

Worship Is A Gym

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[0 : 00] Wonderful. Well, sorry for the small delay as we got our technology to work. This is our fourth session asking the question, what is worship?

And each week I've tried to draw our attention to a particular picture or metaphor which might help us think about what it is we contribute to Sunday worship and what it is we might benefit from Sunday worship.

This week our theme is worship is a gym. For some of us that will be an attractive image, for others on Sunday morning not particularly attractive at all.

So let me pray for us and then I'll ask us perhaps to reflect on the last few weeks. Our dear God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we thank you so much for these weeks to talk and to listen and to learn to reflect on our lives before you and particularly our life in Sunday worship.

So please help us again this morning. Give to us, as we don't deserve, that we might know better how to serve you in this world for Christ's sake.

[1 : 10] Amen. Okay, so perhaps some initial reflections on the last few weeks. Are there images or thoughts or questions which have arisen for you between Sundays?

This is my adult teaching methodology that recalling last time's class can actually long-term be of educational value.

So I'll give you a shot at it anyway. Yes, please. After last week, I thought of the idea that it doesn't seem to you or to me to be biblical to think that if we just get our emotions or sing correctly, or emotions up to a certain level or sing correctly up to a certain level, then that will result in God's presence among us.

Sure. I wonder if some churches have a different temptation to think if we just get our thinking correct enough or our theology up to a certain level of correctness, then God will show up in us.

Yeah, sure. So for those of you at the back who might not have heard, the question was, okay, we might agree that God doesn't arrive in church when we've reached a certain level of emotional intensity.

[2 : 45] But is it also true that God doesn't arrive in church just because we've reached a certain level of intellectual capacity? And of course that's right. We are not saved by having right doctrine.

We're saved through the merits of Jesus Christ. And correct doctrine guards our experience of salvation. It helps us to know that the salvation we've received is to be rightly understood or appropriated, right?

But we're not saved by having right thoughts. Otherwise, only the really smart or the people who think they're really smart could be Christians. So no, it's not that we need to aim at a high intellectual capacity in church either.

That's quite true. And it probably showed the kinds of experiences I have in places that I biased my presentation last week to one side rather than the other. Thank you.

Well, this week our theme is the gym. Not that the word gym is used in the scriptures as far as I can find. But you might like to share out loud some of the sporting or physical pictures of the Christian life which the New Testament or indeed the Old presents to us.

[4 : 06] So a time of open sharing. What are some of the texts or themes which pick up sporting or physical imagery? Yes.

Running a race. We're running a race which probably is Hebrews 12, right? We fix our eyes on Jesus who's run the race before us. Yep. Boxing.

Boxing, yes. In 1 Corinthians 9, Paul says we do not box as though we're just hitting the air. Yep. Yep. The crown of righteousness.

Correct. That's right. So there's those kinds of pictures about sporting events even if they're not describing a particular sport. Or competing according to the rules. Competing according to the rules of the race. Yeah, that's right. That you might win the crown. Correct. Wrestling. Wrestling, yeah, indeed. Like in Colossians 4 where Paul describes wrestling in prayer.

[5 : 20] And interestingly in that one, there's two different kinds of wrestling in the ancient world. And the wrestling that Paul's referring to in Colossians 4 is the close combat wrestling, the kind of every tiny manoeuvre is important in the bout, as every tiny prayer is important for the Lord.

And there's a classic one. And there's a classic one that is actually my scene. That is walking. Walking according to the gospel. Walking, which is actually one of the most used images to describe the Christian life.

It's not spectacular. And you might not think it's a sport. But in my world, it's the most sporting I ever become. And it's a pretty important image because it's a slow and steady, slow and steady image. It's not fast and heavy exertion. It's kind of keeping on, keeping on, which I think for most of us, right, is a pretty important reminder and image of what the challenges of living as a Christian. There's also in 1 Timothy, Paul describes us training. That is, godliness, to be trained in godliness has value in all things.

[6 : 36] Those physical sports might have value in some things. So there is the language of training used there and in other places too. So it's not inappropriate for me to say that Christian worship, Christian living more generally, Christian worship in particular, is a gym.

Now I want to explain this just a little more. Oh, brother, yes. Hey, where do I find that rustling at in the Bible? Colossians 4, where Paul describes the believers as, or not even the believers, it might be one individual wrestling in prayer.

