

The Epiphany of the Son of God

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- [0 : 00] Welcome to our service this morning. We come together to worship God and we pray that he would bless his word to us.
- We can begin by singing to God's praise from Psalm 93. Psalm 93 and we're going to sing the whole psalm.
- Psalm 93 and we're going to sing the whole psalm.
- Psalm 93 and we're going to sing the whole psalm.
- The Lord has written and closed to see.
- [1 : 33] With majesty most bright His words to show him glory.
- The world is also established.
- Thy throne is fixed. Thy throne is fixed.
- The Lord has written and closed to see. The Lord has written and closed to see. The Lord has written and closed to see. The Lord has written and closed to see.
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- [2 : 51] The Lord has written and closed to see.
- And made a mighty noise. But yet the Lord that is so nigh.
- Is more of might by power. The noise of many watersheds.
- Our great sea perils are. Thy testimony save me one.
- And with fullness exhale. And holiness forevermore.
- [4 : 17] Thy heart be calm and well. Let us join together in faith.
- Let us pray. O Lord our God. We are reminded in the words of the psalmist. Of how the creation itself pays homage to the creator.
- And while it may not be in the manner in which we are expected to do so. Nevertheless, by fulfilling the purposes for which they were created or it is created.
- They honour and exalt God. We know that even though the world is under the justice pleasure of you, of God as creator.
- Because we have departed from the role that we were meant to occupy. As living in perfect obedience to you.
- [5 : 39] And not only did mankind suffer as a consequence. But the creation itself is under your condemnation.
- But it awaits the day of redemption. And that is promised to it as much as it is promised to the children of Adam who have repented of their sin and embraced Christ Jesus through the gospel.

We would pray this day that we would know something of the presence of the Lord in this exercise of worship.

May your word be blessed to us. May the prayers of your people, as they are offered in your hearing, May they speak of the way that their heart is held captive by the love of God.

Your love to them has brought them to your footstool, acknowledging their need. Not just temporal need, but spiritual need above all else.

[7 : 02] And that as they call upon you in and through the person of your son Jesus Christ, they are ever thankful that they have a way of access.

Because whatever else they understand by reason of your dealing with them, they know that their sin is sufficient to debar them from your presence. If it is not dealt with as you have so promised to deal with it, then it will be held against them and it will prohibit them from access to you.

But we give thanks that such is the work that Christ has wrought on behalf of his people, that his people are assured that you have indeed secured that way of access to the God of heaven.

We bless you and thank you for every way in which we have discovered this to be true and the implications of it for the way that they live their life here in this world.

Lord, we pray that you would remind us of the simplicity of their faith even, though it may at times be complex in its outworking, that they have been brought to a place where, like another of old, their confession was, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.

[8 : 35] And understanding that there was mercy to be found with God and that they needed it and that because of their need they could not go anywhere else but to God.

We give thanks for the assurance that you have given to them through your word that that mercy is secure, that it does not fluctuate, that it does not depend upon them anymore, that it depends on anyone else other than the God who is the one who bestows it upon them.

And you are not about to deviate from the bestowal of that mercy upon whomsoever thou hast bestowed it. So help us to remember the privileged position we have if we know the Lord Jesus Christ as our own personal Saviour.

It is one thing to discover that to be a truth that the Gospel holds out to all sinners, whosoever they are, wherever they may be, but that it is a truth that has been made relevant to ourselves and that Christ Jesus is one to whom we look and upon whom we depend and whose love fills our heart and yet we find that we often besmirch our profession of that love by failing to live up to it in so many different ways.

We confess our sins and we seek grace to to repent of them and to flee to Christ unlike another who who was so filled with remorse that he could not go to God and did not go to God but sought to seek relief in death and the perverse manner in which he conducted himself escaped his understanding that he was even by entering into death, entering into the experience of a presence from which he would not escape and would be his throughout the endless ages of eternity without benevolence or without pity.

[11 : 07] We pray, Lord, for wisdom to live our lives in the light of the Gospel and to appreciate what the Gospel holds out to us. We pray that you would bless it the world over wherever you have sent out emissaries in your name, ambassadors in Christ's name, proclaiming that Christ to others that their world would be blessed or whatever it is that you have cast their loved.

