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Date: 11 March 2012

[0 : 00] Christ who died, who was raised to life, and is at the right hand of God, and is also interceding for us. That is how we are able to approach our God here this evening together. We are coming into God's presence to worship him. We can come into God's presence with joy and confidence, because this is our Saviour who intercedes for us. Let's come before God in prayer.

Amen. Our Father God, what a privilege it is to know you as God, to know you as our Heavenly Father, who has loved us, dearly loved us, enough to send your one and only Son, the Lord Jesus, to come as a servant, to die a death on a cross, to be that sacrifice for us, so that we can be brought near to you. Thank you that he is ascended, that he is at your right hand, interceding for us, pleading our case, so that we who would have no hope otherwise of being able to come before you, are able to draw near. Our Father, what a rich privilege that is. We thank you so much, and so, Father, we pray that you'd encourage us now to realise the fullness of this truth, that we are accepted and welcomed before you as our Father, all because of Jesus. So help us to draw near with joy and worship, that we may sing your praises, knowing that you are pleased with us, as you are pleased with your

Son, because of him. Please may we be honoured and glorified in all that we do this evening. For Christ's name's sake. Amen. Let's stand and sing our first hymn together, which is, Come people of the risen King, and it's on the sheet which you've been given. Come people of the risen King, who delight to bring him praise, come all and tune your hearts to sing to the morning star of the risen King, who delight to bring him praise, come all and tune your hearts to sing, to the morning star of grace. Come all and tune your hearts to sing, to the morning star of grace.

Come all and tune your hearts to sing, from the shifting shadows of the earth, we will lift our eyes to him.

Rejoice, rejoice, Lett■ kiowej the arms of blessing reach Rejoice, Oelet, european ministry voor ons. Now the Lord, the son of the mighty pastor, give God the's flag,■ing willv Oscars on his holyiche steps. But of course, it is joy, all God which is, O Mary and the church of Christ, rejoice. All God which is one firm over the■■■ rights to the kingdom of our Lord, who delight to praise, cho grado yông through othersrimfahren, the susten bone & lary of the triumph for Z pokemon thereof.

[2 : 54] ■engledly Hopkins with breakthrough dreams in all faith, O church of Christ, rejoice, Healds in all faith, Sharon and lary of the Son, I will face on his holy stream which isions andIVE, now we're moving on earth, His holy Gabriel Christ of Christ kami. One voice, O Church of Christ, rejoice.

And those who join his morning song, and those weeping through the night. And those who tell our battles, hope, and the storming in the fight.

For his perfect love will never change, and his mercies never cease. And follow us through all our days, and the certain love of peace.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Let every tongue rejoice! One heart, one voice, O Church of Christ, rejoice!

Come, young and old from every land, and a queen of the queen.

[4 : 24] Come close to the Laurentiis, and the riches of his praise. Come, young and old from every man, and a queen of the queen.

Come close to the throne, and the throne of the queen. Con■ with Almaour, and the■■■, and an súper of the queen.

Come, young and old from every man, and a queen of the queen. Rejoice! One heart, one voice, O Church of Christ, rejoice!

Rejoice! Rejoice! Let every turn rejoice, One heart, one voice, O Church of Christ, rejoice!

Let's pray. Lord Jesus, what an incredible saviour king you are. You, the king of the whole universe, you who are lifted high and exalted, sat at the right hand of the Father with your enemies made your footstool.

[5 : 55] You, O Lord, are worthy of all our honour and praise. Before you, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that you are Lord. What a great and magnificent king you are, you have conquered.

It says of you in Psalm 24, O Lord, great words of how you've triumphantly conquered and have entered into the holy place that the gates are flung open wide so that the king may enter in. And you, Lord, you have taken your place on the throne over all, over every power. There is nothing that we see around us that is not under your rule, under your authority. And one day we will see that a little more clearly when you bring the final victory. Lord, we thank you. Thank you that you've brought us to come to see you as the king. Thank you for how we've been able to sing of that just now.

And that though we may be going through trials and struggles and difficulties in our lives, thank you that even though it may not look like you're king all the time in our lives, you truly are king.

[7 : 02] And you are coming again. And you will bring your kingdom in its fullness. And we look forward to glory with you. Oh, Lord, we thank you. Thank you that you've brought us to see you as king.

You've brought us to put our trust and faith in you, to trust in you our saviour, who is able to forgive our sins, to free us from our captivity, and to bring us near to God.

