

# Farewell Sermon

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[ 0 : 00 ] And verse 32, Acts chapter 20 and verse 32. And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

I suppose every sermon ought to be personal. That's what preaching is all about. And yet tonight, I suppose that what I have to say is personal in a different way in that I want to make opportunity of this occasion to look back and look forward.

That's what the Apostle Paul was doing as he met with the elders from Ephesus. He was looking back over his time with them, describing his time with them in a deeply honest and in a deeply personal way.

But he was also looking forward to what lay ahead. I want to do the same. And although, like I say, I'm in no way trying to suggest that my time here matches the kind of ministry that the Apostle Paul would have undoubtedly had.

[ 1 : 38 ] Yet there are areas of similarity, I hope, but also areas of dissimilarity. And strangely, the areas of similarity are in what he looked back on.

And the areas of dissimilarity are in, I hope, what he looked forward to. Three areas of each. Three areas.

Which are similar, I hope. And in which we can draw from them helpful pointers to what a congregation is and to what we are for, what our aims and our objectives are as God's people. And I want us to look also at how Paul looked forward to what lay ahead of him. And I hope that what he said is not similar to the situation we are in this evening.

First of all, three areas of similarity as Paul looks back. I want you to notice, first of all, in verse 20, when he looked back over particularly his preaching, the word that he brought to the people of Ephesus, because that's what preaching is.

[ 3 : 01 ] It's the ministry of the word. I want you to notice that he describes, or he hopes, he looks back and he describes his preaching as profitable.

And I would hope, too, no one's preaching is perfect. Not even the apostles was perfect. Paul was a sinner like everyone else. And he was defective like everyone else.

We must never deify the apostles. And yet, no one would doubt the kind of extraordinary ministry that the apostle had throughout his whole life.

Sometimes it was more successful than others. Sometimes it was more fruitful than others.

Sometimes God blessed the words of the apostle in extraordinary ways. And other times the apostle was left on his own, in a prison cell, cold and lonely and desolate and disappointed.

He had to go through all of the emotions of what it means to be a servant of God, and particularly a minister. But that's what a minister's job is.

[ 4 : 12 ] It's varied. It takes into consideration a whole lot of different responsibilities and challenges that there are in every congregation. And yet, when it comes down to it, at root, at heart, a minister's job is preaching God's word.

And that means that he has to know God's word. None of us know it perfectly. None of us have a perfect understanding of it. And yet, we take what we know, we study it, we try to add to our knowledge by reading those who have studied the Bible for themselves, and then we try and bring it and explain it.

That's what we call expounding God's word. We open it, we try to open it up in such a way that will be meaningful and profitable to the people of God. That's what Paul meant when he spoke in verse 20.

How I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable. And what that means is that preaching is not like talking about rocket science.

If I was to talk about rocket science, well, I wouldn't be able to, I wouldn't have the first clue where to start. No doubt there would be one or two of you who might be interested in rocket science or quantum physics.

[ 5 : 26 ] No doubt there'd be one or two of you who might have an interest in things scientific. But it would not be to anyone's profit in terms of the things that really matter, which is our relationship to God.

That's what preaching is all about. Neither would it be profitable in terms of those of you who belong to the Lord Jesus. And yet you're facing all kinds of perplexities and difficulties.

Things that you're wrestling with. Temptations that you're wrestling with. And you need to come here week after week to be reminded about your standing and your status in the Lord Jesus Christ. That you're a child of God. That your sins and your iniquities have been washed and cleansed and forgiven. And that you need to go in the confidence. And that you can face everything and anything in the knowledge that the Holy Spirit dwells within you.

Someone said to me once way back, before I went into the ministry, and I was trying to preach a sermon. I used to preach occasionally in the Glasgow area. And somebody said to me afterwards, you always have to remember, he says, that these people are ordinary people and they need to know, they need to take away something with them that will help them in all in their struggles in the forthcoming week.

[ 6 : 46 ] I've never forgotten that. And I hope that by and large, I know I've failed in so many different ways and no one's more conscious of my failures than I am tonight.

But I hope that by and large, that the last 12 years have been profitable. And that they have been useful, encouraging, sometimes challenging, because the Bible confronts us with what we are. And believe, you can believe me, that if it has challenged you, it has challenged me first. I never preach anything to you and I have not preached anything to you that I haven't preached to myself, first of all.

