

We give thanks to God. And I know that there are many others who would desire that as well. And our desire for you is that you will come and put your trust in the Lord.

And we give thanks to God for his continual reminders to us that he is a gracious God, a generous God, a faithful God. And we look to him in these days.

So I'm going to ask Alistair now to lead us in our worship. Again, to have our eyes fixed on Jesus and the wonder of all that he has done for us. Again, thank you, Calamurto, for your kind welcome and introduction this evening.

We're going to cast our eyes heavenwards as we take to our lips the words of Psalm 36. Psalm 36 on page 44. We're going to begin our worship with the words, Your steadfast love is great, O Lord. [9:29] It reaches heaven high. Your faithfulness is wonderful, extending to the sky. Singing on to the end of the verse, Mark 10. To those who know you as their God, your steadfast love impart.

Maintain your righteousness to those of pure and upright heart. Psalm 36 from verse 5 to the verse Mark 10, five stanzas. And we'll stand to praise God.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS
CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS
CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS to those of good and of right heart.

[12:36] We're going to bow our heads and we're going to join our hearts together as we approach our Heavenly Father in prayer. Lord our God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we bow before you as we seek to offer this evening sacrifice of worship to you, conscious that you are God and we are not.

We pray that it would be with a sense of deep reverence that we would approach your holy throne this evening and yet simultaneously with a holy boldness, recognising that you have given to us this great invitation to draw near to you.

And not simply have you given to us that invitation, you've given to us a promise that those who draw near to you, you will in turn draw near to us. And we recognise that the fulfilment of that promise transforms our gathering this evening.

because it means that we're not simply here in the presence of family and friends, perhaps regulars and visitors to this congregation. But as we seek to draw near to you and you in turn have promised to draw near to us, then we are in the presence of the living, almighty God.

We pray therefore that we would have that stillness that comes from recognising that you are here watching, that you are here listening, that you are the one who walks among the golden candlesticks, you walk among the congregations that bear your name, you know all the different matters that are unfolding, all the different undercurrents that may be present, you know everything.

[14:22] And so we pray that this evening we would have that sense of humility and yet boldness, that sense of recognition of our unworthiness to have this privilege and yet simultaneously a genuine sense of joy that we can come before the living and true God and offer this sacrifice of worship to you.

We pray, Heavenly Father, that you would grant to us the very real leading of your own Holy Spirit this evening through all the different component parts of our service.

As we sing your praises, we ask that we would be kept from merely articulating words, but that our focus would be on the one whose name we are praising.

As we have thought of your steadfast love, your covenant commitment to your people, the fact that you are the God who keeps your word, that we can absolutely depend upon you.

We thank you that we can praise you in such a way for your steadfast love and we pray that as we praise this evening, we would do so with our eyes fixed upon you as the one who is worthy of our praise and of our adoration.

[15:31] We pray that your Holy Spirit would enable us as we pray, as we seek to know how to approach the living and true God and how we seek to ask from you what we do not deserve, but yet what you are so willing to give, that you would do us good this evening, that we would know a sense of your favour, of your smile resting over us as we seek you above all

else.

We thank you for your word and we pray, Father, that as we read and study and submit ourselves to the teaching of your word this evening, we pray that we would do so with an eagerness to hear what you have to say to us and that we would do so recognising that your word is the food for our souls, it is the direction for our lives, it is the way in which we hear what you have to say to us and we pray, therefore, that we would be eagerly anticipating what we may learn of our Saviour as we open your word tonight.

We thank you that your word reminds us that all of Scripture points to our Saviour and so we pray that we may be able to see and to savour again our precious dear Lord.

As we have thought much of him in these days, we pray that that would be what we will do for the rest of our days, that we will think much of our Saviour. Thank you for the opportunity to be able to focus in through word and sacrament on that great cost of our salvation this morning and we pray, Father, that it would be even now still our souls being fed from the privileges that have been ours. Father, we confess before you that as we see our Saviour, we realise that in comparison to him, we are flawed and we are individuals who are polluted in every different way.

