

Cross and Community

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

Date: 14 September 2014

Preacher: Rev Kenneth I Macleod

[0 : 00] From the Scottish Psalter. O Lord, thou hast me searched unknown, thou knowest my sitting down and rising up. Yea, all my thoughts afar to thee are known.

My footsteps and my lying down thou compasses always. Thou also most entirely art acquainted with all my ways. For in my tongue before I speak, not any word can be.

But altogether, lo, O Lord, it is well known to thee. Behind before thou hast beset and laid on me thine hand. Such knowledge is too strange for me, too high to understand.

From thy spirit whither shall I go? Or from thy presence fly? Ascend I heaven, lo, thou art there. There if in hell I lie. And so to the end of verse 10, it's on page 432.

1, 3, 9, 1 to 10. Jun's and Dandu, O Lord, as we searched unknown. O Lord, thou hast me searched unknown.

[1 : 10] Thou hast me searched known. Thou hast me searched unknown. Thou hast me searched unknown. And rising up, yea, all my thoughts afar to thee are known.

My first step and my lying hand. Thou compasses always.

Thou Hyattabbing, Bosh thingufts Fukuea.

All my ways. For in my tongue before I speak.

Not any word can be. But unto yet thou, O Lord.

[2 : 37] It is well known to thee. Behind before thou hast been set.

And laid on me thine hand. Such knowledge is too strange for me.

Too high to understand. From thy spirit whither shall I go.

Or from thy presence fly. Ascend I am.

Lo, thou art there. Then if it hell I lie.

[3 : 54] Take eye the morning wings and dwell. In uttermost parts of sea.

Even there, O'er shall, Thy hand lead. Thy right hand, O shall me.

Let us bow in prayer. O gracious God, we pray to bless us today as we gather together. We pray that our worship will be meaningful, that it will be beneficial to each and every one of us.

Help us to know your peace, and help us to know the word of God into the very depth of our soul.

Minister to us, O Lord. Lord, we are looking when we come here to be fed by the word of God.

It is the bread of life. It is that which will bring us life, and bring us nourishment, and help us along the way. And so we pray today, Lord, that we will know your goodness and mercy following us all the days of our life.

[5 : 16] We pray that our focus will be upon Jesus, that we will see him, we will hear him, that we will know him. And we pray to reveal yourself to us in the word, so that we will come to a greater understanding of who you are and what you've done for us.

We pray to bless us all here with spiritual and temporal blessings, from the youngest to the oldest. May we know the power of God, and may we know the peace of God that passes all understanding. And we pray to direct our hearts and direct our lives. Help us to remember that the word of God tells us that you are the one who guides people.

The psalm tells us, I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you will go. I will guide you with mine eye. And the warning is not to be like the horse or the mule in their stubbornness, but that we might know God's leading, God's guiding.

And so we pray that we might be willing to be led, because there is an inbuilt resistance. We have to confess that, Lord. An inbuilt resistance towards your word and towards your way, where we often will find ourselves in conflict with the word of God.

[6 : 33] And we will want to do our thing. We will want to go our way. We will want that our will will be done. May we have the spirit of Jesus who said, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

And we ask, O Lord, that that might be true, so that there will be, we will be willing to comply with your way and with your will. And we know that that sometimes will be difficult to flesh and blood, because it is not the way that we want, maybe, or the way we expect.

But help us to realize that the glory of God is caught up in everything. And we pray that we might be seeking the glory of God in what we do and in what we say.

We pray to bless us as a congregation. Put your arm around us and protect us from the evil one. May we know the joy and the peace of God. And may we know your love poured in and upon us. We pray to open the windows of heaven and pour down blessing upon us. Give us a spiritual appetite for the things of God. May we hunger and thirst after righteousness.

[7 : 37] And may there be a longing within us a genuine longing to do part, like the Apostle said, to be with Christ, which is far better. We ask, O Lord, then to help us and bless the Sunday school teachers and all who are involved with the young people.

We pray for Marianne and Kenneth tonight at the Youth Fellowship. We pray for all the work that goes on week in, week out with the young people. We ask, Lord, to bless them and uphold them and keep them.

We pray for those who mourn. We remember the family of the late Kate out of McLeod and pray to bless them and bless all who tonight, today, have sore hearts and who have experienced the crushing that death brings.

