

Faith, Love and Hope at the Lord's Table

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Preacher: Rev James Maciver

[0 : 00] Well, a very warm welcome to you all tonight to this pre-communion service. Good to see you so many of you, and obviously quite a number of you by the look of it have been enjoying, like myself, something of the good weather, which we're thankful to God for.

Now, one or two things just to intimate before we begin the service. At the close of the service, an invitation is given to anybody who wishes to come to take communion for the first time, if they would make their way down to the hall, please.

The session will be meeting in the hall tonight rather than in the session room to my left here in the church building. So if you make your way to the hall, that would include any two who have a certificate to hand in or have handed in a disjunction certificate from other congregations, because, as you know, we like, as a session, to formally welcome those who have brought certificates from other congregations, and that's just a formal welcome, there's no interview, but it's just to welcome them and meet with them so that we know exactly who they are.

Now, that also includes the session tonight. Anybody who wishes to come for baptism for their children, the session will be pleased to meet with any who want to have baptism for their children, and we'll arrange that as well, if you would kindly also, after the service, make your way down to the hall.

Now, we're following the same process as last time, same procedure as last communion, so that means we're not giving out tokens, as was the case in the past, just to avoid, again, too much contact.

[1 : 33] So at the end of the service, I won't go to the door. We'll just make our way through to the hall. Those who want to go to the hall and the rest can just leave.

So that's really the only intimations I need to make, I think, this evening. Let's sing to God's praise now from Psalm 105. Psalm 105.

That's in the Sing Psalms version, and that's on page 138, 138, verses 1 to 11.

Give thanks to the Lord God and call on His name. His wonderful deeds to the nations proclaim. Sing praises to Him and His exploits record. Let all those who seek Him rejoice in the Lord.

You chosen ones, look to the Lord and His might. Seek ever His face and His wonders recite. His miracles too and His judgments divine. You children of Abraham, Jacob's own line.

[2 : 33] Through to the end of verse 11. These verses give thanks to the Lord God. And we'll stand to sing. Give thanks to the Lord God and call on His name.

His wonderful deeds to the nations proclaim. Sing praises to Him and His thanks to the Lord.

Let all those who seek Him rejoice in the Lord. The chosen ones, move to the Lord and His might.

Seek ever His peace and His wonders recite. His miracles too and His judgments divine.

New children of Abraham, sing God's own line. The Lord is our God and He rules all the earth.

[4 : 03] Remembering His covenant, the word He set forth. He charting here in edeermen Sheila. He ■ edE207 Show. His cleave for Christ, the law and HEaret was made sure, with Israel his covenant would always endure.

To you I will give a secure portion to stand, the country of Canaan, a beautiful land.

Let's now join together in prayer. Let's call upon the Lord in prayer. O Lord, our gracious God, we thank you for the many truths contained in these words we have been singing.

The promises you gave that have already been fulfilled. The promises that you have given that remain to be fulfilled in the experience of your people. But we thank you, O Lord, that those that remain to be fulfilled are as certain as those that have already been completed.

[5 : 37] For you are God and you are truth and your word is truth. And every word you have spoken has proved to be reliable and always will. We thank you tonight, Lord, that this is our privilege when on such a beautiful evening we could so easily be elsewhere where our hearts desire that way.

But we thank you that our heart is here to worship you and to meet together to prepare for the remembrance of the Lord's death in the sacrament of the supper.

We give thanks for that desire, O Lord, a desire that you have planted in our hearts, a desire that we have not created ourselves and yet we recognize, Lord, the reality of it.

We pray that as we follow that desire and seek to live by faith in following the ways of the Lord, that we would tonight know your presence with us, that we would know your blessing following your word as we read it and have it expounded, as we hear it, as we sing your praises and call upon you in prayer.

O Lord, our God, we ask that you would manifest yourself to us. Show us, we pray, as you showed the disciples long ago the reality of your suffering and now of your resurrection too.

[6 : 52] We thank you that we address you tonight as we seek to remember you in your death tomorrow, that we address you as the risen Lord, as the exalted Lord, as the King of kings and Lord of lords who sits on the throne of heaven and in whose hand is the scroll of the destiny of the world, the history of the world, everything that will ever take place to the end of the age.

We thank you, O Lord, that you are the one who is with your people. We need no less than you to be with us. And we have no less according to your promise and according to the experience of your people down through the ages.

And Lord, we thank you for the promise of your presence with your people to the end of the world so that whatever circumstances may arise in our personal experience, in our circumstances, and the consequences of our own or other's actions.

