

# Communion Service - How Deep a Love

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 04 December 2022

[ 0 : 00 ] Well, let's come and worship God together by singing to His praise. We begin by singing in Psalm 36 in the Sing Psalms version. Psalm 36, page 44 of the Psalm books.

We're going to sing from verse 5 down to verse 10. Your steadfast love is great, O Lord. It reaches heaven high. Your faithfulness is wonderful, extending to the sky.

Your righteousness is very great, like mountains high and steep. Your justice is like ocean depths, both man and beast you keep. We'll sing from verse 5 to 10 to God's praise.

Your steadfast love is great, O Lord. Your righteousness is wonderful, extending to the sky.

Your righteousness is very great, like mountains high and steep.

[ 1 : 31 ] Your righteousness is like ocean depths, both man and beast you keep.

My preciousness, your steadfast love, what confidence it brings.

O Lord, I can hope, I'm sheltering, the shadow of your wings.

With peace within your house and drink from streams of your delight, For with you is the source of light, in your light we see light.

To those who know you as their God, your steadfast love impart, Maintain your righteousness to those of pure and upright heart.

[ 3 : 34 ] Let's unite our hearts in prayer. Let us pray. Our Father, in heaven your word tells us that this is the day that you have made, And that we are to rejoice and to be glad in it.

And we do thank you for your wisdom, a wisdom above any wisdom that we have, And for your ways that are far above our ways.

For from the beginning, Lord, since you created the world, You gave a day set aside for the very purpose of worshipping and praising your name. A day of rest.

A day to refresh our souls and our bodies. A day where we can come and draw near to you in a special way. That we can come and unite our hearts together as your people.

That we can join together in the peace of your sanctuary. And that we can find that place of refuge and rest with you.

[ 4 : 41 ] Even as the psalmist describes it, both high and low. Find shelter in the shadow of your wing. And we thank you, Lord, that we come into your presence anew today.

With boldness and confidence, not in ourselves, but in the one who we come to praise and worship. The one who we come to remember this day.

For all that he has done for us. The one who gave his life as a ransom for many. So we praise you, Lord, for your goodness to us.

We praise you for your steadfast love. The love that we have sung about. The love that we read about. The love that we see even set before us here at the table today.

As we survey it all, we see how precious you are. And how precious your people are to you. That you sent your own son. Not just to live in this world.

[ 5 : 40 ] Not just to proclaim the gospel in this world. But to fulfill every aspect of it. To come to lay down his life.

That his body and blood may be seen even before us this day. In a way where we remember his death until he come. And so we thank you, Lord, that we can come loving you.

Because you first loved us. And we ask, oh Lord, your blessing on all that we do together here this day. We thank you to be able to praise you.

To offer up our songs of praise to you. And we pray, Lord, that from the very depths of our hearts. We will lift up our voices in praise and worship.

We thank you for the one who leads us in it. And we pray you will bless him and uphold him. And help us all to join in that great praise. And offer it up as your people.

[ 6 : 36 ] Not just a people here. But joining in the praise that goes on throughout the world this day. We thank you, Lord, for the calling of your people.

From the rising of the sun to its setting. That your name is to be praised. And so we join in with all your saints. Near and far. Offering up our delight.

And rejoicing in you. We thank you for your word. The precious truth that we have before us. And we ask that as we open it up. As we share from it together.

That your word will be blessed to us. That you will minister to all our needs through it. That you will speak to us here. And even tuning in online, Lord. That we will know your presence with us where we are.

That not just through word. But in the sacrament too. You will minister to us. And speak to us as your people. And to those who look on us well, Lord. We pray that the proclamation of your truth.

[ 7 : 37 ] Both in word and sacrament. Would be blessed to all. That you will stir us up in our hearts. To come to consider the love that we see in Christ Jesus.

And to have a longing and a desire to know more of him. So we pray, Lord. That in all that we do. The glory will be yours. And that all praise and honour will be given to you.

