

Lessons from the publican's prayer (Quality: Very good)

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Preacher: Buss, Charles (1913-1997)

[0 : 00] Hymn number 379, Toon Chester 455 Come, my soul, my suit, pursue. Jesus loves to answer prayer. He himself hath bid thee pray. Therefore will not say thee nay.

Though a common to a king, large petitions will thee bring. For his grace and power are such. None can ever ask too much. In 379 to 450 points.

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THE END Let us pray.

Help me this morning. I'll direct you to words you will find in the 18th chapter of the Gospel according to Luke and the 13th verse. The publican standing afar off would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast saying, God be merciful to me, a sinner.

The 18th chapter of the Gospel according to Luke verse 13. And the publican standing afar off would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast saying, God be merciful to me, a sinner.

[8 : 37] This of course, as we each know, is a part of the parable declared by the Lord Jesus Christ at this time.

And there was that particular purpose and scope of the parable. We've been reminded as we read the chapter that the Lord Jesus Christ spake this parable unto certain which strutted in themselves.

They were righteous and despised others. Evidently, there were many around the Lord Jesus Christ who were in that category, as it were. These self-righteous Pharisees.

These who were full of religion, but fleshly religion, a merely traditional religion.

And that which is so vital, was not evident in their hearts. The Lord Jesus Christ could preach and teach to them as none other could.

[9 : 42] As he knew full well the state and case of each one before him. It is noticeable how the Lord Jesus Christ in the first place spoke a parable to encourage prayer.

And with this word, that we're not always to pray and not to faint. And how we think of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. That he himself trod the path of prayer.

He knew what it was to feel faint as a man. He was the God-man Jesus Christ. Beverly God and Beverly man.

And he was a real man. And he knew what it was to feel to be faint. And he knew what it was to turn aside from time to time to pray to his Father.

What it was to say in the hymn called Mountains. In the midnight air, witness the fervour of his prayer. Oh how we read, he turned aside from the multitude and his earthy labours.

[10 : 56] And a part in the mountain to pray. We read in one place he continued all night in prayer.

What a path of prayer the dear Saviour trod. And here he exhorts men to pray. And with this encouragement that those who truly pray will not pray in vain.

Although it may often be that the Lord does not immediately answer their petitions. And the first parable was spoken with that end in view.

And the Saviour speaks of the unjust judge. One who feared not God, neither regarded man. He speaks of the widow woman.

Who needed to be relieved of her adversary. And although the judge in the first place could not be bothered with her.

[12 : 02] Yet by her continual coming, unless he should be wearied, he granted her request.

And the Lord Jesus Christ uses that parable to set forth that precious truth. And shall not God avenge his own elect which cry day and night unto him, though he bear along with them?

And how often it is that the Lord sees fit to bear along with his people, not to immediately answer their prayer.

Yet there's the promise that God will avenge his own elect. And then there's the question, Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

And here is the secret of real prayer. Faith in God. The exercise of faith in the earth. We read in the epistle to the Hebrews, He that cometh to God must believe that he is.

[13 : 14] And that he is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him. And how we do need grace to lay that truth to our heart. Oh, how little faith we feel to possess oftentimes.

And oh, the unbelief that seems to prevail. And then sometimes there seems to be such a spirit of prayerlessness with us. And yet, through mercy, not total strangers to what it is to truly pray.

Well now as we come to this parable, and this word which I've read this morning by way of a text, It is a very familiar parable.

These two, the Lord Jesus Christ refers to, who both went up to the temple to pray. And yet, what a vast distinction between the two.

What a difference. In the first place, we have one expressed in the parable, as one who thought himself to be righteous, and despised others.

[14 : 31] This Pharisee. And how the Lord Jesus Christ so aptly describes him, as he stood and prayed thus with himself.

That's as far as his prayer went. He prayed with himself. It never reached heaven. It was a prayer so-called, which is an abomination in the sight of the Lord.

You read in the Proverbs about the prayer of the wicked being an abomination to the Lord. No, no, this Pharisee would have been highly offended if he had been considered as a wicked man.

Yet, he was not righteous in the sight of God. And his prayer never entered heaven. It never reached the ear of God. And yet, the Lord Jesus Christ describes him as one who was well satisfied with his devotions.

