

You've Been Framed!

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[0 : 00] Well, if we could, this morning with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling, if we could turn back to that portion of Scripture that we read in the book of Genesis, Genesis chapter 44. Genesis 44, and we're going to look at the whole chapter, but if we just read again from the beginning. Genesis 44 from the beginning.

Then Joseph commanded the steward of his house, fill the men's sacks with food as much as they can carry, and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack, and put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, with his money for the grain. And he did as Joseph told him. As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away with their donkeys, and so on. Do you know, I'm sure that we've all heard of the TV program, You've Been Framed.

You've all heard of that program. It's been on our TV screens for the past 30 years. And if you've watched, You've Been Framed, you'll know that it's all about people and pets who get caught on camera. And they're caught on camera doing silly or stupid things. They're either slipping or sliding or skidding behind, in front of the camera screen. And most of it, when you watch it, it looks actually quite painful, and not something that you would ever want caught on camera. You know, our boys, they love watching You've Been Framed. But when they were younger, they didn't know what it was called. They wanted to watch this program, but they didn't know what it was called. They didn't know that it was called You've Been Framed. So they called it the joke movie. And they wanted to watch the joke movie all the time, because it made them laugh so much. And they loved watching the joke movie. And they loved seeing all these people and all these pets being caught on camera doing silly or stupid things. They thought it was hilarious. And they still think it's hilarious. Maybe some of the young folk have watched You've Been Framed as well.

But you know, as we come to Genesis 44, in a sense, we could say the same about Joseph's brothers. You've been framed. You've been framed. But for Joseph's brothers, this wasn't a joke movie.

[2 : 17] And it wasn't that they were caught on camera doing silly or stupid things in Egypt. Rather, it could be said about Joseph's brothers, you've been framed by your brother Joseph. You've been framed because Joseph has planted evidence. He's provided a false testimony against you. You've been framed.

And this is not a joke movie. You've been framed. And you're caught. And you know, this morning, I'd just like us to consider this chapter under three simple headings. Three very simple headings. Investigation, interrogation, and intercession. Investigation, interrogation, and intercession. So first of all, investigation. Investigation. We'll read again at verse 1.

Then Joseph commanded the steward of his house, fill the men's sacks with food as much as they can carry, and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack, and put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, with his money for the grain. And he did as Joseph told him. As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away with their donkeys. They had gone only a short distance from the city.

Now Joseph said to his steward, Up, follow after the men, and when you overtake them, say to them, Why have you repaid evil for good? Why have you repaid evil for good?

[3 : 46] Now throughout our study in the life of Joseph, we've repeatedly seen and we've repeatedly said that Joseph, he is not actually the main character in the story. Because the Lord is the main character in the story. The Lord is the author of the story. He's the director in the drama. He has written the storyline. And as we've gone through the life of Joseph, we see that Joseph, he might not have understood the storyline. He might not have understood why things were happening. He might not have foreseen all the twists and the turns that were written into the narrative. But the Lord did.

And the Lord knew what he was doing in the lives of Joseph and also Joseph's family. Because the Lord was interested in this family. And the Lord was with this family. And the Lord was at work in this family. And as we've seen and as we've said many times before, the story of this family, it's a humbling reminder to us that whatever is going on in your family today, you have the assurance that the Lord is with you and the Lord is at work in you. My friend, whatever is going on in your life today, there's a reason for it. There's a reason for it. You might not see it or know it or understand why, maybe not until we even leave this world. But the Lord knows. And even though you may not think it or feel it or even be aware of it, the Lord is with you. And the Lord is at work in you. Which means that whatever you're going through today, your comfort and your assurance is that the Lord knows it. And the

Lord sees it. And the Lord understands it. And the Lord is present with you in it. Because every chapter in the story of your life, believe it or not, it has been written by the Lord. Every verse in the story of your life has been appointed by the Lord. He's the author of the story. He's the director in the drama. He has written the storyline of your life. And he's the one who turns the pages in the story.

And the thing is, there's nothing wasted with the Lord. And you know that. There's nothing left wanting. Therefore, your life experiences, they aren't by chance or at random. No, they're all according to the Lord's supreme and sovereign providence. It's all by His grace for your good and to His glory. And even though you may not understand it, the Lord uses all the tests, all the trials, all the temptations, all the transitions in your life so that you'll run to Jesus and rest in Him alone. And so we see the Lord was working in the life of this family. And He was working in their life through famine. Because there was now a severe famine in the land. The people were starving. As we know, there were families struggling. Homes were stressed. But even though there was no food, as we've seen in this story, Pharaoh's dreams were being fulfilled. Because when Joseph was brought from rags to riches, from the pit of prison to the palace in Egypt, he was brought from being a prisoner all the way to being a prime minister in Egypt. And you remember how Joseph, he interpreted Pharaoh's dreams, that there would be seven years of fullness followed by seven years of famine. And during those seven years of fullness, there was great blessing in the land of Egypt.

