

Unbelief and the Transforming Grace of God

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: 20 October 2024

Preacher: Rev Callum Macleod

[0 : 00] We're going to begin our worship by singing to God's praise from Psalm 69 in the Scottish Psalter and at verse 30. It's on page 308 of the Psalm book. Psalm 69 at verse 30.

The name of God I with a song most cheerfully will praise and I in giving thanks to him his name shall highly raise. We sing from verse 32 the end of the Psalm to God's praise.

The name of God I with a song most cheerfully will praise and I in giving thanks to him his name shall highly raise.

This to the Lord a sacrifice more gracious shall prove than bullock, ox, or any beast that hath both horn and hoof.

When this the humble man shall see, it joy to them shall give.

[1 : 43] O all ye that do seek the Lord, your hearts shall ever live.

For God the poor hears and will not his praise. Let him and earth and seas embrace and all that move in them.

For God will Judah cities build and he will Zion save.

That they may dwell therein and it in sure possession have.

And they that are his servant's seed inherit shall the same.

[3 : 09] So shall they have their dwelling there that love his blessed name.

Let's bow our heads and pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Almighty and most gracious God, rejoice in the worship of your name.

Lord, we are thankful to you for your word. It reminds us of the kind of God that you are. It reminds us of your people's response to all that you have made yourself known to them.

And we give thanks to you for your word. And we worship you for your word. And we worship you and we give thanks to you for every way in which you have made yourself known.

As the Father who sent your Son into this world to be our Savior. As the Son of God who loved us and gave himself for us.

[4 : 17] And as the Spirit of God brings new life into our hearts. That gives us to see the beauty of your Son as our Savior. And that gives to us that hope of everlasting life.

And as we worship you together today. May we sense something in our hearts of your presence with us. Seeing something of the glory that belongs to you as our Father in Heaven.

Seeing something of the beauty that belongs to your Son as our Savior. And sensing in a deep and felt way. The ministry of your Holy Spirit.

Shining a light upon the passion of your Son. Giving us to see his beauty and the purpose of his coming. And giving us to understand what that means for ourselves personally.

And bringing us together to that place where by faith in his name. We may know what it is to receive the gift of everlasting life. And journey on through life as those who have that hope and that confidence in you.

[5 : 25] That sure and certain hope of the resurrection. Living in this world in the midst of all of its pains and sorrows. Experiencing the grace of God in every step of life's way.

And looking forward to a day when by grace we will enter into your glory. And we shall find our rest in you. So bless us in our time of worship we do pray.

Bless every heart and life before you. We are all known to you and we are thankful to you for the intimate knowledge you have of us. And we pray that you will give to us each individually in our hearts.

A sense of close knowledge of you. As our God and as our Lord and as our Saviour. Pray for your blessing to be upon every home. Your blessing to be upon our families. Your blessing to be upon parents and children.

We do give thanks to you for the children of our congregation. And your word reminds us that children are the heritage of the Lord. And we pray for your blessing to be upon our children. [6 : 27] In the days in which they live. Growing up with so many challenges. We pray that your word would be truly imprinted on their minds and in their hearts. And praying that they will come to know you as the light of the world.

Bringing their trust in you. And able to face the challenges of growing up in such a world. With a sure knowledge that you are their God. That you are their guide. That you are their shepherd. That you are their teacher. And that keeper. We pray for your blessing to be upon the Christian. Upon tweezers. As I meet today. May you bless leaders. And bless our young people. Our children. We commit them all to your care. And we pray for your blessing to be upon those. That are away from us and hold you at this time. That you will keep them safe. That you will bless them. Wherever they are before you on this day. That you will be merciful to them. We pray that you will bless us. As we continue before you now. Blessing your word to us. And our singing of it. And our reading of it. And our study of it together. [7 : 24] Bless our hearts. Would you ask. And hear our prayer. For we pray these things for Jesus' sake. Amen. Well boys and girls. It's good to see some of you here today.

And you've been very brave. Coming out of this kind of weather. And I hope you're enjoying your school holidays. Our Bible message today comes from the Gospel of John. Which is the fourth book in the New Testament.