And he thought he could stand in the temple and even thank God he was not as other men were.

[15 : 41] And in one sense, he said the truth, because he was certainly not like the publican. And he boasted of his attainment in a religious life and his fastings and his tithes that he gave, thinking that all this produced a righteousness wherein he was acceptable before God.

But he was grossly deceived. But now in the contrast, then we have this poor publican.

And surely we have here the description of a one, a poor sinner who is truly taught to pray.

And there are features to be considered in the description that the Saviour gives of this publican, which I hope might be helpful in the consideration of them.

This publican, a man despised by many, a man who could not claim to be righteous, but rather a man who came to feel that he got a heavy burden upon his heart.

[17 : 02] And he could, but as it were, and burned his heart to the Lord. This publican, this despised publican, I know how true it is that often the Lord's dear people are despised by the religious world.

Indeed, they are despised by the profane world, but they are despised by the religious world. And there are those, I fear, like the Pharisee, who have seen have a lot of religion and can sketchy understand those who fear God, those who try to pray, those who seek to call upon the name of the Lord in secret and from the heart.

Many, it is to be feared, even today, will be well satisfied to utter a few words, set prayers, as it were, in the church worship, and yet, there is no prayer in it.

Now, here was this publican, and he had a deep need. And it is a sense of a deep need, dear friends, that brings sinners to know what it is by the gracious leading of the Holy Spirit, what it is to truly pray.

It may well be, as I tried to bring this word before you this morning there, is a thought in your heart and a realisation that sometimes you feel scarcely unable to pray.

[18 : 53] But if you're sometimes ashamed, your attempt is to pray, and realise there's so many hindrances in coming to the throne of grace. And yet, what a mercy, dear friends, is there's something about this publican that you would enter into.

And I'll try and consider it in the order it is in the text before us. And first, we read this, and the publican standing afar off. Now, here, we see the publican realise that there was a, as it were, in one sense, a great distance between him and God to whom he approached.

He had to stand afar off. You read how the Pharisee stood in the temple and prayed with himself.

Well satisfied. And no doubt, he was one of those who was well pleased with his devotions and maybe one who, like we read elsewhere, who loved to pray standing in the corners of the streets to be seen of men.

But not so this publican. And as he ventured before God, as he went as it were, as the parable describes him, up to the temple, he realised he was appearing before God.

[20 : 23] and in that sense, he had to stand afar off. He realised there was a great disparity between a holy God and him, a sinful creature.

And that sin is a barrier, sin is a separating thing. And this publican felt it.

And he realised that he had to stand afar off. He dare not, as it were, approach in himself that God was holy.

That he was a holy and righteous God. And he a sinner standing afar off. And yet, it has to be said, doesn't it, although he stood afar off, yet he was nearer to God than the Pharisee was.

Although the Pharisee stood in the temple and thought he appeared before God acceptably, yet the publican really was nearer to God than the Pharisee.

[21 : 41] Although he stood afar off. and you see, he was delivered from a presumptuous spirit.

The Pharisee presumed, yes, he presumptuously professed to pray. But he was a man who was preserved from this presumptuous spirit.

a sense of his guilt and a sense of the majesty and holiness of God was a preservative to him, as it were, from presuming, from presumptuous approach unto God, standing afar off.

And then he would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast. Yes, down goeth the eyes.

Although the Pharisee thought he could look up to God, and in a way of self-commendation, how different with the publican, he would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, sin.

[22 : 58] Here, the dear Saviour, I feel, describes a poor sinner who is ashamed of his case, as before God. We find that Ezra expresses himself in the same way, when he said, O God, I blush, I'm ashamed to lift up my face unto thee.

Why? Because he felt the guilt of sin. And so this poor publican would not lift up so much as his eyes are dead. And yet, standing afar off, smiting on his breast, there was the eye of faith.

I feel we have the evidence of that in the description given by the Lord Jesus Christ of this publican. God's love. Because there are two things to be considered.

And two things which were absent in the case of the Pharisee. One was that he had a realisation of the holiness of God.

