

The Importance Of Faith, Obedience & Patience

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[0 : 0 0] I will walk the Lord before. I did believe, therefore I spake, I was afflicted sore. I said when I was in my haste that all men lie of speed, what shall I render to the Lord for all his gifts to me?

I'll of salvation take the cup, on God's name will I call. I'll pay my vows now to the Lord before his people all. Dear in God's sight is his saint's death. Thy servant, Lord, am I. Thy servant sure, thine handmaid's son, my bands thou didst untie.

Thank offerings I to thee will give, and on God's name will call. I'll pay my vows now to the Lord before his people all. Within the courts of God's own house, within the midst of thee, O city of Jerusalem, praise to the Lord give thee.

I'm going to sing verses 9 to the end of the psalm. I, in the land of those that live, will walk the Lord before. I, in the land of those that live, will walk the Lord before.

I, in the land of those that live, will walk the Lord before.

[1 : 5 3] I, in the land of those that live, will walk the Lord before.

I, in the land of those that live, will walk the Lord before.

In the land of those that live, will walk the Lord before.

The coffins I to thee will give, and on cost it will fall.

I'll pay my voucher to the Lord before His feet alone.

[3 : 5 5] Within the courts of God's o'er night, within the midst of Thee, O Spirit, King of Jerusalem, praise to the Lord, forgive me.

Let us join together in prayer. Let us pray. Amen. Eternal and ever-blessed God, as we come before you at this morning hour of worship, we give thanks that the opportunity is ours to gather in your name and to take our place in this building appointed for your worship that is open to us to attend.

And like so many throughout our communities, the doors are open for any and all to come and take their place with those who know the Lord, those who seek the Lord, and those who habitually make it their place to attend at such times.

May the experience that is our personal experience reflect more than just a passing interest, rather an intense desire to meet with God in the place of meeting.

May the Lord, we pray for your blessing upon your word under which we gather. Do not allow us to let this word pass over our heads, but rather to lay hold of every jot and tittle, every iota and laid up in our hearts in order that we may practice it in our lives.

[6 : 2 9] For we are encouraged and invited and treated to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. May we so do.

Pray for all who uphold them in what they do in your name in the community. That the testimony would remain faithful to the truth that we find enshrined in the scripture that are that are designed to enrich the souls and the lives of those who who yield to them.

Remember the housebound hospitalized those who are experiencing the trials that life inevitably brings our way.

We seek healing for broken bodies and broken minds. Restoration to the fullness of life here in this world for those who are having to endure pain and suffering of any description.

We ask that you would bless the grieving and the sorrowful those whose hearts are heavy. We know that every home will at some point experience the voice of death speaking into their relative peace.

[13 : 28] And every every one of us must at some point come face to face with such sorrows. And our prayer is that we would bear one another's burdens and remember those who are who are keenly affected that we may bear their burdens with them that we may sanctify the name of Christ to us in the midst of grief that we would not to turn to him who knows by turning to us how to meet their need.

As a man of sorrows acquainted with grief he walked alongside those who had to endure the hurts of this world and he spoke into these hurts in a way that was meaningful and lasting.

So bless the congregation as a whole bless the community as a whole remember all our congregations especially we pray for ones such as this that are vacant currently.

May your own spirit guide each congregation in turn to find one that you would set over them with regard to the proclamation of truth that we may diligent in the proclamation of such truth sell us to see that it would be preserved in its entirety that we would know the difference between what is of the Lord and what is not and that we would see men said over us who would be sellers to that end.

Remember Lord the congregations of our island the congregations of our nation we see our nation turning its back upon God we are amazed at how rapidly this is taking place but just as surely as you have done in times past you are able to bring us back to your foodstool to cry out for for salvation even saying plainly Lord what must I do to be saved hear our prayers and petitions on behalf of those who rule over us the king and the royal family the various parliaments in Holyrood and Westminster those who govern over the nations of the earth nations that are fragmented by war we pray for these nations that you would restore harmony that you would visit those that have been desecrated by war that you would visit those who have been afflicted by natural calamities in recent days we are so puny and so fragile in the face of the elements that can be unleashed into your hand in a moment and yet we think that we know that we know better than

