John Donne's Good Friday, 1613. Riding Westward

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Preacher: Dr. Maxine Hancock

[0:00] I'm not going to waste very much of your time, friends, only to present once again my honoured colleague, Maxine Hancock, whom most of us heard on Herbert last week, and all left, I suppose, with phrases forming in our mind along the line of Maxine the Magnificent Well, you deserve the tweester, Maxine. You may be, how shall I say it, you may be pocket science in one sense, but you're terrific in another. And I won't keep the group from you. I invite you please to come and introduce us to John Doe.

Thank you very much. Well, thank you very much, Dr. Packard, for that. Actually, I think my students may have a slightly different take on Maxine, whether Magnificent or otherwise, but I kind of churned.

And I did get a note from the students about a class that's meeting in our home tomorrow morning, and they sent out with the line on the internet that said, Monday morning with Maxine. And then the first line of the letter said, maybe that should be the title for a sitcom.

So that's how it is. I'm taken with my students. So we're not sure where that all goes. I hope that you have, some of you have begun an exploration of Herbert after last Sunday. And I know some of you have rushed out and bought copies of Herbert's complete works, and are going to spend some time exploring with him. Herbert and Don take real time to explore. So one of the first things you'll feel, and you'll open that complete works and you'll think, oh, this isn't quite as clear as when we were doing it together in class. And so one of the things I'd like to do today is spend a few minutes talking about how they engage the kind of poetry we're talking about when we're talking about these 17th century poets, as poets of devotional poetry. So, Bill, we have a handout, and I think we'll go directly with that. So I don't know where that is. Yes, the handout is coming, even as we speak. And on today's handout, once again, just one sheet, but you'll see one side talks about how to engage the poetry, and the other side will be the poem that we're going to spend some time on this morning. I did explain to those of you who were here last week why I did the Herbert poetry last week, although he is a slightly, chronologically we should do Don and then Herbert. But I wanted to open up this poetry, it's a little more accessible through Herbert, and then I wanted specifically to do this poem for Good Friday today, so you have it for your meditation through to Good Friday of this week. So, just so that you understand, if you were doing this and if you were doing a chronological survey, you would do Herb Dunn first, because he is the elder poet, born in 1572, so just about exactly a generation older than Herbert, just about 20 years different.

And he would have been the slight, John Dunn would be the slightly older, that next generation up person in the poetic succession, who was part of a group of friends who would meet in George Herbert's mother's home to discuss poetry and so on. So Dunn is a direct influence on Herbert, although Herbert takes some very different directions from Dunn. So we're now, we're sort of tracing, going up river, instead of following the river downstream, we're going up to the sort of this next place of source of this kind of poetry, of this 17th century Protestant devotional poetry, which marks a specific kind and temper of poetry after the long medieval, the high medieval poetry and the Elizabethan poetry. Then we come into the 17th century and we know we're into, we have a slightly new texture and it is a sense of early modern poetry, poetry that is now deeply imbued by a

[4:24] Protestant theology, although with Dunn we're fairly, we still are fairly close, in fact very closely, closely intertwined with a Catholic sensibility. So I'm going to talk about that when I give you some biography, but before I do that, let me just walk you through the one side of your sheet that talks about how to do this poetry. Some of you are wanting, what I of course want you to do out of these two little taster Sundays is to start to make these poets your own and and get your complete works and begin the engagement that I really can be a very major part of your spiritual journey. It can be a form of spiritual nurture and is for me and has been for the church for a very long time, if you can kind of know how to encounter it. So I've laid it out as three steps in embracing, engaging spiritual or devotional poetry. And the first thing is the poem as, to engage the poem, and I call this the poem as encounter. So the very first thing with a poem is to read it right through. And if at all possible to read it orally.

We're pretty good at eye reading now, that is our eyes inform our minds with sound quite well. But poetry is one of those things that really wants voicing. And so if you can be someplace where people don't think you've gone mad, and you can read that poetry out loud, repeatedly, that is a particularly wonderful way to engage it. If you can hear it read, especially read by a very fine British actor, so you're getting a very fine British reading, you hear it even further.

But, so there are of course recordings of all of these poems, and that's one of the ways. But mostly I would just kind of settle in to encounter the poem. So let's take a poem, let's just take one poem and kind of walk through it, following these steps.

Here's one of them, Holy Song. And we'll just take it and we'll just start in on it, and see what we can do.

Holy Song number 2 by Helen Gardner's ordering of the poems, which is pretty much considered standard. O my black soul, now thou art summoned by sickness, death's herald and champion. Thou art like a pilgrim which abroad has done treason, and durst not turn to whence he has fled, or like a thief which till death's doom be read, wishes himself delivered from prison, but damned and hailed to execution, wishes that he still might be imprisoned. Yet grace, if thou repent, thou canst not lack. But who shall give thee that grace to begin?

[7:09] O make thyself with holy mourning black, and red with blushing as thou art with sand, or wash me in Christ's blood, which hath this night, that being red, it dyes red souls to white." Well, first reading, I'm sure you're going, whoa! What's going on in here?

There's obviously a lot happening in 14 lines. Those of you who have a little bit of English background will know that a sonnet is 14 lines, and that it has a very tightly compressed form of poetry, that it's going to set out a problem and a resolution usually.

Sometimes it has four quatrains and then a closing couplet, as this one does. Sometimes it is done with an octave and a set set, that is eight lines first and then six lines.

And in either case, one of the things you check quickly is to see if it's in three quatrains and a couplet. So you're looking at your right scene. Summoned, champion, summoned rhymes with done, uh, excuse me, summons, champion, doesn't exactly rhyme better, summoned and done, fled red, prison execution, it's not exactly scanning easily. But when we get down here, lack, black, begin, sin, and then might, white.

We can see that we're into a set set. This first part is a little bit more complex. So, you don't worry too much about it. You don't get points for whether you get the right rhyme scheme or not. You're just looking quickly to see if you can tell whether this is an English sonnet, which is three quatrains and a couplet, because that tells you something about the way the motion is going to go.

[8:48] But by the time we get to done, the sonnets are so complex that actually you might have a, um, an Italian sonnet with an English resolution on it.

So this is a form, literally, look to see if it has a closing couplet. Because that's going to be where it locks up. If it has a closing couplet that is a rhyme, rhymes at the very last end of the line, that means it's going to probably go, come to the end with a sound resolution in that closing couplet.

If it's an interlocked rhyme scheme right to the end, you probably have something that sets out a problem in the first eight lines and resolves it in the last six.

This form does exactly, um, exactly, uh, the Italian development, that is, it sets up the problem right to there, and then it starts the revolution, but not the Italian rhyme scheme.

So you're, you're, you know, you might as well not worry too much about that to say, okay, now, what that does, what I'm doing by quickly going into a stanchion situation, or quickly going into a rhyme scheme thing, is just trying to see how the poem is shaped.