We do thank you, O Lord, that your word remains true, that your promise is ensured to your people. And we give thanks that this is especially addressed to our life as your people in the world, to our witness for you, to our testimony that you are God, that we are your people.

We pray tonight as we gather in anticipation and preparation for the Lord's Supper, that you would help us as your word calls us to do, to examine ourselves in your presence and to examine ourselves in such a way as would come desiringly and knowingly to partake of the elements of the bread and of the cup, symbolizing and representing and sealing to your people the benefits of your death.

[8 : 40] Lord God, we ask that these may be made very real to us, not only in our preparation, but also by your will tomorrow as we seek to take them to ourselves and to thereby find that we once again remember the Lord's death until he come.

We thank you for all who have come to your table previously, for those who have been there over many years. We thank you, Lord, for their continued testimony and walk with you.

We ask that you would continue to keep them and bless them and help us, Lord, as a congregation to value the counsel of those who have gone ahead of us in the way of faith.

And we pray that as we gather together tonight, we may recognize the value there is in being together and in learning from one another and looking out for each other on the way through life.

We pray for those who wish to come for the first time. Lord, we ask that they too will be encouraged and strengthened and that as they take the step as they desire to do, Lord, help us, we pray, to be of benefit to them and to be that fellowship of a family that would indeed welcome those who want to progress their lives spiritually and grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

[10 : 04] Christ. We give thanks too for those who are joining us from other congregations. We thank you, Lord, for their interest, for their participation in the work of the congregation thus far.

We ask that you bless them in their own hearts and in their families and pray that even at this time they may have confirmed to them your own will and your own purpose for them.

We pray for those who are coming for baptism. We ask that your blessing, Lord, will be with them and with all who have recently baptized their children in this congregation. Gracious Lord, make us thankful that we have young families who wish to follow in the ways of the Lord, who wish to bring up their children in the knowledge of the Lord, in the nurture of the Lord, in the discipline of the Lord.

And we pray that they may, Lord, come and do dependence upon your grace, that they may come themselves to grow and to flourish and to have their children established in your ways and rooted and grounded in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we pray that your blessing will be with all tonight who cannot be with us. Lord, we think especially of those who are ill. We know that there are various illnesses keeping people we know and love from being with us tonight.

[11 : 23] We pray especially for those who are seriously ill. We pray for those who have COVID. We pray for those who are recovering from illness, from surgery. We pray for those who cannot be here because they face and experience the difficulties and the challenges of old age and of discomfort.

Lord, we ask that you would be pleased to bless them, bless them wherever they are and give them, Lord, to know your presence and of your being with them and those who trust in you.

And any who do not, Lord, bring them, we pray, to that position of faith and of trust so that they come to know the living God and come to rejoice in his salvation.

We ask now that you would continue to bless us here and as we turn to your word once again we pray for the light that comes from your Holy Spirit opening up our minds, our understanding and also renewing our will and giving us, O Lord, that inward appetite and hunger for your word and for your presence and enable us as we do so to know, Lord, again of a thankful heart as we express our thanks to you.

Receive us then we pray and cleanse us from all our sins for Jesus' sake. Amen. I'm going to read tonight from the Gospel of Luke chapter 22.

[12 : 53] We're going to be looking at some verses from 1 Corinthians actually looking at our warrants that we usually read when we come to administer the Lord's Supper but we'll look at the way it's rooted obviously in the way in which Jesus spoke on the night in which he was betrayed and spoke in such a way to the disciples as we find in these verses.

So Luke chapter 22 and from verse 7 and we'll read down as far as verse 30. Then came the day of unleavened bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.

So Jesus sent Peter and John saying go and prepare the Passover for us that we may eat it. They said to him where would you have us prepare it? He said to them behold when you have entered the city a man carrying a jar of water will meet you.

Follow him into the house that he enters and tell the master of the house the teacher says to you where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?

And he will show you a large upper room furnished prepare it there. And they went and found it just as he had told them and they prepared the Passover. And when the hour came he reclined at table and the apostles with him and he said to them I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer for I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

[14 : 25] And he took a cup and when he had given thanks he said take this and divide it among yourselves for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.

And he took bread and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them saying this is my body which is given for you do this in remembrance of me.

Likewise the cup after they had eaten saying this cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood but behold the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table for the son of man goes as it has been determined but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed.

And they began to question one another which of them it could be who was going to do this. A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest.

And he said to them the kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them and those in authority over them are called benefactors but not so with you rather let the greatest among you become as the youngest and the leader as one who serves.

