

# Festival of Easter - A Great Demand: The Response of True Worship

*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: 17 April 2022

Preacher: William Philip

- [ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, good evening and welcome to our festival of Easter this Sunday evening.
- There's a creche downstairs for little ones, so do make use of that and enjoy a little break for yourselves if you've little ones. It's also a kids' program for primary school children going on, so don't miss out on that.
- And afterwards, there's refreshments and plenty of time to chat and meet and greet one another. Now, we've got ahead of us an evening of music, of poetry and song.
- Some of it performed for us, some of it for us to join in with, as well as a focus on the Easter message and the light that it brings into the darkness of this world.
- And, of course, the response that Christ's message demands to that light. But before we sing an opening hymn together, listen to the words of this ancient Easter poem.
- [ 1 : 0 1 ] It comes from the 6th century. Sing, my tongue, how glorious battle, glorious victory became through the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- Sing, my tongue, how glorious battle, glorious victory became.
- And above the cross, his trophy, tell the triumph and the fame. Tell how he, the earth's redeemer, by his death for man o'ercame.
- Thirty years fulfilled among us, perfect life in low estate, born for this and self-surrendered, to his passion dedicate.
- On the cross, the lamb is lifted for his people immolate. His, the nails, the spear, the spitting, reed and vinegar and gall, from his patient body pierced, blood and water streaming full.
- [ 2 : 3 1 ] Earth and sea and stars and mankind, by that stream are cleansed all. Faithful cross above all other, one and only noble tree, none in foliage, none in blossom, none in fruit your compares with thee.
- Sweet the wood and sweet the iron, and thy load, how sweet is he.
- Unto God be laud and honour, to the Father, to the Son, to the mighty Spirit, glory, ever three and ever one.
- Power and glory in the highest, while eternal ages run. For may be theámdom alles, the rider, to the keer ál veri, with thee sythaven ■■■■ gras, To the Lord of probably theounding Turn, pale fier and ■■■■ Sache, CHOIR SINGS
- CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS
- [ 5 : 5 8 ] CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

From those who hold them for mercy, his kingdom is the hand.

Forever he shall pray, heaven he brings to his home.

The forest of the land of the sea, the sovereign Lord of God.

Forever he is, the Lord who is the night. He is the Lord who is the night.

[ 7 : 50 ] In the peace of the water, all give me to your name.

For you are my glory. For you are my glory. The grace shall ever, ever end.

Through all eternity. Do be seated.

Well, that triumphant hymn speaks of the glory of the risen and ascended Lord Jesus, crowned as the Lord of life, seated at the right hand of God the Father, and as ruler of time and of eternity, having been as he has been, publicly vindicated by the Holy Spirit, through whom he was raised from the dead.

But that crowning glory came only through the cross, where the wonderful love of God the Father was poured out on lost sinners as God the Son, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without blemish to purify our consciences from dead works so that we might serve the living God.

[ 9 : 16 ] And it's at Easter that the glory of the one and only true God is revealed supremely to our world. We're going to listen now to our choir singing about how deep is that love of the Father and how precious is the blood of the Son, along with some more words spoken and sung of what it means to know and to receive what he has done for us at Easter time.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.  
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. To The Path of Thompson And yesterday's invade And the lord of the land And in the water's misleading Thank you.

The sky and breath has brought my life, my glory is saved. The pure of God, the divine is found for us.

[ 12 : 20 ] The pure of God, the divine is found for us.

The pure of God, the divine is found for us. The pure of God, the divine is found for us.

The pure of God, the divine is found for us. The pure of God, the divine is found for us.

The pure of God, the divine is found for us. The pure of God, the divine is found for us.

The pure of God, the divine is found for us. The pure of God, the divine is found for us.

[ 13 : 42 ] The pure of God, the divine is found for us. The pure of God, the divine is found for us.

The pure of God, the divine is found for us.

The pure of God, the divine is found for us. The pure of God, the divine is found for us.  
The pure of God, the divine is found for us.

The pure of God, the divine is found for us. weren't for us, the divine is found for us. The pure of God, the divine is found for us. He God, the divine is found for us. He who all the world sustains.

Christ is risen from the dead. Go and tell that Jesus reigns. I will sing of my Redeemer.