[17:27] As we think of what your word says when Isaiah recognised that he was a man of unclean lips as Peter recognised before the Lord himself that he was a sinful man that he didn't deserve to be there, we realise that that is us, we do not deserve your goodness your mercy, your grace toward us.

We do not deserve it because not simply of the sins that we committed before we came to a living knowledge of Jesus Christ but even the sins that we have committed since. And Father, we cannot help but be grieved by them because we know that it is possible for us to grieve your spirit by the way in which we live.

And so we pray, that we would know real, true confession again this evening and we pray that again we would know the delight that you are faithful, you are just, you will forgive and cleanse from all of our unrighteousness when we come confessing our sins.

Father, thank you that your knowledge of each person in here is encyclopedic. There is nothing about any one of us that you don't know. You know those who have been eagerly anticipating gathering tonight and you know those Father who have come to this place and they don't want to be here and yet you have brought us here for this divine appointment tonight and we pray that for each one of us it would be to do us good that we might see the wonder of who the Saviour is and that we might all be irresistibly drawn to him as we bow before him in humble worship and adoration.

Please guide us, please lead us and please accept us for we come through that name which is most precious to you than any other in the name of your Son and our Saviour. Amen.

[19:18] We're going to further praise God. This time we're going to sing in Psalm number 27 singing from the sing Psalms version Psalm 27 on page 31 Psalm 27 page 31 we're singing from the beginning down to the end of the verse marked 5 that's 6 stanzas Psalm 27 page 31 the Lord's my Saviour and my light who will make me dismayed the Lord's the stronghold of my life why should I be afraid and so on down to the end of the verse marked 5 6 stanzas and again we'll stand to praise God.

the Lord's my Saviour and my light who will make me dismayed the Lord's the stronghold of my life why should I be afraid of sin You are set to be to take my life away.

My love, my son, is not my foes, will stumble in my day.

Although I'm not the end, my heart will feel no pain.

Oh, what against me is true, the lies I will lift up my hand.

[21:43] What against me is true, the lies I will lift up my hand. I'll flee before the Lord, and this I'll seek always.

As I may come within God's house, I'll dwell there all my years.

Back on the beauty of the Lord, I constantly may gaze.

I'll flee before the Lord, and this I'll flee before the Lord.

In His wings For in His square May He will keep me Safe in troubled days Within His tent He'll shelter me And on the Lord Me raised Our scripture reading this evening is taken from the Gospel of John and chapter 12.

[23:41] John chapter 12, we're going to take up a reading at verse 20.
John chapter 12 at verse 20.

John chapter 12, verse 20.

Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee and asked him, Sir, we wish to see Jesus.

Philip went and told Andrew. Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.

[24:46] Whoever loves his life loses it. And whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me.

And where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honour him. Now is my soul troubled.

And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.

Then a voice came from heaven. I have glorified it and I will glorify it again. The crowd that had stood there and heard it said that it thundered.

Others said, An angel has spoken to him. Jesus answered, This voice has come for your sake, not mine. Now is the judgment of this world.

[25:47] Now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself. He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

So the crowd answered him, We've heard from the law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?

So Jesus said to them, The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know what he is going.

While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become sons of light. The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever.

Let's once more bow our heads as we approach our Heavenly Father in prayer. We pray, Heavenly Father, that your blessing might rest upon this congregation and its witness in the months and years and decades to come.

[27:09] We thank you for the witness of this congregation over many, many years. We thank you for the way in which it has been used by you to draw many people to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we pray, Father, that what has been done in the past would be merely the beginning of what will yet happen with more and more people coming to hear of the Lord Jesus Christ and being drawn by the Holy Spirit into a living relationship with him.

We do thank you for Calamurto and all who serve alongside him in either official or unofficial capacities, all who are willing to give of their time and of the gifts that you've provided them with.

To serve in whatever capacity within the congregation. We pray, Father, that you would encourage all who serve in whatever way that might be. We pray especially, Father, for any who may feel that at times their service is overlooked.

