

the more that we look at, the more that we hear, the more we realise just how little we understand. And yet, O Lord, we thank you for the knowledge that you have given to us, the way that by your grace you open our eyes to see and to hear and to understand your word, to understand our need of a Saviour, and the way that you have provided for us through your own Son, Jesus Christ, the way that we see in all our great needs, that in our sin we were lost, we were condemned. In our sin we were poor and needy, without hope in this world. And yet in Christ we have one who came that we might have hope in him. He came and lived among this people of this world. He came to live life yet without sin, spotless as we think of so often, and as we remembered even last weekend, the Lamb that was slain for us, the one who gave his life, the one we remembered through the bread and the wine. And we thank you for that great remembrance that we have, and that we are to do that until he comes. And even that reminds us that today as we live, and even as we look at tomorrow, we are living in light of that return of our Lord Jesus Christ, the one who died on the cross and rose on the third day, who ascended to heaven and even now at the right hand of you as our Lord and as our God. And we offer our prayers through his name. And we thank you that we do so, recognizing that the things that we cannot do, the things that we cannot achieve ourselves, that are impossible for us, that it is possible with you. And that you have granted us as your people that access into the very holy of holies, that through the name of Jesus we come to the very throne of grace. And we offer up our prayers there before you and you this evening, whether they are thanksgiving, whether they are confession, whether they are desires that we have for lives around us or situations or circumstances that are going on. We thank you that there is nothing hidden from you. And so we come in prayer this evening thankful for that great relationship that we come into through faith, that we can come and call upon you as our Father who is in heaven.

And we pray, Lord, that you will hear us as we pray together this evening, that you would hear us all, O Lord, as we offer up the very groanings of our heart, that you would hear and know and that your will be done in all things. We thank you, Lord, that we so often would have our own desires and will to be done, and yet we know that you know best. And even in the situations where we have little understanding of what they mean at the time, may we be able to look back on them and give praise and thanks to you, that your will was what was needed, your will what was at work and what brought good out of it.

[9:17] And we do think of, Lord, situations near and far, situations that are beyond our comprehending at times, beyond our understanding. And yet, O Lord, we commit them to you. We think of the conflicts going on around our world, and especially this evening we join in prayer with the people in the Ukraine, as we have heard of prayer requests coming from your people there, as tomorrow will mark, three years since that conflict began. We do thank you, Lord, that there is still that prayer, that unity of prayer among your people there. Even in the midst of great trials and difficulties, we thank you that they are able to call upon the name of the Lord. And we do seek your goodness towards your people, people on both sides of the conflict who are yours and who pray, who are calling out upon you, Lord, that you would have mercy and bring peace. We do continue to remember them, Lord, that you would strengthen and uphold them, that you would bless them in their own nation, bless those who have been scattered far and wide throughout many nations of the world, even to our own nation and even our own island here, those for whom conflict has meant leaving all behind. We pray, Lord, that they would be able one day to return to their homes in safety and without the fear of war looming over them. We remember the Middle East as well and thankful for the peace that was brought and yet still seeing, oh Lord, so much tension there, still seeing so much as if it were on an eye-fetch of uncertainty and fear and worry. And we pray, Lord, that true peace might come. And we know that that is only through you. And so we pray, Lord, for your glory to be seen in these lands once again, that the glory of God will be revealed to all people, that they would come to see you and to know you, to know Jesus Christ as Lord and God. We pray, Lord, for our own nation too, as we so often do when we think of it, the dismay that we are brought to in the way that we have gone. And we just look back over a generation, Lord, we have seen your glory in our land and days of revival and blessing. We see and hear of it so often of how so many were brought to faith and brought to love you with all their hearts throughout all walks of life, whether it was politicians and people in power and authority or people right down through every walk of life. We thank you that there was such great times of blessing where young and old, men and women, boys and girls were brought to faith.