So, Lord, we thank you that this is our privilege tonight, to gather as your people to worship you, the king. So help us do that, we pray. Lord, we thank you for the scripture that we've already reflected on this evening, that, yes, those trials and troubles do come.

We never need doubt your love for us. We thank you that you will never lose us from your grasp. And that though at times it may seem that you are far off and life may come to an end, Lord, we thank you that you are near and that you have promised to keep us as your people.

Lord, help us to hold on to those promises even when it looks like those promises are failing, because your promises will never fail and you are ever faithful. Give us the strength we need.

[8 : 14] Give us the faith we need to trust in your promises, we pray. Lord, we thank you for how you've been good to us in this past week. Thank you for how we have been clothed and been fed today.

Thank you for this building where we're able to meet and that we're able to meet in freedom and to hear your word together, that we're able to encourage each other together.

Thank you for how we're able to do good to each other. Lord, these are good gifts that you've given to us. Thank you that we can think of you as our father who cares for us as a father cares for his child.

And that day by day we can see your hand upon us. Again, that though we go through difficulties, actually we see you leading us through that. And although times are hard, Lord, you teach us to grow in Christ through that time.

And that even if we lose many things that we would want materially, Lord, so much more do we gain in Christ. Lord, we pray that that would be where our joy is.

[9 : 22] Lord, we look further afield in the land and we pray that many would come to know you as saviour in this day and age. Father, would you allow the opportunity for the gospel to be preached, to continue on, that you'd continue to raise up people to preach your word, that those who are pastors elsewhere, Lord, would be strengthened at this time to continue pressing on, though ministry may be difficult.

Lord, for other churches that we're connected to who may be knowing great times of encouragement or who are discouraged at this time, Lord, encourage them by the fact that we all serve the risen King, the Lord Jesus, and that it is he who is the conquering victor.

Lord, strengthen us as your church, we pray throughout the UK. We pray for our government at this time. Pray for all the decisions that they're seeking to make.

And Lord, it's frustrating at times when we consider the ways forward that they're looking at, maybe that they're not what we would hope for. Lord, certainly that many decisions are not, as your word says, is best.

Lord, we pray that you continue to put Christians in place to advise and guide, and maybe actually to be raised up in Parliament to make good decisions there.

[10 : 44] Lord, we pray that you would help this government, not to keep going further and further away from you, but to realise again that you are God, that you are the King of the universe, to be

worshipped and served, and that your way is best.

Lord, may your word speak powerfully into the hearts of those in government at this time. As we think wider into the world, we pray that you would, by the power of your Holy Spirit, allow your word to break into hearts throughout many countries at this time.

Thank you for Graham taking this trip, and how he's going to meet up with Malcolm and others. We pray that you'd further the work that's going on out there in Poland and other countries, further that many people out there would be saved.

And we think of other countries too at this time, that there are places where Christ's are being persecuted. May you help them to stand. And as they stand firm, may you allow the Gospels to be proclaimed faithfully, and may your words impact people's lives.

May your Holy Spirit bring new life to places that we've maybe never even heard of, yet we can bring before you now, knowing that you are God and you are able to answer these prayers. Father, it's with excitement that we hold your words in our hands, expectantly hoping that you will speak to us tonight.

[12:04] And we thank you that by your Holy Spirit, the words in the Bible, in your book, are real and living, and they speak to us today.

So may you change our hearts by your Spirit. May you speak powerfully into our lives, so that we would not go from this place unchanged, but we would go out through the doors of this place, really knowing a sense of your presence, really knowing a sense of you at work in our lives, and being changed to be more into the image of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus.

That would be glorious, and that's our desire. So help us, we pray. May he be exalted, may he be honoured and lifted up in all that we do as a church. For his name's sake, we pray.

Amen. Amen. Please, would you turn with me in your Bibles to Colossians chapter 2. Colossians chapter 2, we'll read from verse 20.

We'll be particularly focusing on chapter 3, verses 1 to 17. We'll read from verse 20 of chapter 2.

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

[13:18] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Paul writes to the church in Colossae, Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belong to it, do you submit to its rules?

Do not handle. Do not taste. Do not touch. These are all destined to perish with use because they are based on human commands and teachings.

Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom with their self-imposed worship, their false humility, and their harsh treatments of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

Since then you have been raised with Christ. Set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated, at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

[14:33] Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature, sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, and greed, which is idolatry.

Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these.

Here then there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all and is in all.

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, and humility, gentleness, and patience.

Bear with each other, and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues, put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

[16:06] Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart. Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart.

Let the peace of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Amen. Before we come to study that text together, let's stand and sing again.

