

Thanks to God for His Grace

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Preacher: Malcolm Macdonald

[0 : 00] we're going to sing to god's praise from psalm 119 psalm 119 and verse 105 verse 105 thy word is to my feet alone and to my path a light i sworn haven't i will perform to keep thy judgments right i am with sore affliction even overwhelmed o lord in mercy raise and quicken me according to thy word the free will offerings of my mouth accept i thee beseech and unto me thy servant lord thy judgments clearly teach though still my soul be in my hand thy laws i'll not forget i erred not from them though for me the wicked sneerst itself i of thy testimonies have above all things made choice to be my heritage for a for they my heart rejoice i carefully inclined have my heart still to attend that i thy statutes may perform all way unto the end the section of psalm 119 thy word is to my feet alone and to my path a light thy word is to my feet alone but to my heart the light i swore now and to my heart i will perform to keep thy judgments right

While it's not worth it all of my hijos begin sonic in the ocean middly our hope is to my soul but the world accept and joy till they have me m song Delphley in our Lord i will accept and glory in the ocean Mother now but nothing, O Lord in the ocean And there she brings ungrateful name according to thy word.

The freeway loveth long like the God, set thy feet.

And unto me, thou is heavenward, thy judgment still be ye.

To still my soul in my hand lies, a child of the day.

[3 : 40] I err not from the low for thee, thou it is here today.

I give thy testimonies above all things rejoice.

To be my heritage for thee, for thee my heart rejoice.

I carefully implied in love, my heart still do again.

That I thy stripes may perform all wayward to the end.

[5 : 07] Let us turn now to the passage read. The first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians chapter 1.

And we can read at verse 4. 1 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 4.

I thank my God always on your behalf. For the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ. That in everything ye are enriched by him in all utterance and in all knowledge.

Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you. So that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Who shall also confirm you unto the end. That ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. So on.

[6 : 15] Some of you will remember that last Thursday evening we spoke about the judgment that awaits the world upon the return of Christ.

And to his hands that solemn rule has been committed. He is to judge the righteous and to judge the unrighteous.

To punish one and to reward the other. And as we saw this act on his part is to be carried out in light of their response to his word of revelation.

It is to be carried out on the basis of their own personal relationship with him. And it is to be carried out on the basis of their works.

How they have lived their life in this world. And the purpose of his part is to be carried out in the process of his work. And the purpose of his work. And the purpose of his work.

[7 : 36] Now the link with our text this evening is found in the words of 7, 7 and 8. The apostle reminds us as he does the church in Corinth of the import of what leads up to the church.

The last day. What leads up to the coming of Christ. Now as you can see Paul begins this epistle as he begins many of his other epistles.

With a salutation and then a word of thanksgiving. Which seems strange to us maybe.

We would expect the words of thanksgiving perhaps to come towards the end of the epistle. And it may appear strangers still bearing in mind what we know having read the epistle.

And what he has to say to the recipients of the letter. At first sight the words of verse 4 appear to suggest that Paul is speaking for the Corinthians.

[9 : 24] I thank my God always on your behalf. That's the way I read it anyway. I thank God on your behalf.

But it is more that Paul is thanking God for them.

Which is strange that he is writing a letter to the Corinthians. And yet in this mode of thanksgiving he is thanking God for them.

Because God is the one who is to be thanked for their existence as a church of Christ. That's the epistle addressed to recipients who are believers in Christ.

And any admonition, any teaching, any encouragement he is to give them, he gives to them as those who belong to the church of Christ.

[10 : 33] Those who have experienced the grace of Christ in their life. And I'm sure you've all read this epistle more than once.

And perhaps very closely scrutinised what the apostle has to say. And the kind of people that he is addressing within the epistle.

And we know that there are many, many difficulties associated with the church in Corinth. Roger Ellsworth, one of the commentators, describes them as a contaminated and a confused people.

Contaminated because of their close association with the world. And confused because of their lack of understanding of what God's word teaches.

But even knowing that to be true, Paul is still thanking God for them. He is thanking God because whatever these people are, they are the product of his grace.

[11 : 57] They have come to a knowledge of Jesus Christ through the grace of God coming into effect in their lives. And if that is not the case, then the church would not exist.

And I've recently been, well, over a number of months, perhaps years, trying to work out why the emphasis is placed upon deficiencies within the church.

And lack of appreciation of the need that there is on the part of those who don't belong to it. In this sense, that there is very little sympathy exercised towards these deficiencies within those who are part of the church.

When there is lack of sympathy towards those who are less inclined to understand the needs of those who are outside of Christ and outside of the church.

I'm not sure if I'm not sure if I'm explaining that properly. It's as if people forget that the church is made up of sinners saved by grace.

[13 : 52] Every single one is a sinner saved by grace. That sinner who is saved by grace, without question, needs to be someone who, because of grace in their lives, making suitable progress within the life of faith.

But even with that understanding and with that appreciation, they are still sinners. And they are still in need of being appreciated in the sense that when there is backsliding, where there is wrongdoing, when there are errors coming into their thinking, we must always understand that that is the product of their own sinfulness.

