

# Stand Fast in The Liberty Given To You By Christ

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[ 0 : 00 ] We can resume our public worship of God by singing from Psalm 78, Psalm 78, and we're singing from the beginning to verse 6, verses 1 to 6.

I tend my people to my law, thereto give thou an ear. The words that from my mouth proceed attentively do hear. My mouth shall speak a parable on sayings dark of old, the same which we have heard and known, and us and fathers told.

We also will them not conceal from their posterity, then to the generation to come declared will we. The praises of the Lord our God and his almighty strength, the wondrous works that he hath done we will show forth at length.

His testimony and his law in Israel he did place, and charged their fathers it to show to their succeeding race. That so the race which was to come might well them learn and know, and sons unborn who should arise might to their sons then show.

And so on. Let us sing these verses 1 to 6 of Psalm 78. Attend my people to my law, thereto give thou an ear.

[ 1 : 28 ] attend my people to my law, thereto give thou an ear.

the words that from my mouth proceed. attend my people to my law, thereto give thou an ear.

And so on. And so on. And so on. And so on. And so on.

And so on. And so on. And so on. And so on.

And so on. And so on. And so on.

[ 2 : 50 ] And so on. And so on. And so on. And so on. And so on.

And so on.

The praises of the Lord and Lord as His own bodyathes, send to the Lord both words of the men we will show the place His testimony and his glory His defeated place And charged our father

To his holy death Succeeding grace That so there is Which was to come My well and where God knows And sons and born To should arise My due Let's Let's Let's Let's join together in prayer At this stage Lord our God

As we Come before you We give thanks That your word so Perfectly Brings before us The way in which The children of men Occupy At this Space At this time Appearing At the point At which you Ordain them To take their place And As surely As that is so So you have Ordained The boundaries That mark out Their existence Here in this world With each generation Followed By another Until such time

[ 6 : 32 ] As this world Will have Run its course You have kept Hidden from us What that means We can Look at it Universally And consider The plight That awaits Earth As this place That you have Placed man in That you have Chosen Not to reveal The time At which Your only begotten Will return To fulfil That part Of his Allowed To draw As the judge Of the quick And the dead When he will Come With the second Coming Surrounded By The myriad Hosts Of the angels Heralding His arrival Not in

Small numbers Whatever that Number was When he was Born into the world But with An innumerable Host Declaring His coming To the whole World And we are On that Trajectory To the point At which You will reveal Yourself to us In that fashion Those alive At this coming Will see Images Beyond Description And yet They will be Seen Beyond our Capacity To understand But nevertheless Promised And realised According to Promise We pray that You would Encourage us As your people Here in this World To anticipate Such a time And to be

Ready for it As your World Councils us So to be For in such An hour as You know not The son of Man will Come And you Council Your people To be in a State of Readiness We pray for Your church The world Over We are Thankful That this Church Bays your Name That the Christ Who is Head over The church Is the One to Whom each And every Living soul Looks to As the Author and Finisher of Their faith Lord And Saviour Who has Redeemed them So that to Death they Would not Go down We bless You and Thank you That even Though The grave Might Be occupied By The bodies Of the Saints That they

Will come For the Resurrection We'll see Them Take their Leave Of the Dust And At the Voice of The Last Trump They Shall Hear Their Lord And Saviour Speak To Them And Speak To Them In A Man Which She Has Not Yet Spoken And we Bless you And thank You That those Who are The Blessed Of His Father Will Come To His Right Hand And Enjoy Limitless Blessings Without End We Ask That you Would Remind Your People Of That And Encourage Them By It In A World That Discourages Them No End A World That Disputes That This Is Indeed What Lies Before Us There Are Many Who Live In Dread And Fear

That This World Will Destroy Itself That This World Will Be Brought Into A Calamitous End By Reason Of Man's Doing And We Do Acknowledge That The Foolishness That Marks The Existence Of Man In The World Is There To Be Seen But It Is Not Of Man's Doing To Bring This World To An End No Matter How Close To It They May Come That We Do Not Know Even In The In The Most Powers That Have Been Garnered Together To Create Weapons Of Mass Destruction Put The Potential To To Create Great Are To Man And Beast And