We're going to sing, In Christ Alone, which is number 647 in the hymn book. In Christ alone my hope is found. And this text has all been centred on what we are as Christians in Christ, or what you would be if your trust is in Christ.

[17:09] And in Christ alone my hope is found. He is my light, my strength, my song. Let's stand and sing. In Christ alone my hope is found.

He is my light, my strength, my strength, my strength, my strength. He is my strength, my strength, my strength, my strength.

He is gone as soon, his solid ground. And in Christ alone my hope is found.

In Christ alone my hope is found. In Christ alone my hope is found. In Christ alone my hope is found. To confess, To confess, To be continued, To be continued, And in Christ alone my hope is found.

In Christ alone my hope is found. Till on the cross, as Jesus died, the round of God was satisfied.

[19:03] For every sin, a king was paid, here in the death of Christ my name.

When the ground is gone, he lay, light of the world, light of the same.

And the sin fall in glorious name, up from the grave he rose again.

And as he's found in victory, sin's curse has lost his grip on me.

For I am his, and he is mine, bought with the precious blood of Christ.

[20:18] No doubt in life, no fear in death, this is the power of Christ's defeat.

From lifeless pride, to final breath, Jesus runs my destiny.

The power of hell, the sea of man, can ever come in from his hand.

To hear his hands, all close below, in the blood of Christ my son.

Please turn with me in your Bibles back to Colossians chapter 3.

[21:27] Alexander the Great, looking back in history, was one of the most greatest leaders, one of the most greatest military leaders of all time.

He had a relatively small army that he was taking around with him, taking over virtually every country in sight. He had a great military strategy which meant that though they were a small army, they could take over an army of millions.

And by the time he was coming towards the end of his conquering reign, they had taken over most of the known world known to them at the time. And so the story goes that he reaches the end of his conquering reign and there they are as the army, they've come to a halt.

And after conquering all these lands, there's Alexander the Great in tears. Almost as if, so they say, that he's sad because there's nowhere else left to conquer.

Although actually, that's not the case. He's sad because his army, after having gone round with him for such a long time, wanted to go home.

[22:48] And there was no motivation left for them to carry on fighting. What actually meant the most to them was what was in their hearts, their families, their homes. They wanted to go back and so they just left him.

Motivation is a really important factor, isn't it? But it's only effective if it reflects what's in the heart.

We can try and motivate ourselves in many ways, but unless it's in our heart, then it's not really going to make the difference for the long term.

A heart change makes a difference and then letting that affect our motivations, our actions. I wonder if you've ever thought just thinking, well, about your life, and you really wish you could clean up your life.

You really wish it could be different, properly different. And you're wondering, well, how can I do that? And earlier in chapter 2 of Colossians, Paul was talking about the kind of rules and regulations that we can have in life. Don't do this, don't taste, don't touch, don't handle, don't do this, don't do that.

And he's saying, well, as good as rules can be for discipline, rules themselves don't make the change. What really makes a change, what really makes a difference, is the new life that Christ brings.

[24:10] It's the change of the heart inside that will then motivate everything else. That will make the difference. So what's Paul's message in chapter 3?

You've got new life in Christ, and that changes everything. That's what you need to be different. I'm going to look at this under a few points, but first of all, let's start looking at what is this new life in Christ.

New life in Christ. Paul introduces it to us in the first few verses of chapter 3. Let's read those verses again together. He says this, Since then you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things, for you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. See, Paul gives us something to focus on. He says something has happened, once you've put your trust and faith in Christ, something has happened to make you completely new. You're a new person with a new identity, and that's what we need to focus on.

[25 : 35] You see, actually you're given a heavenly life, a heavenly privilege, a heavenly status with Christ, and a feature of glory, because you are bound to the Son of God, joined to Christ in union with him.

Everything has changed because you've been joined to Christ. One of the great events last year was of the Royal Wedding, Kate Middleton and Prince William.

And it's such an incredible event, not just because of how amazing the parties were, and how wonderful the wedding ceremony was, and how everybody turned out to watch that, and so many people were watching it on the TVs.

It's just incredible that Kate Middleton, who was before just an average member of the public, with that old life was completely changed by this one event, becoming married to William.

See, just a regular member of the public before in her old life, but now just by being married to William, she has this new royal status, doesn't she?

[26 : 49] With royal privileges, and with direct access to the royal family. So when they're having birthday parties, she's there with them. She gets to live in royal homes.

She has the privileges that goes with all of that, because of her royal status. All because of the one event that happened last year, she became married to Prince William.

