

6 Addresses on Psalm 23

Part 5

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Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:00] Sam 23 Vers 1 [00:01:30] We are reminded by him that there are enemies against the flock. We read of robbers, thieves, hirelings and strangers.

And they're all against the flock.

The hireling, he serves for his wages, but he never has any affinity with the flock. He's simply acting in a job to obtain something and to get some advantage through serving for the flock.

[00:02:01] The stranger, he has no affinity with the flock either. The flock, they don't listen to his voice, they won't follow him. There is no connection between the flock and the stranger. Thieves and robbers, their names indicate to us what kind of persons they are. They want to take what doesn't belong to them without any consideration for the flock. Now, these are enemies that the Lord speaks about. And again, too, we have a reference in that wonderful passage where the Lord speaks about security, that there are great powers, great powers which are against the flock. But, says the Lord, my Father who is greater than all, no man can pluck them out of my Father's hand. So I think there's sufficient evidence in chapter 10 of John's Gospel to indicate that there are very definitely enemies against the flock.

And we know, of course, that there are those who scatter the flock. [00:03:02] And what a tremendous havoc has been caused amongst the people of God by those who have scattered instead of binding together.

David speaks about his enemies, a table prepared by the Lord in the midst of his enemies. And we know that from very early in his age, we find that David had to contend.

We've referred already to him defending the flock against the attacks of the bear and the lion and how courageous he was in doing this. Then when we move over into another realm, apart altogether from the flock, we find him facing Goliath and how well he dealt with him, the great enemy of the nation of Israel, the flock of Israel, God's flock. And David, he stood in the breach and what a victory he secured. As we proceed in David's history, we find he had enemies in his own family. [00:04:03] Michael, his own wife, despised him. Absalom, his son, sought to usurp the throne.

And we find that the Philistines were continual enemies of God's people and many, many others amongst the nations too. So David was speaking very, very experimentally when he spoke about the

enemies in the midst of which God provided a table for him.

I don't need to tell you that we are surrounded with enemies too. We carry a very formidable one with us every day of our lives and that's ourselves, the flesh. Very, very formidable enemy, very powerful one, possessed with great power and great skill and great cunning.

Satan, of course, is the greatest of our enemies and he's a very, very powerful enemy indeed.

And we should never, never, never underestimate the power of Satan. [00:05:02] Then too we have the world and that's a very powerful enemy and it can intrude in a very cunning and insidious way and deprive us of the enjoyment of the things that belong to the flock. And then too there are many, many enemies that are very definitely set against the Christian faith and they're growing every day, becoming more apparent, more open in their definite attacks against Christianity. So we are not unaware of the fact that there are enemies.

Thank God that there is a table prepared in the midst of them for our help and our encouragement.

First of all we want to establish what the idea of a table means. And if we remember that in the Old Testament when the children of Israel were going through the wilderness they grumbled and complained about the lack of food and said, can God provide a table in the wilderness? [00:06:03] In other words, can he provide amply for us and meet our need? That's one idea connected with the table, simply a provision for us in our need day by day. We want, of course, to have a deeper and better application and that is it always represents the idea of fellowship.

And so we want to connect these two ideas with the table that's furnished or was furnished for David and, praise God, is furnished for us. First of all in connection with ample provision for David. There was a time when David was in deep, deep trouble and his enemies were very powerful against him and an old man called Barzillai, he came along with ample provision for David and for his army. And you can read this, I think it's in 2 Samuel and what a tremendous variety of food Barzillai brought along. He loved the king and he loved the king's interests [00:07:02] and so he provided and no doubt it was the Lord who guided him and directed him to do this. So while Barzillai is the instrument that's used, it's God who is behind this. And so David's army was provided with ample food in order to bring the kingdom back to David so that he might be the undisputed monarch.

Fellowship.

Yes, thank God David had fellowship too. There were those who came to him in the cave of Adullam and what did they say? Thine are we, David, and on thy side thou son of Jesse.

We are for you, David.

We are for your interests. We want to have a common interest and partaking in this great kingdom of yours and we want to be with you in this case in battle. Thank God the time came when David did become undisputed king and he was able to reward handsomely those who were prepared to share rejection with him. [00:08:04] And so I believe these figures we can apply to ourselves today. Thank God that he has made ample provision for us in order that we might be able to continue warfare, if you like, in relation to the interests of the Lord. He provides us with the resources. He provides us with the opportunities. Thank God provides us with the courage too so that we might be able to stand

in this evil day.

