

Audio file

[Mr Colin Ross Gospel Service 6426cr_luke_19_v41-42.mp3](#)

Transcript

00:00:00

And we'll turn to our scripture reading for tonight.

00:00:02

It's taken from Luke's Gospel, Luke's Gospel chapter 19, reading from verse 28 to the end of the chapter.

00:00:12

Luke's Gospel chapter 19, verse 28.

00:00:17

And when he had thus spoken, he went before ascending up to Jerusalem.

00:00:22

And it came to pass when he was come now to Bethphage and Bethany at the mount called the Mount of Olives,

00:00:28

He sent two of his disciples, saying, Go ye into the village over against you, in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat.

00:00:39

Loose him, and bring him hither.

00:00:41

And if any man ask you, why do ye loose him?

00:00:44

Thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.

00:00:48

Thee that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them.

00:00:53

As they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt?

00:00:58

And they said, The Lord hath need of him.

00:01:01

And they brought him to Jesus.

00:01:02

They cast their garments upon the colt.

00:01:05

They set Jesus thereon.

00:01:07

And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way.

00:01:10

So when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen.

00:01:23

saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord.

00:01:27

Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

00:01:31

And some of the Pharisees from among the multitudes said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

00:01:37

He answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

00:01:44

And when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it.

00:01:49

saying, If thou hadst known even now, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.

00:01:59

For the day shall come upon thee, that thine enemy shall cast a trench about thee, compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee.

00:02:12

They shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

00:02:19

And he went into the temple, began to cast out them that sold therein and them that bought, saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.

00:02:30

And he taught daily in the temple, but the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him.

00:02:37

They could not find what they might do, for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

00:02:43

Amen, my Lord, that is blessing.

00:02:45

To that reading from his own holy word.

00:02:48

Let's turn again the passage we read to Luke chapter 19 and verses 41 and 42.

00:02:55

Verses 41 and 42.

00:03:00

And when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known even now, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.

00:03:16

Well, here we have before us one of the most poignant examples of the love of Christ towards lost sinners.

00:03:23

The other example is in Luke's Gospel in chapter 13, verse 34, where Jesus said these words, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wing, and ye would not.

00:03:44

Well, certainly we see here the true humanity of Christ in the purest and the highest level to which that humanity could aspire in empathy with fellow men.

00:03:56

Yet we also see here in the God-man the love of God towards his fallen race.

00:04:02

Alongside the nature of God and his unswerving justice and holiness, we see the truths which God himself proclaimed in the secret 18 verse 23.

00:04:11

Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord God, and not that he should return from his ways and live?

00:04:20

Verse 32, For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God, wherefore turn yourselves and live ye.

00:04:30

And so as we come now to examine Christ's sorrowful words over Jerusalem, what aspect of their condition and their position does he choose to deliberate upon?

00:04:40

Well, the answer is, of course, their peace, their peace.

00:04:44

So our first point is simply the obtaining of peace, the obtaining of peace.

00:04:50

Well, what is the dictionary definition of peace?

00:04:53

A state of quiet, freedom from disturbance, freedom from war, ease of mind or conscience, tranquility, quiet, stillness, and so on.

00:05:05

So what does Jesus mean?

00:05:06

when he uses the word in our reading in relation to Israel, God's chosen people, chosen from among all the heathen nations of the earth.

00:05:18

Well, in the first instance, he means what our dictionary definition termed freedom from war, freedom from war, both in a literal, temporal sense and also in a spiritual sense.

00:05:29

The objective reality of their situation was that God was about to permit their utter destruction and that of their city at the hands of their hated Roman conquerors in the year AD 70.

00:05:43

Even that temporal judgment may have been avoided.

00:05:46

Had they sought terms of peace, though not with the Roman Empire, but with a much higher authority, they were at war with God also.

00:05:56

A faithless people throughout their generations

00:05:59

A nation who ignored God's repeated appeals to turn from their backsliding ways, who instead, as we quoted earlier, killed the prophets and stoned those who were sent unto them.

00:06:11

And they were about to be scattered among the nations.

00:06:15

So firstly then, let's look at this piece, or in Israel's case, lack of it, in their relationship with God.

00:06:23

We read, If thou hadst known, even now, at least in this idea,

00:06:28

the things which belong unto thy peace, if thou hadst known the things which belong to thy peace.

