

Sunday Morning Communion English

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Date: 28 August 2016

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[0 : 00] I'm seeking the Lord's blessing. Let's turn for a short time together to the passage we read in Luke's Gospel. This is Luke chapter 23.

And we may, for a short time, just to consider together the words that we have at the beginning of verse 34. Luke chapter 23 and from verse 34.

Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

The great desire, of course, of the Christian is found in our walk and relationship with the Lord. That discipleship itself calls us to follow Jesus.

That it is a walk with him. And the journey of our lives, the journey of faith. We're called to see the things that are unseen.

[1 : 12] And to seek to live for the kingdom of God. That calls us, of course, to this great depth of relationship with Christ. To know him as our Lord and Savior.

And to, day by day, to seek to have that faith and love for him itself to grow and deepen and be strengthened. And so the pursuit of our life, of our faith, is to desire to know more of Jesus.

To know more and more of the mind of Jesus, too. And the cross grants to us the unrivaled opportunity to consider these things.

To consider his identity. To consider what he says. To consider what he does. And to consider even what he thinks.

This is expressed to us in seven words of the cross. The dying words of our Savior. The last words that he spoke.

[2 : 21] The cross, of course, brings us to the great achievement of Christ there. In the great desire to pay the redemption price for his people.

It is, of course, what the gospel is all about. It is what the life of faith is all about. And we come often to the cross to reflect from different perspectives.

We see those who were involved in the cross. Those who were involved in the trial. In the betrayal. In the desertion. We see even Jesus' own mother there at the cross.

We largely come from our own perspective. To see and apply these things for ourselves. But these seven words of Jesus from the cross.

Grant us his perspective. And grant to us a window of opportunity. To reflect as he communicates himself.

[3 : 26] What's in his mind. Or what is his prayer. And this is the first word. Father, forgive them.

For they know not. What they do. I want us just to reflect briefly here for our time together. Just on a few remarks.

And to just restrict our thoughts for a few moments here. And the first thing really we want to reflect on. Is that Jesus prays in his pain.

Jesus is praying. In his pain. The cross brings to us the great picture. And the great reality. Of what salvation itself cost.

And how the whole of the gospels remind us of this. Of the coming of Jesus Emmanuel. God is with us. Jesus who himself. Took the form of the servant.

[4 : 26] And humbled himself to death. Even the death of the cross. The whole of the life of Jesus. Speaks of how he has been despised and rejected.

John's gospel opens with the great words. Of the reflection of Jesus. As the word of God. And then it tells us that he came to his own. And they did not receive him.

Time and again we see this sense of rejection. And the affliction and pain. Of Jesus' own experience. In his life here. And yet it reaches his pinnacle.

And its climax. On the cross. And around the cross. In the betrayal of Judas itself. Again it's the Psalms. That grants to us.

A greater reflection of what occurs there. My familiar friend. Has lifted himself against me. The pain and anguish.

[5 : 22] And agony. Of one that was so close. The desertion of the disciples too. How they immediately fled. And even as we reflected in prayer.

How they themselves slept. At the great moments of intensity and agony. And none stood with him. We see the trial.

The abuse. The abuse that Jesus suffered. That wasn't just physical. He was beaten nearly to death. And added to this.

Was this emotional. Abusive mocking. As they tore clothes off him. And mocked him. And dressed him in purple. And called him king.

We see the spiritual agony. And suffering. Because many people were crucified. Even here. At this crucifixion.

[6 : 19] At Golgotha. There is two with him. One on the other side. But his pain and agony. Is distinctive. In terms of the spiritual suffering. He endured.

And again pictured. For us. By another saint. In the darkness. That encapsulated the world. Jesus Christ. He cries out. My God. My God.

Why have you forsaken me? And the words of the cross. Grant to us. Particular insight. Of the agony.

And also. Of what was on his mind. And in his purpose. Because the agony. Is clear. We know this. From early.

Through scripture. That there is a promise. Of a sacrifice. Of a sacrifice. One. Who will be bruised. In a conflict. A lamb. That was to be slain.

[7 : 17] A Passover. That was to be urged. And so. Jesus is that great sacrifice. The altar. That he has. Is the cross.

And the priest. Who gives the sacrifice. Is in fact himself. He gives himself. He gives himself. Voluntarily. He is fully committed. To the demand.

Of the divine will. And he is the priest. Giving the sacrifice. But he is a priest. In another way too. A priest praise.