And there's one day that feature hope that if William becomes king one day, that she too will share in what will come with that, and the status that that brings.

Let alone that bound up in all of that is that she is with the one who she loves, William. And it's very similar for the Christian. You see, when you trust in Christ, there's a connection made between you and Christ.

So much so that you're bound to him, so that you share in what Christ has. And your life is changed forever as a result. So it means that our past, our present, and our future is all tied up in not what we once were, not what we are ourselves, but in what Christ is, and all that he is.

[28 : 03] So what happened to him happened to you. What will happen to him will happen to you. And you're with him now. Now. So, verse 3.

We can go through the timeline. Verse 3. Says that we died. Why is that? Well, in a very real sense, by being in union with Christ, by being joined to him, when he died on that cross, our old life died with him.

So that it's dead and gone, and it doesn't belong to us anymore. Then verse 1. It says, remember, since you have been raised with Christ. So not only were we with him on the cross then, but when he was in that tomb, and then he rose with mighty power.

So we were raised to new life with him. So that we have new life too. And in verse 4, we actually have a wonderful future to look forward to.

So that when Christ, who is our life, appears, you will also appear with him in glory. Do you see? Everywhere that Christ goes, you are with him. And even now, as he is in the heavenlies, at the right hand of the Father, we are in a sense with him there, at the right hand of the Father too.

[29 : 18] You see, our old life is dead and gone. That's not us anymore. What's our new life? A heavenly life. A heavenly life. Bound to Christ with all the wonderful privileges that come with that.

And we're glad that that old life is dead and gone, aren't we? Because it's a life of darkness. A life of guilt. A life of being cut off from God.

Sin and guilt used to rule that old life. And it was a life where we were living for ourselves. A life of self-indulgence just for us. A life of idolatry.

But God has saved us from that. That's not us anymore. He's saved us and made us his and given us a heavenly status.

See, that old life is not who you are anymore if you're in Christ. Instead, you live for God now. And so, you're given direct access to God through Jesus.

[30 : 17] You might not be rich here on earth. You might not be rich here on earth. But you are in Christ. And you have glory to look forward to. And to look forward to. And all the riches of heaven.

And to come to your palace. And meet up with the Queen. And meet up with the Queen. And get to meet her in chat. And you do too, if you were in Christ. You have God as your Father, caring for you.

You might not be rich here on earth, but in Christ we are rich. We have glory to look forward to and all the riches of heaven that are to come. We don't know whether or not William will actually get to become king, but we do know that Christ will return.

We do know that we will appear with him in glory. There's no doubt about that. All of what we have is certain and can never be taken away. It's definitely going to happen.

So do you see that? By being bound to Christ, you've got a past that's gone. You've got the new you, this new life, which is centred on Christ, which has a future hope of glory.

[31 : 24] All because of being joined to Christ. Nothing of you, all of him. Paul wants us just to get that straight in our minds straight away.

Before looking at anything else, that's what we need to realise. Because the trouble is, we either forget, or we don't understand it. We don't fully grasp these things, maybe.

Or maybe we even doubt it. Because it's not a reality that we easily see around us. Looking at each other now, we just, we see ourselves. We see where we're sitting. We see us as we appear.

It's easy sometimes to lose sight that actually we are with Christ in heaven as his people. That's why we need to just stop and reflect on these verses. So when Satan, as he loves to, point on those things in our lives that we've done, and how we begin to feel the guilt of that thing that you did and you're so ashamed of, and you're made to think, well, am I really what God's Word promises that I am?

Am I really saved? Am I really with Christ? Am I really looking forward to the hope of glory ahead? Doubt set in, don't they? But as that hymn says, When Satan tempts me to despair, and tells me of the guilt within, upward I look, and see him there, who made an end of all my sin.

[32 : 56] Look up, see Christ in heaven, and know that you are with him. Because he died, rose again, ascended to heaven, and you are with him when that happens.

See, don't base what you think you are on just what you see around you, or just what you see happening in your life. No, see who you are as your true identity in Christ himself.

Because that's the truth. New life in Christ. Secondly then, new life has new clothes.

New life has new clothes. See, there's an implication from what all this leads on to, is that it demands a change in our lives, doesn't it? The Christian has a very different life now, so our lives, our daily lives, need to be different to reflect that.

It should be affected by it, shouldn't it? And the message is about dressing ourselves with the right character, dressing ourselves right. So we have a heavenly home, we have heavenly privilege, a glorious destiny, so wear the clothes that suit.