I'm the name of the person who's been praying, wrestling in prayer escapes me. That we wrestle not.

Oh, see, I beg your pardon. Yeah, sure, sure, that's right, that's right. Yep, yep. But we take every thought captive, which might be a sporting imagery as well. Can you express it a match between Jacob and God?

Yes, thank you, sure, great. And Jacob came out of that not so well off, right? The reason I use the language of Jim, or the picture of Jim, to describe church, is that there are two ways of thinking about what we do on Sundays, and both of them relate to that image.

[8 : 15] You could come to church to have one spiritual muscle exercised, or you could come to church to have multiple spiritual muscles exercised.

And this has been a big debate, particularly in America, for the last 150 years. Do you come to church just to do one thing well, or do you come to church to do five different things?

None of them might be done as well, but nonetheless, all are important for your Christian life. Or, to sharpen a little bit further, do you come to church to learn how to make decisions for the Lord, to be challenged, to decide, to follow, in which case the only muscle that's getting a workout is your willpower?

Or do you come to church to have multiple spiritual muscles exercised, that your will, and your mind, and your imagination, and your praying, and your serving are all stretched as well?

So, about 100 and... It's almost 200 years ago now, I suppose, in the United States, there was a second great awakening. The phrase might be familiar to some of you.

[9 : 42] And it was decided that when you're out in the fields or in the camps on the frontier, you'd preach, but you'd preach with one particular goal, and that is to win people to Christ, to call people to make a decision for the Lord.

It's not a bad thing to do. You must do it. However, what happened then was that experience on the frontier was taken into Sunday church services too, so that Sunday church services became more and more just about winning people to Christ, calling for people to make a decision for the Lord.

See, traditionally, church services had multiple features. You'd go to church to listen to a sermon, to read the scriptures, to say a psalm, to sing hymns or songs, to take communion.

You'd go to church to learn to serve your community or to serve those who are present in the building. You'd have lots of goals. But from that awakening, the goals for church were narrowed till they were really just one kind of goal.

So I go to a church in Melbourne which meets in a cinema. That's fine. And its services have one goal each week.

[11:07] It's basically a few songs in a sermon that goes for an hour. And the last five minutes of the sermon, it's almost always, come to the Lord, make a decision for Christ.

That's fine as far as it goes. But can you see what's happened? What once was evangelism in a camp on the frontier has now become the regular practice in Sunday meetings.

So we don't pray in our church services where I go to church. And we take communion very infrequently. We never confess our sins. Now, I go there because I'm wanting to encourage the leadership, right?

They're a young crew and that's my job in the fellowship. And they know that I find this difficult. And they know how I've explained why I think church should be about exercising five or ten spiritual muscles, not just one.

But the pastoral team are basically evangelists. And so they can't see past the importance at every opportunity of calling people to Christ.

[12:14] Now, if I had a blackboard or a whiteboard or some kind of visual help, I'd, at this stage, draw a graph. And for those kind of services that just have one spiritual muscle that's being worked out, basically, if you drew a graph, it would be a straight line.

At the beginning of the service, it would be kind of down at the crossing of the X and Y axis. And the end of the service, you'd have risen up to a high intensity. It's a straight line.

Everything is aimed towards the final five minutes of the service when you call people to faith in Christ. That's the kind of one spiritual muscle model.

Whereas at Trinity or elsewhere, in more classically defined churches, there's five or ten things, ten goals for the Sunday meeting, right?

Now, that kind of graph, if you were to draw it, would have lots of ups and downs. A bit of intensity. You'd lose some intensity because people close their eyes and fall asleep during the prayers.

[13:16] And then a little bit more intensity as the Bible reader gets fired up. And a little bit less intensity when the preacher loses you in that story. And then, and so you see what I'm saying? It's kind of, it's up and down.

So it's less kind of neat. But we're getting an all-bodied tone. Not many people go to the gym to say, I'm going to go to the gym for the rest of my life only to work on my arms.

Well, there might be some weird people like that. But you kind of, you kind of cycle through, I don't know these things, I'm just making it up really. But you kind of cycle through the apparatus, right?

So that you exercise your legs or your upper body strength or, I don't know, your ears or whatever you do. That's the way you go to the gym to work out a series of muscles.

And it seems to me that's what we should be doing in church as well, working out a series of spiritual muscles. So the revivalist model is the one where only one spiritual muscle is being stretched.

