

A Living Suffering

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 03 May 2020

Preacher: Rev. Murdo M Campbell

- [0 : 0 0] Well, if we could, this evening for a short while, if we could turn back to that portion of Scripture that we read in 1 Peter chapter 3.
- 1 Peter chapter 3, and we're going to look at the whole passage that we read together. But if we just read again at verse 14. 1 Peter chapter 3 and verse 14.
- But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled. But in your hearts honour Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.
- Yet do it with gentleness and respect. And so on. You know, as many of us sit in our homes this evening, safe and secure from all that's going on in other parts of our nation and indeed our world.
- You know, we should be very thankful that we haven't been hit badly by the coronavirus like other places have. Because as we've witnessed over this past week, the death toll in our nation due to the coronavirus, it has now reached nearly 30,000 souls.
- [1 : 2 2] That's 30,000 souls which have entered eternity in the past few weeks. And just to put it in perspective, that's more than the population of the Western Isles.
- And it's all because of one disease. Other people have suffered and other people have died in our nation because of other sicknesses. But in this past week, we've seen this death toll rise.
- And because of the death toll, our government has rightly focused as well upon our NHS staff and the healthcare workers who have also tragically lost their lives while trying to care for others.
- And as a mark of respect for these over 100 NHS staff and healthcare workers who have died while working on the front line, you'll remember that there was a minute's silence on Tuesday morning.
- But more than that, our government also announced this week that each family of a healthcare worker, whether in the NHS or whether a healthcare worker, each family that has lost someone on the front line during this pandemic, they're to receive 60,000 pounds of compensation, which is, I suppose, only a small compensation for families who are living through suffering because they've lost a father or a mother or a child during this awful crisis.
- [2 : 5 4] And, you know, when Peter wrote his letter to the church, in a similar way, he sought to do the same. Peter wanted to compensate these scattered and suffering saints who were on the front line, not because of a pandemic, but because of persecution.
- They were living through suffering. And Peter's compensation for these Christians who were on the front line of persecution, his compensation was to remind them that although they won't receive praise or a payout in this life, he says they have an inheritance.
- And their inheritance is being kept for them and they will receive it. They will receive it when they see Jesus face to face. And in this passage, Peter, he encourages and exhorts the church of Jesus Christ to live like Jesus and to love like Jesus even through suffering.

Because, as Peter has reminded us in this letter, as Christians who are scattered and suffering saints, we have a living salvation through a living saviour.

And we're being built up into a living structure. We're all living stones. And these living stones were to be, have this living subjection. And because of our living subjection, which we saw last week, that may result in a living suffering.

[4 : 18] A living suffering. But Peter says here in these verses, if you experience a living suffering, if you experience a living suffering, make sure you're demonstrating Christ, defending Christ, and declaring Christ.

And there are three headings this evening.

Demonstrating Christ, defending Christ, and declaring Christ. So if we look first of all at demonstrating Christ. Demonstrating Christ. Peter says in verse 8, Yohan Sanchez, who is the author of our Bible study booklets that we're going through on Wednesday evenings, he's the author of the study of 1 Peter.

And he also has a commentary on 1 Peter that goes along with it. And in his commentary on 1 Peter, he says, the sad reality is that in the West, materialistic prosperity, daily comfort, and cultural acceptance have diluted our view of suffering as Christians.

We're very pleased that Jesus bore his cross for us. But deep down, we hope that we can avoid bearing a cross as we follow him. But we need to realise, he says, that suffering is part of living faithfully for Christ.

[6 : 07] It's not just an add-on for super keen Christians. And you know, that's what Peter is emphasising here. That we need to seek to live in such a way that our Christianity cannot and does not go unnoticed and unchallenged in this world.

And you know, when suffering comes, Peter says, we need to suffer well. We need to suffer well without compromising or contradicting our Christian character, conduct, and conversation.

Peter says, if we have a living suffering, then we need to make sure we're demonstrating Christ. Because the purpose of demonstrating Christ is to obtain blessing.

And you know, Peter, he actually described what it was to demonstrate Christ by giving us the example of what Jesus went through back in chapter 2. He said in chapter 2, at verse 21, And it's with that that Peter says now in verse 8, finally.

