

What is the Place of My Rest?

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[0 : 00] A very good morning to you all and thank you again for joining us for this service of worship. We trust that God will bless his word to us, that he'll bless this time when we're able to share together in the worship of his great name and bless this day to us, a day that he has set apart to be a day that's kept holy to himself.

So whatever you're watching, I pray that God will bless you throughout the day. We're going to begin our worship singing first of all in Psalm 34. Psalm number 34, that's on page 40 of the psalm books if you're using these, and from verse 1.

They look to him and shine with joy. They are not put to shame. This suffering man cried to the Lord. From him deliverance came. The angel of the Lord surrounds and guards continually all those who fear and honour him.

He sets his people free. We sing to the tune of Jackson's, verses 1 to 7. Psalm 34, at all times I will bless the Lord. At all times I will bless the Lord.

I'll praise him with my voice. Because I'm glory in the Lord, let troubled souls rejoice.

[1 : 50] Together let us praise the Lord. Exalt his name with me.

I sought the Lord. His answer came. From fears he set me free.

They look to him and shine with joy. They are not put to shame.

This suffering man cried to the Lord. From him deliverance came.

The angel of the Lord surrounds and guards continually.

[3 : 00] All who are saved and unmerited. All who are saved and unmerited. He sets his people free.

Now let's read God's word as we find that in the prophecy of Isaiah. Prophecy of Isaiah chapter 65. We'll read from verse 17 through to the end of the chapter.

Isaiah 65 at verse 17. For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth. And the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.

But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create. For behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy and a people to be a gladness. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people.

No more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days or an old man who does not fill out his days.

[4 : 12] For the young man shall die a hundred years old and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them. They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

They shall not build another inhabit. They shall not plant and another eat. For like the days of a tree shall be the days of my people. And my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity. For they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the Lord and their descendants with them. Before they call I will answer.

While they are yet speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall graze together. The lion shall eat straw like the ox. And dust shall be the serpent's food.

They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, says the Lord. Amen. May God follow with his blessing that reading of his word.

[5 : 13] Let's now call upon the Lord in prayer. Let's engage in prayer together. O Lord our God we thank you today that you have set apart this day for yourself.

That you have set apart your people to be your people. For you are the God who sanctifies those things that bring you glory and praise and honor. And we thank you today that we are assured Lord that your interest is in your people.

Even as we gather together in this way. We thank you for these words that we have been singing. And these days long ago through Isaiah that you promised. That you would be a blessing to your people.

And that you would send one who would come to be their savior and redeemer. And we thank you today that we live in these days. Though there are so many difficulties and things around us Lord which disturb us and cause us concern.

Lord we thank you for the calmness of heaven. The calmness of your throne. The calmness of your reign. For there is nothing in the way in which you govern the world that you have created.

[6 : 20] There is nothing of panic or uncertainty. We thank you as we come to place our confidence in you. That we do so Lord assured of these things. We thank you for the stability of your kingdom.

For throughout the history of the world Lord we know. That kingdoms and empires have come and gone. Some of them great and long lasting. Others very short lived.

That we thank you Lord that your kingdom will forever stand. That your throne will endure forever. And that none will be able to usurp it.

We bless you today oh Lord that we come under your rule. That we come under your word to guide us in our thoughts. And steer us in our actions. Lord we thank you today that in your wisdom.

You have devised this great plan of salvation for us. We thank you today for the saviour who you sent into the world. Your own only begotten son. Who came into this world and took our nature.

[7 : 23] Became one of us and remains human. Even as he now sits with you on the throne. We bless you Lord for all that that means to your people. Not only in the way in which they know that salvation has been procured.

And created and perfected by him in his work of redemption. But also that they have one now in heaven who presides over all things. And yet understands from a human point of view.

As well as with his divine omniscience. What it is they are going through. We thank you that your word assures us. You have been tempted in all points like as we are.

And yet without sin. We thank you Lord for that sympathy. And that fellow understanding that you have with us. As we go through the things of this life.

Lord bless us we pray today as we come together in this way. We thank you for the facility you have given us to do this. And we still look to you Lord to provide for us a way out of our situation.