[ 11 : 36 ] To The World As A Whore And Yet The Powers That Are In Existence Are Under The Control Of One Greater Than The There Is A King Who Is Jesus And His Word Is The Last Word With Regard To Any Activities That Are To Be Witnessed On The Scene Of Time We Trust In That Lord And Saviour To Dispend Justice Of His Own Leisure And Should Do So Causing All To Submit To His Will We Pray For Your Blessing Upon The Proclamation Of Truth In His Name Tonight In Every Place That People Gather In His Name We Pray That His Presence Would Be Felt By Them And That Young All Would Know That The Lord Who Is King Overall Is Speaking Through His Word May It Secure

A Lodging Place In Our Heart And That It Would Drive Us To Our Knees And Seek The Face And The Favour And The So That We Would Know That He Is Our Lord And He Is Our King We Pray For The Proclamation Of Truth Even Where Hitherto It Has Been Resisted And Prevented In Nations That Are Close To The Gospel May Inroads Be Made So That The Christ That Has Been Hidden From Sight Would Be Revealed And That Those To Whom He Is Revealed Would Bow The Knee To Him Willingly And Acknowledge His Lordship We Pray For The War Torn Nations Of The Earth We Pray For Those Afflicted By Famine By Natural Calamities We Pray Lord For Your Wisdom To Overrule For Good And All These Things Help Us To Be One

Another's Burdens And Even At This Time Of Participation With Regards To Electing Members Of Parliament We Pray For Wisdom To Be Given To Those Who Are Clearly Lapping Lord Hear Our Prayers Guide Us In All Things That We May Glorify Your Name In All That We Seek To Do Cleanse From Sin We Would Ask In Jesus Name Amen I Sing To God's Praise From Psalm 85 Psalm 85 From The Beginning To Verse 8 O Lord Thou Hast Been Favourable To Thy Beloved Land Jacob's Captivity Thou Hast Recalled With Mighty Hand Thou Pardon Thy People Hast All

Pgee For Vide God's Through Let New forth extends. But in thee may thy people joy.

Will thou not us revive? Show us thy mercy, Lord, to us to thy salvation give. And hear what God the Lord will speak. To his folk he'll speak peace and to his saints. But let them not return to foolishness.

[ 15 : 21 ] And so on these verses, Psalm 85 from verse 1, O Lord, thou hast been favourable to thy beloved land. O Lord, thou hast been paved above to thy beloved land.

Jacob, chapter 7, chapter 8, Over to thy Lord as god sout send thou my high quality Halt thou The pardon is I even ask, O there in Enequity, Thou all their trespasses and sins hast ever from Thy lies.

Thou couldst all Thy light adjourn from Thy wrath to this nest.

Turn us, O dove, who is on go, Thy rocket's just to sea.

Shall I dispatch Your love, Savior, against us without end?

[ 17 : 33 ] Will Thou do change that ancient soul, Thy light and vortex stand?

That in the midnight people join, Will Thou not us remind?

Show us Thy mercy, Lord, to us, to Thy salvation give.

I live what not the Lord will see, To His hope He'll speak peace.

I live what not the Lord will see, To His hope He'll speak peace.

[ 19 : 13 ] Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Behold, I, Paul, say unto you that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that ye is a debtor to do the whole law.

Christ is become of no effect unto you. Whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace. For we, through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.

Ye did run well. Who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.

[ 20 : 25 ] A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded.

But he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution?

Then is the offence of the cross cease. I would they were even cut off which trouble you. And so on. May the Lord add his blessing to a reading of this word.

And to his name be the praise. We can sing now from Psalm 119. Psalm 119, the beginning of the psalm.

I'll sing this section of the psalm. Of the psalm. One to read. Blessed are they that undefiled and straight are in the way, who in the Lord's most holy law do walk and do not stray.

