

The Crowd at the Cross

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Date: 14 February 2024

[0 : 00] We're going to begin our worship this evening by singing to God's praise in Psalm 90, the Scottish Psalter version, Psalm 90, page 350.

And we'll sing from verse 13 down to the end of the psalm. Psalm 90 at verse 13. Turn yet again to us, O Lord, how long thus shall it be that it repent thee now for those that servants are to thee? In the words of the end of the psalm, verse 17, that we would see these words being blessed to us over these coming days. That the beauty of the Lord our God be as upon our handiworks, establish thou, establish them, each one.

We'll sing from verse 13 down to the end of the psalm to God's praise. Turn yet again to us, O Lord, how long thus shall it be?

Let it repent thee, love for those that servants are to thee.

[1 : 21] O with thy tender mercies, Lord, us are thee satisfied.

So we rejoice shall all our days, and still be glad in thee.

According us the days of me, wherein we creep upon, and years wherein we ill have seen.

So do thou make us glad. O let thy work and power appear, thy servant face before, and show unto their children dear, thy glory evermore.

And let the beauty of the Lord our God be as upon.

[3 : 17] Thy holy Lord, establish thou, establish them, each one.

Let's bow our heads together in a word of prayer. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven as we gather in your name this evening together, we are thankful for your banner over us.

We are thankful for the name that is over us as we come and unite our hearts in prayer, that we come under the banner of your love, and your love shown to us in your own Son, Jesus Christ.

We thank you that in his name we are able to approach you, our holy God. That even though the way that was so closed off, as it were, in the Old Testament, when only the high priest could approach, we thank you that we have a high priest in Christ Jesus, who has gone before us, who has opened the way for us, and that we can approach your very throne through his name.

And we thank you that that is true for every one of us here this evening. It is true that we can at any time draw near to you in prayer, and draw near knowing that you hear us and that you know us in all our different needs.

[4 : 53] And we thank you, Lord, that you have blessed us with your mercies, that you have been a God who is so faithful towards us. And even as we acknowledge that, today as a new day, as we come to the end of it, Lord, we thank you that you are a God who reminds us, as we rise in the morning and as we lay down our heads in the evening, that you are the one who is with us, watching over us and keeping us.

And we do pray that you will be with us in our time together this evening, that you will bless us in this time of worship, that as we turn to your word, as we sing your praise, as we lift up our prayers to you, as we seek to hear your voice, that we would know, Lord, your beauty with us.

We would know your presence, that the beauty of the Lord our God would be upon us as a people, and not just this evening, but in these days ahead as well, that we would know your gracious blessings to us day by day just now, preparing us in our hearts and in our minds, as we prepare to come to the Lord's table, God willing, this coming Sunday.

And we look to you as the one in whom alone we can approach even these things. God, we do not have any merit of ourselves.

We are unworthy in many ways. And our hearts are sinful to the core. But yet, O Lord, we thank you for your mercies, your mercies that are towards us day by day, that even in our sin, Lord, your mercy is more.

[6 : 41] And we pray, Lord, to know a great sense of your peace and your blessing with us, that as your word is ministered to us in these coming days, that it will be a word that, as it often does,

challenges us, but that it will be a word too that would bless us and remind us of what faith means and who our faith is in and the security that that gives to all of your people, that when we come to put our trust in a living Saviour, in one who came and died for our sin, but who rose again and who ascended on high and who is seated at your right hand this evening, we thank you that we have that sure foundation, the one who is the author and perfecter of faith.

And when our faith is in him, though the world will condemn us and throw so much at us, though we will even do that to ourselves at times when we look at our own unworthiness, it will make us mourn in our sin.

But let us come to marvel at Jesus and to marvel at the one who came to lay down his life for his friends and who says, you are my friends if you do as I command.

And so let us hear your commands anew in these days. Let us come to be faithful to you. Let us come to acknowledge you as our only Saviour and our only hope.

And Lord, we do pray your blessing upon us as a people in every home and family we represent.

We thank you for our congregation and all who belong to us in that way.

[8 : 33] And we thank you, Lord, that we have seen you increasing our numbers. And we pray that you will continue to do so, that you will continue to bless us with new people coming out week by week and even day by day just now, that we would see a people returning to you, that we would know the blessing of your reviving power, that you will turn towards us again, Lord, and revive us in all our needs.

