

It's All About Jesus

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Preacher: Rev James Maciver

[0 : 00] Well, let me extend again a very warm welcome to you all this evening to the service, also to those joining us online.

We trust that together, once again, we'll know the Lord's blessing as we come together to worship Him. You'll find, as usual, the bulletin sheet for the intimations. You can read through that yourselves for the services throughout the week and also next Lord's Day.

Can I just point out the Friday evening presentation for marking Kenny I. McLeod's retirement. You have the details on there. But it'd be good that as many as possible could attend in the church.

It will be live-streamed, but if you can attend in the church, that would be even better. There are plenty of spaces at the moment, so you need to book by Wednesday. And just follow the instructions on there for Lorraine's details to actually see if you want to come, just contact her.

Also, can I point out the WFM conference on Saturday. That's from 11am to 12.30pm. That'll be held, as far as we're concerned, it'll be held in the seminary, so you'll be able to join it in the seminary.

[1 : 17] There is no cost to attending at all. But again, if you could, those attending could consider donating to support this year's projects. That'll go through the WFM finances as usual.

Also, I commend to you the Saturday course that's resuming at Edinburgh Theological Seminary and also online. And more information, you can get that on the ETS website or else contact Mary Ferguson if you wish to have more details.

And these are all the intimations I need to mention, I think, for the moment. And we'll begin our worship. And we're worshipping God firstly, singing his praise in Psalm 96a.

Psalm 96a on page 127. And we'll begin from verse 7 through to the end of the psalm. All nations to the Lord ascribe the glory that is due, glory and strength ascribe to God and praise his name anew.

Enter his courts with joy and bring an offering with you. Worship the Lord in holy fear, all earth before him bow. And so on to the end of the psalm. All nations to the Lord ascribe the glory that is due.

[2 : 31] All nations to the Lord ascribe the glory that is due.

Glory and strength ascribe to God and praise his name anew.

Enter his courts with joy and bring an offering with you.

Worship the Lord in holy fear, all earth before him bow.

Tell every hand the Lord is king. Lord is king.

[3 : 58] He established it, the earth. And cannot live.

The Lord will judge the people's name is true.

Let them rejoice and earth be glad.

With joy let the oceans ring. The fields and all in them will shout.

And forest trees will sing. They all will sing before the Lord.

[5 : 13] Who comes to judge the earth. He'll judge the world in righteousness.

The people's name is true. The people's name is true. Amen. Amen. Let's now join together in prayer as we call upon the Lord in prayer.

Almighty and gracious God, you have brought yourself before us in these words that we have sung in your praise.

And as you call upon the whole creation to magnify your great name, to praise you. We thank you that we tonight here have called upon likewise to give praise and glory and honor to your name.

O Lord, help us, we pray, to have further insight into all that makes you worthy of such praise. And we have been singing that you are worthy to receive our praise and thanks.

[6 : 23] And we bless you for all that you have revealed that makes you worthy of such praise. And even of the praise of heaven, the praise that will go on in the glorified church of God throughout eternity.

O Lord, we give thanks that however perfect that praise is above, it never exceeds your worthiness to be praised. And we thank you tonight, Lord, that we recognize this, that you are our God and our King.

That we would not want to ascribe the praise that we give to you to any other. And Lord, help us as we draw near to you, that our minds may be united in that conviction that you alone are God, that you alone are worthy of such praise.

We thank you for this renewed opportunity that we have of being together. We thank you, Lord, for the togetherness of your church, for the way that your people are united together, joined in bonds that are spiritual and unseen, and yet that are reflected outwardly in their relationships with each other as they relate to yourself.

And we thank you, Lord, tonight that these bonds are strengthened the more we come to know you and to know your truth and to value all that you have done for your people.

[7 : 42] And we pray tonight that we may be led by your Spirit into further understanding of the very foundation of these things in our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray that you would hold him before us once again, that we may have further glimpses of his glory, of his finished work on the cross, and of his glorious resurrection from the dead.

That we may anticipate his return into this world on that great day, the day of judgment. That we may find ourselves, O Lord, concerned to appear before him blameless through his righteousness, through being made holy, as you indeed promised to do for your people.

We pray tonight for that commitment to holiness that would set us apart, O Lord, to be your people in the world. We pray that as we go from day to day, you would enable us to see that our holiness is not something which is outwith the ordinary turn of events of each day.

That it is not detached from our experiences of daily life, but rather that it is very much in those things that we come to depend upon you. And that your Spirit conducts us to make a use of them and of your word as we seek to pursue and grow in righteousness and holiness and in Christlikeness.

We come before you too, Lord, to confess our sins. We are unable to number our sins in your presence, but we give thanks too that we are unable to number the many mercies that we receive.

[9 : 23] Forgive us our sins, we pray once again. We thank you that we can bring our own burden of our sinfulness before you and our many failures as we go from day to day.