[15 : 39] For who is the greater one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table but I am among you as the one who serves?

You are those who have stayed with me in my trials and I assign to you as my father assigned to me a kingdom that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Amen and may the Lord once again bless to us our reading of his word. Let's turn again to praise him this time from Psalm number 40 Psalm number 40 in the Scottish Psalter that's on page 259 We'll sing verses 1 to 5 six stanzas to the double verse 5 I waited for the Lord my God and patiently did bear at length to me he did incline my voice and cry to hear he took me from a fearful pit and from the miry clay and on a rock he set my feet establishing my way verses 1 to 5 I waited for the Lord my God my God and patiently and patiently did bear but led to me he didn't lie my voice and cry to hear he took me he took me from the fearful pit and from the miry clay and on a rock he set my feet establishing my way a new song in my mouth a God to magnify many shall see his hands shall fear and on the Lord rely

O blessed is the man whose trust upon the Lord relies respecting not the proud nor such as turn aside to lies O Lord my God who many are the wonder shall pass done thy gracious thoughts to us were far above all thoughts are gone in your turn and can reckon them to thee if they declare and speak of them

I would they bore and can be numbered high now will you turn with me this evening to 1 Corinthians chapter 11 1 Corinthians chapter 11 and we'll begin reading at verse 23 and this is the passage for a short time we'll look at this evening verses 23 to 26 for I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread and when he had given thanks he broke it and 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 for as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes well we're here as we know to make preparation for coming to the communion table to take communion to partake of the

[20 : 38] Lord's supper and as I was going through these words and these verses it certainly came to me that the three main elements that we find in our Christian walk our Christian practice faith love and hope that they can actually be found in some of the terminology of these verses and that we can therefore say that taking communion is itself an act of faith it's also an act of love it's also an act of hope it is an act of faith if you focus on the words this is my body you come to the Lord's table and you take these words and you discern in these elements the Lord's body what happened on the night in which he was betrayed and then when you think of the word remember or remembrance do this in remembrance of me which is following what the

Lord himself had said to the disciples you can see that partaking of the supper or taking communion is an act of love because in remembrance you're reflecting upon what Christ did and how in his great act of love he gave himself to the death of the cross and now in response you at the Lord's supper take these elements that represent his death and in return you love him as you take the bread and the cup and then thirdly it's also taking communion is also an act of hope because as it says here you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes so you're looking forward in the exercise of hope as well as of love and of faith you look forward in the exercise of hope to the return of the Lord you look forward to the time when the

Lord's supper will be replaced by the marriage banquet of the lamb and as you partake of the Lord's supper so that carries you forward in your thoughts in the exercise of your soul along with faith and with love hoping in a positive way eagerly awaiting for the return of Jesus so taking communion is an act of faith he took this bread and when he had given thanks he said this is my body which is for you in the same way he took the cup and said this cup is the new covenant in my blood this is my body this is the new covenant in my blood and as you come to the Lord's supper and partake of the Lord's supper you do so in the exercise of your faith it's your faith that you exercise when you look at these elements the bread and the cup and you believe in what they represent you believe you trust in the

Jesus that's essentially a main aspect of what faith is trusting in Christ and in theological terms or logical terms and in the theology of our salvation faith comes before love although they are of course joined together inseparably you believe you trust in the Lord Jesus that's what joins you believingly savingly to Christ and it's that that then ushers you into a life and a discipleship of love where you love him and so faith and actually the actions of the table I think are significant just to briefly mention it certainly it was always the case in our forefathers that they saw the actions of the table themselves to be significant because Jesus did say take eat take this cup drink of it there is a specific physical action on our part taking the cup taking the bread which itself outwardly represents your taking of

Jesus to yourself now you've done that already before you've come to the Lord Supper you've come to Jesus you've placed your trust in him and placing your trust in him means you have taken him as your saviour and when you reach forward and take these elements in the Lord Supper you're again doing something representative if you like it is to you outwardly what you've done in your soul already and here in your soul again you're reaching out as it were with the hands of faith and taking Jesus again to yourself in a way that confirms your relationship with him that confirms him as your saviour in a way that says Lord I've already taken you spiritually by believing in you and my trusting in you and I'm actually again confirming that as I take these elements in the Lord Supper you see these elements as themselves representing and indeed as a catechism reminds us they're a sign and a seal a seal being something that confirms the death of

