

Joshua Chapter 7

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Date: 25 August 2019

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning. Welcome to all of you, particularly those who are visiting us, and old friends, and you as well. I think I'm trying to look around and see if there's anybody that I don't recognize. No? Great. There's, oh, Peter, good to see you, and your dear lady wife, and that gentleman with you. Is he a friend of yours?

My brother, actually. How come he's got all the good looks? What happened there? You must have had the brains, Peter. He's got the good looks. Welcome. Good to see you.

We're here, of course, to worship and praise our God and to rejoice in his goodness to us, his loving kindness and faithfulness. And the Apostle Paul, when he was writing to Timothy, this is what he had to say about God's goodness to him. I wonder if you can associate with his words.

He is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason, I was shown mercy, so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. When Paul thought of the salvation that he's received, the forgiveness of sins in Jesus, he couldn't help but burst out with this sense of now to the King eternal. A sense of a wonder and amazement. And I hope that for you, dear friends, this morning, that the love of Christ and the forgiveness of your sins is always, every morning, a thing of wonder and joy and delight. And our first hymn expresses something of that wonder. I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene and wonder how he could love me, a sinner unclean. 245, let's stand and sing this wonderful hymn of praise.

Let's continue to adore our God in prayer. Let us pray together.

[2 : 2 9] Father, in heaven, we too find ourselves lost in wonder, love and praise when we consider the greatness of your love to us. It stands in contrast to the greatness of our sin. And the more we recognize and realize, just as Paul did of old, that we are sinners and the worst of sinners, the more your love shines more brightly, the more your grace is exalted, the more we are astonished at the love that you've shown to us. For, Lord, we don't deserve it.

In fact, the truth is, we deserve your anger and your punishment. We deserve to be cut off from you, separated from you. We deserve, O Lord, to never, ever come near to you. But, O Lord, we thank you that you have not treated us as our sins deserve.

You have not dealt with us according to our iniquities. But, Lord, you have, in your wonderful grace, not only forgiven our sins, but you've given us the privilege and the joy of being children of God. Children, O Lord, born of your spirit.

Children adopted into your family. Children who can approach you, the almighty and awesome God, and call you Abba. Father, in that sense, O Lord, even Daddy, you are the one who is so dear to us. More dear, more precious, more loving than any earthly father could be. And we come again this morning. We come again recognizing that for us to enjoy the delight of your fatherhood, your care and your grace, a great price to be paid. It's nothing that we could ever do to deserve or earn. But, Lord, something that you did for us in your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, when you gave him for us, the most precious, the most delightful, the most pure, most wonderful person in all of the universe.

You gave your Son for us, that through his life and death and resurrection, through his ascension now to your right hand, our salvation is secure and certain, everlasting and unchanging. We thank you for sending your spirit into our hearts when we were dead, so that we might receive that gift of life, so that we might see what once was blind to us, the love and grace of God in Jesus. O Lord, we still see dimly. We still, Lord, have blurry vision at times, doubting your promises, doubting your goodness, fearful of the future.

[5 : 13] Lord, open our eyes even more this morning, we pray, to see more of you and, O Lord, to know you and love you more. Lord, we thank you and bless you for this time together. We seek your blessing, your help, and we pray that in everything, more of the glory of Jesus may be revealed to us, in us, and through us, we pray, for we ask it all in his name. Amen.

Amen. Good. There is tea and coffee, by the way, downstairs after the service, if you'd like to stay and have further fellowship. And if you want to make, there is going to be a Sunday school and a creche, if you want to make use of that or not, then just, I'll signal when to go in a little while. But first of all, we're going to turn together in our Bibles to Joshua and chapter 7. This is the passage that Nathan, who's going to be preaching this morning, has asked me to read. So Joshua and chapter 7, if you have one of the red church Bibles, it's page 221. Page 221. And we're going to read the whole chapter. Just to give you the setting. Jericho, the very famous city of Jericho, has been destroyed. And one of the things that God said was that all the articles of gold and silver, anything that they had that was precious was to be given to the Lord, not to be taken away, but given to the Lord. So not everybody did that, as we're about to find out. So chapter 7, verse 1. But the Israelites were unfaithful in regard to the devoted things. That's their gold and silver, as I mentioned. Achan, son of Carmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of them. So the Lord's anger burned against Israel. Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-Avon, to the east of Bethel, and told them, go up and spy out the region. So the men went up and spied out

