

As We Depart

Words & Music by Nigel Bruce

Melody

1. As we de part this place may the Spi rit follow to
 2. As we de part this place let our souls be filled with the
 3. As we de part this place let our strength be renewed to

treble

bass

Dm C Dm Am7 G

Dm Em7 F Dm G

Am7 G F G F/C C

guide us in this week ahead in all that we do pro
 love of God with in our hearts our the minds are at rest sal
 tell of Je sus Christ our Lord the soon com ing King that

tect and com fort us till we meet a gain some day
 vat ion se cure till we meet a gain some day
 we may be a ble to meet a gain some day

Song origins:

I just wanted to write a benediction and here it is.

School of grace

What happens when the church service is finished for the week?

We walk out of the church building. We chat with friends. We go and eat. Perhaps there is a church lunch. On special occasions there is an afternoon program. Or the weather is so good that one wants to spend it in nature. By evening we are doing different things again. And then we head off into another week, doing our busy life.

The event known as 'church' simply becomes a comma in our existence. We enjoy the music. We share the fellowship. We may even learn something from the sermon. But if it is simply confined to that period of time what is the point of going to church?

The Pharisees thought they knew it all. They had read the Mosaic Law back-to-front. They had studied under the most eminent professors. They declared it their right to tell others what to do, because they knew what was right. By Jesus time they had formulated over 600 regulations to help keep the Ten Commandments. They knew what was appropriate in worship services.

Then Jesus came, and to the astonishment of everyone, criticized these religious leaders the most. Surely he would have condemned the sinners who were dragging down the moral standing of the nation. Surely he would attack the military occupiers and terrorist threat from the surrounding empires. No. Jesus was attacking the religious leaders. This wasn't a light thing. He was attacking the society as a whole.

And what was his problem with them?

It wasn't their sin. It wasn't their mistakes. It was their hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy arises when we find ourselves in a position of authority and attempt to reinforce our support there. We try to get rid of anything that could undermine our standing. We play the game so that people look to us. We define the rules so that we always win. We decide on what is appropriate and what is not, based on what we want ourselves to do.

It is hypocrisy that ignores grace. It is hypocrisy that doesn't see mercy. It is hypocrisy that can't offer compassion. It is hypocrisy that offers false idols.

So what we do during the week after the sermon doesn't matter. In fact that weekly communal worship is not designed to be the springboard for what we are expected to do during the next week. It is what happens in the week leading up to the service. Did we find grace? Did we find mercy? Did we receive compassion? Did we

In fact, it isn't about what we did, but in whether we became open to God? Are we willing to surrender everything in the week simply because God asked us to? Are we open to being humbled? Are we able to receive the love of God? Or are we too busy with everything else that God is simply allocated the time we attend church?

As We Depart

**As we depart this place may the Spirit follow
To guide us in this week ahead in all that we do
Protect and comfort us till we meet again some day**

**As we depart this place let our souls be filled
With the love of God within our hearts
Our minds are at rest salvation secure
Till we meet again some day**

**As we depart this place let our strength be renewed
To tell of Jesus Christ our Lord the soon coming King
That we may be able to meet again some day**