[8 : 25] Where we have restricted us to our gatherings together for worship. And we ask that you would hasten the day Lord when we are able once again to come. To be together safely in our church buildings.

We thank you Lord that some have already been able to do so. We pray their blessing today to be with your people wherever they gather. And by whatever means. Lord may your Holy Spirit today. Truly come to assure us of your love. Of your mercy. Of your provision. Of salvation for us. We pray for your guidance throughout the issues of life. That you grant us Lord by your Spirit.

That we may be directed. So that we may know from day to day. That we are walking in the paths in which you lead us. In the paths of righteousness. Bless today we pray our people.

Those we belong to as a nation. Bless us Lord we pray as we find ourselves in these critical times. And once again we pray for those who lead us. For those who are in government elected by us as a people.

[9 : 27] To lead us at this time. Lord whatever we may think of their leadership. Whatever opinions we may have of their political views. We do ask that you would guide them.

That you would bless them. That you would make them a blessing. That you would show them at this time oh Lord. What to decide in regard to this virus that has overtaken us. We pray especially that you would help them to look to yourself.

And teach us all we pray. To know your ways. And show us your paths. And deliver us we pray from the way in which we are so confined at the moment.

In our movements. And oh Lord as we find evidence of this virus increasing once again. Lord we pray that you would intervene. And come and deliver us oh Lord we pray.

And grant to us we pray that in days to come we may see a further reduction in the infections. And especially in the deaths. We ask that you bless those who are most vulnerable in our society.

[10 : 31] And in our locality as well. Lord we pray today for those who don't have the support of families. And for those who seek to minister to them in the place of families.

And we pray that you bless those who are working with the homeless. Those who have no place to go to and occupy places on our streets. Lord we give thanks for the provision that is made for them. And yet we realise that some are in such a condition as don't even want to take up the spaces available to them. Lord remember us we pray. When such is a feature of our society and of our day. And remember those especially who are caught up with homelessness and in addictions of various kinds. Lord we ask today that you would bless them and bless every ministry to them that seeks to help them.

We ask that you bless especially the work of Bethany, the Christian Trust. We pray your blessing for safe families. Those who seek to help the vulnerable and provide homes and support for them. [11 : 34] Lord we pray that you'd bless them and all who work for them. We pray for those in road to recovery. And ask oh Lord that you'd bless them as they seek to deal with those who acknowledge that they have a problem.

We ask that you would help them with that problem. And be with those Lord who help them at this time. Remember to the work of Hebrides Alpha in our own locality. We thank you for them. And for the work that they do from day to day. We pray for them oh Lord and ask that you would bless those in leadership there. And ask that the work that they do in our communities may be blessed.

May be blessed especially to those who are vulnerable and who are helped by them. Remember them Lord we pray from day to day. And provide for them financially too. In these times when the supply is maybe not as readily available as it used to be.

Continue Lord to provide for them we pray. And do the same for us we pray as a church. We find at this time Lord many anxieties that fill our minds. We pray that you would give us the calmness of knowing that we trust in you.

[12 : 41] And that you do all things well even though we don't understand at times much of what is happening in your government. Oh Lord bless us we pray. Especially through the gospel.

Bless all who hear the gospel today. And be pleased to give them the aid of your spirit to receive your word into our hearts. And as we receive your word Lord help us we pray to live by it and to live for you.

Remember our children. Remember them in their school days. Remember them too we ask at this time as they share in worship services with us. Bless them Lord we pray and grant to them.

That they may know your protective care during these days. And especially guide them in your own ways. And teach them in new paths. Remember those who mourn the passing of loved ones. We ask oh Lord that you draw near to them today. Now Lord we pray that you would bless those in recent days who have lost loved ones. And had funeral services for them.

[13 : 39] As well as those who remember from the past. Loved ones who are no longer with them. Lord we ask that you would come and show us we pray your compassion and your love. And pour this into our hearts.

And enable those today who grieve in their hearts. That they may know your comfort and support and strengthening at this time. Receive us now we pray as we offer our thanks and our worship to you.