And there is a need for us to be, if not sympathetic, at least appreciative in our dealings with them of that fact.

If we can appreciate that those who are ignorant of Christ and those who are out of Christ, and those who need to be presented with Christ with a feeling of charity towards them, because they are what they are, because they are what they are.

That charity should not be missing in the way that we deal with believers who have heard and gone wrong. But that's just a bugbear that I have, where we see criticisms being made of ministers and congregations who have got things wrong.

[15 : 55] And who are thought of us as being in some way open to being anathematised because of their wrongdoing.

Where care and caution is exercised towards those who are outside of Christ, and who are understood to be in need of that grace.

That we selfishly keep back from those who equally depend upon it all the days of their life in this world. I probably haven't explained that properly, but it's just one of these things that has been on my mind.

In the way some people speak, and the way some people speak of the Lord's people, and the Lord's cause.

And these people are themselves part of the Lord's cause, and are not appreciated of the need that there is to exercise judgment, discernment, sympathy even, towards those who have succumbed to sin, even though they are sinners saved by grace.

[17 : 17] Paul speaks here to the Corinthian church. Believers. They're believers he's speaking to. And yet their actions are criminal in many respects.

Yet he doesn't call them people who are not of the faith. He doesn't speak to them as if they have no grace. Here, I thank my God always on your behalf for the grace of God, which is given you by Christ Jesus.

That's where he begins. That's where he begins his thanksgiving. And yet he goes on to speak to them sternly and severely, because of the fact that they are not as they ought to be.

But he doesn't dismiss them as if they are not Christian or not believers. There could not be a church without his grace.

Salvation in Christ begins with regeneration. It begins with conversion. But that is only the beginning. And here Paul has in view, not just a beginning, but he's waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus, who shall also confirm you unto the end, he says.

[18 : 40] We are indebted to God's grace. But it was also the same grace that would take them on the true that day of Christ Jesus.

So Paul is thankful for that. And we need to understand that wherever we are as Christians, we do not all come from the same background.

We do not have the same privileges. We do not have the same facility to understand God's word at times. Although all the Lord's people, we believe, will be taught of the Lord in his time.

It was this week, the beginning of the week, listening to a minister whose congregation is in Gravan, in Glasgow, belongs to that community.

He was raised in that community, but he went away to the mission field and came back to start up a congregation in that community.

[19 : 51] And to be honest, it is a community of people who are suffering from all kinds of addiction and all kinds of depravity.

And they are the product of their environment, but he is convinced they need the gospel. And he said something very interesting about the emphasis that he found that needed to be felt more than anything in the preaching of Jesus Christ.

And that was the need that these people had for affirmation. The need that these people had for affirmation. And the explanation for that is, well, these people grew up in an environment where they were constantly made to feel that they were the dregs of society.

And they survived, by the words, within such an environment. They seldom heard any word of congratulation or encouragement given to them.

So he says, many of these people come and they can barely write their names. They can barely read or write. And for somebody to say to them, if they've read a sentence even, to say to them, well done.

[21 : 23] It's something that they appreciate. Now, strangely, when I was looking at this, it was not with that thought in mind that I looked at this passage.

But when I was preparing it, I was reading the words of one of the commentators, Leon Morris. And he made this observation that it was always Paul's habit to encourage and praise these converts when he could.

So it was fascinating that Paul made it his practice and his habit when he was writing these letters to congregations of all kinds that he habitually praised them and pointed out the things that were worth pointing out.

There's no doubt that he was, he never neglected the role that he had as a preacher of the gospel of bringing to their attention the things that needed to be remedied, the things that needed to be corrected.

That goes without saying. Just read through this epistle for yourself. And you'll see in this epistle how Paul has to bring very gross sins to their attention and remind them of the nature of spiritual life and the nature of what it is to be born again and to be in a living relationship with Jesus Christ.

[23 : 03] But that doesn't mean that he belittles them and fails to identify what can only be the product of the grace of God in their life.

And that is where he begins. So it's strange that he begins with this and so soon after reminds them of the fact that those who are beginning this life of grace that they are soon to be appearing before the Christ who will be their judge.

And that they have this because of his grace facility to believe that when they do they will appear before him as those that are his and those who are to be treated as such.

In verse 5 he says In everything you are enriched by him. Everything you are enriched by him.

In other words you are being thanked or God is thanked because of what? I recognize in you that is the product of the grace of God and everything that is praiseworthy everything that you are able to appreciate has been of worth.

[24 : 38] God is the origin of that. God is the source of that. God's grace alone is responsible for what you have become. And this is a proper order order although men would reverse it and turn it upside down but not so God and those who see God in it.

God's grace first and then what is praiseworthy the result of that grace. in every respect he thinks in all things without exception and two things are highlighted that are praiseworthy in all utterance and in all knowledge which is strange in many respects but in everything you are enriched by him in all utterance and in all knowledge so that they have something to say that's what he means.

They have something to say now which was not true of them before. When they are able to speak they are able to speak the truth concerning Christ and that is more than anything that they could do before this grace came into being in their experience.

Some suggest that he is talking about the gifts of the Spirit and I suppose this epistle goes on to speak about some of these gifts.