And we thank you for that legacy that is ours, that we have the gospel as the foundation of the church here, that we have Jesus Christ as our Lord and as our God. And we pray, Lord, that as a nation, we would acknowledge that once again, that we would come to honour you and praise you. And even as we have prayed for the Ukraine on a day of prayer tomorrow, that our own nation would see that great need as well, that need of calling upon the Lord and making it a national thing. We thank you for the church, O Lord, as it bears witness to you throughout our nation. We pray for your church to be growing.

We thank you for all your people up and down our land, throughout all ends of it, Lord. We thank you that there are churches that are faithful to you, that worship and honour your name. And although our media would never report it, Lord, we thank you that you are a God who is working, bringing people to faith, convicting and converting. For that is a promise through your word, that your church will be built and that the gates of hell will not prevail against it. And so, Lord, may your kingdom come in power. May it come to all ends of the earth. May we continue to pray for that as we think of the needs throughout the world, that we would see glory, your glory, throughout all nations. May you bless us in our worship this evening. Remember us in our homes, in our families and in our communities. Remember those who are mourning and grieving in such sorrow at this time over the passing of both young and old alike, Lord, we do pray for your mercy and your grace to be over us as a people. In the midst of days of sorrow, Lord, may we see the light of the gospel as our great hope. May you comfort the hearts that are broken and may you wipe away the tears from their eyes and help them to know, Lord, your strength and your grace in the midst of it. We pray for those who are unwell in hospital and homes and in their own homes, that your hand be upon them for good as well, that there will be healing, Lord, where that is your will, where there will be help and grace where times are testing. Remember us, Lord, we pray. Remember us as we look to your word as we continue to worship and praise you, as we would come to stand before you as our Lord and as our God. May you give us wisdom to see that it's only through the name of Jesus that we are able to stand. So hear our prayers and go before us now. Guide us in the week ahead in all we do in our homes, in our families, in our schools and workplaces. May your hand be upon us for good.

So all we ask, we ask of the forgiveness of our sins. In Jesus' name. Amen. We will again sing to God's praise, this time in Psalm 90, in the Singed Psalms, page 120 of the psalm book, Psalm 90. We sing from verse 1 to verse 10.

[15 : 21] Lord, you have been our dwelling place before you made the world of time and space, before you made the mountains and the earth. You are eternal, God. You gave them birth. We'll sing from verse 1 down to verse 10 to God's praise. The Tunis Highland Cathedral.

Lord, you have been our dwelling place before you made the world of time and space, before you made the mountains and the earth.

Lord, you have been our dwelling place before you made the world of time and space, before you made the world of time and space. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray.

Let us pray.

Let us pray. the watch by night.

[16 : 53] Into the deep you see them all away, for they are like the grass aflame all day.

All the strings of new and morning white and flies and vanishes before the night.

Your wrath consumes us, we are terrified. Before your days are sins we have not high.

Under the anger, all our days must die. Our years are to their finished way aside.

Our years are to save and deal in vain. For even if we have less pain, and if we are raising grief and
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Isaiah chapter 43, reading at the beginning of this chapter.

[18 : 54] In that psalm that we were just singing, Psalm 90, we were hearing there in these words the reality of our lives, the number of our days and years, and how quickly they pass by.

And it's always in light of the fact that we must appear before God that we think of that. And in Isaiah chapter 43, and in this section, really from Isaiah 40, we're seeing God speaking to his people in different ways.

In Isaiah chapter 40, it speaks of the great need of comfort that the people of God have, and that God is the one who is able to comfort.

So then you're going from that emotion to chapter 41, where you see the futility of idols, the people turning away from God to their own idols. Then in chapter 42, God speaking to them once or more, reminding them of their failure to hear and to acknowledge God.

In chapter 43, we see this emotion just going on, where in the beginning of it, there's a real blessing of God towards his people. But in verse 8, he gives a real sense of challenge as well.

[20 : 06] So we're going to read in Isaiah 43 at verse 1. But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed you.

I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.

