

1 Samuel 18 & 19

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Preacher: Rev Iver Martin

[0 : 0 0] Well, we'll carry on reading that in the next chapter, on page 291, 1 Samuel chapter 19. And Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants that they should kill David. But Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David. And Jonathan told David, Saul, my father seeks to kill you, therefore be on your guard in the morning.

Stay in a secret place and hide yourself, and I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak to my father about you. And if I learn anything, I will tell you.

And Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul, his father, and said to him, Let not the king sin against his servant David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his deeds have brought good to you. For he took his life in his hand, and he struck down the Philistine. And the Lord worked a great salvation for all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced. Why then will you sin against innocent blood by killing David without cause? And Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan.

Saul swore, as the Lord lives, he shall not be put to death. And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan reported to him all these things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as before.

And there was war again. And David went out and fought with the Philistines, and struck them with a great blow, so that they fled before him. Then a harmful spirit from the Lord came upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand. And David was playing the harp. And Saul sought to pin David to the wall with a spear. But he eluded Saul, so that he struck the spear into the wall. And David fled and escaped that night. Saul sent messengers to David's house to watch him, that he might kill him in the morning. But Michal, David's wife, told him, if you do not escape with your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed. So Michal let David down through the window, and he fled away and escaped.

[1 : 5 9] Michal took an image and laid it on the bed and put a pillow of goat's hair at its head and covered it with the clothes. And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, He is sick. Then Saul sent the messengers to see David, saying, Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him. When the messengers came in, behold, the image was in the bed with the pillow of goat's hair at its head. Saul said to Michal, Why have you deceived me thus, and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped? And Michal answered Saul, he said to me, Let me go. Why should I kill you? Now David fled and escaped. And he came to Samuel at Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and lived at Nioth. And it was told Saul, Behold, David is at Nioth in Ramah. And then Saul sent messengers to take David. And when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying and Samuel standing as head over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul. And they also prophesied. When it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they also prophesied. Then he himself went to Ramah and came to the great well that is in Seku. And he asked,

Where are Samuel and David? And one said, Behold, they are at Nieth in Ramah. And he went there to Nieth in Ramah. And the Spirit of God came upon him also. And as he went, he prophesied until he came to Nieth in Ramah. And he too stripped off his clothes. And he too prophesied before Samuel and lay naked all that day and all that night. Thus it is said, is Saul among the prophets. Amen. And we pray that God himself will bless his own word to us. And we're going to come back to these two chapters after we sing together in Psalm 55. That's the Sing Psalms version. It's on page 72. The tune is Coleshill.

And we're going to sing from verse 16 down to verse 22. That's five stanzas. Page number 72. And it's Psalm 55. It's the Sing Psalms version. And we're going to sing from verse 16. Page 72, Psalm 55, 16.

But as for me, I call to God. The Lord will save me now. At evening, morning, and at noon, in prayer to him, I bow. Distressed, I cry. He hears my voice. He ransoms me unharmed from battle waged by many foes who are against me armed. Psalm 55. Sing Psalms version, verse 16 to 22. And we'll stand to sing.

Amen. But as for me, I call to God. The Lord will save me now. At evening, morning, and at noon, in prayer to him, I bow.

[5 : 11] Distressed, I cry. He hears my voice. He ransoms me unharmed from battle waged by many foes who run against me armed.

My God and one forevermore will fear and will repay.

Those men who have no fear of God and never change their way.

This man attacks his loyal friends and breaks his own word.

As for me, I call to God. As for me, I call to God, I call to God. All right, how do I say? As for me, I call to God. By God, O Lord, O Lord, O God, O God, O God, O God, O God, O God, O God.

[6 : 44] Ask your burden on the Lord, and he will care for you.

He'll never let the righteous fall, but bring him safely through.

Let's turn then to the chapter that we read, the first chapter, chapter 18.

We're going to think about the two of them as the one story. We're not going to look at every individual chapter on every evening. That would take us far too long, but we're going to look on this occasion at the two chapters joined together.

But I want us to read together from chapter 18 and the beginning of the chapter, verse 4. Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, and his armor and even his sword and his bow and his belt.

[7 : 57] And David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him. But then also on verse 8, Saul was very angry. How do you read the Old Testament?