Remember the pulpits of our island. May the message of salvation be clear. May it be inambiguous. May it speak the truth lovingly and may it present Christ as the alone Saviour of sinners.

May it remind us that the path that we are on is often a path that is frequented by thieves and these thieves they steal from us our affections, they steal from us our time, they steal from us our times, our love and we acknowledge that because such is the case that we are in danger always and we pray for your help and for your hand to be upon us.

Remember your people here in this place bless them we pray according to need temporal and spiritual. We pray for them in their home, we pray for them in their family, we pray for them in their own souls.

we pray for any that were present who are yet to close in with Christ why it may yet be so about them that they have failed to do so when the invitation of the gospel is so clear come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

[13 : 16] we pray for your own mercy to abound towards them that the eyes of their soul may be opened that they may look and gaze upon the face of Christ Jesus that you may draw them to yourself and burden them of all that they carry in this world that if they are left carrying these burdens to the judgment day they will know all about it so here are petitions for those that we love those that are part of our own families that are still strangers to grace and to God be merciful to each and every one we pray pour out your spirit upon us as a generation remember your people who are incapable of attending with us here they are with us in spirit we know bless them where they are be they in their Roman homes in hospital or being cared for elsewhere we give thanks for the measure of care that is shown to the weak all the frailties and the fragilities of human experience remind us that we are just one short step behind those who have been so long in the way before us and they too had times of of power and strength and industry engaged in all the activities of life some who were your people and who were industrious in your name and who were more testimony to your love for them but through the passage of time and through the weakness of the flesh their pace slowed and their ability to take part in the activities of your church here on earth became limited but we give thanks that this is but a precursor to a greater experience a better experience a more lasting experience where you have promised to take them to be with yourself never again to part from them never again to hear these words arise and let us go hence we give thanks for the gospel that holds these promises out to us remember the world in which we live all the awfulness that exists within it the wickedness that is in man's heart often lies deeply buried and hidden from sight but given the right occasion it floods to the surface and we see how awful sin really is and we see disturbances in the world of all kinds we see the wickedness that is in the world for which there is no remedy except the remedy that you have provided in the person of Jesus

Christ we pray for grace that you may win over kingdoms to yourself you have been able to do so in the past you have done so in the past where your word came with power from on high and we pray we pray that you would yet again bear your hand and rend asunder the heavens and come down watch over us we pray and grant mercy for our many sins in Jesus Christ's name we ask it with forgiveness of sin in him amen let us again sing to God's praise singing this time from Psalm 71 Psalm 71 from the beginning of the psalm O Lord my hope and confidence is placed in thee alone then let thy servant never be put to confusion and let me in thy righteousness from thee deliverance have cause me escape incline thine ear unto me and me save be thou my dwelling rock to which

I ever may resort thou gavest commandment me to save for thou art my rock and fort free me my God from wicked hands hands cruel and unjust for thou O Lord God art my hope and from my youth my trust thou from the womb didst hold me up thou art the same that me out of my mother's bowels too I ever will praise thee too many I a wonder am but thou art my refuge strong filled let my mouth be with thy praise and honour all day long and so on we'll sing these verses Psalm 71 verses 1 2 6 with five stanzas I think five stanzas O Lord my hope and confidence is placed in me alone O Lord my hope and confidence is placed in me alone then let thy servant ever be put to confusion and let me earn thy righteousness from thee dear ransom cause me escape to climb to me and be saved be thou my dwelling road to which

I ever may resort thou give home and made me to save for thou art my rock and for free me my God from wicked hands and and and and just for thou o lord god art my hope and from my youth my trust trust thou from the wounded hold me up thou art the same that me hurt off my mind by us too

I ever will praise thee we are going to hear God's word as we have it in the New Testament and the epistle of Paul to Titus the epistle of Paul to Titus the epistle of Paul to Titus we're reading the second chapter chapter Titus chapter 2 we'll read the whole chapter but speak thou the things which become so doctrine that the aged men be sober grave temperate sowed in faith in charity in patience the aged woman likewise that they may that they may that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness not false accusers not given too much wine teachers of good things that they may teach the young women to be sober to love their husbands to love their children to be discreet chaste keepers at home good obedient to their own husbands their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded, in all things showing thyself a pattern of good works, in doctrine showing uncorrectness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again, not purloining, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

[23 : 36] For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak and exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee. Amen. And thank the Lord that his blessing to a reading of his word and to his name be the praise.

