

# What does God desire

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Preacher: Peter Montague

[0:00] Good evening everybody. Welcome to Union Baptist Church. My name is Joel. I'm the ministry trainee here and it's my pleasure to welcome you to our evening service here tonight.

I don't know where you find yourself this evening. Maybe you're in a good place. Maybe you're struggling. Maybe even since this morning something has happened in the day and you feel that you are run down coming here this evening. I hope that in tonight's service you feel refreshed, that you'll be able to set your eyes upon Jesus and that as we do so we'll be filled with hope and joy and peace that comes from him. Hear these words of Jesus.

Come to me all you who are weary and heavy burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Let's lay down our burdens now at the foot of the cross tonight. Lord, you know the weight that we bear as we come to you tonight. We thank you that we can cast our burdens upon you now and we ask that you help us to fix our eyes upon you.

Jesus, be our centre. Amen. Let's stand and sing together. Jesus, be our centre. Amen.

Jesus, be our centre. Amen. Jesus, be our centre. Amen.

[2:00] Jesus, be our centre. Amen. Jesus, be our centre. Amen. Be my centre. Be my centre. moment. Jesus, be our centre. Amen.

Jesus, be our centre. Amen. Jesus, be our centre. Amen. dropped pit patheni, remember the centre. bral ajud, Be my hope, be my Son, Jesus.

Be the fire in my heart, be the wind in these sails, Be the reason that I live, Jesus, Jesus.

Jesus, be my vision, be my thought, be my guide, Jesus.

Be the fire in my heart, be the wind in these sails, Be the reason that I live, Jesus, Jesus.

[3:45] Jesus, be the center, be my source, be my light, Jesus.

Jesus, be the fire in my heart, be my love, Jesus. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. O to see the dawn of the darkest day rise from the road to Calvary Tried my sinful end, torn at me to end the end to a cross of wood This is the power of the cross Christ became sin for us took the pain, all the wrong we stand forgiven at the cross O to see the pain written on your face bearing the awesome weight of sin every bitter thought, every evil deed crowning your blood-stained brow This is the power of the cross Christ became sin for us took the pain, all the wrong we stand forgiven at the cross Now the daylight flees, now the ground beneath quakes as its wake above his head put a torn in two, dead waste to lie finish the victory cry Christ became sin for us Christ became sin for us took the pain, all the wrong we stand forgiven at the cross O to see my name written in the wounds O through your suffering I am free death is crushed to death death is crushed to death life is mine to live life is mine to live walk through your selfless love this the power of the cross Son of God Son of God Slave for us On our love Lord, to ghost, we stand forgiven at the cross

[7:55] I wonder if I could ask for the words of the final verse to be put back up O to see my name written in the wounds for through your suffering I am free death is crushed to death life is mine to live one through your selfless love Lord, we thank you that through your sacrifice for us on the cross we are free free from the guilt and shame of our sin free, Lord, for you set aside as your special inheritance and Lord, we can be free from our burdens too as we lay them down and we pray that as we continue on into this evening's service you will help us to continue to do that, Lord thank you

Amen please be seated I'm going to bring us a reading now from Psalm 40 I waited patiently for the Lord He turned to me and heard my cry He lifted me out of the slimy pit out of the mud and the mire He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand He put a new song in my mouth a hymn of praise to our God many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in Him blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord who does not look to the proud to those who turn aside to false gods many, Lord my God are your wonders you have done the things you planned for us no one can compare with you were I to speak and tell of your deeds there would be too many to declare sacrifice and offering you did not desire but my ears you have opened burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require then I said here I am

I have come it is written about me in the scroll I desire to do your will my God your law is within my heart I proclaim your saving acts in the great assembly I do not seal my lips Lord as you know I do not hide your righteousness in my heart I speak of your faithfulness and your saving help I do not conceal your love and your faithfulness from the great assembly do not withhold your mercy from me Lord may your love and faithfulness always protect me for troubles about number surround me my sins have overtaken me and I cannot see they are more than their hairs of my head and my heart fails within me be pleased to save me Lord come quickly Lord to help me may all who want to take my life be put to shame and confusion may all who desire my ruin be turned back in disgrace may those who say to me aha aha be appalled at their own shame but may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you may those who long for your saving help always say the Lord is great but as for me