[7 : 20] There was this wholesome harvest each year in which the earth produced abundantly. And then we saw that Joseph, he put a 20% tax on all the people, where one-fifth of the grain was stored up in all the cities. But it wasn't just Pharaoh's dreams that were fulfilled. Joseph's dreams were also being fulfilled. After 20 years of waiting upon God's perfect plan, purpose, and promise, Joseph's dreams were starting to be fulfilled. Because 10 of his brothers, you remember how 10 of his brothers, they ended up on his doorstep looking for food during the famine. They had traveled this 500-mile journey from the promised land of Egypt, promised land of Canaan, all the way to Egypt. And they came because their hope and salvation, they knew that their hope and salvation would be found in the savior of the ancient world, who was Joseph. But when they were confronted with Joseph, they didn't recognize him.

Joseph recognized them. But they didn't recognize Joseph. Because Joseph, he was well-dressed. He was clean-shaven. He had a new name. He spoke another language. He was prime minister now. He was no longer a slave. And he had all these servants who were waiting at his every beck and call. But in order to preserve his integrity and order to protect his identity, we see that Joseph, he kept his brothers at a distance. He dealt with his brothers from a distance. And yet when they came looking for salvation, we saw that Joseph was very gracious with them. Joseph was very gracious with his brothers.

They had sinned against him. They had seized him, separated him, sold him as a slave into Egypt. And yet Joseph was gracious with them. Joseph graciously gave his brothers what they didn't deserve. They didn't deserve anything from him. And he was gracious with them. Joseph, as we've said many times before, he was a type of Christ. Just like Jesus is gracious with us. Because, well, we've sinned against God. We've broken his law. We've ignored his word. And yet he gives to us what we don't deserve. And it's something we should never lose sight of. We should never lose sight of how gracious Jesus is with us. That he fully and freely offers us salvation through the cross of Calvary.

He offers us forgiveness and freedom when we come to him, confessing our sin and our need of a Savior. It doesn't matter how awful we feel about ourselves. We need to keep coming to him. We

need to keep confessing our sin. We need to keep realizing that we have a wonderful Savior in Jesus Christ.

You know, as we saw last time, when Joseph met his brother Benjamin, after 20 years of separation from him, he said to his brothers, come dine with me. I remember how they all came and they had this great dinner in Joseph's house. And it was at the dinner that Joseph's compassion, we're told. It grew warm towards his brothers. He hadn't seen his brothers in 20 years. And Joseph then began to struggle with this charade of keeping his brothers at a distance. And as it literally says in the original language, his love for his brothers began to bubble in his bowels. His love for his brothers began to bubble in his bowels. Joseph's emotions, they were being stirred by this long-lost family that he hadn't seen for over 20 years. And his emotions, they're building and building all the time. They're bubbling away to the point that we keep seeing Joseph leaving the room to calm down and compose himself.

[11:16] And reading it, you're almost saying, Joseph, why didn't you just say something to them? Why didn't you just tell them who you are? Why didn't you just explain the whole situation that you were in prison? But now you're the prime minister and how God has been so good to you. But he doesn't say anything. And as we'll see, this emotional tension, it keeps building and building and bubbling and bubbling until we come to chapter 45. And God willing, we'll look at that next week. So you have to come back next week to make sure and to see what happens in chapter 45. Because we see that Joseph, he can't keep it in any longer. And then he has to spill the beans as it were. He has to tell them what's happened. But even though Joseph, we see that he has this care and compassion for his brothers, he's been very gracious with them. He also has a concern. He's very cautious to make sure that his brothers have changed. Because the thing is, Joseph doesn't want to get hurt again.

Joseph, when you read the passage, he's very human. He doesn't want to open himself up to be let down again by his brothers. It's a very natural response for someone who has been hurt in the past, severely hurt by his own family. He doesn't want to open himself up. And that's why in the last verse of chapter 43, Joseph orders Benjamin's portion to be five times bigger than his brothers. Joseph, he showed favoritism to the youngest brother, Benjamin, just like he had been shown favoritism by his father when he received the coat of many colors. But it was all to test how his brothers would react towards Benjamin. Would they treat him? Would they treat Benjamin like they treated Joseph?