We give thanks too that we can gather together, O Lord, and express collectively these things in your presence. We give thanks that as you promise in your words, so your people experience that you are faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all our unrighteousness.

We pray that you would equip us further, O Lord, to be your people in this world, in our own locality, wherever in providence we find ourselves. Lord, bless us, we pray individually and collectively.

Bless us as we seek further avenues of service as a congregation. We give thanks, Lord, for every opportunity held out for us in the past. And while we have, O Lord, such restrictions imposed on us over these past months and even a year and more, we thank you, Lord, for the prospect of being able to reach out with the Gospel even during these times, and especially as we would anticipate, Lord, the lifting of these restrictions finally.

We ask that you would bless our young people and our children. We thank you for this Sunday School. We thank you for the encouraging attendance on the part of those who attend and of the parents who send their children so willingly and gladly.

[10 : 54] We thank you, Lord, for those who teach, for those who have given themselves and come forward to help us with this. We pray that your blessing, Lord, will follow that in the lives of such young people.

We commend them to you tonight and ask that you would bless them, Lord, as they receive the teaching of your truth and instruction in the things of the Gospel. O Lord, may they be for their own generation bright and shining lights, those who will stand unashamedly for the glory of Christ and for his Gospel, and help them, we pray, as they seek to understand more and more of that Gospel, that they will through it themselves come to have all their trust and confidence placed in him as their Saviour.

We pray your blessing for all other youngsters, Lord, even for those in the creche, for those in the tweenies, for those who have grown to adulthood as well, that come, Lord, to attend upon Bible class and youth fellowship.

We ask for those who have left us at this time to begin study on the mainland. We pray for them, asking your blessing to follow them. Lord, we ask that you would keep them in your ways, that you would protect them from the many influences in the world that would seek to draw them away from you and from the worship of your name.

Grant that we may continue to take a personal and prayerful interest in them, so that we bear them before you at all times, and so that we continue to pray for them and pray for their wellbeing in all their circumstances, both in their education and in their work, and in their lives spiritually.

[12 : 31] We ask your blessing to be with those who have specific responsibilities, Lord, in the congregation for the upkeep of your cause.

Bless the elders, we pray, as they once again find themselves for such a time, having been restricted as we find matters enabling us to carry out further pastoral duties.

We pray that you will bless the elders, bless us as a kirk session, bless the deacons as well as they attend to their duties. Oh Lord, keep us all, we pray, obedient to yourself and faithful, and help us, we pray, as we wrestle with difficulties in providence, with difficulties in people's lives, with the struggles that we all have from time to time in matters of faith.

We ask that you would help us, Lord, by your Holy Spirit, and by your truth enable us to know the direction that we need in our lives. We pray for others, Lord, who look after the matters of the congregation's wellbeing.

We pray for those who help to transmit the services online. We ask that you would bless them. We pray for Lizzie and for Marianne as well, and ask that, as we are thankful for all that they do, along with their helpers in the congregation.

[13 : 50] Lord, help us, we pray, to bear them before you as well, and to realise that they give of their time so willingly, and that keeps them from things which others maybe are able to enjoy in the way in which their lives are structured.

Lord, we ask that you would bless us now, and continue with us as we wait upon you here. Bless us in the world in which we're placed. Bless our nation at this time.

Bless those who lead us politically, both locally and nationally. Lord, our God, we do confess our bewilderment at times at the decisions and at the promotion of matters we know are offensive to you and contrary to your word.

And Lord, we pray that you would turn our leaders away from what is merely human, and especially from what is evil advice. And Lord, we ask that you would bring them into the knowledge of your ways.

And for those of them, Lord, in government or in the lower levels of government, who do fear you and acknowledge you and testify to you, bless and protect them, we pray, from every influence that will seek to turn them away from obedience to you and to your truth.

[15 : 05] Graciously bless us now, and continue to hear us and pardon our many sins. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. Well, a word to this time to the young ones who are present, and also I know there will be some families online tonight that will be taking part in the service as well.

If you're anything like our grandchildren, the older ones at least, they're really into what are generally called superheroes. Those who are in the Marvel magazines, you know the kind of people I mean, those inventions in these magazines such as Spider-Man, the X-Men, Thor, all of these others.

Some really I don't know the names of, and I don't know all that much about them, but I know that they're actually very popular. And one of the creators of these figures, Stan Lee, who's actually responsible for most of them, he was asked at one time, what is it that makes these magazines and these figures so popular?

Because they're obviously more than human in the ordinary sense. They have these superpowers. They seem indestructible. And therefore in that sense they are set apart from ordinary human beings.

Why are they so popular? Why have they been so successful? And his answer was something like this. Well, he said, when I was thinking about the likes of Spider-Man and the X-Men and Thor, I was thinking about what would it be like for a superhero like them?