Remember your church, oh Lord. As you build it up. We thank you for every member here. And we especially thank you for new members in our midst at this time as well.

We particularly remember Ellie just now. And pray. And thank you for her profession of faith. We pray your blessing on our, upon our family too. That you will surround them and uphold them.

In all the days that lie ahead. And each of your people here. Whose name you know. Whose names are written in the book of life. We thank you for each one.

[ 8 : 31 ] And pray that we would indeed encourage one another. And remember one another. We pray for your church far and wide. Throughout our land. And throughout the nations of the world.

We thank you, Lord. That the day that you have made is for all people. And we pray that many would come to realise. And know their longing and their need of you.

So we ask, O Lord, for you to bless the ministry of your word. Through all ends of the earth. We ask, O Lord, your blessing on our young people too. We pray for our Sunday school and creche.

And twinies as they meet just now. Bless them and be with them. And those who lead them and teach them as well. And as they join in with the service later. May it be a blessing and a witness to them too.

To encourage them in their young years. To know the Christ who we speak of. And who we share about. That they would come to know him as a precious saviour for themselves.

[ 9 : 29 ] May you bless each one. Bless our homes and our families. And our communities at large. We ask, O Lord, that you will draw near to us. In all our different needs. Our physical needs.

Our spiritual needs. All our different needs at this time, Lord. Remember those unable to be with us. Bless them, Lord, and be with them. Comfort those who need you in particular ways.

Strengthen those who are unwell. Surround those who need you in particular ways at this time. We thank you for your steadfast love to your people. It reaches heaven high.

We thank you for the way it goes out with power. And your people will know it. And so we commit ourselves into your hands. Into your keeping. That you will go before us now.

Bless us and guide us. As we ask all things confessing our sins anew. But thank you for the one who has made atonement for our sins.

[ 10 : 27 ] Our redeemer. Our only redeemer. Of God's elect. The Lord Jesus Christ. May the praise and glory be his. As we come to do all in remembrance of him.

So bless us now and go with us, we ask. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. We can turn to read God's word together.

We're going to read in Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Paul's letter to the Ephesians. We're going to read in chapter 3. And read together the whole of this chapter.

Ephesians chapter 3. Reading from the beginning of the chapter.

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, on behalf of you Gentiles, assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation.

[ 11 : 33 ] As I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

And to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things. So that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God might be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

[ 12 : 56 ] So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory. For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory, he may grant you to be strengthened with power through the Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Amen. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever.

Amen. Amen. And may God bless that reading from his word to us. We're going to sing together again now.

It's a change to the order that's on the bulletin. It's a Gaelic singing we're going to have just now. We're going to sing in Gaelic in Psalm 103. And the first two verses of that psalm.

Psalm 103 in Gaelic. The first two verses of the psalm. O manim bianich he usernish in yeh Jehovah môr, molochach ni'n hofst a yehom, an am nöwe maris khor.

[ 14 : 46 ] Sing these two verses to God's praise. Sing these two verses to God's praise.

Sing these two verses to God's praise.

Sing these two verses to God's praise.

Sing these two verses to God's praise.

Sing these two verses to God's praise.

[ 17 : 36 ] Sing these two verses to God's praise. Sing these two verses to God's praise. Amen.

As we focus our minds on God's word and the sacrament before us, we want to look at some of the verses towards the end of this chapter where Paul prays for the people of Ephesus.

He says in verse 14, He says in verse 14,

He says in verse 14, that this prayer would speak to them that this prayer would speak to them and minister to their hearts. And the prayer is that they may come to know the wonder of the love of God through Christ Jesus.

Paul here is writing to the people of Ephesus. Paul here is writing to the people of Ephesus, a people he has met with and worshipped with in the past, who he has seen coming to faith and professing the Lord as their Savior.

[ 20 : 01 ] And as they go on, he wants them to go on in his strength. And together as God's people and as a people who come to worship today, whether we're sitting at the table here, whether we're watching from behind the table, whether we're tuning in from home.