We're going to sing now from Psalm 72. Psalm 72. We can read from the beginning of the psalm.

Psalm 73. O Lord, thy judgments give the king, his son, thy righteousness. With right he shall thy people judge, thy poor with uprightness. The lofty mountains shall bring forth unto the people peace.

Likewise the little hills, the same shall do by righteousness. The people's poor ones he shall judge, the needy children save, and those shall he in pieces break, who them oppress a time. They shall thee fear while sun and moon do last, through ages all. Like rain on mawn grass he shall drop, or showers on earth at fall. The just shall flourish in his days and prosper in his reign. He shall, while doth the moon endure, abundant peace maintain. His large and great dominion shall from sea to sea extend. It from the river shall reach forth unto earth's utmost end. They in the wilderness that dwell bow down before him must, and they that are his enemies shall lick the very dust.

And so on. We're going to sing from verse 3 down to verse 9. The lofty mountains shall bring forth unto the people peace.

[26 : 14] The lofty mountains shall bring forth unto the people peace. Likewise the little hills, the same shall do by righteousness.

the people's poor ones he shall judge, the people's poor ones he shall judge, the needy children save.

And those shall he in pieces break, who them oppress a time. They shall be fear while sun and moon do last, through ages. Oh, shall they see even ■ Pascal or attained. Oh God may make these exact pieces of hope. And those shall be fear while sun and moon do last, through ages all. The Mir Alors He reaches all.

Like rain on moon grass, He shall drop harsh ash on earth that fall.

The just shall flourish in His teeth and prosper in His reign.

- [28 : 08] He shall while doth the men in jail abundant peace maintain.
His large and great communion shall from sea to sea extend.
If from the river shall reach forth unto earth's utmost end.
Then in the wilderness that dwell begun before the mast.
And they the darkness enemies shall make the very just.
- [29 : 29] So, I'd like us to turn this morning to the passage read, Epistle of Paul to Titus, Chapter 2.
And we can read again at verse 11. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people's seilis of good works.
Titus 2. But we're looking particularly at the words of verse 13. Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Those of you who were here last Lord's Day will remember that we looked at the birth of Jesus Christ as it is described to us in the Gospel of Luke.
And the main points of that account that we discovered were first of all that His birth was the fulfilment of prophecy.
- [31 : 28] Secondly, it was the consequence of a miracle, the result of divine intervention that has significance of a universal property.
and it is something that ever remains of contemporary significance. The fact that Jesus was born 2,000 years plus years ago matters not.
It is still of import to this present generation. and we understood from the emphasis that was laid upon His birth that every person should wish to know something about this Jesus that was born.
every person should have an interest in Him, not just know about it, but have an interest in Him, and more particularly a saving interest.
That they should understand that the fact of His birth is described as something that was essential for the salvation of a fallen world.
- [32 : 58] For simplicity's sake, the significance is brought home to us in the words of this chapter in verse 14. Who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself for peculiar people sewers of good works.
There are many things you can say about the person of Jesus. Many things you can say about His life and His ministry, what He said, what He did. More particularly, how He died and what He died for.
But, we need to understand that that is what is essentially the subject of the Gospel. And that, not only did He live a life that was exemplary, that He was without sin, that He glorified God in His life, He also glorified God in His death.
And having died, we are told that He rose from the dead and after a number of days, we are told that He ascended to the right hand of glory where God the Father gave Him a place of honour.
And you would think that that would be the end of the martyr. He has fulfilled the work that God gave Him to do, surely. And He is now elevated to glory as a result of that.
- [34 : 34] But, that is not the end. That is not the close of the story. There is more to come. We read, for example, that His life and His death was of such significance, that every person who hears of it should consider it well.