And so he comes. To intercede. And this ought to be. A familiar picture to us. Because in the gospels. We find Jesus. Time and again.

Praying. Praying for his people. Praying even. As you remember. When he is going to select. The apostles. All night in prayer. Praying in Gethsemane.

[8 : 16] Before the great cross. Comes before him. Praying time and again. Through the gospels. And again. We are reminded. That he prays now. Where is Jesus?

He is at the right hand. Of the father. Ever living. To make intercession. For us. And so even. As we gather here. Today. Even in this very moment.

Our high priest. Is praying for us. He is in heaven. At the right hand. Of the father. Praying. And in the moment. Of his greatest pain.

And agony. Jesus. Prays. He prays. Father. Forgive them. For they. Know not.

What they do. And what we have here. Is the reality. Of how Jesus himself. Is not passive. On the cross. And other people.

[9 : 13] Accusingly. Mock him of this. In verse 37. They say there. If you're the king of the Jews. Save yourself. They're crying all around him. Come down from your cross.

Validate your claims. Prove. That you are the savior. By doing this thing. Do something. Come down from the cross. And so they're.

Accusing. Jesus. Jesus here. Of being inactive. Of being passive. But we know. That he is not passive. A voluntary sacrifice.

Is not something. That is passive. Nor is he here. In terms of the function. Of what he's doing. In this moment. Jesus is active. In intercession. And his very first words.

In the cross. Are a prayer. Jesus. Prays. In the moment. Of his greatest. Pain. And agony. I wonder sometimes.

[10 : 11] If we follow. This example. Well. I know. We ought to. But life is full of trials. And there are many moments.

Of pain. And agony. And loneliness. And isolation. And sometimes. It feels like words. Fail us. And sometimes.

We struggle. To see. And know. The presence of God. With us. In our trial. Are we continuing. To pray. In our pain. You remember.

Job. Who says. Though he slay me. I still. Go to hope. In him. He maintains. His faith.

In his agony. He maintains. His hope. He maintains. His trust. In the midst. Of his circumstance. He still. Pray. Despite.

[11 : 07] All the pain. And agony. Who does he pray for? He prays for. Verse 34.

Them. He prays for them. And this is. Really for us. The thought. And consideration. Of. What is in the mind.

Of Jesus. At his death. When he is suffering. And when he is in agony. What is it. That is a prayer. Of his heart. What is it. That is on his mind.

That he is thinking about. What is he concerned with. We know. What he is concerned with. He is concerned. With his bride. His church.

He is concerned. With the people. He loves. He is there. For them. What a beautiful. Picture. What a wonderful.

[12 : 02] Picture. Of Jesus. Concern. For his bride. And we think. Of the bride. And this beautiful. Picture. And we have sanitized. The whole thing. He prays for them.

They are around him. They are mocking him. They are abusing him. They are deriding him. They are demonstrating. Their hatred. To him.

In short. This is the people. Who are at enmity. With him. And he prays. For them. A picture.

Of absolute. Of this. Of this. Shocking. Systematic. Abuse. The greatest.

And most shocking. Crime. That has ever. Been committed. And it is here. On the cross. Here is the son of God.