00:06:36

It would seem a bit harsh to condemn the Jewish people for not acting upon things which were unknown to them, would it not?

00:06:44

Well, this is not the sense of the word known before us.

00:06:47

The things which concerned them gaining peace with God had been indeed before their very eyes.

00:06:53

How else could Jesus say, but now they are hid from thine eyes?

00:06:58

Oh, they knew them in their heads, but it never became a knowledge which became known and accepted in their hearts.

00:07:06

What then did they know but not believe?

00:07:10

They knew and ignored their Old Testament scriptures, which constantly pointed to a suffering Messiah.

00:07:16

They refused to see their Messiah in Isaiah 53 as wounded for their transgressions and bruised for their iniquities.

00:07:23

Instead, when he came,

00:07:25

They fulfilled the prophecy and saw him as a root out of a dry ground with no form nor comeliness and no beauty that they should desire him.

00:07:35

And he was despised and rejected of them.

00:07:39

They rejected too the testimony of John who prepared the way before him and pointed them to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

00:07:47

They rejected the ministry of Jesus as he pled with them to strive to enter into the kingdom of God.

00:07:55

Some, of course, did believe became heirs of that kingdom, but the vast majority of them believed not the things which belonged to their peace.

00:08:04

What happened?

00:08:05

They had hardened their hearts so often against the truth that finally God hardened their hearts, judicial hardening, just as God had done to Pharaoh.

00:08:15

Pharaoh hardened his heart against God, Exodus 5:2, who is the Lord that I should obey his voice and let Israel go?

00:08:24

3, God responds, And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.

00:08:32

Here it is again, near the end of Jesus' ministry in Mark 4:11, And he said unto them, that's to his disciples, and to you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables, that seeing they may see and not perceive.

00:08:50

Hearing and may hear and not understand, lest at any time they should be converted and their sins should be forgiven them.

00:08:58

O Jesus, if only you had known, if only you had embraced the things that belong to your peace with God, but now they are hid from your eyes.

00:09:07

The panel is clear, is it not?

00:09:09

How many of us here have known, if not from early childhood, certainly for many years, the thing concerning our peace?

00:09:18

or how we may come into the possession of peace with God.

00:09:24

What way can such an eternity-defining transaction become a reality in someone's life?

00:09:30

Well, in just the same way as a Jew of Jesus, they obtained it by believing, by exercising faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, thereby being accounted as just or righteous in God's eyes.

00:09:45

Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

00:09:52

Oh, don't make Israel's mistake.

00:09:54

Remember, God said, My Spirit will not always strive with man.

00:09:59

For many of the Jews of Jesus' day, the day of grace was past.

00:10:04

If you're still not reconciled to God and hear well in mercy, God still speaks.

00:10:09

Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.

00:10:14

So that was the reality concerning being or not being at peace with God.

00:10:20

That there is yet another aspect which the dictionary definition of peace termed ease of mind or conscience, ease of mind or conscience.

00:10:29

We're to see this aspect too as Jesus weeps over Jerusalem.

00:10:36

How we would have longed to bestow his peace upon them, the peace only his beloved know.

00:10:42

Each of us here know it tonight.

00:10:45

Well, this is a subjective or felt aspect of peace.

00:10:49

Of course, this ease of mind or conscience is not possible until actual peace has been established between a soul and God.

00:10:58

That's how Isaiah 57 verses 20, 21 can say, but the wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest whose waters cast that mire and dirt.

00:11:07

There is no peace, saith my God to the wicked.

00:11:12

Why have the wicked no peace?

00:11:15

Because their behaviour won't let them have what Paul always sought to have.

00:11:19

And that was, as he says in Acts 24, 16, a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men.

00:11:27

See, every man has a conscience.

00:11:30

Though many people do their best to nullify it, to silence its voice, they have a seared or caught their eyes conscience.

00:11:38

The conscience isn't easily silenced.

00:11:41

That's where they cannot rest.

00:11:43

They must add sin to more sin to dull their conscience and to beat it into submission.

00:11:49

They must never take time for solemn reflection.

00:11:53

Of course, all men are not overtly wicked.

00:11:57

Many live quite a moral and settled life.

00:12:00

There's no disruption in their lives as open sin and its consequences can bring.

00:12:04

In fact, they may be quite proud of the way they live their lives.

00:12:09

Perhaps they would say that they are quite at peace.