I am poor and needy may the Lord think of me you are my help and my deliverer you are my God do not delay we're going to hear now an interview with Chris Manktelow who is at the COP26 summit in Glasgow interview that Malcolm had with him well hi there Chris it's very exciting for me to interview somebody at COP26 now I didn't get an invite and I want to know how did you get one okay well hi Malcolm so I'm part of an organisation called the Young Christian Climate Network and we've been campaigning in the run up to the COP26 talks and because of that we were invited to take part in something called the Christian Climate Observers Programme which is a team of Christians from around the world who are here at COP26 observing their negotiations and telling people about what's going on brilliant so what's inspired you so far at COP26 so I've been given the opportunity to meet some amazing people over the last few days so for example on Saturday we were able to meet up with

Al Gore and his daughter so Al Gore is a former US vice president but actually some of the most inspiring things have happened in the last couple of days so yesterday we met up with a guy called Erasto from Uganda and we heard about how Ugandan Christians are caring for God's creation and they also have a group of young climate activists and so we were able to talk together about how we might be able to work together in the future so that was really inspiring to see how the church around the world was united and doing the same thing the other thing that was really was this morning we met up with an MP in the Canadian Parliament and he shared with us the struggles that he faces as a politician in being a person of integrity especially when he's campaigning for the Canadian government to stop subsidising fossil fuels and when other people don't in different parties don't want him to do that and at the end of our conversation we were able to pray for him as a team and it was just really cool that we were able to pray for people at a UN climate conference and just be a Christian witness there excellent and what concerns you and to guide us in our prayers at

[14:39] Union okay so it'd be great if you could pray for our friend Didier who's from Burundi at the moment he's struggling to get here because of paperwork needed to enter the UK and COVID restrictions so you could pray that those problems would be resolved and that you'd be able to travel here safely to join our team lovely the second thing it'd be great for you to pray for is that so even often a lot of the negotiations that go on at COP26 happen behind closed doors and for some groups of people so people that don't have a nation state they belong to like indigenous people groups or kind of younger people and other groups that they don't always get a voice at the table because of that so it'd be really great if you could pray that world leaders would listen to their voices and find ways of including them in the talks brilliant yeah we'll do that and how can we pray for you personally

Chris so it'd be great to pray just for energy this week that I would have not feel too tired and be able to do what I need to do and it'd be great to just pray for our team in general that we would know what God is doing at this conference and Noah our leader talked to us earlier today about how the kingdom of God is like hidden treasure and you sometimes have to look quite hard to find it and so it'd be great if we could pray that we would know where to find that treasure at COP26 to see what God is doing excellent well perhaps you can give us a quick view of where you are so that people can have a look at the view that you've got okay so I'm in the main auditorium so above me there's this very big globe wow and then behind me you can see the main stage

I think and then if we turn around a bit we see there's a lot of journalists with cameras and whatever so I'm probably accidentally appearing on the TV but there we go you are a complete star tuning in with us thank you so much and God bless you up in Glasgow yeah God bless you too Malcolm thanks great that was great wasn't it to hear Chris and see you via zoom but in person and hear him speak so that was good as we come to our prayers tonight obviously that's going to inform them but we were praying yesterday morning and Malcolm reminded us of Micah 6 verses 6 to 8 I'll just read this to you it says with what shall I come before the Lord and bow down before the exalted