[ 21 : 33 ] Blessed are they who to observe his statutes are inclined, and who do seek the living God with their whole heart and mind. Such in his ways do walk, and they do know iniquity.

Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts carefully. O that thy statutes to observe thou wouldst my ways direct, then shall I not be shamed when I thy precepts all respect.

Then with integrity of heart thee will I praise and bless when I the judgments all have learned of thy pure righteousness. that I will keep thy statutes all firmly resolved have I.

O do not then, most gracious God, forsake me utterly. Psalm 119, verses 1 to 8. Blessed are they that undefiled and straight are in the way.

Blessed are they that undefiled and straight are in the way.

[ 22 : 54 ] Blessed are they that undefiled and straight are in the way.

Blessed are they that undefiled and straight are in the way.

Blessed are they that undefiled and straight are in the way.

O that I start to observe the woods by this thy name, Then shall I not be shamed when I thy pieces all remain, Then with integrity, O Lord, thee will my peace unblessed, Where nigh the judgment all under of thy pure righteousness,

That I will keep thy sanctuos all firm, weary song, dry, O till the end, O say, as God, forsake me utterly.

[ 26 : 11 ] I'd like us to turn to the passage that we read, and we're going to consider the first six verses of that chapter.

Chapter 5, Paul's epistle to the Galatians. From the beginning to verse 6, Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Behold, I, Paul, say unto you that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing, and so on. We're resuming our study of this epistle, And we've already noticed that the apostle Paul is returning to many of the same themes that he covers throughout the epistle.

So you would imagine that such repetition is unnecessary, and you would imagine that he hasn't much to say that is relevant to the church in Galatia.

He's just filling out these pages of the epistle. Well, you couldn't be wrong. You couldn't be more wrong.

[ 28 : 01 ] I suppose the fault is mine when I'm not able to get into the depth of the teaching that is there. But one thing does stand out that Paul feels the need to repeat some of what he has said, although there is variation in the way in which he writes it and applies it.

But ask yourself the question, why does he feel the need to do that? Why does he have to come back to much of the same truths again and again?

Why is he so insistent? Is the relevance to us in our generation might be relevant to the church in Galatia because of their particular circumstances, but what relevance has this got for us?

Because after all, we know nothing of the doctrine of circumcision at a practical level. It is something that was a typical expression of the relationship that existed between God and his people under a dispensation that has now come to an end.

And to speak of it outwith a society that had an interest in that, surely it's not really relevant.

[ 29 : 38 ] It's not really applicable. But there's a statement that's made, and I think it is a statement that we need to take on board.

And it's said about the Lord's people in Israel, the children of Israel, God took them out of Egypt. And he did so in one night.

But then somebody has wisely pointed out that while he took them out of Egypt in one night, it was a lifetime for him to take Egypt out of Israel.

It took a lifetime to take Egypt out of Israel. But what has that got to do with us? Well, I think it tells us the nature of man.

It tells us something about not just the fact that in Egypt, Israel imbibed many of the doctrines and the theologies that were alien to their culture.

[ 30 : 46 ] They imbibed them, and they believed them, and they followed them. And they took them with them when they left Egypt. And that's probably what that saying means.

But if you go back to the beginning, and you remind yourself of what was true about God's created people, God who created men and women in his own image.

He created them so as to live before him in obedience to the law that he gave to them. And that was embellished, that was indelibly imprinted upon their hearts.

And the impression that they had upon creation was that they could do what God commanded them in the law. And that they were perfectly able to do that.

And they were. They were by nature equipped to fulfill the law of God. They were equipped to believe God and to follow his word and to act upon it and to apply it to their lives.

[ 32 : 06 ] But when soon entered into their experience that was no longer the case. But that doesn't mean that they forgot. That they forgot what was their original created condition.

condition. And it was so much part of their psyche, so much part of their spirituality, that even though we have gone thousands of years away from what we were as created, that thought still dominates.

That inclination is still there that by our obedience to whatever we perceive God to be saying to us that we have the ability to gain life through it.

