

Paying our Vows unto the Lord

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[0 : 00] Will you turn with me this morning then to Deuteronomy, the book of Deuteronomy and chapter 23, page 198. Page 198, the book of Deuteronomy and chapter 23.

And we'll read from the 21st verse, Deuteronomy 23 and verse 21.

If you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not delay fulfilling it, for the Lord your God will surely require it of you, and you will be guilty of sin.

But if you refrain from vowing, you will not be guilty of sin. You shall be careful to do what has passed your lips, for you have voluntarily vowed to the Lord your God what you have promised with your mouth.

In our church services, there are not many times when someone other than the minister speaks.

[1 : 31] This, though, is one of these times. In a few moments' time, each of the parents here at the front of the church in connection with the baptism of their children, they will make a promise.

They will make several promises. A promise is a pledge in which, at the very least, a person gives his word that he or she will do what they are promising.

We don't often have that in a service, but we have it at a time of baptism. And the baptism is connected with the promise, and the promises are an important part of the service.

And it's that part that I would like us to look at this morning, in the light of what this passage, this very solemn passage, tells us.

First of all, a promise is related to the importance of telling the truth. So the principle governing a promise is the principle of truth.

[2 : 43] And when we break that principle, we can do so by telling something which isn't the truth. And that's what's sinful about a lie.

It directly contradicts and undermines the truth which God loves. And there are many passages in the Bible that underline the importance of truth.

The ninth commandment tells us, you shall not bear false witness. Leviticus 19 and 11, you shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie to one another.

Colossians 3 verse 9, just in case you think this is confined to the Old Testament, where Paul says, lie not to one another, seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds.

Psalms 120 and verse 2, deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue. I don't need to go any further. I think I've proved already.

[3 : 42] I could repeat passage after passage in the Bible that underline the importance of truth and that highlight how sinful it is to tell something which is not truth.

But you can equally break that principle, not just by telling a lie, but by making a promise and not keeping it. Now you don't even need to be a believer to understand the importance of keeping your word.

The world outside will tell you that he is a man of his word. And when they say that, they say that positively. He has a good reputation when a person is a man or a woman of his word.

And when you know that about a person, you can trust that person. There is nothing worse. And you'll agree with me in this. There's nothing worse than a person who you can't trust.

A person who says one thing and does another. A person who will promise you one thing and then end up not keeping that promise.

[4 : 47] You'll soon fall out with that person. And you won't be able to trust him. You'll never be able to believe anything, even if sometimes he's true to his word. If he's not, if he breaks his promise, you can never know whether he's going to do what he tells you he's going to do.

A man like that would soon get a reputation, even in the pubs of Stornoway, as a person who doesn't keep his word. You'd never lend that person money. And no woman would marry a man like

that.

It would be a waste of time. If he said he loved the woman, she wouldn't believe him because he's not a man of his word. You see, love depends on your word. Your word is all important.

And very often that's all we have to determine what kind of a person that person is. A person's word. A person's promise. You wouldn't employ a person like that. And you would laugh every time he told you anything, not knowing whether it was true or not.

And if this is true in ordinary life, it's true also in civic life and in the courts of law. The courts of law and the establishment of justice depend on the truthfulness of the person who's bearing witness.

[5 : 57] The person who's answering the question. That's why he makes a vow to tell the truth and the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Because if he didn't, you wouldn't have any justice. You would have the guilty set free and you would have the innocent punished.

You would have a total reversal of everything that justice was supposed to represent. The whole system would collapse. And a jury and a judge would never know what verdict to come to.

That's the importance of your word. I don't even need to go any further than that. You all agree.

Nobody in here would disagree with me so far on the importance of giving your word. But here in the Bible, we're not simply talking about a man of his word.

We're talking about a promise which is taken solemnly before God. And that takes it on to another level in its importance.

It's one thing to make a promise privately between one friend or another. It's another thing altogether. To make a vow under God and in the presence of God and to God.

[7 : 01] Making a vow before God actually brings God into the vow. And brings you under God so that you are saying, This promise to me is of such importance that I want God to be my witness.

And I want to place myself under the authority of God in what I promise. Now you don't need to do that. This passage makes clear that a vow or a promise before God must by very nature be voluntary.

It absolutely must be voluntary. Nobody must ever be forced into the situation where they have to make a promise before God. It's so important. They have to do it of their own volition and of their own will.