Father, we pray that you would make it very real to them that there is no service for you that is ever overlooked. You are the one who sees and you are the one who will reward.

[28:12] We pray, Father, that as the people of God in this congregation mingle mingle within the people of this town and beyond, whether that is with their neighbours or with their work colleagues or in whatever other front line they may have, we pray that what might be seen from your people is more and more a reflection of the Lord Jesus Christ whom your people here love.

We pray that that would be what will draw men and women, boys and girls. We pray that that's what the people of God would be known for in this place, known for their similarity and the resemblance that they have to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Father, we long that that would be the case not simply here but throughout every Christian congregation up and down this land who holds your word to be true and who seeks to portray Jesus Christ as the crucified yet risen exalted and returning Saviour.

We pray that we would see days in our country once again whereby young and old would be drawn by the power of the Spirit to the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you for what we are hearing of our renewed interest with different age groups and different demographics within the country and we pray, that as people seem to be stirring to the sense of hopelessness that a secular humanist outlook actually brings, we ask Father that you would bring those who are seeking into contact with those who have a living relationship with you so that they may seek and that they may find and that they may bow before the Lord Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

Father, we've already mentioned the fact that you know each one of us in here tonight and so that means you know everything that's going on in our lives this evening. You know those who've come into this place tonight with many burdens, perhaps burdens that are crushing in their weight, perhaps burdens that are so, so desperately heavy that they wonder if they're going to survive them.

[30:14] Father, we thank you that you have told us that there is a great burden bearer and that there is an invitation to know that we can have the rest that Jesus alone can give.

We thank Father of those who perhaps have come to this place tonight with many different fears, perhaps those who've come with unanswered questions, perhaps those who've come with doubts and difficulties that are causing real problems in their lives.

Father, we realise that we live in a broken world and the brokenness caused by sin manifests itself in many different ways and yet, Father, we thank you that there is a remedy for that brokenness and that is found in the Lord Jesus Christ and so, please help me this evening to communicate your truth in the power of your own Holy Spirit and help us all to receive your word as it is, not the word of any preacher but the word of the living God spoken to us.

Please enable us to be freed from all manner of distraction of things that may have happened or are happening or may yet happen in the future. Help us for the time that you have gathered us together to have our eyes focused on the Lord Jesus Christ, the one in his name we pray.

Amen. Well, before we study some of these words we're going to sing in Psalm 43 singing from the Scottish Psalter Psalm 43 this is on page number 264 Psalm 43 O send thy light forth and thy truth let them be guides to me and bring me to thine holy hill even where thy dwellings be and so on to the end of the psalm Psalm 43 page 246 and verse 3 O send thy light forth and thy truth O send thy light forth and thy truth let them be guides to me and bring me to thy holy hill in where thy dwelling's be and where

[32:34] I took a softer road to God my chief and choice in God in God my God thy name to praise my heart my will and why why are the and why will sing thoughts are now disquieted in me still still trust in God for him to praise good cause thy yet shall have he of my counten sister held my

God that doth me save let me invite you to take your Bibles and to have them open at John chapter 12 this evening to words that we read earlier on John chapter 12 and I want us to read again the words of verse 32 John chapter 12 and the words of verse 32 where Jesus amongst other things says and I when I am lifted up from the earth will draw all people to myself you may you may not know that the scientists in China and in America are having a bit of a competition at present to try and develop the world's strongest magnet currently China is a magnet that is 800,000 times stronger than the earth's magnetic field so the earth's magnetic field compass always points north it's a magnetic field that does that

China has developed a magnet that's 800,000 times stronger than the earth's magnetic field we're assured by both the Chinese and American scientists that these developments are going to help with our understanding of chemistry and physics and materials but human nature being what human nature is whatever good discoveries we end up having it tends to be used for things that are less than helpful but what we find in these words of verse 32 here is actually something that's got an even stronger pulling power than this magnet that the Chinese have been able to develop that's 800,000 times stronger than the earth's magnetic field because what we find here in verse 32 is that we've got a drawing power that can draw from thousands of miles away that can draw from thousands of years ago right back to a particular location where a particular event took place

whereby outside of Jerusalem the Lord Jesus Christ the Lord of glory the one present at the very beginning of time calling into existence all that we see the giver of life is about to die the light of the world is about to be extinguished