Or had they changed? Had something changed in their life? And by what we saw in chapter 43, it seems that Joseph's brothers had changed. But when we come to this chapter, Joseph wants to make sure.

He wants to make sure that his brothers have changed. He wants to test his brothers. He wants to test these 10 men who sold him into Egypt as a slave. And so while they're all enjoying dinner at Joseph's home, Joseph quietly, he calls his steward, who was his chief of staff. You could say it's the same position that Dominic Cummings used to have when he worked alongside Boris Johnson, the chief of staff.

And as prime minister, Joseph, he orders his chief of staff to put all their money, the money of his brothers, back into their sacks for the second time, but also to put Joseph's silver cup into whose sack was it? Do you remember? Benjamin's sack. Told him to put it into Benjamin's sack. And we read that the following morning, Joseph's brothers, they set off towards the land of Canaan. They set off back home.

[14:22] But they're not long left when Joseph, he commands his guards and his chief of staff to go after them in order to search their sacks. And as you read this, you're not saying with Joseph's brothers, you've been framed. You're caught out. He's catching you. This is not a joke movie. You have been framed.

Joseph has something he's going to do to you. And what we see as we go through the narrative is that the investigation, it leads to an interrogation. The investigation leads to an interrogation. That's what we see secondly, an interrogation. So investigation and interrogation. So look at verse 4. They had gone only a short distance from the city. Now Joseph said to his steward, up, follow after the men. And when you overtake them, say to them, why have you repaid evil for good? Is it not from this that my Lord drinks and by this that he practices divination? You have done evil in doing this. When he overtook them, he spoke to them these words. They said to him, why does my Lord speak such words as these? Far be it from your servants to do such a thing? Behold the money that

we found in the mouths of our sacks we brought back to you from the land of Canaan. How then could we steal silver or gold from your Lord's house? Now this wasn't the first time that Joseph had interrogated his brothers. You remember that when they first arrived in Egypt, Joseph, he interrogated his brothers by asking all these questions about their father and about Jacob and about their youngest brother, Benjamin. And on that occasion in chapter 42, Joseph even had his brothers imprisoned for three days because he thought they were spies or he claimed that they were spies. But now Joseph, he's investigating and interrogating his brothers through his chief of staff and he's threatening them. He's threatening them with slavery, which also might have followed with the death penalty for stealing.

Joseph was accusing his brothers of stealing his silver cup, the cup that he used to drink and practice divination. Now I want to point out to you that Joseph would have certainly used the cup, the silver cup, to drink from. But he wouldn't have used it to practice divination, which would be something like the occult or the spirits, looking at evil spirits. It seems that Joseph's chief of staff, he only said that Joseph practiced divination in order to heighten the offense. It's all a charade, the whole thing.

They're framing them. So he's trying to heighten the offense against the prime minister. And he's also trying to increase the suspicion of guilt for these brothers. And so when Joseph's chief of staff, when he begins the interrogation of these 10 men or 11 men, Joseph's brothers are so sure that none of them took it, that they deny it outright. They say, no, it wasn't us. We wouldn't, we would never steal silver or gold from your Lord's house. And because they deny it outright, they willingly comply with the request to search their sacks. Because we read that each of them, they lower their sack to the ground and they open it up ready for inspection. But you know, as we read the narrative, what we should be looking out for is how Joseph's brothers react to the news that the cup is found in Benjamin's sack.

[18:07] Because they know what's at stake here. They know that if the cup is found in their sack, they'll all be taken back to Egypt to remain as a slave. Or worse, some of them will be put to death.

But you know, don't you find it remarkable that what Joseph threatens his brothers with is exactly what happened to Joseph. He was sold into slavery. But you know, as Joseph's brothers, as they lower their sacks to the ground, as they open them up ready for inspection, the chief of staff were told he searches their sacks, beginning with the eldest all the way to the youngest. Which means that he started his search with Reuben. Reuben was the eldest son.

And he searches Reuben's sack. Nothing there. Then Simeon's sack. Nothing there. Then Levi's sack. Nothing there. Judah's sack. Nothing there. Then Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, and finally baby Benjamin. And when they opened Benjamin's sack, they found Joseph's silver cup.