[26 : 12] Christ a sign and a seal of what we are in Christ they don't convey themselves salvation but they do confirm the salvation that we have received by faith in Christ they are a sign and a seal and as you think of trusting in the Lord there is of course the element of obedience along with trusting because obedience is an essential element of faith you cannot think of believing without also carrying in it the element of obedience that's something the Bible itself makes very clear think for example of Romans chapter 6 that wonderful chapter that talks about our being separated from sin as the dominant factor and power in our lives to be brought into union with Christ and under the direction of the Holy Spirit and remember in that chapter verse 17 of Romans 6 you find Paul saying thanks be to God that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed or delivered and having been freed from sin you have become slaves or bond servants of righteousness now these words there are important I know we've mentioned them before you by obedience you were once slaves of sin but you've become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were delivered in other words what God did and separating you off from the power of sin the dominance of sin that once characterized your life as an unsaved sinner he didn't just release you or take you from the attachment that sin had to you and you had to sin he something he delivered you to this standard this form of teaching that he has given us in the gospel or in his word and so obedience to

Christ is at the heart of that you have the same in first Peter the very beginning of that letter of first Peter again teaches us that this is in fact what the purpose of God was in sending Christ into the world and coming to save God's own people he says to those who are elect exiles of the dispersion he mentions then those regions according to the foreknowledge of God the Father in the sanctification of the spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood better I think in the old translation in that instance for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ he brought you under the provision of the death of Christ the sprinkling of his blood that's what it signifies and as he brought you under the provisions of that so that's God bringing us to obedience to this Christ that's why Jesus came that's the purpose of his death to bring us to this point where we're savingly united to him by faith the faith that involves trusting in him the faith that involves obedience to him and of course we remember too that obedience is very much a part of coming to take communion the

Lord doesn't actually present it to us as something that's just a bit of a take it or leave it thing he doesn't say well there's there's the Lord's supper there's the bread and there's the cup take it if you like if you think it's appropriate then take it no he says take it it's a command of his it's an imperative he doesn't just bring us to think of the Lord's supper as something that's there and then leave it to ourselves to think of whether it's a good thing or not it comes with the Lord's specific command that's what Jesus said take the cup take the spread obey the voice of the Lord the command of the Lord in other words in the old days certainly in Scotland as well the Lord wasn't there that it began but the communion very often used to be called the action and the sermon on the day of communion which invariably in those days would have been something to do with the atonement with the death of

Christ or the obedience of Christ himself was called the action sermon the action sermon was a sermon about the action of Jesus in giving himself to the death of the cross and you can see from that how obedience fits into that just as Christ obeyed the father's will in giving himself to the death of the cross so in loving response and believing response and obedient response we come to the Lord's supper and we take the bread and the cup in response to his command to us of course it's a loving command it's not a command with anything other than his divine love behind it but it is authoritative it is the Lord's command it's something that comes to us in conscience and says to us look this is what I have done for your salvation what I require of you what I command is that you do this for me that you take this cup that you take this bread so there's the action of obedience taking communion is an act of faith the faith that involves trusting and involves obedience to

[32 : 28] Christ secondly taking communion is an act of love and the focus as we said is on remembrance do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me this is my body which is for you do this in remembrance of me so in both for both the bread and also the cup the remembrance is attached to both in other words the whole of the supper itself and partaking of the supper is very much an act of love in remembrance of what Jesus has done and as you come to remember what Jesus has done your remembrance is one of thanksgiving along with love and faith and hope because the love of God's people is a love that is itself accompanied by or perhaps you might say even includes the element of thanksgiving it's impossible to think of loving the

Lord without giving thanks to the Lord you don't come to the Lord's supper giving thanks without your love being involved you don't come to express your love by taking the communion without your thanksgiving being involved in that as well Jesus gave thanks as he came to this point representing his own death he took the bread he gave thanks we read something quite amazing in Luke chapter 22 it's what he said to the disciples with earnest desire I have desire to eat this with you before I suffer isn't that a remarkable thing because there is Jesus knowing full well what that bread and that cup represent as far as he's concerned that's the cross that's his own life being poured out in death for his people that's what they represent these elements and yet he comes to that occasion he comes to that moment of instituting the

Lord's supper in the bread and in the cup in a way that expresses his earnest desire to do this his heart is 100% set on the sufferings of the cross for the benefit of his people that's love for you greater love has no man than this as John put it that a man laid down his life for his friends he laid down his life for those that would come to be his friends those that would enjoy eternal life through faith and trust in him and we come to give thanks early fathers in some denominations you'll still find the word used it's a good word a word for the Lord's Supper which is the Eucharist comes from a Greek verb meaning to give thanks and when you hear of the