[16 : 35] God hear us oh Lord bless your word to us as we read it and as we hear it read and as we sing your praises may these words fill our hearts and minds grant mercy for sin in Jesus name amen amen peter peter peter the apostle of jesus christ to the strangers scattered throughout pontus galatia capitolia asia and bithynia elect according to the foreknowledge of god the father through sanctification of the spirit and to obedience and sprinkling of the blood of jesus christ grace unto you and peace be multiplied blessed be the god and father of our lord jesus christ which according to his abundant mercy have begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of jesus christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven for you boys and girls the writer of this epistle is well known to you if you know the names of the disciples of jesus christ peter was one such disciple a follower of jesus somebody who knew jesus well somebody who was with him at the lowest times and at the highest times in his experience when when people followed jesus many crowds thronged him the bible tells us many people filled the streets wanting to see him and to hear him when he spoke and yet peter was also with him when he was alone when he was preparing to go to the cross when he was in the garden of gethsemane praying to god and he took with him just three friends to be with him when he prayed so peter is a remarkable person he's somebody who saw many things and who himself was part to many of the things that jesus did and yet there's a very sad story about peter peter was somebody that jesus warned that the day would come when he would deny him when peter who knew the lord and who professed to love the lord and who followed the lord would say i don't know him i don't know him and it seems something that is entirely impossible to happen it's something that you cannot imagine that any person who would know you and know you as well as peter knew jesus that he would ever come to say i don't know you i've never known you and you just

think of that for yourselves if somebody you know well somebody is one of your friends if they said no i don't know you i don't know you at all how would you feel and it's a question i want you to ask yourself it's a difficult question but perhaps you could ask ask a teacher in the sunday school what they think about this who do you think is doing the the worst thing is it the person who says about jesus that they know him when they don't or is it the person who says that they don't know him when they do they're not the same kind of person but they're both saying something and it's not true what do you think is the saddest thing a person who says i know jesus but yet they don't or a person who says i don't know jesus and they do ask yourself the question i i i would say to you that the person who says they don't know jesus when they do they are doing something that is harmful to themselves and to him the person who says that they do know jesus when they don't they are doing something that is harmful to themselves and to jesus but in different ways and it's important for us even though you might think that question is a grown-up question that it might be a question that grown-ups should ask themselves but you a little person can answer the question just as surely as they can and ask what is most important for you and to understand that to know jesus is all important to follow jesus is all important and to be able to say to all that you are a follower of jesus is all important the remarkable thing about this epistle that we're going to look at today is that it was written by a person who once said i don't know him i am not one of his if you read the story of peter you'll find when he says that even though jesus forewarned him he is in the in the hall of the high priest and sometimes when you read words like hall for example you think of a hall and you think of the hall here or you think of the hall in the community center it's brightly lit and there's no lack of light it's not like that these halls were dimly lit places with just lights from lamps and it would be easy enough for peter to sneak in and stand to the side you might excuse him and say it was a cold night and the bible shows us that it was a cold night the

fire was roaring and peter could easily have come out of the cold and stood to the side and just made sure that he was warm but no we're told peter sat boldly with the servants of the high priest right next to the fire he was front and centre at that moment in his life even though he was ready to deny the lord it didn't seem to matter to him and god could have so easily said well peter i'm not going to hear you anymore i'm not going to listen to you anymore i'm not going to listen to your prayers anymore but we find that when jesus looked at him he broke his heart and peter was able to return to jesus and able to write such a letter as this to jesus to jesus followers to encourage them and to build them up in their faith well i hope that if you know jesus if you know the lord jesus christ as your savior that you will never be ashamed of him and that you will never be ashamed to declare that to whoever and that you will understand that there is a difference between pretending to know him and knowing him the way we are called to do so well god bless these thoughts too we're going to sing now to god's praise from psalm 71 psalm 71 at the beginning of the psalm oh 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 will sing to verse 8 oh lord my hope and confidence is placed in thee alone O lord my hope and confidence is placed in thee alone then let thy servant never be who took on good land have led me in thy righteousness from thee deliverance down cause me escape in thine name the living young be saved be thou my dwelling rock to which

I ever may resort thou give commandment me to save for thou thy road can pour free me my God from wicked!

[28 : 53] and to love and dress for thou O Lord God art my hope and from my youth my trust thou from the home did for me at the heart thou saved me heart of heart heart thou was I ever will raise thee too many

I have wondered round the heart my refuge strong filled let my mouth be with thy face and honor all day long we're going to hear God's word as we said from the first epistle general of Peter chapter one we can read again from the beginning Peter an apostle of Jesus Christ to the strangers scattered through Pontus Galatia Cappadocia Asia and Bithynia elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the

Spirit and to obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ grace unto you and peace be multiplied blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith and to salvation ready to be revealed in the last time wherein ye greatly rejoice though now for our season if need be ye are in heaviness through manifold!

those!

which are now reported unto you, by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Which things the angels desire to look unto, wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

[33 : 02] As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as he which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.

And if ye call on the Father who without respect of persons, judges according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.

For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God, seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, and to unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently, being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man is as flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away, but the word of the Lord endureth forever.

And this is the word, which by the gospel is preached unto you. May the Lord add his blessing to a reading of his word, and to a praise be the praise.

[34 : 57] We'll sing now from Psalm 33. Psalm 33. And we're going to sing verses 13 to the end of the psalm.

The Lord from heaven sees and beholds all sons of men from well. He views all from his dwelling place that in the earth do dwell. He forms their hearts alike, and all their doings he observes.