But then fellowship is something that we are profoundly thankful we can have when we are surrounded by enemies.

I have the slightest doubt in my mind that this has been one of the main points of attack of the enemy, the destruction of Christian fellowship in its pure character.

Remember at the very beginning of the church's history, [00:09:01] it says those who were converted, those who believed the apostles' word, they were baptized and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship and in the breaking of bread and prayers. Now, what was the apostles' fellowship? Was it something that belonged to them personally? And we don't believe that. We believe the apostles' fellowship was that circle of taught men who were privileged to maintain the Lord's interests after he went back to heaven.

All the teaching that we find in the Gospels was in view of the position that they would occupy upon earth after the Lord had gone. And they were responsible to teach others these important features of truth that the Lord had taught them. Now, when he gathered them around himself, he was the center.

They were all there because he had chosen them. [00:10:02] They were all there because he was holding them together. It was his power, his attraction, his greatness that held that little company together and gave it character. I suppose separately they were an undescript lot. But joined to the Lord, they were privileged and honored people and blessed people too.

Now, when the Lord went on high and sent down the Holy Spirit, there was that little company and resident in them was all the teaching that the Lord had given to them. And so those who were converted were brought into that fellowship where they could learn about the Lord and the Lord's mind for them and represent them here. The fellowship that they had now was the common bond that they had in the Lord Jesus governed by the truth that the Lord had given to them. We ought not to forget that. That the person of the Lord was the bond that they had, [00:11:01] the attraction that they had, and his greatness and his glory held them together. But they were to be controlled by the truth that the Lord had made known to his disciples. I believe that was the apostles' fellowship. The Lord Jesus the center and the truth that he had given to them to control them and govern them in this world. Now that was at the beginning. We know that added to that we have Paul's teaching and that too was brought into this wonderful divine circle and a great deal of teaching and exposition concerning the person of the Lord, the formation and functioning of the church, and many other truths.

It was still the one fellowship. Paul describing it the fellowship of God's son.

That's a wonderful thing.

I believe that every true believer in Christ belongs to the fellowship of God's son.

They're there because God has chosen them. [00:12:02] God is faithful, who has called you into the fellowship of God's son.

You're not in that fellowship because of some particular faithfulness that attaches to you or some

particular knowledge that you have. You're there because God has called you to it. The fellowship of God's son.

And that indicates to me, dear brethren, the dignity that belongs to this fellowship.

There are many fellowships in the world in a secular sense where men and women through acquiring certain degrees and status belong to a particular fellowship. And of course only those who have the qualifications are entitled to belong to that fellowship. Praise God, this is the greatest fellowship upon earth and everyone who belongs to it is there because they have believed in the son of God and because they are indwell by the Holy Spirit. Now when we come to the responsibilities of that fellowship, [00:13:01] that's another matter.

And we believe in 1 Corinthians chapter 10 when Paul speaks about fellowship there, he's talking very definitely about the responsibilities that belong to those who are in this fellowship. Those who partake of the Lord's Supper are not to be connected with anything that's dishonoring to the Lord or dishonoring to God. That although it's a very extreme statement, you cannot partake of the Lord's table and the table of demons, the principle is you cannot be connected with anything that's dishonoring to the Lord. You cannot be going on with something that's an offense to him, you must be separate from it. You cannot go on with that which is dishonoring to him. Now we all have to apply that to our own lives.

Is there anything in our lives that's dishonoring to the Lord? Am I in any association that's dishonoring to the Lord where his name is denigrated in some way or other or divine principles are set aside?

[00:14:03] Then the responsibility of the fellowship really means that I must separate from it in order to be true to the fellowship and the one who is the center of it. When we come to chapter 11 of 1 Corinthians, we have how the fellowship is expressed in the breaking of bread. When we partake of the loaf, first of all, we're thinking of the precious physical body of Christ, the body in which he suffered on the cross. No one can possibly enter in to all that it meant to him when he died on Calvary, that body in which he suffered for your sins and for mine.

But in a secondary sense, when we break that loaf, we think of the one body.

When we think of the loaf, we think of the one body consisting of every true believer in our Lord Jesus Christ.

[00:15:01] And we say without any fear that every true believer should be partaking of the Lord's supper. It's their right and their privilege. Of course, there are governing things, too, connected with upright walk and the knowledge of proper doctrine. Anything like that might hinder our participation in the Lord's supper. But as a principle, yes, it is true that every true believer in Christ, members of the body of Christ, ought to be partaking of the Lord's supper. Fellowship, what a wonderful thing.