We come with our sins and we confess them. Not as an afterthought oh Lord. Because we know that we always need to give our sins in our confession to you.

So that we be washed and cleansed. We pray that you would wash and cleanse us today from the defilement of our sins. Make us clean in your presence. And create in us a clean heart.

A persevering spirit. Hear us we pray. For Jesus sake. Amen. Now children we're looking today at the last of the animals we're going to look at.

[14 : 42] And that's the rock badger. I've never seen a rock badger apart from photos of him. You can google it and find it online. But it's mentioned in Proverbs chapter 30.

And from verse 24 to 28. You find four different creatures mentioned there. All of them teaching us a lesson. Four things that are very small.

And yet it says here they are exceedingly wise. It mentions the ants. The rock badgers. The locusts. And the lizards. You can translate that spider perhaps. But we're looking at the rock badgers.

It says there in verse 26. The rock badgers are people not mighty. Yet they make their homes in the cliffs. When it says people of course it doesn't mean they're actual people.

It's just using that word. Because they are the kind of animals that live together in family groups. And what it's saying here is they're very weak. They're not mighty.

[15 : 42] They're very vulnerable. Yet they make their homes in the cliffs. And the rock badger if you look at a photo. Or if you've seen one in real life. They're like a sort of squashed down little dog. Or medium sized dog. Very short feet. Sometimes they stand like a meerkat. But you'll find them in these areas where there's rocky caves. Or little holes in the ground amongst the rocks. That's where they make their home as Proverbs tells us. When I looked it up and find out something about them. You'll find that it says in some of the descriptions of them. That they spend 95% of the time sleeping. Usually lying out in the sunshine. What a life that is. 95% of your time.

Almost 100%. Almost the whole time outside sleeping. In the sunshine. Would you like that? Well no not really. It's good to be in the sunshine. And to have a sleep sometimes.

[16 : 40] But not for 95% of the time. There are too many things in life that you have to do. But that's what it says about them. They're also called conies. C-O-N-E-Y. And that's the kind of thing they are.

It says here they're not mighty. But they make their home in the cliffs. And because they're vulnerable to large birds of prey for example. Or other animals that would kill them. They always have these caves. These little holes in the rocks. And in they go. And they find safety in amongst the rocks. They make their home there. And that teaches us that we too must have the safety that Jesus brings us.

Because God in so many places in the Bible has described us as our refuge. Remember Psalm 46. God is our refuge. And our strength. Our refuge is where you find safety in a time of danger. And it says there that God is our refuge. Just like the conies. They're wise enough to know that they're safe within these holes in the rocks when danger comes.

[17 : 42] And that's what we must do as well. We must come and place our lives in the hands of Jesus. We come and accept Jesus as he's offered in the gospel to us as a saviour.

And not only are they good that way. That wise in that sense. They also live in families. Family groups. And you'll also find that very often.

Just like the meerkats. You'll find two or three of them standing up on end. And just looking around. Watching for danger. So where the hawk comes along. Or whatever it is that's coming. The one that's on watch will actually just screech out. A warning sign. And then they all scurry away back into their burrows. Well it's like that with the conies as well. With the rock badgers.

There's always one or two or more on watch. Just looking out while the rest are sleeping. And anything that comes along that's dangerous. The warning sign goes out. And they all wake up.

[18 : 40] And into their burrows they go. And that tells us too. That we have to look out for each other. Look after each other. One of the great things about belonging to the church.

Although it's not the only group that has this. But one of the great things about belonging to the church. Is that the Bible teaches us that we must care for each other. That we must look after each other.

That we must be careful to just help each other through different times of problems and troubles. And that's the same with you as children as well. As we're taught to look after each other. I know you're taught that in school as well as in church. But the church is one of those places where it should be really special. Where we should find that refuge and that help. And that comfort and that help for us in our problems.

From other Christians. From other people who belong to the church. So the rock badger is small. And yet it's wise. Because it makes its home in the rocks.

[19 : 38] And it's also living in families. Where the warning signs go out. And they warn each other. And look after each other that way. And that's what Jesus is teaching us in all of the Bible.