00:12:13

But there's one glaring problem.

00:12:14

If they are unsaved men or women, God is not at peace with them.

00:12:20

God is not at peace with them.

00:12:22

They still sit under the just condemnation of a holy God and this holy law.

00:12:28

He that believeth not is condemned already, because he has not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God.

00:12:36

Oh dear friend, beware of such a peace, for it is a false peace.

00:12:39

It's a false peace.

00:12:41

It's a peace of death.

00:12:42

There's more hope for a wicked man with no peace than for a self-righteous man with a false peace.

00:12:51

Israel's false prophets proclaim, Peace, peace.

00:12:53

when there were no grounds to have such peace of heart and mind, for God had a controversy with them.

00:13:01

Beware of your heart that false prophet within you crying, Peace, peace, if there is still no peace between you and your God.

00:13:11

Oh, rest not until you have found and experience peace with God.

00:13:15

But oh, there is a peace that is not a false peace.

00:13:19

There is not a false peace.

00:13:22

If thou hadst known even now, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, yes, thou would experience neither objective peace with our enemies, nor subjective peace in our heart through being at peace with our God.

00:13:37

But oh, for the soul that is no longer at enmity with God, there is abundant peace to be had.

00:13:43

What do we know about peace?

00:13:45

Well, as to its origins, it is an attribute of deity.

00:13:48

It's in the Father, Hebrews 13:20, Now the God of peace

00:13:52

that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, and so on.

00:13:58

It's also in the sun.

00:14:00

6, one of Christ's titles, the Prince of Peace.

00:14:04

It's enjoyed only by those who are heirs of the Kingdom of God.

00:14:07

Romans 14:7 says, For the Kingdom of God is not in meat and drink, but in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

00:14:17

We see here that it is applied to the believer's heart by the Holy Ghost.

00:14:22

Along with joy, it is the legacy of saving faith.

00:14:25

Paul understood this in one chapter further on, he says to these Roman believers in chapter 15, verse 13, Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.

00:14:42

So we see that this peace comes in believing.

00:14:45

It's a peace of a heart that's at peace with God.

00:14:47

It's not the false peace we spoke of in the heart which cries, peace, peace, and there are no grounds for peace in the heart that is unreconciled to God.

00:14:57

A worldly false peace.

00:15:00

But Jesus bestowed a different peace upon his disciples before he left them.

00:15:06

27, Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you.

00:15:13

Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

00:15:17

Well, if we're believers, if only we would remember these words of our Saviour when troubles surround us.

00:15:24

How can I have peace, you say, when life's storms threaten to overwhelm me?

00:15:28

I don't understand how that can be.

00:15:31

No, perhaps you don't understand, but Paul tells the Philippians not to let anything cause them much care.

00:15:37

Then he says, And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

00:15:45

So Paul, in Darceva himself, tells that this peace is equal to all of life's trials.

00:15:52

Peace, perfect peace, with sorrows surging round,

00:15:57

On Jesus' bosom not, but calm is found.

00:16:02

3, Thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee.

00:16:08

What about the last enemy?

00:16:09

Is it possible to have peace in the face of death?

00:16:12

Well, David believed so.

00:16:14

Ye, as I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.

00:16:20

Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

00:16:23

Peace, perfect peace.

00:16:26

Death shadowing us and ours.

00:16:28

Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers.

00:16:31

It is enough.

00:16:32

Our struggle soon shall cease.

00:16:35

And Jesus called to heaven's perfect peace.

00:16:38

But this peace, of course, may ebb and flow before we reach that perfect peace of heaven.

00:16:44

Isaac Watts tells us in his hymn that it is sadly so.

00:16:47

Talking of the endless peace of heaven, he says, Sin, my worst enemy before, shall vex my eyes and ears no more.

00:16:55

My inward foe shall all be slain, nor Satan break my peace again.

00:17:01

Now how does Satan break our peace?

00:17:03

Well, of course, by tempting us to sin, of course.

00:17:06

The Psalmist in Psalm 85 warns us to beware lest sin break our peace.

00:17:11

Verse 8, I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace unto his people, unto his saints, but let them not turn again to folly.

00:17:22

It is rather long since turned to folly.

00:17:25

Few men are new God's peace in their hearts.

00:17:28

We regard our peace as where the Lord's is easy to lose, but much harder to recover.