[14:30] And the more classical church model is where several spiritual muscles are being trained. Now, I get that there's a point to calling people to Christ in Sunday worship, and often our pastors can do a good job of that.

And I don't mind if that happens occasionally, that you design the whole service around inviting guests. However, it seems to me that our own life as a Christian is probably jeopardised.

That's probably too strong a word. Our life as a Christian at least faces extra challenges if we're not exercising several spiritual muscles on Sundays. Can you see my point?

There's, not for now, but there's also a handout in your packet there on something I wrote a few years ago on two ways to worship. Picking up this very idea is worship about one spiritual muscle or several spiritual muscles, which you can read and over Sunday lunch.

Let me make one more point and then I'll open for questions or comments. It seems to me that this idea that our Christian worship exercises several spiritual muscles picks up a theme throughout the scriptures that our spirituality should be integrated.

[16:03] That each part of your life touches every other part of your life, every area of your spiritual existence is going to impact other parts of your living.

So, for example, on your sheet, in 1 Thessalonians 5.23, Paul prays that at the return of the Lord, the Thessalonian believers might be sanctified in body, mind and spirit.

That all of them has to get ready for the Lord, not just their willpower. Right? We remind in Romans 12 that Paul is asking for them to, he's encouraging them to think about their spiritual worship and their spiritual worship involves their bodies.

All of them, not just their willpower. In Matthew 22, Jesus asks us to worship the Lord with mind, soul and strength.

And indeed, in Acts chapter 2, when the believers assemble, they commit themselves to four things in their church service. Let me just get this right because I always forget the order.

[17:22] Acts 2.42, they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

So they devoted themselves to teaching, Bible reading and sermon, presumably. They devoted themselves to fellowship. They were engaged at quite a deep level with those in the group. They devoted themselves to the breaking of the bread, which I take as the Lord's Supper because it's not just to breaking bread, it's to the breaking of the bread.

It's not like they became Christians and said, oh, we've got to eat now. We've never thought about eating before, but now we're Christians and we're turning up to Sunday worship. We need to break bread. No, of course they were eating before they were Christians.

But now they're committed to the breaking of the bread together, to the Lord's Supper. And to the prayers, again with the article. I think they had a set form of prayers that they used just like they did in the synagogue.

[18:34] So my basic idea this morning that we'll unpack now a little more through conversation is that church is like a gym. It's like a gym where we try and exercise multiple spiritual muscles.

It probably means that we don't do any of the exercises quite as well as if we only did one exercise. It means that the guy sitting next to you, the gal sitting next to you, is better at that apparatus than I am.

That is, it's a less neat way of thinking about Sunday worship with lots of different kinds of activities, with lots of different kinds of people around us exercising in them.

But nonetheless, it seems to me to be the more appropriate picture of our Christian living generally and our Sunday worship in particular.

Now, I wonder if you might share some thoughts or comments, reactions as we take a breather. It strikes me that this exercising multiple muscles approach to worship is almost painting in an evangelistic way a more whole picture of what it is to be Christian.

[20:02] Interesting, yes, of course. There is a sort of hospitality and call innate. implicit in them. Yes, it's a great point that we could think that to do evangelism in church is only to have a sermon with a particular kind of last five minutes that calls people.

But actually, it might be in our world also evangelism to show people what living as a Christian is like when we say our prayers or when we gather to eat and drink together in the supper or as we lament.

Yeah, yeah, thank you. That's a good point. It's a kind of narrow definition of evangelism as well. Yeah, yeah. What's your thinking on the importance or not importance of posture that we are to Sunday worship service?

Yeah, it's interesting that in some Pentecostal circles, kneeling has become a thing again, at least in Australia. I don't know how it works here.

That's one example of posture where you reinforce with your body an attitude of spirit and if the Lord is our master then it's appropriate to kneel before him, that kind of thing.

[21:25] It doesn't do much for me, I must say. However, I understand that putting your body on the line and expressing in bodily terms what's going on internally might well prove valuable for some.

And of course Pentecostals might raise their arms in the air as well and not just Pentecostals perhaps which I'm not so used to doing. There's nothing wrong with it.

In fact, in 1 Timothy 2 quite a controversial text. Nonetheless, the men are told to raise their hands in holy prayer and we don't do that so often as a command.