The silver cup was found in Benjamin's sack, the youngest son, the father's new favorite, the one whom Jacob didn't want to let out of his sight. But now because the silver cup was found in his sack, as it was promised by the chief of staff, Benjamin would never return home to the promised land of Canaan. And he would remain as a slave in Egypt. Or worse, Benjamin would be put to death for his sin of stealing. But as we said, what we have to notice is how Joseph's brothers react to the news that the cup is found in Benjamin's sack. Because how do they react when they're told that the silver cup is in the sack of their youngest brother, the father's favorite? Do they defend their father's favorite? Or do they despise him? Do they start bartering for Benjamin? Or do they start blaming Benjamin for what's happened? Do they hand Benjamin over and say, well, we're just going to carry on.

You go back to Egypt. We're going home. What do they do? How do they react? Because how they react towards their younger brother and how they treat the father's new favorite will reveal to Joseph whether after all these years his brothers have changed or not. And you know, that was the test.

[20:38] Joseph wanted to test his brothers and see how they would react to Benjamin and how they would treat Benjamin. Would they treat Benjamin like they treated Joseph? Or would they treat him like a brother?

Have their hearts changed? Have their lives changed? That's the questions we should be asking. Has grace been working in their experience? Has the Lord been working in their life? How do Joseph's brothers react to the news that the cup is found in Benjamin's sack? And verse 13 tells us, they tore their clothes and turned around. They tore their clothes and turned around. There was

remorse, but there was also repentance. There was remorse, and then there was also repentance. And you know, this is what's wonderful to see in this chapter. It might not be glaringly obvious, but grace was working in their lives. Grace was at work in the lives of these brothers. Because Joseph's brothers, they don't react towards their younger brother. They don't react towards the family favorite. They don't react and act the way they did 20 years ago towards Joseph. Because you remember 20 years ago, they were angry with Joseph.

They hated him. They hated his dreams. They hated the fact he had a coat of many colors. They got rid of him. But you come to this chapter, and their lives have changed. 20 years have passed, and their lives have changed. Their hearts have changed. Grace is at work. God is at work. Because as those who now realize God's glory, they also see their guilt. As those who can now see, they can see their sinful nature.

They can see that there's something wrong with their heart. And where they once loathed their family, and the family favorite, they now love him. Something's changed. Something's changed. They once wanted to kill their youngest brother, but now they want to show him kindness. Where they once got rid of Joseph, they now feel guilty about Benjamin. You know, my friend, it's wonderful to see grace at work in the life or in the lives of sinners. You know, it's wonderful to see their hearts changed and their lives being transformed by the grace of God. But as we witness this investigation and then the interrogation, what we ought to see is the evidence that the grace of God is at work in their lives.

Because Joseph's brothers, they not only show remorse by feeling guilty and showing kindness and loving their brother, they don't blame him. Their remorse is much deeper than that. It's much more powerful than that. Because they return to Egypt in repentance. They're going to Canaan, but they turn back to Egypt in repentance. And that's what repentance means. Repentance is just to turn around. To turn from sin to salvation. That's what repentance is. It's to turn away from sin to the Savior, Jesus Christ. And that's what happens. Because when Joseph's brothers, when they return in repentance, as we read earlier, they come in before Joseph. And they submit and they surrender their lives under the authority of the Savior of the world. They fall down on their knees before Joseph and they come confessing their sin. They know that they're guilty before God. They know that they need to find forgiveness. And they know that as sinners, they need to submit and to surrender to their Savior. That's a wonderful picture of the gospel, isn't it? It's just a wonderful picture of the message of the gospel. Because you know, my unconverted friend, it's not remorse you need. It's repentance you need. Feeling sorry about your sin is not enough. You need to turn from your sin and turn to the Savior. You need to turn away from sin and turn to Jesus. Because as we all know, I don't need to point out your flaws and your failings. We all know that we're guilty before God. We have a God-given conscience that tells us that.

[25 : 07] And this God-given conscience, it tells us that we need to find forgiveness. And so we must, we must surrender and we must submit to the Savior, Jesus Christ.

And the glory of the gospel is that if you come to this Jesus, this is the wonder of it, if you come to this Jesus like Joseph's brothers came, if you come on bended knee, if you confess your sin, the promise and the assurance today is that He will forgive you your sin.

And cleanse you from all unrighteousness. You know, you don't need to stay in your state of sin a moment longer. You just need to come now. Come today. Don't wait. Because the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. That's what we're saying to the children. The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. But you know, the amazing thing about Joseph's brothers is that grace had been working in their lives for 20 years.