And it's about Jesus being the bread of life. And giving his life so that we might have eternal life. And we know of course that food is really important. We can't survive without food. And when Jesus says he is the bread of life. He is saying something very important to us. And I want us to think of three particular things today. I want to think first of all. Of the word exchange. It's not a difficult word. What do we mean by exchange? What do you think exchange means? If we go to a shop. We pay money. And we exchange money for goods. [8 : 23] So we exchange things. And when we come to read the Bible. God is somebody who shows us that he has put in place a really special exchange.

Because when Jesus tells us he is the bread of life. He tells us that he is giving his life for the world. In other words he is taking out place. And when we read the story of the Bible. God tells us that he gave our sins to Jesus. So that Jesus would die for our sins. And so that we would have everlasting life. That's an exchange. And it comes of course at great cost to the Lord Jesus.

And if we think today of a gift voucher. Somebody can give us a gift voucher. And we can go and exchange for clothes. If that's what it's for. Somebody can give us a gift voucher for a nice restaurant.

Somewhere nice to go and eat some nice food. It costs them a lot of money. And they give it to us. And we are to go. And use that voucher. And get ourselves a special meal.

[9 : 23] And in the Bible story. And the story of Jesus. God has given to us. The opportunity to have salvation. Through believing in Jesus. That Jesus died for us at great cost.

So let's remember the exchange. Jesus died for our sins. So that we might have life. And let's remember that he offers that life to us. As we listen to him from his word.

The second thing I want to think about is. Enjoyment. If there's a great meal on the table. And we're not going to eat it. Then we're not going to enjoy it. If I have my gift voucher.

And I keep it in my drawer. Or on my desk. Or somewhere I told him I don't use it. I'm not going to get any enjoyment out of it. I have to take that gift voucher. I have to go to the restaurant.

And exchange it for really nice food. That's what it's meant for. And today we want to remember that. Because Jesus wants us to enjoy everlasting life. He loves us to come to church.

[10 : 23] He loves us to hear about God's word. But especially he wants us. When we come to church. To believe in Jesus. That's the gift that he promises to us. That exchange.

If we believe in Jesus. We will have that gift of everlasting life. When I go to my special restaurant. And hand over my voucher. I enjoy the best meal.

And somebody else has paid for it. And when we come to believe in Jesus. We realize how precious Jesus is. Because he paid the cost of my eternal life. And the gift that God has given to me.

And the third thing. I want to remember about the gift of virtue. Is that there is usually an expiry date. What does that mean? That means I have to use it by a certain time.

And the Bible tells us that. When we're young. That it's the best time. To hear and to believe in Jesus. Our minds are filled with the Bible.

[11:20] And the words of the Bible. And God wants you today. To believe in Jesus. Remembering that a day might come. When you might not want. To come to church. When you might not want to think about Jesus.

God is speaking to you today. And he does so. In Cresce and Twinnies and Sundays. Going to Bible class. And listening to the word of God being preached. God is speaking to you.

And you have an opportunity. And in the Bible we see that. God gives people a long time. And God gives people sometimes not a long time. But we want you to remember today.

That today is the day that God has given to you. To believe in Jesus. So remember the exchange. Remember the cause to Jesus. So that we could have life.

And believe the promise of God. That if we believe in Jesus. We will have that gift of everlasting life. And don't put it off till tomorrow. Because today is God's special time. For us to believe in Jesus.

[12:18] And have that hope in our own hearts. So thank you for listening. And we'll now say the Lord's prayer together. Our Father. Which art in heaven.

Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth. As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts.

As we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom. The power and the glory. Forever. Amen. Let's turn out to praise God once more.

This is from Psalm number 65. And in St. Psalms. It's on page 82 of the Psalm book. Psalm number 65. At the beginning of the Psalm. And we're seeing from verse 1.

To the verse marked 5. In Zion praise awaits you Lord. To you our vows will pay. To you all people will come near.