Lord's Supper called the Eucharist you think about the giving of thanks that Jesus himself did before he gave this bread and this wine this cup of wine to the disciples and also how we come to give thanks you'll know yourselves and it's a very significant point in the communion procedure that when we come down as ministers to the table and just before we do anything else by way of giving out the elements we give thanks and we say that we follow the Lord's example in giving thanks this is a Eucharistic occasion this is a time to specifically give thanks for all that set out before us represented in the Lord's Supper what a great privilege that is to express your thanks not only by words from your mouth and by singing the praises of God and by talking to one another about the wonders the

Lord has done what a privilege to give thanks by the very act of taking the communion taking it as an act of love in which your thankfulness is expressed and as we come and anticipate coming to the Lord's Supper again remember what he did remember his love remember how he showed his love remember that he died for his people and not only is it a thankfulness that's expressed in taking the communion there's also a proclaiming of Christ because your love for Christ your love that you express by taking the communion by coming to the Lord's table in that love you actually want others to come and partake of it as well you want to make this Jesus known to others you want to proclaim what Jesus has done for you and you do that in your witness you do that in your testimony from day to day you do that in your

[37 : 56] Christian life in your Christian walk but this word that Paul uses here the word proclaim is used specifically about the Lord's supper and what happens when you take the communion you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes and it's a word that the word proclaim the Lord's death in other words the Lord's supper makes an announcement or you might say you're making an announcement through taking the Lord's supper and that announcement has to do with Jesus and his death you proclaim the Lord's death you come to the Lord's supper and to yourself you're proclaiming the death of Jesus to those who are watching you at the Lord's supper you're proclaiming the death of we don't often perhaps give maybe not enough emphasis to that but taking communion on the part of the Lord's people is actually an evangelistic act of love it makes its own declaration this is the death of Jesus represented this is the love of Christ as he gave himself for his people I can't explain how exactly the Lord's supper does that but this is what God's word is saying and in the hands of God in the hands of the Holy Spirit that table that communion becomes a means of expressing to those who are partaking and especially to those who are watching just as the gospel message the preached word of God proclaims the death of Christ so does the Lord's supper it's the same death the same Calvary the same person the same Lord but in a different manner and the Lord's supper is precious to you for that reason too that in it you find a proclamation of the death of

Christ the one you love taking communion is an act of faith taking communion is an act of love but taking communion thirdly is an act of hope do this you remember you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes the focus is on the return of Jesus somebody has said in the Lord's supper that we're looking different ways we're looking backwards to something that happened at Calvary where the death of Jesus actually took place we're looking upwards to God the father especially and to Jesus as he now is because this is what God himself has arranged and purposed and done for us and not only are we looking backwards and looking upwards we're looking sideways or around us because the

Lord's supper is God's people unitedly remembering the death of the Lord you remember you take with you in the remembrance your fellow Christians your fellow believers you're looking around even though you have your own particular individual relationship to Jesus you remember what Paul actually said to the Corinthians and you find it elsewhere in the Bible when you come together when you come together when you come as a people united in Christ you look to those with you in celebrating the Lord's supper and remembering the Lord's death you look around you you also look inwardly you examine yourself before you come you look backwards you look upwards you look around you you look inwards that's what we require to do let a man examine himself let a person examine himself verse 28 and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup examination you see is not intended to conclude in not coming to the Lord's supper the emphasis there is in examining yourself and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup of course that doesn't mean that the examining is done casually it doesn't mean that if we find something there that the

Bible obviously shows us is a grievous sin against the Lord that is something that we should have dealt with and haven't repented of then that is a different matter but the examination is with a view to coming to the table you look inwardly as well as around you and upward and also backward and finally you look forward it's until he comes you look for the return of the Lord and so it is an act of hope partaking of the Lord's supper and you remember those great words in the song of Solomon saying they're directly applicable to the Lord's supper itself as such but certainly the older theologians used to take these verses as descriptive of our personal relationship with God and Christ or with Jesus himself as our saviour and in chapter 2 especially you find these words in the song of