This the Pharisee had not. He thought he could stand before God in his self-righteousness. He had not a realisation of the holiness and majesty of God.

[24 : 23] But the publican did have it. And that is why he had to stand afar off. Why he could not lift up his eyes unto heaven. He had some knowledge of God and his holiness and majesty.

But the other thing was this. He had some knowledge of himself. and what vital knowledge this is.

You see what a solemn thing if we know not God. And then what a solemn thing if we know not ourselves. But by the gracious teaching of the Holy Spirit there are these two aspects of a saving knowledge of God's truth.

there will be some knowledge of the holiness and majesty of God and how needful this is. To be a preservative from presumptuous thoughts and presumptuous ways.

And even in professing to worship God. How needful it is to have a sense of the majesty and holiness of God. God grants us that. that we may be humbled before him.

[25 : 48] Well this the publican had. And then again he also as I said he had a knowledge of himself. Yes in his confession before God in three short words me a sinner he had a knowledge of himself.

He couldn't claim anything more than that. Me a sinner. This is why he had to stand afar off. This is why he had to smite up on his breast.

This is why he could not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven. He was a sinner and he felt the burden of it. Now while a sinner describes all mankind without exception because the word of God tells us all have sinned and come short of the glory of God but not all are sinners feelingly so but those whom the Lord is pleased to deal with in his mercy.

He would teach them something of their sinnership. It is a great mercy dear friends yes to feel the burden of sin. Although of course there is no comfort in that experience but it is a great mercy to feel the burden of our sin.

To know what it is to realise that we're sinners before a holy God. But then further there is this.

[27 : 30] in his prayer this prayer which is contained in these seven words God be merciful to me a sinner.

We have the evidence of faith in exercising the heart of this public and not only in God in all his holiness and majesty but in his mercy.

mercy. And this was his hope. This was what enabled the poor man to venture with his case to the Lord. He says God be merciful full of mercy to me full of sin.

God be merciful to me a sinner. Oh he had a realisation that although God was a holy God he was a merciful God.

And upon the ground of this alone could he venture with his burden to the Lord. God be merciful to me a sinner.

[28 : 43] Oh do we know what it is to pray that prayer. I know it is easy to utter the words as a prayer is to be remembered isn't it? These seven words.

God be merciful to me a sinner. but all to pray it from the heart. And I feel it is as poor sinners are taught by the Holy Spirit they will come into the experience of the public and have to pray like the public and did.

God be merciful to me a sinner. I feel we can consider this prayer first as a prayer which will be found indicted in the hearts of those whom the Lord has been pleased to begin.

Yes a work of grace. Those beginnings are a means in God's hand by his spirit to bring poor sinners to seek mercy.

We think of this prayer as the prayer of an early seeker. God be merciful to me a sinner. Oh if the Lord has been pleased to discover to our hearts something of our guiltiness before him this is the fitting petition that God will be merciful to us.

[30 : 16] And what a wonderful thing it is dear friends that there is mercy with God. That there is forgiveness with him. That he has made a way whereby he can be merciful to sinners.

And the dear Lord Jesus Christ who proclaimed this parable is the one through whom that mercy flows. Yes.

Mercy through Jesus. When I said mercy through blood I make my plea oh God be merciful to me. That God has made a way whereby although he is so holy and cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance has made a way whereby he can be merciful and that he is pleased to show his mercy to needy sinners.

And the publican had some realisation of this. It helped him, it encouraged him to venture with his plea to unburden his heart.

And so we have this little petition then as the Lord Jesus Christ describes it which sprang from the heart of this publican. one who truly went up to the temple to pray.

[31 : 38] Oh there is such a vast distinction between the two isn't there. All through the word of God we have that dividing line. Yes between those who are destitute of the truth and those who are blessed with some knowledge of the truth.

There is a distinction between the ungodly and the godly. A distinction between the self-righteous and those who are justified by the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

You might say then does this describe the public? And yes it does. He was one who was justified in the sight of God.

A poor sinner as he poured out his heart before the Lord. This was his only plea that God would be merciful to him.

His confession to be a sinner. He couldn't claim anything else. He couldn't as it were make a list of all his attainments in religion.

[32 : 55] No. But me a sinner, that described his case. Yes, nothing more, nothing less.