[9:53] Where, where is thought forms going to be? But you could have come at it just about as easily by reading it as sentences, and, and it might be easier for you to come that way. What I'm talking about now is poem as encounter.

Read the poem through several times, orally if possible. Enjoy the sounds and the images conjured, the rhythm, and I've talked to you about the rhyme, because the rhyme is part of the, uh, how this poem is going to work on your pulses.

And then I say, lie back and float on the poem with the sun in your face. Now you say, oh, that's interesting. What I mean is, let the poem hold you for a little while. Don't, you don't have to parse it all out.

So let's read it one more time. Okay? We're going to read it again. This time, we're going to just kind of lay back into the poem and let the poem inform. So, when we start in, we know right away it starts with this address to one soul.

So it's a call to confession. This is a contrition poem. So as soon as this is all my black... Yes? Would you move the poem up slightly? Sure. I'll do that. Yes.

[10:56] Does that help us? That's great. Good. Thank you for that. So, the address to the soul, oh my black soul, is immediately a call to contrition. So, oh my black soul, now thou art summoned by sickness, death's herald and champion.

Thou art like a pilgrim. As soon as you are like a pilgrim, you know you're beginning to set up imagery. So just keep that in mind. Thou art like a pilgrim which abroad hath done treason, and durst not turn to whence he is fled.

Or, like a thief, which till death's doom be read, wishes himself delivered from prison, but damned and hailed to execution, wishes that still he might be in prison. And you should by now be kind of chuckling to yourself, because this is a...

He got two pictures for the soul. None of them very flattering. This is a call to contrition. He says, here you are. You're like a pilgrim in big, deep doo-doo. Because, you went abroad, and you committed treason, but you need to get back home, and you know you're going to be in trouble if you go home, and you're in trouble away.

So, that's the kind of trouble you're in, black soul. So, they call it the second late, just when you're still recovering from the picture of yourself as the pilgrim who went abroad and doesn't dare go home again. Then he says, or, maybe you're like a thief who, till death's doom be read, wishes himself delivered from prison.

[12:20] He's a thief, he's in prison, and he's wishing he could get out. But, the minute they say the day of execution, and they're going to haul him out, now he wishes he were still in prison. In other words, you don't, in a way, you're between the devil and the deep blue sea.

You're between a rock and a hard place. You're in trouble, soul. That's basically the picture. So, you've got your visual images set up for a soul that really is in trouble because of sin, because of the sin that he has been done, and the fact that he's facing sickness, which tells him he's going to have to face judgment.

So, it's a contrition in the faith of sickness, which is death's herald and champion. So, sickness has come, and now this person's saying, whoops, I'm going to meet my maker, and I'm in trouble.

The set up, that far. Now, when you see a yet, or a but, you're coming to a turning point in the poem, yet grace. And that's just a lovely phrase.

When you say, lie back and float on the poem with the sun on your face. Up till now, you've been scurrying. You've been the pilgrim trying to think, should I stay abroad? I'm in trouble abroad. Should I go home? I can't go home. I have no place to rest.

[13:36] I'm like the thief, who I'm in trouble. I hate being imprisoned. But if they, the next step out is worse. So, I'm in trouble there. And then the whole poem swings on this wonderful two little words grace.

Yet grace. And you should just be able to stop and see that whole poem just kind of go, because the sonnet swings there. Yet grace, if thou repent, thou canst not laugh.

There's the doctrinal statement of the poem. Well, the second doctrinal statement. The first doctrinal statement that we all have sinned. But the second big one, the main one, yet grace, if thou repent, thou canst not laugh.

As soon as that resolution comes into the poem, you think, well, the poem could be all done now. Just, you know, here we are. Because in our day and age, we'd sort of say grace and then we're all finished.

But the meal's still ahead in this one. Because once he said, yet grace, if thou repent, thou canst not laugh. If you repent, grace will be made available to you.

[14:41] The big question. But who shall give thee that grace to begin? Where do you think you start to repent? Even to repent requires grace. And where am I going to find that grace?

So there's a call to contrition again. O make thyself with holy mourning black. So you'd be black with sin up here. But now another come back.

Now we get a set of colors. Play on colors. Instead of the blackness of sin, or cover the blackness of sin with holy mourning. The robes, the garth of the mourner, mourning for your sins, garb of your black.

And red with blushing, be ashamed of the sin that you've committed. Just be as red with contrition, or with shame, as thou art with sin.

And the red with sin is an allusion to Isaiah. Though your sins be as crimson, they shall be as snow. Though, that is the idea that sin can be crimson deep.

[15:43] Or, even better. Even better. The or is a very interesting word because it's almost an anticipation. Even better. Even better. Contrition can only take you so far.

The thing you really need is to wash thee in Christ's blood. So we've moved from sin being crimson, to the shame of sin making us blush, to the bread that really changes things.

Which is Christ's blood. Which hath it might or power, that being red, it dyes red souls to white. And that is punning on dyes.

On one hand, Christ's blood. Dyes, as we plunge our lives into Christ's blood, that blackness, that the crimson of our sins, the blackness is gone, the crimson of our sins, is transformed by regeneration.

But also, of course, Christ died in order to turn red souls white. That is souls that were red with the crimson of sin. So it's a complex poem.

[16:51] But if you had read it without me here, you would have done fine. You need to know this. Because the pictures are in the poem. And if you attend to the pictures, once you start to read the lines, listen to the poem, look for the turning points in the poem.

This is the key, key doctrinal and linguistic turning point, the yet grace. That all of our hope is that there is grace if we repent.

And God's promise that grace, if thou repent, thou canst not laugh. And then the issue of how we're going to find that grace, we're going to find it as we turn repentance and rely on Christ's blood.

With this efficacy, that might, that word might, which has this might, this efficacy, this power. So, all in all, I come now in step one, we're still just in this first stage, the engagement, the poem is encounter.

Respond. Does the poem stir you? Surprise you? Shock you? Make an unexpected turn that illumines you? So those are the things you're asking yourself. When you read the poem two or three or four times just by yourself, sort of go, the first thing you feel is, I don't, I don't know if I like that one so much.

[18:11] Or, what's going on in here? This poem grips me. It says something, I don't know what it's saying, I don't know how it's doing it, but it's saying something I care about. It might shock you, poems can shock you, and especially in John Dunn's poems, and especially in sonics, look for the unexpected turn that illumines you.

And I say you might like to mark the places that have a strong impact on you. So this is that first reading that I'm already going way beyond, obviously, in talking through the poem. But, your own reading would be reading and rereading.

And then asking yourself some of these questions that I've given you here. Look for the pictures. What are the images? Where is it like or as? Come back and say what's the metaphor? There's an overarching metaphor here, which those of you with some medieval background we're taking up on, and that is the everyman play.

The everyman play would usually start with everyman coming onto the stage, looking like life is going quite well, and then somebody hooded and with a side, or somebody representing death or illness, death and illness, comes onto the stage and taps everyman who's whistling along, enjoying life, on the shoulder and says, everyman, you must die.