Lord, bring peace, bring help, bring hope into all hearts. We pray for those who are sick, those who are undergoing treatment, those who are experiencing many difficulties in life.

We pray that as a great physician that you will help them and bless them. Pray to bless us nationally at a time like this where this week great decisions will be made.

[8 : 48] And we pray above all that we will seek your wisdom and your guidance and that we will know the blessing of God, the direction of God, because we realize that this is something that crosses all political divides, it is something that has far-reaching consequences upon us.

And so we ask, O Lord, that in everything we will look to the Lord Jesus because you are the one who are able to exalt and the one who are able to bring down.

The Word of God makes it very clear to us that righteousness is what exalts a nation. And so we ask, O Lord, that even at a time like this that we will be seeking the Lord and his righteousness. and so we pray for thy blessing upon us nationally and internationally. Lord, we pray for the troubled areas of this world where there's peace and hatred and bloodshed.

O Lord, bring togetherness, unity, and peace. Watch over us then, we pray, cleansing us from our sin. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. Amen. I just, a wee word to the young folk.

[9 : 59] Yesterday I got, in the post, I got a new driving license. My old one was just about to go, it was to go out in October and I had to apply for a new one. Because you can't drive a car without one.

If you lose your license, you can't drive a car. And I don't mean if you don't know where your license is, if you've put it somewhere in the house and you can't find it, well, I don't know, there are policemen and policewomen in this congregation who know all about these things far better than I do.

But that's not what I talk about, losing your license. Because if I just have put my license somewhere and I don't exactly know where it is, I know that I have it that's somewhere in the house, I can still drive.

But you can lose your license by doing things that are wrong when you're driving. And there was a wee booklet that I saw with loads of the things that can happen and that you, if you do something wrong, you can get sometimes a fine and three penalty points.

And if you top them all up, if you get three penalty points and then you get another three and you reach twelve penalty points, you lose your license for a while.

[11 : 21] And I was looking at some of the things and I was saying, you know, you could have a really, really unlucky day because you can. It all depends on, I suppose it depends on loads of things, but it could happen if you had a really, really bad day.

If you went through, for instance, the traffic lights up at Church Street and Matheson Road and they were red and you drove through them, which would be a dangerous thing to do, but if you were stopped, you could get three points for that.

If you didn't stop at a stop sign and there was traffic coming and you went out, you could get three points. And if the police were talking to you and they just happened to look at your tires and they noticed that the tires had gone really thin, that the tread had gone, you could end up with another three points.

And then if you drove off saying, what a terrible day I'm having and you drove too fast not realising and you got stopped again for speeding, you could get another three points. And if you had a really, really, really bad day and the police weren't in a good mood, you could end up with 12 points in the one day and you would lose your licence.

And you might say to yourself, that's tough. Well, that's the law. But, you know, when you look at life, loads of things in life are like that.

[12:51] But then we come to the Bible and we say to ourselves, what happens when we make a mistake? In fact, Peter went to Jesus one time and Peter said to Jesus, how often if my brother, and not just Andrew, but if a friend or anyone, does something wrong against me, how often am I to forgive him?

And Peter said, how about seven times? And I think Peter thought that was really generous. That if somebody did something bad to you once, twice, three times, four, five, six, seven, and you forgave seven times, Peter thought, oh, I'm doing really well.

And Jesus said, no, not seven times, but 70 times seven. I'm sure if Peter worked that out, he would say, that's 490 times.

Now, can you imagine trying to keep count? And you'd say to yourself, that's the 352nd time. You wouldn't. Because you would have lost count long ago.

And I think that's a point that Jesus is making. That we've got to learn to forgive and to forgive and to forgive. Because that's what God does in Jesus.

[14:12] God forgives us our sins in Jesus. Because Jesus took our sins on the cross. And if Jesus has taken our sins, then we have to go, that's what we have to do, is to go to God and say, oh, Lord, forgive me my sins.

Wash them away. Wash them with the blood of Jesus. And if we really ask that, God will. And do you know this? When God takes away our sins, do you know what he does?

He doesn't even remember them. He says, your sins and your iniquities, I will remember them no more. What a wonderful God we have.

Let us again sing to God's praise from sing psalms, psalm number 26. We're going to sing verses 1 to 8. Psalm 26 verses 1 to 8.