God shall I come before him with burnt offerings with calves a year old will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams with ten thousand rivers of olive oil shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul he has shown you oh mortal what is good and what does the Lord require of you to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God with those words in mind let's just come to our God in prayer yeah Lord we thank you so much for your word we thank you for what you're saying to us in these days and we're just excited to hear from Chris there at COP26 Lord we thank you for his presence there and he's able to shine for you in that place and just meet with other fellow Christians others who are passionate about the climate and making a difference Lord we pray for him pray for energy this week that he would just know good sleep when he needs that and refreshment and be able to turn to you in prayer and study your word Lord and just help him in the meetings and opportunities he has to just make a difference there we thank you for the knowledge that he's gained through his studies in the last number of years Lord we thank you for his passion for climate and just understanding the mechanics of how the climate works and how we're impacting on it Lord we do pray for your forgiveness we lament Lord that this time that so much of the world is facing an uncertain future because of what we've done in our neglect of your beautiful creation and where we've taken things that we shouldn't have done and where we've just been careless in the way that we've caused pollution Lord we do pray for your forgiveness and we pray for as Chris was reminding us there at the conference for those who don't have a seat at a table as it were Lord those who are perhaps marginalized we think of those who are young and those who are in developing countries that somehow their concerns and the issues that they're worried about

[19:50] Lord would be able to come through and would be heard and we do pray for wisdom for those who are taking decisions and bringing together yeah a way forward Lord we pray for wisdom for those who are in leadership and that something really good would come out of this conference Lord that your name would be held high and that we'd be able to look back on this week or two in Glasgow as a real springboard to make a difference in this world we thank you so much for the beauty of it Lord that many of us experience day to day Lord when we look up at the stars we look at the moon and the sun and the planets around us we look at the beauty and the autumn colours at this time we just thank you that we can be part of your creation we pray that as your people you'd help us to make a stand when we need to Lord we pray as we were thinking this morning of those agencies that again are there at COP26 for the non-governmental organisations like Christian Aid and Tear Fund and others who will be just making a stand for you

Lord pray for blessing for them and safety Lord there in that city and Lord we do just want to pray a prayer that's on our this week sheet today just reminding us of your love it says a prayer for COP26 loving God we praise your name with all you have created you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of creatures we acknowledge the responsibilities you have placed upon us as stewards of your creation may the Holy Spirit inspire all political leaders at COP26 as they seek to

embrace the changes needed to foster a more sustainable society instill in them the courage and gentleness to implement fairer solutions for the poorest and the most vulnerable and commit their nations to the care of our common home we ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son Amen Lord we do also just want to mention one of the two other things in our prayers we recognise this week coming up is a week of remembrance for many Lord as we're encouraged particularly on Friday just to take a two minute silence at eleven o'clock

Lord just to remember those who have died serving this country and other countries around the world Lord being killed in warfare and Lord we do pray that for those who have been injured too and those who are facing an uncertain future because of their injuries and those who can still remember times of war in this country and times of fearfulness Lord we pray that you'd help us as a nation to remember well and to encourage those and to be listening Lord we're encouraged this morning to listen well to hear and to understand and to act upon what we hear Lord we pray for this week pray for next Sunday too as we come for that act of remembrance here that you would be at the centre of all that we do and Lord we pray for those who are just finding life tough at the moment and not feeling so well and feeling isolated Lord again as a fellowship you'd help us to be Jesus to one another that we would show your love to one another in the things that we do the things that we say the things that we we just are Lord help us we pray in Jesus name

Amen second Bible reading this evening is from Hebrews chapter 10 verses 1 to 18 the law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming not the realities themselves for this reason it can never by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year make perfect those who draw near to worship otherwise would they not have stopped being offered for the worshippers would have been cleansed once for all and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins but those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins therefore when Christ came into the world he said sacrifice an offering you did not desire but a body you prepared for me with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased then I said here I am it is written about me in the scroll

I have come to do your will my God first he said sacrifices and offerings burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire nor were you pleased with them though they were offered in accordance with the law then he said here I am I have come to do your will he sets aside the first to establish the second and by that will we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties again and again he offers the same sacrifices which can never take away sins but when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins he sat down at the right hand of God and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool for by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy the Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this first he says this is the covenant I will make with them after that time says the Lord

[26:04] I will put my laws in their hearts and I will write them on their minds then he adds their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more and where these have been forgiven sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary Amen as we come towards hearing God's work word spoken to us let's reflect using the words of this song for that single sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross that means the sacrificial system is no longer necessary let's sing together thank you for the cross Lord

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[30:30] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. I'm going to be sharing the rest of us. You've been teaching all of us what you're about to teach us. Thank you. your blessing upon him as he comes to bring it to us now.