And that's really important for every minister to do. Because I'm one of you. I'm no better than anyone else. I don't have. The only reason I'm standing here is so that everyone can see me. There are often times when I feel, I just wish I was where you are. Maybe walking amongst you. Just some churches do that nowadays. They're preachers. Walk amongst the people. Actually, there's something in that sometimes.

[ 7 : 58 ] But nevertheless, we believe, we believe that the word is what makes the pulpit the pulpit. It's not the preacher. It's not the person who's standing here. It's the fact that the word and the fact that the word is preached from a pulpit is an indication that we give reverence and we are here to surrender ourselves to the word.

And so therefore, I do believe in the pulpit. But yet, I also believe in how I'm also very aware of how weak and how defective my own heart is.

So he preached profitably. And I hope that that has been true to some extent over the last 12 years. And I hope it continues to be a feature of the ministry.

And I know that it will. And I know that Kenny I will, as he goes into, as he goes into and as he works with you in this forthcoming vacancy, that he will try his best to minister to you the word of God as he has been doing, of course, over all these years with myself.

Secondly, I want you to notice, and again, I hope it's similar, he preached evangelistically. You'll find that in verse 21. He said that he testified both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance towards God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 9 : 34 ] That was the substance, the content of what he preached. Repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

when you're preaching, you're not just giving a lecture about something. Sometimes, some of, a sermon is giving a lecture because you're explaining or you're trying to describe historically something that happened.

Say, for example, if you were preaching on the flood, you might describe the ark and you might describe how big it was and perhaps the kind of animals that went in and Noah and his righteousness and his faith and all the rest of it and that would be a description.

But preaching is more than that. Preaching is where it makes a connection between the Bible and where you are. So it's not just like one of these documentary programs you see on TV where somebody is describing some battle that took place like Culloden or something else and where they're describing every detail.

That's what a lecture is. That's what a documentary is. Preaching is more than that. It goes to the very heart of what, where we are and that's why so many people find it uncomfortable.

[ 10 : 44 ] That's why it's so difficult for people to come to church. That's why people are reluctant often to come to church because they know that they might hear something that will stab them in their heart, that will get to them, that will offend them.

And people are offended when they're told that they're not right with God. When people are told that despite all their efforts to be the best person I possibly can, I've done no one any harm.

I've tried my best to be kind to people and to give to charity and to be polite. I've been brought up in a good home and I've never done all the nasty things that other people have done who were my friends and who I grew up with.

I've always tried to be an exemplary person and to work hard and to be a good citizen. So when you come to church after living like that and you're told you're dead in trespasses and sins and that God will judge you at the end of time, you don't like that.

I can understand why you might not like that. It's a bit of a blow to the pride, isn't it? And that's what the gospel is. It demolishes your pride.

[ 11 : 58 ] It tells you however much you think of yourself, you're wrong. And however much other people think of you and however much you've tried your best to live a good life in this world.

You know that's the biggest enemy of the gospel? It's the person who thinks that he's lived a good life in this world and no matter what you say to him, everything's going to be okay.

But what you need more than anything else is to walk away from your pride and all your self-achievements.

and you need to see as never before that you need to repent. That's what that word means. The word means turning away when a person comes to see themselves for what they really are before God.

And the only thing that that person can do, you can of course refuse to listen to God, many as a person does. But I hope tonight that you have listened to God and that if you haven't that you'll start now.

[ 13 : 05 ] The God who says to you that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ because every one of us as human beings is accountable to God.

That's what makes us unique as human beings. God has placed us with a special responsibility he's put the knowledge of himself inside our hearts.

And yet what we've done with that, our sin within us has suppressed we don't want to know God. We want to find every argument in the world that will tell us there is no God.

We want to find comfort in anyone who tells us that the gospel is a load of nonsense so that we can live our life the way we want to live and we can achieve our own objectives and we can be the master of our own destiny.

Well sure, you can do that if you're foolish enough not to listen to God. But if you're wise enough and if perhaps for the first time in your life you stop and take stock like I said last week of where I am going in this life what my life is all about where I'm heading in this world then surely you'll want to listen to what God says because he tells us that we're lost.

[ 14 : 27 ] He tells us we're bankrupt. It's not even it's not even that we're good enough or that we have a little bit of good or you know you're not that bad after all. That's not God's message to us.

It's what we think it is but it's not. God's message is that you're lost. It's as drastic as that. In fact it's worse than that. It's that you're dead. Completely dead.

That's what we are by nature. So that what needs to happen is we need to come alive. That's what the gospel is about. The gospel is not some kind of self-help mechanism where you can improve your life by taking a few verses out of the Bible here and there.