Now there is a sense of caution which everything we say. From the time we get up in the morning to the time we go to bed at night. Is in front of God. And God hears everything that we say.

And it's never a bad thing to rediscover the truth. That there is nothing about you that God does not know. Psalm 139. We spoke about it earlier on.

[8 : 16] Oh Lord you have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up. All my thoughts are known to you. We sang these words earlier. Now the psalmist is not just talking about the fact that God is all knowing.

If he had wanted to say that he could have chosen a host of other things to say. But he goes further than that. The psalm describes the fact that God knows all about me.

You have searched me. And known me. Because God has made a point. Specifically of searching me out. Out of all the complexity and the vastness of this universe.

I want us to think of God this morning. What that psalm is describing. If we think about God looking at his great vast universe that he has created. And he's sweeping away all the mountains and the planets and the galaxies.

And the milky ways. And the suns and the stars. And he's focusing through all that. Through the atmosphere. Through the clouds. And he's sweeping away all the trees and the mountains and the seas and the animals.

[9 : 20] And he's coming straight in. And he's looking for someone. And that someone is me. That's what the psalm is telling us. That out of all the vastness of the creation of the universe.

That God has that specific particular concern in you and in me. And when we sing those words that's what we mean. We're acknowledging them. We are recognizing the truth of these words.

That God is focusing upon me and what's in my heart. Not just on what I am from the outside. He knows everything that I do in the secret place. From the time I get up. But he also knows my thoughts.

My intentions. My motives. Every single thing. That's the peculiarity of God. The personal nature of God. And that's what it means to have been created in the image of God.

To be given the recognition. That that is true. It's never a bad thing to discover. And to stop and pause for a moment. To ponder this great profound truth.

[10:20] But when it comes to a vow before God. What you're doing is something that actually rises above every other occasion. Rises above the normal.

The way the fact that God has searched me and known me. And hears every word that I say. As soon as you make that promise before God. But you are swearing and pledging.

That you will do what you promise. Even to the point of being answerable to God. For doing what you have vowed. As soon as you do that.

You are in covenant with God. In other words. If I can put it like this. You absolutely have to keep your vow. There is no alternative.

Well there is. The Bible gives you a get out clause. If you're not going to keep it. Go. Go. Don't do it. In the first place. It's better. Ecclesiastes 5 tells us. It's better not to keep the vow at all.

[11:15] Than to make the vow. And not to keep it. So there are two alternatives. The one is. To run from it. And to decide not to. Not to make the vow in the first place. But there's another alternative.

And that's to keep your vow. To do what you promised. And to make a point of it. And you'll never make a point of it. Until the importance. The importance of the solemnity. Of that promise. Is embedded in our hearts. Now you'll notice by the way. That I'm not looking at these gentlemen here. Alone. I'm looking at all of us. Because these gentlemen. Are going to make up that promise. In a few moments time. And their wives. And. But we've also made that promise. Most of us in here. As parents. We've also made that promise. Everyone here. Is reminded of what I'm saying. And what the Bible is saying to us. And if there is any sense. There's some sense. In which we have. Drifted. From the keeping of those promises. Then we. Have fallen short. Of what we have vowed.

[12:13] So the promise applies to everyone. You don't need to think that. It just applies. To those who are making. Because. Once you make a promise. You're under that promise. For the rest of your life.

You can't wake up one morning. And say. Well I want to. Shed that promise. I want to reverse it. You can't do that. Once you make that vow. That's you for the rest. So I. Am still under my. Baptismal vows. That I took. How many years ago. For my children. I'm still under these vows. And if in any way. Even today. I fall short of them. Then. I am guilty before God.

Of falling short. Of them. Thankfully. God is a gracious God. And God forgives. And God. Begins again. And he gives us. A fresh beginning. And if it wasn't for that.

Then who could be here. This morning. But you absolutely. Have to keep. That promise. That's what this passage. Is telling us. In no uncertain terms. From now on. God himself.

[13:08] Will hold us. Accountable. For whether. We keep. Our promises. And if we do not intend. With our whole heart. To keep them. And it's better not to make them.

In the first place. I should of course. Point out. That nobody. Can keep that promise. And I'm quite sure. That we're already aware. Of how much we need. The Lord's help. In what we are doing today.