[31:50] Amen. Amen. Thank you, John. What a beautiful song, just to lead us into this time of sharing around these first 18 verses of Hebrews chapter 10.

Worthy is the Lamb, Jesus, who has now completed his work and sitting at the right hand of the Father, interceding for us. What a wonderful saviour.

Worthy is the Lamb, the supremacy of Christ. I'll begin with a story. A pig and a hen, sharing the same barnyard, heard about a church's programme to feed the hungry.

The pig and the hen discussed how they could help. The hen said, I've got it. We'll provide bacon and eggs for the church to feed everyone.

Pig thought about the suggestion and said, there's only one thing wrong with your bacon and eggs idea. For you, it only requires a contribution.

[33:04] Sacrifice is costly.

In the Old Testament, the aim of sacrifice was that a believer took what was dear to them and gave it to God to show their love and devotion.

The Old Testament law given to Moses used a complicated system of sacrifice that brought the worshipper into a right relationship with God.

But because of human nature, this degenerated until sacrifice became thought of as no more than a way of buying God's forgiveness.

Worship had become mechanical and failed to change the believer's inner soul. And the Old Testament prophets began to look forward to a day when the debt of sin was wiped away forever.

[34:08] When a perfect sacrifice was made once and for all. A day when the worshipper was given a true sacrificial heart of obedience.

The prophet Ezekiel wrote in chapter 36 verse 26, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you.

I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. Some wonderful words in this passage from Hebrews chapter 10.

Let's just look a little bit at the background as to why Hebrews was written. And why the Mosaic law was superseded by Jesus.

A little bit of the background to the book first of all. Thank you Gary. The letter was written to Jewish converts who were familiar with the Old Testament. Having become Christians, they were tempted to revert to the old Judaic teachings and the old way of life.

[35:12] It's often the way, isn't it? When the going gets tough, we go back to a known, comfortable way of doing things.

And maybe this evening you find yourself in a place where you want to give up, where you want to go back to the old way of doing things. Life has just become unbearable and too difficult.

God's word to you this evening is keep the faith. Keep looking to Jesus and he will bring you through. To address the early believers' difficulties, the writer's theme is the supremacy of Jesus.

He alone is the full revelation of God's love and grace. And through a series of arguments, the author demonstrates that Jesus is the complete fulfilment of God's promises in the Old Testament.

There can be no turning back to the old system of beliefs and rituals, which has been replaced in its entirety by Jesus. Only he can truly redeem God's people and bring them back into his holy presence.

[36:25] So in these verses from Hebrews 10, the writer makes the following points. First of all, in verses 1 through to 4, we can see that the Old Testament law was limited.

Shadows can be confusing, can't they? We have a new addition in our household, a four-month-old kitten called Frodo, named by our youngest son, Phil.

It's been about 25 years or so since we've had a cat and we decided, well, our second son's just got married, so let's get another cat. It's great fun, although we're still working very hard on establishing boundaries, which I believe we will eventually get through to.

One of the things that confuses him is shadows. He can't quite work them out. They're not real, but he loves to chase them and to go round and round in circles, not achieving anything, not quite getting there, but apart from giving us great amusement.

In verse 1 of Hebrews 10, the writer regards sacrifice as a poor shadow of what a relationship with God should be.

[37:49] It is a form without reality. And the ritual of sacrifices was akin to chasing shadows. You never get there.

It was a never-ending cycle that needed to be repeated. Be aware of chasing shadows. Form without reality.