Do you read a chapter in the Old Testament and instantly ask, how does this apply to my life? What can I get out of this chapter?

Now, I'm not suggesting for a moment that you can't get anything out of the chapter. Of course not. It's the Word of God to us. But I am suggesting that that's the wrong question to ask in the first instance.

If you really want to get to grips with the Bible, you don't ask, first of all, what can I get from the chapter? Because if you go in asking that question, you're likely to get the wrong thing.

You're likely to come away drawing your own conclusions, and they may not be the right ones. What you should be asking is, when you open the Bible, is, what is God saying in this chapter about himself?

[9 : 16] And about what he is doing amongst his people? That's how to read the Bible, first and foremost.

And it's as you discover and understand what God is telling his own people and showing his own people about himself, and how he's leading and guiding his own people and revealing himself.

After all, that's what the Bible is all about. It's about God revealing himself to his own people. It's as you discover then, with a right perspective, you are drawn into it by remembering that the God we worship, thousands of years later, is exactly the same God as David and Samuel and all of the great men and women of the Old Testament.

It's the same Lord, same God. And the importance of understanding Israel, how God worked in Israel, is that God was attached to Israel as his covenant people.

He loved them from the very day that he brought Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, way back in Genesis chapter 12. God promised him certain things.

[10 : 31] And the Old Testament is all about God keeping his promises. And again, it comes into our lives when we remember that the same God who keeps the promises that he made to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and to all the people, and these promises are made clear to us in the Old Testament.

It's the same God who keeps his promises today. The same God who said to Abraham, I will give you the land of Canaan. I will be your God. You will be my people.

I will bless you in every way. And in you, every nation in the world will be blessed. We live at a time when we can look back at these promises, and they all came to pass.

Every single one of them. Including the promise that in you, all nations will be in your seed. All nations will be blessed. Well, who was the seed of Abraham?

Who was the son of Abraham that would come hundreds, in fact, thousands of years hence? Jesus Christ. What do we have this evening? We have the blessing of the gospel, the forgiveness of sins.

[11 : 35] And so we can look back and say with absolute assurance, God keeps his word. And so that when we read the promises that he makes to us, that one day Jesus will come and receive us to himself, and we shall be forever with the Lord, same God, same promise, same certainty.

Our confidence in the Lord is bolstered because we read the Old Testament and we see that God is trustworthy and that those who put their trust in him through the person of Jesus Christ, his son, they will never, ever be let down.

Just like we were singing there. Do you see, we sang these wonderful, wonderful words. Cast your burden on the Lord and he will care for you. He'll never let the righteous fall, but bring them safely through.

Now, when he says the righteous, they're not people who have made themselves righteous by their own efforts and their own good works, that's not what righteous means at all in the Bible. It's those who have surrendered themselves and come to Jesus Christ and trusted in his righteousness becoming ours.

Tonight, I stand here not in my own righteousness. And if you're a believer, you don't stand in your own righteousness. You stand in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. God has said you are righteous.

[13 : 01] And that gives us the greatest confidence we can ever have, which draws us to prayer and to living a life of service to God out of love for the Lord.

And so when we read the Old Testament, we read first of all asking, what is God doing with his people? And in the Old Testament, God is utterly, absolutely determined to bring about his plan, which was that the seed of Abraham would be born, Jesus Christ.

And so the whole of the Old Testament looks forward, working its way day by day, year by year, chapter by chapter, verse by verse, in which God is not going to let anything stand between him and the birth of Jesus Christ.

And that determination is so clear as you go through, as you make your way through the hundreds of years of history. If it depended on the people of Israel, it would have fallen a long time.

It wouldn't have taken long to completely fail. But the Old Testament is not about Israel's faithfulness. The Old Testament is about God's faithfulness to his people.

[14 : 09] And God is completely determined to bring his plan to being, come what may. The most remarkable thing, to me anyway, is the way in which God works in individual people.

And that's the value of a person like David, who was just as sinful as you and I, just as prone to failure and to disobedience as you and I are and would be.

And yet God, he raises a person like David to be that glimpse that we were talking about last week, in which we're able to see something about Jesus.

And we'll see one or two glimpses in this chapter, just like we saw in the previous chapter, where David decisively defeats the giant, just like Jesus decisively defeated the enemy when he gave his life at Calvary.