[13:18] You hear us when we pray. We stand to sing from verse 1 to verse 5. To God's praise. In Zion praise awaits you Lord.

To you our vows will pay. To you all people will come near.

You hear us when we pray. When we were overwhelmed by sins.

And guilt upon us lay. You pardoned all our trespasses.

And washed our guilt away. How blessed are those you choose and bring.

[14:34] Within your courts of grace. We're filled with blessings.

In your house. In your most holy place. With awesome deeds of righteousness.

You answer us. O God. Our Saviour. Hope above.

Far the seas. And all the earth. A broad. Let's turn together now.

Let's turn together now. Let's turn together now. Let's turn together now. Let's turn together now.

Let's turn together now. Let's turn together now. Let's turn together now.

[15:40] Let's turn together now. Let's turn together now. Let's turn together now. Let us hear the word of God.

And this is the will of whom he sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

So the Jews grumbled about him because he said, I am the bread that came down from heaven.

They said, it's not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know.

How does he now say, I have come down from heaven? Jesus answered them, do not grumble among yourselves. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day.

It is written in the prophets, and they will all be taught by God. Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God, he has seen the Father.

[17:15] Father, truly I say to you, who believes as eternal life, I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.

There is a bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever.

And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh. Amen. This is God's word. We trust that you are blessed to us, that reading from it.

Once more, we bow our heads in prayer. Most gracious and merciful God, we continue in the worship of your name. We are thankful to you for the words that we have read.

We are thankful to you for the life of your Son here in this world. We are thankful to you for the way in which he engaged with those who were around him.

[18 : 15] We are thankful to you for the way in which he spoke your truth to the world in which he lived. We are thankful to you for the way in which so many lives were transformed through his life and through his ministry.

We are thankful to you for all the promises that he gave and left with us in your word. And we are thankful today that we can come to these words and do so looking back upon the death of your Son, the bread of life, who gave himself for us.

We seek to humble ourselves and to marvel at the greatness of your love for us, that the darkness of Calvary's cross was the portion of your Son as the bread of life, and that his body was broken for us so that we might live and live forever.

We seek to humble ourselves with thankfulness before you today because of that great provision, because of that great hope in his resurrection, and because today you are making new people, changing lives, building your church, and drawing people to yourself.

And we pray as we do worship you together this morning that we may sense your work, your activity, your hand upon our lives, drawing us to you, showing us your glory in the passion of your Son, and giving to us to believe that we might be saved and enter into the full enjoyment of what it means to have faith in Jesus Christ, to find our satisfaction in life in him, and to know what it means to discover the emptiness of everything else without him.

[20 : 06] Lord, bless our hearts and your word. And as we come to you out of this world in which we live, we pray that every way in which our minds and our lives have been influenced in this past week, that all of these things we may be able to pour them out before you, and that we may be able to separate ourselves from them, in such a way as to allow your truth to penetrate our minds, and to dislodge the things that can become embedded in our thinking, and to work in our minds in such a way as to help us to understand that same world through the lens of your word, and giving us to so live life by faith, trusting in you and learning day by day what it means to walk in your paths, to serve and to honour you, to be light and to be salt in the world in which we live.

We pray for your blessing to be upon us as a congregation of your people. We are thankful to you for every evidence of your goodness and of your blessing. We are thankful to you for every way in which you continue to work.

We pray that you will bless your word proclaimed on Lord's Day and the activities and the meetings during the week as well. We pray for your blessing to be upon us at this time of vacancy, that you will give wisdom and guidance and direction to us.

We are thankful to you that in the life and in the experience of your church, that you place the right of choosing a pastor in the hearts and lives of those who are your people.

And we pray today that we would be reminded by you in a powerful way that the choosing is first of all yours, and give to us to prayerfully choose the man of your choosing.

[21 : 59] So that in days to come, we know blessing from you and your power present through the ministry of the gospel. In days to come, as it has been in the past, we do commit ourselves to you and pray for your guiding hand to be upon us.