June is Evan, it's in psalm 26, sing psalms verses 1 to 8. It's on page 30. Declare me innocent, O Lord, I have walked in blameless ways, and I have trusted in the Lord, not wavering all my days.

[15:29] Test me, O Lord, and try my heart, my inmost thoughts survey. Your love surrounds me, from your truth my feet will never stray. I do not sit with worthless folk, I shun the hypocrite, I hate the wicked's gatherings, with them I will not sit.

And so on, Psalm 26, 1 to 8, the tune is Evan, declare me innocent, O Lord. Declare me innocent, O Lord, I walked in blameless ways, and I have trusted in the Lord, not wavering all my days.

test me, O Lord, and try my heart, my inmost thoughts survey.

Your love surrounds me, from your truth my feet will never stray.

I do not sit with worthless folk, I shun the hypocrite, I hate the wicked's gatherings, with them I will not sit.

[17:26] I wash my hands in innocence, and blameless is my heart.

I go upon your altar, Lord, Lord, the place you set apart.

I'll tell of all your awesome deeds, oh, claiming loud your praise, your glory felt, your dwelling place, I love your house always.

Let us turn now to read God's word, John's Gospel, chapter 13. Gospel of John, chapter 13. And we read the first 18 verses, first 17 verses, sorry.

John, chapter 13, verses 1 to 17. Now, before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

[19:03] During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper.

He laid aside his outer garments and, taking a towel, tied it round his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped round him.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, Lord, do you wash my feet? Jesus answered him, what I am doing you do not understand now, but afterwards you will understand.

Peter said to him, you shall never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, if I do not wash you, you have no share with me. Simon Peter said to him, O Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

Jesus said to him, the one who has bathed does not need to wash except for his feet, but is completely clean, and you are clean, but not every one of you, for he knew who was to betray him, that was why he said, not all of you are clean.

[20 : 24] When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, do you understand what I have done to you? You call me teacher and Lord and you write, for so I am.

If I then, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet, for I have given you an example that you also should do just as I have done to you.

Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

Amen, and may God bless to us this reading of his holy word. I'm going to sing again from the Scottish Psalter, Psalm 51. Psalm 51, and we're going to sing verses 1 to 7 to the tune St. Kilda. It's on page 280. After thy loving kindness, Lord, have mercy upon me, for thy compassion's great blot out all mine iniquity, me cleanse from sin and throughly wash from mine iniquity, for my transgression I confess, my sin I ever see.

[21 : 37] Right down to verse 7, do thou with hyssop sprinkle me, I shall be cleansed so, yea, wash thou me, and then I shall be whiter than the snow.

Psalm 51, 1 to 7, tunes in Kilda, on page 280. After thy loving kindness, Lord. After thy loving kindness, Lord, have mercy upon me, for thy compassion's great water all my iniquity, me cleansed from sin and throughly wash from my iniquity, for my transgressions I confess my sin I ever see.

Against thee only have I sinned in thy sight done this still, that when thou speaks thou mayst be just and clear in judging still.

behold, I in iniquity was formed the womb within my mother also be conceived in guiltiness and sin.

[24 : 05] Behold thou with thee inward parts with truth delighted art and wisdom thou shalt thou shalt make me know within the hidden part to thou with this up sprinkle me I shall be cleansed so yea watch thou me and then I shall be whiter than the snow let's turn again to the chapter we read in john's gospel chapter 13 and I just want us to look over these verses that we read again just by way of overview we read there

I'll just read at the beginning now before the feast of the Passover when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of the world of the father having loved his own who were in the world he loved them to the end and so on and maybe we'll read at verse four as well and we read there that having knowing that he's going back to the father he rose from supper he laid aside his outer garments and taking a towel tied it around his waist then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples feet and so on the foot washing in the upper room is something that's sort of grabbed people's attention down over the years and we know that Jesus never did something just for the sake of doing something never did it just for effect sake or so that people would talk about it whatever Jesus did there was a purpose and there was a meaning to it and many of the outward things that he did had really deep significant things being taught to us even for instance like the feeding of the 5,000 which was an amazing and a wonderful miracle but it was teaching something far more than giving 5,000 people food and fortunately many of the people present couldn't see beyond getting food that's all they saw they saw it as an amazing miracle right enough but they were only taken up with the food part of it

