

[00:00:00] *hope: Welcome to the Hope Church Glasgow Sunday podcast. We pray you encounter God's love afresh today. Find out more about us@hopechurchglasgow.org or find us on Facebook and Instagram. Now, please enjoy this week's podcast.

[00:00:18] John: Let's just pray again.

I want to.

The major prayer today is that Jesus would be glorified, that he would reveal himself in high definition. And the reality is there is a veil that threatens to cover each and every one of our hearts.

And what we want to pray is for that veil to just be removed completely that we are able to see him clearly. And what I would love is for each and every one of you to join with me in this prayer right now that Jesus would reveal himself more clearly to you. Amen.

[00:01:00] Speaker C: So, Father, we all ask that you

[00:01:03] John: would reveal yourself to us. We want to see you.

[00:01:09] Speaker C: And Jesus said, if you've seen me, you've seen the Father.

So we want to pray that you would reveal your son, Jesus to us. In our hearts, we pray that any veil, any hardness of heart, any hardness

[00:01:26] John: of hearing or dullness of our eyes

[00:01:30] Speaker C: would be miraculously healed by the Holy Spirit in our midst.

And so we pray that you would do the work. We are not dependent on our own mind for understanding or the eloquence of our lips, but on the power of your spirit. And we thank you that you promised

[00:01:48] John: us that any who lack your spirit,

[00:01:51] Speaker C: any who desire to be filled, could come to you and that you would

[00:01:55] John: give to us freely of your holy spirit. And so we say, here we are. Would you give us the spirit of revelation that we can see you in a new way and taste and see that you are good? In Jesus name, amen.

And it's a real delight to have all the Ignites crew with us. We love having you guys with us. You, yes, give us a wave. These guys are going to be out doing fun stuff.

So we're working our way through Psalm 103.

The verse that we're talking about today is verse six.

Now, the whole point of this series is that we remember the benefits of the Lord.

We say, bless the Lord, O my soul and all that is within me. Bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul and

[00:02:50] Speaker C: forget not his benefits.

It's easy to walk through this life

[00:02:56] John: and get distracted on other things. It's really important that we remember who he is. And that's what we're gathered here to do. We're gathered to remember who he is. So this benefit, we talked about how he forgives all our iniquity he heals our.

[00:03:11] Speaker C: All of our diseases.

[00:03:13] John: He redeems our life from the pit. He crowns us with steadfast love and mercy and satisfies us with good so that our youth is renewed like the eagles. And now we're talking about. The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.

He works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.

[00:03:40] Speaker C: Now this is really good news.

Any of you ever felt like you've been oppressed?

Any of you ever have a boss who you felt like was quite oppressive in the way that they treated you?

Any of you young people ever feel like your parents oppressed you?

No. Charis is like, no way.

[00:04:06] John: Actually, she was nodding.

[00:04:11] Speaker C: Any of you ever felt like somebody's mistreated you?

Anybody ever felt like something has happened that's been unfair?

[00:04:26] John: What'd you say?

[00:04:28] Speaker C: I'm a middle child, so everything's been unfair.

[00:04:32] John: We have four middle children, so, yes.

Yeah.

[00:04:37] Speaker C: You know, the reality is we live in a fallen world.

And so in some way or another,

[00:04:46] John: we've all experienced the oppression of what it's like to live in a fallen world.

[00:04:54] Speaker C: Somebody, at some point has wronged you.

Somebody at some point has overlooked that good thing that you've done, maybe even blamed you for something that you haven't done, overlooked you for that promotion or that job or misunderstood you.

[00:05:20] John: I hate being misunderstood.

[00:05:23] Speaker C: Anybody hate that when your intentions are good, but somebody misunderstands you.

And to make matters worse, there are plenty of times when my intentions are not so great. And I do say something that's hurtful,

[00:05:40] John: which I'm sure we all can agree that that happens sometimes.

[00:05:46] Speaker C: But if you were to take a moment and really consider the ways that you've been misunderstood or hurt or wounded, sometimes these things are really severe. Sometimes it's the people who love us

[00:06:00] John: the most or who are supposed to

[00:06:02] Speaker C: love us the most, and they're having a bad day or whatever the reason is, they fail, and we can become seriously hurt.

Sometimes those wounds are things that we carry all of our life.

[00:06:20] John: We might be fortunate enough to have a counselor who can come alongside and sometimes unpick some of these things and

[00:06:27] Speaker C: help us to see how childhood wounds have affected us our whole life.