Jesus says that when he is lifted up from the earth that he is going to draw all people to himself and that's what we see we see people of all ages drawn to Jesus we see people from all cultures drawn to Jesus we see people from all generations drawn to Jesus drawn so that they look to the events of this cross at Calvary and not just merely with a casual glance at something that's happened and then they move on but drawn in such a way that when they look and see what Jesus has done then their lives are transformed and so the pulling, drawing, captivating appeal of Jesus Christ when he is declared in all of his glory it will draw to himself all those whom the Father will call and tonight we're going to be thinking about this drawing magnetic power of Jesus that transforms men, women, boys and girls that has the power to transform you this evening if you entered this building without a living relationship with Jesus as we encounter the power of the gospel it is that power that can change your life that can change anyone of our lives and so this evening we're going to be thinking about this drawing power of Jesus let's put this into its context however we need to always make sure we do so and what we saw on Friday evening when we looked at the first part of this section of John chapter 12 we saw that there was a great request those folks had come from far away and they had come with a particular desire we want to see Jesus and when Jesus was given this message he took their arrival as the sign that the hour that had always been in the future throughout John's gospel as a drum beat every so often the hour has not yet come the hour has not yet come the hour has not yet come with these Greek visitors with their request to see Jesus he now says that the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified glorified the hour has come now for the plan of salvation developed in eternity enacted in time to move on to its next phase and this next phase is going to mean that the people from all the nations of the earth are going to be are going to be welcomed and blessed as they look to Jesus up until this point Jesus had only been going to the lost sheep of Israel but now there's this wider perspective because now the plan of salvation has moved on to a new phase a critical phase for Jesus and so the first thing I want us to point out from this passage this evening is the internal impact of this next phase if you like of the plan of salvation and the impact that that has on Jesus and we have that for us described in verse 27 to verse 29 where it says now is my soul troubled and what shall I say

Father save me from this hour but for this purpose I've come to this hour Father glorify your name then a voice came from heaven I have glorified it and I will glorify it again the crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered others said an angel has spoken to him the eternal impact of this hour coming upon Jesus there was a sequel last year I think it was Gladiators 2 movie some of you may have seen the original Gladiators film in that film the main character played by an actor called Russell Crowe in his, in the death scene of the main character what stood out in that movie was that over about five minutes you saw this main character dying and it would go, revert images from him to images of what he's thinking about and he's walking through fields and there's all this beautiful sunset and it's all so calm and it's so peaceful and bit by bit this carries on until eventually death comes and you know the movies like to portray what death is going to be like and not necessarily particularly accurately but that's them so there you have the main character in that great, that action adventure as it were and his death was so calm and so peaceful and so pleasant and filled with wonderful images and you think what a contrast to the Lord of Glory because as the main character of all scripture we have recorded for us in all four Gospels that when Jesus was approaching his death it wasn't nice, calm, relaxing images there wasn't warm, soothing music in the background to create just the right atmosphere there was in the sense of our Saviour the horror of what was about to unfold that for our Saviour, when he says here now is my soul troubled he's not exaggerating he is communicating the agitation that he now experiences conscious that the hour has now come this is the same terminology that's used in different occasions it's used as Jesus saw the impact of death and what it's done in the household of Lazarus he's going to use similar words agitation, trauma as he thinks of the betrayal in chapter 13 the words are going to be used there as well but for Jesus, he is now deeply troubled words that are associated in the original with trauma why is he so troubled?