[16 : 43] Supposing they existed in the real world, what would life be like for them? And he said, I began to think that, well, they would actually need to have some method of sustenance from day to day.

They would actually live in a way that found that not everybody trusted them. They would need some way of living in the world that engaged in some ordinary things as well.

That's why you find some of them have girlfriends. Some of them have things that ordinary people have as well in the world. So he said, that's really what I think made the appeal and made them so popular.

They were superheroes, yet they also had some human frailties and human struggles. And they identified with human beings in that way. There were some people, there were people or superheroes with whom people could identify.

They actually saw, well, there is a superhero, but he's got weaknesses as well. And so he's like me in that sense. Well, we all need someone to save us.

[17 : 52] To save us especially from our sins. And it's not a superhero that does that. It's someone much more than a superhero. It's Jesus Christ. It's the Son of God.

And despite the fact that he is the Son of God, he came into this world and took our human nature to himself. He became human. He identified with us.

He entered into our points of weakness. And so he is at the same time one who can save us, but also understands our struggles and the battles we face in this life.

That's why Jesus is unique. He is not a superhero. He's more than a superhero. He is the Savior.

He's the Son of God. But he's also human. And he remembers that we are ourselves human. And he's been through many of the experiences and indeed all of the temptations that we are subject to.

[19 : 03] And that's why in the likes of the letter to the Hebrews, you'll find in chapter 4, verses which really call on us to remember who Jesus is and what he's like.

Since then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God. Let us hold fast our confession, for we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Let us, therefore, let us, therefore, with confidence draw near the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

We cannot manage life. We cannot manage life. You young folks cannot manage life without Jesus and without having him as your Savior also.

Now let's recite the Lord's Prayer together. Amen. Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

[20 : 15] 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 and the power and the glory forever. Amen. Our reading of God's word tonight is from Philippians. The epistle to the Philippians, chapter 1.

We begin our reading at verse 18. Philippians chapter 1 and verse 18.

What then, only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

Yes, and I will rejoice. For I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Christ Jesus, this will turn out for my deliverance. As it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now, as always, Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death.

[21 : 28] For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell.

I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.

Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith. So that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus because of my coming to you again.

Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ. So that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind, striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents.

This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him, but also suffer for his sake.

[22 : 41] Engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had, and now hear that I still have. And we pray God again to bless these words to us from his own precious truth this evening.

Now if we can pick up where we began reading there to take another few verses this evening in our studies in Philippians. From verse 18, we're reaching down as far as verse 21 this evening.

And you remember we began, we're beginning where we left off last time, where we saw in the last study, which ended on the note of Paul's rejoicing in verse 18.

Rejoicing, he says, despite the fact that some were actually preaching the gospel seeking to add further affliction to his life, yet they were preaching Christ. So he says, what then only in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

And now he's saying, yes, and I will rejoice. He's moving into another section of his teaching. And yet that same note with which the previous section ended is being sounded again and carried through just like a piece of music.

[23 : 59] Imagine a piece of music where one movement ends on a particular note, and then that same note is carried on through into the next piece, which may then be a different tempo or whatever.

But that same note really ends the one section and moves you into the beginning of the next one. That's something like that with the teaching of the apostle here. This note of rejoicing as he ends there in that previous verse.

Now he's saying, yes, and I will rejoice. It's actually the second half of verse 18. Yes, and I will rejoice. He's carrying that same note of rejoicing into what he is now going to say.

And that's important for us because remember, as we saw, he is actually in prison. He is not having a time of luxury or of comfort. He is experiencing many things that cause him distress and pain, certainly physically.

And yet he is still saying, I'm rejoicing in hearing that Christ is proclaimed. And I'm rejoicing that my imprisonment has actually emboldened some who are preaching to actually go forth with more boldness to preach the gospel.

[25 : 07] And I will continue to rejoice for, he says, I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, this will turn out for my deliverance.

And there are two main features of the passage through to the end of verse 26, actually. We're only going to take the first of them this evening. First of all is Paul's main concern in his life and in his circumstances just now, and as he conveys that to the Philippians.

Paul's main concern is to glorify Jesus, to bring honor to Jesus, that Jesus may himself be honored through Paul's life or even, as we'll see, through Paul's death.

And then from verse 22 onwards, we come to Paul's difficult choice. God willing, when we come to see that, it follows on logically from what he said.

And he says, I am really hard pressed between the two, that is, whether to depart from this world and to be with Christ or else to remain.

[26 : 18] And we'll see, when we come to that study, that it gives you a real insight into how Paul saw the service that he had for Christ to be of such incredible high value.

That he could place it almost on the same level as going to be with Christ in glory. And that really shows you what he thought of serving Jesus, what he thought of being Christ's servant in this world.