For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour. I give Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in exchange for you.

Because you are precious in my eyes and honoured, and I love you, I give men in return for you, peoples in exchange for your life. Fear not, for I am with you.

I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you. I will say to the north, give up, and to the south, do not withhold. Bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the end of the earth, everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.

[21 : 20] Bring out the people who are blind, yet have eyes, who are deaf, yet have ears. All the nations gather together, and the peoples assemble.

Who among them can declare this and show us the former things? Let them bring their witnesses to prove them right, and let them hear and say, it is true.

You are my witnesses, declares the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he.

Before me no God was formed, nor shall there be any after me. I, I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour.

I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange God among you, and you are my witnesses, declares the Lord, and I am God.

[22 : 16] Also henceforth I am he. There is none who can deliver from my hand. I work, and who can turn it back? And so on, and may God bless that reading from his word.

Well, we again sing to God's praise this time in Psalm 77. Sing Psalm's version, page 100 of the psalm books. Psalm 77 on page 100.

We read, sing from verse 7 down to verse 14. Psalm 77 at verse 7. Forever will the Lord reject and never show his grace.

Has he withdrawn his steadfast love and turned from me his face? For all time has his promise failed. Is God no longer kind? Has he in his great wrath dismissed compassion from his mind? You see there the questions of the psalmist. And then in verse 10, it says, Then to my heart there came this thought. On this I will rely. The years of the right hand of power of him who is most high.

[23 : 24] The Lord who is in control. Psalm 77 verse 7 to 14. We stand to sing the tune of Amazing Grace. Forever will the Lord reject and never show his grace.

Forever will the Lord reject and never show his grace.

And the Lord reject and never show his grace. For all time has his promise failed.

All time has his promise failed. His God no longer kind.

As he in his spirit of his mind. His promise failed.

[24 : 44] His promise failed. His promise failed. His promise failed. His promise failed.

His promise failed.

I will recall the Lord's praise.

Your words of glory are good. I may it be, O Lord, your eyes.

Your mighty needs are shown. O God, most holy I hear this.

[26 : 18] What God compares with you? You are the God of this.

Whose power thy nations view. We can turn back to Isaiah chapter 43, and our focus this evening is going to be on verse 8 down to verse 13.

the question that the psalmist had in that psalm we just sang psalm 77 verse 13 what god compares with you that's the kind of question that we have here in isaiah 43 in verse 8 to 13 where we really see the people standing trial before god and that's what we're thinking about this evening this morning we were looking at our standing firm the sure foundation of believing in crisis we're looking at that in luke chapter 6 with jesus speaking about the wise and the foolish builder and this evening we're looking at standing trial so again let's think of how can we come and stand before god in psalm 130 it speaks about that as well who lord if you would mark in equity who could stand before you how can we stand before god on trial somebody was telling me earlier today that they have been called for duty duty and it's it's quite a thought that just having to go into a courtroom whatever part you're playing in the courtroom it's quite a thought just being involved in it i've never been in a courtroom and something i would love to just see how it works but thinking about it you have all these different kinds of people in the courtroom you have the judge who is sitting in a seat who will declare a verdict at the end you have witnesses being called you have the person standing on trial you have a jury who has a decision to make there's all kinds of different people involved in it and it's quite a thought just the whole process and the outcome from it how someone's life is on edge as it were whether they're going to be declared innocent or declared guilty but it's another thought entirely to think of well we all have to appear in that courtroom when it comes to the judgment seat of god we all have to appear before christ and give an account before him we are all going to stand before him on trial as it were and he declare a verdict innocent or guilty and it's a thought that what are we going to say how are we going to stand before him and that's really what is happening here in chapter 43 verse 8 to 13 it's something that you see beginning in chapter 41 as well where it speaks about bearing witness and coming before god as well in verse 21 of chapter 41 it says set forth your case says the lord bring your proofs say the king say that says the king of jacob so there's a case to be brought before god set your proof before god and this is really being picked up again in verse 8 of chapter 43 where it says bring out the people who are blind bring out is again being called into the the courtroom setting before god and as you go through these chapters and i say as i was saying that there's a whole host of emotions going on here you're going from one thing to another even in this chapter that we've read chapter 43 you have these beautiful verses at the beginning of the chapter wonderful verses we've looked at them a wee while ago now we looked at verse one to seven here and you're thinking of these words that the lord is saying to his people fear not for i have redeemed you i have called you by name you are mine you are precious to me when you pass through the waters i will be with you and through the rivers they shall not overwhelm you when you walk through the fire you shall not be burned and the flame shall not consume you for i am the lord your god the holy one of israel your savior and so it goes on there's these beautiful verses that are reminding us what it is to have a relationship with god to have faith with him and to know this great relationship