[43:21] because with the hour coming the time where he is going to become a curse for sin and be before the holy justice of a sin hating God well that, instead of being an event well in the future is now an event that's right up close and the prospect of standing before a sin hating God

carrying this sin of the world on him is something that shook him right to his very core this is a different perspective to what we see of Jesus, isn't it?

because we think of Jesus and the impact of his teaching and we think of the impact of his ministry people being made whole again we think of the control that he's had and yet now as he comes to a point where this hour is arriving for him the full weight of what's about to be unleashed upon him is coming into focus and it's not something he's shrugging off it's something that's leaving him really, really troubled because he knows he's going to be in a position where he's never been in before because not simply the one who had no sin is now going to become sin as we thought about but the one who has lived that life of intimate connection with his father even through his ministry reflecting the father's words and will and telling people the father's always with him he's going to experience as he stands before this sin hating God bearing your sin and bearing my sin he's going to experience a break in that connection a break in that communion he's going to sense as if that's no longer there he's going to cry out and he's going to say well my God why have you forsaken me? he's not even going to have that sense as we thought of earlier on today of that fatherly presence that accompanied him all the way through so for Jesus here he's conscious of the time that he is going to be in a situation that he's never been in before and the reason he's going to be in that position is because of the brokenness of your life and the brokenness of my life brokenness caused by sin caused by our own sin caused by other people's sin but nonetheless the brokenness the sinfulness of our life he's going to be in that place to deal with our sin once and for all he's going to be in that place so that he can deal with the worst of our secrets the things that we hope people never find out about he's going to be in that place bearing our sin conscious of the attitudes that we have shown and the selfishness that's been there and the way in which we perhaps have used others and the way in which we perhaps have manipulated or the way in which we've cruelly dealt with other people and the way in which we've had excesses in different ways and all of these things that have evidenced how we were no longer or how we were not living in a right relationship with God all of that was going to be condensed all of it was going to be concentrated and all of it was going to be taken by our Saviour and so the very prospect of this unfolding was leaving him troubled little wonder it left him troubled and so his trouble as this hour is approaching is a trouble that only he as this infinite being who could offer this and pay this infinite price was a trouble that only he could take and he could deal with for us and so he makes it clear that his soul is troubled and into that context he speaks and says well should I ask the Father to somehow save me from this hour and of course there is the recognition that he knew that it was for this hour he's coming from verse 27 and then he has this prayer

Father glorify your name and just as Jesus had at the very start of his ministry this voice from heaven to encourage and to and to give to him what he needed at that moment as he rose from the river Jordan having been baptized the Holy Spirit descending upon him and this voice thundering from heaven this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased and just as Jesus in in John 17 as he as he set his face towards Jerusalem and all that was about to unfold it was now coming closer and still there is this word from heaven and now here as the hour has now struck we have this third word from heaven when the voice from heaven says I have glorified your name and I will glorify it again and so what we're learning here is that the Father is being glorified through the ministry of the Son and so we learned that at the birth of Jesus didn't we?

the very arrival of the Creator God into his creation to be limited in a time and in a space for the first time in his existence to be helpless, to be dependent well what was the anthem that the angels would sing?

[49:11] well glory to God in the highest so there was glory given to the Father through the very arrival of Jesus into this broken world and there was glory given to the Father through the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ as he taught, as he healed, as he showed back as he showed by example how to live as he protected, as he rescued as he stood up for those who were being mistreated all of that was bringing glory to the Heavenly Father and yet there is a sense in which the ultimate glory to the Father is going to be the glory that's going to be expressed at the cross at Calvary because there at the cross at Calvary the Father is going to be glorified because there at the cross at Calvary we're going

to see something about of the absolute holiness of God we're going to see something of the absolute justice of God we're going to see something of the absolute faithfulness of God we're going to see something of the depth of the very love of God all of these are on display at Calvary's cross the holy God who cannot just ignore sin the just God who has to ensure that justice is done the God who is faithful, the God who has promised that someday there would be somebody who would come who would undo the damage done and brought into this world by Satan and undo the damage caused by sin once and for all and on display would be the very love of God that how God can simultaneously be the one who punishes and the one who saves at the same time and so the cross is going to be this great glorification of God the Father and here we have the Son being very conscious of that and so on the cross what is unfolding?