Jesus said that to them you're following me you're wanting to make me king because because I fed you but Jesus was trying to teach them he went on and he spoke in depth and he was trying to teach them about their need for personal faith in himself about the atonement about how he was everything that they needed for their life and he was showing he said I am the bread of life I am the one that you need and so Jesus teaches through in a very illustrative way by many of the things that

he does and again we find that what Jesus does here is all tied into that opening statement Jesus knew as I had come to depart out of the world and to go back to the father and so we see Jesus here on the brink of the most awful moment in his experience he was turned remember a man of sorrows and he was acquainted with grief and so much of

Jesus life was hard it was difficult it was painful it was traumatic it was emotional because Jesus lived under huge pressure all the time I think it's something we often tend to forget but he was somebody who was rejected by and large by the people that he came to tells us that he came to his own and his own didn't receive him but however difficult experiences and times may have been for Jesus in his three years of public ministry he was just on the very brink of coming to the most awful moment that anybody in this world has ever experienced because Jesus is just about to experience the full force of God's wrath and punishment for sin along with all the horrors that crucifixion brought upon a person Jesus Jesus was taking it so many degrees deeper and further because tied in to the awfulness of all the physical and the mental and the emotional suffering and the anguish that the death of crucifixion brought tied in with that

Jesus on the cross was to undergo the full as we say the full force of God's wrath and punishment for sin and so Jesus is aware of what is before him and there are moments where he becomes quite disturbed we find occasions and we didn't reach that in verse 21 after saying these things Jesus was troubled in his spirit we find that on a few occasions and of course the biggest display of that was to happen just in a very short time in Gethsemane where there was this real anguish even although he was on the brink of this awful period we find there's a tremendous calmness and composure about Jesus and there's nothing about him at that particular time to indicate that he knew what was just in front of him and so the knowledge of the fearful darkness and the awful suffering that he was to go through didn't stop him caring for his disciples you know that's quite remarkable because if you look at all these people in the room

[30 : 38] I would say that there were only two people who were really disturbed in that room one of them was Judas to begin with Judas went out into the dark but I'm quite persuaded that Judas would have a there would be an unsettledness about him because he knew the dark work he was believed for one moment that Judas enjoyed any measure of peace in that upper room for a while until he went out but of course Jesus was the one whose heart was filled with anguish with what was ahead of him and yet we find himself giving himself to the disciples the horrors of what lay ahead didn't distract him so that in this period he pours himself out upon the disciples and we have all this rich teaching that goes on in John 14 15 and 16 all in the upper room and we have this amazing display of Jesus' care of his disciples so not even the anguish that lay ahead not even the joy that was beyond that because we're told that

Jesus that there was a joy set before him that's why he endured the cross that Jesus was seeing beyond the anguish into the glory into the amazing glory that he was to receive when his state of humiliation was over and he was brought into a state of exaltation and there was going to be this great longing that the whole church would join with him forever in glory this is all part of the joy but even the joy didn't distract him you and I know if there's something exciting ahead of us we're going to do something or go somewhere and we're really excited about it it's sometimes quite hard to concentrate because we find ourselves that we're being distracted with what we're going to do or where we're going and there's this excitement and we just can't focus properly upon what we're trying to do well that wasn't through of

Jesus so neither the horror nor the joy which was to follow the horrors distracted him from focusing upon his disciples and we know of course that Jesus and the disciples had just walked from Bethany and they wore sandals and their feet would be dirty and dusty from that long walk and so we find that which was the custom of the day when people went for a meal anywhere the host would organize for the guests to have their feet washed you took off the sandal your sandals you would give them a shake out and then have your feet washed that was a normal custom in fact Jesus remember when he had been invited to the house of Simon the Pharisee remember when that woman came in and anointed the feet of Jesus Simon the really condemning of that woman Jesus turned round to Simon and he said you know you asked me here but you didn't even give me the most basic or do the most basic thing for me which was to give me water to wash my feet that was normally the done thing that water would be given and it was often in those days often there was slaves it would be it was such a menial task to wash the person's feet that it would be often a slave or a servant that would do that particular job but here is Jesus in the upper room and we have

the Passover and the washing of the feet and so on but there are of course they're all guests to a certain extent there is no host as such but the amazing thing is that Jesus he takes the role of the host and he doesn't get somebody else to do the washing of the feet but he does it himself however it also tells us in