What a wonderful prayer for us all here today, to know this love more and more. And it's so powerful when you look at his prayer for his people here.

What does he pray for them? You might imagine that he would pray that they may be guarded in the midst of their suffering. You might imagine that he would pray for their physical, material, financial good and well-being.

You might imagine that he'd pray for healing for the sick or comfort for those who are going through hard times. That they would be delivered from persecution or any of these things.

You might imagine he would pray for them. And indeed, he probably did pray these things for them at different times. But his prayer here doesn't focus on these things.

[ 21 : 13 ] It focuses on one thing in particular. The comprehension of the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ that surpasses all knowledge.

And the question for ourselves today is, do you know this love? Do you understand some of the depth of it?

There's a mystery in it, isn't there? Even as Paul is writing to the church here, he is speaking about the mystery of the gospel being revealed. The mystery of the gospel made known even to Gentiles, as he says, those who are unworthy of the least of the mercies of Christ.

And yet he's revealing it to them that God's love has this height and depth and length and breadth that reaches out to people far and wide.

And if you're sitting at the Lord's table today, what has brought you there? It's a realization of that love.

[ 22 : 21 ] Even if only in part just now. Maybe you only know a small amount of it. But what a wonderful love it is. It's an unsearchable love.

A love that is sometimes hard to put into words. But it is a wonderful love. A love that we should rejoice in today.

We may like listening to love songs, whether it's on the radio or sitting down just to listen to some music. You may be listening to love songs and you can enter into that spirit of love that this world speaks of.

Some of them are very beautiful songs. Whatever language we listen to, we hear so many different kinds of songs. But there is no song in this world that has a depth of the love of Christ Jesus.

The song of salvation. Think of the psalm that we sung together. Psalm 36. And the love that it speaks of.

[ 23 : 21 ] The steadfast love of God. Your steadfast love is great, O Lord, the psalm says. It reaches heaven high. He goes on to say in verse 7, How precious is your steadfast love.

What confidence it brings. Does your love in Christ bring you confidence? In many ways, maybe we lack that confidence at times.

We lack that assurance. But what gives us confidence is His steadfast love towards us. A love that never changes.

Our love towards Him we can feel maybe goes hot and cold at times. We feel our sin, which means that maybe if we can't love Him as we should.

And yet as we look into His word, we see that His love is steadfast, sure towards His people. So Paul prays that the people may grasp the love of Christ.

[ 24 : 26 ] How long, how high, how deep, how wide it is. Can we grasp that love for ourselves? Where do we see that love?

We see it before us even here today. We see it in God's word. We see it in the sacrament that's prepared for us to share in.

We see it in God's people who come to proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. We come to do this in remembrance of Him.

To love really is to know Christ Jesus as our Lord. Is there a word that you could describe this love with?

As you think to yourself today of the love of Christ towards you, is there any word that you could use today that describes that love fully? So many words would come to our mind.

[ 25 : 24 ] So many words we may think of even at this time. How magnificent His love is. How breathtaking His love is. How costly His love is.

Even how undeserving His love is. There are many words that come to mind. But that word that we sang, steadfast love.

That's the word that we want to focus on. The steadfast love of God. That unchanging love of God. That is what Paul prays that they will grasp.

The love that surpasses knowledge. The love that we just cannot find the right word to describe it because we are unworthy of it. But when we see this love, we should recognize that as John says in this letter, 1 John, we love because He first loved us.

We want to think of this love that we see Paul praying for the people to know in Ephesus and for ourselves today by considering how we see this mystery, this love shown in other parts of Scripture.

[ 26 : 34 ] We're going to turn to three different texts together this morning as we consider the height and depth and length and breadth of this love. We could turn almost anywhere in Scripture and see this love.

It's there from the beginning to the very end. The love of God that surpasses knowledge. But I want us just to consider three things about it. And the first thing is this.