And we thank you, Lord, that you are a God whose call can never be ignored, can never be turned away, even though we may at times, Lord, not listen.

We thank you for your faithfulness towards us. And we do remember too, Lord, that as we see new ones coming in, that we are reminded so often of other ones who are taken from us.

There is always that sense of looking back at this time as well, when we think of those who were once with us, those who once belonged to our communion role here, and those who are now in glory with you.

And Lord, we thank you for all who have gone before us, all who have prayed for us, all who have remembered us, even maybe not seeing prayer answered, but knowing, oh Lord, that you are a God who is able to answer in your time.

[9 : 58] And so we bless you, Lord, for your faithful people, and for those who even continue to pray today, Lord, even though unable to be with us, those who are prayer warriors at home, and even in hospital and in homes as well.

We thank you, Lord, that you surround your people, that you encamp around them, that you are their security as well. And we pray, Lord, for your blessing over us in all of these ways.

We pray too, Lord, that you will bless the ministers who will come to be with us over these days.

Remember, Reverend Kenny Ferguson, as he comes to minister tomorrow evening. Remember the Reverend Cal MacDonald, and the Reverend Angus McRae too, as they will preach to us over the weekend.

We thank you for their individual ministries. We thank you for their congregations. We thank you for their families. We thank you for their faithful ministry, each one over so many years.

And we pray that as they come to minister to us, that we will be blessed by their ministry, and that they would be blessed to administering your word and the sacrament.

[11 : 11] We pray, Lord, that you will be their strength and their help throughout this weekend. You bless our fellowship together, as we meet in different ways over these coming days, whether it's in our homes together, or in fellowships in the congregation.

We pray for your spirit to be present, to bless us, and to enrich us through it all. And so, Lord, as we continue to worship you this evening, we pray your blessing over us, and your word to us.

Remember us in all our needs, and remember us in the world in which we live, and the turmoil that we see around us again and again, throughout our land and throughout the nations of the world.

We look to you, Lord, even as the psalmist said, how long thus shall it be? Lord, let it repent thee now for those that servants are to thee, or with thy tender mercies, Lord, as early satisfy.

So we rejoice shall all our days, and still be glad in thee. We pray that your people, near and far, would rejoice and be glad in you, and that together we too here over these days, would rejoice and be glad in you as our Lord, and as our Saviour.

[12 : 29] Hear our prayers, and forgive us all our sins, as we confess them anew this evening, as we know, Lord, as we come, to prepare ourselves, as we examine our hearts.

We see the blackness of our sin, and we mourn over it, Lord, but pray your blessing, and your forgiveness, and your mercy to be upon us. So hear us now, and continue with us, and we ask all these things, for the sake, and for the glory of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, and him alone.

Amen. Amen. We'll again sing to God's praise, in Psalm 67, in the Scottish Psalter version.

We're going to sing the first version of this psalm, page 300 of the psalm books. Psalm 67, the first version.

Again, this is a prayer for us, as we look to God's blessing over us. Lord, bless and pity us, shine on us with thy face, that the earth, thy way, and nations all, may know thy saving grace.

[13 : 37] Let people praise thee, Lord, let people all thee praise. Let the nations be glad, and songs their voices raise. We'll sing the whole of this psalm, to God's praise.

Amen. Lord, bless and pity us, shine on us with thy face, that the earth, thy way, and nations all, may know and save in place.

Let people praise thee, Lord. Let people all thee praise.

O let the nations be glad, in songs their voices ring.

Thou justly people judge, on earth, foolish and small.

[15 : 10] Let people praise thee, Lord, let them praise thee, O great and small.

The earth, our fruit shall heal, our God shall bless in sin, God shall us bless, men shall them fear, and to earth shall come.

We'll turn to read together now in God's word. We're going to read in the Gospel of Luke, and chapter 23. Luke chapter 23.

We'll take up our reading at verse 18, and read down to verse 49. Luke chapter 23.

We'll take up our reading at verse 18. But they all cried out together, Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas, a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city, and for murder.