well the eternal Son is bringing glory to the Father and the Father is being glorified through this work we tend to think of glory when people are given a platform or put on some podium or given some spotlight or whatever and somehow they are exalted in one way or another whereas here the glory is going to be given as Jesus is lifted up but lifted up in an entirely different way as he's lifted up to die the death that we deserve and so this hour has come the internal impact of this hour upon Jesus is that he's troubled by it the external impact of this hour is what Jesus goes on to speak about next from verse 30 to verse 36 because Jesus speaks that a number of things are now going to happen because this hour has come and a number of things are going to be learned that now that this hour has come first of all that judgment is coming and Jesus sees now is the judgment of this world verse 31 now is the judgment of this world because what's going to unfold at Calvary is going to make people aware that actually the biggest problems in humanity they're not external and they're not time bound but they're actually eternal issues that the big problems of humanity are not going to be solved by economics they're not going to be solved by education it's not going to be solved by environmental improvements all of which have their place in a particular realm but not in this realm because the biggest problems that humanity has that society has that if we take it personally the biggest problems that we have by nature it's not the problems that are out there it's the problems that are in here and this is telling us that on the cross itself judgment for this world is going to be there because what's going to happen on this cross well the only person who ever walked on this earth the only person who perfectly loved God with all of his heart, soul, strength and mind the only person who perfectly loved his neighbour as himself the only one who lived a truly perfect life what did we do to him?

well we killed him didn't we? what did we do to the Saviour of the world? well we put him to death we hung him on a cross we nailed him to a cross and we left him there to die and Jesus is saying that there is no judgment judgment is coming and judgment is it culminates on that work on the cross the second thing that Jesus sees by way of an external impact of this hour now verse 31 will the ruler of this world be cast out?

that what's going to happen on this cross at Calvary as the Father is glorified is that this work will simultaneously be fatal to Satan will be fatal to Satan that Satan as he thinks he finally has the eternal Son of God what he wants him to be upon a cross with the weapon that he thinks is the most suitable weapon in his arsenal to destroy Jesus Christ once and for all is going to find out that what he thinks is his greatest moment of triumph is actually the moment of his ultimate defeat because Jesus has told us didn't he in John's Gospel a couple of chapters back he said no one is going to take my life from me I will lay it down and I will take it back up again so Satan thinking this weapon of death that is going to somehow extinguish the light of the world he thinks that this is his moment that this is where he is ruling and he doesn't seem to appreciate that the work that's about to unfold will mean that the ruler of this world his power broken never to be restored again and so the defeat of Satan is going to be so clearly in view in that sense

Satan is so foolish as he sees Jesus as he sees him breathe his last he's so foolish he thinks he's now got his empire established and yet his empire is as strong as a sandcastle with the tide coming in because you know what it's like and the tide's coming in and slowly but surely you know that sandcastle is going to fall over and as he sees as he sees the Lord of Glory breathe his last no doubt he rejoices only to realise three days later that the very Lord of Glory is back death defeated so the external impact of the our coming is that there is judgement that Satan's power once and for

all that there is a new king in town that there is a new king who has dealt with the old king
Revelation tells us in chapter 11 verse 15 the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our
Lord and of his Christ and he shall reign the third external impact is that Jesus will draw all people
and so now we get back to where we started this is where Jesus will draw all people to himself this
is what he said here verse 32 when I am lifted up