and yet in the midst of this you just go back to chapter 42 and the end of it and the people are rejecting god so god is giving one verdict you are mine you are precious i am with you and yet what are they doing well in isaiah 42 verse 20 he's talking there about his people he sees many things but does not upset him his ears are open but he does not hear he's talking here but those who are blind and deaf they're not listening and they're looking to false gods people are being disobedient and because of this there's there's consequences you look at verse 25 of chapter 42 so he poured out on them the heat of his anger and the might of battle there was fire brought down all around but still they did not understand there's this punishment that comes and that's in light then of chapter 43 when he says when you pass through when you walk through the fire you will not be burned there's still this element of grace the punishment that might have been expected it's still withheld for a time but that's not to say that it's not going to come eventually god will not just leave it at that god demands a response from his people if you are not going to go with them he will not go with you and so god makes demands and that's what we see then as we come into chapter 43 these great promises that god gives in verse 1 to verse 7 he then challenges them as he brings them out brings the people out so they might respond before him are they going to go on the side of the idols and listen to them or are they going to listen to god and trust in him how are they going to stand before

god as they come on trial god is saying do you agree with me or do you not so as we see in life so often when there's a disagreement when there's a fallout over many different kinds of issues when there's two parties and they want something resolved it often ends up coming to court and both sides being called to give evidence for their side of this story and see someone declared in a verdict as to who is right and who is wrong and so god is saying well if you're going to listen to your idols bring them out let's talk this through let's come together and see who is right here who is going to come out on the right side here bring out the people the lord sees let's come to the courtroom and settle this and so we're going to look at it in that sense of coming into the courtroom standing trial before god and in verse 8 we see the court assembles the court assembles as we said before now there's different kinds of people involved in the courtroom there's witnesses there's those who are standing trial there's those who are giving the verdict and we see all of that as we see the court assemble in verse 8 bring out the people who are blind yet have eyes who are deaf yet have ears all the nations gather together and the peoples assemble everyone is given an opportunity to be involved in this case there are times when you see people longing to bring a case against maybe a company a company who they believe has been in the wrong and yet the people the ordinary people are so weak to bring any case against them because this company will have money and finance and the best of lawyers behind them and so the the reality of trying to go up against these companies as ordinary people is that you're going to fail unless you're determined unless you're just so determined to bring a case before you that's going to prove that they are wrong there was a film called erin brokovich and that was the kind of situation that took place a company who had been doing wrong they'd been putting chemicals into the the soils and the contaminated the water and people were getting sick and the company thought they could get away with by just paying out a little sum of money to quieten the people just just give them enough and just to silence them but there was a lawyer who came in who was determined that they would get what they were due and they kept going kept going kept going and eventually they won a great settlement against this large company and sometimes we feel powerless but imagine what it's like coming into this courtroom when god is saying bring out the people when we are to up here before god and you could think about going up against the largest company with all the money in the world and the fear that that might bring but what about coming before god the maker of the heaven and the earth all-powerful all-knowing god how could we stand before him and yet he gives opportunity he gives opportunity here as we see bring out these people bring out these witnesses but look at the witnesses look at the people as they come how they describe there in verse 8 bring the people out who are blind and who are deaf what kind of witnesses are they how are they possibly going to be able to present something that would be make a compelling case to god they're blind and they're deaf if you were in any courtroom and someone was giving evidence and they were deaf and you were saying well what did you hear i heard nothing or they're blind what do you see i saw nothing well there's no case and yet that's what's put before us here but you see here people who are blind yet have eyes who are deaf yet have ears so there's something about them they're selective in what they're seeing and what they're hearing they're only looking at it from their perspective they're only looking at the way they want to see things and hear things you see it when people go to court and it used to be more so that you had to swear on the bible and you would see it in any courtroom drama i swear to tell the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth and yet they would go on and just tell lies twist the truth swearing on the bible and yet the bible meant nothing and that's something we see here in our own society to this day that there's this idea that we just live the way we want do the things we want and there's no consequences and and god is saying here this is the way you are living you're blind but you have eyes you're deaf but you have ears a little like what we were looking at this morning as well when we were thinking of how we are to live in light of what god does for us how we are to hear the word of god and do it as well