Please brother. Somewhat outside of the worship context, I feel like at least the part of the evangelical church that I'm familiar with has overemphasized will in sanctification and growing in Christ and holiness.

As if we just decide hard enough at this particular point, that will carry us through. Yeah, sure. There's a reaction going on, isn't there, in evangelical churches that I visit where we've become so slack in our Christian obedience that the preacher often will call for us to make decisions but I think you're right, becoming more like Christ involves making decisions but involves other facets of my walk as well.

[23 : 08] So we don't, it's not that we want to stop calling people to make decisions because there's lots of commands in the scripture that we just have to obey it, just obey it, okay, because that's what the Lord says.

but there are other ways that the scriptures encourage or motivate us to obedience as well. One of the great things about reading, say, Proverbs 1-8, so Proverbs 1-8, Proverbs 1-9 has general principles and Proverbs chapter 9 forward for the rest of the book are individual Proverbs. So you don't get the chapter 9 on unless you first understood chapters 1-8. Chapters 1-8 is all about motivations for an obedient lifestyle.

And there's a stack of, I think it's in Australianism, right? There's a whole list of different kinds of motivations in Proverbs 1-8 which are more than just appealing to the will.

Sister? I'm thinking that the service, that exercises all the muscles is like a panoply of colours.

[24 : 22] Yes. You know, all different colours. Yep, yep. What comes to my mind. Yes, sure, sure. And you mentioned, I think it was last week, how you often think with pictures and with, yeah.

And I think that's right that this is a multi-coloured tapestry we're weaving. I think what happens, interesting, churches that are more focused on calling for decision, is that they actually do use lots of colours in their building, literally with their lighting, or the, so I think they, there's a kind of compensation going on within the space, that there's more video production, which will involve colours.

There'll be actual different lighting gantries or ways of colouring the space itself. But you're right, it's a multi-coloured way of thinking about Sunday worship.

Yeah. I remember when I first started coming to Trinity, I had come from a church that was much like what you described, not necessarily evangelistic, but just singing sermons.

And when I first came here, I felt like I was, I was given a feast. Interesting. And not just, you know, cookies and milk. How lovely.

[25 : 47] I hope the pastors are hearing that. Yeah, sure, sure. I felt so fed and nourished. Yeah, sure. And I think that's sort of what you're saying.

Yeah, yeah. It's a multi-level, many different things. That's right. Words in the songs or the sermon or whatever. Yeah, yeah. Yes, that's right. It's long term, I think it's actually better for our spiritual health to have those different, for the Lord to address us in different ways during worship.

Yeah, that's correct. Sometimes I do this, I run the chapel services every day where I teach at Ridley.

And every so often when we have communion, I get people to bring in a whole lot of food and drink to put on the communion table. So some bottles of wine, some fruit, some cheese, some meat, to remind us that actually though week by week the bread and the wine are kind of morsels, they're very tiny morsels.

Nonetheless, God is offering us eternally a feast, feast, and that filling the table with other food stuffs can perhaps remind us of what we're waiting for, and then at the end of the service get people to come and take away whatever it is they want.

[27 : 12] It doesn't happen very often, but it does happen often enough that we can be reminded of the feast that we've come to celebrate. Well, I think organising worship and conducting worship is an extraordinarily difficult skill, especially if you think that Sunday worship should be a workout for multiple spiritual muscles.

It's kind of a bit easier if you know there's only one spiritual muscle you're doing, and then the music for the first half of the service is just loosening you up so that the one muscle that then is exercised during or at the end of the sermon can be better applied.

But leading service or organising worship is a massively difficult project, especially if you want to exercise multiple spiritual muscles. So I've got there a random chart of the kinds of things we might do in church, and I haven't done the maths, but the permutations and combinations on each of these elements interacting with the others in other columns is just massive.

So for church on Sundays we gather, we read, we hear a sermon, we sing, we pray, we might well say a creed, participate in the sacraments, there might be some testimonies or interviews, occasionally you'll find wedding vows, committal prayer, burial, notices and a dismissal.

The actual elements of the verse. And then if you multiply those elements by the different kinds of dimensions of each of the elements, sometimes the element is directed upwards, sometimes it's directed to those around us horizontally.

[28 : 57] Sometimes you're stressing the objective gift or the objective promise of God, and sometimes you're cultivating the subjective, emotional, personal dimension.

sometimes you're referring to the past or the present or the future, sometimes the song is more individual, sometimes more corporate, sometimes you're drawing out kind of thoughts or intellect, sometimes emotions, sometimes you're calling people to act, sometimes you're asking people to reflect.