And yet he was one who was acceptable in the sight of God. One who had been taught to humble himself before God.

and you see, it is through the gracious teaching of the Holy Spirit that sinners are humbled before God, laid low in the dust.

Yes, their mouth is stopped as it were. They feel guilty. The law condemns them and as they consider their condition, they feel condemned in their conscience.

But in such a case, made to really and very deeply feel their need of mercy. So then we think of it as a prayer of one in early experience.

[34 : 04] One who has begun to realise something of his or her state as a sinner before a holy God. And find this prayer to be so fitting. Yes, a pleading for mercy.

The mercy of God, the mercy that flows through the Lord Jesus Christ. That mercy and the fullness of it, which is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because the publican prayed, God be merciful, that is full of mercy. mercy because he felt to be full of sin. And it is only mercy that can reach a sinner's case, is it?

If there's no mercy, where should you and I be? We should be without hope, altogether. But with God there is mercy.

Yes, forgiving mercy. God be merciful to me, a sinner. thus the publican prayed. And this will be the prayer, yes, the desire of all who are wrought upon by the Spirit of God and taught to feel something of their guiltiness before a holy God.

[35 : 23] Not all have experienced this to the same degree, but the Word of God tells us they shall be all taught to God. And one thing the Lord teaches his people is their sinnership.

Yes, he teaches them to feel and to know that they are guilty sinners before a holy God. But then the mercy.

Well, it was as though this poor man laid hold upon this, didn't he? It was his only hope. And if God was to be otherwise to him, then he would perish, perish in his sin.

But, blessed be God, there is this mercy. And it is as though the poor man could humbly lay hold upon this. It was that which he grasped at, as it were, in his guilty condition, that God is merciful.

But then how we have to realise this, that a long, nice pathway, in the midst of the journey, surely this prayer is such a needful prayer, isn't it?

[36 : 43] Oh, how many times have you had to come to this point? Yes, to stand, as it were, in spirit, alongside this public and cry, God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

When there may be fresh discoveries of the plague of the heart and God is pleased in his wisdom at times to so deal with his people to discover to them in a more solemn and deeper sense their sinnership before him.

And it brings them back to this prayer, doesn't it? God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Yes, and right down to the end.

I know some have been greatly favoured and been blessed with great blessings and have been favoured, as it were, to be on the mount of God's everlasting love in the felt sense of it.

But how often such have to come down again as it were, into the valley with the public and God be merciful to be a sinner. And yet at the end of the journey, you see, it is through mercy that sinners are safely gathered in heaven.

[38 : 14] Amen. I think of one this morning who, in his latest words that he said, he said he could pray with the public and he couldn't claim much more and yet I believe he is right with God and right is before God.

God be merciful to me, a sinner. Let us try and think for a few minutes of this wonderful attribute of God, mercy.

God of mercy. Here is the sinner's hope and what mercy it is. And all the wonder of it in the way the Lord has been pleased to so provide that mercy should reach these sinners who are taught to cry for it.

So that every poor sinner who has been taught by the Spirit of God to pray like the publican, God be merciful to me, that mercy will come, that mercy will flow to them.

They shall know that mercy. Although there may be burdens sometimes, and many of the Lord's dear people have been heavily burdened, yes, with their case.

[39 : 48] And as we noticed earlier, when the Lord Jesus Christ described the matter with regard to delayed answers to prayer, prayer, it doesn't mean that God has forgotten to be gracious, his mercy has not cleaned on forever, and yet there are times when poor sinners feel tried with regard to this.

The psalmist was like that, wasn't he? He put some very strange questions in the psalm, hath God forgotten to be gracious, will he be favourable no more, hath he in anger shat have his tender mercies?

You see, the poor man was in the dark, he was tempted, he was tried, no doubt Satan came with his whisperings and prompted those questions as it were, and then there's the unbelief in the heart, and when God hides his face, how dark the scene is to a poor sinner, and yet the truth of the matter is this, his mercy is not cleaned on forever, the Lord does not forget to be gracious, there's something about this parable to encourage poor sinners, who feel like the publican, to press their case before the throne of grace, there's encouragement for these, the Lord Jesus Christ describes the case of this man as one who the Lord was pleased to deal graciously with and make known his mercy, how blessed that man went down to his house, didn't he?