You must present yourself to your maker. And that's the beginning of a medieval morality play. And so the setup is actually within that framework. Well, you can tell I have a hard time stopping beyond this poem as encountered.

[19:42] But when you're doing it yourself, the first thing is, what I'm calling poem as encountered, the first and most important thing about devotional or any kind of poetry really, is that you feel it on your pulses.

Even if you can't do all the working out of exactly what it means and all the doctrines, that somehow it touches us in a way that very often prose is not able to.

So then your next major step is what I call the stantiation. The poem is object. If you're really wanting to engage the poem beyond this poem as encountered, your next step is to look at the poem more completely.

And I say stop for a minute to examine your own subjectivity. Who are you? How old are you? How did you come to faith? Where does the poem position itself along the becoming continuum?

So if you're a very new believer, you're just beginning to explore the faith, you might be saying, okay, that's very interesting. There's something here that calls us to repentance and to contrition.

[20:51] If you were a believer for a very long time, you might ask yourself how well prepared you are for that summonsing. That was a very typical 17th century mental exercise, the memento mori, to actually say, okay, how well prepared I am.

If this is the day that I were to be tapped on the shoulder like every man, what account would I give of myself and of my life? So where is this poem along the continuum?

Does holy sonnets are usually pitched at a point of conflict? That is usually, and that's a very good place to put a sonnet, because you've got the chance to set out the problem and the resolution.

But also it makes a dramatic monologue, it makes a dramatic moment. So usually they're pitched at a moment of conflict. Conflict here, how do I even begin to repent fully and properly?

Where do I find grace to make a beginning point? I'm in trouble myself. Where does this grace, this yet grace that I mean, where does it start in my soul?

[21:59] Then I say, do you know anything about the poet's faith story? If not, you might want to investigate it or the significance of the poetry to others. So I'm going to talk to you a little bit about John Dunn's story in a minute here.

And you might want to read other poetry by the same poet. What I'm giving you here would apply not just to Herbert and Dunn, but to any. If you pick up Margaret Avison, if you pick up Denise Levertop, if you pick up T.S. Eliot, this is a way of going at it.

And then, what about the poem makes you rethink your own certainties or uncertainties? And what intertexts do you recognize or can you trace? Where do you find, especially biblical allusions, which we now are calling intertexts.

They used to be called allusions. But that is references, which aren't in reference. And many of you will have heard the one that I pointed out to you from Isaiah. That is that, though our sins be as crimson, they shall be as white as wool, like snow.

It's the Isaiah chapter 2, I think it is. Then, once you've done some reading and thinking, reading the poem, re-reading the poem.

[23:07] And I would, like, there's nothing wrong with taking a sonnet and using it alongside your devotional reading for a week or two. You don't have to crack it like a nut.

You don't have to take a boom and get it all. You can just read it every morning along with your devotional reading for a week, two weeks, three weeks. That's what I'm meaning about kind of letting the poem talk to you and you sort of relaxing with the poem.

Because what you will find is with any very fine literature, it will just sort of begin to open itself up to you just with the reading. Day one, you kind of go, I don't know what's that about.

Day two, you start to see the pictures. Day three, you're beginning to hear the movements through the poem. Day four, you're beginning to understand how it's operating and on you go with it until you're happy.

Until the poem has spoken with you or you feel, I think that that's as much time as I want to spend with that poem. But you can just take the sonnets or any of Herbert's poems and read and re-read them that way.

[24:09] And then I say that step three is to re-embrace the poem, the poem as experience. Once you've done some reading, re-reading and maybe some background work on it, maybe if you have an annotated edition you look up information on the hard words in the poem, use your dictionary and solve etymological issues.

Now read the poem again, I say repeatedly over a period of a week or more. Drink deeply, turn phrases over and over in your mind. Memorize lines that move you deeply.

Yet grace, if thou repent, thou canst not lack. I think I'm going to memorize that one this morning. Yet grace, if thou repent, thou canst not lack.

Let's build on the promises of God. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. That text, that scripture is built into that one lovely poetic line.

I think it should go up on our fridges, don't you? For this week. And then of course, the other lines around it. Memorize lines that move you deeply. Some of you can memorize whole sonnets.

[25:20] Everybody's talking about doing things that keep our brains alive as we grow older these days. I'm thinking that understanding and studying sonnets will be my way to do crossword puzzles. I think it's more interesting.

I think it's more interesting. So I just decided that now. Anyway, another thing you can do is find a way to incorporate the poem in worship in your family or your group.

I think it would be lovely if small groups, as they come together, would read a poem at the beginning. You already have a time of prayer. How about reading a poem that day as you gather in your study groups or your small house groups or at your table?

Wouldn't that be lovely? I'm sure the children would be charmed. Now we're just going to have a sonnet by John Donne. And nobody thinks until I'm finished. I don't think so. I don't think that would be the ideal way.

But in a house group or a group that was interested in growing together, I think this would be a very interesting thing to add into. To add into our repertoire of language that helps us get away from patterns.

[26:26] I think that's one of the real things that poetry is a gift for. That it's very easy in our Christian kind of tradition to get pat in our language. And poetry keeps shaking.

The one thing you can't have is a pat poem. A poem with pat language or easy solution is just, it's not going to stand. And one of the things that Herbert and Donne do is keep that from happening.

Let's look at one more sonnet before I give you a little bit more background. I never know what to pick.

Here's another one that's set up around the everyman play. Can you explain what the everyman play is? Oh, yes, I'd like to. Thank you. In the Middle Ages in England, there were a number of ways that the, especially the Franciscan friars, encouraged people to know the scriptures through drama.

And one was a whole set of plays called The Mystery Cycle that every year were played in cities like Coventry and New York and so on. That acted out the major scenes of the biblical drama from creation through the fall, through Noah's flood, on through the Abraham story, and on to the incarnation, the coming of Jesus, the nativity, the birth of Christ, and then on right through to the last judgment.

[27:48] That would be a series of plays. Then the second kind of plays that were played were called morality plays, and they were designed to teach people how to live the Christian life. So one set of plays taught them the whole Christian story, and the other taught them how to live.

Those are the morality plays, and chief among those are the everyman, the everyman plays, which were plays which actually had a character called everyman, who would come out on the plane, he was representing me, you, humanity.

And he was addressed as everyman, and he would be immediately tapped on the shoulder, like in the poem we just finished looking at, and death would sound him, saying, everyman, it's time to meet your nature.

Or everyman, thou must die. By sunset tomorrow, it's all going to be over. And then everyman has to do an assessment of his life and of his status before God, and try to assess whether he's ready to stand before God.