Sometimes sight is the important feature, you gather the kids around the baptismal pool so they can see and feel some of the water splashing over the edge, but sometimes hearing is the more appropriate sense.

Sometimes we stress space, sometimes time, sometimes repetition, sometimes a unique event that's only going to ever happen once for a person like their baptism.

Sometimes it's a serious moment, sometimes more humorous. Sometimes you're speaking for motivation, sometimes you're speaking for information.

[30 : 10] There's tension release, lament and praise, gift and demand, or silence compared with words. So there's, each of the elements can connect with several of those dimensions, right?

It's actually very complicated. Have we had enough of the vertical so far in the service? Have we had enough of the intellectual? Have we had enough of the praise?

And in any service, I want to come away and ask the question, have the people today been asked to do something, to feel something, and to think something?

I ask myself the same from sermons. Have I, in my sermon, asked people to do something, to feel something, and to think something? My basic point is that organising and participation in worship is actually a really significant and complicated task.

But I figure that that's still the better option if worship is a gym in which we're exercising several different spiritual muscles. But I have another point to make, which would normally be a whole other session, but Nick encouraged me to do it just briefly at the end of this morning.

[31 : 31] I think church is weird. If you're new at the faith, or if you've never been to church before, we do lots of things that are very strange.

And you know what? That's perfectly fine. Because, in the end, church is a dress rehearsal for heaven.

Of course non-Christians are going to find stuff strange in our fellowship, because we're training for our heavenly destination, and to reach that kind of destination does require us doing something that our non-Christian family or friends do find weird, or that haven't crossed their minds to undertake.

So in a sense, church could be a classroom, or a gym, or a compass.

I think I said something else in the last few weeks as well. But certainly it's a dress rehearsal, because we're training for the main event, which is heaven.

[32 : 39] So I think actually church is heaven brought forward. Not because church is perfect, like heaven is perfect.

Of course we all recognize that. But what God has done by giving us his spirit is to bring forward for believers the spiritual destination, or in Acts chapter 2, when the spirit is poured out on the day of Pentecost.

This was fulfilling a prophecy of Joel, of course, in Joel chapter 2, that on the last day God would pour out his spirit. The spirit coming is a sign of the end of the world coming. It's just that when it did come in Acts chapter 2, it was discovered that the end of the world comes in two parts.

Jesus' first coming and ultimately his second coming, his return. So in the meantime, because we have the spirit, because we are the body of Christ and the spirit is with us, we are a down payment on heaven.

We are a bit of heaven brought forward. Church on Sundays is a dress rehearsal for the main event. as an extra reason why I think it's okay to have several different spiritual muscles being exercised.

[34 : 09] Whatever it takes, brothers and sisters, to get you to heaven, that's what I think we need to be doing in our Sunday worship. And so, because human beings are complicated, bodies and minds and souls and spirit, then I think it takes a number of different elements to rightly stretch us and exercise us for the main event.

If I push back a little bit further, I'd say this. What's the purpose of the universe? Now I'm getting, this is kind of big for Sunday morning, right? Well, the whole purpose of the universe is for the Father to give a bride to the Son, and for the Son to return the bride as the kingdom to the Father. The whole purpose of the universe is for the Father to give a bride to the Son, and for the Son, according to 1 Corinthians 15, to give the kingdom back to the Father. So, if we are the bride, if the church is the bride that the Father gives to the Son, and we are the kingdom that the Son returns to the Father, then us, the church, are not just a sideline in God's plans for the cosmos. We are at the heart of God's purposes for the cosmos. Because we are the bride that he gives to the Son, and we are the kingdom that the Son returns to the Father at the last day. And if the church has that kind of eternal, deliberate role in God's purposes, then our Sunday worship, of course, has to reflect those big cosmic themes.

[36 : 02] We are the bride, and we are the kingdom. That's trying to back out from the nitty-gritty of particular elements in a Sunday service to remind us of the big story of the universe.

Unbelievably, right, that we are at the heart of. It's extraordinary. Perhaps some thoughts or questions, then.

I think the folks that strip elements out of services and tend to focus on maybe just a few things, one of their critiques of, historically, of the churches that keep multiple elements is that joy and atoning rejoicing kind of gets lost sometimes at churches that are trying to be faithful to all these multiple elements.