[34 : 10] We've got the 2012 Olympics coming up, and for some athletes this is going to be the first time competing in the Olympics. And in the opening ceremonies you get the teams marching around, showing off their flags and their colours, before the crowds, as ambassadors for their country, as Olympians.

They are given the privileges and rights to compete as Olympians there before everybody. So it would be no good them turning up to that opening ceremony there in London, dressed in torn jeans, a hoodie and sandals.

That just wouldn't fit, would it? No, they wear the tracksuit with their country's colours on, they've got the sport shoes on that look the part, and they've got their nation's flag. It's about dressing right to fit who you are as your identity.

And so this is what Paul is saying here in the verses that follow on. And it takes us really to the end of verse 17, 5 to 17. He's saying here in verse 9 that there are old practices, there's the old life, the old self to take off, to get rid of.

And then in his place, verse 10, there are things to put on. And again, verse 12, that as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with, and it gives some instructions.

[35 : 34] You see, there's the clothes from the old life, which we are to get rid of, to burn, as it were. And there's the new clothes that are suitable for your new life that we're to take on.

So think of it like this. In the Christian life, there are two wardrobes. And every day as you get up each morning, you're confronted with these two wardrobes, and you've got to pick which one you take the clothes from.

One wardrobe has the sign ego over it, and the other wardrobe has a sign love over it. Clothes in the wardrobe called ego belong to the old life, and that's the old you.

And if you belong to the new life, it's completely inappropriate to wear those clothes anymore. So we need to get rid of them. We need to get rid of the clothes which we might take from that wardrobe.

And verses 5 to 9 will explain to us how we spot what those clothes look like in our lives. And then there's the clothes in the wardrobe called love. And these are appropriate for the new life that we have in Christ.

[36 : 46] And verses 12 to 17 go on to tell us about those. So we're to put those clothes on instead. We're always to have something to replace it. So we're to put those clothes on.

And if we're not sure how to wear them, if we're not sure what it looks like to wear them, at the centre of this section, we've got verse 10, that we are being renewed in the knowledge, in the image of its creator.

We have a model example before us, Christ. He's, as it were, the model dresser. He's the one who dresses perfectly. And we're being made like him.

And that's what these verses are pointing to us too. So let's slow down a bit over those instructions. We're not going to have time to look at all the detail, but we'll try and pick out some of them. So first of all, the clothes that belong to the wardrobe called ego, that we need to get rid of.

You can look at verses 5 to 8. We'll read them again. Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature, sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, and greed, which is idolatry.

[37 : 55] Skip on to verse 8. You must now read yourselves of all such things as these. Anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices. See, these are the clothes to get rid of. They're clothes with a certain kind of look that come from the wardrobe called ego.

They're about self-indulgence. They're about me. They're about getting for myself instead of obeying God's command to love God and to love each other.

It's the opposite of loving God and loving each other. And so, Paul divides it into two ways. First of all, in relation to God, he says there are certain things which are idolatry, and that is the sexual immorality, the impurity, the lust, and the evil desires and greed.

You see, there are certain things which belong to the old life which were against God. Good gifts from God, the privilege of being able to enjoy sex in its right context, the privilege of being able to have good things in life, good possessions, all things that we turn around to use for ourselves instead, which we use for our own self-indulgence when we look away from God.

[39 : 18] And so that's why it's a problem even today, even among Christians in churches, where we struggle with things like internet pornography, how late at night it can be difficult not to fall to the temptation of what is actually really readily available.

Or maybe using friendships to form close relationships, inappropriate close relationships that you know aren't right. Maybe with somebody who's already in a relationship with somebody else, and it's actually using it for your own purposes, very inappropriately.

Or maybe problems with greed, with things like catalogue shopping, or careless spending just to keep getting for yourself, things which, yeah, you just have to have, the latest iPhone, whatever, all things that are actually idolatry, good things given by God, yet that we, we put in the place of God and worship instead.

So these are things we need to get rid of. These are things, these are attitudes that we're not to have anymore because it's not loving God. And then in relation to each other, Paul is talking about things like the angry words which we can say, which is not demonstrating love to each other at all.

The hateful words, the gossiping about each other, they're talking about each other behind each other's backs, even if it is for prayer under that guise.

[40 : 49] You see, there are many ways which we can try and excuse these things, yet Paul is saying, no, we must get rid of those old clothes. They belong to a life where we are serving ourselves and not loving God and not loving each other.

We need to be ruthless about getting rid of those clothes. But having got rid of those clothes, we need to put on the clothes from the wardrobe, love. And this is the incredible picture that we can have the privilege of living like Christ.

