, tells us when and where this prayer was offered.

I doubt if anyone around Calvary that day could have predicted that such words would ever tumble from the lips of this man.

[ 41 : 55 ] A man who, by his own admission, was justly condemned by the civil jurisdiction. We receive, he says, the just reward of our deeds.

He's not questioning the judgment passed on him. He's not protesting his innocence. He sees it as being just. So here is this justly convicted criminal paying the penalty of his crimes.

And I'm quite sure many would have said, there is no hope for this character. But you know, the just judge of all the earth never said that.

The just judge of all the earth never said that. And if you are in Christ today, how indebted you are to the just judge of all the earth.

That he didn't reject you, but that he received you into the embrace of his grace. Does that not teach us that we should never despair of anyone's salvation as long as they live?

[ 43 : 25 ] No matter how unlikely it might appear, when you remember and have such examples of Christ's power to save.

No one is too wicked. No one is too hard. No one is too worldly to be made a Christian. For with Christ, nothing is impossible.

And that ought to be a source of encouragement for perhaps those who are praying, for the souls of members of their families, or for friends, or for neighbors.

And you see nothing happening in their lives. There would be no hope for any of us, were it not for the greatness of divine mercy in being meted out to undeserving sinners.

You know, the Bible gives us a picture in the book of Psalms of a handful of corn planted in a most unlikely location.

[ 44 : 38 ] A rocky, barren location where you might expect no growth and where you would never think of going with your seed to plant it on tops of mountains high.

Of corn and handful in the earth on tops of mountains high. And although your expectation might be little or no growth, the Bible paints a very different picture.

With prosperous fruit shall shake like trees on Lebanon at be. And the trees in Lebanon were famed for their strength and their greatness for their growth.

And so, I would suggest that this man is a prominent example of that truth being fulfilled. In fact, I'd go further.

Every person who is brought into the kingdom of Christ is testimony to the fulfillment of this truth. what was so hard, so flint hard and so unpromising and uncompromising as the heart of man.

[ 45 : 52 ] I cannot say with certainty how the handful of seed came to fall into the heart of this man who on the face of it seemed such an unlikely person to be converted.

Some would say it was the prayer of Christ. Father, forgive them for they know not what they do. It is possible, but I don't know. What I do know and can say with certainty is that a handful of seed fell into his heart.

What I can also assert is that where Christ reigns in our heart there will come a day of great harvest because there is no poor harvest in the kingdom of grace.

This man then unlikely as it may have appeared was praying. It was the fruit of amazing grace in his life. Remember when he was praying.

Not just where he was praying, but when. It was the hour of the powers of darkness. Christ himself states this is your hour and the power of darkness.

[ 47 : 06 ] In other words, the spiritual forces of evil thought that victory was within their grasp as they grappled with the prince of light and controlled the hostile actions of those around the cross.

Yet, I say yet, in the very midst of the works of darkness, a work of light was ongoing.

how encouraging that ought to be. It is not possible for the powers of darkness to prevent the work of light progressing, much as they seek to prevent it.

You see, this prayer is testimony to the fact that God was working in the life of this man even at that dark hour. Here was this helpless individual nailed to a cross unable to do anything for himself.

Couldn't move. He required help from out with himself. And here he is praying. No cry of despair.

[ 48 : 19 ] Wasn't even a cry for an improvement in his suffering or a lessening of pain. It was no mere escapism on the part of this man. But at the height of his suffering and tremendous pain facing certain death, there is this prayer offered.

The prayer, a genuine mark of spiritual life and a work of grace. His prayer, a mark of spiritual life.

Is there prayer in your and my life today? Secondly, his prayer demonstrates faith and exercise. Note how his prayer begins.



Lord, remember me. You cannot say that his prayer is wordy. There are very few words in his prayer and yet there is a profound depth and breadth to this prayer.

prayer. It is a prayer that is full of thought. His petition is not even unique to himself either. There are others in the Bible who use these words.

[ 49 : 33 ] The psalmist, for example, uses them more than once. Remember me, O Lord, when you show favor to your people. Commentators tend to apply these words to the period when Israel was in the captivity of Babylon where by the rivers of Babylon they sat and wept.