[57:11] I will draw all people and so we are thinking now of outstretched
arms entreating may see of this Jesus of his identity and of his
willingness to be found in such a position upon a cross to secure our
freedom that all who will who will hear and all who will see will be
welcomed that they will be that they will be that they will be that they
will be that they will be something about Jesus that will draw them to
him it's not that they are that they are driven to Jesus it's that they
will be drawn to Jesus because as we as we think of what we are like and
the gap that exists in our lives between the people that we want to be
that we really are we realize that we are not the way we should be and
that deep down that's going to come back to haunt us and it's going to
haunt us when we actually stand before our maker and give an account for
how we have lived and loved in this world and so we actually need to have
somebody who's going to stand with us when we are in that court setting
and there is nobody better to stand with us in fact there's nobody
qualified to stand with us other than the very Lord of glory himself
because anybody else that we may think of our closest friends our most
loved family well they too have got this gap and they too are going to
have to stand before almighty God and answer for themselves they can't
advocate on our behalf but there is somebody who can there's somebody who
can somebody who was willing to put himself into that place of horror
somebody who was willing to put himself into that place where beforehand
the very prospect almost broke him whether we think here of his trouble
or whether we think specifically of Gethsemane as the sweat pores are now
tinged with blood such was the weight the pressure upon him and he's
willing to do that he's willing to go into that place for us and he's
willing to go there and he says listen I have paid the penalty for you so
come to me follow me know my rest and know the fulfillment that I can
give to you and know the love that I have for you the love I've shown you
learn of that love and keep learning of that love and whoever will hear
of that love will be drawn will be captivated because the pulling power
of the crucified yet risen saviour is a power that can transform from
whatever starting position from a starting position of hardened atheism
from a starting position of agnosticism or humanism or whatever else it
might want to be it doesn't matter how firm a starting position somebody
can be when the pulling power of the gospel through the Holy Spirit
starts drawing people it doesn't matter how fixed their position was
become more and more obsessed with who is this Jesus he lived a life

I couldn't live he cared for people that other people were just quite happy to ignore he wouldn't walk
on by he would see things that other people didn't see and this Bible tells us that he's not changed
and so that he sees me other people may not see me other people may not know what's going on in
my life but this Jesus does he knows and he really does care and he's inviting me he's inviting me
and saying whoever you are I'll never turn you away you see the drawing power of Jesus Christ
there is nothing nothing that can rival it and so that's why the message of the cross is the message
that we need to keep communicating because it's it's the message where hope is to be found isn't it
that all of the mess that we've made can be undone that all of the guilt that we carry can be lifted
away and that all of the all of the wandering and rejection that we've had of God can be transformed
and we can be accepted and it's all focused on the cross at Calvary the cross that is the message
that we share is the message that we give it's the message that we don't graduate from it's a
message we need to keep coming back to it is the message that is the hope of sinners it is the
message that is the joy of saints it's the message that is the study of angels it is the message of

Christ and his willingness to receive all who will come to him who will look to what he has done for them and who will welcome all who will look to him to know his salvation to know his power because when he is lifted up he will draw all people to himself remember the context the Greek people came and want to see Jesus and what they're learning is that what they're going to see of Jesus is not what they necessarily expect to see of Jesus because what they need to see of Jesus is a Jesus who is crucified and yet who is risen and who is exalted and so therefore with these truths in mind what applications do we have for ourselves this evening two or three and then we're done first of all for any of you who tonight are troubled deeply troubled maybe for different reasons but troubled nonetheless let me remind you of a saviour who can empathise with you being troubled maybe some of you are carrying traumas that are very deep and very sore let me remind you of a saviour who can empathise with your traumas and who can come to a people who are troubled and who are traumatised and who can say to them as he said to his disciples in a couple of chapters he said don't let your hearts be troubled why?

because of who he is because he is God and he is the one who understands and he is the one who can help us and he is the one who can deliver us from our troubles whatever they may be he is the one who can deliver us from our troubles as we look to him and for his people who find themselves in troubled days he is the one who is going to enable us in these troubles to follow his pattern his pattern of bringing glory to God in these troubles in the difficulties perhaps with health in the difficulties perhaps with relationships in the difficulties perhaps at work in the difficulties perhaps in community in congregation whatever it might be he is the one who is going to enable us to bring glory to our God through the troubles that we face you know one of the greatest ways that people see the reality of faith is when they know somebody has a faith and they see them going through really difficult times and they see them holding on to that faith that gives a credibility to the gospel in a way that few other things do and so you may be troubled this evening there is one who understands and there is one who cares and there is one who helps and there is one who can enable you to follow his example of bringing glory to God through these troubles as you rest in him that only can happen however as our eyes are fixed on Jesus that can only happen as he has that place in our perspective that he really ought to have that can only happen as we look to the exalted Jesus and so we do so ourselves to remind ourselves if we want to know what God is like we look to Jesus if we want to know what it is to be human we look to Jesus if we want to know what genuine love is we look to Jesus and we keep looking to Jesus because looking to the crucified yet risen ascended saviour who is returning that is what's going to enable us to live the life that we ought to to live as his people but for some of us