The end of the everyman play, the one who has properly repented and found grace, is escorted by the angels off the right side of the stage. The one who doesn't, there's a, the pageant wagon would actually have a, which is a wagon pulled up in square where they acted this, would actually have a under stage, which is called Hell's Month, and they would actually, the devil would appear and drag him off the stage, and stuff him into Hell's Month. So it was all quite dramatic.

[29:11] And these scenes, that, for example, this is my play's last scene here, Heaven's the Point, my pilgrimage's last mile, my race, I will yet quickly run at this last pace, that will all draw on that, those pictures I will always play.

Okay? Thank you for asking, I'm glad when I get a chance to explain what I'm moving too quickly on. So this one is very much a miniature morality play, this, this poem, as others might be.

But this one, this is my play's last scene, here, Heaven's the Point, my pilgrimage's last mile, and my race, I will yet quickly run past this last pace, my span's last inch, my minute's latest point, and gluttonous death will instantly unjoint my body and soul, and I shall sleep a space, but my ever-waking part shall see that face whose fear already shakes my every joint.

Then, as my soul to Heaven her first feet takes flight, and earth-born body in the earth shall dwell, so fall my sins, that all may have their right to wear their bread, and would press me to Hell.

Impute me righteous, thus purged of evil, for thus I leave the world, the flesh, the devil. This poem actually works with the, again, it's very much like the last one, that is it sets up the problem in the first eight lines, and begins the resolution with this then, but it really clinches it with that final couplet, so it has that closing couplet that clinches it.

[30:52] So here's the story, the set up, I'm going to be summons before God, and notice the holy terror here. This is not an idea of, oh goody, I get, you know, it's safe in the arms of Jesus.

This is, I'm going to see that face whose fear already shakes my every joint. There's a huge amount of the fear of the Lord in this poem. So, since I'm coming to this point where my soul and my body are going to separate, may it be, then as my soul to heaven her first seat takes flight, an earth-born body in the earth shall dwell, so this separation of spirit and body at death.

And so, may my, and the idea here is that sin is heavy. Sin weights down the soul, so full my sins, that all may have their right to wear their bread. May the sin fall into the earth along my body, because otherwise it would press me to hell.

And then, the doctrinal statement. And I think it's really important to see how strongly doctrinal these poems are. We saw one in the last poem. Here it is. Impute me righteous. And this is the prayer. This is, may this be the case, then may this be the case, so full my sins.

But now the prayer, direct prayer. Impute me righteous. And this is a reformation theme that when we are declared righteous, through faith in Christ, Christ's righteousness is imputed to us. That is, it is put into our account, as it were.

[32:24] It's an accounting term. That it's not just that Christ's righteousness is somehow, we begin to understand it, but it's actually given to us as a gift and a gift to our account.

So this is, if God will impute me righteous, then thus purged of evil, with the final outcome of sin, which is death, having now put me in the grave, as it were.

In the righteousness of Christ, I am safely able to leave the world, the flesh, the death behind. So this has a strong pictorial concept and a very strong doctrinal statement.

That it is in the imputation of Christ's righteousness that one can face death confidently. I think you're seeing that these poems are a little more complex than the Herbert poems.

That is, the language is a little more difficult, and the concepts are a little bit tougher of access, I think. But I think that as one reads them and rereads them, you can get to them.

[33:37] So I'll tell you just a little bit about John Donne, and then I want to spend our last, what, the last third of the time we have together on this Good Friday poem, which is sort of the whole point of what I'm setting you up for here.

As I mentioned to you, John Donne is actually a very, very fascinating figure, and has remained in the English imagination as probably one of the great love poems, poets, and also as a really great figure of love.

And just this September, the Times Literary Supplement actually had a whole cover feature set of articles on John Donne, and it says, Lovers of Donne, with articles by Katherine Duncan Jones and A.F. Byatt, who you'll recognize as contemporary major figures. Do you recognize the picture of John Donne?

If you've done any poetry work at all, this is a very famous portrait of Donne. Are you able to see it fairly well? It's kind of a long, thin face. But this portrait of Donne, sort of glowing out of this dark background in this Renaissance-style painting, is very deeply imprinted on the English imagination.

And I think one could say that he's a great poet of love, of human love and divine love, and is often, I think in our imagination, sort of England's great lover.

[35:02] Because, very interestingly, he depicts and lived out a romantic marital love that was virtually an emerging phenomenon.

And sort of the first person who, in a very public way, chose to marry the wife of his love, rather than the wife who was negotiated for, and at great personal cost, which I'll tell you about just a little bit more, but had a faithful and loving marriage until she died.

And then when she died in childbirth, quite young, he dedicated himself to raising his children and said he would not inflict a stepmother on his children. He would raise them alone and save as a single father.

So there's a kind of this very, this constancy of a passion, love, that is quite a new figure. And very different from sort of the Byron or Casanova kind of figure of love, but rather this faithful but passionate marital love.

And I think that that makes him particularly beloved and particularly interesting as a Christian poet. He was raised Catholic and at a time when England had largely become a Protestant nation, was in a family that had maintained its Catholic character.

[36:23] He actually was tutored by a Spanish tutor. And so one of the things that makes that extremely interesting, besides this passionate, constant love theme that runs through it, is the fact that he seems to have a Catholic sensibility, that is out of the Catholic mystical tradition of meditation on the wounds of Christ, meditation on the actual dying Christ, merged with Protestant Reformed theology.

So you get this, the poem I just showed you, which is quite Catholic in its vision, that is out of the medieval period and the idea of being summoned by death and now looking at whether you lived a good life or not lived a good life and how is grace going to help you.

But infusing that with the Reformation doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ. So he has this Catholic sensibility fused later in his life with a Protestant doctrinal commitment.

He attended both Oxford and Cambridge and didn't take degrees either place because he had to swear, would have had to give a confessional statement in line with the Anglican Church at that time.

And at that time was still undecided as to whether he would be a Catholic or a Protestant in his adult life. He was still in quite a deep conflict of his own spiritual determination and he didn't take degrees.

[37:43] went on to Lincoln's in court where he trained in law and later became actually the preacher at the Lincoln's in courts of law, the places where the young people trained for law.

In 1601, he did the thing that shaped and altered his life. Up until this time he was moving very well and like Herbert was moving in the direction of court appointments.

But he secretly married the girl he loved, Anne Moore. And she was the niece of the man he was working for as private secretary who would have seen him on up through the ranks in court when her father found out that Don had married this girl.

And she was very young by the way. Nowadays we would be completely asconced. We would be just not as, maybe not as asconced as they were then. But I think she was 14 or 15 when they had their secret marriage. She still lived on at home but they had had a secret ceremony.

And when her father found out that this had happened, which was completely against the law, and I mean it was, it's pretty scandalous even yet. It's still kind of, oh my goodness. He had done thrown into jail along with the two friends who had, one friend who had actually performed the ceremony and the other who had witnessed it.

[39:02] So here John Donne was in jail for this. And he wrote a very famous little line to his wife, John Donne and Donne undone. And it was his undoing as far as any, from that point on he really did operate under a cloud and was not, never again given significant court work.

