

Luke Chapter 2 v 25 - 38

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[0 : 00] Let's continue to adore and praise our God as we pray together. Let us all pray. Whenever we come into your presence, O Lord our God, we find ourselves unable to do anything else but praise you, to worship you, to adore you.

Whenever we think about the wonder of your love to us, whenever we gaze by faith upon Jesus, our Savior, who lived and died and rose again, who's ascended and seated in glory and power.

Whenever we think of the work of your Holy Spirit and how he gave us sight and life, how he opened our deaf ears and melted our stony hearts.

O Lord, when we think of all that you have done for us, and Lord, we just cannot help but worship and adore and praise you. We cannot help but be stopped in our tracks from the thoughts of the day and the thoughts of the week and be caused to worship and adore.

O Lord, what a great and good and lovely and marvelous Savior you are to us. O what a heavenly Father we have. What a wonderful Redeemer in Jesus.

[1 : 16] O Lord, how we thank you again that as we come this morning, you are here. Yes, you dwell in heaven. Your throne is there. You are the Lord of heaven and earth. You fill the universe and beyond.

And yet how we thank you that you choose to dwell amongst your people. You promise to be with us when we gather in your name. You promise, Lord, to be with us, to bless, to do us good, to help us, to strengthen us, to encourage us.

Yes, Lord, when necessary to correct us, to challenge, to change. We pray, O Lord, that we might be open. That we might be willing, desiring, Lord, to hear your voice and to know your work in our lives.

We long, Lord, that in fact, that we might give you greater glory, greater praise. That we might love you more and in our lives show the very reality that we are disciples of Jesus.

So, Lord, come amongst us. Work and speak. Help us. Lord, grant us again, we pray, to hear your voice and to bring you our praise.

[2 : 25] Again, Lord, we ask these things because we know it is your deep desire to do us good. Help us to be open and to be receptive of the blessing you want to bring.

For we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Good. Let's turn together in our Bibles to the Gospel of Luke.

Luke and chapter 2. We began looking at this Gospel before Christmas. It was helpful as we looked at the first chapter, particularly in the leading up to the coming of Christ.

And then over Christmas as well. And then we're back here in chapter 2. Again, can I thank those who stood in for me last Sunday.

It was good that Graham Heaps was here on holiday. Poor chap. So he got roped in. But thankful to him. I just had a bit of a cold. It wasn't really flu. It wasn't even man flu, really.

[3 : 24] It wasn't like Mike had. I mean, Mike, this bike's been really manly. He's had a really Australian flu. I know some of you have had something pretty bad as well. But thank you to those who stood in. And then Robin in the evening. So we're going to pick up from Luke 2, verse 21.

And read through to verse 40. Luke chapter 2, beginning at verse 21. Where usually we finish the Christmas events, particularly in Luke.

And then 21 through to 40. These early days in the life of Christ. On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus.

The name the angel had given him before he was conceived. When the time came for the purification rites required by the law of Moses, Joseph of Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.

As it is written in the law of the Lord, every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord. And to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the law of the Lord.

[4 : 32] A pair of doves or two young pigeons. Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel.

And the Holy Spirit was on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts.

When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations. A light for revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel.

The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed.

[5 : 48] And a sword will pierce your own soul too. There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel of the tribe of Asher. She was very old.

She had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was 84. She never left the temple, but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying.

Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.

And the child grew and became strong. He was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him. I'll give you your Bible to hand.

Turn back then to that reading in Luke and chapter 2. Luke and chapter 2, verses 21 to 40, as we continue to explore this wonderful gospel, this wonderful record of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[6 : 59] I think probably all of us will have come across the phrase, no pain, no gain. It's sort of become very much a mantra that's entered into the English language.

A mantra for those who do sport or do exercise, whether it's in the gym or on the athletics track or the swimming pool or the cycle race, whatever, no pain, no gain.

It may surprise you to know that it's relatively recent, an invention, first used by Jane Fonda in her 1980s workout videos.

Perhaps you've got some of them gathering dust still in your house. But she was the one who first used that phrase. But no pain, no gain, of course, has sort of really moved and travelled from the arena of just exercise and sport.