It's not some kind of evening class that you can go to to add to your qualifications. The gospel is total revolution.

It's drastic. And God's message to us is a very very clear one but it's one that makes us feel enormously uncomfortable which means which is he'll tell us what nobody else will tell us.

[ 15 : 40 ] Everyone else will tell us how we can improve our lives and the opportunities that we have in this world to make a difference and to better ourselves in some way by learning a language or learning to cook or learning to sail or learning this, that and the next thing.

Adding to our repertoire. That's not what the gospel is about. In the gospel God tells us that our sin has separated us from God and that is our greatest problem.

Our greatest dilemma. And that's what the apostle Paul had to find out way back when he was Saul of Tarsus and when he thought he was the bee's knees. Thought he was better than anyone else. Prided himself in what he thought was a perfect life before God. Wanted if anyone could have pleased God by the way he lived it was Saul of Tarsus and he had to come crashing down on the road to Damascus when he finally once and for all discovered that he was a hopeless helpless dead sinner that deserved nothing but God's wrath and God's judgment.

But God has done something about it. That's not the end of God's message. God's message to us is that he sent his son into the world who became a man and who gave himself on the cross so that by his sacrifice the guilt of our sin could be placed on him and so that by his death instead of us we could be transformed and we could have a new life faith in him by faith in him.

[ 17 : 27 ] So when we read in verse 21 testifying to both Jews and Jews a repentance towards God that's when you turn away from your sin and repentance is only part of it repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that's what conversion is.

That's what it means when a person is converted. When a person turns away from the shame and the guilt of their sin and walks away from it and puts his trust or her trust in Jesus and in him alone surrendering themselves by faith in him.

And I want to challenge you tonight perhaps this is an occasion when you know you're not going to see me in this pulpit again well at least not regularly maybe there might be occasions there may be occasions who knows what lies ahead but you know when maybe there's something about an evening like this in which you know that there is a special event that might give you that extra sense of receptiveness to what God has been telling you all along well if that is the case then so be it hallelujah I hope that this is the evening when you start to think if you've never thought about it before that you start to think of where you are with God in relation to him I hope even further that this is the evening when you discover in your own heart what it means to turn away from sin and to trust to give yourself to the Lord

Jesus Christ that's what repentance and faith mean and then the third thing the third similarity was that he preached comprehensively you'll find that in verse 27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God Paul left nothing out of his preaching nothing was off limits for the apostle Paul he was much more courageous than I am and a lot of ministers are I can't say I've covered the whole Bible over the last 12 years I would love to think that by the time I reach the end of my life I would have preached through the whole Bible but that's not going to happen the Bible's too big for that my life is too short for that there are passages that I have never chosen to preach some of them because I wouldn't even know where to begin to open up others because perhaps because of their awkwardness and they require such careful handling that

I just have fell shied away from them sometimes like for example 1st Corinthians 7 have you ever heard a sermon on 1st Corinthians 7 I don't think we I don't think I certainly have never preached on it you go home and read it and you'll find out why because it's such a sensitive passage and yet it's the word of God and no minister should ever ever shrink back from preaching anything in the word of God if I had been doing a series in Corinthians which I was often tempted to do if I'd been doing if I'd done a series in Corinthians then I would have had to preach on it but it just didn't happen because I did a series on some other things but that didn't mean that I was able to escape some awkward passages there were some awkward passages in the Ten Commandments if you remember there were awkward passages in Revelation complicated mysterious passages that I found so difficult to get my head around and yet what are we to do are we going to run away from them of course not because that's

[ 21 : 23 ] God's word to us don't ever shy away from God's word and every time you come across a passage that you think is complicated and you can't get your head around then stop at that passage and maybe ask some questions and maybe go to a Christian friend or someone who you know who's perhaps a bit older or perhaps a bit more knowledgeable than you are and ask them have you ever read this passage what do you make of it maybe they'll say well I haven't a clue either that's so often what happens in the Bible and that's what makes it such a thrilling book that you

have to study it you have to spend time with it I want to say to you tonight please please please stay in the word stay close to the Bible read it ask God to open it up to you ask God to lead you through it ask God to speak to you through it don't ever neglect it don't ever neglect these times of prayer so Paul preached comprehensively he left nothing out he shied away from nothing you know there are so many pitfalls when you're a minister one there's two in particular one is when you preach only subjects that you know are going to please people big mistake big big mistake because then you'll preach on a passage that you know is not going to rock any boats you know there are people people who come to church and they come to church for all kinds of different reasons and I've met them over the last 20 years in the ministry people who want more theology and the more complicated theology the better for them people who want no theology they don't want any teaching they don't want to grapple with the great truths of the bible they're quite content with the one-liners people who want to be challenged and you think it's almost like a kind of a unnatural desire in them to be challenged the more and people who don't want any challenge at all