[ 15 : 21 ] And His Father who's come to me. For the cruel and costly suffering. Of the curse who set me free.

I will tell the story. And my lost sin to sin. In His balance of a mercy.

He around so pretty. Yes, I'll sing of my Redeemer. With His blood we worship free.

On the cross He still has my heart. May His grace and make me free.

O praise my Redeemer.

[ 16 : 26 ] His triumphal death. O the things He gives me. O the sin I've ever heard.

O the sin I've ever heard. O the sin I've ever heard. O the sin I've ever heard. O the sin I've ever heard.

O the sin I've ever heard. Be content to have those wanting. O the sin I've ever heard. O the sin I've ever heard.

O the sin I've ever heard. With His blood He purchased me On the cross He sealed my burden With His hands that made me free To sing the story of the Christ He died for me Sing it with the saints in glory God and God in rest of the sea There's no sin on my redeemer With His blood He purchased me On the cross He sealed my burden

Bring His hands that made me free Free to sing of my redeemer With His blood He sealed my burden In His hand that made me free A great day to sing Great souls that great days Great souls that great days Great to sing Hello, my name is Michael. I am 39 years old. I'm an engineer from the Wirral and I live in Glasgow with my wife, Carol, and two children.

[ 19 : 10 ] I come from a family of non-believers. My mum and dad are both atheists, as is my younger brother. And so was I until I was about 30 years old. Just prior to that I was living in Valencia in Spain where I'd been awarded a scholarship to study a master's degree in engineering.

And I hoped that that would be the start of a new life in Spain. That was my idol. I always wanted to live in Spain. I thought that was what would make me ultimately happy and contented.

At the end of the 12 months I was very grateful to be offered a job. But the only catch was that rather than being in Valencia it was in Glasgow. Whilst I was in Glasgow I had what you might call a bit of a crisis. So I was reading lots of books about philosophy and things just to really try to understand my position in life.

And the more I read the more I came to the quite sad conclusion that there was no God and that that meant that there was no ultimate meaning in life. It was difficult for me to embrace the conclusions of the worldview which I had. If I was to be consistent with my worldview I had to either grip my teeth and embrace those conclusions.

I mean I wanted a family. I wanted to love somebody. I wanted to be loved. But I came to the hard conclusion that if I were to enjoy those things I would have to ultimately engage in self-deception and just hope for the best.

[ 20 : 30 ] And it was just unsatisfying. And so I reached the point where I thought well actually I need there to be real truth. I need real love. I need real right and wrong. I know evil exists. And so it left me in a position where I knew that God was real. Or at least I deeply wanted, I sincerely wanted God to be real despite my upbringing.

I was very fortunate at that time to be living in a shared flat with a Christian guy called Charlie. He was the first person I knew who told me that Jesus Christ was his king.

And so I took him up on the offer to go to church. And that's when I was presented with the gospel and I was presented with the Bible and I was quickly plugged into a Bible study. Very quickly from beginning that Bible study to taking the Bible home and reading it and underlining it, I very quickly was presented with Jesus Christ.

And that challenged all of the preconceptions, the erroneous preconceptions that I had. And it started me on this walk that I'm currently on, which is walking with my king, the Lord Jesus.

Of course, problems don't go away when you're a Christian. Life is still difficult. I do worry about the future for myself and my family. But ultimately I know whose hands our lives are in. I know that God is faithful and I know that he is good. I no longer pine for Spain. It's nice to go there occasionally.

[ 21 : 48 ] But my hope now is in the new creation when the Lord Jesus Christ returns and we're changed. And so ultimately I can resign to the confidence of knowing that God is in control. He's undergirding everything.

And so all I need to do is do my best in walking according to his rules and bring my children up in the hope and the truth that we have in the gospel. And that they might too walk in that faith and have everlasting hope.

As a family, the hope that we have in Jesus Christ, they help us to forgive and help us to love, help us to give grace for each other. Especially when we are tired or we cannot sleep and all the stress of the real life is really hard.

We are not perfect, but the grace of Christ is, wow, is good for every day and it's good for us and it's good for them. I think that is something that helps us in that something that God has helped us to shape our characters in our life.