Ai. When they returned to Joshua, they said, not all the army will have to go up against Ai. Send two or three thousand men to take it. Do not weary the whole army, for only a few people live there. So about three thousand went up. But they were routed by the men of Ai, who killed about thirty-six of them. They chased the Israelites from the city gate as far as the stone quarries, and struck them down on the slopes. At this, the hearts of the people melted in fear and became like water. Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell face down to the ground before the ark of the Lord, remaining there till evening. The elders of Israel did the same and sprinkled dust on their heads. And Joshua said, alas, sovereign Lord, why did you ever bring this people across the Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? If only we had been content to stay on the other side of the Jordan. Pardon your servant, Lord. What can I say now that Israel has been routed by its enemies? The Canaanites and the other people of the country will hear about this. They will surround us and wipe out our name from the earth. What then will you do for your own great name? The Lord said to Joshua, stand up. What are you doing down on your face? Israel has sinned.

They have violated my covenant, which I commanded them to keep. They have taken some of the devoted things. They have stolen. They have lied. They have put them with their own possessions. That is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies. They turn their backs and run because they have been made liable to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy whatever among you is devoted to destruction. Go, consecrate the people. Tell them, consecrate yourselves in preparation for tomorrow, for this is what the Lord, the God of Israel says. There are devoted things among you, Israel.

You cannot stand against your enemies until you remove them. In the morning, present yourselves tribe by tribe. The tribe that the Lord chooses shall come forward clan by clan. The clan that the Lord chooses shall come forward family by family. And the family that the Lord chooses shall come forward man by man. Whoever is caught with the devoted things shall be destroyed by fire, along with all that belongs to him. He has violated the covenant of the Lord and has done an outrageous thing in Israel.

[10 : 12] Early the next morning, Joshua made Israel come forward by tribes and Judah was chosen. The clans of Judah came forward and the Zerahites were chosen. He made the clan of the Zerahites come forward by families and Zimri was chosen. Joshua made his family come forward man by man and Achan, son of Carmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah of the tribe of Judah, was chosen. Then Joshua said to Achan, my son, give glory to the Lord, the God of Israel and honor him. Tell me what you have done. Do not hide it from me.

Achan replied, it is true. I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel. This is what I've done. When I saw in the plunder a beautiful robe from Babylonia, 200 shekels of silver and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels, I coveted them and took them. They are hidden in the ground inside my tent with the silver underneath. So Joshua sent messengers and they ran to the tent and there it was, hidden in his tent with the silver underneath. They took the things from the tent, brought them to Joshua and all the Israelites and spread them out before the Lord. Then Joshua together with all the Israelites took Achan, son of Zerah, the silver, the robe, the gold bar, his sons and daughters, his cattle, donkeys and sheep, his tent and all that he had to the valley of Achor. Joshua said, why have you brought this trouble on us?

The Lord will bring trouble on you today. Then all Israel stoned him and after they'd stoned the rest, they burned them. Over Achan they heaped up a large pile of rocks which remains this day.

The Lord turned from his fierce anger. Therefore that place has been called the valley of Achor ever since. What a tragic passage but we're sure that it has much to speak to us about the Lord our God.

Now if anybody would like to make use of the crash or children like to go down to Sunday school, they'd like to do that now please. Thank you.

[12 : 20] Oh, Jesus.

Oh, Jesus. Oh, Jesus. Mighty Christ on time is earth, Mighty him and nature takes, Mighty heaven on God redire, Mighty death is selfly grace.