Nehemiah also uses these words. Remember me, O my God. Remember, O my God, and spare me according to the greatness of your steadfast or your covenant love.

And there is another example in the Bible of this prayer being offered. Remember me. Offered by a man who was a Nazareth from the womb.

And despite the privileges that he enjoyed, he went greatly astray. As a consequence, you find him shorn of his mighty strength.

Not just his hair, but his mighty strength. And the sad thing is, he was not aware of the fact. He did not know that the Lord had left him.

[ 50 : 44 ] And you know, the Philistine seized him and gouged out his eyes, brought him down to Gaza, browned him with bronze shackles and he ground at the mill in the prison.

He was just a shadow of the man he had been before, a blind, shackled prisoner. and the interesting thing is, he was being used to feed his former enemies.

He ground at the mill in the prison. The very enemies against whom he had waged a campaign of destruction. He was a man who had experience of the blessing of the Lord on more than one occasion as well as the presence of the Lord.

But as I said, such was the low spiritual state of this man. He did not know that the Lord had left him, going publicly astray.

It's always food to the enemies of the gospel. They gloat. But this was still a man of God. And you remember he prayed, O Lord God, please remember me.

[ 52 : 09 ] And please strengthen me only this once. Words of repentance, words full of anguish, a prayer of faith. How do we know it was a prayer of faith?

Because it was answered by the Lord. And that's what we have here too. In this petition of the thief, a prayer of faith, faith, and his prayer also was answered.

His prayer demonstrates faith and exercise. His prayer is a mark of spiritual life. And finally, his prayer reveals a depth of spiritual insight.

faith. In the wonderful, overriding, sovereign providence of God, this man is placed on a cross beside Jesus.

He meets death with Christ physically beside him. Now, for the other thief, that didn't mean much.

[ 53 : 20 ] but for this man it did. And the words of his prayer are the last words he utters in this life as far as we know.

And yet these words have borne testimony for over two thousand years and have been blessed, I believe, in the experience of many.

you have to ask yourself what prompted this prayer? Why do I ask that question? For the very reason that his companion spoke in a very different way.

You remember when Christ was tempted in the wilderness, that part of the temptation that was used by Satan was this, if you are the son of God, twice you find Satan coming with this temptation.

Those who were passers-by at Calvary, we are told in Matthew's gospel, also spoke in that way, if you are the son of God. And here in Luke's account, the other thief stating, if you are Christ, if you be, thou be Christ.

[ 54 : 40 ] In other words, you are not whoever you are. But this man, this man, unlike everyone else, was praying, Lord, remember me.

Now, at that very moment, Christ was in the very depths of the valley of humiliation, in the bleak, inhospitable valley of death, and all that that entailed been revealed to him.

No indication that he was a king. And yet, this man is praying to him as the king of kings. What possessed him to pray in this way?

Can we not say that he was given a different insight into this, the identity of this mysterious person who was crucified beside him?

This man had new vision. Some would contend that as Christ was transformed on the Mount of Transfiguration, that something similar happened here.

[ 56 : 03 ] I can't be sure about that. But this I do know. When the grace of God in Christ flows into your soul, your whole view of the Godhead is radically changed.

spirit. And so this man with new sight, as a direct consequence of the work of the Holy Spirit, is seeing a different crown on Jesus.

Not the contemptuous, derisory crown of thorns, but his rightful crown of glory. Behind the humiliation of the cross, this man was seen a shining throne.

And his prayer, seems to me, makes it very obvious that he had no doubt about the kingdom. Why?

Because he glimpsed the glory of the King. Remember, the shorter catechism asks this question, what offices does Christ execute as our Redeemer?

[ 57 : 14 ] Christ as our Redeemer executes the office of prophet, priest, and king, both in his state of humiliation and exhortation. Who now is able to see Christ in these offices?

In my view, only those whose eyes have been opened by the Lord himself. Look at how much progress, how much growth he made in such a short time.

Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom. We don't know what conception he had of the kingdom of Christ. Was he thinking of when Christ would come in the majesty of his glory?