He's with us. He's part of our family. He's the head of our family. He's shaping us through Bible studies and through church and through every aspect of life. And even just when we take moments to reflect on our family and where God has placed us and brought us.

[ 23 : 08 ] When I look at what God has done in my life, I know that I can trust him. He's good and he's faithful. So it gives me great hope to know that he is at the helm and that we're not alone.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, born and the brothers and sisters was from the■■■■■.

ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK

ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK

ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK ZANG EN MUZIEK  
das hart und schweiß stillschweigend, ja, stillschweigend, stillschweigend, ja, und wo bleibst du das Wort und schweiß stillschweigend, ja.

[ 27 : 42 ] Amen. We're going to hear now from the Bible, from John's Gospel, chapter 12, where we have Jesus himself explaining what the Easter message is really all about.

He tells us very plainly, in his own words, just days before he was to go to the cross, what the meaning of his death and resurrection is.

And he also makes clear that there are implications of what he's doing that can't be avoided for every human being in the world. We're going to hear the reading in two parts.

Do follow it. It's printed in the center of your programs. And in between, the musicians will play a lovely version of Love Divine or Love's Excelling, while we have a presentation on the screen about our Easter offering this year.

So Evita's going to read the first part now. The Pharisees said to one another, Look, the world has gone after him.

[ 28 : 58 ] Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, Sir, we wish to see Jesus.

Philip went and told Andrew. Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth, And it dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.

Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this purpose, I have come to this hour.

Father, glorify your name. Then a voice came from heaven. I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again. The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered.

[ 30 : 04 ] Others said, An angel has spoken to him. Jesus answered, This voice has come for your sake, not mine. Now is the judgment of this world.

Now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, Will draw all people to myself. He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

So the crowd answered him, We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?

So Jesus said to them, The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, Lest darkness overtake you.

The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, Believe in the light, That you may become sons of light.

[ 31 : 08 ] A■TER Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

When Jesus had said these things he departed and hid himself from them. Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him.

[ 34 : 21 ] So that the words spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled. Lord, who has believed what he heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

Therefore, they could not believe. For again, Isaiah said, He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.

Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory, and spoke of him. Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees, they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue.

For they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God. And Jesus cried out and said, Whoever believes in me, believes not in me, but in him who sent me.

And whoever sees me, sees him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.

[ 35 : 41 ] If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.

The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge. The word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment, what to say and what to speak.

And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me. Amen.

Over these last weeks in our church gatherings together, we've been looking at this chapter of John's Gospel where Jesus himself explains what his death at Easter was all about.

You can see it there in verse 33. Just a few days before he went to the cross, he speaks here to show by what kind of death he was going to die. And in fact, there's a lot in this chapter.

[ 36 : 51 ] We've seen first that Jesus' death is a great declaration, the great revelation to this world once and for all of the true glory of God. Father, glorify your name, says Jesus in verse 28.

And the voice of the Father answers, I will glorify it again in this great hour of climax that is coming at Calvary. And Jesus' death also is a great definition of the road to glory for everyone who will follow him.

Verse 26. If anyone serves me, he must follow me. Losing his life, hating this world's treasures, becoming like a grain of wheat that falls into the ground and dies in order to bear much fruit.

And Jesus' death also is the great deliverance for this world. Look at verse 31. Judging the world, exposing sin, and yet bearing away sin, destroying the ruler of this world and the power of sin, and ensuring that all people will at the last be drawn to Jesus to stand before him as their judge.

And therefore, because Jesus' death uniquely declares God's glory and offers deliverance from sin and defines his true people, those who follow him, then also it's a death that divides the world.

[ 38 : 16 ] Divides it into those who do believe and follow him and those who will not. And it divides them both in time and also in eternity. So, you see, Jesus' death and the message of Easter is one that just can't be ignored.

It's an event that makes a great demand. It demands from every human being the response of true worship of God through Jesus Christ and through him alone.

Jesus makes that very clear here in verse 36 when he says, Believe while you have the light that you may become sons of light. He's saying that his life and his death have a unique meaning, an ultimate meaning, an eternal meaning.

And therefore, it demands a response universally from every single human being in the world. Of course, immediately you make that sort of statement.

It grates on people today in our very secular world, of our very post-modern world. Because we've relegated religion and faith to just the matter of preference, of opinion.