It's become to every aspect of life. So if you want to experience any growth, any improvement, whether it be in your education, whether it be in your career, in your relationship, the principle is the same.

[8 : 08] If you want gain, there has to be pain. There has to be cost. There has to be something given to receive that increase.

As a Christian, as Christian believers, then that's something which is true for us as well, for every believer. If we desire to experience the gains of Christ's blessing in our lives, then there will inevitably be a measure of pain.

Jesus laid out that principle plainly in his very famous words when he said, whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves, take up their cross daily and follow me.

There's an element in which he's declaring gain, in other words, following me and being my disciple equals pain, denying yourself, taking up the cross. And when we come to this passage in Luke chapter 2 that I read just a few moments ago, it seems to me that here we have before us several ways in which the coming of Jesus Christ brought great gain.

The birth of Christ has brought us great gain, but also that's matched by pain, by suffering for those who receive him, those who trust him, those who follow him.

[9 : 30] Mary, of course, is the prime example of this truth when she is told by Simeon in verse 35, a sword will pierce your own soul too. Here is a woman who is uniquely called of God, blessed of God, to be the mother of the Messiah, the Christ, and yet for the gain of that privilege, there was great pain to follow, which ultimately would pierce her own soul like a sword.

But she's not the only person to whom that reality applies, and so we're going to look at that together in this event. What's the context? What's happening for us to learn about these things?

Well, we know that Joseph, Mary, and Jesus, we're told on several occasions, are fulfilling the requirements of the Old Testament law. So there in verse 22, when the time came for the purification rites required by the law, and then later on as well, verse 39, Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the law.

The bookends of the events, they are keeping God's word, they're being faithful to what God has commanded, they're fulfilling the law of God. And the very first thing that they did, according to our passage, is verse 21, when Jesus is circumcised.

On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, there's an act of obedience there, they're given the name that the angel had told them he was to have, but they're obedient to God's words.

[11 : 05] They go all the way back to Abraham, the very father of the faith, for God said to Abraham, Genesis 15, the generations to come, every male among you, who is eight days old, must be circumcised.

Well, there's a certain amount of pain involved there, isn't there, for the child, as they are circumcised. But that pain, is a sign of them being part of the covenant people of God, and entering into all the marvellous gains that that meant, to have God as their God, and to share in the blessings of faith.

Now, of course, thankfully, when we move into the New Testament, that sign has been changed to baptism, somewhat less painful for the child, glad to say. Then we move to verse 22, when the time came for the purification rites.

So the family travelled that short distance, from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, wasn't too far, 33 days later. What are they doing? We're not told it's 33 days later, but we know by the law, given in Leviticus chapter 12, that whenever a mother gave birth, she was considered to be unclean.

That means that she was unable to go to the temple, or engage in worship. If she had a son, then it would be 33 days, after the circumcision, if it was, which would be ultimately 40 days in total.

[12 : 32] If it was a daughter, it would be 80 days in total. Only after that time, was she permitted to come to the temple, and there to bring an offering, an offering which would secure her cleansing, her purification, and restore her to that right relationship with God.

And she would have to bring, usually, a lamb as a burnt offering, and a dove or a pigeon as a sin offering. What was that? Why was that necessary?

Why did God command that in his word? Why were they doing that, which was, again, what God commanded? Well, the whole system in the Old Testament, of clean and unclean, of offering and sacrifice, was meant to impress upon the people of God, that it's no easy thing, to be in a right relationship with God.

It's not something trivial, it's not something light, for men and women, to be in relationship with God, because, of course, of our sin. The sin that we have committed, the sin of our hearts and our lives, has separated us from God, cut us off from the blessings, that he wants us to have.

A huge chasm has opened up between us. And therefore, to enjoy that blessing, to enjoy that restoration, there's a price to be paid. There's a pain to be endured.

[13 : 53] It's not easy, it's not straightforward, it's not that we can just simply stroll, into the presence of God as we are. And so, the cost of childbirth, in that sense, was the price of a lamb or a dove.