In other words, it doesn't mean, what he's saying, when he says finally, it doesn't mean that he's coming to the end of his letter. But rather, Peter means to that end. In other words, he says, we'll obtain blessing when we're demonstrating the example of Jesus Christ.

[7 : 52] Finally, all of you have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, a humble mind, do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called that you may obtain a blessing.

And you know, does that know what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount about obtaining a blessing? Jesus said, blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

And blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Then Jesus says, rejoice and be glad for your reward is great in heaven.

Peter says, we'll obtain blessing when we're demonstrating Christ. In fact, that's how Peter began his letter to the church. He began by reminding us that because we've bowed our knee to King Jesus and confessed him as Lord, that we're blessed.

We're blessed. We've received from the gracious hand of King Jesus what we don't deserve. We've been blessed because we've been born again to a living hope. We've been, we're being kept by the power of God and we have this promised glorious inheritance of one day seeing Jesus face to face.

[9 : 16] Therefore, says Peter, if we experience a living suffering in this life, we're to be demonstrating Christ in our suffering.

We're to be following in the footsteps of Jesus. We're to be demonstrating Christ. And you know, as we mentioned last week, following in the footsteps of Jesus isn't comfortable because as Jesus said, if anyone will come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.

The way of the crown is the way of the cross. The way of the crown is the way of the cross. That's what J.C. Ryle emphasized. A Christianity that costs nothing is worth nothing.

A cheap Christianity without a cross will prove in the end a useless Christianity without a crown. The way of the crown is the way of the cross. And you know, it's with this, this emphasis upon demonstrating Christ in our suffering that Peter goes on to urge us from the words of Psalm 34 that when we suffer, we're to suffer well by demonstrating Christ.

He says in verse 10, quoting Psalm 34, for whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit.

[10 : 41] Let him turn away from evil and do good. Let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.

Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? And so from Psalm 34, Peter says that when we're faced with opposition and persecution for our faith, we're to desire what is good, we're to speak what is true and we're to pursue what is right.

We're to desire what is good, speak what is true and pursue what is right. We're to suffer well, he says, without compromising or contradicting our Christian character, conduct or conversation.

because, you know, persecution, says Peter, it isn't to be viewed as an obstacle but as an opportunity for the church to be demonstrating Christ.

And, you know, even this pandemic that we're faced with at the moment, that shouldn't be viewed as an obstacle to the church. It should be viewed as an opportunity for the church to be demonstrating Christ and for the furtherance of the gospel.

[11 : 56] Because, you know, the wonderful thing is that even though the doors of the church building are closed at the moment, the wonderful thing is the gospel is still advancing through the means of technology.

There are people tonight sitting watching sermons or listening to sermons and maybe they wouldn't usually come to church at all. And yet, despite the obstacle, it's a day of opportunity.

And, you know, that's how the early church saw persecution. They saw it not as an obstacle but as an opportunity for the church to be demonstrating Christ and for the gospel to keep advancing and the kingdom of God to keep spreading and building.

Of course, without comfortable Christianity, we would see persecution as a curse rather than a blessing. But the early church, they knew that to confess the name of Christ was pretty much to sign your death warrant.

Because, as we said before, the Roman Empire, it had instituted and it had insisted upon emperor worship that everyone must bow down and confess the Caesar as Lord.

[13 : 11] But for the Christian, that was an impossibility because Jesus is Lord. And when you refuse to go by the flow and confess the Caesar as Lord, you received persecution.

And for Christians living within the Roman Empire during the first century, persecution was extremely volatile and extremely violent. To the point that Christians, they were often captured.

And when they were captured, they were then impaled on a pole and set on fire. My friend, they were used as lamp posts to light the streets at night.

That's what Christians were good for in the first century. They experienced a living suffering because they refused to deny Christ and continued to demonstrate Christ even unto death.

They continued demonstrating Christ even in the face of death. And you know, it was John Fox, he was an English historian in the 16th century.