In Paul's epistle to the Philippians, when we think about the life and death of Christ, there are so many things that merit attention and merit greater focus and study.

And I hope you appreciate that. I hope you appreciate the wonder of who Christ is and what He came to do and what He did do. But the words of Paul tells us about His humiliation.

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, sought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

[36 : 21] In that statement, not only are we given a brief description of Christ's incarnation, we are taught what it meant for him to experience and take into himself our humanity.

He experienced the griefs and the sorrows of life in a sinful world, yet he himself without sin. He experienced what it was to be the focus of the hatred and the enmity of sinful men.

He experienced the extremes of what it was to be judged, bearing the sins of many. But we are also reminded whenever it comes to a brief statement of all that Christ was to do, that there is something yet left undone, that there is something yet that he is to experience, that there is something yet that this world is yet to experience.

the writer to the Hebrews says, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of God, of the throne of God.

There is exaltation, there is the glory and the honour given to him, but it is incomplete, believe it or not, it is not yet come to fruition what is to be his by virtue of his perfect obedience to God.

[38 : 07] And this is what this passage reminds us of, that having gone to glory, having been seated at the right hand of God in glory, that he is going to come back to the world, that he is going to come again into this world, and that he is to deal with those who are in the world, who were in the world, and who may be in between now and this coming, he is going to deal with them all in a different way to the way that he dealt with the world in his first incarnation.

he left the world but only for a time. But I want us just to think about the implications of that as they arise from this verse that we are going to focus on.

Bearing in mind the context of the words but I think focusing on the thought that just as surely as there was an incarnation in the experience of Christ that he took our nature, that he came into the world, that he was born into the world and in order for that to happen he personally, physically manifested himself on the scene of time.

And there is a time uncertain to us when he will physically manifest himself again on the scene of time in this world.

And I want us to take alongside that the thoughts that we had concerning his birth, his incarnation because some of the thoughts, some of them are interlinked to my way of thinking anyway.

[40 : 10] You'll notice that the Apostle Paul is speaking to those who are looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Christ. The first thing that I want to say about this hope is a well-founded hope. Just as surely as the incarnation, as the coming of Christ into the world was foretold, was prophesied, this second coming of Christ is also foretold and prophesied.

so the hope of those who possess that hope has very strong foundations. It is not one of these hopes that many hold in the world, which is, I've always understood it to be rather a hope soap.

I hope so, but what their hope is founded on, nobody knows. It is speculative, it is uncertain, it can be any number of things, but it is not founded on fact.

This hope is a sure and certain hope based upon God's own word, God's own promise, God's own revelation of what he intends to do.

[41 : 44] The second thing we are told about this hope is it is described as a glorious hope. Now, we're not talking there about the sense in which the hope is focused on something in particular, but that the hope of which it speaks, speaks of a glorious and an awesome event that defies description.

The glorious appearing of the great God and our saviour, Jesus Christ. And the third thing that I think must be understood, probably more from the context, and that is that it is a hope that is practical.

Those who believe this live in its light. Those who believe this hope to be God's provision for them, behave as if they know to be true.

They live their life in its light. They live and behave as if this might happen soon. The might and I'm saying might there in the sense of the uncertainty of the occasion, not the uncertainty of when it takes place.

So let's think of these three particular thoughts and try and expand on them just a little. The first thing is a disclaimer, I suppose, you and I speak of what this verse speaks about as the second coming of Christ.

[43 : 36] And most theologians who are dealing with the question or the topic of the second coming of Christ are actually using language that you will not find in the Bible.

The Bible never uses the word second coming. You can go to your Bible, take your concordance and work your way through it and that description is never found there.

But it serves a purpose because it tells you that this is what is anticipated by the church that Christ is going to come again a second time because they are aware that he came the first time.

But there is a vast difference between his coming the first time and his coming the second time. But there are three specific words that you find used within the Bible that tell you something about his coming.

the first word that you will come across and probably is the most common word is the word parousia.

[44 : 52] In the epistle of James for example you will find the apostle there speaking about his own appreciation of what he can anticipate coming to pass.