But you notice there, in verse 24, that Mary and Joseph, presented a pair of doves, or two young pigeons. That was for those, who couldn't afford a lamb. Again, reflects, and shows us, the poverty, in which Mary and Joseph, were in, at that time.

And so, these offerings are brought, there's also to be brought, a payment as well, because every firstborn male, as we're told there, belonged to God. That went back to the time of the Exodus, the Passover.

Remember when God spared, all the firstborn of his people, but all the firstborn of Egypt, were slaughtered. And so, from then on, every firstborn child, was the Lord's.

It had to be, in one sense, purchased, back, to the family. So, there they are, they're in the temple, they're in Jerusalem, they're being faithful, to God's word, they're carrying out, the commands of the Lord, but then, while they're there, they meet with these two, extraordinary people, Simeon, and Anna.

[15 : 08] And both of these people, Simeon and Anna, speak about the gains, and the blessings, that Jesus' birth, would bring into the world. But Simeon also adds, the pain, that Christ's coming, would bring as well.

The cost. It's quite obvious, isn't it, that Simeon and Anna, were not there by chance. It wasn't just an accidental meeting. It's very clear, that this was God appointed.

There in verse 27, we're told, Simeon was moved, by the Spirit. And then later on, Anna, we're told, coming up to them, verse 38, at that very moment, there's a sense of God's hand, upon these two people, moving them, to this place, to meet with, Mary and Joseph, to bless them, to speak to them.

Samuel, we're told, is a man, upon whom the Holy Spirit dwelt. Rarity, at this time. Remember, John the Baptist, was someone who, who received the Holy Spirit, from the womb, but, but, until the coming of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit himself, did not, fill, every person, who believed, and followed the Lord.

Special people, were anointed, and helped by the Holy Spirit. Here's one, Simeon, but it's very clear, that Anna must have been, very much the same, because she's spoken of, as a prophet, in verse 36.

[16 : 32] Two, spiritual people, two godly people, two faithful people. And clearly, what they are going to say, clearly what they're going to present, what they're going to speak, about Jesus, is something, of God's voice, God's word.

They're not just two, as we might put it, dear elderly people, who see a baby. You know what it's like, there's, well perhaps you've done it yourself, even if they're not that old, you see a baby, and you're, oh isn't he lovely, oh he's, you can see he's going to grow up, to be big and strong, he's going to be like his dad, or whatever.

These aren't just the wishful thoughts, of two elderly people, who meet with Mary and Joseph, cooing over a baby. This is God speaking, and revealing, the wonderful, the glorious, the amazing things, that Christ coming into the world, would bring, but also the cost, the pain, for that gain.

Now we do tend to think, of Simeon as being old, we're not told, that he was old, we're just told, that he, had been told, he wouldn't die, until he saw the Messiah. Very probable, that he was, at some age, because he's now happy, to, when he says, let, may you, you may now, dismiss your servant, in other words, you can, you can take my life, you can, let, dismiss me from your service, and, and I can die, a happy man.

But for Simeon, the very cost, of being filled, with the Spirit, the cost of the revelation, that he would see the Messiah, the cost, of being someone, who served God, and spoke for God, was, painful cost, I believe.

[18 : 04] He'd had to wait, for years, and years, to see the Messiah. It had been revealed to him, verse 26, by the Holy Spirit, he would not die, before he'd seen, the Lord's Messiah.

Imagine receiving, that wonderful promise, from God, that you're going to see, the Messiah, but then having to wait, and wait, and no doubt, as a man of God, he was, he hoped, and he prayed, and he waited, every day, perhaps, when he went into the temple, he thought, would this be the day?

No, it wasn't. And that would have gone on, for weeks, and for months, years, possibly even decades, waiting, and longing, for God's promise, to be realized, but still, he had to wait.

The writer of the Proverbs, tells us, hope deferred, makes the heart sick. When you're longing, for something, longing, and longing, and it still doesn't arrive, it makes you sick, it breaks your heart, it is painful.

Simeon, I believe, that the gain, the blessing, the blessing, of being promised, they'd see the Messiah, was matched, by the pain, of having to wait, and wait.