[14 : 18] I'm sure you've read his book or maybe heard of it. It's the book called Fox's Book of Martyrs. And it's fascinating to read because it gives an account of many of the Christians who were persecuted and martyred from the time of the early church in the first century all the way through to the Reformation in the 16th century.

And in fact, John Fox, he claimed that the first martyr in the early church or in the New Testament was John the Baptist because he was beheaded by King Herod for preaching the truth.

Then there was Stephen who was also stoned to death for preaching the truth. And then one by one, John Fox, he explains that all the apostles were martyred except for the apostle John.

He tells us that ten years after the death of Stephen, the apostle James was beheaded. Philip was scourged, thrown into prison and eventually crucified.

Matthew, who wrote Matthew's gospel, he was killed with an axe. Andrew, the brother of Peter, he was crucified on a cross the shape of the Scotland flag which is why we call it the St. Andrew's Cross.

[15 : 29] There was Peter who wrote these letters in the New Testament. He was crucified upside down. There was Bartholomew who was beaten and crucified. Thomas was thrust through with a spear.

Simon the Zealot, he was also crucified. Matthias, who was the new addition to the apostles, he was stoned to death and then beheaded. And in addition to this, John Fox, he tells us that Mark, the gospel writer, he was tied to a horse and dragged through the street until there was nothing left of him.

Luke, the author of the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, he was also hanged for his faith in Jesus Christ. And then James the Less who wrote the letter of James and is the brother of Jesus.

He was stoned and beaten to death. And you know, in response to the martyrdom of all these Christians and many, many, many more, John Fox, he wrote, the history of the church may almost be said to be a history of the trials and sufferings of its members.

The history of the church may almost be said to be a history of the trials and sufferings of its members. And that's what Peter is saying here, that if you experience a living suffering, make sure you're demonstrating Christ.

[16 : 52] Make sure you're demonstrating Christ. But secondly, Peter says, if you experience a living suffering, make sure you're defending Christ.

Make sure you're defending Christ. We'll look at verse 14. He says, But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed.

Have no fear of them, nor be troubled. But in your hearts, honour Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.

Yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that when you are slandered, those who revile your good behaviour in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good if that should be God's will than for doing evil.

At the end of the second century, the early church father, Tertullian, he stood to defend Christianity against the Roman Empire.

[18 : 00] And he wrote this defence called Apologeticus, which simply means a defence. And in it, Tertullian, he criticised the Roman Empire for the way in which they persecuted and martyred Christians during the first two centuries of the early church.

And particularly the way in which the Emperor Nero, he had blamed the Christians for the great fire of Rome and persecuted them because of it. But Tertullian, he pleaded that the Roman Empire would tolerate Christianity and treat Christians fairly, just like other members of society.

and in his defence called Apologeticus, Tertullian, he memorably concluded his defence by saying that Christians, Christians take no pleasure in being persecuted and enduring trials.

But as soldiers of Christ, they too must fight for the truth, for the glory of God. And then Tertullian, he went on to say, crucify us, torture us, condemn us, destroy us, your injustice is proof of our innocence.

When we're condemned by you, we're acquitted by God. And with that, Tertullian, he went on to warn the Roman Empire that if they continue persecuting Christians and seek to eradicate Christianity completely, their empire will one day collapse.

[19 : 31] Because as Tertullian famously said, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.

And as you know, Tertullian was right. Because as the Roman Empire continued to persecute the Christian church, it eventually collapsed. And the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church.

Because by demonstrating Christ and by defending Christ, the church of Jesus Christ continued to be built and the gates of hell could not prevail against it.

But of course, the reality is persecution, it wasn't confined to the first century. And the church continued to grow through persecution. In fact, it's estimated that in the 21st century, one in nine Christians in the world are being persecuted for their faith.

The Christian charity Open Doors, who have been helping persecuted Christians for over 60 years in over 50 countries, they have what they call a world watch list in which they estimate that over 245 million Christians are being persecuted for their faith in the world.

[20 : 52] with the most dangerous place to be a Christian being North Korea. And you know, this is why we find Peter encouraging and exhorting Christians in the first century and also it's relevant for the 21st century.