Well, let's confine it tonight to Paul's main concern, which is to bring glory or honor to Jesus. And he's saying here, I will rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, this will turn out for my deliverance.

Now, you might think that the word deliverance there really means that Paul is thinking primarily of his release from prison. And that the things that he's now going to speak about are part of what's going to lead to that deliverance, for that release, for that freedom from his imprisonment.

But actually, that's not primarily what he means at all. Because the word he's using for a start here, literally, that's translated deliverance, is the word salvation. He uses it for translated salvation many, many other times in Paul's writings.

[27 : 34] And to confine it, as the ESV does, to deliverance is somewhat misleading because it does suggest that Paul's main concern is with being released from prison.

And that that's the burden of his heart here, that he will come to glorify Christ by being released from prison through his deliverance. Whereas what he's talking about, really, more than anything else, is his salvation.

And the words that he's using in this passage really are very much part of the whole fabric of his salvation experience, of his relationship with Christ. He talks about his eager expectation, a word that's used in Romans 8 for the longing of the creation, for the revelation of the sons of God, the final stage of redemption.

He's using the word hope. He's using the word courage, which is really the word boldness elsewhere. And all of that shows that his mind is set not just on being released from prison.

Whether that happens or not, he's not sure. He's waiting for the outcome of his trial. He's awaiting the verdict, whenever that will be, of this Roman judicial court.

[28 : 43] But what he's saying is, that's really not the point of issue. That really doesn't matter at the end of the day. Because I know that this is going to work out.

This imprisonment, including everything else, is going to work out for my salvation. It's part of Christ's program for me. You see, Paul is not saying here, well, I know that I'm saved in Christ.

I know that I will be with him. I know that I will be saved. That's the end point of my life as he comes to think about going to be with Christ.

But you mustn't think that Paul is saying, well, that's really everything except this imprisonment. As if this imprisonment is just a blip on the way that doesn't contribute anything to his progress as a Christian.

Or to his movement onwards towards finally being with Christ. It's not like that for the apostle at all. And that's why the lordship of Christ figures so largely in the passage.

[29 : 47] For the apostle, his imprisonment, just like everything else, is part of God's program for him. To actually bring him onwards step by step, experience by experience, hour by hour, day by day, year by year.

Onwards towards the mark of the high calling of God in Christ. To be finally with Jesus. And what he's really saying is pretty much this.

He's saying it amounts pretty much to this. Where Paul is saying, well, if I am released from prison. Or if I actually have to die and be put to death, if that's the verdict.

At the end of the day, it makes no difference. Because my burden is to honor Christ. My burden is to glorify Christ. The purpose of my life is Christ.

If I live, he's saying, it'll be living for Jesus. If I have to die if I'm executed, then it'll be going to be with Jesus. So either way, this is where his mind is actually set on honoring Christ.

[30 : 56] Whether by life or by death, as the passage goes on to tell us. In other words, Paul is really thinking of whatever outcome his court trial will end with.

What he's really saying is, well, it's not Caesar who actually decides the final outcome of my life anyway. The Roman judiciary might pronounce him guilty and therefore he be put to death and executed.

But that's not the final decision of Paul's experience and Paul's life and Paul's person. That lies with the Lord. And Caesar is an instrument.

And the Roman judiciary is an instrument in the Lord's plan for his apostle Paul. Now you can take from that many things that are valuable.

For a start, it brings a whole different dimension to life when you realize who is actually in charge of everything.

[31 : 58] It prevents you from sheer despair. When you realize that it's not just the happy times. It's not just the comforting spells in your life.

It's not just the things that give you much encouragement. The things that really fill your life with further hope. It's not these things only that are under the control of Christ. So is every difficulty.

So is every struggle. And we all have them. They're not absent from his lordship. From the control of his lordship. From the sovereignty of his lordship.

From the care of his lordship. For his identifying with us as our Lord in all the circumstances of life. Here's what Paul is saying. My imprisonment is not an accident.

My imprisonment is not something detached from my progress in Christ. It's not something that sits outside of the program that Jesus has for me as one of his people.

[32 : 56] It's part and partial of it. It stands in its own place in my progress. In faith. In love. In hope.

How do we view our struggles? How do you see the trials in your own life? Be they small or great.

How do you see them in relation to Jesus? Where are they in relation to the lordship of Christ? Well tonight I hope for me and for yourself.

That we're something like the apostle if not at the same level and certainly of the same kind of outlook. That we see everything under the lordship of Christ. That we see that he is lord of everything.

Lord of the passing of time. Lord of the events of time. Lord of history. Lord of the outcomes. Lord of everything. You know if Jesus isn't lord in the absolute sense.

[33 : 56] He's not lord at all. Because lord means lord. Lord means totality of control and of purpose. And there's a sense.