[19 : 18] You can tell, that ultimately, when he does see Christ, there's such a sense, of relief, such a sense, of peace. Sovereign Lord, as you've promised, you may now, dismiss your servant, in peace, for my eyes, have seen, your salvation.

Dear friends, for us Christians, for many of us, waiting on the Lord, can be one of the most painful, experiences, of our hearts. It can be particularly painful, when we are waiting, and praying, to see a loved one, be converted.

And for years, and years, months and months, we've trusted God, and we said, Lord, we believe that you are faithful, believe that you answer prayer, we're trusting you, that you will save this dear one, whether it be a partner, a husband, a wife, a child, a grandchild, a parent, but, those prayers aren't answered.

For others, perhaps it's that long, painful, and very real, painful experience, of going through, times of great illness, or discomfort, longing for, some relief, to that pain, longing for some, some peace to come.

I wouldn't wake up, in agony each morning, that I wouldn't wake up, not just perhaps, with physical pain, but perhaps with, pain of sorrow, the pain of grief, longing for that inner peace, so if only I could wake up, one morning, and then not be, that churning within me, that discontent within me, that sorrow within me.

[20 : 59] All of us, dear friends, are waiting, all of us are hoping, all of us are praying, all of us are longing, and that can be, very painful. At the very least, isn't the greatest longing, of the Christian heart, isn't the greatest longing, that we have, perhaps particularly, as we get older, this, that I might be free, from this body, and be with the Lord, which is better by far.

Have we met, with dear Christians, dear faithful, lovely Christians, Simeon type Christians, who have ultimately, been saying and praying, Lord, just take me home, I don't want to be, I don't want to be, in this world anymore, I don't want to suffer, in this body anymore, I don't want to go, through this heartache anymore, and yet God, in his infinite wisdom, and love, has told us to wait.

Then there's Anna, as well, isn't there, someone who we're told, is a prophet, someone who is privileged, somebody who had, the great blessing, of knowing the Lord, and even this great privilege, now ultimately, of seeing, and meeting the Messiah.

She's a woman, whose devotion to God, included for her, a great deal of pain, that pain of loss, that pain of loneliness, loneliness. You might notice there, that we're told, she was a widow, till she was 84, and there's a little bit of, not confusion, but not certain, as to whether it means, that she'd been a widow, for 84 years, which would make her, into her hundreds, wouldn't it, make her about 110, possibly, at the very least, or whether she was simply 84, and been a widow, only married for seven years, but the reality is, that she was a woman, who was married, and lost her husband, very young, and very early on, and so spent the rest, of her life, in that sense, of loss, and grief.

People say this, don't they, oh it's better, to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all. Really? For those of you, who've loved, and lost, you know that that pain, is extremely, unpleasant.

[22 : 59] Sometimes it's, maybe the feeling, I wish I had never loved, if losing someone, is so painful. Seems that love, and pain, go together, don't they?

The more you love, the more you can be hurt. Maybe that's why, some people will not love, put up a barrier, and a separation. I won't love, I won't give myself, to someone, I won't, because the pain, has been too great, in the past.

But love, and pain, go together. The more we love, the more we will feel pain, which is ultimately, surely why Mary was told, that a sword, would pierce her soul. She loved her son, yet she would have to watch him, suffer and die.

Here's Anna. The immense privilege, of serving the Lord, but the lifelong sorrow, of loss. So we see again, here, there's great gain, these are blessed people, spiritually blessed people, but for them, they endured, and experienced pain.

Dear friends, as Christians, surely that's, the case for each one of us, as well. But what about, what they had to say, about Jesus, these, these believers, they spoke about his coming, and what would happen, and we're given snippets, of that.

[24 : 08] Simeon speaks about, the consolation of Israel, there, in verse 25, that he was waiting for. Later on, he talks about, having seen the salvation, that God has prepared, for the Gentiles.

Anna, we're told, went around, speaking about, those who are looking forward, to the redemption, of Jerusalem. What do all these, phrases mean? Well, they mean, the same thing.