That we have to use him. And have him as our saviour. And look after each other as God's people through this life. Well let's say the Lord's Prayer again together.

And again let's just think about the words of the prayer. So that we can really pray them as we're saying them together. Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. I'd like us now to turn to Isaiah chapter 66.

[20 : 42] Isaiah chapter 66, and we're going to look at verses 1 to 2 of this chapter. Thus says the Lord, heaven is my throne and the earth is my fruitstool.

What is the house that you would build for me? And what is the place of my rest? All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the Lord. But this is the one to whom I will look, he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

Here's the question at the end of verse 1 there, that we're using as the next of our questions from God. This question, what is the place of my rest?

Well, it's twofold really. It's saying, what is the house you would build me? What is the place of my rest? God is asking, in other words, what are you providing for me, for a home?

Where is my home? Where do I live? Where do I make my home? Now the passage is one of those that builds up to a final point, where that final point really hits you with some force, with power, because of the way that the argument, the teaching builds up to that point.

[21 : 52] And you'll find that here in these two verses. It starts there, verse 1 goes through the various points there, and then it comes really to hit you powerfully with this. This is the one to whom I will look, the one who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

In other words, God is saying, that's my home. That's where I have set up my residence. Or you could look at, make an illustration of these verses, if you can, something like this.

When you look at an artist actually beginning a painting, you'll maybe find him, or are going to do the background first, is usually the case. They paint in the background, whatever it's going to be. Usually that's done more quickly. And then the main subject of the painting is then concentrated on. But the background is really important. They don't just splash the paint on, even so, though sometimes it may seem that way.

They don't splash it on any old way. The background itself is chosen very carefully by the artist because they want the main feature, the main subject, whether it's a portrait or a scene or whatever, they want that to be really the focal point, that which catches your eye, that which is presented to you as the main topic, the main subject of the painting.

[23 : 12] And that's how it is with these verses as well. You have the background. We're going to call it the background. They're in verses 1 and the first part of verse 2, which talks about the greatness of God, a great subject in itself.

And it's not in any way suggesting that God's greatness is just a background thing that doesn't form an important feature. Of course it doesn't. But here, in these verses, it does form the background so that the last part of verse 2 is then thrown into the foreground so that that's really what you're left with.

And that's what makes a powerful point, having seen the background to it in the greatness of God. So the greatness of God is the background to the verses, to what you find in the spiritual painting, if you like.

And the main topic, the one that's thrown into relief in the foreground, is the grace of God. The greatness of God leading you to the grace of God, the grace that makes the likes of us a home for himself, a home to live in our souls.

Let's look at that, first of all, the background, in verses 1 and 2, the first part of verse 2. It's God's greatness, isn't it? God the King.

[24 : 28] Thus says the Lord, Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Now he's beginning there just to describe himself, in a few words, in terms of his greatness, as the greatness of universal kingship.

The King is on his throne. What is he using as his footstool? Well, he says it's the earth. And in fact, the whole of the universe, the whole of the created order, in fact, is the footstool of God.

God in his greatness, sitting in his majesty, sitting on his throne, ruling the universe. Whenever you hear about people saying, if God is this and that, why doesn't he do this? God is great.

God is the King. God knows what he's doing. God is sitting upon his throne. He never leaves his throne. And as he comes to describe himself in this way, in his greatness, he's saying, Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.

And you know, this is such an important thing, that we will appreciate, as far as we can, the greatness of God presented to us in the Bible. We need to know God as he describes himself.

[25 : 31] We need to know God as he really is, as far as that is possible to us, in Christ and through Jesus. And that is really our basic flaw, isn't it? As sinners, until God really brings home to us the truth about himself and about ourselves, this is not the God we see.

This is not the kind of God we want. We reject God as he's revealed in the Scriptures if we're left to our own devices and our own understanding. And indeed, we go further and just make a God for ourselves, even if it's the God of the Bible.