So a vow. Then. Is a very. Very solemn promise. And I hope that. As we've read. Those two passages. In Ecclesiastes. And in Deuteronomy. That emphasize. The solemnity. Of that promise. Then I hope. That we have. That we hope. We're on track. For understanding. As we try to understand. What the Bible. Is saying. Now I guess. That we've all seen.

Promises taken. When two people. Get married. And for example. They do so. By making vows. Which they promise. To each other. That they'll be loving. And faithful. And devoted.

[14:02] To one another. Exclusively. In their marriage. Partnership. And they do this. In front. Of witnesses. But more importantly. Again. They do it. In front. Of God.

And that's another example. Of course. Probably the most celebrated. Example. Of when people. Make promises. Now. I. Want us. To think then.

What. We are promising. In baptism. What. Is. The actual. Promise. That. These parents. Are going to make. And that many of us. Have made.

Already. That's the first thing. I want us to think about. What they. What they are. And then. I want us to think about. How we do them. How we do the promise. How. What steps we take.

To make sure. That we keep. The vows. And the pledges. That we make. In baptism. First of all. What are we promising. In baptism.

[14:57] Well. When we're taking those vows. We're saying something. About. Ourselves. As parents. We're choosing. To have baptism.

For our children. We're saying something. About. Ourselves. We are making. These promises. Not only voluntarily. But because. We really.

In our hearts. Believe. What. And want. What we are doing. To come. To pass. Otherwise. It's absurd. It is. The height.

Of disrespect. And dishonor. To God. When we say. Something. To him. And then. We go away. When all the time. In our hearts. We mean. Something different.

Remember what we said before. Lord. You have searched me. And known me. You know. My sitting down. And rising up. Even my thoughts. So the Lord knows. The thoughts. Of these parents. Here this morning.

[15:50] And he knows. Our thoughts. As well. He knows. To what extent. These parents. Truly. And meaningfully. Really mean. What they say. It's almost like. A wedding.

If you can imagine. The absurdity. Of a wedding. In which the bride. For example. Is asked. Do you promise. To take this man. To be your lawfully wedded husband. And do you promise.

And covenant before God. To be to him. A faithful. And loving. And dutiful wife. All the days of your life. Until God separates you. But can you imagine.

The woman saying yes. When all the while. She doesn't want to even. Look at her husband. Because she can't stand. The sight of him. That would be the height. Of absurdity. You can't imagine that.

So when she makes. These promises. What she's really saying is. I love this man. And the husband. Is the same. When he makes the promise. To be to her. A dutiful. And a loyal husband.

[16:44] He's actually saying. I love you so much. And I regard this day. As so important. That my love. To say that I love you. Is not enough. To put that love.

Into practice. Is when we come together. And I'm giving myself to you. From now on. This day onward. We're going to be one flesh. One mind. One will. One purpose. We're going to.

We're going to be to each other. A loving. And a faithful. And a committed couple. And I want to do that. In front of these witnesses. And in front of God. That's how solemn it is. And that's how important it is.

Not just. To make the promise. From the outside. But to actually. Really mean. So. So. So. To make. A promise. Is actually.

It tells us something. About ourselves. First of all. At every baptism. We're asked. Do you believe. The Bible. To be the word of God. Do you believe. That there is one God. Father.

[17:38] Son. And Holy Spirit. Do you believe. That Jesus Christ. Is the only way. To. To be saved. And do you promise. Now these are all things. Not about the child. These are all things. About.

About the parents. Do you believe. Because if the parent. Doesn't believe. These basic facts. About the gospel. Then. What chance is there. Of them ever. Being able to bring up. Their children.

In the knowledge. And in the teaching. And in the love. Of God. Now there's a question here. That is raised. I don't want to ignore the question. And that's the question. Of course. Of whose children.

Are baptized.

And entitled to baptism. Because there's a controversy. Even within our own church. Of this. We believe in infant baptism. I believe in infant baptism. The confession believes it. I know that there are Christians.

Who don't believe in it. I fully respect their view. I disagree. But even within those. Even amongst those. Who do believe in infant baptism. There's a controversy. Between those who say. Well. It's only the.

[18:30] It's only the children. Of professing. Members. Of the church. That ought to be baptized. I know many ministers. Who actually wouldn't baptize. But. I would.

And I'll tell you why I would. For two reasons. First of all. Because baptism. Is a covenant sign. That was given within. A covenant community. The covenant community. Of Israel. We believe.