Great host save not a king, much strength no mighty man preserves. And so on to the end of the psalm.

The Lord from heaven sees and beholds all sons of men from well. The Lord from heaven sees and beholds all sons of men from well.

He views all from his dwelling place He views all from his dwelling place that in the earth do dwell.

[36 : 17] He forms their hearts alike, He forms their hearts alike, and all their doings he observes.

Great host save not a king, King, much strength no mighty man preserves.

But heart for preservation Is a deceitful thing Of his dwelling place To Him fear the Lord has said to die.

In those who on His mercy do with confidence rely.

From death to free, their soul endures.

[38 : 19] Thy love unto them to heal. Thy soul hath weighed upon the Lord.

He is the heavenly shield. Seth in His holy name, which has our heart of joyful be.

Lord, let Thy mercy be on us.

As we give hope in Thee. Amen. We're going to turn for a short while to the passage read.

We'll look at some words we have at the beginning of the epistle. Verse 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

[39 : 55] To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that faith is not away. We serve in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last time.

And so on. When we read the epistle that is before us here, both epistles that bear His name, there's much in these epistles that interest us.

For different reasons, but at different times, because the apostle who wrote these epistles had a purpose for writing them and for directing the epistle to the church at large.

And those of us who have some knowledge of the scripture cannot, but as we said to the young people, have a knowledge of some of Peter's experiences.

Some of them were incredible in the time that he shared in the company of the Lord.

[41 : 23] Some of the things that he saw, that he was eyewitness to, the performance of miracles, and the incredible power that Jesus possessed that was revealed even in the way that his word was able to affect the lives of so many people.

Peter saw these things and he couldn't but speak of what he saw and heard as he introduced his readers to the truth.

That were important for them to remember and to apply. And I think as far as the passion of Peter is concerned, that I could be wrong, but he's the kind of person.

He appears to us to be a larger than life character. And he would be more than likely, if he were alive today, and if God's people were in fellowship, if Peter was in the fellowship, he would be at the heart of that fellowship.

He would be somebody that couldn't keep quiet. He would always have something to say. And he would say it in a very powerful way, in a very different way, I suppose, in many respects.

[42 : 52] But understanding that, and appreciating that, that there were ups and downs in the experience of Peter, in his relationship with Christ, that these things in themselves are what formed him, what shaped him spiritually.

And they're part of the ingredients that belong to his writing of this epistle. They're part of the things that the Holy Spirit brings to sharp focus, as he speaks through the apostle, the truths of God, that we're able to read and to hear read.

And we can understand some of what he says, and what would necessitate him saying it. But I think we agree with those who glean from his writing the essential truths that he wants to convey.

That there are three things that, for the main, he comes back to again and again. And that is the importance of faith, the importance of obedience, and the importance of patience.

These things come to the fore again and again. And although it is a general epistle, it is an epistle that any reader can read it, without necessarily requiring them to be believers in Jesus Christ, in order for them to at least understand, to a degree, the things that Peter is emphasising.

[45 : 06] You know, a person who may be like yourself here today, who is not a professing member of the Church of Christ, and yet who is a bystander in one respect, a non-looker, and yet somebody who has an interest, albeit from a distance, in what it is that the Church is all about, what it is the people of God are all about, what it is that makes a person a Christian, and what needs to be true of them.

And you're interested in that, because I would hope that it may be true of you yet, that you will be one of them, and one with them. So, Peter, as he speaks of these main things, his purpose in so doing is to establish, to confirm, to fix the faith of those who have faith, and as he so does, he directs them.

I think it is Bishop Layton, in his own commentaries, that describes to us the purposes of the Apostle, in declaring the truths that we find running through these epistles, that his main burden would be his understanding of the sufferings that they are enduring at this time, that because they are God's people, there is comfort available to them, that will alleviate their sufferings, whatever their sufferings may be.

So we're going to think very quickly of three things that we find here. I think without, as if it were, shining a light on this, Peter is insistent on the need for the new birth.

He is insistent upon it because it's not something like Jesus said to Nicodemus, as we shall see.

[47 : 28] You must be born again. Peter believes that and insists upon it because he believes that this has to be the case. A person must experience new life from above.

The second thing is the person who has this new life, who have been born again, they are in possession of what he calls a living hope.

And I'd like to say just a word about this living hope, that what differentiates it from all other forms of hope. And finally, the certainty that is there who have this new life from above, who possess a living hope that there is the certainty of an inheritance that belongs to them there and then, but that they will come into possession of and that all that is part of it will become theirs in its fullness.

and that in the description that he gives to it is a wonderful description. We understand from the Bible that a person is needing to be born again.

the Bible the Bible not only insists on this but it also insists on the truth that shows us why it must be the case.

[49 : 17] Because a person who is in this world born into it in a natural way what is true of them that at the moment of their birth they are spiritually dead.