And maybe we sometimes ask the question or in preaching we presented something like this. Have you made Jesus the lord of your life? But there's a sense in which that's not really the right way of putting it.

Because whether we have accepted Jesus or not. He is still lord. And he's the lord of your life tonight and of my life tonight. Whatever we have made of his gospel.

He is still in charge. He is still lord. He's still the one you're answerable to. He's the one you must give account to. You don't make him lord. He is lord.

What the gospel presents us with. In presenting us with the lord Jesus Christ is. Here is the lord. Accept him as lord.

[34 : 57] Accept him for who he is. Because he is the lord anyway. And his lordship will be acknowledged. As indeed Philippians 2 goes on to say.

To say. That. In terms of. His exaltation. Even to. To be exalted. Highly by God the father. So that.

He has bestowed on him the name that is above every name. So that at the name of Jesus. Every knee should bow. In heaven and on earth and under the earth. And every tongue confess.

That Jesus Christ is lord to the glory of God the father. Every tongue. Every single person who has ever been created. Will. Will. Will. Confess with their tongue.

That Jesus is lord. Some will not do it willingly. Some will do it in hell. Reluctantly. But they will not doubt Jesus lordship.

[35 : 57] Even over a lost eternity. Tonight Jesus. Is lord. Is. Is. And the question then is. How is he in your own life.

Have you accepted his lordship. As it's commended and presented in the gospel. Are you still trying to control life with Jesus on the sidelines. Or do you accept his lordship.

Over every single event of your life. That's what Paul did. That's what Paul did. That's why he has this outlook. That's why. This passage of the gospel is saying.

That this is his main concern to glorify Jesus. And to see even his imprisonment. As under the lordship and control. And purpose of Christ. But he is saying.

Through your prayers. I know that. Through your prayers. And the. The help of the spirit of Christ Jesus. This will turn out. For my salvation. Now Jesus is lord.

[36 : 58] He's got no doubts about that. But Paul is also very much aware that. That Jesus as lord uses means. And one of the means that he uses.

Is the prayers of his people. And that the fact that Jesus is lord. Does not mean that the holy spirit. The holy spirit is no longer required. In our lives. So he's combining.

The two things together. I know that. Through your prayers. And the help. The supply. It's really the word. Of the spirit of Christ Jesus. This will work out. For my salvation.

See he's saying. The spirit of Jesus Christ. What does that remind you of? Well it takes you back to. The life of Jesus himself. In this world. As the servant of God.

How was he. At the beginning of his ministry. Given the endowment. What sort of endowment. Was he given. What sort of thing. Happened in order to.

[37 : 54] Equip him for all the tasks. Of that mediatorship. Of that life. Of an. As an obedient. Servant of the father. The holy spirit. Came down in the form of a dove.

And as John said. Rested upon him. And just as he is the spirit. Of Jesus. So the holy spirit.

As the spirit of Jesus. The spirit that endowed Jesus. Is the spirit that Paul. Is setting up before the Philippians. As. That.

That they must pray for. Paul needs to be endowed. He needs to be equipped. How is he going to face. The difficulties that he's in. And the difficulties in the future. Whether it's by life. Or by death.

How is he going to face. Being put to death. If that's what the verdict. Of the Roman authorities is. He's saying. I know. That through your prayers. And the supply.

[38 : 49] Of the spirit. Of Jesus Christ. This will work. For my salvation. This top priority.

For the apostle. Is going to be. Met by the supply. Of the spirit. The spirit's power. The spirit's ministry. In his life.

But it's also connected. With the prayers. Of God's people. In Philippi. How can we fill these pews? How can we reach out.

Into this community. With the gospel. In a way that's effective. What is going to bring. People. With concern. For their souls. To attend upon the gospel. Or to listen. To what we have to say.

To them. Even before they ever. Come to church. What is it going to take. To actually get people. In this generation. To really think seriously. About life. In a biblical way. Well two things.

[39 : 47] Your prayers. And the spirit. Of Jesus Christ. Not one or the other. But both. The best thing. That you can possibly do.

For the ministry. Of the gospel. Whether it's myself. Or Kenny. Or whoever else it is. That stands in this pulpit. As every other preacher. Of the gospel. The best. And the most necessary thing.

For you. Is to pray. For the supply. Of the spirit. That's why. Our prayer meetings. Really should be earnest. And indeed. Well attended.

For that purpose. Not just in our lives. Personally. And individually. But it's our great privilege. To pray together. To be together. Pleading with God.

Setting before God. The need. For the supply. Of the spirit. Of Christ. That he will come. And bless. The gospel. And that raises another question.

[40 : 44] What is it that lies. At the heart of prayer. You can reframe it. Something like. What is it that makes us pray. And you might answer that. Well. Surely.

Our prayers. Are experience driven. We have experiences in life. And we feed that into our prayers. And therefore we can say that. Our prayers are experience driven.