I know it's time to actually start looking at this Jesus isn't it it's time to to stop looking elsewhere and to start looking to him it's time to stop delaying any longer because as Jesus goes on in this passage the people as is frequently the case in John's gospel as he studied the people as they hear what Jesus says don't quite understand it and Jesus brings it round to the point of fact that actually there's a sense of urgency to listen to what he has to say there's a sense of urgency because they have light but they're only going to have it a little bit longer and then after that it's going to be darkness and then that's going to be major difficulty and so what Jesus is saying to them is that there's an urgency to listen to what he says and what he's saying to you is that there's an urgency to listen to his invitation to live because today you have that invitation you're here however you're here whether you're this is your normal whether you've been invited whether you've never been here in your life before you're here and he's brought you here you have this light but this light is not guaranteed to last any longer because this is a light that needs to be responded to now as you look to Jesus and as you think why was he on that cross well he went to that cross for me well how can I possibly how can I possibly live ignoring the fact he went to that cross for me but would he want someone like me would he want someone like me with all of my messed up thinking and all of my past with all of my present would he want someone like me and again we go back to the words of

John chapter 6 that whoever comes to me he says I will never turn you away you see we started off talking about magnets and the strongest magnet in the world and how Jesus has greater drawing power but the thing about Jesus is like every magnet there are those who are drawn and there are those who are repelled and the sad reality is that some of you in here tonight might be being repelled by Jesus let me warn you as lovingly and as solemnly as I can that that is the most dangerous place you can possibly be in because this is the saviour the only one you need him and he's come for you and he's offering you tonight life life lived to the full here and now and life

forevermore with him as you bow the knee before

[68:30] King Jesus why because Jesus said that when I am lifted from the earth I will draw all people to myself the invitation is open right now to come to him let's pray Father we thank you for all that our saviour was willing to do for all that our saviour is currently doing and for all that our saviour will yet do for us we pray that tonight you would draw to yourself those who do not have a living trust in Jesus we pray that such a connection would be established and we pray this for your glory we pray that you would be glorified in the saving of sinners we pray that there would be rejoicing among the angels in heaven even this evening with sinners repenting and believing and turning and trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ bless us we pray for we ask this all in his name

Amen we're going to conclude by singing in Psalm number 24 Psalm 24 on page number 28 Psalm 24 on page 28 we're going to sing from verse 7 down to the end of this psalm we are singing of the king of glory we're singing of our saviour you ancient gates lift up your heads you doors be opened wide so may the king of glory come forever to abide and down to verse 10 but who is this exalted king who can this sovereign be the Lord almighty he is king of glory none but he we're going to stand as we praise God you ancient gates lift up your heads your doors be open wide so may the king of glory come forever forever to the mine but who is this exalted king what glorious king is he it is the Lord of strength and might the Lord of victory it is the Lord of strength and might the Lord of victory you ancient gates lift up your heads your doors be open wide so may the king of glory come forever to the light but who is this exalted king who can this sovereign be the Lord almighty he is king!

of glory and might be the Lord almighty he is king of glory and might be alleluia alleluia alleluia alleluia alleluia amen amen amen amen until the Lord returns calls us home now to him is able to keep you from falling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy to the only God our saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory, majesty, dominion and authority before all time, now and forevermore.

And the people of God said, Amen. Amen.