Gifts such as prophecy, gifts such as us teaching, teaching, those who are endowed with even the gift of tongues.

[26 : 50] Remember you read on chapter 13 and that featured within the congregation there. But the word I think is really to be understood as simply as possible that the Corinthians had something to speak about when they came to know Christ as their saviour.

Before that whatever they had to say and remember these people were encouraged to celebrate those who were orators and those who had gifts of reasoning and the ability to process thought and to present arguments in ways that people were taken up with.

The Christian could speak about Christ and the Christian who could speak about Christ could speak about nothing better than Christ. And the knowledge they had of that Christ was a knowledge that was a saving knowledge was a knowledge that had the potential not just to bring them to salvation but to bring them to the fruition of salvation which was to be presented holy and without blemish in the day of Christ.

They were the product of God's grace. They have more than one occasion been in the company of some who could talk and who did talk and they spoke at length but it would have been much better for them to speak less and to engage their brain more if I was to be sympathetic towards them.

There are some people and they just can't help talking but it's not just talk it's a speech that is moderated by the grace of God in Christ Jesus so that what you have to say is worth saying and there is nothing better than saying something worthwhile about Christ your knowledge of him and your experience of him and everything that the gospel has brought to your attention and here as in verse 6 indicates what they gave utterance to was all of Christ even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you he says not just to you but in you you who have been transformed by the grace of

[29 : 58] Christ have the proof of that in the transformation that has taken place in your life now that doesn't mean that they are that they are the finished product that doesn't mean that they have come to perfection in the twinkling of a knife sometimes we thought that at some point we thought it wouldn't be long until we were ready for glory we were just we were so full of Christ so ready for being ushered into his presence it didn't take him long to show us otherwise but what God was doing in them it was all of Christ through the ministry of the word they were able to speak wisely about him as well as by way of their own personal experience of him and every

Christian has a different relationship with the world and every Christian has their own personal experience of Christ it may not conform to the norm of son but may conform perfectly to son the divine Charles Hodge explains it in these terms the gospel is in one view the testimony which Christ bore or the testimony the apostles bore concerning him it is good to contemplate the gospel as that system of truth which the eternal logos or revealer has made known the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you so that you come behind in no gift waiting for the coming of our

Lord Jesus Christ in other words nothing that is necessary is lacking nothing that you need is missing everything that is needful for the work of Christ to come to fruition the fullness of it you have it even though it is understood that it is not the case that they are as they should be as far as the gift and graces of the spirit are concerned they lack nothing but are still immature as you would imagine or some are anyway some would have to go on for a long time before they got to the place that God was going to declare concerning them that they were a finished article yet when the day of

Christ comes they will find themselves blameless because of what he has done in them we mentioned Leon Morris and he made the following observation the enriching with the spirit's gift is itself an assurance a foretaste of things to come it is he who will confirm them and because it is they may be assured that they will be blameless in that day blameless suggests unimpeachable there will be nobody there who will lay a charge against them that will remove from them the right that Christ has given to them to be one with his people when we just read the apostles words in Romans 8 he says to the believer there that he asked the question who shall lay a charge against

God's elect it is God that justifies and so on and the Eremon people not the Roman church alone the Corinthian church those who are in membership there those who are in the body of Christ those who are by faith experience what it is to close in with Christ and to accept him as the one who is their saviour and to receive him as their saviour Christ it's amazing how the apostle Paul begins this epistle with the full knowledge that the people he is writing to there are many things going on in their life that they need to reform that they need to address and if he was to write a letter to any one of us with that same knowledge what would he write no different because even though many of us make a profession of being in Christ there are still things that are true of us that we need to acknowledge that only by grace they can be dealt with is it not good that there is grace adequate to meet all our needs in Christ may bless to us these few thoughts let us pray ever blessed

[36 : 05] God you are a God of all grace not one professing Christian could make that profession were it not for your grace it was grace that came into all our lives and set us free from the bondage of sin we bless you and thank you that such a deliverance is all of grace and that it wasn't anything that was true of us that ensured that we would embrace that salvation that is in Christ we pray that you would bless your people with all their varying needs wherever they may be this night we give thanks for them we're thankful for every individual we're thankful for the body that is known collectively as the church of Christ and the day will come where they one and all will be one in his image without any blemish without any stain without anything that any will lay to their charge because the blood of

Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin we give thanks for the blood and we pray that we would apply to it always bless those who live in your care any for whom we may be concerned any who are unwell any who are needing to be prayed for may we do so knowledgeably and with understanding cleansing from sin in Jesus name amen we're going to sing in conclusion in gaelic two verses from psalm 97 two verses in gaelic from psalm 97 verse 9 or how yegi hofa art os cun cac ulu hir ha vartartoch o gymor os cun cac cia c dier saes no

Die Ze vartarto abandoned Let's kill Kahulahir.

I'll see you then. In high with dark thick morning.

I'll see you then. In high with dark thick morning.

[39 : 57] In high with dark thick morning.

In high with dark thick morning. In high with dark thick morning.

In high with dark thick morning. In high with dark thick morning.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[41 : 55] Thank you.