The reason we baptize infants. Is because we believe. That baptism. Is a New Testament. Equivalent. To circumcision. And circumcision. Was given. Within the covenant community.

Of Israel. Now to be part of the covenant community. Of Israel. Was an enormous. Privilege. And the covenant sign.

Was placed. Upon the. Those who are covenant community. Of course. A person. Could forsake. That community. And in that case. A person. That person. Was not entitled.

[19 : 26] To the covenant sign. But that person. Being within. The covenant community. Was entitled to it. And it's the same. With people. Even if. They don't. They haven't reached.

That point. Of commitment. As. Communicant members. Now. The other reason. That I believe. In giving this. Is because this. How am I to know.

What's in a person's heart. I don't know. I don't have access. To a person's heart. But when we see. And we make a point. By the way. Of visiting. And talking to.

Every parent. That wants to have. Baptism for their child. And we. We make a point. Of asking them. About their commitment. To the gospel. And it's only.

When. We see. When we meet. With a parent. Or parents. Who are. Committed to the gospel. To committed. To coming. To hear the word. Taking the gospel. Seriously. How do I know.

[20 : 19] What God is doing. In that person's heart. And why is it. That I should deny. That person. Baptism. Just because. They haven't reached. That stage. Of. Commitment.

By way. Of coming. To the Lord's table. Why should I. Withhold. The sacrament. Of baptism. When I see. Within a person's heart. That seriousness.

That seriousness. And you know. As well as I do. That a person. That. There are many of us. Here today. And if it wasn't. For the fact. That we came. And we listened. And we absorbed.

God's word. By regular attendance. At the means of grace. Listening to the gospel. Listening to the bible. That God began. To speak to us. And gradually. As time went on.

We begin to be convicted. Of sin. We begin to see. The importance of the gospel. And as we take our families. And you know what. Many. Many as a person. Has only started that process.

[21 : 14] As they have taken their children. To the church. And you know. There's another thing as well. It's very often. When a child is born. Into a family. And I've seen this. Loads of times.

A child is born into a family. Those parents. Are struck. For the first time ever. With the awesomeness of God. The reality of God. Because they're seeing. The result of the goodness.

And the kindness. And the grace of God. And you know. They examine their own hearts. And they say. I don't deserve this. And they begin to discover. Perhaps for the first time. The grace.

Of God. The goodness of God. And they're bowled over by it. Why should God be so good to me. In giving me my wife. In giving me my home. In giving me my child.

And very often. It's at that point. That they discover. My wild days are over. That's it. Finished. I'm now going to start reading my Bible. I'm now going to start coming to church. I'm now going to start reading.

[22 : 10] As I've never. Never. Sought before. And I'm really going to start. Taking this gospel seriously. Now. All of these parents have told us that. All of these parents.

And so have you. You have made the same pledge. And we pray. It is our prayer. That through that process. That the Lord will use that.

To bring people. From stage to stage. And their understanding of him. And that I believe. Includes. The sacrament of baptism. Now I know everybody doesn't. Doesn't agree with me on this.

I don't want to go into the controversy on it. But that's my position. In any case. And you can argue. Later on. That's what we're saying about ourselves. We're saying. I believe.

The Bible is the word. I believe. In the Lord. In the Lord Jesus Christ. As the savior of sinners. And so that person is. Is saying. That they know.

[23 : 06] The way to be saved. Now. Now that we've talked about. What the pledge. And the promise says about ourselves. How do we do it? How do we put it into practice?

And again. This is a reminder for all of us. As to how. If we're parents this morning. How do we put those words. Into practice. There are so many things. I suppose. When you've had experience yourself.

Of six children. And three grandchildren. And many years of experience. Of the pain. And the. And the. Sometimes the. The hardship. Of bringing up children. As well as all the joys. And the privileges.

That there are. And they are. Huge. Huge joys. I want to confine. What I say to. Three things. Three. Areas. In which we. Implement. And put into practice.

Our vows. First of all. The Bible. Secondly. Prayer. Thirdly. The church. Three things. Please keep these three things. At the forefront.

[23 : 59] Of your mind. The Bible. As the word. Of God. One of the promises is. Do you believe the Bible. To be the word. Of God. And on that basis.

You'll be asked. These parents will be asked. Do you. Will you bring up your child. In the knowledge. In the knowledge. Of God. And there's only one place. Where we get that knowledge. And that's the Bible. When we speak about the knowledge of God. It's not just a bunch of facts. Bare historical facts. Or theological facts. The Bible is the living word of God.