[ 39 : 26 ] That's just your opinion, people say. Fine for you to believe that. But just don't try and say that your beliefs make any demands on me. You believe what you like. Put your faith in yoga or in Kabbalah or in meditation or in Christianity or in fairies, whatever.

That's fine. Just don't expect me to do your thing. That's often what people say, isn't it? The one thing that's really unacceptable and really wrong is that you should force your view, your beliefs on me or indeed on anyone else.

Unless, of course, those things do come into the one category of absolute truth and absolute sin. There are things like that, aren't there now? Misgendering someone, for example. That's always wrong.

Daring to be skeptical about things like climate change. That's real heresy. That's always wrong. So it's funny, isn't it, that in a world where everything is relative, some things are still more relative than others. There are some things that just can't be tolerated in our world of liberalism and in our world of tolerance.

And it's true, isn't it? People will often say to Christians, that's fine that you believe all that. That's great. I'm happy for you. They just don't tell me that your beliefs have got to impact me. And sometimes we find that people come to our church here, to our services, maybe to one of our courses, like the Life Course or Christianity Explored.

- [ 40 : 52 ] And after a time, they'll say something like this. They'll say, OK, fine, I understand the story now. I get it. And, yeah, I understand your message. But let's leave off for a bit.
- I don't want to get into anything too heavy at the moment. I don't really want to feel I have to make any decisions about this. I'd rather keep my options open. So just let's cool it. And, of course, we're never going to force anybody here to do anything or to believe anything.
- But, you see, here's the problem. Jesus himself is the one who says, no, I can't let you away with that. Because I'm not dealing with relativistic ideas.
- I'm dealing with truth. I'm dealing with public truth. With universal truth. With absolute truth. With true truth. And it's a truth that demands a response.
- No. It's urgent, says Jesus. While you have the light, believe in the light. And what Jesus is saying is that whether you like it or not, actually you will respond to him.
- [ 42 : 05 ] Because when you're faced with his insistent demand to try to abstain, to try to hide, to sit on the fence permanently, that is a response.
- It's a no vote. It's a rejection, isn't it, of what Jesus offers. It's a refusal of his light, which he says is life itself. And so, to ignore the truth, to ignore the light of absolute reality, is a response.
- But it's one that can only lead to catastrophe. Because if you won't embrace the light, well, look at what Jesus says there in verse 35. He says, you remain walking in darkness.
- Ignorant, not knowing where you're going. And in the end, he says, darkness will completely overtake you. It will envelop you, even as you try to sit on the fence.
- So, Jesus, you see, is as clear as he is urgent. He's saying, respond now before it's too late. Before your future becomes irretrievably dark.
- [ 43 : 17 ] Well, again, people don't like that sort of absolutist message. Don't like it today, certainly, but actually, they didn't like it then either. And these verses show us what so often happens when Jesus' demand on people's lives is made very clear.
- They try to deflect it. And very often, they appeal to their own sense of religion or their own sense of virtue in order to do so. And that's what they're doing here in verse 34.
- Look, it's a classic religious defense from Jesus' listeners. Classic piece of defense against the challenge and the commitment that's demanded from people by the real message of the real Jesus.
- So they fend him off with religion. That might seem an odd thing to say, but it just shows that the real message of Jesus doesn't fit into the world, the comfortable world of human religion at all.
- It's far too radical. It's far too challenging. Look what the people say there in verse 34. Just the sort of thing that respectable religious people might say today, particularly if they're middle-aged or older.
- [ 44 : 25 ] We know the Bible. We don't recognize any of this sort of fanatical stuff you're talking about, though, this sort of son of man being lifted up business. You see, they're saying, oh, well, we've been to Sunday school.
- We've grown up in a Christian country. We went to school assembly and RE lessons and that sort of thing. We're quite content with the institutional established church for weddings and funerals, maybe the occasional Christmas service or Easter service.
- But we don't want any of this fundamentalism that you're talking about. We don't want any of this fanaticism that goes on about the Bible and the cross and being born again and all this denying yourself and following Jesus and certainly none of this being scorned and hated by the world.

No way. Suffering loss for doing that? No thanks. That's what these people meant, you see. Because what they say there in verse 34 presupposes two things.