00:17:35

So we've seen in our text tonight the peace that Israel had robbed herself of, both temporal and eternal.

00:17:42

Next, can we look at that which is evidenced by our Lord's obvious sorrow and His tears, and that is that Christ desires the salvation of sinners.

00:17:51

Christ desires the salvation of sinners.

00:17:54

See what Jesus says here as he weeps, if thou hadst known, even thou.

00:17:59

The word we have translated here as even, even now.

00:18:02

It's actually the Greek word and, the Greek word and.

00:18:05

It's as if Jesus is saying, if only you had known and you, especially you, the people so favoured, so loved by God, the ones into whose nation I have been born, to whom I have come first with my offer of salvation.

00:18:20

In the words we quoted earlier from Luke 13:34, How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen that gathered her brood under her wing, and ye would not.

00:18:32

Oh, Jesus desired that his kinsmen after the flesh would be saved, and he weeps because it chose death over life.

00:18:42

He sees them lying in their sin.

00:18:44

They had killed the prophets and despised their messages from God.

00:18:47

Moreover, he saw that they would soon crucify him.

00:18:51

that soon his blood would be on their heads, as they later cried, His blood be on us and on our children.

00:19:00

And yet for all that he wept over them.

00:19:02

For in his omniscience he saw the temporal judgments soon to come upon them of their city, but he saw most of all that as a judge of the living and the dead he must one day consign them forever to hell.

00:19:17

And he wept.

00:19:20

Christ's love for lost mankind goes further back than our text.

00:19:23

It is eternal.

00:19:25

In Proverbs 8, we see Christ in eternity passed with his Father as wisdom personified.

00:19:30

We read of him in verse 31, rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, and as delights were with the sons of men.

00:19:39

He delighted in the sons of men.

00:19:42

was God the Son, He knew what would befall mankind.

00:19:45

The words of the Him, He saw me ruined in the fall, that loved me, yet was standing on.

00:19:51

He knew, yet He loved fallen sons and daughters of Adam's race just the same.

00:19:55

And with His Father, He formed a covenant of redemption in which He undertook to save those that His Father had given to Him, to be His elect, His heavenly bride.

00:20:07

The Father had covenant, had given them inheritance of fallen men and women, who did in Psalm 2 verse 8, Ask of me, shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, the I think was parts of the earth for thy possession.

00:20:20

Oh, what would be needed to transform them into heirs of glory?

00:20:24

Well, it took redeeming love, a love which brought the eternal Son of God from the glories of heaven to this world of sin and darkness, from the adoration of angels to the abuse of sinners.

00:20:38

7, Then said I, lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God.

00:20:46

Well, Paul rehearses that path of humiliation in Philippians 2:6, Who, been in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant who was made in the likeness of men,

00:21:04

and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

00:21:12

What amazing love.

00:21:15

Jesus said, Greater loveth no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

00:21:19

But oh, if we're saved tonight, we were his enemies, and yet he laid down his life for us.

00:21:25

And so much Jesus cares for sinners.

00:21:29

Did he lay down his life willingly?

00:21:31

Oh yes, no man taketh it from me, I lay it down with myself, John 10:18.

00:21:37

He was clear in his message.

00:21:39

The Son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

00:21:43

He was tender in his appeals.

00:21:45

Come unto me all you that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

00:21:50

He was solemn in his warnings.

00:21:52

Except you repent, you shall all likewise perish.

00:21:56

And he was sorrowful in his rejection.

00:21:58

He will not come unto me.

00:22:01

that ye might have life.

00:22:03

He will not come unto me.

00:22:05

What more could love have done?

00:22:08

Wesley puts it well.

00:22:10

Emptied himself of all but love and bled for Adam's helpless race, this mercy all immense and free.

00:22:18

But can you say these final words with Wesley?

00:22:21

For oh my God, it found out me.

00:22:25

Paul says, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

00:22:31

Is he still saying to you tonight, you will not come unto me that you might have life?

00:22:37

God's word is clear.

00:22:38

How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

00:22:42

How long can you tarry?

00:22:43

How long can you presume on God's mercy?

00:22:47

Well, let's look at our third point then.

00:22:49

There is a day of grace.

00:22:50

There is a day while mercy's door is still open for sinners.

00:22:55

If thou hadst known even now, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.