[43 : 43] Solomon beautiful beautiful words where love is expressed between the beloved the bride and her beloved and where you find in chapter 2 they're saying it's the voice of my beloved behold he comes leaping over the mountains bounding over the hills and so on he says behold she says he stands behind our wall gazing through the windows looking through the lattice my beloved speaks and says to me arise my love my beautiful one and come away for behold the winter is past the rain is over and gone the flowers appear on the earth the time of singing has come and you can you can really see in those the principles of a saving relationship to Christ because here is God saying as it were the Lord's supper just like the preaching of the word while we're in this world in this life is a bit like that lattice work like that lattice that covered the windows in those days and here was here she was recognizing the outline the shape of her beloved as he as he approached the window and looked into where she was her heart got excited she recognized him she couldn't make out every detail about him but she knew that was him and so in the

Lord's supper you recognize Jesus you discern Christ you actually have him set out representative but for you he is there spiritually there spiritually to your face and you're conscious that you can't yet see all of him that you can't see everything that you would like about him but you're thankful for the way that the supper as well as the word is the lattice through which you see him the means that God has given us that we might see Jesus in that but of course he's calling us to go forwards from that go forwards in the sense of looking to the future looking to his return as he says there in reply to his beloved arise my love my beautiful one and come away for behold the winter is past the rain is over and gone and so on he's really taking our mind away from the present and on into the future and that's how it is for the

Lord's supper as well for God's people how thankful to be there what a wonderful privilege to benefit from what's there here and now but it's until he comes and when he comes there'll be something even better than the Lord's supper there'll be the marriage banquet supper of the lamb the reception of the marriage of Christ and his people the things of this world of time will be no more we will be taken above that and beyond that and so as you see his beauty through the lattice of the Lord's supper doesn't that just stimulate your heart towards the greater sight of his beauty when he comes as John puts it now then we are the children or the sons of

God he's no doubt about that in 1st John chapter 3 what love the father has bestowed that we should be called the children of God the sons of God now this is what we are he says but it has not yet been made clear what we shall be but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is and if it's thrilling as it should be for us to see him through the lattice of the Lord's supper what a thrill it's going to be when you see him as he is for a moment that's going to be when he returns he's not going to return with the modest clothes of his humiliation he's not going to return unrecognized by many in this world he's going to return in his splendor in the greatness of his might and power in the magnificence of his kingship in the beauty of his being

Lord and that's what the supper is preparing us for it's giving us a glimpse into what is yet to be though we're thankful for what now is and of course when he comes we shall then be with him we shall see him as he is we shall be like him and we shall be with him forevermore and that's again what the Lord's supper does it feeds your hope because your hope is a positive hope that leans and stretches forward to the return of Christ as Jesus himself put it in that great prayer recorded in John chapter 17 father I will that those whom you have given me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory you see the glory of Jesus through the

[49 : 35] Lord's supper in a measure you appreciate something of it through that lattice but oh what a day it will be when we sit down with our king and celebrate at the marriage supper of the lamb to see the king in his beauty and to be with him forevermore an everlasting banquet for which the Lord's supper prepares your heart and hope taking communion is an act of faith it's also an act of love it's also an act of hope and when we come God willing tomorrow to the Lord's supper and to partake of the supper may it be for you and for me a strengthening of our faith a deepening of our love an expansion and confirming of our hope let's pray

Lord we thank you for all that this supper represents by your own divine appointment we thank you for the blessings that your people have received from this supper down through the centuries peace and we pray oh Lord as we anticipate once again to sit at the Lord's table and partake of the communion oh Lord help us we pray to express to you our need of being taken by yourself and know your Holy Spirit enlarging our love strengthening our faith and confirming our hope we pray that your word and the sacrament itself will be blessed to us to that end continue Lord we pray to encourage those who seek to come for the first time may the Lord find that it's not the extent of their faith the measure of their love or the quality of their hope that forms the basis on which they come to remember the Lord's death but that they trust in you and believe what you have done and appreciate and love all of that for themselves hear us we pray for Jesus sake

Amen let's conclude this evening our worship in Psalm 116 Psalm 116 on page 154 and we're singing verses 1 to 9 the first four stanzas I love the Lord because he heard my voice he listened when I cried to him for aid I'll call on him as long as I shall live because he turned to hear me when I prayed verses 1 to 9 to God's praise I love I love the Lord because he heard my voice he listened when I cried to him for aid I'll call on him as long as long as I shall live because he turned to hear me when I he gave the horse of death glim and entangled me upon me gave thee and wish of again with me and trouble

I was overcome then on the name of God I called Lord save the Lord the God is kind and full of grace both righteous and compassionate is he the Lord protects all those of childlike faith when I was in great need he rescued me he rescued me rest oh my soul

God has been good to you for you oh Lord have saved my soul from death my feet from stumbling and my eyes from tears that I may live for you while I have breath now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you now and evermore Amen