I've met people who want to tell who have said to me I want to go out of church with a positive feeling I want to be uplifted that's why I come to church well I'm sorry sometimes it's not like that sometimes we have to face the harsh realities of God speaking to us because it's only in these harsh realities that God brings his comfort to us when we go through the pain of seeing ourselves as we really are even as God's people and then the second pitfall is when a minister only preaches what he wants to preach you know we all have our favorite passages of the Bible don't we ministers have their favorite passages as well their favorite portions of scripture and the tendency is over a long period of time to just to just bring the people of God the same the things that we find comforting or the things that we find easy to preach no no no it's not like that he preached comprehensively he preached the whole counsel of God and that's why these three similarities are such an ongoing challenge to me because I ask myself did I live up to these three to these three principles profitably evangelistically and comprehensively well my opportunity is gone in this congregation at least and I hope that whoever

I know that the ministry of the word will continue through Kenny and through whoever else is here on supply and I hope that as you face a future and another ministry in this congregation in God's good time that ministry will be profitable it will be evangelistic and it will be comprehensive even more so than ever before well now very quickly three dissimilarities I see the time is going as Paul looked forward prospectively into the future and one the first one is in verse 23 that he faced hardship and imprisonment I hope that that's not true for our own situation here this evening Paul knew that in the next stage of his life it was to involve suffering because of the gospel he didn't need to be a prophet to know that Jerusalem was a dangerous place for any preacher who was not afraid to preach

Jesus there were hard-line Jewish leaders who wanted to get rid of this gospel and unfortunately many within the church were capitulating weak people were capitulating and listening to them and they were doing what they said they were giving in to some of the demands that the Jewish people so Paul knew that he was in a hiding to nothing he knew that by going into Jerusalem it was only a matter of time if he held fast to the gospel that he too would be arrested why then was he so determined to press on ahead well actually there are some controversies over this some people say that Paul should never have gone to Jerusalem he should have listened to his brothers and his sisters in the Lord who were telling him not to go people like the disciples at Tyre in the next chapter the disciples at Tyre said to him don't go then the disciples at Caesarea told him don't go and then a man called

Agabus who was a prophet he forewarned Paul not to go but Paul at the end of the day believed he was constrained that's the word that he uses in this chapter he was constrained to go because he believed that it was God's will that he move on and move into Jerusalem now today we're not in the same situation as the apostle we don't have there are no there isn't a Jewish opposition and there isn't the same kind of situation in Edinburgh or Glasgow or Stornoway or Scotland as there was in Jerusalem at that time nevertheless nevertheless wherever the gospel exists there is opposition and none more so than the day in which we live in today if you take a stand for Jesus if you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ you will be opposed and it can happen in various different ways it is perhaps unlikely that imprisonment awaits any of us immediately

[ 28 : 12 ] I don't know who knows what will happen things are changing so fast now in our society that who knows but it's more likely that the pressure will be on in different subtle ways for example I

read someone who was writing in the Herald last week who was demanding that churches unless they were unless they followed unless they complied with the wishes of society at large they should have they should be denied gift aid I believe the day is coming or is likely to come when the government will stop gift aid and that will place us in greater financial difficulty and I think we need to be ready for that and we need to say well okay the church in Jerusalem didn't have gift aid and if so if it so happens that society turns against the gospel because of its views on various issues then so be it we'll have to be more sacrificial for the cause of Christ and perhaps perhaps a little bit more persecution and constraint might make for a more healthy church the institution

I'm going to work in I find it quite thrilling to think that right at the heart of atheist secular Scotland where all the forces of opposition to the gospel are so vocal right in the heart of Edinburgh that the Bible is being taught and there are 27 new students coming in this year who knows what God will do with these young people who want to learn the Bible with a view to going out and sharing the gospel with other people I find that strangely thrilling and ironic that's the way that God God always even in the darkest times in the darkest places God plants his own seed and we need to be under no illusions as to what the dangers are so will you support the work of ETS and the work of missions whether home missions or international missions the work of our denomination is thrilling at this time we are part of that denomination