We're going to see that there are other glimpses in this chapter. But I want us not to forget that the chapter is a story, it's a true story, about real people.

[15 : 15] And in which God is working through these people and the events in his providence, again, to push through, edge through his own will and his own plan.

And we'll see that it's a highly foolish strategy to ever think that you can stand against the mind and the power and the plan of God.

That's what Saul did. That was a great tragedy in the life of Saul. We've seen that before and we're going to see it coming more and more to the fore. Well, if after killing Goliath, David imagined that his troubles were over, he was greatly mistaken.

In many ways, Goliath was the easiest enemy he ever confronted. Goliath's defeat was straightforward. The opposition came from exactly where you would expect it to come from and in the form that it came.

Here was an enemy, the Philistines. They hated the Israelite people and as we've often seen, behind that enemy stood the evil one. And so when the Philistines came to battle with Israel, no surprise whatsoever.

[16 : 26] That's where you expected the opposition to come from, from the enemy, the Philistines. In this case, the Philistines, sometimes it was the Moabites, the Midianites, the Amorites, whoever it was.

They were the enemy. There was a clear line between the Israelites and the enemies of Israel. What you didn't expect is for opposition to come and the hatred and the animosity to come from one of your own people.

Somebody, David should have respected and loved. He tried to. He did. He started off by loving Saul. He wanted to serve him as any true soldier would have done.

And indeed, even when he knew that Saul hated him, what he wanted more than anything else was to get back into service to him. He was loyal to him to the very end.

The truth is that David's troubles were only just beginning. There was to be more opposition and an even greater, more persistent danger, except this time it came from within his own people.

[17 : 36] And that, I would put to you, makes it much, much more complicated. Because whilst you knew exactly that your enemy, what he was going to do or what he was going to try to do, what was Saul?

Was he an enemy? Was he a friend? Was he a fellow Israelite? Did he serve the Lord? Where did the Lord come into this? The whole thing became so much more confusing.

And it all began, of course, as we read in this chapter that when David rather came back from fighting Goliath, the song that the women sang on their way back was one which elevated David to a place of greater popularity than Saul.

This is what they sang. Saul has struck down his thousands and David his tens of thousands. And then we read that as a result of that, Saul was very angry and this saying displeased him.

He said, they have ascribed to David ten thousands and to me and he and to me they have ascribed thousands and what more can he have but the kingdom?

[18 : 52] Well, this perhaps shouldn't surprise us because we've been seeing all along how Saul was struggling already with his own failure. God had spoken to him and the message that God had for him was that the kingdom no longer belonged to him.

God was going to remove it from him and give it to someone else. He was yesterday's man. He was in the process of removing his kingdom.

He was a spent force. His days were long time ago and the rule was now going to be given to someone else. And there's every likelihood, of course, that when Saul was told that, that he was looking out for signs as to who this replacement king might be.

In other words, instead of him becoming reconciled to God's judgment on him, he went in the opposite direction and he became bitter and suspicious, looking out for who God might want to put on the throne instead of him.

You see, it was all about him. Look at what he says. Saul was angry and this saying displeased him. And he said, they have ascribed to David ten thousands and to me, they have ascribed, to me, they have ascribed thousands.

[20 : 12] If you start off from your own perspective, don't expect anything but a miserable life. If your life is oriented towards, if it's not oriented towards God, if everything surrounds you and you think of the whole world in your terms, the people that you know in your terms, the conversations that you have in your terms, you think first and foremost about yourself, then God gets pushed further and further and further out of the picture.

And sin is where you put the great eye where God should be. That's where it all started in Adam and Eve where God said, of the tree, of the knowledge of good and evil, you will not eat because in the day you eat, you will surely die.

What did Adam and Eve do? They replaced the word of God with what I want. The tree, the fruit, was pleasing to the eye and it was lovely to look upon and it was attractive.

And for them, they wanted to be like God's. They wanted. It was all about them. And from that moment onwards, this world is all about me. That's the great problem.

It's all about me. And that's the challenge that you face tonight if you're not a Christian. It's you. You are the obstacle that stands between you and God.