And God speaks to us. Through that word. And when you share that word. With your children. He will speak. God will speak to your children. Through that word.

Children. Understand. And love. The Bible. Don't. Make any mistake. About that. And we make a point.

[24 : 53] Of course. As you know. Of issuing all the children. With a Bible. With a children's story Bible. It's actually the one. That my own grandchildren use. And it's absolutely brilliant. Because it's. Because this way.

Of just putting. Bible stories. In the most. The simplest fashion. And I know. For a fact. That my. My own grandchildren. Love it. They love reading it.

They love the pictures in it. And they love everything about it. And that's. That's. The great. The great thing. About the Bible. Is that it creates. Such fascination. Fascination.

Within. Our children. Please. Parents. Read. The Bible. And don't be ashamed. What is it about us men. That's ashamed. To read the Bible. To our children.

Not so much in women. It's men. What is it about us men. That finds. You know. You imagine your mates. Are watching you. Well so what if they were. And you know.

[25 : 49] For a fact. That they're not. And sometimes. We're more ashamed. Because we're in front of our wives. We don't want to. Feel a bit of a wimp. Because you know. Men just don't do this. Why do they not do it?

Why do they not do it? If you believe. That the Lord is God. And you believe. In what you're doing today. Then you do it. Whatever it takes. And you know what. The moment you do it. Then.

Our wives. And our friends. Will secretly. Admire us for it. And that's a fact. Why is it. That we're so slow. In saying. You know. There was a. There was a tradition here.

When even people. Who hadn't become members. Of the church. They would still. Have what they call. Family worship. Why is that disappeared? Why is it disappeared? You know. I've got an even more important question.

Why is it disappeared. Amongst Christians. Amongst people. Who are members. And once it disappears. You know. It's. It's almost impossible. To reinstate it again.

[26 : 44] You're making. A serious mistake. If you've dropped it. Because not only. Are you saying. Something to yourself.

That the Bible. Is no longer important enough. To be read. In my house. But you're saying. To your children. The Bible. Is no longer important enough. To be read. In their presence. I know that. That's pretty tough. I mean it.

If you're professing. To be a Christian today. Then. The Bible. Has central importance. I know that there are. I know that there are. Times and. And occasions.

When it's difficult. And sometimes. When it's impossible. When kids are going out. And into various clubs. And all the right. I know all of that stuff. I know all of that. But does that give you an excuse. To not read it at all.

With your children. Does that give you an excuse. If there's a will. There's a way. Now. I also am aware. That it's not as easy. In one home. As it is in another. Perhaps. There are.

[27 : 39] There are. There's a home. Where members of that home. Are not so keen. Or whatever. I know all of these things. These things. Are all. Have to be taken into account.

And you have to work all that. At these. These. These factors. And it may be. That. That it's impossible. But I'm talking. About where it is possible. And why is it.

That we're so slow. And so. Just. Distracted. And lazy. That we don't give God. His place. In our homes. Bite the bullet. Reinstate.

Family worship. Where it's gone. And it doesn't have to be. A long drawn out affair. It doesn't have to be. An elaborate. Formal affair. It's simply. The giving of God.

His importance. In your home. It's the same. It's true with prayer. Why do people. Have so much. Hang ups. About prayer. Prayer is simply. Coming to the Lord. And opening up. Our heart. [28 : 36] Before God. And if you don't. Teach your children. To pray. Then they'll never know. Then they will grow up. With this. This hang up as well. That I hear. And see. So many people with. Whether it's men.

At the prayer meeting. Who are dead scared. And being asked. To pray. Or whether it's. Whether it's. People in their own homes. Who are so reluctant. To pray. Why is that? Why have we lost. The simplicity. And the beauty. And just the ordinariness. Of coming to our heavenly father. And thanking him. And praying for things. What's the big problem. With taking your children. When they're able to. And asking every night. Or whatever. And coming to him. Saying let's pray. Thank you Lord. For today. Thank you Lord. For my food. Thank you for the Bible. Thank you for the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you for mummy. Thank you for daddy. And for my brothers. And my sisters. And for all the good things. You give me. And you know somebody.