And that thought is something that man has not been able to shake off. in which however it manifests itself in whatever way it comes to light, we still find ourselves as if commending ourselves to God by doing the things we expect that he requires of us.

A limited understanding with lack of light, lack of spirituality, will make us think that God will be satisfied with law keeping in whatever way that law keeping comes to fruition or comes to light.

[ 33 : 55 ] So I think that's part of the reason that Paul is having to come back to this people again, not just because this people were greatly influenced by those who were Judaizers, who lived by the word of God as they understood it, who believed that there was some merit in their law keeping, and who insisted on others doing the same thing, and in particular those that they saw to be believers in the Christ of God, that they should live by the law, and we've already touched on that.

So because it's so deeply ingrained, innocent, in mankind as a whole, it's inevitable that Paul will confront this and see this and feel the need to bring this back to front and centre again, so that we realise what's happening.

Just think for a moment of how the Shorter Catechism teaches us with regard to our inability to please God.

the divines there made this statement, no mere man since the fall is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but does daily break them in thought and word and in deed.

That's the divines writing in the 17th century. writing from the word of God their understanding that this was something that was a doctrine that needed to be brought to their attention that man's inability to please God had to be understood, had to be taught, had to be applied.

[ 36 : 17 ] and despite that we still try or if not we seek to justify our Christian status on the basis of our obedience, of our obedience mind.

We justify ourselves before God on the basis of what we've done right or the things that we believe are commending us to God which really there is no commendation at all because the moment we commend ourselves to God on the basis of our obedience we are doing service to the obedience of Christ who is the one and only means by which we are justified in the eyes of God.

I want us just to look at this passage and see what Paul is actually saying and why he is saying it. And he begins and I suppose if you look at various commentators they actually separate verse one from chapter five and they tie it into verse 31 of chapter four chapter divisions are rather arbitrary anyway but they believe that it makes more sense for it to be tacked on to the end of chapter four than beginning chapter five but that being said what Paul is saying there in verse one is quite a strong and insistent statement and most of those who are translating this passage from the Greek they are saying that the translation that we have here loses the effect of the original language in the sense that

Paul is saying this for freedom Christ freed you which is a very powerful and a very insistent statement for freedom Christ has freed you it presents it in a different light in the sense that we can believe as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ that the liberty that Christ has secured for us on the basis of our faith in him is a liberty that insists that we are no longer bound by the laws of God or the consequences of their breach and I suppose that is the best way of putting it we are obligated to God to fulfill his law and we are unable to fulfill that law and because our condemnation would rest upon that failure by faith looking into Christ we find one who has fulfilled the law on our behalf and rid us of that condemnation the law is still relevant in that sense but the condemnation has been removed by Christ so the statement if left simply that the

Christian is free from the controlling power of the law or the influencing power of the we just simply said that we would be wrong because we need to append to that statement the fact that our obligations to the law still apply but not in order to achieve salvation by that because of our inability to do so freedom from law works in order to attain to righteousness and salvation is secure by Christ Jesus stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage you are standing on a secure foundation when your salvation rests upon

[ 41 : 03 ] Christ and not upon your endeavours to fulfil the law of God in order to satisfy that God whose law it is and this is what Paul wants us to understand and this is what these people that he is confronting again and again have to be confronted with because they are insisting that there is something over and above faith in Christ that needs to be in the experience of the Christian be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage and the words that he uses there are clearly the same he is talking about those who are ensnared who have gone back to the chains that Christ shattered and are doing so willingly and not to realise that is to submit once again to the yoke of bondage what

Christ has done for you you try to do for yourself or you try to add to what Christ has done for you with something that you believe adds to what he has done which is clearly not the case is to then we find Paul in verse two onwards he says he focuses on circumcision in particular and it is no more or no less what is in the experience of every male Jew the right of circumcision is something that symbolises to them the relationship that exists between God and his people circumcision takes you right back to Abraham in the