Sometimes we just don't have him as the God of our lives, do we? As the King of our hearts. You remember, long ago in the times of Samuel, in 1 Samuel chapter 5 there, when the ark was taken by the Philistines and captured, and they brought it to Ashdod, one of their cities, and they brought it into the place where their idol Dagon was situated.

And they placed the ark there in front of Dagon, this little statue that was placed on a shelf there on the wall that they worshipped. And the next day, they came in and they saw that Dagon had fallen on the ground in the presence of the ark.

And you might have thought, well, surely that would make them think that what this ark represents is greater than the God Dagon that they worshipped. But no. You see, the Bible has a way of really showing up the stupidity of people in their sinfulness, and that includes myself and yourself at times.

[27 : 07] But what did they do? They didn't actually say, oh, well, we'd better now take this ark instead of Dagon. No, it says there, they took Dagon and they put him back on the shelf.

You see, what is that saying? It's saying, well, if you create your own God, one of these days, he's going to fall off the pedestal on which you place him. And unless you come by that to the true God, to the God of the Bible, to this God and his greatness and worship him, all you're going to do is just put your God back on the shelf.

And sadly, God, for some people, is a bit of a convenience. They just keep him on a shelf somewhere until some crisis comes into their life and then they kind of take him down and look at him more closely until the crisis goes away.

Well, the Bible's not like that. It shows us God in his greatness and not only God in his greatness, but God in his uniqueness as the great, majestic God that he is.

Today, God is our king. We worship God as the king of the universe. We bow before God as the king of the universe. And he's this God who sits on the throne and the earth is his footstool.

[28 : 17] But then he goes on in verse 2 to speak about God being the creator. All these things my hand has made and so all these things came to be, declares the Lord.

See, he's looking for a home for himself, as it were, in the way that he's speaking here through Isaiah to the people. And he's now presenting himself as the creator. And he's saying all the things that are created, all the universe, I have created them.

Everything that has come to be is by my creative might. So where are you going to find a home for me amongst all that? What are you going to choose? God is not just sitting on his throne and presiding over everything, but he has made everything for himself and for his own glory.

Remember, that's what happened in the case of Job. Job, when he came to realise, after God had dealt with him, very many different types of experiences that Job went through.

But at the end of the book of Job, you find God showing him the universe and showing the vast extent of it and the control that God has over all things.

[29 : 30] And of course, Job then realises, well, I did know God, but I didn't know this much about his greatness. And so he threw himself down in the presence of God and complained about his sinfulness and his lack of knowledge and who was he to try and say to God how he should rule the universe or even rule his own life.

You see, for Job, he then saw himself as just a small sinful speck beside this glorious holiness and greatness of God. What is our God today to us, to me, to you?

Is your God great? Is he small? Is he just an extension of yourself or maybe just thinking of God as the perfection of what you are yourself?

You see, if God is smaller to us than what he says of himself in the Bible, then our sin will be very small. You can only see sin as serious and great if you see God as great because it's against him that we sin.

And if our sin is small and really not all that significant, if you can just fleetingly say a word or two of prayer and then just forget about it, what you're really saying is, well, Christ is not significant to me and his death is not significant to me.

[30 : 51] Why did Jesus die the kind of death he died? And I don't just mean the physical aspect of his death on the cross, painful and awful though that is. Why did he die the death that is hell, the death that is damnation, the death that is what we deserve for our sins?

Why did he die that death? Why did the Son of God in our nature have to die that death? Because sin is such a great thing, such a grievous thing, such a serious thing, that this is the way God came to deal with it, so that we might be saved, that we might have his forgiveness.

This God in his greatness, that is really in many respects what's wrong with the world in which we live, wrong with ourselves by nature, I'm saying that too, but if you look out over the world, you don't find that this God is for most people, one who is great and to be worshipped and to be revered and to be feared.

You don't find people's concept of God to be as the Bible here and elsewhere sets it out. There's a wonderful account of the funeral of Louis XIV.

He was known as the Sun King, really opulent, grand, just a life and rain filled with the most magnificent things.