The love that left all behind. As we focus our attention on the love of God, it always brings us to a central point. And that point is the cross.

Where Christ laid down His life for His people. And that is what we want to come and see today.

And just see the love of Christ towards us. The steadfast love of God in giving us His Son.

The first thing we think of is this love that left all behind. The height and depth and length and breadth of this love. And just, if you can, turn with me to 2 Corinthians 8 verse 9.

[ 27 : 40 ] The love that left all behind. 2 Corinthians 8 verse 9. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. That though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor.

So that you through His poverty might become rich. The love that left all behind. Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor.

What you automatically think of there when you read these words. Though He was rich. Though He was rich. We so often think of riches in terms of money. The world revolves around the riches of this world.

The wealth and prosperity that money brings. But that is not the riches of Christ. It is not money. It is not financial gain.

It's none of these things. The love of God in Christ Jesus. The love of God in Christ Jesus is seen in that He left behind all things. Though He was rich.

[ 28 : 52 ] Yet for your sake He became poor. Did He leave behind financial wealth to become a poor beggar in this world?

That's not what He's talking about here. It's the riches that He left behind for your sake. For your sake and mine.

That we through His poverty might become rich. So He left it so you might have it. He left the love that left all behind.

His relationship with the Father. The unity and oneness that they enjoyed from the beginning. He left it behind. He came into this world.

He took the form of a man. He came into this world and lived in a sinful fallen world. He endured so much in this world. He was despised and rejected by His own.

[ 29 : 56 ] He came into this world having left all behind. And He was obedient to His Father. Obedient even to the point of death. And that death on a cross.

All the glory that He had. All that He enjoyed in that close relationship with the Father. God sent His Son into this world.

Because God loved this world. And that love through Christ Jesus left it all behind. In a marriage, vows are taken.

And part of these vows are that we will stay together. Whatever the circumstances, for richer or for poorer, is often a phrase that is used. But how many marriages are broken down when financial hardships come?

How many marriages are broken down when a financial windfall comes? When people become rich, the marriage dissolves. But here is a love that runs so much deeper than any of that.

[ 31 : 01 ] God made a covenant with His people. God made this promise with His people. The steadfast love of God. What confidence it brings.

Because the steadfast love, it reaches heaven high. But the love has come down to us. The Word, it says, became flesh and dwelt among us.

Though He was rich, yet for your sakes, He became poor. Professor Donald MacLeod's got a book. And the title of that book just says so much, even in just the title. From Glory to Golgotha. From glory that was left behind, He came into this world to go to Golgotha.

The place of the skull. The place of the cross. He was rich. But because of His love for lost people, He became poor.

[ 32 : 09 ] And we are reminded of that in another of Paul's letters. Letter to the Philippians. Where in chapter 2, verse 5, he says, Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, and being found in human form.

He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross. What great love. What a height and depth and length and breadth to that love.

That love that surpasses all knowledge. Because how can we understand that? That Christ Jesus would come from glory to Golgotha.

And yet it was for your sake and mine. This love came at a great cost. He laid down His life.

And how precious our lives were and are to Him, that He gave His all for us. There's a story told during the time of Oliver Cromwell.

[ 33 : 29 ] It was during the 17th century, where once He sentenced a soldier to be shot due to the crimes that He had committed. And the execution was to take place at the ringing of the evening bell when curfew came.

So that time in the evening came, and everyone was waiting for the bell to strike, and watching then this man who would be put to death. But the bell didn't ring.

And the minutes went on, and the bell still didn't ring. Eventually, they went up to the bell tower to see what the fault was. And what they found there was something that made a deep impression on so many and on Oliver Cromwell himself.

What they found was the soldier's fiancée had climbed into the bell tower. And she was clinging on to the bell clapper so that the clapper wouldn't strike the bell and ring.

It was causing her so much pain. She was bleeding from the exertion. And yet she held on with dear life so that her fiancée would not be put to death.