They're, they're different phrases, to mean, really, the same thing. Namely, the coming of the Messiah, the coming of God's, Christ, into the world, the Saviour, who would bring the blessing, of Almighty God, into the lives of those, who were his people.

Think about those phrases, consolation. To be consoled, means to, means to be calmed, to be comforted, to be, given a sense of peace, to speak peace.

And that's what Samuel experienced, didn't he? Now you may dismiss your servant, in peace. There's such a wonderful relief, that fills his soul. There's a, consolation is a supreme sense, of wellness, within.

[25 : 14] So Jesus came to bring us, came to bring us, consolation for our sins, for the sorrow, and the grief, that they bring, came to bring to us, the consolation of God's love, the comfort, the assurance.

And then there's that salvation, my eyes, verse 30, have seen your salvation. We know what that means, to be rescued, but of course, in the context of the Bible, it doesn't mean, just simply being rescued, from physical danger, it means, eternal danger, eternal loss.

The consequences, of our sinful rebellion, against God, our creator, and our rightful king, is that we are lost, and we are in grave, serious, eternal danger.

Unless Christ saves us, then we shall be, forever condemned to hell, we shall be, forever lost, but Christ came to rescue, to save, to lift us, to bring us into, that assurance, of life, and safety, with God in heaven.

And then there's, that phrase, redemption, verse 38, of which Anna speaks, to redeem, is to set at liberty, to pay a price, to secure the freedom, of someone who's in bondage, someone who's been kidnapped, somebody who's, under, the power and control, of an evil force.

[26 : 34] So the world, we're told, is under the very control, of Satan. Men and women, boys and girls, are held captive, by his lies, that sin is good, that naughty is nice, that God, is not worth, bothering with.

But Jesus came, to redeem us, to bring us into, as Paul puts it, the glorious freedom, of the children of God. These are the things, they were talking about.

These are the message, they were sharing, with Mary and Joseph. This is what they were, telling the people, this boy, this child who's born, is bringing into the world, all these things, consolation, salvation, redemption, incredible blessings, and gains, for all people.

And notice, they are for all people. For Simeon says, verse 31, which you've prepared, in the sight of all nations, a light for revelation, to the Gentiles, and the glory, of your people Israel.

In other words, for the Jew, and the Gentile, for the good, and the bad, for whoever we are, whatever our past, whatever our sin, whatever our pain, all people, this Christ has come.

[27 : 42] There's none who say, I do not need Jesus. There's none who can say, it's nothing to do with me. None who can say, God does not have a concern, for my life. The coming of Christ, is for all nations, the Jew, the Gentile.

But for these gains, for these blessings, to be ours, for us to know, God's consoling love, to know his saving power, and his redeeming grace, there has to be, a great pain, to be endured.

A great cost. Great suffering. And that great suffering, of course, is the suffering, of Jesus Christ, himself. It's only hinted at here, isn't it?

We aren't yet seeing, the full understanding, of the cross. That's going to come out, in Luke's gospel, as Jesus becomes, absolutely certain, of going to Jerusalem. But we have hints, at the suffering, of Christ.

Yes, we've already pointed, to the fact, that Mary will have, her soul pierced, with a sword, over the grief, and sorrow, which she must face. But surely, we see as well, the reality of Jesus's, suffering spoken there, as to be a sign, that will be spoken, against.

[28 : 56] The Lord Jesus Christ, this child, is to be a sign, that will be spoken, against. In other words, he will be rejected. He will experience, throughout his life, the rejection, of those he came, to save.

When Peter, stands on the day, of Pentecost, and preaches, to the people there, he tells them, you rejected, the holy, and righteous, one. That rejection, that Jesus endured, through his life, was not the small mindedness, that we often, may face, as Christians, to be shunned, or ignored, or to be patronized, or in some way, no, this is the rejection, of the rightful king.

This is their rejection, of the son of God. This is a rejection, of the Lord, who has come to them. This is the rejection, that ultimately, led to that day, when, as Jesus was presented, to the people, they called for his death.

Luke tells us, later on, that Pilate stood, with Jesus, and said, here's your king. But they shouted, take him away, take him away, crucify him.