Are there desires, are there things in your life that are shadows, form without reality? Things that take you away from Jesus.

We all have different ways of remembering things, don't we? Some of us make lists, list after list after list, and we never feel we've had a good day until we work through several of our lists.

Some of us will put something in a safe place, somewhere that we will remember easily. And when we come to look for that thing we've put in a safe place, we can't remember where the safe place is. [38:56] We forget. We set the alarm on our phone. But when we do that, we need to make sure we type in what the alarm is about because otherwise it goes off and we haven't a clue why it's going off.

We might ask someone to remind us and then they forget to remind us later. That's really a form of passing the buck, isn't it? We all have different ways of remembering things.

The sacrificial rituals served only as a reminder. They did not give the believer the removal of sin and the right relationship with God once and for all.

In fact, all the law did was to remind the believers that a better way was needed. And then we see in verses 5 through to 10 that Jesus provides a perfect way.

The result of these sacrifices was that a barrier still existed between man and God that no sacrificial offering could remove. Only a perfect sacrifice of sinless total obedience could provide a way.

[40:04] This summer in Japan we had the Olympics which is always a brilliant occasion if you love sport. If you don't love sport, it's a tough few weeks, isn't it?

Brilliant. They're normally great fun. Perhaps a little bit subdued this year because no spectators were there because of the pandemic. And then after the Olympics, you have the Paralympics which I just find extraordinary.

The level of skill that is involved to do what they do. Remember a few years ago, previous Olympics, seeing a table tennis player, some awesome shots. He was holding the bat in his mouth. I couldn't even do that without dropping it. It was extraordinary. And we look forward to the Winter Olympics that are going to take place early next year in China. And there are different sports there that we all love and enjoy.

I'd love to take part in the Olympics, but I'm never going to reach the qualifying standard required in any sport. To enter, you need to run a distance in a certain time, to jump a certain height, to throw something into a measurable distance.

[41:16] And for me, that is just not going to be possible. It never was, never will be. But in the same way, God sets a qualifying standard to enter his kingdom, a perfect, sinless, obedient life.

Only one person who has ever lived has done that. Jesus Christ, God's Son. God's will for Jesus was that he died on the cross, a perfect sacrifice for our sins.

And because he lived a perfect life, death had no power to hold him. And three days later, he gloriously rose to new life. He had met God's qualifying standard.

And he brings us that new life. If our lives are obedient and given to him, it is not endless ritual that saves us, but the resurrection power of Jesus in our lives as we are in relationship with him.

As we trust him, we are clothed in his righteousness. And because of what he's done in our lives, we become able to enter the holy presence of God.

[42:34] Because of Jesus, we are able to reach God's qualifying standard. The words used here in verses five through seven are quoted from King David in Psalm 40.

What separated David from King Saul, who we're studying in the mornings, that he had a heart that humbled himself before God. And the theme of the psalm is one of great rescue by God from a pit that had no escape.

And now the writer is putting these words into the very mouth of Jesus. Here I am. I have come to do your will.

Jesus knew what that will meant, going to give himself on a cross. And the truth in verse 10, as I studied, I just found absolutely staggering.

And let's just read that. By that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

[43:43] Take these words into your heart this evening. Through Jesus, once and for all, you have been made holy.

Allow these words to breathe spiritual life deep into your soul. You may have come here this evening, perhaps feeling worried. How can I ever sort out my relationship with God? I keep messing up. I keep going wrong. How can I do what is right? The word of God to you this evening is stop worrying. There is no need to get stressed out.

The good news is, you don't have to do anything. Jesus has done it for you. Once and for all, through him, your sins have been removed.

You have been embraced by God's love through Jesus on the cross and been forgiven absolutely everything. 1 John 1 verse 9 says, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

[45:00] Your part is just to receive from the Lord. Confess your need of Jesus to him. Repent of your sins and trust him for the way ahead.