00:23:06

Christ is here telling Jerusalem that she had had a day or a period of time which God had appointed to her in which to know and to come into possession of the things which concerned her peace, making her peace with him and thus knowing the peace of sins forgiven.

00:23:25

What was this her day here spoken of?

00:23:28

Well, it was a day of several things.

00:23:30

It was her day because it was a time unlike any other time in their history.

00:23:35

This was a day which her backsliding fathers had not had the privilege of witnessing.

00:23:41

It was a day many faithful in Israel longed to see, like Simeon who desired to live long enough to see the coming of the constellation of Israel.

00:23:49

and saw that consolation incarnate when Jesus' parents brought him as an infant to the temple.

00:23:56

Orana, the prophetess, who spoke of him to all who looked for redemption in Israel.

00:24:02

And it was a day that Abraham desired to see and indeed did see by faith and was glad.

00:24:06

It was a day of the long-awaited Messiah.

00:24:12

This day in Jerusalem's life was no ordinary day.

00:24:14

Our people had lived through the earthly ministry of God manifest in the flesh.

00:24:20

They had been invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb by none other than that Lamb, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

00:24:28

And they had refused the invitation.

00:24:31

They had refused the invitation.

00:24:33

This was the day when Israel, that barren fig tree, had been digged about and done by the sovereign grace of God, her husband, to see if she would bear the fruit of faith.

00:24:44

But as usual, there were no figs.

00:24:47

if only thou wouldst known, even now, in this thy day.

00:24:52

Dear friends, Jerusalem's day of grace was past.

00:24:56

Some souls were planted as bands from the burning, but for most, God the husbandman said of this barren fig tree, Dig it up, why cumbereth it the ground?

00:25:08

As we said, Israel's days had been the days in which they had the unique privilege of being in the very presence of God, manifest in the flesh.

00:25:17

Days of which the blind saw, the lame walked, lepers were cleansed, the deaf heard, the dead were raised, and the poor, to the poor the gospel was preached.

00:25:26

Oh, this was enough to reassure the imprisoned John the Baptist, but not enough to convince this evil and adulterous generation as Christ called them.

00:25:35

Now their day had passed.

00:25:39

For everyone here tonight, there is a day of grace.

00:25:42

There is a day of grace.

00:25:44

The length of days which God has appointed, which every man, woman and child may by faith in Jesus Christ enter the Kingdom of God.

00:25:52

The length that day may be from the day you were born until the day you die.

00:25:56

My dear friend, it may not.

00:25:58

It may not.

00:25:59

Was Israel dealt with in a unique manner by God, different to his dealings with all mankind?

00:26:06

We have no reason to think so.

00:26:08

God warns us that the Spirit will not always strive with man.

00:26:12

Beware lest you harden your heart and harden your heart so often that God the Holy Spirit may no longer strive with you.

00:26:21

Man's day of grace begins in childhood.

00:26:24

Oh, how important it is for a child to be told about Jesus and this love at an early age.

00:26:30

For children are not burdened with the cares of this life, that is, if they have been spared a childhood in a land oppressed by war and famine.

00:26:39

but they're unable to learn the Bible stories, to learn the way of salvation without the distractions of later life.

00:26:47

Life is one long playtime for children and happy homes.

00:26:51

In the words of the poem, When as a child I laughed and wept, time crept.

00:26:56

Moreover, they have not been infected with the cynicism which comes with the wisdom of this world.

00:27:03

There's a transparency about them, a simplistic trust which older age will erode.

00:27:11

Jesus used these childhood traits as an illustration of a heart that is brought by God's grace to the place of saving faith.

00:27:17

He says in Mark 10, 14, Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.

00:27:25

Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

00:27:33

Oh, that all of us were more childlike in some aspects of our lives.

00:27:37

Paul tells of Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 14:20, Brethren, be not children in understanding however, in malice be ye children.

00:27:47

Well, for most of us here tonight, our day of grace brought us safely through childhood.

00:27:52

Next came the days of youth, still a relatively tender and impressionable age in life.

00:27:58

And with it came a message from God's Holy Spirit, Ecclesiastes 12:1, Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth,

00:28:05

While evil days come not, now the years draw nigh when I shall say, I have no pleasure in them.

00:28:13

And so on.

00:28:14

Oh, at that age, how easy it is to ignore such an entreaty.

00:28:18

Oh, I'll never get old.