Luke's gospel tells us in other of the gospels as well that not a fight but a strife broke out amongst the disciples when they were at this supper this is something we we've often mentioned but I find it hard to get my head round a really strong argument I think that's the word you would use broke out amongst them as to which was the greatest of them each of them was saying look I'm better than you and you can almost hear Peter saying hey I've had experience even you John I know that you might be closest to Jesus John was lying against Jesus hi John you might be closer but you didn't walk on the water I did and you can hear you can almost hear them different ones saying well I did this and I did that they were vying for power you know one of the humanity this desperation for power it's caused so much heartache well here we have it even at the supper even at the table they're vying for power

[36 : 09] I'm top dog I'm better than you I have a greater position and Jesus gets up and he fills his basin and you know the timing the timing of this would have been absolutely extraordinary because here they are they're having a really heated discussion as to which one of them was the greatest and Jesus gets up and he fills a basin and he takes off his outer garment and he starts washing their feet you can almost hear the silence the shocked silence in the room what's going on and I can imagine they would have felt all of them quite ashamed of themselves because Jesus is giving a really practical rebuke to their pride by demonstrating his own humility and his own willingness to serve he was the servant and you can almost hear this stunned silence and you can almost feel the shame as they had been trying to make out each one of them was the greatest but you know when it says that

Jesus rose and he laid aside his outer garment and he took a towel and a basin water and he began to wash the disciples feet there's almost a spiritual side to this because there's almost here a picture of what Jesus did for us because it tells us here that he rose from supper and he laid aside his outer garments there you can almost see Jesus here rising as it were from the throne of glory and laying aside his glory, not that he divested himself of his glory he cannot as it were shed his glory, but it's as if his glory is hidden concealed when he came into this world.

And it tells us there that he laid aside his outer garment and taking a towel he tied it round his waist. He took this and he tied it to himself as he in humility dealt with the disciples.

And that's what he did. He rose as it were from the throne of glory and he as it were concealed his glory but he took to himself human nature, came into this world and humbled himself all the time, all the time Jesus was humbling himself for us.

Not at one moment was he humbling himself for himself but for us. Everything Jesus did right throughout his whole life in this world he did for us.

[38 : 52] Did because he was fulfilling the will of God which was for us. And so there is there is almost a picture here at this particular moment a spiritual for to spiritualize this the action of Jesus is really showing a wee picture of what he has done.

And it's interesting it tells us that at the end if you go to verse 12 when he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments he resumed his place and said to them.

And that's what Jesus did he came into this world for a short time he did everything that was required of him and then he ascended back into glory.

We have that told that's how it tells us in Hebrews when he had by himself purged our sins sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high.

So in what Jesus is doing there we have a little picture of the whole mission of Jesus. So then as Jesus goes round washing the disciples feet he comes to Peter and of course Peter being Peter reacts and Peter says to him Lord do you wash my feet?

[40 : 12] It's almost like this is preposterous this is completely out of order and Peter of course objects strongly Lord you're not going to wash my feet. And Jesus makes that statement he says what I am doing you do not understand but afterwards you will understand.

And that statement that Jesus makes there is so true it's true in your experience and in my experience there are many things that Jesus does that we just don't understand.

Many things happen within our lives that we don't understand. But Jesus is here saying and it's a great comfort. Jesus I said to him there what I am doing you do not understand now but afterwards

you will understand.

And for instance John would have been in the same boat as Peter John didn't object but John wouldn't have understood any more than Peter exactly what was happening.

But remember when they ran Peter and John ran to the grave when they got news the grave was empty. Peter ran in and John looked in and it tells us he believed.

[41 : 29] There was that moment where everything came together was a dawning realization. The picture was beginning to come together. All these mysteries and things he couldn't understand and the things that had baffled him and torn his heart.

It was whoa I'm now seeing. And I believe it's going to be like that as well. There are maybe many of you in here right now and your hearts are torn and you do not understand.

And the Lord is saying of you today what I am doing in your life what has been happening. You don't understand. You cannot understand. But one day you will.

Maybe not you might understand in this world but maybe you won't. But you certainly will in the world to come. because I believe that's one of the things that will happen in glory where there will be an unfolding of God's purposes.