Peter is encouraging and exhorting Christians that if you experience a living suffering, make sure you're demonstrating Christ and make sure you're defending Christ.

That's what he says, even if you should suffer for righteousness sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them nor be troubled but in your hearts honour Christ, Christ as holy, always being prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and respect.

And you're drawing upon Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount there in verse 14 where Jesus, you'll remember he said, blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs as the kingdom of heaven.

Drawing upon those words, Peter encourages and he exhorts Christians that when they face persecution for their faith, they're not to fear, they're not to be troubled, but they're to honour Christ, they're to commit themselves to Christ.

[22 : 10] Literally, Peter says, sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts so that you're always ready to give a reason for the hope that is within you.

Sanctify him in your hearts that you're able to give a defence of Jesus Christ. And that word defence is the same word that Tertullian used in his Apologeticus.

It's where we get the word apology or apologetics from. And the word apologetics means to make a verbal defence.

And that's what, you know, that's what Christian apologetics is. It's making a verbal defence of the Christian faith and the truths of the Bible. And as you know, there are many intelligent Christian apologists who discuss and debate and defend the Christian faith against atheists or other religions.

But, you know, here, Peter isn't saying that you need to know all the apologetical arguments of creation and science and religion in order to make this defence of Christianity.

[23 : 21] Of course, it's good to learn these things. It's good to know a little bit about them. It's good to make every effort to learn something about apologetics. But, Peter says, when you make a defence of the gospel of Jesus Christ, he says, you're not to be defensive in your attitude or your approach.

You're to make it your defence with gentleness and respect because, Peter says, what your persecutors can never take from you or beat out of you is the reason for the hope that is within you.

It doesn't matter what they do to you, Peter says. They can never take from you the reason for the hope that is within you. And, my friend, what is the reason for that hope which is within you?

What is the reason of the hope that is within you tonight? Because, you know, in these dark and difficult days that we're living in at the moment, everyone is looking for hope. Everyone is looking at the symbol of the rainbow for hope.

And they can't see that the symbol of the rainbow came from God himself. But even in this past week, many in our nation have considered Captain Tong to be this beacon of hope during dark and difficult days.

[24 : 40] and there's no denying that Captain Tom's fundraising of 30 million pounds for the NHS, it's amazing and it's highly commendable. But to call him a beacon of hope, which many have done, that beacon of hope is not sure and steadfast.

It's not the hope that the gospel gives to us. It's not the hope that Christ gives to his people. It's not the hope that is able to be found within. Because the hope, my friend, that's within you is Christ himself dwelling by his Holy Spirit.

The hope that he gives to us is sure and steadfast because we are in union with Christ by his Holy Spirit. And because we have that union, because we have a hope that is sure and steadfast, it's that hope that is the anchor of our soul.

And what Peter is saying to these persecuted Christians is that when you come across persecution, when you experience opposition for your faith, you're to demonstrate Christ and you're to be defending Christ.

You're to speak of this Jesus who is your only hope in life and death. You're to defend his name and you're to share his name with people because he is our only hope.

[26 : 03] He is the hope that is sure and steadfast. He is the anchor of our soul. And so Peter says always be ready. Always be ready to give a defence, an apology.

Always be ready to give a defence for the reason, for the hope that is within you. My friend, we have a great hope. So always be ready to speak of it.

Don't be silent. Speak about this wonderful hope that you have. And so Peter says if you experience a living suffering, make sure you're demonstrating Christ.

Make sure you're defending Christ. And lastly, he says, make sure you're declaring Christ. Make sure you're declaring Christ. Demonstrating Christ, defending Christ, and declaring Christ.

declaring Christ. We look at verse 18. Peter says, for Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that his eight persons were brought safely through water.

[27 : 33] Now, it's safe to say that these verses are difficult to understand. But I want us to remember that when we consider them, we have to consider them within their context, the context of 1 Peter, a letter that was written to scattered and suffering saints.

And what Peter says in verse 18 is that if you're experiencing a living suffering, if you're experiencing suffering because of your faith in Jesus Christ, remember that Christ suffered for your sin.