[39 : 12] here they have ears to hear and eyes to see but they don't act they don't do instead they do what they want themselves so the court is assembling and and this is the witnesses but the second thing we see with with the court assembling is what the disagreement is over as well what is causing this disagreement who is able to declare authority over all things who is able to show that well we have done this no god has done it so there's this disagreement over which gods have done what and god is saying you are going to your idols you are looking to your idols that you have made in your own image with your own eyes and your own ears or you can look to me even when you go back to to verse the verses the beginning of this chapter the lord is saying to them fear not for i am i have redeemed you when you pass through the waters i will be with you in verse 3 fear for i am the

lord your god the holy one of israel your savior there's all of these promises all of these things that god has shown to them and yet they are pushing it away they are not listening god has brought them out i give egypt as your ransom cushion seba in exchange for you all of these things that i have done for you looking back over all the generations up until this very point i have been with you and yet they are saying no it is our idols it is ourselves it is all of these other things that have brought us to this point so where is the truth where is the truth in all of this and where is the truth for all of our lives today what is the truth of how we live move and have our being is it in ourselves is it in our wealth is it in our power is it in all that we do ourselves or is it in god that is what is on trial that's what's at stake who are we looking to are we trusting in there was a book written it's called uh between the between two truths it's by kyle snodgrass and in it he speaks of it's obviously just speaking of it in a fictional sense but he says once the devil was walking along with one of his cohorts and they saw a man ahead of them picking up something shiny what did he find asked the cohort of the devil the devil answered a piece of truth and so the cohort said doesn't that bother you that he's found a piece of truth and the devil's response was no that will become their religion and so you see a little bit of truth can be very dangerous a little bit of truth it can just cause more harm than good without the whole truth because when we just look at a little bit of truth we begin to believe just that and nothing else and that's when you go back to isaiah 41 verse 21 and 22 where it says set forth your case says the lord bring your proofs says the king of jacob let them bring them and tell us what is to happen so what is ahead how are your gods your idols showing you what lies ahead tell us the former things what they are that we may consider them that we may know their outcome or declare to us the things to come whether you look back or whether you look forward he is saying here who is it that has made these things come to be and that's the great challenge that we face when we're on trial before god