See his might in thy eyes, In of death and earth I rise.

Praise Christ Jesus in his mercy, Praise as God that man is he, Great his happiness and beauty, White and ruddy, let us see.

Break the sight, soaring light, Throats in your own heaven's sight.

[14 : 05] Good morning. It is a privilege to be able to come to greet you in the name of Jesus and to share with you in worship this morning.

My name is Nathan Wallace, I'm from Northern Ireland, I'm based in Oxford at the minute as I study there. And also this week we're part of the Christian Answer team that's doing some work out around the town.

And one of the things that keeps coming up as we're out sharing the gospel with people, they'll always have an objection as to why they're not a Christian, they'll have a reason. People need to have a reason for why they don't believe in God and they'll give a reason.

And one of the ones that keeps coming up is something like this. In Christianity there's so much bloodshed. In Christianity you have the crusades that have come from the Christian faith.

You have all these things that they believe have been evil and wicked that have come from the faith we profess. And they look at a passage, if they knew a passage like this, they would look at it and they would say, here we have God commanding the stoning and the burning of a family which breaks his law.

[15 : 23] And they would think, what? And that's the God you worship? And to which we as Christians reply, yes and amen, because he is holy, holy, holy.

This morning we're going to go through this passage verse by verse and we're going to think about what it tells us about God and who he is and what it teaches us about ourselves and how we're to live for him in covenant now as his people in the church.

Let's take a look at Joshua chapter 7 verse 1. But the Israelites were unfaithful in regard to the devoted things.

Achan, son of Carmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah of the tribe of Judah took some of them so the Lord's anger burned against Israel. The context of this passage, as has already been stated, is that the people of Israel have enjoyed great victory.

God has brought them out of Egypt. He dried up and parted the Red Sea so that they could walk through it. They enjoyed victory in their conquests under Moses. And now Joshua has taken leadership and they have even taken Jericho.

[16 : 30] And now they come to this point and the Israelites are unfaithful because they have stolen some of the devoted things. The things from a foreign nation which they were not to take because God did not will for them to become seduced by gold and silver and robes and things like that.

They were to devote them to him to give them back. But they take them, they steal them. And the Lord's anger burned against Israel. But it's not just they, it's him.

It's Achan. And he's so specifically named. It's Achan, son of Cormi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah.

And if there's one thing we can learn from this passage now, it's that how you live as a Christian really matters. It really matters.

Because individual sin can have corporate consequences. One man sins and the Lord's anger burns against the nation of Israel. Individual sin can have corporate consequences.

[17 : 41] How much more if one member of the body of Christ contracts leprosy? One man's sin can have corporate consequences.

The amount of people we have spoken to on the street. And they will say they're not a Christian and they'll say something about how they were hurt by the church at some point earlier in their lives. And sometimes, actually, the hurt they experienced was real and it was from a Christian who genuinely sinned.

One man's sin can have corporate consequences. So these devoted things, a Babylonian robe, some silver and some gold that Achan stole, they were equivalent to a lifetime's earnings for a person in those days.

And he took them when he saw them. He wanted them. He took them and he buried them in the ground under his tent, which was an extreme act of sin. Theft and deception.

Breaking God's law and trying to hide that he had done it. And what's worse, he thought he could get away with it. He thought no one knew.

[18 : 49] But here's the thing. God knows everything. God knows every moment that comes to pass. And because of this one man's sin, which he saw and he knew, though I can believe no one else did, the Lord's anger burned against the whole nation.

And this is very sobering for us. Because when we come to church, we might think that because people don't know our sins, if we're living unrepentant lives secretly, we can get away with it and there'll be no consequences.

But God knows. And one person's sin can have corporate consequences. We might come to church and we might think, well, only the minister's holiness matters because he's the one getting up to preach.

Or only the elder's holiness matters because they're the ones leading the church, only the deacons. No, if you are here and you profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and you're a member of the covenant community, your sin can impact this fellowship so severely.