If you're going through suffering, remember that Christ suffered for your sin. He says Christ also suffered and he suffered once, not repeatedly and not deservedly, but he suffered as the righteous for the unrighteous, the just for the unjust, because as Paul reminds us, he who knew no sin became sin for us, all so that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

It was Calvary's great transaction where the worst about us was laid upon him and the best about him was laid upon us. Our sins transferred to Christ, his cleansing transferred to us, our iniquities imputed to Christ, his righteousness imputed to us, our transgressions, they were all assigned to Christ, his forgiveness assigned to us.

It was Calvary's great transaction, the just for the unjust, the righteous for the unrighteous, and Peter says that it all took place.

[29 : 14] It was all so that he might bring us to God. It was all so that he would bring us this chasm that separated God and man.

He might bring us to be united in fellowship once more. And Peter says it was by being put to death in the spirit and being made alive, put to death in the flesh and being made alive in the spirit.

How did Jesus bring us to God? How did Jesus make a way for lost sinners to enter into that fellowship with God?

And Peter says it was by being put to death in the flesh and being made alive in the spirit. Jesus made a way for us to be saved by his death on the cross on Good Friday and his resurrection on Easter Sunday.

But then Peter draws our attention to what happened in that time between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. And Peter says in verse 19 that Jesus went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison.

[30 : 24] He says in verse 19 he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison because they formerly did not obey when God's patience waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared in which a few, that is eight persons were brought safely through water.

Now some have interpreted this passage to mean that Jesus preached through Noah for those 120 years before the flood and while the ark was being built.

And in many ways that's true because Jesus would have been present by his spirit he would have been present as Noah the preacher of righteousness as Noah called men and women boys and girls he called them to come into the ark by following God's way of salvation Noah would have been there calling people to come in and so Jesus would have been present but that's not what this means.

Others have said that while Jesus was on the cross and the world was shrouded in darkness Jesus' soul went to hell to offer a second chance to those who lived through Noah's day but were drowned in the flood.

But of course that interpretation would discount the solemn words of Hebrews 9 verse 27 that it's appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgment because the truth is there are no second chances after death.

[31 : 56] There are no second chances after death. But you know having considered this passage I believe that Peter is telling us that after Jesus cried it is finished on the cross.

In that time between Good Friday and Easter Sunday Jesus descended into hell. Now I know that this may not fit perfectly into our little theological boxes but these verses in the Bible they are as inspired as every other verse in the Bible.

And it seems to be that after Jesus, after Jesus had committed himself into his father's hands and after Jesus had entered paradise with a thief on the cross, after Jesus had ascended to heaven at some point between Good Friday and Easter Sunday, Jesus descended into hell.

And Peter says Jesus went there for a purpose and the purpose was to proclaim to the disobedient spirits of Noah's day who are in prison.

But the disobedient spirits, they weren't people. They were the demonic spirits who had created havoc upon the earth during the days of Noah.

[33 : 17] And before the flood, God had consigned them to hell early and he had consigned them to be there until the day of judgment.

Now I say all this because Peter actually picks up this thought again in his second letter in 2 Peter chapter 2. He says 2 Peter chapter 2 at verse 4.

He says God did not spare the angels when they sinned but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of darkness to be kept until the day of judgment.

Then he says he did not spare the ancient world but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly.

You see my friend, hell thought that they had won at the cross. Because hell, hell you could say had been unleashed upon Jesus at the cross.

[34 : 17] That's why he was crying, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Hell had descended into the soul of Jesus upon the cross.

Hell thought that they had won upon the cross. And even when Jesus died, you could say hell danced. When the prince of glory gave up the ghost, you could say heaven was silent but hell was singing.

But what Peter tells us is that between Good Friday and Easter Sunday, while these demonic spirits who had been bound up in a hold in hell, while they were singing and dancing at the death of Jesus, Peter says Jesus shows up.

Jesus shows up. And Jesus has one mission to these demonic spirits and his mission is to proclaim to them. And what does he proclaim?

His victory and his vindication. Jesus proclaimed to the spirits in prison that sin, Satan, and death have been defeated. Jesus proclaimed to these spirits in prison that salvation belongs to the Lord.