Bless all of our congregations, bless our island communities today. We pray for your blessing to be upon your word as it is proclaimed throughout all of our communities. May you bless hearts and lives, and may you bless those whom you have called to serve you and to go out with the gospel today, and to go out with a sense of perhaps their own inadequacy and inability, and trusting in you that you will supply their needs.

And we pray that you will make yourself powerfully known in them and through them in the ministry of the gospel today. Bless the nation to which we belong. We commit ourselves to you. We pray a blessing to be upon our leadership, our MPs, our MSPs, our Prime Minister, our First Minister, all who are in authority.

May you give wisdom and direction to them. May you remind them of their calling by you to serve in such lofty positions, and may they be reminded by you of their responsibility to serve and to honour you, and to may you turn the hearts of the people of our nation by turning their hearts to you as the

only true and living God.

So bless us, and bless every corner and area of life and of society with all the multitude of needs that are around us. We pray that you'll come to us, O Lord, and to make yourself known in your power and in your mercy and in your grace and in your compassion.

[23 : 35] Bless the wider world, which we'll have also praying that you'll bring an end to conflict and strife, that you will bring an end to oppression and to persecution, and that you will give it to us as the peoples of this world to love the Lord our God with all of our hearts and to love our neighbour as ourselves.

So bless our world, bless your world as it goes forth to every corner of this world today, and bless the hearts and lives of your people, and to may we be blessed and equipped by you to continue to love for you in this world day by day with that great expectation that this world is not our home, but that you are the God who is making a new heavens and a new earth where your people will be gathered in everlasting glory to be forevermore with their Saviour.

So hear our prayer, continue to watch your orders, and bless your world as we ask. We ask these things for Jesus' sake. Amen. So our next item of praise is Psalm number 45.

It's 45a and sing Psalms on page 56. It's a psalm where the psalmist is speaking of the beauty of the King and the beauty of Jesus as our Saviour, as our great King.

Psalm 45 at the beginning of the psalm. A noble theme inspires my heart with verses for the King. My tongues are skilled for writers' pain, composing lines to sing.

[25 : 05] We stand to sing from verse 1 to the verse 5 to God's praise. Amen. A noble theme inspires my heart with verses for the King.

My tongues are skilled for writers' pen, composing lines to sing.

You far excel the best of men. Your lips are full of grace.

For God has blessed you evermore. His light shines on your face.

O mighty one, take up your sword and bind it on your thigh.

[26 : 27] With glorious splendor, clothe yourself and with your majesty.

Ride forth in state victoriously for meekness, truth and right.

Let your right hand display your deeds of awesome power and might.

Let your sharp arrows pierce the hearts of those who hate the King.

And all the nations of the earth into subjection bring.

[27 : 48] Let's turn together to the Gospel of John and chapter number 6. And we can read at verse 35. John 6 at verse 35. Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life.

The who comes to me shall not hunger and who believes in me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen me and you do not believe. And down through the rest of the verses that we have down to verse number 51.

When we come into the Gospel of John, it's always good to remind ourselves of John's purpose in writing the Gospel. And he gives that purpose to us in chapter number 20 and at verse number 30. Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in his name.

And as we come to consider the verses before us today, we do understand that life is full of big questions. And I think it's fair to say that when we read the Bible, the Bible gives us a hierarchy of big questions.

[29 : 12] In other words, there are big questions which are bigger and of greater importance than others. And for all of us together today, we do have our own big questions.

We have life's challenges challenges, and we all have our own individual challenges with big questions that come into our minds and our lives day by day. We have our personal challenges that are private to ourselves that perhaps we don't share with anyone.

There is big questions. They are important things in our everyday lives. There are big questions when you look at our communities and look at our nation and we look at the nations of the world.

There are big questions that come and that arise because of what's happening in our world. And then, of course, when you go beyond that, there are the big questions that come because there are wars and there are persecutions and there is oppression in the world.

There are big questions that come and that arise because of what's happening in our world. And then, of course, when you go beyond that, there are the big questions that come because there are wars and there are persecutions and there is oppression in the world.

Big questions that come into our lives because of what's happening around us. But the priority, big question is, how can we be saved?