They might not have thought about sin and the need of salvation in their youth, but now that they're older, and this is the thing about Joseph's brothers, they're all in their 30s, their 40s, and their 50s. They're all a bit older. They're all a bit maybe wiser. They're all starting to think about eternity, salvation. And as they think about it, they know in their heart that as sinners, they're guilty. They're guilty before God, and they need to find forgiveness.

Do you know, does that describe you? Does that describe you? Because you know, there are some of you here, and you have heard this message for over 20 years.

[26 : 59] You've been sitting in this church for a long time. But I hope and pray that in that time, you have been taking heed to the message, not hardening to the message. Don't harden your heart to the message of the gospel. Take heed to it. As the Bible says, today, if you hear, hear his voice, harden not your heart. But you know, what we ought to notice is that, you know, if we come to

Calvary for cleansing, then there must be evidence of that cleansing.

If we come to Calvary, there must be evidence of cleansing. Because like it was with Joseph's brothers, there must be evidence that the grace of God is at work in our lives. There must be evidence that our hearts have changed and our lives have been transformed. There must be evidence that we no longer loathe our brother or sister in Christ, but love them. You know, Jesus gave us a new commandment in John 13. And I think it's the hardest commandment, the hardest commandment to live up to.

Jesus said, love one another. How much? Just as I loved you. How much did Jesus love us? Well, he gave his life for us. Love one another just as I have loved you. By this, all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another. And you know, we all have to ask ourselves, is the grace of God at work in my life today? Am I growing in grace? Am I growing in the knowledge of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Is the grace of God at work in my life today?

And so we've considered investigation and interrogation, but lastly we see intercession.

Intercession. Investigation, interrogation, and intercession. Look at verse 18.

We read that, then Judah went up to him, that is Joseph, and said, said to Joseph, O my Lord, please let your servant speak a word in my Lord's ears, and let not your anger burn against your servant, for you are like Pharaoh himself. And although we're not going to read it, verse 18 to the end of the chapter, it forms Judah's intercession, which is actually the longest speech in the book of Genesis. And Judah's intercession was in response to Joseph's investigation and his interrogation. [29 : 33] And Judah's intercession, it came, as we could say about Joseph's brothers, that they were framed. You've been framed. But as we said, for Judah, this wasn't a joke. This wasn't a joke movie. Rather, it was this incredible act of intercession. Judah, when you read the passage, and I'd encourage you to read it again, it's an incredible act of intercession, where he was humble, he was heartfelt, and in many ways he becomes the hero of the story. But the thing about Judah, as you know, he was the main character in the colorful chapter in Genesis 38, where he made this messy mistake in his life. He had an affair with his daughter-in-law, Tamar. And it was a messy mistake. But as you know, and it's when we studied it, and if you want to go back and look over it, the Lord was sovereignly working in Judah's life to prepare the way for the Messiah. Because what's remarkable is that Judah and Tamar, they are part of the line and lineage of grace. They're mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew's gospel, which means that they're not only ancestors of Jesus, but they're also part of the promise of salvation. They're part of this wonderful promise. And you know, Judah, he's a wonderful reminder to us that the Lord is able to work in and through all our messy mistakes. And he's able to work by his grace for our good and to his glory. And the remarkable thing about the Bible, and you know, this is what we should understand about the Bible. It's not a book about saints. It's a book about sinners. It's not a message of ruin. It's a message of remedy. It's not a message of rejection. It's a message of reconciliation. It's not a message of condemnation. It's a message of commendation.

Because the wonderful thing about this Bible is that Jesus is commended to you in the gospel. He is commended to you as the only Savior of sinners. But you know, what we see in the close of this chapter in verse 18 onwards, it's something so beautiful. Because Judah, who is an elder brother of Benjamin, he intercedes on behalf of Benjamin. Judah engages in intercession on behalf of the younger brother. Judah, he pleads and he protests his little brother's innocence. Judah intervenes. Judah intercedes on behalf of his younger brother. And you know, I highlight this because, and this is what the passage is all about. Judah is intervening and interceding on behalf of his younger brother.

Why? Because it's all foreshadowing the role and the responsibility of Judah's descendant, Jesus Christ. Do you know, my friend, the glory of the gospel, and it's here in Genesis 44, the glory of the gospel is that our sinless Savior, Jesus Christ, he presented and he portrayed, he's portrayed to us in the Bible as our elder brother. That's the wonder of the gospel.

You know, when you're brought into the family of God by faith and repentance, when you become a Christian, when all the Christians around you are their brothers and sisters, as Calvin says, God is your father, the church is your mother, and Jesus is your elder brother. And as our elder brother, Jesus intercedes on our behalf. Through his finished work at Calvary, Jesus pleads our cause. He protests our innocence. He pronounces our safety. He proclaims our righteousness through his only sacrifice. You know, my friend, Jesus, our elder brother, he intercedes on our behalf.