But the great thing is, as common partakers, that's what the word means, common partakers, it's because Christ is central to it. And one feels, oh, how much we've missed this. And I speak for myself.

I'm not throwing stones at anyone else. I'm thinking of myself, how much this has been missed in my life, that Christ is central, that all truth relating to the fellowship must be held in relation to him.

[00:16:04] It's not what I think, it's not what I feel, it's what he is, and all the honor and glory that's due to him. Now, this table that's furnished in the wilderness, David says, is for him.

Well, individually, of course, we appropriate it and enjoy it. And what a wonderful thing it is to enjoy it. I think the fact that we're gathered here this evening is a wonderful expression of fellowship. We come from different parts, with different callings in a secular sense, and we're all different, except in this one great matter, we're all unified in our knowledge of the Lord Jesus as Savior and Lord, and we're all unified in the fact that we're bound together in this great bundle of life. We're all partakers of this fellowship.

Wilderness? Yes, very, very definitely. This is where we enjoy.

We might come together each Lord's morning, as thank God we do, [00:17:03] and very often it appeals to me, this is just like it was in the days in Jerusalem when the Lord gathered the few around him, and outside a seething mass of intrigue and hatred and opposition against the Lord.

And yet in that little room there was quietness. The Lord's presence and power was dominating that scene as he showed to them the way they were to remember him in his absence. I like to think of that, how tranquil it was, how peaceful. All that was going on in the world round about didn't intrude there. The Lord's presence kept it out, and the disciples were so glad to be there and enjoy the presence of the Lord as he showed them what they could do in remembrance of him in his absence and what wonderful fellowship they had. And that has continued ever since, and thank God we have our part in it, and how glad we are that we still have that opportunity [00:18:04] to remember him in the wilderness, in the place where he is still rejected and cast out.

There is the fellowship of the Spirit. Paul speaks about it in Philippians chapter 2, and we believe that's a fellowship that's dominated by the Spirit, that he's the power of it, that he directs in it, that he unifies the saints in relation to Christ and God, and this is his particular service in doing this. He, if you like, he's permeating the fellowship with his power and his influence and directing our hearts towards God and towards Christ.

There is also the solemn side of fellowship when Paul desired to have the fellowship of his sufferings.

We're not so keen about that, are we? We don't deliberately rush into a position where we're persecuted, [00:19:03] but if we're faithful, it will come. And when it does come, we are having fellowship with him in his sufferings. Not those atoning sufferings on the cross. No one could have fellowship in them. Thank God we can know what it is to be sneered at, mocked, disparaged.

We know what it is to be in some measure persecuted, maybe not physically, but in other ways, or the world can be very severe when it likes without physical persecution. And all that, I believe, is fellowship in the sufferings of the Lord. But fellowship is a sweet thing. Paul says, thou hast prepared a table for me in the presence of mine enemies. That is, no matter how great the enemies are, how numerous they are, God is thinking about his own and he's providing for them simply in whatever way they need. And there's that little center where Christ is supreme.

[00:20:01] Now I'm applying the anti-type, rather, where Christ is supreme, where we can enjoy all that he provides in spite of the opposition that is against us.

Now he says, thou anointest my head with oil.

I don't know if David was referring to any particular function that took place in relation to sheep, that might be, but I like to think of his own experience when he personally was made the Lord's anointed, when Samuel came to him, you remember, and anointed him the king to take the place of Saul.

Now we want to speak about that just for a minute. Brother Jack referred to it one morning about the seven sons, great in stature, imposing men, and Samuel thinking as each one came before him, ah, that's the man, ideal man for the king. No, they were rejected.

Man looks on the outward appearance, God looks on the heart. [00:21:03] We don't know why they were rejected, but David was the man after God's own heart, and God knew David's heart, and so when David was brought before Samuel, arise and anoint him, this is he, this is the one whom God had chosen, and well he proved that he was a man after God's own heart.

Now David never forgot one thing about Saul, and that was that Saul was the Lord's anointed, and you know that he never lifted a finger against Saul when he could easily have done so, and Saul was one of his bitterest enemies. All was seeking to slay David after envy filled his heart.

Terrible thing, envy.

And then we find, time comes when Saul is slain on Mount Gilboa, and unfortunately Jonathan too, the weapons of war have perished. So dear friends, David became undisputed king, [00:22:03] the anointing of the Lord was upon him, and he was distinguished above all the rest in the fact that this anointing oil was placed upon him. And I believe that's the great thought connected with it, the distinguishing anointing that stamps a person out from all the rest who are around.