[16 : 50] Pilate addressed them once more, deciding to release Jesus, but they kept shouting, Crucify, crucify him. A third time he said to them, Why?

What evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him. But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified, and their voices prevailed.

So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their will.

And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross to carry it behind Jesus.

And there followed him a great multitude of the people, and of women who were mourning and lamenting for him. But turning to them, Jesus said, Daughters of Jerusalem, Do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.

[18 : 08] For behold, the days are coming when they will say, Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed. Then they will begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, cover us.

For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry? Two others who were criminals were led away to be put to death with him.

And when they came to the place that is called the skull, there they crucified him and the criminals, one on his right hand and one on his left.

And Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. And they cast lots to divide his garments. And the people stood by, watching.

But the rulers scoffed at him, saying, He saved others. Let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his chosen one.

[19 : 14] The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine and saying, If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself. There was also an inscription over him, This is the king of the Jews.

One of the criminals, who were hanged, railed at him, saying, Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us. But the other rebuked him, saying, Do you not fear God, since you are under the same

sentence of condemnation?

And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds. But this man has done nothing wrong. And he said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

And he said to him, Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise. It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun's light failed, and the curtain of the temple was torn in two.

Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. And having said this, he breathed his last.

[20 : 36] Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, Certainly this man was innocent. And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home, beating their breasts.

And all his acquaintances and the woman who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things. And so on.

And may God bless that reading from his word. Before we turn back to this passage, we'll again sing to God's praise, this time in Psalm 116.

And we'll sing Psalm's version, page 154. Psalm 116, and we'll sing from verse 1 down to verse 9. I love the Lord, because he heard my voice.

He listened when I cried to him for aid. I'll call on him as long as I shall live, because he turned to hear me when I prayed.

[21 : 44] We'll sing from verse 1 to verse 9 to God's praise. I love the Lord, because he heard my voice.

He listened when I cry to him for aid.

I'll call on him as long as I shall live, because he turned to hear me when I prayed.

The courts of death gripped and entangled me.

Upon me came the anguish of the grave.

[22 : 58] With grief and trouble I was overcome. Then on the name of God I call Lord, Lord, sing The Lord, our God, is kind and full of grace, both righteous and compassionate is he.

The Lord protects all those of childlike faith.

When I was in great need, he rescued me.

rest, O my soul, God has been good to you.

For you, O Lord, have saved my soul from death.

[24 : 25] I keep from stumbling and high eyes from tears, but I may live for you while I have breath.

you can turn back with me to the passage we read in Luke chapter 23.

We're going to look at this section from verse 26 down to verse 49. We're going to focus on the situation that we see here as we look to the cross.

We read in verse 26, And as they led him away, they seized one, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross to carry it behind Jesus.

And there followed him a great multitude of people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for him. Well, as we come to focus our attention this evening and on these days ahead as we prepare to come to the Lord's table, our focus is always towards the cross.

[25 : 55] The cross is always the heart of all our preaching, of all that we do in the Lord's name.

The cross is always there, central to it all, central to our faith.

It is where Jesus died that sinners might be saved. But when you think of the cross and what it means to people today, how do people view the suffering of Jesus at Calvary?

How do they view the cross? So many people come to the cross in different ways. For some, it means nothing at all. For some, it is just downplayed.

some people see it as some kind of cruelty and injustice that God would send his son into the world to die on the cross.

Was it really necessary? How important is the cross? There's lots of views out there, but what about with yourself?

[27 : 00] How do you view the cross? And how do you view Jesus on the cross as we think of coming to remember his death until he comes?

Well, the word of God reminds us that we really fall into two categories when it comes to thinking of the cross. It's in 1 Corinthians 1, verse 18, where it says the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing.

it's foolishness to many, but it says it's folly to those who are perishing. Even without realizing these people who downplay the cross, who mock the cross, there are people who are perishing. But, in 1 Corinthians 1, verse 18, it says, But to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. Us who are being saved, we are being saved from our sin as we look in faith to the cross and Christ crucified. For there we see the power of God to salvation.

[28 : 20] And so, if you're a Christian today, if you long to be a Christian today, we come to the cross and we come there to the feet of Jesus, to the foot of the cross.