[ 34 : 42 ] She was summoned to come and see Oliver Cromwell. And he saw her bruised and bleeding hands. And his heart was touched, and he said, Your lover shall live because of your sacrifice.

And that is the love that Christ Jesus has shown to us, that we are spared even from death, eternal death, because of what he has done for us.

When Jesus met with Thomas and the disciples, what did he say? Behold my hands. His hands were pierced.

His side that was speared. What great love. How can we understand it? That love that left all behind.

The height and depth and length and breadth. We cannot comprehend it, but as Paul prays here, he prays that this love of Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

[ 35 : 52 ] So come by faith today, knowing this love that left behind all. The second place we want to turn to and see this love is a love that reached out.

I want to turn to Romans 5, verse 8. And there we read in that verse, God demonstrates his own love for us in this.

While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Someone once put it like this, the Lord Jesus did not come into the world to meet with his friends.

He came to die for his enemies. And these words should hit us powerfully. But maybe you say to yourself, I'm no enemy of Jesus.

But if you're trusting your life and soul to him, you recognize that there was a time when you were an enemy. But the more you go on through faith, the more you see how precious his steadfast love is.

[ 37 : 05 ] This love that God demonstrates, his own love for us in this, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. There was a time, maybe in your life, when Christ meant nothing to you.

There was no love in your heart for him. But even these words that we read, how powerful they are, that even in that time when you were an enemy, an enemy of his, when you were still a sinner, Christ died for us.

What a love that is. The love that reached out to us, poor lost sinners. Even when we were cursing him, even when we were rejecting him, Christ died for us.

How wide, how long, how high, how deep, the love of Christ for sinners such as we are. There's a power in this love.

While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. He came to die for a people who rejected him.

[ 38 : 17 ] He came for a people confident in their own self, and their own self-righteousness, just as we were once. Maybe just as you are today, you think you're no enemy of Christ, but you're sitting, maybe behind the table, thinking all is well.

It's not, unless you have faith in the Lord Jesus. And it's to comprehend this love. This love that passes all knowledge, that's so hard to understand, so hard to explain.

But by sitting at the table, you come to proclaim this love, that you love because he first loved us.

He came to die for nations, for people who turned away from the truth of the gospel to the lie of this world. There is this huge, massive chasm between God and us.

We are at enmity with God. We are separated from him. When we are enemies of him. And it's only through the love of Christ that this divide can be bridged.

[ 39 : 26 ] That is how we come to know Christ, through faith. In all that he has done for us, he died for us. This Christ who the gospel proclaims, we are not to lose heart, as Paul says here.

Don't lose heart in anything that's going on around us. Because even the enemies that we see around us, maybe they will one day turn to Christ. And that is our prayer.

But to know this Christ for yourself. To come and do this in remembrance of him. Is to remember the love that reached out to you. The love that he showed when you were an enemy of his.

When you rejected him. When you cursed him. When you turned away from him and his word. The love that took hold by grace. And brought you to himself. The love that Paul goes on in Romans to speak of.

In that wonderful chapter, Romans 8. When it speaks of the love of God through Christ Jesus. And says, nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

[ 40 : 37 ] What a powerful love it is. That love that reached out took hold. And as it says, now as he holds on to you, nothing can separate you from the love of Christ in Christ Jesus.

Nothing in this world. Nothing that can come our way. Not even death itself. Because he died for sinners such as we are. that we might know the precious love and gift of eternal life through him.

If you've ever done the Christianity Explored course, you may have heard this phrase in the course. It reminds us just how sinful we are, but also how loved we are.

It says, we are more sinful than we ever realized. Maybe that's how you come today to the table. Maybe you're realizing more and more just how sinful you are.

We all feel it. We all know it in our hearts. Our hearts are sinful. We are more sinful than we ever realized. But the quote goes on to say this, but more loved than we ever dreamed.