You see, verses 11 through to 14, through Jesus, no sacrificial repetition is needed. A simple sentence from the characters in a TV programme enables us to identify what it is, doesn't it? For example, if I was to say Lovely Jubbly, you might say that was Dillboy, Only Fools and Horses. I have a cunning plan. Baldrick in Blackadder, yeah. No, no, no, no, no, yes. That's the Vicar of Dibley, yeah, yeah.

Probably one of the most famous TV quotes going, Beam me up, Scotty. Star Trek, yeah. We've all been in situations where we'd love to say that and do that, haven't we?

[46:10] And then, listen very carefully. I shall say this only once. Hello, hello, yeah, yeah. The character who was a resistance fighter was saying, who was declaring, in other words, what I'm saying is very important.

No missing about. Listen carefully. And there is a sense that the writer in Hebrews is saying this to us. Listen carefully. I'm not going to repeat this.

What Jesus has done is for us once and for all. If you look at verse 11, the priests were really, really busy people.

They were standing all day, day in, day out, offering sacrifice after sacrifice, burnt offerings, meat offerings. It never ended. As I read this, I really felt quite sorry for them, constantly on the go. They stood all the time because their work was never completed as they served God and the people. But when the work of Jesus was finished, as the perfect son of God, he sat down at his right hand.

[47:22] This is a term that means being in a place of blessing and honour. His work was complete. There was no need for repetition. Jesus' sacrifice is a complete and utter game changer.

Verse 14, he is made perfect forever, those who would seek to draw close to God. Another wow moment. Not only have you been made holy through Jesus, you have been made perfect. It just gets better and better, doesn't it? How does Jesus do this? It's because he changes us from the inside out, verses 15 through to 18.

A few years ago, we took one of our nieces to see the animated film called Inside Out. Very simply, it's the story of a young girl whose life is directed by the characters that play the five core inner emotions of anger, disgust, fear, sadness, and joy.

Thoroughly enjoyable and very powerful watch, actually. the film's premise is that it's what's inside our minds and how we respond to situations that shapes our lives.

[48:40] It's what we are like inside that directs us. The law failed because it did not change people's very being and attitudes. They were trying to control God rather than being obedient to him.

Verses 16 and 17 are quotes from Jeremiah chapter 31 verses 33 and 34. Through the new covenant in Jesus, we don't have to follow an external set of rules and procedures.

When we acknowledge Jesus as Lord, he fills us with his presence, the Holy Spirit, God's power within us to be obedient to his commands.

over the years, we've all experienced the use of things that have become obsolete, that have become outdated. Think of cassette tapes.

I've still got a load at home. I do have a very old player, but I haven't played them for a very long time. I'm not sure they'd actually last being played. We've recently cleared out lots of redundant VHS tapes.

[49:52] Things that we've invested lots of time and energy in over the years, but we can't play them anymore. And even the charity shops don't take them. Things constantly change and evolve, don't they?

I guess even eventually DVDs will be fully gone when everyone's streaming and downloading all the time. But if we look at this last verse in this passage, verse 18, it states that because of what Jesus has done, the old way of sacrifice has become obsolete.

It's not needed anymore. Jesus is providing a new and better way. So in summary, Jesus has made a sacrifice once and for all and no further sacrifice is needed.

Through this, we have been made holy, perfect, and God has filled us with his presence to serve and to obey.

His law has been written into our souls and in our minds. Utterly, utterly incredible. And we need to make a response to these truths.

[51:06] Studying these verses has led me to be really humbled at what Jesus has done for us on the cross. Through Jesus, we rest in the presence of God himself.

This evening, tomorrow, Monday morning, Tuesday, in the weeks to come, we rest in the presence of God through the work of Jesus on the cross.

And the truths we've looked at this evening do not change whatever the circumstances you will find yourself in this week. Even when your backs are to the wall, even when decisions you have taken have led you down a blind alley, even when your emotions are crushing you, through the sacrifice of Jesus, you are still made perfect and filled with the holy presence of God.