- [12 : 58] Holy. And innocent. And pure. Having never sinned. Coming to bring. Reconciliation. And peace. And they want him. Dead. And they want him. Silent. They want him. In the grave. You see.
- Even here. In Luke's gospel. And throughout all the gospels. The way that they treat him. In verse 35. As he is praying. This very prayer. They stood watching him.
- And they are scoffing at him. And they are saying. He saved others. Let him save himself. And the soldiers. Then mocked him. Coming up. And offering him sour wine. Laughing at Jesus.
- As he is. Drawing his last breaths. And then. Of course. John reminds us. They can't wait for him to die. They take the clothes off him. This is absolutely shocking.
- [13 : 57] In Acts chapter 2. We are told. That this is illegal. Jesus has been killed. By lawless men. No thought. Or consideration. Of what they are doing.
- In the pain. And agony. That Jesus is suffering. And the way that they compound. His suffering. You cannot imagine. A greater sin. Even as Jesus is dying.
- On the cross. They blaspheme him. They mock him. The Lord of glory. This is what they do.
- To the Savior. And he knew. He knew they would do this to him. In Matthew chapter 21. He teaches the parable of the tenants. And he says. The king then sends. After all the servants being abused. He then sends his son. And he says.
- [14 : 54] Surely they are going to reverence the son. Surely they will know who he is. They will know his status. Surely they will welcome the son. The parable goes on.
- And Jesus says. They saw the son coming. And they said. This is the heir. Come let us kill him. A world. A world that is filled with darkness.
- A people who are filled with their sin. Jesus here speaks of them in verse 34. They know not what they do. What does it mean if you know not what you do.
- It means that you are ignorant. Ignorant to the very crimes committed. And the New Testament goes on to detail this for us.
- In Acts chapter 3. We are told. They acted in ignorance. They did not understand. First Corinthians chapter 2. Of who this is. Paul himself says of his old life.
- [15 : 51] In first Timothy chapter 1. I acted ignorantly. And in unbelief. And this is who they are. Acting in ignorance.
- And unbelief. This is what sin has done. It blinds us. Even to what we. What we are engaging in. Even all the things we have done.
- The catalogue of our sins. And just how grave. And awful they are. We are failing to comprehend them fully. Because sin blinds us.
- We fail to perceive. We fail to understand. And this is our natural state. We are given over to sin. We are in darkness. We are fallen.
- We are broken people. And it is because of sin. It is because of what we are. And what we do. And yet Jesus. Prays for those.
- [16 : 49] Who are inflicting such agony. Upon him. Father. Forgive them. Who is he praying for?
- Them around the cross? He is praying for us. God. This is who we are friends. This is what we have done.
- This is our guilt. And our shame. This is our natural state. We are at enmity with God. We are at war. With our holy God.

Our sin has done this. This is what the gospel is all about. The need of reconciliation. And the reality. That it comes by grace.

You don't deserve it. I don't deserve it. This is the great wonder of the love of God. God. That we are not here.

[17 : 54] Because we have earned the right to be here. We have earned the right to these things. We are here. Because of his great kindness. This is the mind of your savior.

As he receives the cruel blows. And taunts. Agonies. He prays. He prays for those. Who are at enmity.

And who need reconciliation. Who need grace. Who does he pray to? Father.

Forgive them. Of course this is familiar. We know who he prays to. He prays to his father. This is the great example that he gives to us.

This is how he teaches us. Teaches us to pray. The disciples are asking. Lord teach us to pray. Like John teaches his disciples. You teach us to pray. How are we to approach God?

[18 : 56] And he says. This is how you pray. Our father who art in heaven. Our father. This is how Jesus teaches to pray. This is how Jesus prays.

In his great care. And the display of his concern for others. He grants to us. Not just the opportunity. To understand what's on his heart. And mind.

But to understand. A little glimpse. Of the wonderful relationship. That he has with his father. His love. Trust.

And commitment. We see this. Even as part of his own. Humiliation. Paul says. He was in the form of God.

But he did not count equality with God. A thing to be grasped. But he made himself. Nothing. He made himself. Nothing. Taking the form of a servant. Born in the likeness of men.

[19 : 55] And the writer to the Hebrews says. In the days of his flesh. Jesus offered up prayers. And supplications. With loud cries. And tears. To him who was able to save him.

From death. And he was heard. Because of his reverence. This is what Jesus does. In the great intimacy. Of this relationship.

He brings his prayer. To his father. Who else was he going to pray to? Not just in the sense of.

Who it is who can help. This is why we pray to God. We pray for his help. But that's not the only reason. We come in prayer. We come for many different reasons.

We come in thanks. And gratitude. And praise to God. But we come to. Because God understands. We come because God knows.

[20 : 54] And no one else does. Where is the compassion. For our saviour at the cross. Where are you Peter. With your great claims of boldness.

You are there standing at a distance. Where is the compassion and care of the world. That crucifies the saviour. Where one of his own disciples betrays him.

With a religious ruler. Deliver him up. And shout crucify him. Crucify him. Who knows Jesus' pain. And agony.

Who understands what he is going through. No one else. But the father. Who understands your situation.

Remember I have already quoted how Job says. Though he slay me. I will hope in him. Though your providence might be against you. And though you may be facing hardships.

[21 : 57] In the will of God. Will you still hope in him. You see what happens here on the cross. How Jesus is the recipient of all of this suffering.

And pain and agony. And it is the will of the father. This is the great agonizing cry of Gethsemane. Not my will. But your will be done.

This is the father's will. We read this in Isaiah 53. His will is to crush him. His will is to put him to death.

His will is demanding everything. This is the father's will. And Jesus here begins his saints on the cross. By saying. Father. In the great wonderful display.

Of his continued trust. In the will of God. His continued commitment. To everything. That is demanded of him.