It's called love because it is the opposite of those hurtful attitudes that we can have towards each other. And it's the opposite of idolatry because it's actually turning to God in worship.

Again, we haven't got time to look at all of it in detail, but here's some of it. It's about not looking to somebody to make you to deserve your love but actually to love somebody regardless of how they are to you.

Not seeing yourself as the most important person. Being willing to lose face or have your pride hurt to show compassion to someone else even though you don't think they deserve compassion.

[42 : 03] and not allowing things to fester beneath the surface. It was a big problem back in Paul's day with divisions in the church and it's still a struggle for God's people today, isn't it?

Paul in verse 11 is trying to say where there is no Greek or Jew that there aren't these divisions in Christ. And yet so easily we can put divisions between each other, isn't it?

That we can actually put up divisions among the church over things like music. Things that should be turned to God in worship.

See Paul is talking about a real change here. A real change for love. Wouldn't it be fantastic if we could actually take this on as a church and really begin to look like Christ in all his love in this way. But do you know what? It's really hard work. And so that's why Paul is having to say put to death therefore what belongs to that old nature. It's hard work of doing that.

[43 : 06] Towards Carmarthen in South Wales there's an old ancient Elizabethan garden 400 years old and when it was first made it's a beautiful garden with wonderful landscaping wonderful ponds and great architectural features.

But over time as a couple of hundred years went by it fell into neglect and for about a hundred years it just got overgrown. and so although it had this wonderful image of being this great Elizabethan garden which still hadn't vanished it was just overgrown because nobody was taking the hard work to keep the weeds under control.

And before long nobody really knew it was there because it just blended in with the woodland around it. It wasn't until a restoration project happened that actually they started to go in and take out those weeds and root them out.

actually they found that there was still the old features there still that original identity of that wonderful Elizabethan garden but it was going to take hard work to keep rooting out those weeds that keep growing back and if you've got a garden you'll know how hard that work is but that there's a yew tree tunnel there possibly a hundred or two hundred years old and it was still there and they were able to peel it back.

And so in the same way as Christians it is hard work getting rid of those old clothes but Paul says persevere in it. Put those old ones to death and press on.

[44 : 33] And he says that also in relation to worshipping God. We come to verse 16 and he says that the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

So as we love each other we're also turning to God in love with great thanks for what he's done to us in Christ. And it's the challenge to us isn't it that as we have visitors come into this place has it been evident to them that we are meeting with God today?

Is it evidence to those around you as we leave this place that you are joyfully praising God in your heart? Or when the music stops at the end of the service at the end of the final hymn does our praise stop with it?

Do we sing and pray from our hearts in love towards God? That's what Paul's saying is what's warranted with this new life is a wonderful new life of love.

Incredible standards here which Paul is saying is true to the new life and it's very easy just to look at these and think well how on earth can I live that out? Surely Paul you've just set us up with this list

of impossible things to do I want to change my life but all I can think of is do's and don'ts to put all this into practice how can I really really take this on?

[46 : 02] Well we go back to the beginning again beginning of chapter 3 and actually see that we're given the motivation for all this. we're not to live this out because we've got to not to live this out in a sense of doing it in terms of rules and regulations no we do this joyfully and with great thankfulness why?