[35 : 30] Jesus proclaimed that he has redeemed his church with his own precious blood, and that one day he will present them faultless before his glory with exceeding joy.

My friend, Jesus proclaimed to these spirits in prison that all authority in heaven and on earth had been given to him, and that one day when all is said and done, every knee will bow in heaven and on earth and in hell, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

My friend, Jesus proclaimed to these spirits in prison that just like Noah experienced salvation in the ark, that through his death and his resurrection, sinners can experience salvation by being in Christ.

Because as Peter says, the promise of salvation is to all who are baptized into Christ, not by water, but by the Holy Spirit. Peter says, it's not your baptism with water that saves you.

No, no, that can't take away the stains of sin from your soul. It's your baptism, says Peter, it's your baptism by the Holy Spirit that can save you.

[36 : 49] It's by being in Christ, in union with Christ, hiding in Christ that you can be safe. it's only by experiencing the forgiveness of the cross and the power of the resurrection that you'll know the victory and the vindication of Jesus Christ.

That's what Peter is saying. And you know, for these suffering and scattered saints, this was a great encouragement for them. Because as we've seen already, the Roman Empire, in the first century and in the second century, they had this demonic hatred of Christians.

They were living, the Christians were living, surrounded by this demonic hatred of them. But Peter, he's affirming and assuring these suffering and scattered saints that Jesus, he has won the victory and there will come a great day of vindication.

And you know, Peter is saying that despite all the persecution that they may experience in this world, they're to keep demonstrating Christ, they're to keep defending Christ, they're to keep declaring Christ.

Why? Because neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come, neither height nor depth nor any other creature will be able to separate them from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[38 : 23] God it's a wonderful encouragement that Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth and he hasn't left his church, he hasn't left his people and that's what Peter is saying, if you experience a living suffering make sure you're demonstrating Christ, make sure you're declaring Christ, make sure you're defending Christ, make sure you're standing on the side of Christ because it's far better to be with him than to be found outside of Christ for all eternity.

What an encouragement Peter gave to the Christian church. God if you experience a living suffering, make sure you're demonstrating Christ, defending Christ and declaring Christ.

Always being prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. well may the Lord bless these thoughts to us and let us pray.

O Lord our gracious God, we give thanks to thee that in the midst of opposition and persecution that thy people they have a word of encouragement, a word to remind them that we are to keep demonstrating this wonderful saviour because he has demonstrated his love towards us in that whilst we were yet sinners, he died for us.

And Lord help us we pray to keep defending our saviour, to keep speaking well of him, to keep speaking about the reason for the hope that is within us because we have a great hope.

[40 : 14] And Lord we ask that we would defend him, Lord that we would defend him with our mouths but also defend him with our lives and that we would keep declaring him, declaring this wonderful saviour who has done in us and for us exceedingly abundantly above all, more than we could ask or even think.

Lord bless us then we pray, continue with us we ask for we ask it in Jesus name and for his sake. Amen. Well we're going to bring our time to a conclusion by singing the words of Psalm 73.

Psalm 73 we're singing in the Scottish Psalter and we're singing from verse 25 down to the end of the psalm. Psalm 73 is a psalm that was written by Asaph where Asaph was considering how the world was getting on so well and how he was suffering as a Christian but it was only when he went into God's house that he realised that the Lord is still in control that the Lord still has all authority in heaven and on earth and it's with that that Asaph he concludes his psalm by saying whom have I in the heavens high but thee O Lord alone and in the earth whom I desire besides thee there is none.

So we're singing Psalm 73 from verse 25 down to the end of the psalm to God's praise. To have I in the heaven sky found, or thou own And in the earth whom I desire It signs me there is none My flesh and heart Doth fate and fail But what doth fail me never

For love my heart For this is the strength And devotion forever For love the heart Are far from thee Forever perish thou Then thou jahol In strongly gold Thou hast destroy it all But surely it is good for me

[43 : 49] That I draw near to God In God I trust That all thy words I may declare On him The Word of God Do not go after him God Thou hast belle Canvas And than this side of the world Could...