[22 : 56] By the father. He prays to the father. What does he pray for? We understand and know.

That he prays for them. But what specifically does he pray. With regards to them. We find this of course very clearly. Again in verse 34.

He says. Father. Forgive. Forgive them. And the wonderful picture of course here.

Is. In many senses. This is. Almost. Judicial. It is almost like a trial. And Jesus. Takes up the place.

Of the advocate. He takes up that position. And the case he takes. Is the case of the indefensible. It is quite clear.

[23 : 57] Those here. Who are guilty. And ignorant. And you see this all the time. In some of the. Well known trials. That we. We learn often.

What we see before us. That there are often. These lawyers. And they'll take any case. And sometimes you ask yourself. How could they take. That case.

How could they defend. That person. In all the crimes. They've committed. And the guilt. That seems so apparent. And so obvious. To everybody. Where are they even.

Going to begin. Why would you take. Such a case. As this. He takes up. The case. Of the indefensible. The unlovable.

The guilty. And the ignorant. And he puts this plea. Before the great judge. And he says. Father.

[24 : 54] Forgive them. Grant them that wonderful. Pardon. Make them free. Don't hold their guilt.

Against them. And this brings us. To the very heart. Of what the gospel is. It brings us. To the very reason. That Jesus is here.

Jesus is here. In order. To secure forgiveness. In order. To achieve redemption. He is here. As the savior. He is here. As the substitute.

Because. Although he looks. For forgiveness. What we can't. Deal with. Is forgetting. It's not just. Dismissed. It's not thrown. Out of court. There is still.

Guilt. There is still. A sentence. There is still. A price. To be paid. There is still. This great. Redemption. Price. And that's. Why he's here. And this is.

[25 : 49] The very heart. Of his plea. The very heart. Of his life. And his ministry. And why. He left. Heaven. He came. To secure. Forgiveness. For them. For them.

To pray. The price. For the guilty. This is. The gospel. This is. The good news. Friends. That he is there.

And you are not. And so. The advocate. Doesn't just. Make the case. And plead. For a sentence.

And seek. To secure. This verdict. He does more. The advocate. Becomes. The substitute. And he takes. The sentence.

And he takes. The pain. And he takes. The guilt. Upon himself. He bore. Our sins. On the cross. Jesus. Died. For our sins. This is.

[26 : 48] Good news. Friends. This is. What he does. This is. His great work. As our mediator. This is. His great work. As our substitute. This is why he came.

And as our mediator. He doesn't just. Engage in this great act. Of being our substitute. But as our mediator. He prays to the father.

Because he longs for reconciliation. That the enemy would be brought near. That peace would break out. That the war would be over.

That their rebellion would end. That they would come. Here to him. That he would secure. In his agony. Their forgiveness. Their peace.

Out of the anguish. Of his soul. He shall see. And be satisfied. By his knowledge. Shall the righteous one. My servant. Make many accounted. Righteousness.

[27 : 46] He shall bear. Their iniquities. He makes intercession. For the transgressors. Father.

Forgive them. In the backdrop. Of a cold. Murderous. Day. The darkest day. Of the world.

A warm. Loving. Pre. Comes from the cross. And enters heaven. Father.

Forgive them. Encapsulated. In the cry of his pain. It's a great purpose. For why he came. He came to save.

He came to rescue you. Rescue you. What does the gospel. Save you from. Saves you from hell.

[28 : 53] Saves you from your sins. Saves you from your ignorance. And your guilt. It saves you from yourself. Saves you from God.

Saves you from your sins. Saves you from your sins. Saves you from your sins. Saves you from your sins. Saves you from your sins. And so here. Our Savior. As our substitute.

Facing the wrath of God. Here. As the one who is holy. And pure. Standing in our place.

In our room. The cases against us. and he is here and he doesn't deserve this death. The gospel writers remind us on a number of occasions that there are two there with him and they're guilty.

The gospel writers tell us they're criminals. They've done things deserving this death. He's done nothing wrong. He's done nothing deserving this death, not just the crucifixion, but the agony of the pain of the wrath of God.

[30 : 00] He's done nothing to deserve this. He doesn't deserve it, but the reality is he doesn't desire that we would suffer. This is our pain.

This is our place. This is our guilt. This is our ignorance. And the reality of the great gospel message is that we're called to believe and trust, to repent of all our sin, to realize the great wonder of the exchange on Calvary's cross.

His righteousness imputed to us our sins to him, our sins on that tree. And the great wonder, they did this to him and he prays for them.