First of all. Well of course that is true. You take the experiences of life. You bring them to God. You pray over them. But that's not the primary.

Reason why we pray. Or what moves us to pray. Our prayers must never. Primarily be experience driven. They must be rather. Relationship driven.

What's the difference? The difference is. You pray because you love Jesus. You pray because you're in. This relationship with him. That urges upon you. The need to pray. To thank him.

[41 : 41] To seek his help. To actually have him. More and more revealed in your life. Through the supply of the spirit. That's why we pray. Because we are bonded to Jesus Christ.

And being bonded to Jesus Christ. We cannot but pray. I'm not saying. I or yourselves. Can say every day of life.

That we've prayed the way we ought to have prayed. That we've prayed to the extent that we've prayed. But I can say this. If you know Jesus Christ. As your savior. If you know him as the king.

If you acknowledge him as the ruler of the universe. And of your life. You will pray. You will not be inactive. In regard to prayer. Because that's where it comes from.

It's a relationship driven prayer. Not merely experience driven or related. Is that the main focus of my own prayers tonight?

[42 : 41] Can I say to myself as a preacher of the gospel. James you pray because. Of this relationship you have with Jesus. Irrespective of what your condition may be in life.

Irrespective of your circumstances. Irrespective of where you find yourself. Because you know Jesus. And you know who he is. And you know what his status is. You pray. Well honestly I can't say that.

Every day and every moment of my life. But I would like it to be. Nearer to what the apostle has here. As each day goes by. And I'm sure you would too.

That because you know him. In your life. And because you know who he is. And what he means to you. You pray because that. You see as absolutely essential.

Because of who he is. Not just because of. Where you are. Or what you're experiencing. But be thankful too of course. That you can bring all your experiences to him.

[43 : 42] And pray over them. And set them before him. We're not saying that that. Is not important. So here is Paul saying. This will work through your prayers. The spirit.

And the supply of the spirit of Christ Jesus. Will turn out for my salvation. As it is my eager expectation and hope. That I will not be at all ashamed.

But that with full courage. Or boldness. Now as always. Christ will be honored in my body. Whether by life. Or by death. For to me. To live is Christ.

And to die. Is gain. He's saying here. It will be. In my body. That he will be honored. And he's using the word flesh as well. That's not. Flesh in the sense.

In which he uses elsewhere. Of. Of. The motions. Of. Remaining sin. In the life of the believer. He's using flesh here. Entirely in a physical sense. Just to actually put it with body.

[44 : 37] In other words. He's saying. I am weak in myself. I'm a human being. And in my humanness. I have so much weakness. I need the supply of the spirit.

Of Jesus Christ. So that. When it comes to the end result. Whether it's by life. Or by death. I need that supply. I need the power of Jesus.

I need that which. I want you to pray for. He's saying. To the Philippians. Because he says. I am. It is my eager expectation. And hope. These are. Salvation filled words.

Really. One expectation. They're the only other place. It's used. It's in Romans chapter 8. The eager expectation. Of the creation. Longing for the. Liberty.

Of the children of God. Their creation. To be released. From its bondage. To corruption. But here is. As Paul putting it. There for himself. As he thinks.

[45 : 33] Of the need to. His burden. To honor Christ. This he says. Is my eager expectation. That I will not be at all ashamed. Now that's again. A term that.

The Bible uses for. In many ways. It uses for being lost. It's not talking here about. Simply about. A subjective feeling of guilt.

Being ashamed of something you've done. It's rather the Bible's emphasis on. Being put to shame. Being made an object of disgrace. And that's really the end result.

For those. Who will die without Christ. Who will appear in the judgment. Without Jesus as Savior. They will be made an open disgrace.

They will be put to shame. An eternity of. Awful. Indescribable. Ongoing shame. And Paul is saying.

[46 : 33] That's not going to be for me. The outcome of my situation. It will be through. Your prayers. And the help of the Spirit. It will be. For my salvation. Because it's my eager expectation.

And hope. I will not be ashamed. But that with full courage. Now as always. Christ will be honored in my body. Whether it's by life. Or by death. In other words.

He's wanting. To magnify Jesus. And he's confident. That that's how it will be. By the supply of the Spirit of God. Through the prayers of God's people. And it's a characteristic.

Of God's children. That they have such boldness. To think in these terms. And the word boldness. Or courage there. Is really the word boldness.

That with full boldness. Now as always. Christ will be honored in my body. What gives you. The confidence you have. As a Christian. What gives you the boldness.