[30 : 25] How can we be right with God? How can we become Christians? That is the most important question. When we read this gospel and when we follow the life of Jesus and John himself in writing this gospel, we see that he understands that very thing.

And the pattern that he gives to us is that he addresses that biggest question of all by overlapping two things. First of all, he brings to their attention their great personal need.

And we all need that in order to be saved. The second thing he does, he brings before them what he is doing and what he is going to do that God so loved the world that he gave his son.

And so with these overlapping things through this gospel, he is answering that big question of how can we be Christians? How can we be right with God?

And in this chapter, he is doing that by interacting with the people who historically, once more, are preparing themselves for the Passover. so he is speaking to people who have a story.

[31 : 39] It is a story about faith. It is a story about the believing community. He is interacting with them where they are on their journey. But people who have fathers and grandfathers and people have gone before them who were believers.

And so it is for ourselves today. We want to look at this passage bearing that in mind, the big question, how can we be right with God? How can we become a Christian?

And bearing in mind that God is speaking to us as those who belong to the church of God that has come down to us from those who went before us.

And I want to consider these words under the title of unbelief and the transforming grace of God. I want to see, first of all, that there is a declaration.

And the declaration that Jesus is making is about himself, first of all. He wants them to know who he is. Vitally important. He is not just anybody who was born in Nazareth.

[32 : 51] He is not just the son of Joseph and Mary. He wants them to know who he is. And in order for them to understand that, he makes this great statement in verse 35, I am the bread of life.

And when he's doing that, he's doing two things. He's giving them his identity, first of all. I am the bread of life.

And he's speaking to a people whose history, whose origins go back to that very time in the Old Testament when God said to Moses in Exodus 3 at the burning bush, when Moses asked, whom shall I say sent me?

I am sent you. Tell them I am did it. So what's Jesus doing? He's not only connecting himself with the person who spoke to Moses.

He is telling him that he is that very person. In other words, he is the son of God, as John makes clear at the beginning of this gospel. He wants them to know that he is the son of God and that he is here as someone sent by God.

[34 : 00] And for you and I on our journey to becoming the people of God, we have to believe firmly and understand clearly that Jesus is no ordinary human being.

In fact, he is the second person of the God that he is the son of God. And until we appreciate that, we're not going to appreciate what he says and we're not going to truly appreciate what he does. Who is Jesus? He is I am. He is the eternal God, the eternal son of God. And he's also telling him something about what he is going to do for them.

I am, he says, the bread of life. In other words, if there is life, it's to be found in him. It's the bread that gives life from which, from which life flows.

It's the bread that is the source of all life. And he goes on in verse 51 to remind them that the bread that he will give for the life of the world is his flesh.

[35 : 05] I am the bread of life. I am the son of God who is going to give myself on Calvary's cross for the life of the world. That's the cost. That's what he's going to pay in order to be the bread of life so that you and I can have the gift of everlasting life.

The declaration about himself. To draw their attention to a key thing in their experience that as surely as they are here to remember that God saved his people from the land of Egypt across the Red Sea because of the blood of the Passover.

No, he wants them to understand that God is moving on and that he's replacing all of that with the work of his son, the Lord Jesus, who is the Passover lamb, the person concerning whom John said when he saw him, Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

And he wants them to think along the lines of the fact that Jesus is here not to repeat the exodus in the Old Testament but to bring about a new exodus, a new coming out of where they are into the

experience of the life of the children of God.

And it's the truth that should bring joy to our hearts today that this is what Jesus is saying, that where you are is the place from which God is working to create an exodus to take you from where you are to bring you into his eternal kingdom.

[36 : 45] And he will do that in a variety of ways but at this stage he's declaring to you through his word today that that's the kind of God that he is who is working through the passion of his son to open a door for you to come out of your lostness into the very family of God.

The declaration about himself but he also wants to make a declaration about them and this is the key thing as far as their journey here is concerned and he goes on to speak about the way in which in verse 35 whoever comes to me shall not hunger whoever believes to me shall never thirst but I said to you that you have seen me and do not believe.