And you know that kings were anointed, priests were anointed, prophets were anointed, and this indicated that they were stamped out, if you like, or distinguished for a particular service that only they could render.

We are very, very thankful that we can see this because those who were anointed were distinguished persons and they performed their function in a very efficient way.

Then we have to understand what this means for us today. And we're not left in any doubt that the oil speaks about the Holy Spirit, [00:23:02] because when we transfer this to the New Testament, we read about the anointing.

There are three particular passages in the New Testament that speak about the anointing of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it's always with the Holy Spirit. We read in Luke chapter 4, where it says, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.

We read about it, too, in Acts chapter 10, where Peter says that the Lord Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power. And in Acts chapter 4, we're reminded again by Peter that the enemies, the princes, had banded together against the Lord and against his anointed, and thy holy servant Jesus whom thou hast anointed.

And so we believe that the anointing indicates the Holy Spirit coming upon persons [00:24:02] to

perform a particular service, and this, of course, was distinctive in relation to the Lord Jesus. Now, you know that the word Christ or Messiah simply means anointed, the anointed one.

And the Lord Jesus was distinguished in this way when the Holy Spirit came upon him like a dove.

There he was anointed publicly in view of his service for God in this world.

But then we come to ourselves.

And are we anointed?

The Bible says yes, we are anointed. In 2 Corinthians chapter 1, we find Paul mentioning three different features connected with the Holy Spirit in relation to ourselves. We are sealed, we are anointed, and we have the earnest of the Spirit. Three different ideas, but all connected with the Holy Spirit. We are anointed.

So if you like, we too are distinguished. [00:25:03] Distinguished persons in this world, favored persons in this world, in that we are anointed with the Holy Spirit to perform the functions that God requires of us as we are found here in the wilderness. Now isn't that tremendous?

We are indwelt with the Holy Spirit forever.

It says he will abide with you forever.

My, that's wonderful.

If it had depended upon our faithfulness, he would have left us long ago. But that's just the difference between the gift of the Spirit in the Old Testament and the gift of the Spirit in the New Testament. Saul, the king of Israel, had the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit empowered him and he did great things for God until he was disobedient and the Spirit was taken from him and came upon David, the anointed king. That will never take place in you, in me, or any other real Christian.

[00:26:04] When we are sealed with the Spirit, we are sealed until the day of redemption. We are sealed, we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit right to the very end of our lives here, right to the end of the Christian testimony here. The Holy Spirit is here forever.

And if there is any particular function that we desire to do in the assembly, then the Holy Spirit is the power.

I believe that's a secondary thought connected with the gift of the Spirit. You say, well, can't the Lord just give us power and then that enables us to do what we want to do? No, he wants to give us the person of the Holy Spirit to come upon us, to tell us and remind us that in ourselves we are hopeless and useless, that we need a power greater than ourselves, we need someone infinitely greater than ourselves in order to do anything for the Lord. [00:27:01] And we know that we are very often like Saul, we are very often disobedient, we are often impulsive like Saul in offering up what we ought not to offer as Saul did, things of that nature that indicate impetuosity, indicate disobedience, and we don't get help along that line. But when we humble ourselves and say, yes, Lord, in ourselves we are no use, we are hopeless, but we do want to do this for thee, then the power of the Spirit is there to help

us. My, that's wonderful.

And I believe that's why the Christian testimony is still here today.

And if the Spirit had been withdrawn at any moment because of the unfaithfulness of the Church, it would have disappeared. But the Spirit is here and will never be withdrawn. The anointing, thou anointest my head with oil.

And so we too can say we have received the anointing and we can do the things that the Lord wants us to do. [00:28:03] But another thought connected with the anointing, and we find this in John's epistle, first epistle, chapter 2, where he says we have received an anointing from the Holy One. Same word, anointing.

The anointing that you have received makes you indispensable, makes you rather, that's not the word I should be using, it makes us superior to all the knowledge that man possesses, and he can't give you anything in this realm because the Holy Spirit is here to teach us. You don't need any man to teach you, says John, you have the Holy Spirit. Now that does not run contrary to what Paul says in Ephesians chapter 4, when he says the head in glory has given gifts to the assembly, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastor, teachers, with a view to the work of the ministry and so on. There very definitely the gifts are given for the teaching of the Church.

[00:29:01] So what John is saying, you don't need any man to teach you, that's the natural man.