A sign, to be spoken against. The death, of the Lord Jesus Christ, the pain, that he endured, both that physical pain, of crucifixion, probably the most, painful, and vile way, to be killed.

[30 : 21] But the spiritual, pain as well, that he bore, as he was punished, for your sins, and mine, as he paid the price, to purchase, to purchase, our forgiveness, to cover the full cost, of the gains, that he generously brings, and gives, to all who receive him.

It was necessary, for there to be gain, that there must be pain. What about us?

What about you and me today? Today, notice that it says, this child is to, cause the falling, and rising, of many, in Israel.

A sign, to be spoken against, so that the thoughts, of many hearts, will be revealed. Jesus came, to cause, the falling, of many. Jesus came, to reveal, the thoughts, of people's hearts.

The birth, of the Lord Jesus Christ, the coming, of the Son of God, this small babe, now, this moment in time, his coming, into the world, is to have, the most dramatic, and powerful effects, upon the lives, of every single person, in history.

[31 : 38] Either he will, cause us to rise, or he will, cause us to fall. Either he will, lift us up, or he will, cast us down.

Either he will, bring us into heaven, or he will, send us into hell. That's the power, that's the effect, that's the consequence, of Christ, coming into this world.

Why is that? Because, people must, react to Jesus, in one of two ways. Just as they did, in his day. Either they will, reject him, speak against him.

They will, not have anything, to do with him, as the consolation, the salvation, and the redemption, of his people. people. They will reveal, the attitude, of their hearts, towards him.

The attitude, of their hearts, towards God. By rejecting, casting aside, and having, nothing to do, with him. For those people, who are too proud, to see their need, of Christ.

[32 : 46] Or too self-absorbed, to worship him. To those people, who are too arrogant, to give him, his place, as the king, of their lives. There can only be, a falling. A terrible falling, an awful falling.

An eternal falling. And yet, there will be those, as well, who he will raise. Those who, when their hearts, are opened, when they see, just that they are sinners, when they see, that they are in need, of forgiveness, will turn to him, and ask for his grace, and ask for his forgiveness, and ask for his salvation.

They will do, as Simeon did. Verse 28, what a lovely picture, Simeon took him, in his arms. They will embrace Christ. Say, Lord, I embrace you.

I receive you. The one who loved me, as God, will embrace him, as the beautiful gift, that he is from God. The promised saviour. The one who takes away, the fear of death, so that Simeon, like all believers, can say, now Lord, take me, dismiss me, I'm at peace.

So the question is this, in life, there will be pain. It's inevitable. It can't be helped. It must happen. But are we willing, to share that pain, which comes with following Christ?

[34 : 22] The pain that Jesus spoke about, and speaks about later on in Luke. Listen to what he has to say. Because the cost of following Jesus is real, and it's great, but it is nothing in comparison, to the gains.

In Luke, in chapter 9, 23, Jesus said to them all, whoever wants to be my disciple, must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow me.

For whoever wants to save their life, will lose it. But whoever loses their life for me, will save it. What good is it for someone, to gain the whole world, and yet lose, their very, soul?

Whoever is ashamed of me, and my words, the Son of Man, will be ashamed of them, when he comes in his glory. You see, there's a cost now, to following Jesus.

The cost, and the pain is this, laying aside our pride, laying aside our self-confidence, laying aside, our living for self, bowing the knee, and acknowledging him, as my rightful king, my savior, my redeemer.

[35 : 35] Taking up that cross, which says, I will do, Lord Jesus, as you command. I will follow you, whatever the cost.

Whatever men may say, whatever rejection I may face, I will follow you, because I know, that you have paid the price, and taken the pain.

For my sin. Let's sing together, our final hymn. It's a hymn of faith. A wonderful hymn, that reminds us again, that it is Christ, who has done everything for us.

In Christ alone, my hope is found. Certainly was the case, for Simeon, and for Anna. Is it true of us, as well this morning? Six hundred and forty-seven.

For we do not lose heart, though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

[36 : 47] For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So fix your eyes, not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is everlasting.

Amen. Amen.