And so he was actually impoverished. And he and his young wife were denied any support from the family and he had to make do with little personal secretarial jobs for various, of the aristocracy for quite some time.

And they really struggled, it was a very hard time. But they never denied their love for each other. There was a deep sustaining love. This was a passionate and romantic marriage.

And this was a new model in many ways. And finally, Donne did finally work through his theological position and declare himself Protestant and was then able to engage in those things that you had to have a confessional statement for.

And finally decided to enter the ministry under great encouragement from the king, for one, but from a number of his friends. He became the deacon of St. Paul's Cathedral in 1615 and became the dean of St. Paul's.

[40:30] This is old St. Paul's, the old wooden structure from before the great fire of London. But he became a very, very famous preacher there at St. Paul's in London. And he would actually go out into the courtyard of St. Paul's in London in noon hour sermons on the weekdays.

And a throng of people would come. I mean, thousands came to hear him preach in a regular way. He was a great, great orator and a great preacher. And we have many books of his sermons.

He is a very, very fine preacher. And I think ten volumes of his sermons still exist. He continued to write poetry. His wife died in 1617.

Between 1613 and 1617, my notes here say that Donne lost two sons, a daughter, a child who was stillborn, and finally his wife. They died young in those days through repeated childbirth.

And finally she died in childbirth. So it's a very, he was very, very familiar with death taking those he most dearly loved. All of that is backdrop to say that Donne seems to be preoccupied with death.

[41:39] You're going to find a lot of poems about dying and death in Donne's poems. And some people even speak of him as being obsessed with death. That's been one of those schools. Oh, this is a man who was obsessed with death.

Well, maybe. If you had gone through what he had gone through and the number of losses he had, given also that the great plague, the plague is passing through England repeatedly. There are three periods of plague and one of them right during this time of his younger years.

Death was all around him. Death was almost, I would say we haven't seen death as close to the young as it was in the 17th century until now with the HIV-AIDS epidemic.

And we now have young people who face death among their friends and death at young years in a way that was much more familiar to the 17th century. He preached then at St. Paul's and after that was financially established and finished raising his family.

Never had any of his poetry published during his life. Died in 1631 at about 56. And his poetry was published, began to be published in about 1633.

[42:46] Soon after his death his poetry was published and has never not been published since. So that's the life of this poet who had, I think, huge personal struggles, huge faith struggles.

And I think one of the reasons he goes on being especially a young person's poet is because of this sense of struggle in it. There's a good deal of struggle in his poems. Herbert more often is writing, although he's writing of the conflict, you feel like the resolution has happened somewhere back there.

Whereas in Doug sometimes you feel like the conflict is right happening in the poem at that moment. Not necessarily his conflict, but the one that he is writing about. Okay, I'm going to take just a breath before we turn to this major poem that I want to look at.

Questions you want to ask me before I... I know I'm giving you such a rapid step here of so many things. Anybody have a question you want to ask before I move on to this poem? Yes. You mentioned the intertexts and so on, taught me a new word, thank you.

But I can remember a time when you could not get through a senior English course without a working knowledge of Greek mythology and the Bible. And I am actually wondering how your students manage with this kind of thing today when they don't have that sort of a foundation in David's poetry.

[43:59] Do you have to do a lot of theological teaching on road to a poem? Yes. In a secular academy you do have to... Most students who are going to do say an honors English degree are going to still do a King James Bible course somewhere along the line.

And so there is ongoing... You know, it's continued to be taught as literature, not necessarily in any other sense, but the literature is at least opened up. But yes, I mean, you do teach whatever you need to teach to give background.

And people don't know the scriptures like they did at that time, nor have they for quite a long time. You use annotated editions. You students learn how to use the notes and find out what the allusions are.

That's what good annotated editions are for. And what you can use too, the Penguin Classics John Dunn Complete English Poems has really a good set of notes and will highlight with, you know, get notes at the back for almost all poems.

So wherever you're encountering a tough spot, likely there's a note at the back to help you out with it. So, yeah, it's just a lot of teaching. You do a lot of teaching, but you wouldn't... You would just point out that line and you would...

[45:12] Now, fortunately, at what Regent College where I teach now, most students have a very strong... They're taking Biblical Studies as part of their courses, and so then the intertext is much more easily illumined.

Yes, yeah. You mentioned his journey from being a Roman Catholic and growing up as a Catholic to being Protestant. So, are there any particular people or experiences that...

We don't have much about that. He doesn't leave a memoir. We have a life by Isaac Walton of John Dunn as we did of George Herbert. So we have that lovely early biography of John Dunn, and Isaac Walton loves him dearly and really has seen him very highly.

It is quite beautiful to read. It is found, quite often it's found with Dunn poetry, that is, Isaac Walton's biography. But we don't know very much about what went on in John Dunn's mind.

He no doubt... Remember that Cambridge was very Calvinist at this time. There were lots of good structures, and he no doubt was really engaging with his own theology and structures, and friends and peers.

[46:21] There is always of course that slight question about Dunn's conversion to Protestantism. Did he finally just in despair that he could never get a position in court or church without being a Protestantism?

He just capitulates to Protestantism. I don't think you can doubt Dunn's, what he calls in one of his poems, quite sincerity. There is something so deeply sincere about Dunn that I think you can't read his poetry and think that of him.

I think he wrestled through to a conviction that amounted to a conversion. But I think it was a hard one. And in the poem that we are going to look at, and you will see how deeply his Catholic sensibility still informs his poetry.

And one of the reasons his poetry is so rich is because the two, in a sense, surface together. So you get the old pictures out of the Catholic, out of the mystery plays, and out of the miracle plays, and out of the morality plays.

And you get the crucifixion scenes of the meditation on the wounds of Christ. And you get, Impute me righteous, yet great, if thou repent, thou canst not lack.

[47:30] You get certain affirmations that otherwise are elusive in that context. So I think, I think, but I think there is real struggle there. Yes, Phil, and then Beth.

Was there a touch of expediency to move from the Catholic faith to the Protestant faith? It was quite dangerous to know his feelings, wasn't it?

Yes. Indeed. There was expediency. But that, what I'm trying to position myself on personally, I don't think he did it because it was merely expedient.

I think he did actually work through the doctrinal issues. And he wrote quite a long poem called Pseudo-Martyr, which he lays out his confession of faith on behalf of.

Did he have any clear Protestant mentors? Well, this is the question that Joe and I were trying to work through. Now, we don't know the names. We don't know much of that biography.

[48:29] Only what surfaces in his sermons or, and by that time he has a full Protestant role as a priest. And so, I don't think we know, we don't know all of that story.

And there is no memoir. Just a biography after his death. Yes? Oh, I'm sorry, I had Beth Wade. I'm not a QE. I just wanted to know something about the relationship between Herbert and them.