even today when we look to the future who holds it what does it hold we think we have our own plans our own lives all planned out in front of us and yet how quickly these plans change or whether we look back do we say it was ourselves that have done all of these things that are built all of our homes our lives and everything that we have or is it god who has been good to us the court assembles to discuss these things and to see who is it that has blessed us who is it that is with us who is it that we are listening to this is what the trial is all about so often you see that throughout the scriptures god challenging his people in deuteronomy you go back there and you see how he was telling them when you go into this land when you see all that it will give to you the riches the homes the crops everything he says do not forget the lord and here we are the lord being forgotten israel's failure to hear and to see they're turning to their false gods and so it is with ourselves today we're failing to see and to hear what god has done but he is calling us to give answer to stand trial before you before him and so that's when we see then the witnesses called and they are to give answer they are to give answer what do the witnesses see well as they come in as they come into this courtroom setting it begin we begin to see that they have so little answer before god you see it in the middle of verse 9 who among them can declare this and show us the former things let them bring their witnesses to prove them right and let them hear and say it is true so the lord is calling them before them let's hear your witnesses let's hear what you have to say and the false gods that they are following it's almost like they are brought to the stand now let them bring them in and see what they have to show us of the former things did they do it can they give answer what's the response silence there's nothing no false god can answer before god we cannot answer before god if we were to say i have done this i have brought my own salvation i have brought myself through the waters or through the fires or all of these things there's no response to give the witnesses are called the evidence is called for what help of your false gods bring how they predicted what was to come how they able to show what is ahead of you nothing there is nothing that they can give and so it is in this world for us what can we say of what lies ahead what power do we have over what lies ahead of us what power have we had in the past it is nothing because truly we are in god's hands truly we are in his hands and so the witnesses are called to give response on the side of man and what do they have they have nothing but yet other witnesses are called then in verse 10 there's a pause between these verses let them hear and say it is through at the end of verse 9 and there's nothing there's no answer but then in verse 10 god calls his witness and he says you are my witnesses he calls the same witnesses back as it were and he says to the people you are my witnesses because through you i am going to show you just what i have done for you what your idols didn't do and could never do i have done for you you are my witnesses declares the

lord and my servant whom i have chosen that you may know and believe me and understand that i am he and he goes on to say this before me no god before me no god was formed nor shall there be any after me i i am the lord and besides me there is no savior you see what he is saying to them he is showing them the evidence from another side he says i've called you have called you have called you as witnesses to bring the truth before me you have no response i bring you as my witnesses before me now and here is what you will see i i am the lord you would expect two different sets of witnesses but it's the same ones we can deny god we can be blind we can be deaf before him but we actually have eyes to see and ears to hear and the knowledge of god is before us in all that we see and all that we hear and when you look at it and he's calling us as witnesses before him can we not see the same things that he is god that there is no other that he alone is the one who is able to save are we not witnesses to his mercy and to his grace the very things that we have day by day that we take for granted the very things that we think we have provided for ourselves our health our homes our families our communities we say it's all of us it's not it is god and it is to god we are to be thankful that he has chosen his people that he has watched over his people that he has provided for his people that he has shown mercy and grace towards his people when you go back again to to the previous chapters here when there was judgment called in chapter 20 42 verse 25 he poured out on him the heat of his anger and the might of battle and set it set him on fire all round all of these things is the wrath of god that we deserve and yet he calls us as witnesses has he given it he has held it back for now he has been gracious he has been merciful towards us he has given us a day to hear his word and to respond to his word we deserve his wrath we deserve his judgment and yet in wrath he remembers mercy you are my witnesses to this declares the lord and where does it point us towards where does this lead us to it always points us towards the cross to jesus who he sent into this world for our sin that through him we would see his mercy that he did not spare his own son but gave him as a ransom for his people that he might lay down his life for his people that they might have life through him that we might have life through him you are my witnesses he says as i say i would go on to show them in isaiah 53 the suffering servant the one who would come to be to give his life you are my witnesses to all of these things and so he highlights that for us here how there is purpose that you may know he says in verse 10 that you may know and believe and understand so there's these three words again know believe and understand just like we had this morning that we would come and hear and do there's another three for us here know and believe and believe and understand we are witnesses to the mercy of god that he has given us an advocate someone who would come to our defense and that's what john speaks about in first john chapter 2 verse 1 to 3 where it says if anyone does sin we have an advocate advocate with the father jesus christ the righteous he is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world and by this that we have we know that we have come to know him if we keep his commandments so he has shown us he has shown us his mercy he has given us his mercy the witnesses are called one they have no response to give when they look to their own idols just like we do but another god calls and says well look what i have done for you i have chosen you i am the lord i am the savior there is no other so the witnesses give their evidence and the final thing we want to see from this is a verdict must be come to a verdict must be come to a verdict must be declared and what will it be who are we going to side with i declared and i saved he says in verse 12 and proclaimed when there was no strange god among you you are my witnesses declared the lord and i am god also henceforth i am he there is none who can deliver from my hand i work and who can turn it back well following the witnesses we have to ask ourselves what verdict would we give what could we say before the lord as we stand trial would we still say but but our idols but my strength but my power or any of these things is what has saved me or would we come just humbly before god and say it is only by your mercy lord who could stand if you would mark iniquity against us none no one could stand but yet with you there is forgiveness the psalmist says it is the only way that we can stand that we can stand it is to be before him thankful for all that he has done he has declared he has saved he has proclaimed he has done it all but do we have eyes to see and ears to hear or are we still blind and are we still deaf you know the amazing thing is as you go through scripture you still see the god of this world who has blinded the eyes of people to this very day in luke chapter 19 verse 14 there's that parable where it's talking about jesus talking about what are you going to do with this man and the citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him saying we do not want this man to reign over us that parable was talking about how they would treat jesus when he came we do not want this man to reign over us is that our response when we