[ 42 : 00 ] And the more we go on in this world in faith, the more we want to see and understand the height and depth and length and breadth of this love that reached out to us.

The love that we see bearing our sins on the cross. John Stott, in writing on this text in Ephesians, he explains Paul's language in this way.

he says, the love of Christ is broad enough to encompass all mankind, long enough to last for eternity, deep enough to reach the most degraded sinner and high enough to exalt him to heaven. When we know Christ's love, there are no boundaries outside of which we may step to the love of Christ. it reaches far and wide.

That is the love that we see when we look to Christ. The love that reached out to his own. The love that has such height and depth and length and breadth.

[ 43 : 10 ] The final thing I want us to see here of this love, it's the love that gives life. And for that, we want to turn to a text in the Gospel of John, chapter 10, verse 10 and 11.

There we read these words, the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.

I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The greatness of his love is expressed in the ultimate way.

He came to give his life. When you look at the holiness of God who hates all sin, how could we possibly come and approach this holy God?

How could we possibly come and sit at the Lord's table today when we see the nature of our sin? Only through the righteousness of Christ.

[ 44 : 24 ] Only through faith in him. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who died and gave himself for us. There's no other way.

Psalms 130 speaks of it just like we were thinking about last evening when we were looking at Isaiah. When he saw the glory of God he said woe is me for I am a man of unclean lips.

He felt so unworthy. Psalm 130 expresses that very same thought as well. It says in verse 3 if you O Lord should mark iniquities O Lord who could stand?

Who could possibly stand before this holy God if he marked all our iniquities against us? But it says but with you there is forgiveness that you may be feared.

And how is that forgiveness? It is through him who lay down his life for his sheep. Greater love hath no man in this that he lay down his life for his friends.

[ 45 : 34 ] You are my friends if you do as I command the Lord says. Are you day to day doing as the Lord commands?

Are you obedient to his call to his command to love him with all your heart and to do this in remembrance of me?

Psalm 130 goes on to say in verse 7 O Israel hope in the Lord for with the Lord there is steadfast love and with him is plentiful redemption and he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

What love it is that God would give his son his only son to suffer and die in our place on the cross. C.S.

Lewis once said on the whole God's love for us is a much safer subject to think about than our love for him.

[ 46 : 42 ] And that is Paul's prayer to us today. Yes we are sinners and the more we go on we realise just how sinful we are.

But may we come to go on and not think of our sin and just focus on that but to look to Christ the one who was lifted up on the cross the one who bore our sins and may we think more about his love for us his steadfast love for that is a much safer subject a much more powerful subject to think about today and every day to remember as Paul prays to comprehend with all the saints with the height the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge that you may be filled with all the fullness of God Christ love without his grace is beyond understanding but by his grace by his mercy may we come to understand more and more this wonderful powerful steadfast love for undeserving sinners such as us how deep the Father's love for us how vast beyond all measure that he should give his only son to make a wretch his treasure that is us wretches undeserving sinners but God sent his son into this world for sinners such as we are how deep the Father's love love as we think of this love and as we pray God's blessing on all that we do today may we pray Paul's prayer to grasp the wonder of this love that surpasses all knowledge that this love would not grow cold in our hearts that we never lose sight of Christ and all that he has done for us that our focus our eyes will be fixed on him we come as unworthy sinners but we come maybe even today realizing more and more loved more than we ever realized or even dreamed may we come through faith to receive more of this love and to be strengthened by it a love that surpasses knowledge may we know it may we come to realize it more and may we share it as we go on let us bow our heads in a word of prayer father we thank you for the wonder of your love love towards undeserving sinners such as we are but we thank you that your love has that steadfast nature behind it for you are a