because of what we are in Christ so just to bring this all together to wrap this up Paul is saying since then you have been raised with Christ set your hearts on things above set your minds on things above because that will help you to live out this radically different life it is going to be tough it is going to be hard work to live this out as a church as we try to do this together corporately as we try to bear with each other and forgive each other and go the extra mile with each other it is hard work but Paul is saying if you ground yourselves in the gospel if you keep reminding yourselves of that that is where the difference will be made so maybe think for example in a few years time you hear of Kate Middleton struggling with the responsibilities that she's got it's just incredibly hard work as a royal having to turn up to these events having to get smartly dressed up and having to to play the part of that as she is of being married to William as part of the royal family the struggles that that is what's the one thing that could keep her going through that is to remember that she's got a wonderful privilege of being a member of the royal family of being joined to William and the privileges that go with it with all of that that's the motivation and for us as Christians what's going to make the change it's not about you beating yourself up to try and be like this and forcing yourself with rules and regulations no it's by understanding the gospel understanding your privileges of what you are in Christ of being able to be transformed to be like him and as the Holy Spirit applies that to your life so we will want to live this out and so we will see him change us there's ways that we can do that that every morning personally before you walk out that bedroom door reflect on verses like 1 to 4 of chapter 3 reminding you of what you are in Christ reflect on that so that before you walk out that door you remember who you are in Christ remember the privileges that you have and the access to God and the future glory that you have to live for and as God's people look back at verse 16 there's a way that we can encourage each other so that we could let the word of Christ dwell in us richly as we teach and admonish each other with all wisdom how do we do that practically well we do that as we sing together so we can encourage each other with the words of the songs that we've already sung tonight we can do that as we pray together we can do that as we share with each other what we've learnt from scripture this week and as we look forward to the week ahead we can promise to pray for each other and we can maybe encourage each other with a phone call or a note or a text whatever it may be to encourage each other again with the gospel there are ways which we can support each other in doing that and this is what Paul is saying ground yourself in the gospel realise what you are in Christ help each other to do that and that will be the motivation to make this glorious change the change that we'd love to see happen in our lives but that of ourselves we are powerless to do but in Christ he's given us everything so that's our prayer for each other isn't it the Holy Spirit would open our eyes to these things and that we'd encourage each other with it Amen the next hymn which we're going to sing reflects what Paul is instructing here this desire that Christ's mind would be ours and that his way would control all that we do and say and may this be our prayer for each other as you sing this be praying for each other as we look around this place and see each other as brothers and sisters in Christ together may this be our prayer for us that we would grow in the knowledge of Christ together let's stand and sing in the knowledge of Christ my Savior may we keep from day to day by his spirit

Oh Oh Oh

Oh Oh Oh Oh So our Father we thank you for these glorious truths so simple and yet so profound so simple as the fact that Christ died and rose again and is exalted on high and that we are bound to him and are with him as your people and Yet so profound that the son of God would do that and that we would be joined to him to share in all that he has

[53 : 34] May that never fail to amaze us May you help us to really grasp that in our hearts and may we may we pour out as from our hearts Our love to you our father in joyful thanksgiving and to each other As Christ loved us. So help us we pray Ground these truths in our minds So that they would always be there in the forefront of our minds cast away all our doubts and fears we pray So that we would see Christ and know that we are his and that he is ours. Amen Amen O we are the Lord Happy as he is We are the Lord That we are He is

He is He is be done from Okay.
Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Well, we come now to the Lord's Supper, and of course this is the occasion when we remember the Lord's death on the cross. We remember that his body was broken for us and that his blood was shed for us. But it isn't just the memory of a past event, is it? We live in the present, and we are at this very present moment wanting the presence of Christ, aren't we? The presence of Christ we appropriate as we take the bread and we drink from the cup. We don't take physically.

Christ doesn't physically become his body, the bread doesn't become his body, and the cup doesn't become his blood. We don't believe that. But we do believe that as we eat and as we drink, we're appropriating by faith now in this very moment what the living Christ has done for us. He did die 2,000 years ago, but we know he rose again and he's living as we've been singing. He burst the bonds of death, didn't he? He's living now, and we want his presence, don't we, with us, each one of us. And so it's an individual matter initially. Jesus said that I myself may be in them, and Colossians says Christ in you. So we want to know Christ in us, don't we, the hope of glory. As we physically eat and we take these elements into our body and they go down into our inner parts, then we're wanting Christ, don't we, to come into us so that we know him? One of the hymns we were saying, it was, I am his and he is mine. Well, the Song of Songs says, my lover is mine and I am his. And this is it, isn't it? It's the intimate union of lovers, a husband and a wife, become one. They love each other and become one.

[57 : 30] So we want to express and renew, don't we, our love for Christ and become one with him as we remember his death and eat the bread and drink from the cup. And then the Lord's Supper is also called communion, isn't it? And communion is our fellowship together, because as we each are united to the Lord, then we're part of the church, aren't we? And Christ, we've talked about the mystery, don't we, of Christ married to the church. And so as we individually experience Christ, then we have that wonderful sense of fellowship that is unique, isn't it? It's unique to those who really do know the Lord as Saviour. We're sad, I know I am. We're sad, aren't we? We know lovely people, but there's something missing. There's something unique to the fellowship of God's people. So let's come to Christ Christ by faith as we partake of the Lord's Supper. This is what we call an open table. If you profess the

Lord as your Saviour, then do partake of the elements as they are passed to you. The bread will be given to you in individual portions, and we eat the bread as we receive it. And then after that, the cup is handed round. Individual cups are handed round. Whilst we sing a hymn, we wait till the hymn is finished, and then we all drink together. Let's pray.