I'm not going to criticize other churches but I'm not the denomination that God has placed me in is my first responsibility to support and to give myself and my means to the gospel both at home and abroad the second thing is that Paul foresaw the destruction of the church from within what did he say in verse 29 he says this he says I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you not sparing the flock and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things to draw away the disciples after them that's what he foresaw as something that was going to happen after his departure I hope that doesn't happen here what he meant by that was that it was only a matter of time before people would infiltrate the church with something that sounded like the gospel in fact it sounded so similar to the gospel that you couldn't distinguish unless you really knew what you were talking about you couldn't distinguish it but it wasn't the gospel and so people would eventually be led astray into a perverted message that was always happening particularly in the first century they didn't have the new testament as we have it but there's no point in having a new testament if you're not going to use it and if you're not going to know it and the thing is if you don't know your bible and if you don't know what you believe and why you believe it then you become vulnerable to all kinds of different voices voices that are plausible where there are strong characters charismatic and I don't mean that in the ecclesiastical sense

I mean people who draw others to themselves who are natural leaders and who are compelling personalities and they speak in terms that are so similar to the gospel that before you know it you're drinking in every word that's the way it was then Paul is saying that they're wolves and they're out to destroy the flock and there's a real warning there isn't there for all of us when we listen to whatever message even the message in this pulpit whether it's from me or anyone else that we listen and we check it out I've always said that to you don't just ever accept anything that I say because I say it some people think oh well the minister's been trained he's been going three years in seminary and he must know what he's talking about no you have to check it out for yourself every thinking believer ought to become a theologian that's your goal and your objective for the night you must become a theologian is simply someone who knows his bible or her bible surely if the bible is god's word then what we want to do is to get to know it more and more and more it's not going to happen overnight but the only way to spot the counterfeit is to be familiar with the real thing if you try to sell me I said this to someone else this week if you try to sell me a van gogh painting you came up to me tonight say I've got a van gogh painting in my house come and see it I'll sell you for a hundred pounds I would go along I would look at your painting I would think it was a van gogh you could easily fool me into thinking that this was a genuine article before you know it I'd be parting with a hundred pounds you'd be laughing all the way to the bank because it's not a van gogh at all and I'd be fooled but let me tell you this the only way that you can spot a counterfeit is to know the real thing and the more time you spend with a real thing the more you'll be able to spot a counterfeit so that's it that's the way to be prepared for the wolves the false teaching the corrupted gospel the perverted gospel that sounds so similar and so plausible but that is going to draw you away and then what Paul the way that Paul responds to this of course is first of all to turn to the elders and he reminds them of the awesomeness of their responsibility and the awesomeness was this pay

careful attention verse 28 to yourselves and to all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to care for the church of God which he obtained with his own blood and I want to remind with all due respect I loved working with the eldership in this congregation but now as never before my brethren here are going to be left with a greater responsibility and perhaps that could be a good thing could be a challenge because with them lies the responsibility of the oversight the pastoral oversight of this congregation and pastoral oversight means getting to know your people on a personal level in such a way that will exercise care and attention and love and interaction with them that's all of our responsibility as a congregation

[ 36 : 18 ] Paul's concern was also that the flock would be scattered and of course it may not be the wolves that scatter the flock in this instance but it may be anything this is a testing time for the congregation a time you'll forgive me if I go just a little bit over what I normally don't do but this is a test this is so important this is a testing time a vacancy is a testing time we have had 12 years of settled ministry when you haven't had to apply your mind to the choice of a new minister but a choice of a minister for a congregation belongs to the congregation what will happen is a vacancy committee will be set up in the in the weeks that lie ahead and they will have the task of listening to the congregation and to their views as to who a prospective candidate might be they will have the task of inviting prospective candidates to preach to you so you get to know them and so that you and hopefully at the end of this process

I don't know how long it will be but at the end of the process you will come together and you will choose and the choice will be yours it is absolutely fundamental in our church that the choice of a new minister is the congregation's choice not the elders it's not the vacancy committee it's not the interim moderator it's the people the membership in the congregation that's whose choice it is which of course is a very interesting situation to be in because as well as hearing people who you happen to like there will be other people who someone else likes and there will be all kinds of variety of opinion as to how you respond and how you might react to various people and suggestions that they might be called and so on and so forth it's a real challenge but if you remain united and you keep loving each other and keep that spirit of unity within you that there was on