And there we want to see there is the power of God to save. It's quite interesting when you go through the Gospel of Luke how you find at different points people at the feet of Jesus.

In Luke 7 verse 31, there we read of someone who came to the feet of Jesus, someone who you wouldn't expect to find at the feet of Jesus.

A sinful woman, a woman of the city she is called, a prostitute. It says in verse 37, Behold, a woman of the city who was a sinner when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment and standing behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wipe them with the hair of her head.

It's a beautiful image there. She was at the feet of Jesus with her tears falling onto his feet and wiping his feet with her hair.

[29 : 51] We read of someone else in Luke chapter 10 verse 39 who was at the feet of Jesus and it was Mary. She had a sister, that's Martha, had a sister called Mary who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching.

She sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. One more we could just see is Luke chapter 17 and verse 16 where Jesus had cleansed ten lepers but only one came back to Jesus.

The one, then one of them says in verse 15 when he saw that he was healed, turned back praising God with a loud voice and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet giving him thanks.

You have these three incidents where people come to the feet of Jesus and you see they're all in different ways but the culmination of them all is as we see the crowds coming to the foot of the cross where they see the feet of Jesus pierced as he hangs on the cross and each one is there with their own different thoughts with their own different set of circumstances with their own differences in life just like you think of the sinful woman or Mary or the one who had leprosy who was healed all different backgrounds but found themselves at the feet of Jesus and it's a place we all come to everyone comes to the cross in some way either being foolish and dismissing it and perishing or seeing it as the power of

God and being saved and this passage before us this evening it reminds us of different ways in which people came to the cross crowds gathered there followed it says in verse 27 a great multitude of people they all followed they all came and remember this was Jerusalem at the time of the Passover a city that was full of people who had come from all over to remember the Passover festival crowds of people we want to see how the crowds reacted as they were at the foot of the cross there are three types of people I want us to look at and as we think of preparing ourselves to come to the Lord's table to remember his death we ask ourselves where do we find ourselves when it comes to the categories we will look at of those who are at the cross there were three

[32 : 59] I want us to see three different groups there were those who mocked there were those who mourned and there were those who marveled and we're going to think of each of these each of these groups just for a few moments each and ask ourselves where are we when we think of coming to remember the Lord's death as we think of the cross and what it means to ourselves where are we well the first group that we see is those who mocked and they were not just a few they were prominent at this time as you see Jesus being mocked as it were all along the way here from appearing before Herod before Pilate being delivered over to the Roman soldiers and to the will of the people there are those who are mocking him all along the way and even as he is hanging on the cross there are those who are still mocking him from governors to soldiers to those who stood watching to passers by they were all doing it they were all mocking him in different ways and mocking is a cruel thing it's a cruel thing if you've ever been on the end of being mocked or ridiculed you know it hurts but imagine how much it hurt

Jesus there was the physical side of his suffering but what about as he saw these people mocking him mocking him as he was on his way to the cross mocking him as he hung on the cross and realising what he had come to do the fulfilment of scripture here he was coming to die for sinners as the word of John says he came to his own but his own did not receive him as you go back into the

prophecy of Isaiah 53 you see it fulfilled in those who mocked him it's a saying I'm sure you've heard it sticks and stones will break my bones but names will never hurt me it's not true name calling mocking is one of the most hurtful things that someone can experience and if you look at verse 35 and 36 you see it there the people stood by watching but the rulers scoffed at him saying he saved others let him save himself if he is the

Christ of God his chosen one the soldiers also mocked him coming up and offering him sour wine and saying if you are the king of the Jews save yourself you see the mocking if the question there if you are the Christ of God if you are the chosen one if you are the king of the Jews they're questioning who he is yet he was all of these things he was and is the king of the Jews he was and is the Christ of God he was and is the chosen one all of these things he was and is but they were mocking him with the question if you are the chosen one if you are the Christ of God if you are the king of the

Jews and nothing has changed there are still those who will mock Jesus if you watch television today films and stand up comedians Jesus and Christians it's an easy target it's common place to be hearing mocking it's been growing and growing over the years but it seems to spread further and further so that now you find mocking of Christians and Jesus in the more serious programs in news programs in politics and documentaries it has spread because the Christian faith is seen as an easy target it's in our own communities if you see online discussion anything that's mentioned about our own island and its Christian faith and heritage it's mocked it's ridiculed people pour out their anger towards it you find it more and more in our own island and it's all based on ridiculing