Our Father, we do thank you for gathering us together this evening. We thank you for giving us the strength of body to be able to come and be present, to hear your word and to worship you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And we thank you that you've given us this ordinance, that you desire and require that we remember the death of your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so we do pray that as we remember his death, and as we partake of the bread and drink from the cup, that we may appropriate him, the living Christ, to ourselves afresh into our souls and bodies, that we may experience that he is mine, that I am his, that we are joined together as one. So we pray for your blessing on each one now as we partake, in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[60 : 09] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died.

[64 : 54] My riches gain I count but loss And more contempt on all my pride Forbid it, Lord, that I shall boast Save in the death of Christ my God All the vain things that charm me most I sacrifice them to His blood He loved His head, His hands, His feet

Sorrow and love flow mingled down Did e'er such love and sorrow meet For thorns compose so rich a crown His dying crimson like a robe Spreads o'er His body on the tree When am I dead to all the globe And all the globe is dead to me

Were there a whole realm of nature mine That were an offering far too small Love so amazing, so divine Dear God, my soul, my life, my all Drink and remember to live and shed His blood for us Let us pray together

Dear Lord, you've been reminded Tonight of the sacrifice that you paid The sacrifice that paid the penalty for sin Once and for all And Lord, we understand from what we've heard That our life too is to be modeled on The Lord Jesus Christ Himself That just as He went We too would go And therefore, Lord, we know that our life too Will be a life of sacrifice And we thank you And we thank you, Lord That you give us the opportunity In some small measure to pay back to you That little that we can That might reflect the greater sacrifice

That you paid on our behalf Lord, we thank you for those who have chosen to Take that even further by going on to the mission field Giving up lives of comfort perhaps here at home Lives of relative wealth And yet they've gone to countries They've gone to areas where life is difficult And where even to speak your name Might put them in great danger Lord, we pray that you'll Continue to bless all those Who are in such situations We pray, Lord, for those from this church And those that we know Who have gone on to the mission field Some serving abroad But some serving missions Even here We pray for the Cayleys

[70 : 05] And the Bricksies And the Griffins And all those who Through the years we know We pray, Lord That you'll be with them And continue to Bless them And support them And we thank you, Lord That they've been willing to go Willing to go and proclaim the message boldly That others who might not have heard that message Might hear it And believe And Lord, we think too Of all those who are ministers In this land and throughout the world Again, who've chosen a life Not of wealth Not of prestige But a life of service Service to others Service to their communities Service To their group of believers In the local church And Lord, once again We pray that in these times When great opposition

To the church is evident That Lord, you will Encourage them And build them up As they seek to serve you And finally, Lord We do pray For ourselves That we might know What it is to Offer our own sacrifice To you It seems, Lord There's so little That we can give And yet What we can give Lord, we would seek to give That we'd seek to serve Your church too And that we'd seek to Follow you In your life As a servant A life that you are called to And therefore A life that we are called to as well So Lord, just be With each one of us Help us to Support one another Help us to Grow To love one another Even more And to build each other

Up in the faith As we seek to go on In this Christian life Which you've planned for us Lord, we thank you For this reminder At your table Of all that you've done for us And therefore Now we commit our lives Once again to you And ask that you'd be with us And bless us From this Day on And forevermore Because we ask all these things In Jesus' precious name That his name Might be given the glory Amen Shall we close our worship With our final hymn Number 191 With harps and with vials There stand a great throng Just wondering whether we should Miss verses 3 and 4 You think Sing the whole lot Sing the whole lot then Let's sing all the verses Not too late Number 191 With harps and with vials There stand a great throng In the presence of Jesus And sing this new song Unto him who has loved us And washed us from sin Unto him be the glory Forever Amen Amen All praise For grace was the Savior He pardoned his sight And laid in pilgrimage In great sacred night

Unto him who has loved us And washed us from sin Unto him be the glory forever. Amen.

[74 : 26] He makes of the rebel a priest and a king. He has brought us and taught us this new song to sing.

Unto him who has loved us and washed us from sin. Unto him be the glory forever. Amen.
How helpless and hopeless we sinners have been if he never had loved us till cleansed from our sin.

Unto him who has loved us and washed us from sin. Unto him be the glory forever. Amen.
Aloud in his praises our voices shall ring so that others believing this new song shall sing.

[75 : 42] Unto him who has loved us and washed us from sin. Unto him be the glory forever.
Amen.

Shall we say the grace together? May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore.

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

Amen.. I always feel nervous.

I always feel nervous that I'll forget something. I think it went to our home. That's a significant thing. I won't do that.

[77 : 28] I feel afraid I can die with all going down an inch. See the walls.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[79 : 40] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.