In chapter 5 and verse 7 he speaks to the believers be patient therefore brethren unto the coming of the Lord. Be patient unto the parousia.

Behold the husband man waited for the precious fruit of the earth and hath long patience for it until he received the early and laughter rain. Be ye also patient establish your hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

James the apostle understands that Jesus is going to come again and he encourages the church of God to live as if they know that to be the case.

we also see the apostle Peter in his own second epistle and he writes in the following terms but beloved be not ignorant of this one thing that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand as one day.

[46 : 20] The Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness but is long suffering to us toward not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance but the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with a fervent heat and so on.

Peter the apostle is convinced of this fact and he encourages the church that he is responsible for and those that he is writing to that Jesus is going to come again.

Similarly John in his epistle now little children abide in him that when he shall appear we may have confidence and not be ashamed of him at his coming.

So this parousia this coming of Christ is integral to the faith of the Lord's people. How they live their lives anticipating this event that will surely take place and in accordance with the certainty that they possess they live their life in its light and they behave as if they believe it to be so.

Then we have the word perhaps you're more familiar with the word apocalypse apocalypse or apocalypses which is a revelation or a manifestation which speaks of the kind of experience that there will be when Jesus comes.

[48 : 04] He will be revealed or manifested in glory and Peter again uses that word I leave you to find it for yourself.

John in the book of the revelation it is an apocalypse that is in his mind a revelation of Christ a manifestation of Christ in a sense what is revealed was previously hidden from sight but the glorious manifestation is a revelation of who he is and what he is.

And the third one is the one we have here in this passage an appearing again a manifestation so Paul is saying of the church that they are waiting for this manifestation which from the context is a manifestation of his glory.

And it is their hope because like the incarnation it is prophesied it is predicted and it carries in it the promises that God is yet to do a work in the world a work different to the work that Christ carried out before.

And what you need to remember is that you know the whole of scripture is redolent it is full of proofs or truths that are concerned with this event even though the Old Testament at times speaks of Christ being born and Christ coming in the incarnation and Christ experiencing all that his life included as an infant and as a man experiences the torments of living in this world as a holy being yet it also pointed you beyond this world beyond the events of the cross beyond the ascension into glory beyond the the session of sitting on the throne of God something that the Old Testament and the

[50 : 34] New Testament refer to often you have to remember that because it's important because some people think that the gospel is a closed book it is nothing more to say to this world it has said everything it has said everything it needs to say and I think you need to remember and I need to remember that there is something yet that is going to happen in this world that will affect you and will affect me and affect every other person who has ever drawn path in this world and it has to do with Christ and it is on the basis of what he has done before but it certainly will involve you in what he is yet to do when you read the book of the prophet Isaiah we often go to it because it speaks so wonderfully about the incarnation and about his sufferings on the cross there is so much detail it is awe inspiring but he also speaks about what he is going to do yet the glory of the

Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together what does that mean did everybody see the glory of Christ when he was in the world did everybody worship Christ when he was in the world did everybody adore Christ when he was in the world far from it but the day will come when he will be manifested and all the world will glorify him oh you're saying does that mean everybody will be a believer oh well they would believe that day that he is who the Bible says he is but in the terror that fills the heart of some the sheer dread that fills their souls because they know at that point that the judge of the quick and the dead is before them and that the word of God is true and that Christ has come for his own and that

Christ has come to fulfill what God has entrusted to him Jesus frequently comforted his disciples with words that spoke about his manifestation his epiphany chapter chapter which you take time to read it for yourself but you'll find how detailed the Lord Jesus is in describing some of the things that are true of this world leading up to who's coming again in chapter 24 and in that chapter you know some people read this and they say this can't all be true some even have interpreted it and said these words must be true only in the experience of

Christ when he was in the world but no Jesus is saying to his disciples here that there are some things that will be true when he comes again into the world and he expects them to receive encouragement from it and like much of what he had to say to the disciples they didn't fully understand what he meant by it because foolishly they expected Christ to remain with them foolishly they understood that his messiahship meant that he was going to establish an earthly kingdom but in Matthew chapter 24 we read so many of these details just