God and Jesus they were there in the time of Jesus' crucifixion and they're still there today but the word of God is folly to those who are perishing that is a serious side that they don't see but to mock Jesus to ridicule him is to perish to be lost eternally there are consequences to all of these things and yet even in the midst of the mocking what we see here is a powerful reminder of the love of God of his love towards us and it's the words of Jesus that always is so powerful when he says father forgive them in verse 34 for they know not what they do the mercy that he shows even in the midst of mocking and for many of us perhaps we've known that mercy for ourselves that we were once a people who mocked and ridiculed

[39 : 58] Christ the cross and the Christian faith but by God's grace he saved us he brought us to himself but there's a serious side for it too that if we continue in mocking we will perish there was a man called Bertrand Russell I'm sure many of you may have heard of him a famous mathematician he had a tragic childhood he lost his parents when he was young and he was really brought up by a grandmother and a grandmother who sought to teach him the Christian faith but he rejected the Christian faith his life went in a very different direction and he became an outspoken atheist mocking the Christian faith often but after he passed away

I think it was 1970 he passed away his daughter Catherine Tate she wrote a book about his life and she said in the book somewhere at the bottom of his heart in the depths of his soul there was an empty space that had once been filled by God and he never found anything else to put in it such a sad statement of a life there was a space in the bottom of his heart in the depths of his soul an empty space that had once been filled by God and he never found anything else to put in it mocking leaves us empty so let our hearts be filled with Christ let it be filled with that forgiveness and that mercy of

God towards us you'll have heard it before the saying of Paschal there's a God shaped void in the heart of each man which cannot be satisfied by any created thing but only by God the creator made known through Jesus Christ that void can only be filled by Christ mocking leaves us empty and that's why Jesus says Father forgive them for they know not what they do the second thing we see is those who mourned there were so many people who came to the cross and mocking but we see there also those large crowds of those who mourned there was his friends his family you read there in verse 27 there followed followed a great multitude of people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for him wherever

Jesus went there was crowds as you see him teaching and ministering all through the gospels you see there's always large crowds of people he had his followers he had those who came to believe in him and came to trust in him and as they were coming to the cross there is much mourning and lamenting for him and it's a fulfillment of the scripture itself fulfillment of the prophecy of Zachariah in Zachariah 12 verse 10 it says there and I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and a pleas for mercy so that when they look on me on him whom

they have pierced they shall mourn for him as one mourns for an only child and weep bitterly over him there's a sense of prophecy that's being fulfilled here weeping and mourning over Jesus as it says there years before it happened they look on me on him whom they have pierced and there will be mourning the question is were they right to mourn and should we mourn over the death of Jesus Jesus says in verse 28 here turning to them Jesus said daughters of Jerusalem do not weep for me but weep for yourselves and for your children should we mourn as we look to the cross I guess there's two sides of and Jesus gives us the two sides here the first thing that we see is he says do not weep for me but weep for yourselves and that helps us to understand when we look at the cross that we do come in mourning that we do come in sorrow and in sadness because as we look at the cross and as we see the need for

[45 : 26] Jesus to be hung on the cross to die there on the cross we have to ask ourselves why why was Jesus there he was there because of our sin he was there to deal with our sin because we cannot deal with it ourselves we cannot heal the sins of our heart ourselves the only way for our sin to be dealt with was by Jesus going to the cross and there is much mourning and lamenting for him here as we see the crowds who had followed him they believe that their saviour is being taken from them they believe the one who had come to save his people was now being put to death and taken away they weren't understanding all that had been prophesied in the