Firstly, that they understood very well that Jesus was claiming to be the Christ, the Messiah King, the glorious son of man. And secondly, they clearly understood, didn't they, that Jesus was talking about being lifted up to die.

[ 45 : 42 ] And that's what they couldn't stomach, you see. In other words, they grasped his message but they didn't like it. Not at all. And they knew that they were being confronted with the Messiah, the Christ, but not at all the kind of Messiah that they wanted or expected.

And certainly not the kind of discipleship that they wanted either. So what they said was yes to the idea of a Messiah, an eternal king who remains forever.

Yes, to the eternal life and glory and all of that that he brings. But no to the real Messiah who stood in front of them as a savior from sin and as a Lord who was calling his people to follow him and carrying a cross and bearing shame and bearing suffering as he did.

You see, it's yes to thought for the day and songs of praise and perhaps occasional christening or wedding in a church but it's no to evangelical fanaticism.

It's no to talk about repentance and conversion and certainly it's no to any sort of talk about a God who will judge people for their sins and so on. No, no, no.

[ 46 : 59 ] You'll have to give us none of that if you want us to be involved in your church. Because we're educated people. We're civilized. We're sophisticated. So you'll have to answer all of our clever questions is what they're saying to Jesus.

Tone down all that sort of crude talk about the cross and about death. You want people like us to take you seriously. What kind of son of man is that? What kind of God is that?

A dying savior God? No way. It's really just the same today as it was way back then. People change very little at heart.

Look at verse 42 there. It's very telling. Some of those even in the religious establishment did want to believe but what? Well they were afraid you see they were embarrassed.

You can't confess in public that you're serious about the real Jesus Christ. Oh look what will happen. You'll be put out of the synagogue. You'll be put out of the establishment. You'll be put out of polite society.

[ 48 : 06 ] That's just the same today isn't it? What was it Alistair Campbell famously said of the Tony Blair government? We don't do God. It's a vote loser. And others of course just like today didn't want to believe at all.

They turned their backs. And they were happy to cloak their spirituality to signal their virtue to everybody but they weren't happy with something that actually interfered with their way of life and with their pride with their self-glorification.

Look at verse 43. They loved the glory that comes from man. They loved the approval of the world and of society and all that goes with that. And they loved it far more than the glory that comes from God but which puts you outside the world of polite society.

And it's not any different in our world today is it? In all sorts of ways people want to be in with the opinions of those who they think matter in the world. On social media, in the staff room, with their company culture, with their friends, with school.

They want to have the right virtue signaling signs on their Facebook page or their Twitter account. many people will only have Jesus if Jesus will actually sign up to whatever the glory of man demands today.

[ 49 : 35 ] But notice how Jesus responds to all that sort of religious defense. He doesn't engage. He doesn't answer their pompous questions, their self-important questioning, does he?



No, in verse 35, he just meets them with a relentless demand. The light is among you for a little while longer, he says.

So walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. It's a real warning, isn't it? A stark one, a clear one. But it's also a wonderful invitation, isn't it?

Even to those impertinent people. It's a wonderful invitation to believe, to become sons of light. We'll come back to Jesus' relentless demand in a moment.

But let's pause and sing a hymn that articulates the beauty of that command on the lips of Jesus. Walk in the light, and then the tomb shall hold for you no fear.

[ 50 : 33 ] Glory shall chase away its gloom, for Christ has conquered there. O noch and deeply love and ihm soon go and leaders God bless you.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. He puts the spotlight right between their eyes.

I wonder if you notice in verse 36. It's very direct. It's no longer in the third person as it was back there in verse 26 where he talks about anyone. Look, verse 36.

[ 53 : 41 ] It's you. It's you listening right now, right here. The light is among you, verse 35. Just a little while longer. So walk now while you can.

Before the darkness overtakes you. You can't hide, Jesus is saying. You can't abstain. You must respond. It's a matter of urgency.

You've got all the answers that you need already. You've seen the signs, he says in verse 37. You've heard the words that I've spoken. Words that are light and life.

And he's saying you don't have much time left. So walk while you have the light. Believe in the light. Jesus' death and resurrection, you see, makes a great demand.