Or sometimes these things just lie under the radar, and we might never fully

[00:06:37] John: understand how the ways that we've been hurt or how the ways that a fallen world have actually affected us.

[00:06:45] Speaker C: Whether we understand or not, we sometimes find ourselves hobbling through life without the

[00:06:51] John: necessary tools to become victorious.

[00:06:56] Speaker C: Maybe these wounds that we carry aren't even things that people have done to us. Sometimes they're just things that we had no control over that nobody had any control over.

You know, natural disasters, things like what's happening in Nepal right now, or the big church festival.

[00:07:19] John: A sign falls over and somebody dies at a Christian festival, and you think, oh,

[00:07:29] Speaker C: we live in a fallen world.

[00:07:33] John: And there's a cry from each one of our hearts for justice, for freedom for all who are oppressed.

And the good news here is that

[00:07:50] Speaker C: there will be freedom for all who are oppressed.

Now, before we can sort of get into that bit, we also not only have to face the reality that all of these bad things have happened to us, but that also each and every one of us have been part of

[00:08:12] John: the problem as well.

[00:08:16] Speaker C: You see, when God created the world, he created you and me. And he made us in his image.

He gave us authority to rule and to reign on this earth.

Adam and Eve were supposed to create this garden, and it was meant to be a utopia, a utopia that was governed by man in right relationship with God.

So man would never have it all in his own head, the difference between right and wrong, the difference between the knowledge of good and evil. But in right relationship with God, God would help him to understand how to rule and to reign, what it looks like to walk in righteousness so that the world would flourish.

The story of Adam and Eve is a story of men who say, actually, we would rather live independently of you. And the consequence was that the whole earth suffered.

And you see this same thing repeated over and over and over again in Scripture. All you have to do is read through the Book of Judges if you want to know what that's like. The Book of Judges is horrible to read because judge in the Old Testament meant rulers.

And a judge in the Old Testament was meant to be somebody who was like a king, who was meant to

[00:09:46] John: rule over the world, who was meant

[00:09:48] Speaker C: to bring justice to a nation. But what you see is every time one of these rulers had this call and anointing on their life, sometimes they did all right, but most of the time they didn't do all right. And who suffered?

The whole nation suffered. Not only the nation, but all the nations around them.

Because when there's a call on your life to rule and to reign, and you don't take that call seriously, the whole world around you will suffer.

So not only have we all been wronged, but actually we've all participated in this. Now, that's what the Bible means when it says in Romans 3, 23 that all have sinned and fall short of

[00:10:35] John: the glory of God.

[00:10:39] Speaker C: See, it wasn't just Adam and Eve, but every one of us have sinned. Now, sometimes when you think about sin, we think about it like that wrong thing that we did to sin was to hurt somebody, to steal, to say that hurtful thing or whatever it is.

But actually the root word for sin is actually he missed the mark.

And if you think about like a line of moral actions, and the center of that line is neutral.

And everything to this side of the

[00:11:13] John: line would be our bad actions, and

[00:11:16] Speaker C: everything to this side of the line

[00:11:18] John: would be our positive actions.

[00:11:20] Speaker C: Sometimes we think to sin is everything on this side of the line, all the bad things that we could have done. And to not sin is simply to be neutral.

But actually the concept of sin that God gives us is anything short of being the right ruler, anything short of releasing the beauty of God's reign on

[00:11:46] John: the earth is sin.

[00:11:49] Speaker C: That puts us in a completely different state of dependence.

It means that it's not just about not hurting people. It's about being who you are.

It's about standing against injustice.

So when it says, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, what it's saying is that God wanted his glory to be released on the world. And what that looks like is perfection and beauty and righteousness.

He wanted that righteousness to be extended into the world in a way that was thorough, not just conceptual, not just a sort of a good idea.

And when Jesus came along, Jesus talked about this all the time. And what he called it was the kingdom of God.

He constantly preached about the kingdom of God because. For although it says in Romans 3:23, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, God had a plan before the foundation of the world that he would reveal the glory of

[00:12:59] John: God on the earth.

[00:13:01] Speaker C: Just this. No man had that glory in himself. To perfectly represent the heart of the Father, the Father said, I myself will come to the earth as a

[00:13:13] John: man to show you what my glory looks like.

[00:13:16] Speaker C: This is a claim of Jesus. Think about this.

The claim of Jesus is that the invisible God, the creator of the heaven and earth, would come to the earth as a man.

And that everything that man did would

[00:13:36] John: reveal the invisible God.