God is merciful, yes, the gospel proclaims that, and that mercy flows to the Lord Jesus Christ, he who spake this parable is the channel through which that mercy flows, it's made a way, yes, he was made sin for his people who knew no sin, he stood in the sinner's place, and because he stood in the sinner's place, and bore the penalty of sin, so mercy flows to those to whom the Lord has designed it, and those who have been designed to receive mercy are those who are taught to pray for mercy, and this will be their prayer again and again, God be merciful to me, a sinner, but this mercy, you see, it is mercy that reaches the case, isn't it?

And the fact that God is merciful was the ground of the hope of this poor publican, he otherwise would have to have returned to his house, yes, justly condemned, but there is mercy, mercy which reaches condemned sinners, and the way that mercy flows is through the Lord Jesus Christ who was condemned for sinners, who died that cursed death upon the cross, and poured out his precious blood, which alone can put away sin, and bring pardoned in peace.

[43 : 37] This is the mercy. And you see, sinners who know something of their status, guilty sinners before a holy God will prize mercy.

Yes, it is something very attractive to them. It is their hope that upon the ground of the mercy of God that they call upon him.

Indeed, mercy, as one has put it, mercy is welcome news indeed to those who guilty stand. God be merciful to be a sinner. It is mercy to sinners then.

And it is mercy that flows from a glassy love. God has said in his word, I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious. gracious and he is a merciful God to his people.

Yes, because he has loved them from all eternity. They can never be separated from that. And he deals with them to teach them his truth and to bring them into the experience of his salvation.

[44 : 49] And it is his mercy then that flows from everlasting love. And it is his mercy that brings forgiveness. Yes, pardon for sin.

This is what the publican needed, didn't they? He needed forgiveness. If you analyse the Pharisee's prayer, there is no hint of any felt need of mercy or forgiveness.

He was satisfied. He didn't need forgiveness. He didn't need mercy. No. At least he didn't feel to need it.

But he was sadly deceived. But the publican, he needed mercy. He needed pardoning mercy. Yes, he needed that mercy that sets a person afraid from his condemned condition.

That mercy flows to the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a provision the Lord has made for his dear people. As poor needy sinners in the gift of his beloved son.

[46 : 02] He who lived, yes, and died for sinners. He who stood in the sinner's place. Made sin for us who knew no sin, says the word of God.

And what mercy that is. And all the wonder of it. peace. And it is mercy which brings peace. Peace in the heart.

This poor public as he went up to the temple to pray, there was no peace in his heart. The Pharisee seemed to be at peace, but it was a false peace, a false security.

He was blinded, he was deceived. But the public could feel no peace in his heart because of the burden of his sin. But God's mercy brings pardon, it brings peace.

And it is through mercy, you see, there is this access to God. The publican's prayer gained God's ear. It ascended to heaven, it was acceptable in the sight of a holy God, and yet a God who condescends to sinners.

[47 : 20] His prayer entered heaven, and there's mercy to be seen in this. And what a mercy it is that God hears the prayers of poor sinners.

There's a way whereby their poor petition can ascend acceptably to God, and that is through Jesus, and through his precious blood, which he so freely shed upon the cross.

Mercy through blood, and it is that that brings peace. Guiltiness upon the conscience, such cannot feel peace within, or peace with God.

No, but when mercy flows, and sometimes when a poor sinner is helped to plead for mercy, there is a sense of peace that flows into the heart, as he unburdens his heart to the Lord.

I was thinking earlier this morning of the case of Job, and how he expressed his deep desire that he might find God.

[48 : 35] God, yes, oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat, I would order my cause before him, I would fill my mouth in arguments, and he desired to realise that access to God, and the time came when Job was favourable with that, wasn't he?

And when he was humbled in the dust, and confessed his sin, God regarded him then, in mercy, and delivered him, yes, from all his troubles, and blessed him in his latter end, and through mercy.

Yes, and now the Lord Jesus Christ declares this, he says, I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. You see, the Pharisee sought to justify himself.