And when we see the lengths that Jesus has gone to for us, we can't do anything else, can we, but to respond with worship, with praise, with our lives.

There is a need for ongoing change and that takes place as you look to Jesus. I'm going to close with a simple story. A father was sitting watching television when his little boy came running over.

[52:34] Dad, can you play with me? Dad enjoys playing with his son and plans to give him plenty of time, but not just yet. Soon, soon, he says.

When this program finishes. Five minutes later, the little boy returns. Dad, can we play now? Soon, son, soon. When this program finishes.

Two minutes later, the little boy returns again. Dad, is it time to play yet? Dad realises he's not going to get any peace, so he decides to set his son a task that will take some time.

He notices a picture of the world on the front page of the newspaper lying in front of him. He tears the picture out, then he rips it into small pieces.

Now, son, I've got a game for you. Take the pieces of this picture of the world, put them back together again, and then we'll play together. The little boy eagerly takes the pieces away with him and sets to work.

[53:33] Dad's relieved he'll get to see the last half hour of his TV program. But to his amazement, the little boy is back in less than five minutes. I've finished, Dad, can we play now?

The father's stunned when he turns around to see his son holding up the picture of the world, each piece sticky-taped into the right position. He begins wondering whether he has a child's prodigy on his hands.

How did you get it done so quickly? He asks. That would have taken me a good twenty minutes and I'm an adult. Oh, it was easy, Dad. On the back of the world was a picture of a person.

So I put the person together and that's when the world came together. It may be that you are struggling to make sense of what is happening in the world and your life at the moment.

But if you let Jesus have first place in your life, everything else will begin to make a little sense. This evening, will you look to him and allow him to be Lord of your life to put the pieces in place and guide you?

[54:50] Just a few moments, we're going to be sharing around the communion table together, putting Jesus at the centre of our worship. an act that reminds us of the lengths that Jesus went to to make us holy and perfect, a sacrifice once and for all.

And as you meditate and worship, allow the Lord to rewrite on your heart his love, grace and will for your life. And may your trust in Jesus lead God to declare about you their sins, and lawless acts I will remember no more.

What a saviour, what a saviour we have in Jesus. Let's pray. You cannot grasp water in your hand, it drops through your fingers.

You cannot grasp truth in your mind, it drops through your thoughts. You can only possess water by drinking it, taking it into your body. You can only possess truth by living it, taking it into your heart. Lord Jesus, you are the way, the truth and life. Forgive us our sins, forgive us our pride. We cannot lead our lives without you.

[56:24] take our lives this evening. Fill them with your spirit, write your law on our hearts and enable us to lead obedient lives.

This evening, Lord, we have come to do your will. Amen. Thank you very much for that.

I was struck when we were watching the video from COP26 by one of the things that Chris said. As they're having these negotiations, they're behind closed doors.

not everyone gets to have a seat at the table. But this evening, we're not before that restriction. We come to a table that the Lord invites us all to.

What a privilege and what an amazing thing that is. This is not a table behind closed doors. This is an open table for us all to come and receive. So let's come and do that now.

[57:43] As we're doing that, on a practical note, hopefully you've all got your little communion cup and wafer. If not, there's a few at the front on the table and there's a few at the back.

Maybe raise your hand if you need someone to go and get one for you. So I'm going to start this time of communion by reading the end of the passage that we've been looking at this evening. This is from Hebrews 10 verses 16 and 18. This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord.

I will put my laws in their hearts and I'll write them on their minds. Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more. And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary. When these words were originally written in Psalm 40, they were a future promise. For us, they are a present reality. God's law is on our hearts.

[58:48] The sacrifice has been made. The sacrificial system is no longer necessary. So let's come before this table now. Come to this table not because you must, but because you may.

Not because you are strong, but because you are weak. Come not because of any goodness of your own that gives you a right to come, but because you need mercy and help.

Come because you love the Lord a little and would like to love him more. Come because he loved you and gave himself for you.