see all that god has done for us that we would say we do not want this man to reign over us if we do we will not stand before him when we come on trial when we come to give account for all that he has done for us we will not be able to stand but by faith in him by looking to him by trusting in him we will be able to stand before him as the one who has saved us from our sins what will we do with our faith what will we do with all that we hear in this will we proclaim it or will we shy away from it the truth is before us the truth is there is nothing we can do of ourselves the truth is it is only by god's grace that we can stand before him on the sure foundation that is christ we need him not to say we will not have this man rule over us but to be able to say my lord and my god have mercy on me have mercy on me that i might live the thought of coming on trial before god what a thought that we must appear before him and that he would give witnesses against us when he says i have done this for you i have done that for you and above all i have given my son for you would you say not for me i'll do it myself i'll go my way or would you come and say lord have mercy lord forgive me when i see what you have done give me eyes and give me ears to hear and understand and see and know and that i might follow you may god help us to be able to stand firm in christ that we might stand trial before him with christ as our advocate on our side as our defense as our savior let us pray lord our gracious god we do thank you for all you do for us we thank you that in the fear of standing before you there is hope and assurance as we look to christ christ our advocate christ our defense christ our savior and we pray lord that anything that we see in ourselves that makes us feel worthy or powerful to stand before you you would take it away from us and help us to come just mercyfully before you humbly before you by your grace and by your will hear our prayers and continue with us that's all we ask we ask in jesus name amen i'm going to conclude by singing to god's praise in psalm 73 in the scottish psalter

[59 : 32] page 316 psalm 73 at verse 23 to 26 again we see the change in this psalm when the psalmist is before god and almost leaning on his own understanding in verse 21 it says as grieved it was my heart and me and me my reigns oppressed so rude was i and ignorant and in thy sight a beast but yet you see the change that comes in verse 23 nevertheless continually oh lord i am with thee thou dost me hold by my right hand and still upholdest me our hope is found in the lord who is able to hold us so we sing from verse 23 to verse 26 to god's praise the tune as weather be voy forbade voy

God dost behold by thy right hand, and still thou holdest me.

Come with thy counsel while I am, let me conduct and guide, and to thy glory aftermore receive me to thee.

Come with thy right hand, and to thy glory aftermore receive me to thee.

His sight be there is none. My flesh and heart doth faint and fear, but God doth fill me there.

[62 : 29] For of my heart, God is the strength and motion for ever.

Amen. After the benediction, I'll go to the door to my right. We'll close with a benediction. Now may grace, mercy, and peace from God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit rest upon and abide with you all now and forevermore.

Amen. Amen.