Do you ever think, do you ever think that how you live privately impacts the person in the pew next to you, the row next to you in front of you, behind you? Do you ever think in those terms?

[20 : 06] Because it can and it does. Do you come to church knowing that you yourself are saturated in the word, yourself are spending time in prayer so that if the person next to you asks for prayer, you can encourage them, you can help them, you are a holy and faithful child of God yourself with something to give and contribute to them in their Christian life?

Every one of us here contributes to what this church is. We are the church. And one person's sin can have corporate consequences.

A can sinned and the whole nation suffered. But it wasn't just a can. Because something else was going wrong as well. If we read chapter 7, verses 2 and 3, here's what it says.

Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-Avon, to the east of Bethel, and told them, go up and spy out the region. So the men went up and spied out Ai.

When they returned to Joshua, they said, not all the army will have to go up against Ai. Send two or three thousand men to take it. And do not weary the whole army, for only a few people live there.

[21 : 19] Pride has entered the camp. Joshua sends out the spies, and they come back with a message of self-reliance. This will be easy.

This will be a piece of cake. We only need two or three thousand men. Don't weary the whole army. This is no problem. Compare that with what the spies said when they came back in Joshua chapter 2, verses 24.

They came back and they said, surely the Lord has given the whole land into our hands. And this is one of the things that we see in this failure, the people of Israel.

Consistently throughout the book of Joshua, when they are faithful, when they are in covenant faithfulness with their God, they enjoy victory over their enemies.

But the moment they depart from him and they break covenant, they suffer. Here we are, straight after the victory at Jericho. They are no longer relying on the promises of God for success in their mission.

[22 : 20] They're relying on their own strength. They're puffed up. They're proud. They go without God's instruction. Calvin has a great quote where he says, men are more in danger from prosperity than from adversity.

For when matters go smoothly, they flatter themselves and are intoxicated by their successes. And we no longer pray. And we no longer fast.

And we no longer seek God's help for what we're doing. Let me ask you, as a church, in your mission, how do you do it?

How reliant are you on God's help? And then let me ask you specifically as an individual, do you attend the church's prayer meeting?

Are you there? Are you praying? Are you seeking for God to come down and work in this church that it might be a beacon of light to the town of Whitby where you have people coming, as we have already seen, from all over the world?

[23 : 21] Imagine the opportunities there are for the gospel here. Imagine what God could and will do. But are you praying for it? Are you gathering together as the people of God?

If not, why not? Here's what happened when the Israelites went out on mission self-reliantly. We read it in chapter 7, verses 4 and 5.

So about 3,000 went up, but they were routed by the men of Ai, who killed about 36 of them. They chased the Israelites from the city gate as far as the stone quarries and struck them down on the slopes.

At this, the hearts of the people melted in fear and became like water. They suffer extreme loss in battle and they lose their reputation. So what happens?

The Israelites go up self-reliantly without any explicit direction to launch this attack. They come back and their hearts are melted in fear. And that's a very deliberate choice of words.

[24 : 20] Because this is exactly how the Canaanites are described in chapters 2, verse 11, and chapter 5, verse 1. In chapter 2, verse 11, Rahab told the spies that when her people had heard that the Lord had dried up the Red Sea for them to leave Egypt and that they had killed two Amorite kings on their way there, the Canaanites' heart, quote, melted in fear.

And everyone's courage failed. Why? For the Lord your God is in heaven, in heaven above, and on earth below. So there was a recognition these were the people of God, the Lord was their strength, and they were to be feared.

And then in chapter 5, verse 1, when all the Amorite kings west of the Jordan and all the Canaanite kings along the west coast heard how the Lord had dried up the Jordan before the Israelites until they had crossed over, their hearts melted in fear.

Again, the Israelites are in covenant faithfulness, and the hearts of their enemies melt in fear like water. Now, the Israelites break covenant faithfulness.