The natural man is incapable of giving anything to the saints of God, but the Holy Spirit can, as 1 Corinthians chapter 2 tells us.

The second chapter tells us that the natural man, he cannot receive the things of the Lord, he cannot impart the things of the Lord, but because we have the Holy Spirit, then spiritual things can be communicated to us. So dear brethren, we are well supplied.

We are anointed with oil, anointed with the Holy Spirit. We can claim that on the authority of the Word of God, every true believer.

Now we find this last statement, my cup runneth over.

My cup runneth over.

There are various thoughts connected with cups in scripture. [00:30:02] You remember the well-known one, when the Lord speaks about a cup that he had to drink, the cup which my Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it?

And that wasn't a cup of joy, that was a cup of woe indeed, a cup of sorrow.

But he was willing to drink it in order to accomplish the Father's will. We read in the Old Testament about God's cup of wrath, a cup that he would pour out upon Israel and upon the nations because of their opposition and wickedness. But here this is a cup of blessing.

My cup runneth over.

It's not half filled, it's filled to overflowing, more than enough, ample there for David's blessing and encouragement and refreshment.

Now if we just refer to three scriptures in connection with this, it might help us to see something of his blessing. In one of the Psalms, [00:31:01] I just forget which at the moment, I think it's Psalm 119, I may be wrong, where the psalmist says, I will take the cup of salvation.

I will take the cup of salvation.

And by, that's a full cup, and a cup that's running over, running over with every conceivable blessing, the cup of salvation.

What I'm going to say, you've heard it over and over again, that we're convinced we have to repeat these things because they're necessary. Salvation doesn't simply mean that my sins are forgiven and I'm going to heaven. Praise God for that.

That's a very wonderful thing. But when I think about salvation that I have acquired through Christ, it's a very embracing term indeed.

And first of all, that salvation deals with the guilt of my sins and this reminds me of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thank God for that.

Every qualm of the conscience, [00:32:02] every question of doubt can be settled when we gaze at the cross and see that the Lord Jesus in his death there has settled once and for all the question of my sins. The cross of Christ is the reason why I'm saved. That's a very, very full cup indeed. But then we find day by day, in very practical experience, we come up against sins, we come up against sin in the world, we come up against it in our lives. And what are we to do?

Well, says Paul in Romans, we are saved by his life.

Here is another feature of salvation. Saved by his life. Why, Paul, you continually tell us we are saved through his death. How are we saved by his life? Because Paul's not talking about the life that he lived down here in this world. He's talking about the life that Christ has at the right hand of God. And he's talking about all the power that can come through Christ [00:33:01] at the right hand of God for your benefit and mine to enable us to fight against sin and the consequences we meet in this world. Just let me give one example of this. You remember Paul writing to the Philippians, writing from prison.

And he said to them, your prayers and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ shall turn out for my salvation.

Was Paul doubting his salvation?

Was he doubting about the matter of his sins? Not for a moment.

He's talking about his circumstances. He's in prison. He's subject to pressure. He's subject to persecution. How is he going to react? He says, I want to be like Christ. He says, the Lord was in prison.

The Lord knew what it was to be persecuted and to be ill-treated in prison. He says, I want to be like him. He opened not his mouth when he was taken like a lamb to the slaughter and when he was treated shamefully. Paul says, I want to be like him. [00:34:02] The spirit of Christ, that's what he wanted to be in him. And that would save him, save him from his circumstances and the conditions that he was in and enabling him to live like Christ. So this is practical salvation over sin and over consequences.

And that's a daily matter. And that's connected with the man who is in the presence of God. Then Paul says, now is your salvation nearer than when you believe.

What does he mean?

Why, he says, this is the final act of salvation and is connected with the coming of the Lord. When we'll be saved out of the very presence of sin and guilt and opposition.

So you see the cup of salvation is a very full cup and it's all connected with Christ. And if we miss that, we miss the best.

His death, his glory at the right hand of God, his coming again.

But because of him, the guilt of my sins is dealt with, I have power to fight against sin and consequences [00:35:03] and I look forward to the final act of salvation when my body will be changed and I will be caught up to be with Christ. That's a good cup of salvation. A very, very full one indeed. That one is running over because there's plenty in it to meet our need. Then Paul speaks about the cup of blessing.

The cup of blessing which we bless is it not the communion of the blood of Christ.

Oh, what a wealth is there when we think of all that the blood of Christ has brought us into. John says it cleanses away our sins, every one of them, not a vestige of them remaining. Paul says we're reconciled to God by the death of his son and involving his blood too. And through that blood too we're privileged to draw an eye into the presence of God, the cup of blessing. Oh, who can expound adequately all that's involved in that expression, the cup of blessing.