00:28:19

That's for old people.

00:28:20

Oh, lots of new interests now, football, clothes, boyfriends, girlfriends, and education, planning a career.

00:28:27

Life's a bit faster now.

00:28:30

When as a youth, I wax more bold, time's trolled.

00:28:35

Yet for all of us here tonight, this time in our lives was still, for us, God's day of grace.

00:28:41

But how quickly did we find ourselves in adulthood?

00:28:44

The meandering streamlet which flowed through the meadows of childhood and grew into the bubbling brook of youth now became the wide, deep, flowing river of manhood.

00:28:54

And with it came all the cares and concerns and responsibilities of adult life.

00:29:00

Gone were the idyllic days of childhood, when life was constant sunshine.

00:29:05

Gone were the exciting days of youth, the days the songwriter described thus, These were the days, my friend, we thought they'd never end.

00:29:13

But then they did.

00:29:15

Now came the need to have steady employment, to pay the bills, the mortgage, the car, and so on.

00:29:21

Was there any time to consider the things concerning my never dying soul?

00:29:26

Any time to ponder the question, where will I spend eternity?

00:29:32

Any time to seek the Lord while he may be found and to attend a place of worship.

00:29:38

Well, for many of the Lord's people, early adulthood reflected the sentiment of these words, time for business, time for pleasure, but for Christ crucified, not one place where he can enter in the heart for which he died.

00:29:52

But, oh, praise God, grace prevailed over sin.

00:29:55

Grace prevailed over sin, yet for many,

00:29:57

Achieving life's ambitions and dealing with life's problems masked the march of time.

00:30:04

When I became a full-grown man, time ran, time ran.

00:30:10

When older still I daily grew, time flew.

00:30:14

Still God in His mercy has spared us all to this present day, the grave grace is still with us.

00:30:20

What next?

00:30:22

Oh, the river of life seems to flow faster and faster as it approaches the waterfall of death and launches out into the ocean of eternity.

00:30:32

Our advancing years, a more opportune time to consider the things that belong to our peace.

00:30:38

My dear friend, experience tells us that the human heart grows harder with age, year up and year of rejecting or deflecting God's call of mercy.

00:30:48

and also weakness and deteriorating health are no suitable companions for solemn reflection.

00:30:56

In Ecclesiastes, we read how these in the bloom of youth were called to remember their Creator.

00:31:02

Let us read the reason why God's Holy Spirit directed them to turn to God in their tender years.

00:31:08

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, that the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.

00:31:16

And that's old age of what we would term no quality of life.

00:31:20

While the sun or the light or the moon or the stars be not darkened, nor clouds return after the rain.

00:31:26

In the day when the keepers of the house still tremble, the strong men shall bow themselves, the grinders cease because they are few, those that look out the windows be darkened, the door shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low and he shall rise up with the voice of the bird, all the daughters of music shall be brought low.

00:31:44

Also, when they shall be afraid of that which is high and fear shall be in the way, the almond tree shall flesh, grasshoppers shall be a burden, desire shall fail, because man goeth to his long home and the mourners go about the streets.

00:31:59

Strange words referring to failing health, deterioration of various organs of the body, and then ultimately death.

00:32:08

Decreasing opportunity and ability to make peace with God.

00:32:13

The solemn truth is many do not even achieve such an age.

00:32:19

Dear friend, when will your this thy day end?

00:32:24

The day in which to know and to embrace the things that belong to thy peace?

00:32:31

When your day of grace be over, mercy's door close forever.

00:32:36

Still God calls tonight, turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?

00:32:42

Let's read the last section of the poem we've been quoting at each stage of life.

00:32:47

Soon I shall find in passing on, time gone, time gone.

00:32:53

O Christ, wilt thou have saved me then?

00:32:58

If thou hadst known even now, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.

00:33:09

O may each of us here tonight, with God's grace, being able to know the things which belong to our eternal peace in this our day, lest God should hide them from our eyes forever.

00:33:21

Amen.

00:33:22

Our Father, we thank you again for this your day when we have been able to meet in your presence and sing your praises, hear your word of truth to go to our souls.

00:33:31

May each one of us here tonight know and settle the things that belong to our eternal peace.

00:33:37

Be with us now as we part from one another.

00:33:39

Watch over us.

00:33:40

For Jesus' sake we ask it.

00:33:43

Amen.