Old Testament originally it was something that belonged to Abraham and to his family those who were his immediate family then it was extended beyond that to the nation of Israel it had several features as well as a physical sign that Mark Abraham himself and his descendants it was a sign of national identity but the implications of that for the New Testament Church was that they were teaching that those who were Christian also needed to submit themselves to the right of circumcision otherwise their Christianity would be incomplete they needed to submit to the right of circumcision as it was practiced in the experience of

Abraham and his descendants in his book the economy of the covenants theology of the various expressions of covenant theology that are witnessed through the history of the church church and this was a Dutch theologian a man called Herman Witsius and his books two volumes of them they're very exhaustive in the way that it deals the whole doctrine of covenant theology but he says this whoever submits to circumcision as a necessary part of God's instituted or as a means of justification thereby renounces Christ the one who willingly submits to that as necessary a necessary part of

God's institution are a means of justification they renounce Christ it's a very clear statement that's what Paul is insisting upon the person who does this they are saying that Christ is not enough whoever seeks for righteousness in circumcision as his own work is fallen from the righteousness of Christ and so if he would obtain salvation it is necessary that he keep the whole law which it is impossible for him to do so there's two sides to it there's the understanding that that in some way what Christ has done is not sufficient but the understanding that in some way they're going to meet this insufficiency by something that they themselves will do and that is impossible

[ 46 : 52 ] Paul is teaching it is impossible I testify again to every man that is circumcised that he is a debtor to do the whole law Christ has become of no effect unto you whosoever of you are justified by the law you are fallen from grace and that's quite severe language you are fallen from grace you have gone to Christ you have acknowledged Christ as the saviour of sinners you have declared your saving interest in him but having done that you have now gone back to a former way of life now what Paul is saying here is I suppose it has to be clarified that he is not saying that the person who is circumcised cannot be saved that's not what he is saying because clearly when the gospel was preached to the Jews it was preached to those who were by reason of their national identity they were circumcised so he's not saying to them you can't be saved because of your national identity that's clearly law but what he is saying is the person who becomes circumcised in order to be saved is doing something that contradicts the grace that is in the gospel you can't live by the law and at the same time live by grace now you might think listening to all this that this really is something that has to do with a particular group of people and it doesn't include you you are excluded because you're not a Jew and you're never submitted to the right of circumcision and really it has no relevance to the way that you live your life but there is a warning there to those who have come to Christ and trusted in Christ for their salvation and yet having done that they in some way believe that by their keeping of God's law that that is a necessity for them in order for them to be saved now I think that has to be stated alongside the thought that what Paul is teaching is not antinomianism he is not against the law as a rule of life in the sense that the believer knows what the law of God is and the believer lives in the light of that law by faith endeavouring to keep the law as far as he is able or she is able but not in order to gain salvation that's where we get things wrong if you have submitted your soul to the safekeeping of Christ as the saviour that you need you are not under obligation to keep the law in order to be more saved than you are when you close in with Christ by faith but the obligation to keep the law is nevertheless

there as someone who desires to honour God the God whose law it is to live to live your life in the light of that law and fulfil to the best of your ability all that the law expects of you in whichever way it manifests itself but never in order to be better more acceptable to God your acceptability to God my acceptability to God is entirely bound up with him whose life we look to for salvation and that is further expanded in verses 5 and 6 Christ is become of no effect unto you whosoever of you are justified by the law you are fallen from grace but he says for we through the spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith for in

Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision but faith which worketh by love Paul is there identifying with the believer this is the Jew that once was this is the one who has undergone circumcision this is the one who in his flesh has the marks of the covenant of Abraham and yet he identifies himself with the believer who through the spirit waits for the hope of righteousness by faith and what does he say well he's saying in these words although slightly complicated in the way that they're done he describes what differentiates the true believer from the apostate the true believer from the person who has reverted to depending upon law works for salvation

Paul himself whose faith is the faith of the believer in Christ and possesses what he calls the hope of righteousness like they do now the word hope there accompanies the word faith read it again we through the spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith now hope is something that anticipates what is yet to be it is something that looks forward to an event in the future and the believer's hope looks beyond the present into the future realities that are promised but their faith is what enables them to fulfill what the hope of the believer holds out hope looks beyond the present to the day where we stand before