It's a staggering truth to a people who are flocking around him who were so interested in what he was doing they're saying earlier on in the chapter this is that prophet that God promised let's go and take him and let's make him our king what they were doing looked so promising they went across the sea to Capernaum where Jesus was because they must be with Jesus they wanted to hear more of what he said they wanted to learn about him and here they are gathering around him and he's telling them who he is and he wants them to know also who they are and they are identified with those who belong to the history of the people of God in the Old Testament but identified with a particular group within that body of people and it's the group that simply did not believe in God in the Old Testament and here they are now following the line of the history of the people of God and within the gathering around Jesus there are those and Jesus because of his all seeing eye he's coming with a sense of inquisition to see where they are and he's telling them you do not believe the declaration perhaps today what you need to hear most is the insight that Jesus can give to you of what goes on in your heart and the insight that no matter what you think you are doing and no matter what you think you're believing the insight of Jesus that perhaps in your heart of hearts you don't believe Jesus at all you don't put your trust in his name and despite all of the activity in your life around the kingdom of

God and around the word of God when the Lord Jesus takes his eye and looks into your heart this is what he declares is that the case today do you believe in the name of the son of God you believe in the name of the Lord Jesus he is the son of God who is giving his life for you do you believe in his name a declaration and when Jesus makes the declaration there are no arguments we have no words we fall silent before him and we take heed to what he is saying because when he speaks about salvation it is important when he speaks about the kind of people we are it is equally important the declaration let's find ourselves somewhere under the declaration that Jesus makes of himself and of us in these words today so there is a declaration secondly we want to see that there is a decree that makes a difference what is it that makes a difference to you and to me when this declaration by Jesus tells us that we do not believe how is that going to change it's going to change because of God's decree and God's decree is the purpose of God that he had in his heart before the world ever was it's what he chose to do before he ever created the world it's his free choice that we cannot understand but the

[41 : 37] Bible leads us to believe that that's exactly what he did and that's what makes the difference and we don't need today to scramble and try and do things that only God can do because God wants us to take to our hearts today in our unbelief that only those whom he has decreed in his heart will be saved will come to Jesus and that's what he says in verse number 37 all that the father gives me will come to me there's a gift there's a donation there's a giving of certain people by the father to the son and Jesus and through the gospel himself he speaks of the way in which John 17 for example they were you and you gave them to me there is an eternal transaction that's invisible and that is known only to

God in his mind and in his heart with the son and the spirit of God there is that choice that works itself out in the experience of people in this world and that bears the fruit that God alone is looking for it's God's choice it's what the Bible calls and Ephesians chapter one it's what the Bible calls election selecting people from the masses God choosing not the way you and I will choose because we love the lovable because we're attracted to those whom we choose God is very different to that he loves the unlovable he chooses the unchoosable there is nothing attractive in you and in me that would draw God toward us but despite all of that

God makes the choice and he makes a choice before you and I ever did anything right or wrong he chose us in Jesus Christ before ever the world was and we cannot begin to understand the mystery of God's choice but we know that God's choice bears fruit and what is the fruit all that the father gives me will come to me there are people who are coming to Jesus to hear more of what he is saying but their hearts are filled with unbelief there are disciples who are closely walking with them and they are doing so because they are chosen by God they have been given to the son the son who says in

John 17 for their sakes I sanctify myself in other words for their sakes I die on Calvary's cross for those the father has given to me and if your life and my life changes and we see an about turn in your life and we see a heart that comes to believe in the Lord Jesus there is only one explanation and the explanation is powerful because this is not based on what you do but on what God does you and I know well that we may choose one thing today and we're so fickle we'll go off and choose something very different the following day we are motivated and moved so much by what happens around us we change our choices and things that weren't attractive before suddenly become attractive and we go and embrace them and we choose them and our salvation would be equally fickle if it was based on our own choice alone but