Yeah. They're good, they were friends. That was the older poet. He was part of Herbert's mother's coterie of poets that came in. The Herberts were wealthy people and she had a grand house and into this invited poets would come and live and stay for periods of time and talk poetry and be writing their poetry.

So, Herbert was definitely one of John Dunn's younger, much younger friends. So, when Herbert was beginning to write, Dunn would be writing poetry and they would be talking about it. Herbert chooses deliberately a different style than Dunn.

Some of that is that X to throw off the influence of the previous generation of poets. And some of it's just who Herbert was. And he chooses that kind of sweet simplicity where Dunn is still working with that very tightly knotted syntax, that very tightly, the metaphysical kind of, what they call metaphysical confit.

[49:46] And that's kind of metaphor. It's strange. It reaches. It's not an obvious comparison. It's a stretch comparison. I think we saw one in, I'm this, like the pilgrim who's committed treason, doesn't know whether to stay away or come home.

That's not the strongest example of metaphysical conceit. But they're what you call strained metaphors. He also, Dunn also strained his rhythms and his rhymes in ways that Herbert doesn't do.

So it was called strong-lined poetry at that time. And it was considered avant-garde poetry in Dunn's day. And Herbert moves back away from that into a more traditional kind of English lyric form and voice.

So there's play between the traditions. But they were friends and that was an esteemed friend of Herbert's. He wasn't published. Could he define himself as a poet?

And how did he actually deal with it? Who read his poetry? How did he get out? Yeah. You know, Dunn didn't publish, his work was not published, that is not in print text published, until after his death.

[50:52] But manuscript copies were circulating from the time he was in Oxford on Cambridge. And his love poetry was always a very popular court poetry. And I'm not even taking you there.

He wrote a great deal of some of England's finest and some of his racist love poetry before this passion poured itself into the holy sonnets.

And those were popular poems and they were passed around. But it would be almost like a sort of courtier poetry. And so it was passed person to person until it became seen that it had wide enough public appeal to be printed.

Same with it, his sermons I think were published more along the way. But there again, he wouldn't be publishing his manuscript. Somebody would be writing his sermons down, I think, by the way. That I would have to verify exactly what that process was.

But mostly, sermons were published from somebody actually taking notes. And so you're getting, in a sense, a smaller form than the sermon itself. But a very careful transcript. But not taken off the tape or something.

[51:54] You know, just a long hand. Did you have a comment on that? Well, the rule that was recommended to everybody in those studies was write your sermons, memorize them, and then deliver them freely with such expansions as come to you on the spur of the moment.

But start by writing the text. And so I think that those sermons do go back to his own text. Okay, that's a case of saying, not Bynum, he doesn't publish sermons, he writes his own story.

But a lot of the sermons that were published in collections do come from the transcripts. I think the Thomas Adams sermons were from, that would be there. Yes, but I think that that's the exception actually, rather than the rule.

I mean, you go through to Richard Baxter, who didn't die until 1691, and he wrote, or should reckon to write, anyway, all the sermons that he then preached.

That's a good point. That's going right through, into the restoration period. Very, very popular form of literature, certainly. They sold books. That's right. They were the best sellers of the time.

[53:13] Okay, we've just got time to take a look at good literature. Which is the whole point where I was taking you, to take you to this poem for your Easter meditation. Good Friday, 1613, Riding Westward.

I wanted to show you this poem, because it's a particularly good example of dance poetry, and because it's a particularly wonderful Good Friday meditation. It is a occasional meditation.

And that is, it's, by occasional meditation, I don't mean that once in a while you meditate. I mean, it's a particular occasion on which you have a meditation. So, by, when they say an occasional meditation, it is on a particular dated occasion.

So, in this case, we have a particular date. It's Good Friday, 1613. Dunn has another very interesting occasional poem that he wrote on a date when the Feast of the Annunciation and Good Friday occur on the same date for some reason.

There's some calendric reason why those two dates come together. I would have to look that up to remember what that occasion was. But these occasional poems that have their root in a particular occasion.

[54:22] You know, it's very, very warm in this room. Is everybody melting? Can we open any more windows or do anything, or open a door at the back? Yeah. I don't know if there's any way we can...

Yeah. There you... I'm sure where you're... I'm warm and I'm sure you are. Thank you for that. Thank you for that. Thank you. Thank you. So, we're not looking at a sonnet this time.

We're not looking at 14 lines that set out a picture and then read the problem and give a resolution, which is the sonnet style, the style of the Holy Sonnet. We're looking at a poem that runs its race, as it were.

He writes his poem until it's done, and the form is the form of a meditation. He starts off with quite a complex meditation, and this time, I think, in order to get you through this...

I hate to... I'm going to read it through once. I can't just start in without reading it through. Let's read the poem once. We're going to... This is our poem as in counter-born, okay? Where you...

[55:24] We're going to read the poem through once and just kind of let it happen. And then I'm going to have to come back and try to walk you through it so that you have some frame for meditating on it. But let me just say this before I start to read it.

Because once I'm reading it, I won't stop until I'm done, okay? Problem. The situation is that Dunn is riding westward on the day when the whole church should be facing east towards Jerusalem in recognition of Jesus' death.

It's Good Friday. This is a day of recognition of the death of Christ. And it should be a day when what you're doing is observing his death. You should be facing eastward with the whole church.

And you should be remembering Christ's death. But something has called him on business. The business perhaps of... Who knows what business? For some reason, he's having to ride west on business that day.

All of us have been in this situation sometimes. When you feel like where you ought to be is someplace, but where you need to go is, in a sense, the opposite direction. So he's actually moving in the opposite direction from what devotion should take him.

[56:31] So how do you solve a problem like this? Well, you do your devotion in the midst of the motion that you necessarily have to be going on.

Any mother who's had to manage to keep any kind of devotional life alive with family around knows that you learn how to have your contemplation while you're doing the cleanup of the dishes or while you're folding clothes.

So that's the sort of thing that you do your devotion even when it's in counter motion with your physical situation. The situation is that the irony that every good, that very good and godly, even pastoral work, can take us away from contemplation and that everyday tasks occur even on Good Friday.

The resolution is to contemplate anyhow, even contemplate the inability to contemplate properly. Okay, so that's, you've got the frame now. So now don't panic, there's going to be a few places where you think, whoa, where's that going?

And I'll explain them after I've read it to you. Let man's soul be a sphere, and then in this the intelligence that moves devotion is. And as the other spheres, by being grown subject to foreign motions, lose their own and being by others hurried every day, scarce in a year they match shall form obey.

[57:52] Pleasure or business so, our souls admit for their first mover, and are hurled by it. Hence is that I am carried towards the west this day, when my soul's form bends towards the east.

There I should see a sun by rising set, and by that setting endless day beget. But that Christ on this cross did rise and fall, sin had eternally benight it all.

Yet dare I almost be glad I do not see that spectacle of too much weight for me? Who sees God's face, that is self-light must die?