[21 : 38] There is only one obstacle and that is yourself. But it's a giant obstacle. And it has to go. Yourself has to die.

That's what the gospel is all about. And that's the demand of the gospel. Paul makes it absolutely clear in his letters that when a person comes to faith in Jesus Christ, the moment they become to faith in Jesus, they die.

That person they once were is no more. He's dead and buried. You have to die to yourself. And that is the problem because you don't want to die to yourself.

You want to keep the old life and hang on for dear life. Well, there is no life there. It's not worth hanging on to because the life that God offers you tonight through Jesus Christ is real life.

It's abundant life. It's everlasting life. Now, what's going to happen to you? Are you going to come and are you going to surrender yourself and are you going to ask the Lord for that new life that he is willing to give you and that he wants to give you tonight?

[22 : 56] The only obstacle is you standing in the way and you've probably been standing in the way your whole life. How stubborn are you? This is all about stubbornness.

Goliath's stubbornness. Goliath's refusing to recognize the God of the Israelites. Knowing full well what God has done for his people. And now it's Saul and he should know better because he's one of the Israelites and what he's doing, he is opposing what God is doing.

Maybe you never saw it like that. Maybe he was so consumed and that's what I wanted to talk to you this evening about. Our own sinfulness because there is something of Saul in every one of us.

What was wrong with Saul? Well Saul allowed himself to be overtaken by his own jealousy and his obsession and his bitterness because he saw himself being threatened.

He wasn't the only man in Israel to come under the judgment of God by the way. Moses himself came under the judgment of God. Remember when Moses was leading the people through the wilderness late on he said God told him to go to a rock and to speak to the rock and instead of speaking to the rock he lost his temper and he hit the rock he smote the rock and the water came out of the rock.

[24 : 19] God was angry with him and he said that as a result of his disobedience that he would not be allowed to enter into the promised land. Now Moses could have become bitter just like Saul.

He could have allowed this to become an obsession with him. He could have allowed himself to say well after all I've done for the Lord years I've spent my life was on the line look at all the trouble that I put up with I've done everything I've spent every moment of my life in the service of God for the last 40 years I've given myself to the Lord and now he takes the one thing I was looking forward to the one thing he takes that away from what's sin he could have allowed himself to think those ways but he didn't.

He wanted so much to enter into the promised land the same way as everybody else but God said no and he surrendered himself to the Lord.

Why? Because what was important to Moses was God and his glory and his honor that wasn't important to Saul what was important to Saul was him and what he wanted and his power and his rule even although he had lost the confidence of his people but he was now becoming worse and worse because he was allowing the spirit of jealousy and bitterness to overcome him and that's what sin is.

Jesus said whoever sins is a slave to sin. It becomes something we can't control and this was this is a classic example of somebody who succumbs to his own obsession and I feel that this is an appropriate place to look at ourselves in the mirror me as well me and you to ask if there are any obsessions in our hearts if there are any jealousies and envies in our hearts if we have allowed ourselves to become to adopt a one track mind and become obsessed about something could be something that's happened to you in the past obsession is where one particular issue takes over and begin to think about it more and more and more and it rises to a place of more and more importance so it becomes the only thing that you think about so you wake up in the morning and the first thought that comes to your head is what this obsession is it could be someone who you think has done you a great disservice or an injustice someone who has who you've fallen out with over an issue where you believe you're right and you're going to prove to him and to yourself and to the world that you're right and that everyone else is wrong and your life's ambition is to prove that and you won't stop until you do it there's all kinds of obsessions you can become obsessed with almost anything where it rises and elevates in your mind and in your soul and it eats you up and you begin to change your personality and you begin to be miserable and more and more and more unhappy with everything that's going on because this one thing has taken over and that's what Saul was for him it was David but actually it was himself he had sinned against the Lord and this was God's way of bringing about his judgment and instead of accepting it and repenting in which case

[27 : 43] I believe the Lord would have been merciful to Saul the same way as he was to Moses instead of that he became more and more resolute in his opposition to David and by so doing he found himself as an enemy of God and once you do that that's it you're destined to failure because whoever else you're opposed to in this life you cannot successfully stand against God you will never do it Goliath didn't and now it was Saul's turn standing against God and once that gets hold of you you have to ask that the Lord will you have to recognize it and ask that the Lord will remove it in fact only by seeing the big picture it's quite interesting isn't it that chapter 19 one of the things that Jonathan does we've seen Jonathan before we've recognized how much of an unsung hero he was in the Bible what a great man