God wants us to know today that salvation is because of his choice of us and that his choice of us becomes visible in our coming to put our faith in the Lord Jesus and God doesn't want us today to lose ourselves in trying to work out the mystery of his eternal election and if we're concerned about God's election God wants us to know that the proof of our election is in our submission and our obedience and our faith in the Lord Jesus it's that exodus that I referred to earlier where the door is opened and Jesus is in the gospel sending his word out his appeal out and we come from there we are choosing Jesus because God chose us and because Jesus died for us in accordance with God's gift the decree is the decree not the basis of our rejoicing today and as we see here it is also the basis of our security and is that not what we are looking for in this world the security of knowing that we are the children of God in the midst of life's big questions and big challenges that we are secure in what

[47 : 36] God has done for us in Jesus and Jesus confirms that to them all that the father gives me will come to me and whoever comes to me I will never cast out the promise is to everyone whoever comes to me all those who are carrying out or walking into their own exodus from their life without God and without Jesus Christ our savior who are coming into the kingdom of God Jesus promises you and I as we come into his kingdom that he will never be cast out he will lose nothing of what the father has given to him in verse number 38 he will never evict us and sometimes we because of our sin we we sense that

God would be just and putting us out of his kingdom and evicting us from his family home because of our rebellion against him but Jesus wants us to know today that we are secure because of God's choice and that he will never cast out we will never be cast out of God's kingdom of God's house as those who are unwelcome guests we are all the children of our heavenly father and we shall never be separated from him and that promise and that security is a promise that has that covers the whole of our lives and that brings us into the everlasting kingdom that Jesus speaks of here and that his father has promised and that's what he's saying in verse number 38 for

I come down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me and this is the will of him who sent me that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me but raise it up on the last day it's eternal life that we receive in this moment of coming to Jesus of of receiving him as our savior! of accepting him life where we have satisfaction today where we exchange the voucher and where we take the gift of God recognizing that Jesus paid the price we take the promise and we have the gift of everlasting life a life beyond what we see in this world in a new heavens in a new earth in the kingdom of God the kingdom of heaven that is still to come there is the decree the choice of God that gives us security today and that gives us the sure knowledge that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ and that gives us the sure knowledge that the day will come when it will be welcomed into the eternal glory of God and when Jesus will stand before

God's throne and will speak to God the father behold me and the children God has given to me that's the scope of the security and the safety that is ours because of God's decree that makes a difference and we wrestle on with coming to hear the word of God we read the Bible we hear the word of God preached we pray over what God says in his word we pray over the difficult things that we find and we pray that God will help us to understand in the first place that he does the work of

salvation and that he alone does the work of salvation it is ours to trust it is him to work to choose and to bring us to believe in the

[52 : 12] Lord Jesus so there is a declaration there is the decree and thirdly there is the desire I think it's absolutely true that nobody ever came to believe in the Lord Jesus and did not feel that that's what they long to do more than anything coming to know the Lord Jesus is not without feeling it is with feeling it is with experience God works in us personally and individually in order to transform us from within and Jesus draws attention to that in verse number 44 no one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him he reemphasizes the impossibility and human impossibility is something is something that we perhaps find hard to accept and more so perhaps in the world and the society in which we live there is so much of self importance and self realization and self expression and self sufficiency see the gospel cuts right across that and tells us we cannot come it's impossible for us to do it we are disabled by sin and we can do nothing ourselves and against that he's saying unless the father who sent me draws him no drawing or attracting when

God does it it's powerful it's beautiful it's full of love it's full of mercy it's full of compassion God draws the image behind the verb that John uses here is tying something to a piece of string and pulling that thing along to remove from where it is to place it somewhere else we see it at different levels and in the days of agriculture that John was writing it was something it was a picture that was before the rise every day we pull an animal we pull agriculture machinery we tie something to it and we take it somewhere else we're using force to move that object and to place it somewhere else but in this case the same thing is happening but there is no sense of force the same thing is happening but there is nothing but the sense of love there's a sense of drawing and in that moment that the hook of the gospel in that moment that connection is made there is the attraction of