God of promise you are a God of covenant and all that you have said you would do you have done for us through Christ Jesus we thank you that you did not spare him but that you gave your only son that you gave him that he would come into this world leaving behind the glory that he enjoyed to come and experience the wrath that we deserved to experience the curse of sin and to be obedient even to the point of death on the cross may we marvel at the love of Christ towards us and may we Lord rejoice in that love too and go before us we pray Lord help us to go on in your strength help us to go on never cold to that love but that love would burn up within our hearts and strengthen us along our journey day by day and draw us closer to you that wherever we sit or are this day whether we come to the table whether we sit behind whether we are tuning in at home that the love of Christ would dwell in our hearts richly we ask it all with forgiveness of our sins in Jesus name Amen we're going to sing now as we come to the table of the Lord as we come to do this in remembrance of him we're going to sing in the psalm psalm 118 and singing at verse 15 down to verse 21 dwellings of the righteous is heard the melody of joy and health the Lord's right hand doth ever valiantly the right hand of the mighty Lord exalted is on high the right hand of the mighty Lord doth ever valiantly we'll sing from verse 15 to God's praise of the right helps

[ 52 : 23 ] The glory of joy and The Lord's right hand, the pale of higher King.

The bright hand of the mighty Lord, exalted in so high.

The bright hand of the mighty Lord, the forever quiet be.

I shall not die, but live, and shall the words of God discover.

The Lord hath me just I said so, but not to death give no word.

[ 53 : 55 ] What set ye open unto me, the gates of righteousness?

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

This is the gate of God I give, the just shall enter in.

Thee will thy grace, for love we hurt, and has my safety been.

Well, it's good to welcome the young ones in from the Sunday school just now as well.

[ 55 : 16 ] It's good to see you sitting upstairs. And we join together here to partake in the Lord's Supper as God's family, as God's people. Whether we're at the table having professed God's love towards us, or if we're looking on, that we may know and see more of the love of God to us in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

As you look on maybe just now, especially maybe thinking of the young ones sitting upstairs, you maybe wonder just what we're doing. And I want to try and explain that to you, just a little bit to explain to us all what we're doing here together just now as we come to remember the Lord's death. You maybe see things and wonder, what's everybody doing, and what part is everybody playing here? Standing beside me, it maybe looks like I've got bodyguards. So I maybe look like picked up guys who are here to protect the minister, but they're here to serve.

To serve, just like we are all to be servants to God, to Christ. They are here to serve the things that we have before us. And what we have before us is the bread and the wine.

And in a moment we're going to read what we call our warrant, our instruction to come and remember the Lord's death till He comes. And we read that in 1 Corinthians chapter 11.

[ 56 : 40 ] But as we read these words, it reminds us of three different things that we see as we come to do this in remembrance of Him. I'll read these words just now.

1 Corinthians 11 verse 23. But I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you. But the Lord Jesus, on the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread.

And when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, Take, eat. This is my body, which is broken for 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. This do as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. There's three things in these verses that we want to think about as we come to take the Lord's Supper.

[ 57 : 46 ] First thing is this, what we see. What we see before us is the bread and the wine that represent to us the body and blood of Christ.

The body that was broken, the body that was given for our life, for our eternal life. Jesus came to lay down His life. We see these things before us.

They remind us of the wonderful love of Christ to His people. The second thing that we are reminded of in these words is that we take.

We are to take of these elements. He says, This do in remembrance of me. We are not here to bring glory to ourselves.

We are here to bring glory to Christ. To be obedient to His command. We love because He first loved us. And so He says, Take, take these.

[ 58 : 50 ] If you love me with all your heart, take and do this in remembrance of me. The third thing that we see here is, We take, we proclaim.

It says, As you take, For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, You proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. Those who will take, you proclaim.

You show your love towards Christ. And may all who watch on see everyone who takes, Proclaiming the Lord's death.

Proclaiming your love towards Him who first loved you. We see, we take, we proclaim.

And as we go from here today, May we go proclaiming God's love to us. To show that we love the Lord because He first loved us.

[ 59 : 54 ] So as the Lord Jesus gave instruction, As we come to partake in the Lord's Supper, We begin first by giving thanks, Following the example of our Lord.