Indeed, one man, and they themselves become self-reliant. They break covenant faithfulness, no longer trusting in the promises of God, go out on mission, and they come back, their hearts melted in fear.

[25 : 38] When God's people rely on him, they are able to do the work. When they go on their own, we simply can't.

We simply can't. Jesus Christ said, I am the true vine. If you abide in me, you can do these things, but if you do not abide in me, you cannot. We must abide in the vine.

Because if God's people wander and disobey, God will discipline them. And with God, there is no favoritism, and he cannot be mocked.

So if we, this morning, know in our hearts of a sin that we have tried to bury, and we think no one knows about it, we can be sure, God does.

He cannot be mocked, and with him there is no favoritism. And we should not be surprised if, as we're told in Hebrews 13, God disciplines those whom he loves.

[26 : 38] This morning, if you are wandering, you are a Christian, but you know you have broken covenant faithfulness, disobeying the one who has saved you, repent, and throw yourself on the mercy of Jesus Christ, who died for you on the cross.

We come now then to Joshua's prayer, in Joshua chapter 7, verses 6 to 9. And we read then how Joshua responds.

He is one of God's people. He knows the Lord, and he sees this failure. And here's what we read. Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell face down to the ground before the ark of the Lord, remaining there till evening.

The elders of Israel did the same and sprinkled dust on their heads. And Joshua said, Alas, sovereign Lord, why did you ever bring this people across the Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us?

If only we had been content to stay on the other side of the Jordan. And then here comes a turn. Pardon your servant, Lord. What can I say now that Israel has been routed by its enemies?

[27 : 54] The Canaanites and the other people of the country will hear about this, and they will surround us and wipe out our name from the earth. What then will you do for your own great name?

Joshua's prayer is unfortunately familiar to all of us who are Christians and have been walking with the Lord for a number of years.

Because we've all been at that point where we say to God, why have you done this? And actually Joshua goes further because he actually says it would have been easier if we'd never obeyed.

He actually says it would have been easier if we'd never crossed the Jordan. You brought us across the Jordan. You brought us into this failure. Why have you done this to us? If only we'd been content to stay on the other side of the Jordan.

And this is the rising of the conceit in his own heart. And then we read in verse 8 a turning point when a moment of grace comes and in the four words the entire heart of the prayer changes.

[29 : 02] Pardon your servant, Lord Joshua says. After recognising the bubbling pride in his own heart, he asks for forgiveness.

He asks to be pardoned. He lowers himself. He remembers his status as a servant and he acknowledges that God is the Lord, the one who is king, creator, and ruler of all and indeed decides the fate of the Israelites in battle.

And so then here's what comes after the turning point of repentance in Joshua's prayer. What can I say now that Israel has been routed by its enemies? The Canaanites and the other people of the country will hear about this and they will surround us and wipe out our name from the earth.

What then will you do for your own great name? He begins now to be concerned with God's glory. He begins now to be concerned with the fame and honour of God's great name.

And he begins now to become concerned with what witness it will be if the people of God are wiped out by the Canaanites and his heart completely changes. He knows that they are the nation of Israel, the people of God, a prophetic witness to the world and he recognises that they have done wrong.

[30 : 21] And this is how Christians are to pray. I remember where I first learned to pray like this. I was a young Christian. I was 16 years of age. I was going out on mission in Monaghan Town Centre in Ireland.

And I remember being in a prayer meeting. There were only four or five of us and there was a Presbyterian elder there and he was praying, Lord, in your word you promise that if we confess our sins, you're faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

And as I heard this man, I was a young Christian of only a few months, this man who had been walking with the Lord for years, pray the promises of God back to him. That was when it clicked with me that this is how we're to pray to our God.

We're to pray his promises back to him. And you know this if you're a parent. What's more persuasive? When your child comes to you and says, give me a new bike? Or when your child comes to you and says, mum, dad, you promised me a new bike for Christmas?

Yeah, when that comes then you have to do it. You've promised it. It's very different. And when we pray as God's children, if we pray his promises, he has given us his word that he will answer them.