A relentless demand for a response before darkness falls. And darkness will fall. Jesus makes that point very starkly at the end of verse 36, do you see?

[ 54 : 49 ] When he had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them. You see the point John's making by telling us that very bluntly? He's saying there comes a time when if you have not responded to Jesus' command, it is too late.

And disaster strikes, he will walk away. Imagine a child playing in the road. And you look at them. You have to shout, look out, there's a lorry coming.

That's not the time, is it, for a truculent child to turn around and say, prove it to me. Convince me you're right. I'm not going anywhere. It's the time to act.

It's the time to jump out of the way in response to the warning. And Jesus is saying, friends, when the message of my death on the cross confronts you, you, it demands a response.

You can't presume upon it. You must believe, he says, lest the darkness overtake you. And the tragic thing is that for many of those who are listening to Jesus, then it did.

[ 56 : 02 ] Verse 37. Despite all that they'd seen, they still did not believe in him.

And so ultimately that light was removed and darkness came. They would not believe and in the end, look at verse 39. Therefore, they could not believe.

Therefore, they could not believe. See, what Jesus is saying, unpalatable as it may be, is that you can resist his demands too long. Jesus' command is the command of God the Father himself.

Jesus is crystal clear about that. Look at verse 49. He gave me what to say and what to speak. So to resist is inexcusable. It is the command of almighty God himself.

And to refuse it is to spit in the face of almighty God himself. And that can only leave you in the place of utter condemnation.

[ 57 : 04 ] Look at verse 40. Do you see? If you harden your heart, if you close your eyes to the gracious command of God, the command of life itself, in the end, God will confirm you in that desire.

He will harden your heart. If you will not believe, there comes a time when you cannot believe. And Jesus says in verse 48, You will be judged, you will be condemned, not by the Christ who came to save, but by these very words of salvation offered to you, which you have refused.

Either by deliberate refusal, or by default, by trying to abstain, by not following him when he calls you.

Either way, you see, he's saying you're walking away from Jesus and his light. And you're walking into darkness, which ultimately will become ultimate darkness.

Like Judas in the next chapter. We read it from these terrible words, that despite Jesus offering him the bread, the last supper, he left.

[ 58 : 17 ] And John says he went out, and it was night. Those are terrible words. But remember that, friends, John tells us at the end of this book that he has written these things that we may believe that the Christ, the King of this world forever, is this Jesus and no other.

And that believing you may find life in his name. And these words here that we're looking at are the last words of Jesus' public ministry. That's why he's so urgent.

Look at verse 44. Jesus cried out. It's a cry from the heart. And it is still today. Whoever believes in me believes him who sent me.

I have come into this world as light so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. Not remain in darkness.

Jesus meets every religious defense with his relentless demand. And it is a word of gospel grace to bring rescue from darkness. from ultimate darkness.

[ 59 : 29 ] From eternal darkness. He came to deliver from darkness into light and into life that is eternal. But it's called demands a response.

He calls us to true worship. Walk while you have the light. Lest darkness overtake you. What if those were Jesus' last words to you ever this Easter Sunday?

Friends, it's a message that demands a response. Don't put up a defense however religious it can sound. Respond to his call. Bow down to his sovereign rule today.

Respond in true worship to Christ the King. While you have the light believe in the light that you may become sons of the light.

That's why Jesus Christ came. And that's what Easter is all for. Amen. dinners perform ■■■ capitalist ■ ■ Isn that true?

[ 61 : 02 ] son of ère he Also the foldys Rotzdem And?... in life and Christ the Lord Christ the Lord On His throne all Incoprients, laz■m e terrains, Will a storm to terminate all Who knows where the days we live next who hips the ministry on but only toreard at the warm Miseric Mars of all other lives.

Is Oh Sing Alleluia Our most Praise eternal Oh Sing Alleluia On Every Christ the Holy And you Can Love The God Is His name Is Lord In our great Jesus And He Who Steps above The Great

And To The God Christ Oh Sing Alleluia Our Most Praise Christ Oh Sing Alleluia Now Let We Face Christ Our God To The Great What Shall We Christ He He Heotherap

O sing hallelujah, for hope is eternal. O sing hallelujah, now heaven be blessed.

Christ, the holy life of heaven. O sing hallelujah, for hope is eternal.