What a death work then to see God die! It made his own lieutenant nature shrink, it made his footstool crack and the sun wink.

Could I behold those hands which span the poles, and tune all spheres at once pierced with those holes? Could I behold that endless height which is then to us, and our antipodes humbled below us?

[59:10] Or that blood which is the seat of all our souls, if not of his made dirt of dust? Or that flesh which was worn by God for his apparel rags and torn?

If on these things I durst not look, durst I upon his miserable mother cast mine eye, who was God's partner here, and furnished us half of that sacrifice which ransomed us?

Though these things as I ride be from mine eye, they are yet present unto my memory. For that looks towards them, and thou lookst towards me, O Savior, as thou tank'st upon that tree.

I turn my back to thee, but to receive correction, till thy mercies did thee leave. O think me worth thine anger, punish me, burn off my rust and my deformity.

Restore thine image so much by thy grace that thou mayst know me, and I'll turn my face. I'm already done on the first reading, the first encounter.

[60:27] What I would want you to do, if I were just rushing you through this, or quarreling you through this in a few minutes, I'd want you to read this another dozen times. Just let it happen for you.

Because there is a physical motion in this poem, and there is a spiritual motion in this poem. And there is a kind of counter motion. So I hope you, I'm sure you heard, starting with verse, with line about 13, right through to 35, or 34, you really have a really strong meditation on the cross.

You actually have the crucified one before, held up before the poet's eyes. Even though he's riding away, he is in his memory, imagining and seeing Christ dying for him.

And after he, so, and after he has thought about that, and he's envisioned that picture, and some of the strongest lines I know in all of English literature, could I behold those hands which span the poles and tune all spheres at once, pierced with those holes, the outstretched hands of the Creator, God, pierced with the nails, now outstretched in death and finally in mercy.

A huge number of pictures in there that are very, if you know any of the altar art of the high middle ages, the early modern period, you can see that he's really imagining an altar piece.

[62:00] The painting behind the altar, in which Christ is, the crucified Christ is the central figure, and on one side is his mother and the disciple John, clustered in grief, and on the other side usually is John the Baptist pointing to the Lamb, saying, Behold the Lamb of God.

So he's actually, the back screen of this poem is the altar piece, usually a triptych, that he can't see because he's not in the church today, because he's riding, clop, clop, clop, clop, west, and imagining this.

But after he's thought about this poem, he thinks, oh just think about that. Here I am with my back to that altar piece. That means Christ is looking at me. What's he seeing?

And then he says, Dear Lord, correct me. He uses the language of, think me, worth my anger, punish me, burn off my rust and my deformity.

With my back turned to you, please understand it's not because I'm rejecting you, but that I'm accepting your correction and your cleansing. And when you have restored your image, enough that I feel that I can, you would know me, that you would recognize me, I'll turn back, I'll turn my face and look towards you.

[63:14] So the physical situation is the setup of a spiritual journey. I think this, the opening lines of this poem are quite complex, and I just want to give them to you a little bit so you understand because it becomes a metaphor all the way through the poem.

Let man's soul be a sphere, and then in this the intelligence that moves, devotion is. So he's saying, if man's soul is a sphere, and he's thinking now in sort of Ptolemaic astronomical terms, if man's soul is a sphere that's moved by a prime mover, that prime mover ought to be devotion to Christ.

But in this system of thought, in this Ptolemaic system, the spheres were moved by a prime mover, but also influenced by many other spheres around them.

And so they were, there was sort of a conflict of influences. So that, we don't think that way in our astronomical realm. But he had a very good metaphor for the fact that maybe our prime mover is our love for Christ, but we're also being moved by our concerns for family, by business, by all the other things that move us through life.

And that means that this sphere is moving in some kind of a motion and counter motion, tension, that actually is a confluence of the prime mover and these other influences.

[64:36] So that's what's going on there. And you need to have that kind of, at least a little bit of that picture in your mind, because you again have that idea of Christ being the one, the creator who choose all spheres at once.

And the idea that the eight or nine celestial spheres all nested inside each other and made a perfect harmony is in that picture. So that's the first, the first six or seven, seven or lines, that have this idea that the prime mover of the soul is devotion.

But all of these other foreign motions move us and so we are, pleasure and business move, and our souls emit, actually operate as their first mover and are whirled by us.

That's the conclusion of that first section. So he's setting up a situation, why he's not in church on Good Friday, and why business is taking him somewhere else. I'm going to be reading this poem as we travel next Friday, which is Good Friday.

We will be driving west, no we'll be driving east. We'll be driving in the right direction. We'll be driving east to meet up with our family in Interior BC for an Easter gathering.

[65:47] And so we will be being moved by business. At least we'll be moving east, but the same situation. Something will be moving us in another direction from a day of focused devotion.

And then one takes a poem like this into consideration. Then he sets up a number of pictures. He said, when my soul, on Noun line 9, Hence is that I am carried towards the west this day when my soul's form bends towards the east.

I am in a habit of devotion. I am in an attitude of worship, even though physically I'm in counter motion. He said, when I'm thinking towards the east, if I was in my soul, as I'm thinking, there I would see a sun, and he loves to pun on the sun.

He's still got his astronomical chart in mind. But of course, the sun being also the sun of God. So S-U-N-N and sun are punned on endlessly in the poetry of this time.

But if I were looking east right now, I would see a sun by rising set. I would see an astronomical phenomenon. A sun that actually rises and sets in the same moment. And of course, the picture of Christ being raised up on the cross.

[67:04] But in some sense, that being, but also, and set into the ground, but also his life being over, which is a sunset picture. So there's a rising and a sunset all at the same time.

And by that setting, so he said, on this particular day, I would actually see a sunset if I looked east. Because I would see Christ dying. And by that setting, endless day begets.

So this is a new day being begun in Christ's death. And then his comment. But that Christ on this cross, except for the fact, that but means except for the fact that Christ on this cross did rise and fall, sin had eternally benighted all.

There would have been no sunrise for any of us if there hadn't been this sunset, this sun set at Easter for all of us.

So a new day, the day of grace, the day of salvation, and eternal life begun for us in this action. And then the, the, the, the, the, the inset, uh, meditation on the cross itself.

[68:18] That spectacle of too much weight for me. That spectacle, that thing that is almost more than I can contemplate. It's more than I can enter into.

Um, he, he says that's partly because he's not worthy to look into the face of God. Who sees God's face must die.

You've got to read that sentence. It's a very, uh, complicated sentence. Who sees God's face must die. That is his self-life. That is, will die to himself. Will die to his own vision of reality.

Um, and that's based on a scripture that says that, uh, that no man can look into God's face. And, and at the cross we look in to the, to the face of God in Christ in death.

And so he meditates on this shocking thing. That we actually dare to look at this. Maybe it's better to do this. Maybe it's in, in, in this contemplation. Maybe it's better to not be looking at this.