Wednesday night and that I believe there is and don't do anything that will that will spoil that sense of unity respect one another listen to one another because at the end of the day the choice we believe is made by the congregation as the congregation is led to that conclusion by the Holy Spirit but above all please be praying please be praying pray believing that the Lord has someone out there who right now he is preparing to take my place in this pulpit and to lead you into the next chapter of your existence and your ministry and your witness in this place congregation a vacancy is a time of uncertainty and I would I would ask you to please stay stay together stay together look at what God has done amongst us over the past few years look at the good things that are happening I'm not suggesting no congregation is perfect every congregation has its own frustrations and things that we are annoyed at things that are not happening things that we're not happy with that happens everywhere and if you go to another congregation you'll soon find out that things are the same there maybe in different form whatever congregation you go to so I'm saying this God has put you where you are and he's giving you the gifts and he's giving you the place where you are to be put to his to be put to his glory and to to to be to be to be act to be lived out to his glory you have a job to do here some people of course are not able to fulfill much because of their other commitments family and perhaps sick relatives or whatever but but whatever we all have different a different role to play please please stay together stay together and finally and this this is this is I with this I close I'm sorry to take so long finally Paul said that they would never see his face again I hope that's not true in my case and in actual fact strangely enough theologically wasn't through it anyway how why was that not true because they were going to see him again because God has a glorious endless eternal future for all of us who trust in the Lord

Jesus Christ and we will be with one another in glory but of course that's not what Paul meant Paul meant in this life that they would never see him again but I still hope it's not true in my case because I hope that we will Paul didn't live in a day there wasn't Facebook in Paul's day there wasn't all the means of communication that there was Paul made every use of the means that there was in those days but there are so much communication nowadays there's no excuse for losing touch and I hope I look forward so much to learning and to hearing of great things that God continues to do in this congregation wonderful things but the most wonderful wonderful work of all is when lives are transformed oh that's what I want to hear I want to hear of people who at this moment in time are

not following

Jesus who will follow him they will turn and they will repent and they will follow him as they listen to his word and as they come to be touched by the Holy Spirit you have great opportunities don't don't lose sight of these opportunities work together for the good of the gospel so that God will use these means and bring others into his kingdom and so that what a rich heritage we have as a church but that heritage cannot just be assumed you've got to work at it you've got to keep it nurture it develop it pray together and be together as a congregation and love one another and I have gone way over my time let's pray oh father in heaven gracious and eternal God we give thanks for what has thanks for all the privileges that we have in this congregation and we give thanks that you have blessed us in so many different ways we thank you lord that this is not a one man or a two man effort but that a congregation has to be collective everybody bearing the responsibility and shouldering the burden of the work of the gospel we pray that as my dear friends my brothers and sisters in the lord as we part company that that they will go on in the strength of the lord as we all must depending upon you and obedient to you in every possible way and so lord fill us with your spirit we pray pour out your spirit upon us and forgive our sin in jesus name amen well our closing psalm is psalm 84 psalm 84 and verse 5 it's a sorry i should have said the sing psalms version now after the benediction will you allow please my wife and myself to stand at that door now if you need to go out these doors the front doors then so be it that's not that's not a problem but i really would like the opportunity and my wife as well to just shake hands with you on this last occasion i do hope that i might be able to be attend saturday and sunday of the communion next week but that's uncertain at the moment but in any case this will give an important opportunity just to say goodbye to you and my wife also psalm 84 it's page 112 sing psalms the last version tune is ottawa and verse 5 to the end of this psalm blessed are those whose strength is in you those who have a pilgrim's mind pulls from autumn's rains refresh them springs and bake as veil they find and so on verse 5 weekend wolf11 stand to see this 20 instead of whom i have a 25 in if you have a pilgrim's mind who if you wrote in feelings if you have a pilgrim's mind wills from autumn rains refresh them springs and baker's will they find

[ 45 : 22 ] Springs and bakers will they find Strength and pleasing Zion word They go on their way to God Hear my prayer, O God Almighty And receive the plea I make Listen to me, God of Jacob Hear me for your mercy's sake Look upon our shield and ring Favour to your chosen King One day in your courts is better Than a thousand days elsewhere

Let me stay in my God's temple Let me be a dorm unfair Rather than find happiness In the tents of wickedness For the Lord, his grace and honour God will be a shield and sun He will not withhold his blessing From the just and blameless one Lord Almighty, great and true Bless the one who trusts in you With these words, O Lord

We pray that your grace And your mercy And your peace From Father, Son and Spirit Will rest on and abide with each one of us Both now and always Amen John Thank you.