[ 64 : 23 ] O sing hallelujah, now heaven be blessed. Christ, the holy life of heaven.

Now heaven be blessed, Christ, the holy life of heaven. O sing hallelujah, now heaven be blessed.

I'm Biddy Martin, and I've been with a church family for 30 years. I was brought up in a Christian family, and was converted when I was nine years old.

My father was a lay preacher, and he used to preach about, do you want to be left behind because you don't know the Lord?

We were so frightened of this, my brother and I, that we thought we'd better do something about it. But I knew my scriptures because I had a wonderful grandmother, and she taught me the scriptures, and she taught me rightly so that I knew where I was going.

[ 65 : 43 ] And I did, I gave my heart to Jesus and asked him to look after me. As I was growing up, if anything difficult happened, I was on my knees praying.

Now I went on doing that until I couldn't get on my knees, of course. And I always took it to the Lord. But throughout my life, I wouldn't say that I had stuck to it.

Absolutely. What I really felt was sometimes I was very rebellious. I thought I could do things for myself, but I have learned over the years I need the Lord.

We have to depend upon the Lord, but we're depending on Him far more than we think we are. When one is into old age, and especially 90s, when you feel you can't do things, there are very simple prayers that I take to the Lord.

In other words, help me upstairs, and help me, Lord, in what I'm going to do today. I need the help. I need the strength that the Lord will give me, and He is my helper.

[ 67 : 02 ] The Lord is my anchor. He I cling to, but more than that, He holds me fast. And so I have no doubts as to the future.

The doubts that I might have were all washed away at the cross. I hope that everyone, when they reach my age, if they do reach my age, will have a hope of heaven.

The eternal home which we want to be in. And my hope does not waver now. So I am very thankful indeed that I have a church family who are very good to me and look after me, and that I have the hope in the Lord Jesus.

Lord Jesus. Lord Jesus. Lord Jesus.

music singing Thank you.

[ 69 : 13 ] ...

...

.....

... and my God. For each will stand, and each will start, and I will request the Lord.

Request my Savior and my God. Amen. Well, we're delighted that you have joined us this evening as we have thought on, reflected on the events of the death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, thinking about the light that he brings in our darkness.

[ 72 : 02 ] But it's not just the events that we thought about. We thought about the implications for all of us to these events that are so pressing for each and every one of us. And these events we've thought about, they demand a response, as we've been thinking.

And we would love for you to do that and to continue thinking about these things. And the best way to do that is to keep coming along to our Sunday services.

We meet at 10 a.m. here, but also at Central, on Bath Street, and on the south side at Queen's Park, 10 a.m. every Sunday. And then again here at 5 p.m. in the afternoon.

That is the best way to continue to think about the Lord Jesus Christ, to investigate for yourself the claims of Jesus Christ. So come along. And if a friend brought you this evening, then pester them to bring you along each Sunday.

You'd be very welcome. These services are for everyone to come to, and we'd love you to do that. So do please come. You may also want to read further in John's Gospel.

[ 73 : 07 ] We've been looking at a bit of John's Gospel this evening. And we have these little booklets, these little blue booklets, and there are some available at the back in the hallways you leave. And they take you through John's Gospel bit by bit in sort of bite-sized chunks.

And again, if someone's brought you here tonight, then why not ask them to read with you one-to-one through John's Gospel and to see for yourself the claims of the Lord Jesus, to look at the evidence for yourself.

We'd love you to do that. Later in the year, we have our life course, not until September. But that's another opportunity to come to investigate for yourself the claims of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But the best thing, the thing I'd love you to do, is to come again on Sundays here in our different locations to hear for yourself the teaching from God's Word.

And we'd love nothing more than for you to share in the hope of the risen Lord Jesus for today, but also for eternity. Because Jesus Christ will return.

[ 74 : 10 ] He will return as judge and as saviour. And it's that certain and coming reality that we sing of now with our final hymn. Christ is surely coming, bringing his reward.

So let's sing now as we close our service together. Christ is surely coming. Christ is surely coming. Amen.

Christ is surely coming.

CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR  
SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS  
CHOIR SINGS

[ 77 : 05 ] CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR  
SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS  
Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 80 : 45 ] Thank you.