Where we will see things from his side rather than from our side. Just now we can only see it from our side. But his side is completely different.

[42 : 38] That's why the Lord says, look he says, my ways are so much higher than your ways. Just as the heaven is so much higher above us than the earth. So are my ways and thoughts and your ways and thoughts.

And so we're often left confused and perplexed when sad things happen, when tragic things happen, when traumatic things happen.

Lord, I don't understand. Why, Lord? The Lord is saying, one day, maybe not just now, but one day, and then we find, of course, that Peter is saying, Lord, you shall never wash, you'll never wash my feet.

And Jesus said to him, if I do not wash, you have no share with me. You shall never wash my feet. And I'm sure there have been times, too, when we've said the never to the Lord.

Maybe there's somebody here today who's saying never to the Lord. Maybe the Lord's asking you to do something, or to give up something. And you're saying, no, Lord, can't, I won't, never.

[43 : 55] But we've always got to be careful that we don't say never to the Lord. When the Lord asks us to do something, we must be always willing. It might not be easy, and sometimes we have to say, Lord, what you're asking me to do is going to be so, so difficult.

You're going to have to give me loads of grace. But the thing is, the Lord will, he does give us the grace. And we need to go to him and ask him, because far too often we try, we try and do things on our own, when we're challenged by the word, and we say, oh, that's going to be so difficult.

And we say, I don't know how I'm going to do that. No, you can't do it yourself. I can't. That's where we need his help, his strength, his grace. My grace, he says, is sufficient for you.

So this is what we need. So then when Jesus said to Peter, you know, he said, if I don't wash you, you have no part with me.

And of course, Peter being Peter, he goes completely the other way. First of all, no, Lord, you never, and when Jesus says, Peter, if I don't wash you, you have no part with me.

[45 : 06] Oh, well, Lord, completely wash me. It's just typical Peter, he goes from one extreme to the other. And Jesus says, the one who has bathed does not need to wash except his feet.

And again, Jesus is teaching a great spiritual truth from the custom of the day. When a person would be going to dinner, very simply they would bathe. But by the time they got to where they were going, their feet would be dirty.

Now, of course, that's all that needed to be cleaned. They had already been washed. They were already clean. But all they needed was their feet to be washed and to be cleaned. That had to be done over and over again within the day.

And Jesus is saying the same thing to us. He says, you know, you only need to be washed, bathed once by me. You see, Jesus doesn't say to us, you must be born again and again and again and again.

Imagine if that's how it was, that you would be born again, but then you would fall out of being born again, and you need to be born again all over. No, it doesn't work like that.

[46 : 21] Once we come to faith in Jesus Christ, that's it. we don't fall out of faith with Jesus Christ. Our faith may wobble, our faith may go very low.

Sometimes Jesus said to the disciples, and remember it was the disciples, to Peter, James, and John, oh you of little faith. These were the leaders of the church, oh you of little faith.

So faith can wobble, faith can be very little. And as he said sometimes to people, oh you of great, great is your faith. But the fact is, once faith comes into existence, it remains.

We never fall out of love with Jesus. More importantly, he never falls out of love with us. Even although you may wander far away, even although you may go through days and you forget all about him, sometimes it can happen for the Christian in the good days.

And they say, you know, I haven't opened my Bible. I'm not hearing what Jesus is saying. I don't think I'm even talking. Then there's a great rebuke within the heart.

[47 : 38] But even although we may forget him, he never forgets us. He never loses his love for us. And because it's his love that has turned us round and taken hold of us, then we in turn continue to love him.

We love him because he first loved us. So that's what Jesus is saying. Once you've been bathed, you don't need to be bathed again. But you need your feet washed.

And what Jesus is saying is, in the daily going on in this world, we need the daily cleansing. We need the once and for all in him, but we also need his daily cleansing.

And that's why every day we're going to the Lord again and again and again and again and saying, oh Lord, forgive me. Lord, I'm sorry for what I said there. Really sorry, Lord, about what I've done. I've let you down and I've let myself down. That's what we're doing. We're going back again and again to the Lord. How often? But that's what we're to do. That's why we're saying there to the children, it's not four times like you could lose your license for four different things on a really, really bad day.