[29 : 30] Who's sick. Pray for that person. And ask. What's the problem. With sitting around a table. Why have we. Abandoned. Saying grace. Again. Embarrassment. Why are we so embarrassed. About it. There's nothing.

To be embarrassed about. We're simply. Acknowledging. The goodness. Of God. What's so. Difficult. About asking your children. To say the grace. Even a five year old. Say the grace. It might be a one liner. So what. That teaches them. To pray. Teach them. How to pray. And it's the same. With church.

I know how easy it is. To drop off the habit. I'm quite sure. That every one of our. Of our friends here. At the front here. Have every intention. Of today. Keeping their vow. And perhaps for a while. They will. And perhaps for a while. It'll be easy for them. To come to church. And even to read the bible. And to pray with their children. In their own simple way. But for sure. As soon as they start. You know what's going to happen. The next day.

[30 : 26] You're going to have a row. With your wife. And then you won't feel. So much like doing it. And then there'll be some kind of. High pressure thing. Or something that's taking away. Your time. It happens all the time. You have to have.

The determination. To keep your vow. And you know what. Sometimes you have to come back. To the very promise itself. And to the importance. Of that promise. And it's that importance. That makes you do it.

That's no bad thing. Sometimes it's that way. With a marriage. You go back. To the altar. And you remember the promises. That you made. And unless there is a fundamental problem. You keep those promises. It's the same with church. Church is so important to a child. Church is so important.

In their upbringing. And in their development. And in their understanding. Of God. Don't be afraid to take them. I hear so many parents. They say. You must have noticed my child.

[31 : 23] Being so restless today. I didn't. Neither does Kenny. It doesn't bother us. At all. Unless they're making a huge noise. Which is distracting other people. Well. That's maybe a problem.

You just go out to the creche. Or to the hall. It's not a problem. It's not. Shouldn't be a hang up. Take them to church. Teach them the word. Make church a delight for them.

Because that's what it is. It's supposed to be. The place. Where God reveals himself. To. Us. And to our children. Let me just say one thing.

If you've decided. To withdraw yourself. From the gospel. That's one thing. But whatever you. Whatever you do. Don't drag your children.

To a lost eternity. With you. It's as solemn. And as serious as that. Keep. Your promise. Nobody's forced you to make it.

[32 : 23] It is. The most. One of the most. Solemn thing. You know. We make a big deal. About the Lord's Supper here. And we're right to. It's important. Hugely important. Why do we not make the same.

Why do we not emphasize. The other sacrament. As importantly. As the Lord's Supper. There are two sacraments. In the New Testament. One is baptism.

And the other. Is the Lord's Supper. Let's give the same weight. And the same importance. To a baptism. As we do. To the Lord's Supper. I want to end.

By one more thing. Of the importance. Of making promises. They're important. Because God. Has made promises. To us. Do you ever wonder. Why. A promise. Is so solemn. And so important. Well. I'll tell you. It's because. It originates. In God himself. God. speaks to us. And reveals himself. To us. By promise. The very.

[33 : 19] At the very beginning. When Adam and Eve fell. God's resolution. To that fall. Was a promise. And if you want to know. What that promise was. You go back to Genesis. Chapter 3.

You can do that by yourself. You read all through the Bible. God's promise. When he called Abraham. He did so. By a promise. When he called Moses. He did so. By a promise. He's all through the Old Testament.

And through the person of Jesus. As he comes to us today. And he promises. That if you believe. In the Lord Jesus Christ. You will live forever.

That's the greatest promise. Of all. That you'll ever find. In the whole universe. The promise of the gospel. To all those. Who lay hold upon Jesus. By faith. Who come to him.

And to. Who commit themselves. To Jesus Christ. By faith. God says to us. I promise. To change your life. I promise. To forgive your sins.

[34 : 14] I promise. To raise you up. In the last day. And to take you. To be with me. Where I am. So that where I am. There you will be also. And when God makes a promise. He always.

Without exception. Keeps. His. Word. Let's pray. Our Father in heaven.

Once again. We come to you. In the solemnity. And the seriousness. Of this moment. We give thanks. For this occasion. We give thanks. For how clearly. Your word. Challenges. Each one of us.

And we pray. To rise. To that challenge. Now. To be reminded. Of the. The word. That we have given. Many of us. Have given. And we pray. For your help. In keeping that word.

And in implementing. Your word. In our lives. And with our children. And in our homes. Blessed to us. As we pray. In Jesus name. Amen.