Come and meet the risen Christ, for we are his body. A prayer of confession. Almighty God, to whom all hearts are an open book, to whom all desires are known and from whom no secrets are hidden, cleanse the thoughts of our minds and the desires of our hearts by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and magnify your holy name through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen. We're going to have a moment of silence now just to focus our minds on the Lord and the sacrifice that he made for us. And then I'll lead us, if we want to have a time of open prayer, I'll start us off with a short prayer and if anyone wants to add to their prayer and praise, please feel free.

[60:25] Amen. Lord, thank you that you loved us.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Thank you, Lord, for your sacrifice for us, that we have been washed clean, washed whiter than snow. Amen.

If you haven't already done so, now would be a good moment to open your communion cup, so you can peel the first layer off, and you have the wafer, and then you can peel the second layer, ready to have the wine.

Amen. Let's take our wafer and remember Jesus' body, broken for us.

[63:24] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. In the same way, after the supper, he took the cup, saying, this is the cup of the new covenant.

My blood, do this whenever you drink it in remembrance of me. Let's take our cups and remember Jesus' blood shed for us.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[64:29] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. ■■■■. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. may we be led from this place filled with the hope and joy that your sacrifice brings to us may we remember that we are washed as white as snow amen we're going to reflect a bit further on jesus's sacrifice for us on the cross as we come to sing our final two songs starting with jesus christ i think upon your sacrifice thank you jesus christ i think upon your sacrifice you began nothing you poured out to death many times so i wonder at your gift of life and i'm in that place once again i'm in that place once again and once again i look upon the cross where you died i'm humbled by your mercy and i'm broken inside once again i thank you once again i pour out my life now you are exalted to the highest place king of the heavens and one day i'll bow and for now i'll be the same in grace i'm full of praise once again once again i'm full of praise once again and once again i look upon the cross where you died i'm humbled by your mercy and broken inside once again i thank you once again i pour out my life thank you for the cross thank you for the cross my friend thank you for the cross thank you for the cross thank you for the cross

Thank you for the cross, thank you for the cross, my friend. Once again I look upon the cross where you die, humbled by your mercy and broken side.

Once again I thank you, once again I pour out my life. The grace of God has reached you for me, and pulled me from the raging sea.

And I am safe on this solid ground, the Lord is my salvation. I will not fear when darkness falls, His strength will help me stay in these walls.

[69:45] I'll see the dawn of the rising circle, Lord is my salvation.

Who is like the Lord, our God, strong to see, faithful in love.

My debt is made, and the victory won. The Lord is my salvation.

My hope is hidden in the Lord. He fulfills each promise of His word.

When winter fades, when the spring will come, the Lord is my salvation.

[70:48] In times of waiting, in times of need. When I know lost, when I am weak.

I know His grace will renew these days. The Lord is my salvation.

Who is like the Lord, our God, strong to see, faithful in love. My debt is made, and the victory won.

The Lord is my salvation.

And when I am, our God, our God, strong to see, faithful in love. And when I reach the final day, He will not leave me in the grave.

And I will rise and you will hold me home. The Lord is my salvation. Who is like the Lord, our God, strong to see, faithful in love.

[72:12] My debt is made, and the victory won. The Lord is my salvation.

Glory be to God, the Father, glory be to God, the Father, glory be to God, the Son, glory be to God, the Spirit, the Lord is our salvation.

The Lord is our salvation. The Lord is our salvation.

The Lord is our salvation. The Lord is our salvation.

The Lord is our salvation. What greater hope and joy and peace can we have than that? A prayer of blessing as we go.

[73:50] Lord, you are our salvation. Lord, you are our salvation. May that truth go out with us as we go tonight, as we go into our weeks. May we go out into the world in your strength, in the knowledge of your sacrifice for us on the cross, in the knowledge that there are no barriers to your table because of the sacrifice that Jesus Christ made once and for all on the cross.

Be with us as we leave this place, Lord. Amen. Thank you.