- [47 : 30] That you have. To enter into the presence of God. And speak to him. As your friend. And as your father. What gives you the boldness. To move beyond the fact. That you're a lost sinner.
- And a hell deserving sinner. Well that you're in Christ. That's what. And in Christ you have that. That boldness. That boldness of sonship. That boldness.
- Of being a child of God. That goes to your father. With your burdened heart. And you have that boldness. Because of him. It's a characteristic. Of God's children.
- Well this is Paul's confidence. That whether by life. Or by death. This he says. Is what I am looking to. To Christ. For Christ to be honored. In my body. By life.
- Or by death. How can he say that. How can he say that. With such conviction. How can he actually.
- [48 : 25] Come to the point. Where he says. It doesn't really matter. Whether I live. Whether I'm released. Or else on the other hand. Whether I'm put to death. This is what my burden is.
- That Christ. Will be honored. In my body. Whether by life. Or by death. Well the reason he can say that. And this is really the crux.
- Of his argument. Is verse 21. For to me. To live. Is Christ. And to die. Is gain. And there's the apostle's statement.
- And what a statement it is. For to me. To live. Is Christ. And to die. Is gain. The purpose of living. Is Christ. The end result of death.
- Is gain. Because to live. Is Christ. It's a logical thing. In the way he relates. Both things together. It's logical for him. To say. That. Because.
- [49 : 20] Life. Is. All about Jesus. So death. Must be. To go. To be with Jesus. That's the logical outcome. And before you say.
- Well I wish. I was like that. Well so do I. Don't. Take this. As something. That will. That will always be. Of such strength.
- Of conviction. In every Christian. As it is for the apostle. This. Is the apostle's. Personal testimony. This is how it is. For him. This is perhaps.
- What we all aspire to. And indeed. There's nothing wrong with that. But don't be disturbed. If you don't have that same level. Of conviction. That same level. Of confidence. That same level. Of boldness.
- That the apostle had. God. It's something. That he could say. Is true. Of him. It doesn't necessarily mean. That it's going to be.
- [50 : 15] As strongly. A conviction. In our experience. In our confession. As it was. For him. Paul's living. Is for Christ.
- Paul's dying. Is then gain. It's going to be. With Christ. Christ. Christ is with him. In this world. As he serves him.
- He's going to be. With Christ. In glory. As he leaves. The service. To go home. To be with Christ. And in principle. That's what it is. For every Christian.
- That's what it is. For all. Who are saved. Life is about Jesus. About serving him. About bringing him. Honor. And although. We can perhaps.
- Never reach the conviction. The level of conviction. That the apostle. Had the confidence. That this was certainly. True of him. That this was really true. At such a height. For him. It's still true.
- [51 : 11] In the purpose. Of your life. Isn't it? As a Christian. This is what you want. To live for. Whatever it is. You're doing. Has to come under. That it's. For Christ.

For me to live. Is Christ. He's the source of life. He's the purpose. For life. That's how it is. For the apostle. That's how it is in principle. For every Christian.

And to die. Is gain. To be with Christ. Now you see. He's here. Doing something of. A spiritual. Accountancy exercise. He comes to.

Say something similar. In chapter 3. Where he speaks about. All the things that he once. Counted. As gain. And where he lived. Without Christ. Where he lived in a way. That. Gloried in the things.

Of the. Pharisaic life. Of seeking to please God. By his. His. Minute. Attention. To the detail. Of the law. But he said.

[52 : 07] Whatever things were. Gained to me. In that respect. I now count as loss. For the sake of Christ. Things have changed. For the apostle. What's changed them?

Jesus Christ. Christ. Where Jesus is. Now in his life. How Jesus has. Revealed himself. To him. And where he has. Situated himself. In the life of the apostle.

And. As he carries out. That spiritual accountancy. You and I can do the same thing. Do it now. Just. Let's just do that. For a moment. Put on one side.

Of the page. Of your ledger. If you like. Of your accountancy book. The accountancy book. On the record of your life. Put on the one side. Of the page. Everything that you see. In worldly terms.

Of gain. Every single thing. You can think of. That will be gain. In a worldly. In a worldly sense. Whether it's material. Or whatever.

[53 : 04] Put it all together. On that side of the page. Add it all up. But leave Jesus. Out of it. And then you can write. At the bottom. Loss.

Because that's what it amounts to. To. Everything. That this world. Can give you. As Jesus himself. Put it. What shall it profit? A man. Though he gains. The whole world. But lose.

His soul. Or forfeit his life. The answer to that. Is obvious. Nothing. You cross it out. You say it's loss. On the other hand. On the other side.

Of the book. Or the ledger. Just put Christ. Nothing else. Just Christ. Not Christ. Plus this. Or Christ. Plus that. Not Christ. Plus your prayers.

Not Christ. Plus. Plus whoever it is. You are helped. Or helped by in the church. Not Christ. Plus. Christ alone. Just Christ.

[54 : 01] And then run down. To the bottom of the page. And say. Well. Let's assume. That I've lost everything else. But I still have Jesus. It's gain.

Isn't it? It will always be gain. It will always balance out that way. What things Paul is saying. I counted once. But gain.