[00:13:38] Speaker C: This is a crazy claim.

Christianity makes a claim that the invisible God became a man. And everything that man did displayed the true glory of God. This is what it means when it says, into the great darkness there was a light, into the darkness of the fallenness of this world, into the darkness of people who are oppressed, who could not rescue themselves into the mess of our pain, into the mess of sin that every one of us have participated in.

[00:14:17] John: At some level, Jesus comes like a

[00:14:22] Speaker C: bright light and he does not sin.

Not only does he not say no to the Father, but he says yes to the Father. And so we see in Jesus what perfect justice looks like.

And when Jesus walks around and he encounters the prostitute, whereas all of the religious men speak down about her and expel her from their midst, Jesus reaches out with compassion and extends mercy and calls her righteous.

When lepers who are socially outcast are brought to Jesus, Jesus touches them. Because instead of their uncleanness affecting him, his cleanness and his holiness and his righteousness makes them clean.

Now you can put yourself in the story.

When Jesus comes into your mess, he doesn't despise you. He sees you exactly as you are today.

And he is the same today as he was in those days.

And all you got to do is flip through the pages of the Gospel. And if you haven't read the Gospels in a while, maybe you've never read them. I want to encourage you to just flip through these stories.

Even you ignite skies. I don't know how much you guys get into your Bible, but you can open the pages of these Bibles and, and open the pages of the Bible, read these stories of Jesus and ask yourself the question, is this, what is this how I know the invisible God to be?

[00:16:00] John: Because he's compassionate and kind and lowly.

And his heart is for every one of us to experience this justice.

Every time Jesus encountered somebody who was trapped in an illness or trapped in sin or trapped in social exclusion, he

[00:16:28] Speaker C: fought for that person.

He fought for that person to demonstrate

[00:16:34] John: what rightful ruling should look like.

[00:16:39] Speaker C: He was the epitome of justice for

[00:16:42] John: all who are oppressed.

[00:16:45] Speaker C: All of Israel was meant to do that. In the law, it said that they were supposed to stand up for the

[00:16:49] John: orphans, for the widows, for the immigrants.

[00:16:53] Speaker C: And constantly the people of Israel were failing over and over and over again.

[00:17:00] John: They had a covenant with God that

[00:17:02] Speaker C: they were meant to be doing this. And they failed over and over and over again. But it was merely so that each

[00:17:09] John: and every one of us would be able to do this only by grace.

Jesus modeled what it looked like to fight for justice.

And the invitation is that you and I would get to participate in that fight for justice.

Jesus didn't come simply so that you would be forgiven and could just go on living a comfortable life.

[00:17:53] Speaker C: I do believe God wants to Bless us.

[00:17:56] John: He wants us to have a comfortable life.

I believe God wants us to.

[00:18:01] Speaker C: But he doesn't just want us to have that for ourselves. He actually wants us to want that for the world around us.

He wants us to selflessly say, lord, if you desire me to take up my cross and to give my life for other people, I will do that.

[00:18:19] John: This is a huge ask, but thankfully his promise is that I will never leave you or forsake you.

That's why this metaphor, as we were worshipping about Jesus leading the battle cry and this imagery that we were singing and what I was sharing at the very beginning, you have this sense of Jesus setting the captives free and each and every one of us in some sort of pain or hurt that we've gone through, where the fallenness of the world has cut us up.

Said when the fall occurred, it was like the briars and their thorns. The earth took on a harsh aspect. And you can imagine going through this harsh world.

And the imagery is of us getting all cut up by the thorns throughout our day.

That says that there would be pains of childbirth. And I don't think that means just childbirth. I think sometimes I think it means raising kids as well.

It could be.

[00:19:26] Speaker C: It can be a hard, harsh world. And we go through it and we're all cut. And Jesus comes and he's leading us into. He's rescuing you.

He's saying, whatever your ailment is, he wants to rescue you. But not only that, but you then become part of the army, part of the solution.

Jan was feeling that we should be praying for people at the end. I know these guys both felt that if you've got some sort of illness or pains and things, or maybe you've been waiting for a breakthrough in a

[00:19:59] John: certain area and it's just not been happening.

[00:20:02] Speaker C: We want to pray for you, but it's not just to restore you back to the position of neutral.

We want to pray for you to actually be not only healed, but empowered to go through. Because each of you have been strategically

[00:20:18] John: placed in your environment to release justice,

[00:20:24] Speaker C: to release the Lord's justice. You young people, you go to schools, and each of you have been strategically placed in your friend groups, in your classrooms.