We did this to him and he prays for us. He doesn't desire revenge. He desires reconciliation. He desires repentance.

He desires that you would know forgiveness. Spurgeon, of course, has got a wonderful sermon on this passage and these words.

[31 : 21] And in that sermon, Spurgeon highlights the uniqueness of Jesus' prayer. In the sense that Spurgeon asks, where did he learn this?

Where did Jesus learn to pray like this? Where did Jesus learn to love like this? And Spurgeon's assessment is from himself.

From himself. This is your Savior, loving, compassionate, and longing for forgiveness.

And the New Testament tells you that this is what we're to be like. Repay no one evil for evil or reviling for reviling.

On the contrary, bless for this you were called. You were called to be our blessing. Here is Jesus being reviled and being treated with evil.

[32 : 33] And he responds with blessing. And he speaks. His blood is a powerful plea. It washes us and cleanses us from all our sin.

The power of that blood that in which our salvation has been obtained. In which we have been saved. In which we have been made righteous. In which we have been washed and cleansed.

But it isn't just his blood that speaks. It isn't just his blood here but it is words to the effective plea of this great high priest that died for our sins and who comes here in these moments and he prays to the Father and he says forgive them.

And he still prays to the Father today. now at this very moment continuing to pray for you.

What a wonderful saviour unique in this divine love and compassion. in his agony his first words are words plain a plea for forgiveness.

[33 : 56] And as we reflect on this and as we reflect on who Jesus is and what he has done for us let us lift the symbols of that broken body and shed blood with joy and thankfulness and wonder at the mind and the heart of our saviour what he has achieved for us and the great burden of his prayer that we would be forgiven.

This is your great high priest who made intercession for you who made reconciliation for you. who suffered and died for your sins.

Amen. May the Lord bless our thoughts together. We're now going to sing together from Psalm 130. This is on page 421 so it's in the soft dot.

we're going to sing these familiar words in Psalm 130 and we'll sing the whole of this Psalm.

Lord from the depths to thee I cried my voice Lord do thou hear and to my supplications voice give an attentive ear. Psalm 130 singing a whole Psalm standing to praise God.

[35 : 28] 321ir■■ pls ng towards.

Cij a lowured they're in the water are ■■ such an Thank you.

Thank you.

I say more than they have to watch, the morning light to see.

Let Israel open the Lord, for within mercies be.

[37 : 25] And when Jesus' redemption is ever found within, and from all his sin iniquities, he Israel shall redeem.

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

Amen. Amen. that it is a useful and important time for us to reflect on, well, what the fencing of the table is, is who has the right to be here. But that means that we're to explore what a Christian is, or what a Christian looks like. And so we affirm the teaching of Scripture. And we also, of course, speak of the great wonder of the Gospel. And I think that it is valuable for us to do that on every occasion, and especially on solemn and special occasions such as this is. In one respect, the Church corporately already engages in this practice. A court session has to validate any application to sit at the Lord's table. And so the eldership seeks to see whether there is consistency in terms of the life of that person. But also in terms of discipline, that this must be maintained. Otherwise, of course, we have difficulties in terms of the purity of the Church, and also the credibility of the Gospel within our community. And so there is a solemn task on a court session, and a task that requires great prayerful support from ourselves. There's also an aspect in which we engage in this in a very personal way. And these words that we have in 1 Corinthians remind us of this, where Paul encourages us to examine ourselves. And we find this a great task and a great spiritual exercise and discipline, that we're to engage in this, and to repent of our sin, and to see that this is an opportunity to renew our covenant, and we dedicate ourselves to the Lord. But I want us just to reflect for a few moments in verses 44 and 45 of Matthew chapter 5.

This is, of course, the great Sermon on the Mount. Jesus preaches the longest recorded teaching of Jesus. Matthew chapter 5, we're breaking into it in verses 44 and 45.

I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. And so in one respect, we emphasize the great wonder of our adoption in verse 45, sons or children of your Father. And to see that the Christian walks by faith in the power of the reality of what Christ has achieved on the cross, in the wonder of what is at the very heart of the gospel, the great wonder of forgiveness, and to find our status and our identity there.

[41 : 45] But what does it mean to be a child of God? What does it mean to be a son or a daughter of God the Father? What does it mean to be a Christian?

In a very simple sense, it means that you are a Christ one. You're following Jesus. And so it's not just about that verdict of forgiveness, forgiveness, but actually that the gospel is demanding us for more.