[69:16] Maybe even in my mind it's almost more than I can handle. Then he talks about the, the cross itself. It made his own lieutenant nature shrink. It made his footstool crack and the sun wink.

Uh, strong images here. Nature as God's deputy ruling over creation. Uh, so God's nature is God's lieutenant or deputy. Uh, and it shrinks back.

That the earthquake at the time of the crucifixion. And the blackness that covered the sky are pictured in these lines. It made his footstool crack. The earth is God's footstool.

And the sun wink. They go out. And then the lines I, I pointed out. Which I think are the center of the whole poem. Could I behold those hands which span the poles.

And tune all spheres at once. Tears with those holes. Could I behold that endless height which is zenith to us. And our antipodes humbled below us. This, I'm looking up and at the same time I'm seeing he has descended to the lowest possible condition of the human person.

[70:20] And I don't, in a sense, there's a sense in which, in all of this, he's riding westward thinking, where would I put my eyes? What, what would I focus on? If I were looking at that altarpiece.

And every place I focus on is sheer terror. This is God, in Christ, done for me. And it's more than I can handle.

And then he says, what am I going to look at? We're going to look at his torn flesh. He speaks of his flesh as the apparel he wore in the incarnation. Ragged and torn. And then he says, okay, that's too much for me.

Maybe I'll do the stay back matter meditation. I'll go rest my eyes on his mother who stands. That was a very typical move in Ignatian meditation. It's too much to look at the crucified one.

Then identify with the mother. You can at least feel grief then. You can at least say this is a human person. So this is a very Catholic kind of meditation at this point. And one can sense the Catholic sensibility here.

[71:20] As he moves to position himself at the foot of the cross. With Mary the mother of Christ. And then he finally in a way just leaves the altarpiece. And says, in a way, almost I don't know where to position myself there.

But as I'm riding on. What I can realize is that maybe it's more important that Christ is looking at me. Than that I am looking at him. And as he looks at me.

I'm going to invite his holy correction to my heart. The next lines read almost like a kind of flagellation scene. And some people see that as part of the kind of a Catholic mysticism.

Or Spanish mysticism. That think me worth thine anger. Punish me. Burn off my rust. I turn my back to receive corrections. But I think you could certainly have that sensibility.

To accept that correction. But it also has an intertext from Hebrews chapter 12. Where it speaks that the Lord. Whom the Lord loves. He chastens and scourges every son whom he receiveth.

[72:23] And so there is the poet's physical positioning. That positions him to say. Consider me worth correcting. So that I can truly be your child.

Restore thine image so much by thy grace. That thou mayst know me. This being the crux finally. Of our salvation. Not that we know him.

How can we know him? But that he knows us. That our resting place comes in. That you might know me. And I'll turn my face. I'll turn back to my devotion.

And look at the crucified one. It's a big pull. It's a tough one. But I'm going to give it to you. For your good Friday meditation. Even if there's just a few lines in there. That will inform your thinking.

The lines especially. From line 10. Through to 35. Or 34.

[73:21] Within the self. Create for you. A good Friday meditation. That I think. If you read it each day. From now until good Friday. You would have mental images. For your good Friday. Whether you are riding east west.

Or here. Worshipping. Or with some other fellowship. Worshipping. On that day. I trust that we'll bless you. And I think our time. Is being spent. Bill. Do you know that the time situation is.

Are we closing? Or should I ask? Five minutes for question and answer. I'd be happy to take. Yes. What point. In that faint. And I'm mostly ignorant. What point after this poem.

Is coming to the Anglican. Because it's interesting to me. That these were dangerous times. So that people have said. And part of the tension. You know. In the more Catholic way. Of looking at the imagery.

Is that the people have said. And part of the tension. You know. In the more Catholic way. Of looking at the imagery. Was that. It was going to. Take him. Into. A very. Cyclical thing.

[74:19] And the. The gear. Played out. And. You know. His. Turning his eye. Visually. To. The art. Which is all going to be.

Expanded. From. Well. No. This. This is like. For. For. To. To. To.

To. To. To. This. Yeah. This. This. Into. This. Esto. It's.

The. The. So. This. This. This. This. This. From. John.

From. I mean. Is. Dr. Foley. That. that more, the way of embracing scripture himself in a more rational kind of way.

[75:19] I think that, I don't think that struggle ever stops and done, but it is, I mean, we are a good 60 years into the Protestant Reformation at this point. So England has, but he is from a Catholic family.

But what is his own timeline? Well, his own timeline is 1615. He is inaugurated as a deacon at St. Paul. Oh, okay. So he is, that's right.

It is very much in the time when he is just determining, in a sense, his Christian identity within this very conflicted time. And I think you do feel the pictures.

Even the old astronomical picture he draws is all being challenged at this time. He's using an archaic system at a time when they were beginning, you know, the Copernican picture was already being strongly established.

So there's all kinds of, all kinds of old meeting new in poems like this, and especially in this one. Yes? But just to put it, though, I mean, iconoclasm, serious iconoclasm breaks out in the Civil War.

[76:25] That's 1640-something. Okay. Yeah. John Donne is still within the sphere of the Elizabethan settlement. Yeah, this is, yeah. That pictorial spiritual life is common. I think it is, although certainly the despoiling of the monasteries and so on under Henry D. H.

happened way back in the 1540s. So you're sort of in that period between 1540 and 1640 when there's still, a lot of these things are being sorted out. So there's been a huge amount of despoilation of this tradition.

But there would still be altarpieces. There would still be art being made at this time. And certainly you can see it in the Dutch masters at the same time. It's taking its new form.

So, yeah, there's a period of deeply conflicted sensibilities. And I think you sense the tension in this poem, both the personal tension and this kind of sensibility tension.

Yes? Outside of the, sorry, political goings on, I think when you move Catholicism, Protestantism, one of the difficulties you have when you raise Catholic is you know all about Jesus, but you don't know Jesus.

[77:36] But the other thing that Catholicism does mean is it leads you in this very dangerous position. You know you're in deep dive, but it doesn't tell you how to get out of deep dive.

And I think that's the transition we see here with this. Because he has found the truth. But he has been raised in this tradition.

That's comforting. It's like when you start to read the Bible as a believer, you understand everything that you were taught as a Catholic, that you didn't understand it.

So I go to a Catholic Mass and see Jesus much more clearly today than I ever did. He's raised in the tradition. And I think that's maybe what we're seeing with, that it's not the expediency of moving from Catholic to Anglican.

But this was a man who was on spiritual journey, who discovered Christ, and questioned everything that he's been taught. Well, you certainly speak out of an experience, obviously, that can match something against it in a way that most of us can't.

[78:50] That's a very helpful comment. Any other questions? Bill, I think we're done. Thank you. Thank you, Maxine.

The stuff from the Reformation's window. It is. And we miss it for the tragedy. For the tragedy. I hope this helps us re-access some of this richness.

Thank you so much.