It's difficult to say. But when he says, remember me, don't you think that this is implied? Do not let me be parted from you.

How can I be sure of that? From the very reply that Christ gives to this man. Remember, Christ is able to interpret, to analyze his petition.

[ 58 : 24 ] The Bible tells us in the book of Psalms how the psalmist drew comfort from this. In my tongue before I speak, not any word can be, but altogether though, Lord, it is well known to thee.

And does one who is able to analyze, look at his reply, what does it say? Does Christ say, I will remember you, etc. It's not what he says, but this, verily I say unto you, today shall thou be with me.

In other words, Christ is saying to this man, there's going to be no parting. That's what the thief desired. That's the assurance he received, you shall be with me.

His prayer was answered. Despite the unusual meeting place, Christ was fulfilling what was predicted by the prophets. And the thief, there on account of how he had conducted his life, he was receiving the just penalty for his misdeeds.

peace. And you can almost hear Christ say, I am numbered among the transgressors, so that the transgressors might be numbered with me.

[ 59 : 44 ] Therefore, says the prophet Isaiah, I will divide him a portion with the many, he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul and was numbered with the transgressors, yet he bore the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors.

So he says, in response to the prayer of this man, verily or truly I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

You'll be much, much closer to me than you are now. Why? Because a new union had been formed, a union of faith.

There was harmony of mind and heart that only grace can bring. Christ was made precious to this man.

The vast ocean of divine love that touched his life flowed into his heart and that was but the beginning. You see, the satisfaction of the reply swallowed up the bitterness of death.

[ 60 : 58 ] The sting of death was removed. The grave was robbed of its victory. You shall be with me, says Jesus.

The deepest desire of this man fulfilled. No delay in the matter. reminds me of a man of whom I heard I never met him in the flesh.

That was before my time. He was on his deathbed. He was from the neighbouring community of Bach. And there were a number of people in the house and they were asking him how he was.

Oh, he replied, the Lord said to me today, you will be with me in glory. And one of the neighbours, an old Christian who was in the home, she said, oh my dear, she said, the Bible states it is paradise.

And the dying man responded, it was glory, he said to me. And he did die that day.

[ 62 : 18 ] what a quick transformation in the life of this man on the cross, as he stepped out of grace and into glory.

One moment surrounded by the hostile cries of the enemies of Christ, the next moment participating in the choral song of glory.

No more darkness for him. Translated to the place where there is no need of sun or moon to shine for the glory of God gives it light and its lamp is the lamb.

An end to his days of sadness, mourning and sorrow. Who would not wish to hear such reassurance at the end of life?

You shall be with me. That's heaven. To be where Jesus is. That's heaven. But to arrive there, we have to trust in him alone for salvation in this life.

[ 63 : 32 ] We don't get there without trusting in him alone for salvation. His prayer then a mark of spiritual life. his prayer demonstrates faith and exercise.

His prayer reveals a depth of spiritual insight. Do you find yourself today among those who have the spirit of prayer where faith is an exercise and you are in possession of spiritual insight into the identity of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Let us pray. O eternal God how marvelous and wonderful is your work of grace.

Help us never to cease to be amazed at how grace transforms translates the lives of impoverished men and women and boys and girls so that they are assured of being with Christ eternally.

may may we be amongst that number and the glory shall be thine. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. Let us conclude by singing to God's praise from Psalm 86.

[ 65 : 08 ] Psalm 86 and at verse 11. Teach me thy way and in thy truth O Lord then walk will I unite my heart that I thy name may fear continually O Lord my God with all my heart to thee I will give praise and I the glory will ascribe unto thy name always because thy mercy toward me in greatness doth excel and thou delivered hast my soul out from the lowest hell these verses Psalm 86 teach me thy way teach me thy way and in thy truth O Lord then walk with

I give I my heart heart I take heart I've great heart me ahead■ of I hum will look my god ■  
Oh Oh Take down thee, ward me, and being exalt thank you.

And thou youandin'ye,■■ fast my soul. Icom the lowest Ed.

Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit, rest on and abide with you all, now and forever. Amen.