[33 : 35] In fact, in Jesus, in Jesus, we have an advocate with the Father. Jesus Christ, the righteous. In Jesus, we have a mediator between God and men. The man Christ Jesus. In Jesus, our elder brother.

And never lose sight of this fact. We have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God. That's why the Bible says to us, therefore, let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in our time of need. Because in Jesus, we have an elder brother seated at the Father's right hand, who ever lives to make intercession for us.

Today, he ever lives to make intercession for us. That's the wonder of who our elder brother is. But just in closing, you know, in the 19th century, there was a well-known and well-established hymn writer.

She was called Charity Lees Bancroft. She was from Northern Ireland, and she composed many hymns, and she contributed to many hymn books that many eminent preachers used, such as Spurgeon and also my good friend, J.C. Ryle. But Bancroft's best-known hymn, it was originally called The Advocate, but in more recent years, it has been affectionately named Before the Throne of God Above. I'm sure you've heard of it. Because it's a hymn which reminds us that in Jesus, in our elder brother, whoever lives to make intercession, we have a wonderful high priest. And just to quote the opening verse, Before the throne of God above, I have a strong and perfect plea, a great high priest whose name is love, whoever lives and pleads for me. His name is graven on his hands. My name is written on his heart.

I know that while in heaven he stands, no tongue can bid me thence depart. My friend, do you have that elder brother? Do you know that elder brother? Is he the one you go to day by day with all your sins, your sicknesses, your sufferings, and your sorrows? Can you say today that Jesus is your friend and your elder brother, whoever lives to make intercession for you?

[36 : 15] Because that's what Genesis 44 is reminding us. We need this elder brother every day for time and for eternity. Well, may the Lord bless these thoughts to us. Let us pray.

O Lord, our gracious God, we give thanks to thee that we do not come in our own name, and we do not come in our own strength, and we do not come in our own righteousness or even washed in our own blood, but we come clothed in the righteousness of Jesus, washed in the blood of Jesus.

We come by the grace of Jesus, and that we are able to come boldly to this throne and help us to do so daily, knowing that we have an elder brother, whoever lives to make intercession for us, or that we would see Jesus day by day, one who is in our family, part of our family, one in whom we can rest in and rely upon day by day. Lord, go before us, we pray. Guide us into a week, another week that lies before us, and we do pray that whatever is in our cup, whatever is in our experience, that we would all bring it to the Lord in prayer, that we would bring it to our elder brother who knows us and who loves us and gave himself for us. Do us good, then we pray. Go before us for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Well, we're going to bring our service to a conclusion by singing the words of Psalm 103. Psalm 103. It's in the Sing Psalms version on page 135. Psalm 103, we're singing from the beginning, and we're singing down to the verse marked 11. It's a psalm that reminds us that the God we worship is a gracious God. He forgives all our sins and heals our sicknesses and diseases. That's what we're reminded in this wonderful psalm. Praise God, my soul, with all my heart. Let me exalt his holy name.

Forget not all his benefits. His praise, my soul, in song proclaim. The Lord forgives you all your sins and heals your sickness and distress. Your life he rescues from the grave and crowns you in his tenderness. The tune is related to the hymn that we mentioned there, Before the Throne of God Above.

[38 : 46] So we'll sing Psalm 103 from the beginning down to the verse marked 11. We'll stand to sing to God's praise. Praise God, my soul, with all my heart. Let me exalt his holy name. Forget not all his benefits.

This praise, my soul, with all my heart. Let me exalt his holy name. The Lord forgives you all your sins and heals your sickness and distress. Your life he rescues from the grave and crowns you in his tenderness.

And cleanse you in his tenderness. He satisfies your deep desires from his unending source of good. So that just like the evil's pain, your youthful living, His tenderness is renewed. The Lord is known for the word of God. The Lord is known for the love of God. His love he rescues from the

grave and crowns you in his tenderness.

The Lord is known for a righteous man, and justice to the land for the cross.

The waters he made known his ways, his mighty deeds to Israel's sons.

[40 : 48] The Lord is merciful and kind, to anger slow and full of grace.

He will not constantly be proved, for in his anger I exist.

He does not punish her his feet, or give our sins their just reward.

And raise his love as high as head towards all those who fear the Lord.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all, now and forevermore. Amen.