Each and every one of you have been strategically placed in your.

In the world that you live in. Maybe it's your brothers and sisters, maybe it's with your parents, but the Lord has strategically placed you as a warrior of justice.

He strategically placed you to release his heart in your community.

[00:21:00] John: Friends, I don't believe God's called us as Hope Church to just do whatever we need to do to grow, to be a big congregation.

[00:21:11] Speaker C: I don't feel like God just wants us to have better music and more polished sermons and better children's work and all this just so that we can grow.

You know, I do believe God wants us to grow. But what I believe he wants more than anything is for each and every one of us to say, yes, Lord, I will be your kingdom bearer in my world.

I will do what you want to humbly walk before you.

[00:21:41] John: He says it in the. In the prophets, in the book of Micah, Micah 6, 8.

He has told you, O man, what is good? And what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?

That verse, he has told you, O man, what is good? What does the Lord require of you, but to do justice and to love kindness? Or you could say, to love steadfast love and to walk humbly with your God.

It's great to be aware of what the Lord is saying.

It's great to have the power to lay your hands on people and to see them healed.

But nothing is as powerful as aligning our heart with the Lord to see justice and steadfast love.

[00:22:49] Speaker C: And the cool thing is that that

[00:22:50] John: justice is actually seeing people healed, that justice is seeing people hearing the word of the Lord, but also that we would hold onto the steadfast love.

Jesus made this his own mission.

When he came to the earth, he opened up the scroll in the temple and he read, this is recorded in Luke 4:18. He said, the Spirit is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are being oppressed.

So, friends, I want to just pray for us, and then we're going to have some time of ministry.

[00:23:51] Speaker C: First thing I want to pray is

[00:23:53] John: for any of you who might feel like you're oppressed.

[00:23:58] Speaker C: And we never want to spend too much time

[00:24:02] John: sort of navel gazing or, you know, focus completely, entirely on this.

[00:24:10] Speaker C: But nor do we want to just

[00:24:11] John: completely gloss over it.

[00:24:15] Speaker C: And if there are areas in your

[00:24:17] John: life where you feel like you've been wronged somehow, or you feel like you've, you know, somebody's done something to you, it's been unfair or unjust, or you've

[00:24:29] Speaker C: experienced oppression in the world, just the

[00:24:32] John: difficulties of the world, I want to just pray right now For Holy Spirit to minister to you.

You can close your eyes if you like, but

[00:24:47] Speaker C: God, I just want to

[00:24:48] John: pray that for anyone who feels as though they have been in some way wronged or experienced the pain of living in a fallen world, that right now they would have a fresh revelation of you, the one who sets the captives free.

Right now. If there's any person who's been wrestling with an illness in their physical body, or maybe they just feel like they're not good enough for this world,

[00:25:27] Speaker C: I

[00:25:27] John: want to pray right now that they would feel your love and your rescuing right now. Holy Spirit, would you do that?

Now I want to pray for anyone who feels like maybe they feel a little bit guilty, like they just haven't participated in the way that they would like with God.

They just feel like you've missed the mark.

Right now I want to pray that you would have a fresh image of Jesus taking all of that and giving you his righteousness.

Thank you, Lord, that when you hung on the cross, you took all of our sin, you took all of our shame, you took every mistake.

And right now, God, together, we want to give you our mistakes, we want to give you our lack, we want to give you all of our shame.

We thank you that you forgive us, Lord, and in the place of our shame, you give us righteousness.

And I pray for each and every person here that they would have a fresh revelation of that righteousness which you give as a free gift because of what your son has done.

And lastly, Lord, I want to pray that there would be a call to arms that would go out clearly to each and every person here, that we would hear that same commission which you gave Adam, that in right relationship you are to rule and to reign in

[00:27:38] Speaker C: your world, that you will never be

[00:27:41] John: alone, that he will walk with you in the cool of the day, that he will teach you right from wrong.

[00:27:48] Speaker C: And I pray that as that call

[00:27:50] John: to arms goes out, Father, you would use us, your people, to extend your

[00:27:57] Speaker C: kingdom in our world.

[00:28:00] John: We pray that you would use it to transform our families into places of love and grace, mercy and kindness.

We pray that you would use it to transform our workplaces, our schools, our communities, our nation, our government, our church in every way.

[00:28:23] Speaker C: God, would you release your kingdom in our midst.

[00:28:28] John: And we pray this in Jesus name.

Amen.

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