Old Testament all that Jesus himself had taught them there was a lack of understanding of what he had said to them that he must go to Jerusalem he must be put to death but those are forgetting that he would on the third day rise again and as he is saying do not weep for me weep for yourselves he is saying weep because of the consequences of sin and all that it means for Jerusalem and for God's people for here we would see later on that Jerusalem would be overthrown that the people would suffer in so many ways but Jesus says also do not weep for me because it was necessary for him to go to the cross he was fulfilling the will of his father he was fulfilling all that he had come to do to save his people from their sins and so we come mourning so many things in our life the sin in our hearts the state of the church the mocking of the Christian faith the sinful nature of our world in so many ways we weep and mourn over that but it is not to stay there it is not to stay in mourning but to realise the joy that he brings to us through his death the peace that he gives to his people the peace that he is able to give to the world he went there for our sins really it was only after the event that the disciples and the people of God who mourned here had their mourning turned to joy as they saw the risen saviour as they met with him again as their hearts burned within them as he rejoiced that he is risen that he had come to die yes but that he rose from the grave they could rejoice but it could only come afterwards

I read a poem by Olga Weiss and it's called The Road is Too Rough and she says this in the poem The road is too rough I said Dear Lord there are stones that hurt me so and he said dear child I understand I walked it long ago but there's a cool green path I said let me walk there for a time no child he gently answered me the green path does not climb my burden I said is far too great how can I bear it so my child he said I remember the weight I carried my cross you know but I said I wish there were friends with me who would make my way their own oh yes he said

Gethsemane was hard to bear alone and so I climb the stony path content at last to know that where my master had not gone I would not need to go and strangely then I found new friends the burden grew less sore and I remember long ago he went that way before

[54 : 16] and he says in verse 42 Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom and Jesus said to him truly I say to you today you will be with me in paradise what a transformation the work of grace that turns this thief from one who mocked to one who marvels at Jesus and that is the power of the cross it is the power to save and we see it too with the Roman centurion in verse 47 now when the centurion saw what had taken place he praised God saying certainly this man was innocent he too marveled at the Lord Jesus and what he was doing we're told elsewhere truly this is the son of

God there's this transformation the soldier who was probably among those who were mocking him casting lots for him now he's here before the cross at the foot of the cross saying truly certainly this man was innocent marveling at the sight of Jesus of what he saw and what he heard the composure of Jesus what he could have done there on the cross he could have saved himself if he wanted to he didn't he died that we might live he saw his compassion towards him the forgiveness he offered and the impact on him was to say that certainly this man was innocent and that's how we should come to the cross that's how we should come to the

Lord's table looking to Jesus certainly this man was innocent and we are not but we can say in my place condemned he stood and should that not make us all marvel marvel and rejoice that there the son of God bore our sins the hymn writer says when I survey the wondrous cross on which the prince of glory died my riches gain I count but loss and poor contempt on all my pride and a few verses later he says where the whole realm of nature mine that were a present far too small love so amazing so divine demands my soul my life my all what can we give to God and thanks for all that he has done for us but that we would marvel that Jesus would die for me that demands that love demands my soul my life my all as we approach this communion weekend let us spend more time marveling at the foot of the cross where the prince of glory died that we might live it reminds us of the mocking it gives us a sense of mourning over the price of our sin but may it help us marvel and fill us with a sense of assurance of the salvation that he gives to us and the fullness of joy and praise that is ours let us pray our father in heaven we rejoice in your mercy towards us we rejoice in your gift to us of your son the one who was despised and rejected the one who was mocked so cruelly the one who so many mourned over and yet the one who like the soldier and the thief who marveled that we can come and marvel at his love for us and we pray Lord that you will help us to prepare our hearts to be still and to know that you are God that you are the one who is able to fill our hearts with that joy continue to bless us and go before us in all things as we ask it all with forgiveness of our sin in Jesus name Amen We're going to conclude by singing to God's praise in Psalm 139a in the Sing Psalms page 181 Psalm 139a we sing from verse 16 down to verse 18 and all the days that I should live which you ordained for me were written in your book O Lord before they came to be O God how precious are your thoughts I scan them from afar and as I seek to grasp them all how numberless they are we'll sing from verse 16 to 18 to God's praise and all the days that I should live which you ordained for me were written in your book oh Lord before they came to me

[61 : 00] O God how precious are your thoughts I scan them from afar and I seek to grasp them o'er how numberless they are when I took them they would be more than the grave of sun when I am awake I am with you still safe within your hand now may grace mercy and peace from

God Father Son and Holy Spirit rest upon and abide with you all now and forever more Amen God