God if you just for an example the day we stand before God on the day of judgment if we think of it like that the believer's experience after death what is it going to be like this is what it is for the believer whose hope and trust is in Christ that they will as the Bible declares them to have to like everybody else they will stand before God before Christ on the day of judgment and what will be true of them is that whether if they're alive when he comes or if they're raised up to the hope of glory they shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment Christ the judge will identify them as his own they will identify their clothing as the righteousness that he himself has woven for them and they will be identified as his and declared free from guilt covered in the impeccable righteousness of his own making that is the hope of the believer part of it but it certainly it's not something that has yet been realized in the experience of any believer here but this is what is going to be true of them and what that depends upon is what

[ 55 : 46 ] Christ is to them this is a hope born of the spirit and he says it's the born of the spirit working by love what they do they don't do it because they are under the hail of an oppressor they don't do it because they are compelled to do it out of fear but out of love you read what Paul says in his epistle to the Colossians it's in chapter one he's describing the believer there and describing what is true of the believer in verse 10 he says that you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God this is what a believer does walking worthy of the

Lord unto all pleasing fruitful in every good work increasing in the knowledge of God these are not things that they depend upon for salvation but because they are saved this is how they are marked out strengthened with all might according to his glorious power and to all patience and long suffering with joyfulness giving thanks unto the Father which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the sin light who has delivered us from the power of darkness and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear son in whom we have redemption through his blood even the forgiveness of sins and so on Christ all all through their hope lies this is their faith focusing on him and their accompanying hope looking with anticipation to what will be there but they live out their life here in this world manifesting revealing demonstrating through the love that they have for God and for

Christ how they highlight and elevate the Lord by perfect control what God has for them and wants from them to be a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ Paul maintains is something that fills them with delight the law is not onerous the law is not something that is a burden to them it's not something that they shy away from but neither do they insist upon it as something that their life their spiritual life their eternal life depends upon way through the spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision but faith that worketh by love and that's what



Paul comments that's what Paul highlights he denigrates the teaching the insistence that undermines the Christ of the gospel and what he has secured for the saved he has fulfilled all righteousness so why should they reverse to something in order to accomplish their own this is Paul's teaching and this is Paul wanting us to take this to heart and try and apply it in our relationship with him that we live with a righteousness without which we cannot we cannot exist but not to attain salvation by it may God bless to us these few thoughts let us pray oh lord oh god we give thanks that your patience is made manifest in the way in which you seek to teach us that we build upon a sure and a certain foundation that is unshakable even the finished work of

Christ Jesus and what he has accomplished for us we need not seek by our own endeavours to accomplish anything of an equivalent sort or even a comparable sort we pray for wisdom to be able to understand the difference between what he has done and what we fail to do hear our prayers and watch over us each one and all we commend to your care and keeping this evening especially those of our number who are unwell we remember them to you once again for our sin in Jesus name amen of closing psalm is psalm 17 psalm 17 we're singing at verse 5 psalm 17 at verse 5 hold up my goings lord me guide in those thy paths divine so that my footsteps may not slide out of those ways of thine

[ 61 : 34 ] I called on thee have on thee O God because thou wilt me hear that thou mayst hearken to my speech to me and climb thine ear thy wondrous loving kindness show how that by thy right hand saves them that trust in thee from those that up against them stand as the apple of the eye me keep in thy wings shade me close from lewd oppressors compassing me round as deadly foes these verses hold up my goings Lord me guide in those thy paths divine hold up my goings Lord me guide in those thy paths divine so that my hurt sets me not like the love such his sake rest of these few sides bear me glory and hope

That thou best art and do my speech to read by thy ear.

Thy wondrous love in kindness show the love by thy bride.

Sent them like voting be from the earth of mine to give away thyice.

and sun at the apple of the ivy and thy wings shake me from the earth of desert shall guard in mir round our fahren Eli Christ in E líder our is a holy spirit invest in was in C amen