I'm going to refer to it again so I'll just read a part wherefore if they shall say unto you behold he is in the desert go not forth behold he is in the secret chamber believe it not for as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even into the west so shall also the coming of the son of man be Jesus spoke clearly to the disciples about this event but we'll refer to that chapter again because there are certain things that I want you to bear in mind the second thing I wanted to say was that it speaks here about a glorious hope a glorious appearing in the ESV translation what it says is it is the appearing of the glory of a slightly different nuance to what is said the glorious appearing of

[55 : 53] Christ or the appearing of the glory of Christ now that can I think even just that statement alone can mean many things to many people but I think what it does mean is that he shall appear he shall be manifested but his manifestation will not be as before his incarnation we remember was in weakness as an infant as a child newborn his incarnation was of somebody born into abject poverty his incarnation was in ignominy his incarnation was as one who was despised by many in the world who were ignorant of his coming now all of these things you know the fact that there were many who were ignorant of his being born it has to be understood that when

Christ comes again no one will be ignorant of it I don't believe that that is so and I think when you think try and put yourself into the shoes of Paul they're teaching this and those who are listening to Paul how can that possibly be how can Christ be manifested to all so that everybody will see him so that everybody will see his glory how can that possibly be it is an impossibility how can somebody in Jerusalem see what those who are in Sydney or in London see well humanly speaking a huge difference has occurred in the world since that was declared I'm not suggesting for one minute that this is how it would be but just imagine what it was like for the apostle to try and grasp the truth that was being suggested there that was declared there and somebody who sat recently watching the coronation of

King Charles II along with millions and millions of people throughout the Commonwealth and that's just human endeavour human prowess has enabled people to see an event hundreds and thousands of miles away simultaneously and everybody who was interested in seeing it could see it albeit through the medium of television I'm not suggesting that this is how it will be in this manifestation of Christ but if man can do it if puny man can allow millions of people to see something like that why can God not in the wonderful powerful ability that he possesses to reveal even to close minds the glory of

Christ in a way that has never been seen before and I'm sure that's what I can't tell you how it will happen but I can tell you that the Bible says that every knee shall bow every eye shall see every tongue shall confess the word every if it means anything it means every means all it means nobody excluded he will come not the way that he came before he will come with a fanfare he will come with a heavenly host of angels announcing his arrival he will come with all the trappings of divinity exposed to the eye and not hidden his presence in the world was veiled his glory was hidden because it was God's doing Professor Donald McLeod in his writings somewhere speaks of Christ's second coming

Christ manifestation says he he will look like he is there will be no veil he will look like the world saviour he will look like God he will come with the form splendour and majesty of God himself quite different to the way that he was born into the world as an infant if you're reading this passage and reading what commentators have to say about it most of them will tell you that these words that we have in this verse that they speak to us of the divinity of Christ it speaks to us of the divinity of Christ and it's the clearest expression of it in this passage as a whole the grace of

[61 : 28] God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men the glory of Christ it's not just physical but it is physical it will be a passion it will be a passion in our nature that you will see but it will be our nature that is glorified whatever that entails and every eye will see him but what he will do will have glory all of its own and we cannot overlook it because he will exercise power in opening the graves and the resurrection will take place by the word of his power the graves will open the dead will rise they will appear in his presence they will be presented for judgment the words of

Peter you saw him speaking about the reconstruction of heaven and earth I think that there are of course differences of opinion within the Christian understanding of what is going to happen whether the events that are described have a thousand year gap is there a millennial glory is there a time spent between the coming of Christ and the exaltation of the glorified church and there are so many variations on that theme but what we find here is simply this that there is a glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ and the things that are associated with his coming are clearly evidenced within the scripture we are not told however when if you go back to Matthew chapter 24 I think that's probably part of what Jesus is majoring on he says there will be those that will say to you he is here or he is there nobody will need to tell you where