Jonathan was he was such a man of God it was a tremendous tremendous example of living for the Lord and Jonathan intervenes he delighted much in David we'll talk about that in a moment verse 2 Jonathan told David Saul my father seeks to kill you therefore be on your guard so then he went he went to one side of the of one party then he went to his father and he spoke well of David to Saul and said to him let not the king sin against his servant David because he has not sinned against you and because his deeds have brought good to you for he took his life in his hand and he struck down the Philistine and the Lord worked a great salvation for Israel and you saw it and rejoiced why do you sin against an innocent man see what Jonathan's doing you know what the Lord Jesus says he says blessed are the peacemakers one of the characteristics of the Christian life is that we work towards peace where there is conflict and this is something that we perhaps that you're already involved and I know many of you go out to work in a world that's full of conflict and perhaps bad feeling and envy and jealousy and bitterness and we're all part of that world whether it's our neighbourhoods or our families or our places of work we need to be peacemakers trouble is that sometimes that we're the very opposite that we make things worse rather than making things better somebody asked the question once I remember reading a book once and saying when you walk into a conflict do you make things better or worse that's a very very challenging question when you walk into a conflict do you make things better or worse ask yourself that question

I need to ask myself that question as well Jesus says blessed are the peacemakers here's Jonathan he loves the Lord he wants what is right he's not concerned about his own place he was the rightful heir to the throne if anyone should have been gunning for David it should have been Jonathan but he was the opposite why because what mattered to Jonathan was the Lord the honour of God the glory of God and when you're a Christian that's what matters to us in the very first place and we and part of how we put that into practice is by seeking to bring peace and he did that by reason and argument and we can do the same thing we have it within us to resolve all kinds of the most complicated problems I believe that's what the church is for I believe that's what the church ought to be more involved in where there are complex issues of course part of the problem is we're so we're so private that we don't want anybody to know where there is difficulty because and that can be of course a form of pride amongst ourselves as well we don't want anybody to know that we're having any difficulty whatsoever

I don't want anybody interfering is that not the case but the Lord has called us to look after one another he's called us and some of us he has said that the more mature amongst us God brings us maturity in the Christian life for a reason so that we will be a help to others and so that we will be able by reason by quiet reason and rationality and by prayerful dialogue I don't know who I'm talking to tonight it's strange isn't it how a thing like this can be so practical and I don't know who you might have something this week that you may go back to this chapter and you may see how that's how the Bible applies to us because we put God in his first place and we obey God and we do service to God and our service to the Lord is in relationships with other people remember that our relationships with other people well we'll see more of Saul the next time but what about

Jonathan the chapter opens with Jonathan and we've seen him before chapter 13 defeating a Philistine garrison chapter 14 again defeating a Philistine garrison in the name of the Lord by faith in the Lord chapter 14 defying Saul's vow because it was a stupid vow in the first place it made no sense whatsoever and we we saw how a vow like this just was so nonsensical and chapter 18 is friendship with David and I want to close by by this evening by looking at just three things because there's a contrast isn't there in this chapter there's the Jonathan who loved David and there's the Saul who hated David both of them should have loved him but it's like what I was saying this morning the gospel divides because David was a man of God's after God's heart there was instant division because behind David God was with him and that issued the same challenge to the people of Israel as the gospel issues tonight to you the supreme man of

[34 : 22] God after God's heart is Jesus God's love but there is a division because as soon as you discover that Jesus the son of God the question becomes whose side are you on that was the question as it became apparent that God was with David the question rose and the question was everyone's whose side are you on for Jonathan no question he loved David and he made up his mind that he was going to support him and be behind him in every possible way because he saw who David was but for Saul he hated him because the number one in Saul's life was himself like we've already seen now I want to say three things in closing first of all I want to talk about the love between Jonathan and David and I want to talk about the covenant that they had between one another and then I want to talk about the close but I'm not going to have enough time