[31 : 35] He will. We pray for forgiveness knowing he's promised it in Christ. So, in Joshua chapter 7 verses 10 to 12, here's what happens next. The Lord said to Joshua, stand up.

What are you doing down on your face? Israel has sinned. They have violated my covenant which I commanded them to keep. They have taken some of the devoted things. They have stolen.

They have lied. They have put them with their own possessions. That is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies. They turn their backs and run because they have been made liable to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy whatever among you is devoted to destruction.

God outlines his covenant relationship with Israel. If you are obedient, there is blessing. If you are disobedient, there is cursing. There is abandonment.

But the people of Israel repent. The people of God repent because they tremble at the threatenings of God's covenant curses. The warning of those covenant curses make the people of God tremble and so they repent before them and that is why Joshua does what he does next.

[32 : 47] God tells him go consecrate the people tell them consecrate yourselves in preparation for tomorrow for this is what the Lord the God of Israel says there are devoted things among you Israel you cannot stand against your enemies until you remove them.

Sin has spiritual consequences the nation suffers the spiritual consequences they will not be able to stand against their enemies until they have repented and cleansed themselves as a nation and so here is what they are to do we are told in verse 14 in the morning present yourselves tribe by tribe the tribe the Lord chooses shall come forward clan by clan the clan the Lord chooses shall come forward family by family and the family the Lord chooses shall come forward man by man whoever is caught with the devoted things shall be destroyed by fire along with all that belongs to him he has violated the covenant of the Lord and has done an outrageous thing in Israel that's what they are to do destroy the devoted things purify themselves and then it's so stark when we are told that a tribe will be called and then a clan and then a family and then a man and it goes down to the individual who will be brought forward it would almost be like saying it will be this side of the church and then we are going to go down the rows and then we are going to pick the row and go down the seats that's what it would have been like except it would have been before an entire nation and this man would have been brought out to the front and he would have had to say that he was greedy and he stole and he lied and it was too late and that man according to verse 15 is to be destroyed by fire along with all that belongs to him and so we read what happens in verses 16 to 18 early the next morning

Joshua had Israel come forward by tribes and Judah was chosen the clans of Judah came forward and the Zerahites were chosen he had the clan of Zerahites come forward by families and Zimri was chosen Joshua had his family come forward man by man and Achan son of Carmi the son of Zimri the son of Zerah of the tribe of Judah was chosen I wonder what Achan thought as he lay in bed that night because the people were told go and consecrate yourselves there was a night make yourself pure make yourself holy before you come and stand before the Lord the command went out the offer of grace went out and Achan said no he went and lay in his bed in his tent knowing that the treasure the devoted things lay beneath he lay in his sin after being given the chance to consecrate himself and so the

Israelites come forward and he is chosen and what has he got to say in the end verses 19 to 21 then Joshua said to Achan my son give glory to the Lord the God of Israel and honour him tell me what you have done and do not hide it from me Achan replied it is true I have sinned against the Lord the God of Israel this is what I have done when I saw in the plunder a beautiful robe from Babylonia 200 shekels of silver and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels I coveted them and took them they are hidden in the ground inside my tent with the silver underneath Joshua begs Achan to glorify and honour God and Achan confesses but it's too late because the judgment has come and so what happens in 22 and 23

Joshua sent the messengers and they ran to the tent and there it was hidden in his tent with the silver underneath they took the things from the tent brought them to Joshua and all the Israelites and spread them out before the Lord sure enough it's all there the sin the proof of his guilt are beneath his tent and the proof of his guilt is laying before the Lord and the people of God then Joshua together with all Israel took Achan son of Zerah the silver the robe gold bar his sons and daughters his cattle donkeys and sheep his tent and all that he had to the valley of Hachor Joshua said why have you brought this trouble on us the Lord will bring trouble on you today then all Israel stoned him and after they had stoned the rest they burned them over a can they heaped up a large pile of rocks which remains to this day then the