Jesus is nobody will need to tell you you won't need to depend on anybody else's opinion or anybody else's enlightening information you will know for yourself if you are in the world at that time or if you are in the grave and you open your eyes on the world I don't know what that will be like I don't know what that will be like for the resurrected body to rise out of the grave and to see the Lord with whom his people have been united even though in death there is a biblical truth concerning the coming of Christ and that is this that is overlooked by so many and Christ alludes to it there is the well the declaration by so many that they know when he will come that they know when he is coming that he has chosen to reveal his coming that flies in the face of what

Christ himself has said many shall come in my name saying I am Christ and shall deceive many you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars see that you be not troubled for all of these things will come to pass nations shall rise against nations kingdom against kingdom earthquakes in diverse places you know all of these things that is spoken of by the lord Jesus Christ you could argue that all of these things are current all of these things are ongoing it's a constant international foment in war and in dis-peace and all of these things are mentioned as precursors to his coming but we don't know when we don't know the hour we don't know the day but we do know that Christ said that he will come as a thief in the night he will come as a thief in the night do you believe what the bible is saying you know some people would probably say they have to believe that Jesus was born because there is ample evidence that such a person as Jesus was born what they will probably some dismiss is who this Jesus was and whether he was really who he said he was and those people clearly don't believe what the bible is saying but they can't say that Jesus didn't say that he was who he was they can't say that the bible didn't teach that the people of God who met with him believed that he was who he said he was that the church of God throughout all the generations believed him to be who he said he was now whether he had a promise

I don't know but you also understand that the bible the same bible tells us the same truth concerning the second coming whose apocalypse is epiphany it tells us the same thing James Montgomery Boyce an American theologian tells us that within the Bible there are 318 times separate mentions from Genesis to Revelation of this concrete proof if you like from the Bible that Jesus is going to come again 318 times it speaks far more about his second coming about his epiphany than it does about his incarnation which seems strange but it is true and here the practical element is brought to our attention because Paul says that teaching us that denying in godliness and worldly lust we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world looking for that blessed hope it's as if he is linking together the prospect of Christ's coming again with their lifestyle with the way that they live in the world what they are doing in the here and now because in the future be it well whatever future is this is long term short term you live your life in the light of it today today because you today might be your last day famous preacher once said this or it was said often he lived and preached as if

[69 : 33] Christ died yesterday rose today and was coming tomorrow when you have that belief then that belief changes is all that you do but shoot anyway I think somebody was asked the question if you thought if you thought Jesus was coming tomorrow what would you do what would you do or maybe every one of us here would say but we'd do something differently I'd take my bible and I'd sit down and pray and I would

I would try and make myself ready but somebody was asked that question I'd do exactly the same as I did yesterday and as I'm doing today because I know that he may come even tomorrow there is a truth that presents to us the certainty of Christ are you ready for when he comes are you ready with the only readiness that is of any worth that is to have him as your Lord and Saviour that you may delight in the glory of his presence let us pray oh Lord oh God the foolishness of our heart tells us that we have ample opportunity to reconcile ourselves our lives and our our doings and our undoings to the

God who is God over all help us to appreciate that we live our life in the light of your own word and what that word is saying to us watch over each one we pray forgive in Jesus name amen our closing psalm is psalm 96 psalm 96 and we're going to sing from verse 9 to the end of the psalm psalm 96 and verse 9 in beauty of his holiness or do the Lord adore likewise let all the earth throughout tremble his face before among the heathens say God reigns the world shall steadfastly be fixed from moving you shall judge the people righteously let heavens be glad before the Lord and let the earth rejoice let cease and all that is therein cry out and make a noise we'll sing to the end of the psalm in beauty of his holiness or do the

Lord adore in beauty of his holiness or do the Lord adore likewise let all the earth be
talked of living just sort of gen ■ The heathens, sick of range, The world shall steadfastly
Be fixed from moving He shall judge The people righteously Let heathens be glad

Before the Lord And let the earth rejoice Let season all that is therein Cry out and make a
noise Let fields rejoice And everything That springeth off the earth Then woods and
heavenly creatures Sing with gladness and with mirth Before the Lord Because he comes

[74 : 54] To judge the earth come sea He'll judge the world With righteousness The people
faithfully As I make grace, mission Peace from God the Father The Son of the Holy Spirit
Rest and abide with you all Never and always Amen