[00:36:02] And it's held out to us every time we go to remember the Lord. And we make much of that cup. That's the idea. We eulogize it. It's so full, it's so wonderful. And it's all connected with the value of the blood of Christ. And through that blood our guilt is dealt with. Praise God, through that blood we can worship. And so it's a very, very full cup indeed. And then lastly, again referring to the Lord inaugurating the supper, he says this is the cup of the new covenant in my blood.

Now we know that strictly speaking the new covenant according to the book of Jeremiah is made with Israel, the house of Israel and refers to a coming day. But the principles involved in that covenant are equally applicable to the people of God today. And Paul sums them up in two distinct features in Hebrews chapter 8 where he says your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more forever.

Then it says and all shall know me [00:37:01] from the least to the greatest. Now we often say this, that people who talk about the forgiveness of sins as being something elementary, they don't know what they're talking about. It's all through the Bible. The forgiveness of sins is a unique blessing that can

only come from God. No one else but God can forgive sins. And God doesn't give to us anything that's elementary. And that's the very basis upon which all his blessing comes to us. The day of atonement stands out in the Old Testament as the great sacrifice that affected the nation of Israel year by year. And too when you apply it to ourselves, marvelous thing that our sins are forgiven. Perhaps we don't realize the greatness of that wonderful blessing. To lay our heads in our pillows at night and to say they're all gone, no fears. We're ready to meet God. And too to come before God with our consciences purged and worship him and to know him, all shall know me from the least to the greatest. [00:38:02] And so Paul sums up the new covenant as far as we're concerned in these two great blessings. And also, of course, there is the glory that excelleth that's far infinitely greater than all that was connected with the old covenant. Many, many other things that we find in 2 Corinthians chapter 3 connected with the new covenant as it applies to us today. That's a cup that's full and running over. Well, dear brethren, may these few remarks on this verse be an encouragement to us. First of all, we have fellowship. The table spread in the midst of our enemies. Secondly, we have favor, the anointing that we have received that distinguishes us from all around us. And then lastly, we have a fullness connected with these cups that I've mentioned and there are others too, how marvelous these things are. And they come to us through this great and glorious person who describes himself to us as the good shepherd. [00:39:02] May we be encouraged for his namesake. Now can we sing 1-0-3? 1-0-3.

We'll sing of the shepherd that died, that died for the sake of the flock. His love to the utmost was tried, but firmly endured as a rock.

Of him and his love will we sing.

His praises our tongues shall employ till heavenly anthems we bring in yonder bright regions of joy. 1-0-3.

We'll sing of the shepherd that died, that died for the sake of the flock.

His love to the utmost was tried, [00:40:01] but firmly endured as a rock.

When blood from the victim must flow, this shepherd by pity was led to stand between us and the foe and willingly died in our stead.

Our song then forever shall be of the shepherd who gave himself thus, no subject so glorious as he, nothing so affecting to us.

[00:41:07] Of him and his love will we sing.

His praises our tongues shall employ till heavenly anthems we bring in yonder bright regions of joy.

Lord Jesus, we thank thee, we can raise our voices in song to thee now, and we're glad to do this. We derive a great deal of pleasure when we sing these hymns. We thank thee, O God, Lord Jesus, that they tell us about thyself, they bring before us thy glory, thy person, [00:42:02] and the greatness of thy work, and we're glad to sing about thee. Glad to sing to thee also, Lord Jesus. And so we once more thank thee for the privilege of being gathered together and the honor of being occupied with thyself.

We think of all the occupations of men in this world, their great men, their favorites, their heroes, their politicians, their leaders. So we thank thee that we have thyself, Lord Jesus, and we pray that we may have a greater appreciation of thee, more often speaking to thee, more often listening to thee. And so, Lord, we look to thee and pray that thou wilt have a greater part in each of our lives. Help us not to be overawed by the presence of so many enemies.

They are but men.

We know the power of Satan is great, who energizes them. Help us to rely upon thee, thy power. Thou didst say to thine own, [00:43:02] all power is given unto me in heaven and upon earth. We thank thee for this.

Paul, the great apostle, would say, I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me, and we pray that we may have that experience too, Lord Jesus, as we have found in this poor, sad world. And so we give thee thanks for our time together and bless thee, Lord Jesus, in thy peerless name. Amen. Copyright WDR 2021