I want to talk about first of all the love don't read these words in the light of the current thinking of the world around us don't pollute the Bible you know what I'm talking about I am not even going to give at the time of day this love was a pure extraordinary spiritual friendship friendship that God in which God had brought these two men together and in which they it was more than just that they got on with one another they saw in one another the kind of bond that there only is between God's people that's what the Bible is about it's about God bringing people together in an extraordinary brotherly relationship and he's done the same in the New

Testament that's what the church is about there was a peculiar affection between Jonathan and David in which Jonathan recognized David's heart and where David stood in relation to the Lord and so by loving David and by attaching himself to David and bowing down to him and recognizing his kingship he was bowing down to what God was doing as an act of obedience Jesus says I have called you friends I want you to dwell on that great statement for a moment that's what he sent his disciples and he says exactly the same thing to every believer I have called you friends he says greater love has no man than this that he give his life for his friends

I want you to think of yourself tonight in terms of Jonathan and David as a friend where there is a friendship that extends beyond any other kind of friendship in which God has said to us he said what manner of love has God bestowed upon us that you should be called the children of God the sons and daughters of God and surely when we read about the friendship of David and Solomon our minds are drawn into the gospel and to that bond that God has created between himself and his people through the Lord Jesus Christ I can't help but thinking about a glimpse like I said last week here's a glimpse of the gospel just a glimpse that's all but it was more than a friendship it was a committed friendship because Jonathan and David made a covenant with one another now what was a covenant well

I'm sure most of you will know this already from having read the Old Testament my covenant was simply this I don't have time to say anything except that it was a solemn promise in which two parties came together it could be two men in friendship like David and Jonathan it could be two kings who had once been warring against each an covenant was always when you came together with another person and when you promised that from now on forever more as far as lies within me I am going to recognize you as my friend and my equal and I'm going to do everything I can to support you in every possible way and that's what they did and it was done in a very strange way they got an animal and they cut the animal in two they killed the animal cut it in two and they separated the two halves of the animal maybe may have been a bull cut the bull in half and they would put the two halves of the bull on the ground and there was a pathway in between them and the two of them would walk down the two halves they would walk on the channel in between the two halves and they would make this promise they would say if either of us breaks this promise let us be like this bull as dead and as destroyed as this bull that's how important a covenant was very solemn and

[40 : 15] God in his love for his people made a covenant made a covenant with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob to be and he made certain promises and he made those promises in terms of a covenant I promise you he says I solemnly promise you that I will be your God forever more that's what he said to his people and that's what he says in Jesus Christ tells us a covenant written in our hearts it's a covenant in which he speaks to us and in which we can utterly rely upon that promise forever more and know that even when we go wrong that he's faithful to that covenant and then lastly we read that Jonathan took his armor off and gave his robe and his sword and his shield and whatever else his bow and his belt to

David now what does this mean well it was the quickest way to describe it is simply this that Jonathan you are what you wear we say that in our century and it was even more true for Jonathan Jonathan was the crown prince he was the heir to the throne and his robe was a special robe it wasn't an ordinary robe it was one which identified him as the crown prince and so by taking off his robe and giving them to David he was surrendering his position his rights his life his status to David as God's anointed and that's what God is asking you to do tonight to surrender all that you have and all that you are because what you are is actually only what you think you are we have nothing that hasn't been given to us by the Lord every breath that we take has been a gift of God we depend upon him for everything and so the least tonight that we should be doing is listening to what he asks us to do and this is what it is he asks us to surrender what we are to give what we are to come to him to come to him in our entirety and to say to him nothing in my hands

I bring simply to the cross I cling let's bow our heads in prayer Father in heaven we ask that tonight that as we read these vivid verses in which we are able to see a glimpse just a glimpse of the cross we thank you that that glimpse became a reality because you promised it in the fullness of time and we give thanks oh Lord that tonight that we can that we can see how you brought to pass those promises in the Lord Jesus Christ who comes to us this evening and asks us and commands us to to come in all our rags our filthiness our sin and our guilt with a promise that you will cleanse us through the blood of Jesus that was shed for us at Calvary so Lord we pray that you will strengthen us for the coming week whatever that week brings we do not know what a day or an hour may bring and we're so often reminded of how uncertain our lives are prepare us we pray may your word prepare us this evening and forgive our sin in Jesus name

Amen