[32 : 16] He ruled for 72 years, died in 1715, having ruled for 72 years and his chaplain or the court chaplain was a man called Jean-Baptiste Massignon and the king gave orders that when he died, his funeral was to show something of his greatness as well and he gave orders to Massignon that his body would lie in a golden casket for viewing and as people would file past, they would see something that reminded them of the greatness and the glory and the pomp of Louis XIV.

But the whole cathedral of Notre-Dame was to be in darkness except for one candle just above the coffin, the casket. And that one candle was intended just to focus on the dead king and still to say this is Louis the Great.

And so when people had filed past and took their places again, the whole place in darkness apart from this one candle, Massignon came forward and as he began his funeral oration he reached out and he snuffed out the candle and at the same time said in the darkness to the gathered crowd, God alone is great.

Imagine the impact that would have made for good or ill. But that's what Massignon did. The greatest king, the most magnificent royalty on earth.

Massignon is saying he's dead. This is just a corpse. But God lives and God alone is great.

[34 : 04] And friends that's today what we are privileged to know through the gospel. And that's the background to what's going to come now to the grace of God in the second part of verse 2.

The background of God's greatness. God the king and God the creator. Our God, your God, the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So let's look at secondly, the foreground. As we come to the foreground of this painting in words, a spiritual painting, where he says this is the one to whom I will look, he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

The Hebrew here is grammarians tell us, those who know something about Hebrew tell us that the structure of the language is deliberately set so that as you go through, you find these two words, what, the end of verse 1, what is the house you would build for me?

What is the place of my rest? And then it takes you immediately to this. This is the one to whom I will look. In other words, God through this is emphasizing all the way through the universe, all the way through all that I have created.

[35 : 15] And as I look down from heaven, my throne and the earth is my footstool, what is the place of my rest? What is the house you would build for me? This is it. This is where I live.

This is where I will choose to make a home for myself. The one who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

See how the background sets that off. There's God in his greatness, God sitting on his throne in the heavens, and yet this is what he's saying. This is the place I've chosen to live in, where I myself come to make a home.

This is the palace of the king. The home God chooses is the humble and contrite heart, the heart that loves him and fears him and serves him.

And that reminds us of the two most significant events. I'm not talking here about Jesus' incarnation and his death on the cross and resurrection.

[36 : 15] Of course, they're significant centrally to our salvation and to our humanity. But looking at our human experience as human beings, the two most significant events in our human experience

in that sense were when God first of all left us.

He created us as we find in Genesis. And then at the fall, what did Adam and Eve do? Well, Adam tried to hide himself from God.

That shows you he's no longer in living fellowship with God. God has gone from his heart. God has vacated the temple that he created in Adam. That's the first significant event.

The second one is when God returns to the temple, when God returns into our souls. He left a ruined temple in Adam, but he comes back to a restored one through Christ when his Holy Spirit comes into our lives and comes to place himself in our hearts.

That's the second significant event in human experience. And just think of all that's between that. What is it that links? Where's the bridge between the ruined temple and the restored temple?

[37 : 28] Where is the bridge between Adam and his fallenness and you and I in God's restoration of us spiritually by his Holy Spirit? It's Jesus, isn't it? It's the cross.

It's the resurrection. That's what makes the bridge. That's what makes and comes from the ruined temple to the restored one in our regeneration, in our recreation in Jesus Christ.

God vacated the ruined temple, but he didn't leave it ruined without ever coming back. He restored it. And there's so much in the New Testament about that.

You remember Jesus himself in John chapter 14, where he says, if anyone loves me, whoever loves me, he will keep my word and my father will love him and we will come and make our home with him.

What a remarkable text. There is Jesus before he went out to face the cross teaching the disciples in the upper room and this is what he's saying. John 14, verse 23, if anyone loves me, he will keep my word.

[38 : 36] He will have my word to keep in his heart, to be obedient to me through it. And my father will love him and we will come and make our home with him.

And then in chapter 16, he comes to speak about the spirit of God coming. And through that spirit, the father and the son occupy the heart that he has made a temple for himself.

What a fantastic, wonderful, great God we have. Not the kind of greatness that stands aloof and says, I am royalty. I'm not going near that. That's not the kind of thing as you find with Louis the 14th and great emperors and kings of this world who wouldn't bother themselves to go and dirty their hands.