And I think they might hear you say, this should be a foretaste of heaven, and I think they would be nodding vigorously. Yes. And I think they would say, yes, this is a foretaste of heaven, so what's going to happen when Jesus returns?

We're going to be hopping around like wild animals and slamming that. Yes, sure, sure, sure. Slamming that. So how do you respond to that?

[37 : 36] So there are two ways of responding. The first is to say, is heaven just about singing songs? Or is heaven about serving the Lord? Of course, in Revelation 4 and 5, the people sing a song.

In Revelation 4, it's about the creator. And in Revelation 5, it's about the redeemer. So I'm not saying that heaven doesn't involve worship. But actually, I do want to argue that Revelation 4 and 5 are about life after death, but not about life after life after death.

What heaven's going to be like is Revelation 21 and 22. And Revelation 4 and 5 are the description of heaven until the Lord returns to the earth.

That is, we look at Revelation 4 and 5, we say, heaven's about singing, therefore let's do church about singing. I think actually, Revelation 4 and 5 are about the kind of experience those who've died in the Lord are having now.

But that's not actually the ultimate goal. The ultimate goal is Revelation 21 and 22, the making of new heavens and earth in which righteousness dwells. So that's my first point, that actually, heaven's about more than singing.

[38 : 53] It's about serving. And secondly, the danger is, of course, in having multiple elements in our church service, that we don't do any of them so well.

It takes lots of skills, lots of organisation, lots of different kinds of apparatuses in the gym. And in a sense, it would be easy to put all our time and energy into just having kind of excellent music. That's, of course, the downside. That sometimes services that do a bit of everything feel a little less professional, a little bit less kind of excellent.

I'm happy to put up with that. What would you say to someone who said, yes, we should exercise everything, but Sunday we do this muscle.

Wednesday we have the prayers. Oh, yes. Yes, sure. I'd say that muscle. Sure. Well, first of all, I'd be glad that they're thinking in terms of multiple spiritual muscles, so that's a step forward. But it could be as well that in a church service, we exercise three particular muscles this Sunday, but next Sunday we're aware of we want to concentrate on a different three.

[40 : 03] I'm not saying that all 75 spiritual muscles have to be exercised in every Sunday service, right? And we can, through good planning and so on, make some choices.

We only have 90 minutes after all. But I'd still say, is the spiritual muscle you're exercising on Wednesday night in your Bible study group really seen then as a spiritual muscle that all of us need to exercise or just for the elite who can find the time and the space to get out on Wednesday night? Sorry. Yes, sir. 75 spiritual muscles? Where do you find this, that you find?

I could have said 78. I was just making it up. Because I backed up what you said, going back to where it got. Yeah, sure. Everything there is true. Sure, sure.

Well, we can start making a list. I can't promise it will be 75, but there's a whole lot of them there. Where can I find them? Start reading with Matthew chapter 1.

[41 : 18] But I don't want to finish this series of studies just talking about our Sunday worship. I want us to pray this hymn out loud together.

We won't have music, but I think we can afford to say it out loud anyway. Which reminds us that though we worship in church on Sundays, In the end, our worship in the world is of great importance to the Lord as well, As we pursue our heavenly goal, our destination in heaven.

So let's say this hymn as a prayer out loud together. Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go, my daily labour to pursue, Thee only thee resolve to know, in all I think or speak or do.

The task thy wisdom hath assigned, O let me cheerfully fulfill, In all my works thy presence find, and prove thy good and perfect will.

Preserve me from my calling snare, and hide my simple heart above, Above the thorns of choking care, the gilded baits of worldly love.

[42 : 35] Thee may I set at my right hand, whose eyes my inmost substance see, And labour on thy command, and offer all my works to thee.

Give me to bear thy easy yoke, and every moment watch and pray, And still to things eternal look, and hasten to thy glorious day.

For thee delightfully employ, whate'er thy bounteous grace hath given, And run my course with even joy, and closely walk with thee to heaven.

So let me pray. Please, Lord, help us this morning in our worship, every day in our worship, That we might be rightly exercised, That we might know your care and your provision, To help us arrive safely on the shores of heaven.

Thank you for these, my brothers and sisters at Trinity, And this opportunity to talk and to share. Please keep us safe. In your word, for your son's sake.

[43 : 46] Amen.