Let us give thanks. Our gracious Father in Heaven, The wonder of your love towards us That is beyond all knowledge.

Help us even now to grasp it. To seek to understand it more. To see what lies before us. The elements that are prepared for us.

The bread and the wine Symbolizing your body and blood Given and shed for us. We thank you for your wonderful sacrifice.

And may we see what has been done for us. And may it stir us up in our hearts To love you more. Help us, Lord, those who will take. To take this.

[ 60 : 57 ] To take it because we know the love of Christ That dwells in our hearts. And may you build us up Through the richness of your love. That steadfast love That would help us to go on In your strength.

And to do this In remembrance of you. Giving all glory to you. And may we indeed proclaim The Lord's death. May we show it forth.

May we not be ashamed Of your love for us. May we not be ashamed Of the testimony that we have. That you have loved us With all And given all for us.

So, Lord, help us To return our thanks to you. A thanks that seems So weak and frail. But help us, Lord, With thankful hearts To come And partake in this.

Bless us, Lord. Bless all of us here. Bless those who watch on us well In here and at home too, Lord. Surround us With your steadfast love. Keep us secure As we ask all things For the forgiveness of our sin.

[ 62 : 04 ] In Jesus' name. Amen. Well, as we read There in our warrant On the night that Jesus was betrayed He took bread And having given thanks He broke it and said Take, eat.

This is my body Which is given for you. In the same manner He also took the cup And saying This cup Is the new covenant In my blood This do as often as you drink it In remembrance Of me.

For as often as you eat this Bread And drink this cup You proclaim The Lord's death Till he comes Well, as we come to rise From the table How are we going to come away From it?

And how are we going to go in To the days that lie Before us? We pray we'll be strengthened In the knowledge Of the love of Christ for us And that we'll go forward With our eyes fixed On the Lord Jesus Christ.

There's a story told Of a very powerful man He was a leader Of a great empire Many years ago And on conquering Another land And having taken Many prisoners He asked for one Of the princes That he had captured To come before him That he might see him.

[ 63 : 50 ] And as the prince Came before him He asked him a question This powerful leader He said What would you give you? What would you give to me If I released you? And he said I would give you Half of my wealth.

And then he asked him What would you give to me If I released Your children? He said I would give you Everything I have. And then he asked him A third question He said What would you give to me If I would release Your wife?

And he said I would give you Myself. And the powerful leader Was so moved By his response That he freed The whole family.

They were afraid To go back To their homes. As the family Was making their way Back home The prince said To his wife Wasn't that man That powerful leader Wasn't he such A handsome man? And his wife's response Was this She said to him I never noticed I only had my eyes On you Who was willing To sacrifice Himself For me.

[ 65 : 00 ] As we go Into this world There will be Many things That will vie For our attention Many things That will clamor For our love But as we rise From the table And as we go Into the days ahead May we not be Distracted But have our eyes Fixed on Jesus The one who loved us And gave himself For us As Hebrews 12 Verse 1 and 2 Says Let us run With endurance The race That is set before us Looking to Jesus The founder And perfecter Of our faith And for the joy That was set before him Endured the cross Despising the shame And is seated At the right hand Of the throne Of God.

May we rise And continue to fix Our eyes On him We're going to conclude By singing To God's praise In Psalm 72 In the Scottish Psalter Psalm 72 And at verse 17 His name forever Shall endure Last like the sun It shall And shall be blessed In him and blessed All nations Shall him call We'll stand to sing Verse 17 To the end Of the psalm To God's praise Faith And shall be blessed In his parlance In Israel blessed, all nations shall live all.

I blessed be the Lord, the Lord, the Lord of Israel.

For me alone, the wondrous works, in glory I excel.

I blessed be His glorious name to all eternity.

[ 67 : 43 ] The whole earth is glorified. Amen.

So let it be. Now may grace, mercy, and peace from God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, rest upon and abide with us all, now and forevermore. Amen.