Now this is the God who in his greatness looked upon us in our plight, looked upon us in our lostness, looked upon us as a ruined temple that needed to be repaired and rebuilt and said, I'm going to do that.

I'm going to actually come and through my son that temple is going to be restored. Not just refashioned in any way at all. Not just a kind of recycled job.

[39 : 43] It's going to be made brand new. It'll be so that it'll be a home for me. There you find all the way through the New Testament. Galatians 4 verse 6 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

1 Corinthians 6 verse 19 Do you not know that you are the temple of the Holy Spirit? The Spirit living in you. God living in you.

What's our greatest privilege? That's a question that's not all that easy to answer. There might be different ways of answering it.

What is our greatest privilege? Well, surely this. That God has chosen to come and live in our hearts. To come and live in our lives.

That God himself, this great God, who says heaven is my throne, the earth is my footstool. What is the house that you'd build for me? Where is the place of my rest?

[40 : 45] I'll look to this one, to this heart that honours me and obeys me and loves me. Well, what are the features of that palace, of this heart?

Well, he says here, the one who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word. It's important to know what that means. Because that is what God says, these are the features of the heart, of the life, what he says, the spiritual temple or the palace in which he has made a home for himself.

Well, the heart, the one who's humble and contrite and trembles at my word is someone who has come to acknowledge and confess and know themselves as lost, broken sinners.

And they're sorrowful over it. They've come to realise they've done this against God. They've come to realise there's guilt involved in that. And they're humble and they're sensitive to his word. And his word, as it's brought this message to them, they accept it.

They accept it of themselves. They say, this is what I am. We'll be singing Psalm 51 in a moment. But there's a great example of a humble and contrite spirit where David, in his confession of sin and repentance, comes before God and says, Lord, I have done this.

[41 : 55] I have sinned against you. I have sinned against you only. Against you only. I've done this evil and I have done it. And you come to that.

I hope you've come to that point in your life where you've realised that your sin is serious. That being a sinner is serious. That lostness is serious.

The guilt of sin is serious. That it's against this God that you have sinned. And that even the smallest sin, if we can describe them as such, they deserve his wrath and his curse forever.

But he has made a rest for himself in the through Jesus Christ providing salvation for us. Is your heart tonight, today, a resting place for God?

Are you pleased to know that God has come into your life and that he's chosen your soul to be a home for himself? That he says about you, this is the one that I'm looking to.

[42 : 58] You may be saying of yourself as I have to say of myself. While I'm not as humble as I should be or anything like it, I'm not contrite in spirit. I'm not lowly in spirit. I don't often, as often as I should, tremble at the word of God.

And that means not just trembling with a slavish kind of fear, but trembling because the word of God as it presents God to us and as it presents ourselves in relation to that to us.

As we find that described in the Bible, we look with awe to God. That's what it means to fear God, to tremble at his word, not to do something that makes us turn our back on God.

It's rather the opposite. It's just coming to acknowledge and confess and speak to this God and worship this God, this great God, in a way that realizes that he has to be our saviour or we're done for.

He has to be our king or else we're going to be condemned forever. That's why we give an eviction order. When God comes into your life, you see things in your life in a different way.

[44 : 11] You see things that you then realize, well, I've got to do without this. I've got to put this out of my life. I've got to stop that practice. I've got to stop these thoughts. I've got to stop this sin.

That I see in my life. I've got to get rid of it. I've got to put it out. You give an eviction order to those things that God himself finds offensive. Thomas Chalmers, shortly after he was converted, described his conversion in different ways.

But one of the descriptions he used was this. He says, I came to know the expulsive power of a new affection.

The expulsive power of a new affection. What he meant by that was when this new affection, this real love for God was created in his heart by God, by God the Holy Spirit.

When God came into his life, when God came to make a home for himself in his life, it meant the expulsion of things that he didn't, he then saw God didn't agree with.

[45 : 08] It was the expulsive power, the expelling power of this new affection, this love for God. And we know something about that ourselves, don't we?