[38 : 02] Lord turned from his fierce anger therefore that place has been called the valley of Hachor ever since in the end a can brings everything with him to the last judgment the gold silver cattle donkeys sheep his family the things which he has been given to steward the grace which he has received she is accountable for in the end he is condemned with it all and after spending his life acquiring it was ultimately the sin of greed which brought him to this point it's all reduced to rubble with him and what makes this even more horrifying for us today is that all of us if we're honest with ourselves are a can in the story all of us if we're honest with ourselves know we deserve the punishment the punishment of death the punishment of the destruction of all that we've done and indeed fire in eternity after death we have lived lives of sin we have made countless mistakes and caused so much hurt and we're now filled with regret for the things we have done wrong and there are only two types of people here this morning there are only those who know they are forgiven or those who know they are awaiting judgment there are those who know that the day of judgment is coming and they're ready for it because they have consecrated themselves the call has gone out to consecrate ourselves and Christians have heard it and placed their trust in Christ and been cleaned in him but there are others perhaps even some here today who have heard the call maybe even heard the call over weeks perhaps years of attending this church to purify yourself by placing your trust in Jesus

Christ and you have not done it and the judgment is coming the Bible warns about this coming judgment when all that we have done and all in our lives will be held up before the holy light of God's law and all mouths will be stopped and all of us will be silenced and the only hope any of us will have is that we are in Christ what will your defence be on that last day if you are a Christian then you know you have put your trust in the one who didn't feel the stones fall on his shoulders but who hung on a cross and there felt the weight of God's wrath against sin fall on his soul the wrath of almighty God fell on the Lord Jesus Christ that we might be forgiven if you are a Christian that is the heartbeat of your soul that is your greatest joy and that is your hope for eternity if you are not a

Christian if you are not a Christian and you hear those words you hear of that promise what do you want to do with it will you repent will you believe or will you harden your heart keep the sin tucked away and hidden under the tent until the last day when it's all revealed by fire this morning the call has gone out consecrate yourself before a holy God give yourself over to him completely and be washed in the blood of Jesus Christ by repenting of your sins and having faith in him as we close there are three things to remember how you live as a Christian as part of this church it really matters you are responsible to the person in the pew sitting beside you for how you live your

Christian life secondly self-reliance has the power to completely weaken undermine your church's mission and show that you're not self-reliant by relying on God in prayer by attending your weekly prayer meeting and then third we go on mission as a team and indeed this church and its mission its purpose of mission exists because of this reality we go on mission because judgment is coming and we know that in our families amongst our friends and the people we walk past on the street they are like a can but they may not have heard that call yet and we need to bring it to them to repent and believe in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins let's pray father in heaven we thank you for your great kindness to us as your people that you sent your son the lord jesus christ to live the life that we could not live in flawless obedience to your law to go then and hang on a cross and suffer the weight of our sin in dying the death and taking the punishment that we deserve and father that truth of the gospel brings us to our knees and leaves us in humility and father we pray that that is where we would stay we pray that we would not be like joshua and the israelites who in this moment in this chapter became proud became self-reliant and believed they could go and conquer ai on their own strength departing from your promises departing from your strength breaking your covenant father grant us the grace we need to be faithful covenant keepers people who keep the covenant of obedience and faith and submission to the lordship of christ and father thank you that that call has gone out the call to consecrate ourselves the call to be made holy in the lord jesus thank you that we have responded to it those of us who are christians thank you that we know the joy of sins forgiven thank you that we know what it is to have clean consciences and father give us the strength we need to honour you now as we go out to share that with others for we ask it in jesus name amen amen christ the lord my hope is found he is the light my strength my song his core as stone his solid ground firm through the pit there's ground and stone what heights of love what depths of peace when fears are still when striding seas my love for death my holy lord here above Christ shall Gracie recent

Amen. Amen.

[46 : 52] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit go with us all evermore. Amen.