His prayer was an effort of self-justification. He thought he was righteous, and so much so he despised others, he despised his poor publican.

But you know, a sinner taught of God will not despise others. No, he feels himself to be a guilty sinner before God.

[50 : 01] he dare not despise others. He realises this, that according to his sin, he deserved to be despised of God.

But there's mercy. And through mercy, that plea reaches heaven. man, this poor man, this poor burdened sinner, Jesus says, I tell you, this man, this man who had no hope or help in himself, this man who couldn't claim anything as it were in himself, this man who was despised by the publican, this man who felt helpless and hope in himself, I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.

How was he justified? He didn't justify himself, no, but it teaches us this, you see, that poor sinners taught to plead for mercy through Jesus' blood are the ones who are justified in the sight of God, yes, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and they become recipients of that justifying righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so the Saviour speaks of this then, for everyone that exalteth himself will be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Now you see, the Pharisee, he thought, sought to exalt himself, and such shall be abased, said the Lord Jesus Christ.

[51 : 57] Yes, but how different with regard to the one that humbles himself. And how is it he humbles himself? Oh, through the humbling teaching of the Holy Spirit, laid low, feels something of his unworthiness, his guiltiness, his nothingness before God, he is laid low in the dust, and he humbles himself, and such, says Jesus, shall be exalted.

Not a self-exaltation, but exalted, yes, through the mercy of God, shall be lifted up. And how often these poor sinners, like the publican, and you may feel sometimes, like the publican, you feel to be so cast down.

Yes, you feel that there is sin, sin in you. Now you've been taught to detest sin, yet there it is, and you feel the plague of the heart, and sometimes you feel to be so cast down on account of this.

Yet, there is lifting up to these cast down souls. There's a wonderful word in the book of Job, it was uttered by one of Job's friends, and while Job's friends so misunderstood Job, they misapplied the truth of God oftentimes, with regard to Job's case, but there were times when they stated the truth, didn't they?

And one truth which was expressed by Eliphaz, I think it was, was this, when men are cast down, then they shall say there is lifting up.

[53 : 49] Now what is the foundation truth of that then? It is in this word here, that these humbled ones shall be exalted, the Lord lifts them up, that they have no hope or help in themselves, that be laid low as it were in the dust, yet the Lord lifts these up in his mercy.

He will exalt them in due season. Yes, they shall be lifted to heaven, but that they're despised as they live here by many, and often tempted by Satan, no much of his heinous insinuations, yet they shall be exalted.

When men are cast down, then they shall say there is lifting up. And sometimes in the gospel, and the effect of the gospel as it comes to poor sinners, has the effect of lifting them out of their low place, lifting them up to a hope in God's mercy.

yes, who can tell but what God will be gracious? He that humbly himself shall be exalted.

And so then this publican, and going back to the scope of this parable spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ, it is to certain which trust in themselves.

[55 : 22] Dear friends, what a mercy. If God has delivered us from trusting themselves, what a folly it is. And yet many there are who trust in themselves, trust in their own righteousness, trust in their own religion as it were, their own what they may appear before men.

But this is a sandy foundation. Good it is to be humbled, laid low. Yes, brought to the feet of Jesus.

To be constantly brought time and again to this point, to need mercy. And surely dear friends, as we journey on, we need mercy, yes, again and again.

One has said in the hymn, without thy sweet mercy, I could not live here. Sin soon will reduce me to utter despair. fear, but there is mercy.

And I think of those words in the little 130th psalm. If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

[56 : 37] Amen. let's say II June 396 Ye humble souls complain no more Let faith survey your future story How happy how divinely blessed the sacred truth words of truth attest In vain the sons of wealth and pride despise your love your hope divine

In vain they urge their little store Trifles are theirs A kingdom yours 257 to 396 to 396 to 396 CHOIR SINGS

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[61 : 41] But in many changes, parent groups must understand who is unable to listen to, and who can resist the's öyle in the stylish mode.

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The cross there O then goes O worldMI Jesus Christ, Lord, Jesus Christ, Lord, Jesus Christ, Lord, and now by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the communion and fellowship of the Holy Spirit rest upon us, the void with us, now and forever. Amen.

Amen.