[48 : 56] It's not like Peter said, Lord, is it seven times I forgive? No, 70 times seven. It's ongoing. But we've to go and just say to the Lord again and again, Lord, please forgive me.

And sometimes you say to yourself, oh, the Lord must be fed up of me coming. Well, the same thing, no, he's not. He just wants to see you come and acknowledge your failings and your failures. And you know something? He's a God who delights in mercy. He loves to forgive. He loves to send us on our way with a sense of our sins having been forgiven.

It's a wonderful, wonderful thing. And finally, Jesus, then he says to the disciples, do you understand what I have done to you? You call me teacher and Lord and you are right, for so I am. If I then your teacher and Lord have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. And so Jesus is really teaching. I would say if you were to take a theme out of this passage, to give it a title, it would be cross and community.

[50 : 10] The cross is what Jesus has done, but the impact of the cross affects the community. And Jesus is here showing the care, the humility, the love, the compassion that has to be in the Christian heart for one another.

And if you and I cannot stoop down to help one another, then there's something far wrong. We're not showing the compassion, the love of Jesus within our heart.

He who is the one who created all things is the one who is ready to take the basin and to go down on his knees and to do the most menial task possible. Compassion and love has to be in the heart of the Christian.

And so this is what Jesus is teaching us. There's cross and community all tied together here. And he's saying to his disciples, you call me teacher and Lord.

Are you able today to say to Jesus or say about Jesus, Lord, you today, Lord are my teacher and my Lord. And if you can say that, you know, I would say you're in a great place.

[51 : 20] Because to be a teacher means that you want to be under the teaching of somebody. And Jesus is the one who teaches us in the word.

And you're saying, Lord, may your word be the rule for my life. And if you're saying to him, Lord, I want you to be my Lord, it means very simply that you're saying, Lord, you're my king.

I have bowed down under your authority and your rule. And if you've done that, my friend, you're a Christian. If today Jesus is your Lord and he's your teacher, then you are in the right place.

If he's not, then ask him even now, Lord, please become my Lord and my teacher. Let us pray. O Lord, we pray that the teaching of this word may indeed impact our lives for good.

May we be all, as it says in the word, taught of the Lord. We cannot pray or want anything greater than to be taught of the Lord. And we pray that the Holy Spirit will teach us and guide us through the truth, that we may learn the right way to go.

[52 : 45] And forgive us, Lord, for how often we go wrong. Forgive us, Lord, for our personal sins. Forgive us, Lord, for our collective sins. Forgive us, O Lord, for not being what we would love to be and certainly not being what you want us to be.

and yet you are so patient with us. And we give thanks that you are molding us and shaping us to become like your Son, Jesus Christ.

What an amazing thought. And we pray then that we may, even in the dark times, and it's often in the dark times, come to discover your mercy, your love, your grace.

Lord, do us good, we pray. Take us to our home safely. We pray to bless a cup of tea in the hall afterwards and take away your sin in Jesus' name. Amen. Our concluding singing is from Sing Psalm, Psalm number 31.

Sing Psalm, Psalm number 31, the tune is Herringate, and it's at verse 20, it's on page 37. Psalm 31 on page 37, verse 20.

[53 : 56] Your presence hides and shelters them from those who plot to take their life, and in your tent you keep them safe from evil tongues that stir up strife. The Lord be praised because he showed the wonder of his love to me.

When in a city I was trapped, surrounded by the enemy, in my alarm I rashly said that I was hidden from your eyes. But when I called to you for help, in grace you listened to my cries.

O love the Lord, all you who saints, the faithful, will be kept by God, but he will give the proud their due. Be strong, take heart, hope in the Lord.

Psalm 31, verses 20 to the end. Your presence hides and shelters them. Your presence hides and shelters them from those who want to take their life.

And in your tent you keep them safe from evil tongues that stir up strife.

[55 : 20] the Lord be great because he showed the wonder of his love to me.

When in a city I was trapped, surrounded by the enemy, in my alarm I rashly said that I was hidden from your eyes.

But when I call to you for help, in grace you listen to my cries.

O love the Lord all you who sings, the faithful will be kept by God, but he will give the proud their due.

Be strong, take heart, hope in the Lord. Now may the grace, mercy, and peace of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit rest and abide upon each one of you, now and forever more.

[57 : 14] Amen.