I now count as loss. Why? For the surpassing worth of knowing. Christ Jesus. My Lord. Because he is everything. When you lose everything.

And still have Jesus. You still have everything. When you have everything. But don't have Jesus. You have nothing. Nothing of lasting value. Nothing for hope.

For eternity. There's the calculation. We all have to do it. And just because I'm standing in a pulpit tonight. Preaching the gospel.

[54 : 58] Doesn't mean inevitably. That I'm on the right side of the ledger book. I have to have Jesus. And Jesus only. As my saviour for that.

A well known preacher of. 1900s. Dr. William Graham Scroggie. He was an Englishman. And for a time at least.

He was in Spurgeon's. Spurgeon's. Tabernacle in London. And he was actually. Preaching at one time. Lecturing at the Keswick Convention. And he was giving a lecture.

On the lordship of Christ. And after the lecture. As he was. Just mingling with people. This woman came up to him. And she said. I want Jesus to be lord of my life.

But I'm afraid that God. Will send me overseas. As a missionary. And I don't want that. And he turned to her and said. Open your Bible at Acts chapter 10 verse 14.

[56 : 04] Now these are the words. Of the apostle Peter. Remember that incident with Cornelius. Where the voice said to Peter. Rise Peter. Kill and eat. Things which he then thought. Were unclean animals.

And he said. In the authorised version. Which is what. Scroggie would have had. He said. Not so lord. Scroggie said to her. Here's my pencil.

And I want you to do. Either one of two things. You either stroke out the words. Not so. And leave the word lord. Or you stroke out the word lord.

And leave the words. Not so. And he handed her the pencil. And he said. Now I'm just going to walk away. And I'll come back shortly. And when he came back.

He looked over. Her shoulder. Her Bible was still open. At that page. And he saw. That she had stroked out the words. Not so. And left the word lord.

[57 : 04] And not only so. But she was sitting there. With the Bible. And just saying repeatedly. Lord. Lord. Lord. Lord. What is it for yourself.

And myself tonight? Stroke out the words. Not so. Whatever in your life. Is actually standing in the way.

Of accepting Jesus. As the lord of your life. Stroke it out. Because you can't afford. To be without him. And leave the word lord.

In place. Lord. Lord. Lord. That's how it was. For the apostle. And I hope that's how it is for me.

And for you also. Let's pray. Lord. We give thanks. That you are indeed the lord. Of all things. That you preside over all the events.

[58 : 04] Of this world. Including the whole course of history. You are the one. That is revealed to us. In the final book of your word. As taking the scroll.

And opening. Its seals. And revealing its pages. And we give thanks. That that contained. An imagery of. That page. That it continued.

It contained. The. The whole expanse. Of history through. To the end of the world. Lord. Help us. We pray. To glory. In the fact. That you are lord. And to glory.

In the fact. That we. Ourselves. Place ourselves. Under your lordship. We pray. For any lord. Tonight. Who. Have not yet. Yielded. To your lordship.

Who have not come. To accept it. For themselves. Oh lord. We pray. That. In the past. As you opened hearts. To enable people. To do so. So you would do so. Even now.

[58 : 59] Bring us lord. Lord. We pray. To value. Your lordship. Above everything else. And throughout. The course of life. Receive our worship. Cleanse us from our sin. For Jesus sake.

Amen. We're going to conclude. Our worship. This evening. Singing in. Psalm 37. 37. In the sing. Psalms. Version of the psalm.

That's on page. Sorry. In the Scottish Psalter. Version. I'm sorry. That's. Psalm 37. On page. 255. And. We're singing.

Verses 37. To 40. The final. Verses of the psalm. Psalm. 37. At verse. 37. Page 255. Mark thou.

The perfect. And behold. The man of uprightness. Because that surely. Of this man. The latter. End is peace. But those men. That transgressors are. Shall be destroyed. Together. The latter.

[59 : 54] End of wicked men. Shall be cut off. Forever. But the salvation. Of the just. Is from the Lord above. He in their time. Of time. Of their distress. Their stay. And strength.

Doth prove. The Lord shall help. And them deliver. He shall them free. And save. From wicked men. Because in him. Their confidence. They have. These verses.

In conclusion. Mark. Mark thou. The perfect.

And behold. The man. Of all. Brightness.

Because. The truly. Of this man. The latter.

[60 : 52] In his peace. But those men. That transgressors are.

Shall be destroyed. Together. The latter.

End. Of wicked men. Shall be. At all.

Forever. But the salvation of all the just is from the Lord above.

He in the time of their distress, their strength and strength doth prove.

[62 : 07] The Lord shall help and then deliver.

He shall let free and save from wicked men.

Because in Him they're confident they have.

And now may the grace, mercy and peace of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you now and evermore. Amen. Amen.