Jesus in our hearts there is a sense of his beauty there is a sense of seeing for the first time all that he is in the gospel and all now that he is to me the father who sent me draws him it's the irresistible grace of God irresistible because there is so much that we see so much that we discover and that we come willingly and lovingly to accept the Lord Jesus as our saviour the drawing in the old testament God through the prophecy of Hosea speaks of the way in which he leads his people with cords of kindness and bands of love that's the image what is the connection there are these cords of the eternal love of

God of the compassion of God that he ties around our hearts and that he uses to draw us closer and closer to himself into the full enjoyment of the blessing of the gospel as we have it in the person of Jesus the drawing of God and that attraction comes in a very simple way it comes through what's happening at this moment as the gospel is preached it happens through hearing the word of God in verse number 45 it is written in the prophets and they will all be taught by God everyone who has heard and learned from the father comes to me it comes through hearing hearing the word of God and they are the ones who come to believe in the son of God and Jesus makes it clear in these verses that all of this is through him nobody has seen God but Jesus himself and he makes him known to those who are his people so that there is that sense of faith coming by hearing and learning about Jesus about God through Jesus and Jesus himself in chapter 5 speaks about his relationship with God and how God makes himself known to him and through that he lives out to the life that God has set out for him it's that personal relationship and that's what happens with you and with me in that moment suddenly Jesus

[58 : 40] Christ is meaningful suddenly he's attractive it's not because your emotions and your affections are moved in the first place it's because your mind has been enlightened it's been opened by the spirit of God the lights have gone on and you then see Jesus for who he is you have learnt from the word of God and the very agency that teaches!

that is the teacher in that process of education Jesus tells him later on it's the Holy Spirit of God the helper the teacher he will lead you into all truth he will help you to remember the things I said he will show the things that belong to me and make them known to you it's a moment of our minds being enlightened and suddenly we come from darkness to light and the word of God is full of meaning the person of the Lord Jesus is absolutely precious and special and believing him and loving him is the most obvious and natural and loving thing I want to do more than anything else I have done in life and God wants us to know today that underlying our choice of the

Lord Jesus as our saviour it's the choice that he made of us and when we bring all of these things together in our faith in the Lord Jesus how awesome is that how worthy is God of our praise and how thankful we are that what we could never do God has done it first of all in the person of his son

the Lord Jesus and now in your heart and in mine and perhaps the greatest reminder you need to hear today is that you should not wait for an experience that you expect must take place before you become a Christian understand that God works through his word making himself known to you and gradually opening your mind on the understanding of what Jesus has done that's how he works it's not an explosion it's coming to the spirit of

God as our teacher and learning from him and so today let's reflect on the biggest question of all let's understand our unbelief without God's help let's be thankful of God's decree of God's choice of us and let's be thankful for the way in which he makes that choice of us clear in drawing us to the Lord Jesus and let's go on our way rejoicing that we're safe and secure from the moment we believe in Jesus until we arrive at the eternal glory into which Jesus himself has entered may God bless!

Christ in you as a God who is our Savior who is our Father in heaven who has worked so wonderfully in the presence of your Son to secure our salvation and his resurrection and his glory to bring us alive to you and pray that you will bless your word to us today that you will give to us that saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and that you will help us to grow day by day and our knowledge of him and a deeper appreciation of all that he has done and a growing desire to do the things that are pleasing to you as we journey on through life together so hear our prayer and accept our thanks for Jesus sake Amen Psalm number 22 in the Scottish Psalter Psalm 22 at verse 28 it's on page 229 Psalm 22 in the

[63 : 02] Scottish Psalter at verse 28 because the kingdom to the Lord doth appertain as his likewise among the nations the governor he is and after the band dictionary I'll go to the main door we stand to sing from verse 28 to verse 31 to God's praise because the kingdom to the Lord!

doth appertain! doth appertain as his! likewise among the nations the governor he is earth's fat ones eat and worship shall all who to dust descend shall bow to him none of them can his soul from death defend a seed shall service due to him and to the Lord it shall be for a generation!

! they shall declare his truth and righteousness they shall command they shall declare his truth and righteousness righteousness and to a people yet unborn and that he hath done this the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever more Amen now voy

Thank you.