It demands us for a life commitment, a walk with the Lord. It demands that we follow him. It demands that we bear fruit, spiritual fruit.

In verse 44 of Matthew 5, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. And what the gospel is reminding us is that if we ourselves are confessing that we have received grace and received love, if we're saying that there is this wonderful transformation in our life that is life-changing, that we've been born again, if we are recipients of the blessings of God, even the blessings even over this weekend, how many times we were or could have been here, at the services under the sound of God's word, receiving the blessings of God, if we're receiving all of these things, ought it not to be seen in our lives?

Ought we not to be changed? Ought we not to be different? Different to what we were? And different to the world around us?

[43 : 31] Jesus goes on in the Sermon on the Mount here at the end of chapter 5. He says, If you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same. He's saying this is the way the world behaves.

But you, you're different. Your life has been ransomed. You're distinctive. You are not like the children of the world anymore.

You were dead in your trespasses and sins, but no more. You've come to life. Everything has changed. The way you think, the way you feel, the way you act. Everything has changed.

And so the great fruit of the spirit of love must be evidenced in the people of God. Must be evidenced by those who sit at the table, who are confessing that this is their Lord, who are professing their faith by lifting bread and lifting wine, and who validate that faith every day of our lives.

As we go out to a world that despised and rejected Jesus and the gospel, and we're called to respond with grace and with love.

[44 : 47] Ought Jesus not to expect this from us? Ought not we to expect it from ourselves? Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

Jesus is calling us to be different. We'll now give the elders the opportunity to prepare the table, and we'll sing us as our practice from Psalm 118 in the Psalter.

This is verse 15, and we'll sing on to the discretion of the presenters. And once the elements are prepared at this point, I want to remind you that this table is not exclusive to this congregation of this denomination, and any who are in good standing in their own congregation are encouraged to come and to sit with the people of God and to remember the Lord's death till he comes again.

We're singing from Psalm 118 at verse 15. In dwellings of the righteous, is heard the melody of joy and health of the Lord's death.

The Lord's right hand of heaven magnately.

[46 : 41] The right hand of the mighty Lord exalted is on high.

The right hand of the mighty Lord of heaven magnately.

I shall not die, but live and shallidiorah, don't die, but heaven■n.

ob. I said so, but not to death, dear Lord. Oh, set ye open unto me the gates of righteousness.

Then will I enter into them, and I the Lord will bless.

[48 : 13] This is the gate of north by it, the just shall enter in.

Be well, I praise for the meaners, and thus my safety be.

Let me read the report from 1 Corinthians 11, verse 23.

For I received the Lord, and I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night he was with faith, took bread, and when it gave thanks, he broke it and said, This is my body which is full of you.

Do this in remembrance of me. In the same manner he also took the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you can do, in remembrance of me.

[49 : 49] For as often as weep this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. On Jesus, on that night, pray.

Let's engage in prayer. Gracious God, we bless you and praise you for your goodness, the providence that finds us here on this very day, and the opportunity to proclaim the death of our Savior again, or even for some for the first time, that this is a wonderful blessing of your grace.

And we pray that you would bless this to us as we engage, Lord, in this spiritual activity, and that you would bless these elements to us.

We pray that you would be near to us and strengthen us in a way, and forgive us our sins, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

I spoke before with respect to how sometimes we can feel a little reluctant when the fencing of the table occurs. And I feel that sometimes it's because there may be a potential to discourage us.

[51 : 10] And often we can be discouraged already, and we can find it a very difficult task to examine ourselves. Sometimes we dislike greatly what we see, and we find it hard to see and find our identity in Christ, and the great wonder of the power of the blood, and it washes from us, from our sins.

But I don't want us to be discouraged today. I want us to find encouragement. I want you to find your place at the table as your opportunity to display your love for Jesus, and to display your love for His pride.

For me, I feel myself that this is one of the times that I enjoy the most, when we're sitting here together so close.

When we're sharing the great wonder of being together, the picture of unity, fellowship. Because our communion isn't just with the Lord, but also with His people.

And you look around you, and you see people with Jesus' lives. And He loves and saves His people.

[52 : 40] And another point, really, just before we partake of the elements, is that this isn't of ourselves. We love Him because He's hurt our hearts.

We are compelled to be here, constrained by the love of Christ. This is why we gather together.

After He had given thanks, He broke it, and He said, This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way also, He took the cup. After supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it. In remembrance of me.

In remembrance of me. Amen.

[53 : 48] Thank you.

Thank you.