We know that there are things that the love of God, love for God, cannot sit easily with when they have to do with sin and rebellion against God and disobedience with God.

And this is what God is saying. To this person I will look. Of all the places in the vastness of the universe that I have created, God is saying, this is where I will make my rest.

This is where I make my home with this person that's humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word. And when he's saying here that he's looking for a place, what is the place of my rest?

That's the question we're looking at this morning. The word rest there actually includes the fact that God is satisfied in making a home in our hearts.

[46 : 11] Just think of that. The greatness of this God, indescribably great. And yet, he's saying about himself, I have a resting place.

I have a home which gives me satisfaction. And it's in the heart of my people. It's in the heart of those who love me. Isn't it amazing to yourself that you and I could actually give God satisfaction? I know he creates this for himself. That is by his grace and it's the brilliance of his grace that's brought out. It's not what we deserve. It's not what we create ourselves. But it's true. It's a fact when

it happens.

And God is saying, I am so pleased. I am so satisfied with having a home. In your heart. Doesn't that make us really love him all the more in return?

Doesn't it show us our need of having Jesus as our saviour? You know, you're thankful today as we remembered in prayer that those who are homeless, those who are dealing with homelessness, and those who are subject to being homeless, and it's a difficult thing.

[47 : 25] It's a very grievous thing. And you're thankful today as you're listening to this that you're not homeless, that you have a home. But let me put it this way. Are you still making Jesus homeless?

What I mean by that is when we do not accept him into our lives, when we still keep him outside of our hearts, what we're really saying is there's no home here for you.

I respect you for what you are. I know who you are. I know how you're described in the Bible, but there's no actual home for you in my heart. That's what you're really saying if you haven't taken Jesus into your life through the grace of God, through the enabling of God.

That's exactly what you're saying. There's no home here for you. In Luke chapter 13, we find Jesus describing how things will be and responding to the question.

Somebody said to him, Lord, will those who are saved be few? And he said to them, strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

[48 : 38] When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock the door saying, Lord, open to us. Then he will answer you, I do not know where you're from.

Then you will begin to say, but we ate and drank in your presence and you taught in our streets. But he will say, I tell you, I do not know you, where you come from.

Depart from me all you workers of evil. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

When you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves cast out.

And people will come from the east and west and from the north and south and recline at table in the kingdom of God. And behold, some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last.

And these solemn words really can be summarized like this. If we don't make a home in our heart for God, we will not have a home in heaven with God.

[49 : 44] Where is the place of my rest? The place of my rest, you see, is in the believing heart, the humble heart, the contrite heart.

May God bless these thoughts on his word to us. We're going to conclude now by singing. Once again, this time from Psalm 51. Psalm 51, verses 14 to 17 in the Scottish Psalter.

That's page 281, if you're using the sound books. O God of my salvation, God, me from blood guiltiness set free. Then shall my tongue aloud sing of thy righteousness.

My closed lips, O Lord, by thee let them be opened. Then shall thy praises by my mouth abroad be published. For thou desired not sacrifice, else I would give it thee.

Nor wilt thou with burnt offering at all delighted be. A broken spirit is to God a pleasing sacrifice. A broken and a contrite heart, Lord, thou wilt not despise.

[50 : 46] We'll sing to the tune St. Kilda from verse 14. O God of my salvation, God. O God of my salvation, God, O God of my salvation, God, Let them be opened.

Then shall thy praises by my mouth abroad be published.

For thou desired not sacrifice, For thou desired not sacrifice, Else would I give it thee.

Nor wilt thou with burnt offering At all delighted be.

A broken spirit is to God a pleasing sacrifice.

[52 : 42] A broken and a contrite heart, Lord, thou wilt not despise.

Amen. Amen. And now may grace and mercy and peace from God, The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be with you now and evermore. Amen. Thank you once again for joining in, For watching and for participating in this short service of worship.

If you can, do join us again this evening at 6.30. That service will be conducted by Reverend Kenny I. MacLeod. In the meantime, may God bless you through the rest of the day And keep you safe in these days to come.

Thank you.