They are dead in trespasses and sins. Which seems a very contradictory thought because at the moment of a person's birth there is celebration because of new life born into the world.

You understand that? you join in celebration when you see new life born into the world. And yet the moment of that new life the person born into the world as far as the relationship to God is concerned because of the fact of sin and because of the pervasive nature of sin that person is under the power and sway of sin and open to the to the ultimate end that sin brings into our experience that is that we will die which is not what you want to hear not what you want to declare to a new a mother with a newborn or this child is born to die but the Bible tells us that's the way it is and the reason it is the way it is is because the Bible takes us right back to the beginning to the moment that death entered into this world to the moment that death affected those who were in the world it ties it in to the disobedience that there was in the hearts and minds of our first parents to the revealed will of their God and the apostle

Paul tells us in many different ways but I think that my own favourite passage as far as this particular truth is concerned is the description of the apostle gives to us in Ephesians 2 that is addressed to those who are now believers where he reminds them of what was true of them before they believed I think there's an interesting thought behind that the fact that Paul is addressing believers and reminding them this is what was true of you once it could be just a word of encouragement but it's also a challenge to many people's thinking who conveniently forget that until such time as God came into their experience as a saviour as a redeemer this was what was true they were dead in trespass and sins and he says wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world according to the prince of the power of the air the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience and so on you read this chapter for yourself take time to read it take time to reflect upon it and learn what it is that it says about the desperate plight of men and women outside of christ and until such time as they came to know that christ for themselves as their lord and as their saviour this was how they remained and peter here is you have to remind yourself of this he's an apostle he's a disciple of christ he's somebody that followed christ by christ's invitation but he was not always an apostle he was not always a disciple he was not always spiritually alive if he was he was one of the few and there are a few who were from birth possessing spiritual life but the natural order is that every man woman and child is dead in trespasses and sin and although peter doesn't tell us so he himself would be one that was in need of being born again from on high and he speaks of it here blessed be the god and father of our lord jesus christ which according to his abundant mercy have begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of jesus christ from the dead he is speaking as somebody who has experienced this begetting this activity of the spirit in his heart and mind and soul that allowed him to respond to the invitation of christ in the gospel invitation that was given to him along with others to follow him now i know there are christians here by profession and if i was to ask every one of them in turn describe to me your experience of being born again tell me what it is like the day you were born again what did you experience

what did you go through in what sense did you did you understand that you were no longer dead in trespasses and sin and that you were now in possession of new life and i'm sure that every single one of them would have a different story to tell and that they would rehearse their experience and point to different things and say this is the major factor this is what it was what was necessary for me to experience this new life but the reality is as peter says here the begetting of life in the soul of a believer is God's doing and it's a merciful act of

[56 : 29] God it is something that God does when no one of us can persuade him to do it in us and i suppose if you put alongside this the experience of your birth into the world how many of you were interested in your conception how many of you were involved in it how many of you had a part to play in the choice of your parents how many of you had a role to play at the time of your birth your place of your birth your geographic location why are you not an Australian or an American or a Canadian because you had no part to play in it it was entirely out of your sphere influence and yet we sometimes think that we should be able to say to God I want to be born again and if you go to God and you say to him that very thing you're going to the right place but what you must be acknowledging there is that you're wanting

God to do what you cannot do for yourself and also you must appreciate the very thing that Peter appreciates that this is God's doing and it's an act of his mercy it's not something we deserve it's not something that we have earned in any way shape or form a theologian by the name of Thomas Aquinas asked the question and I suppose there's a reason for the question that he asked is the grace of regeneration operative grace or cooperative grace now the reason for the question for those of you who have some theology is that instinctively we want to attribute some of the kudos or some of the glory for our activity spiritually to ourselves we want to find something in what we have done that can in some way be responsible for our faith or our belief for our coming into experiencing new life but that's completely wrong one of the writers

I think it's R.C. Sproul that says God does not whisper in our ear please will you cooperate with me please will you cooperate with me so that I can save you so that I can create in you new life and if you're willing then I will be able to do my part no that's not it what God says in his word is believe what Jesus said to Peter was follow me what Jesus says through the gospel to every one of you is believe trust follow!

and you might say I can't do it well if you can say that you're suggesting that you would want to do it and if you want to do it then you must go to the one who enables you to do it because you can't do it yourself and this is what proud!

man find so difficult to accept there are countless experiences in the Bible recorded for us of Jesus performing miracles in the experience of people who were as far as men and women could see beyond the reach of any power on earth Lazarus was in the grave not just in the grave his body was corrupting and suffering the effects of being dead several days and yet Jesus went to Lazarus I didn't say to him Lazarus cooperate with me he didn't say to Lazarus go on Lazarus do now your bit no he called Lazarus out of the grave how you understand that physically you understand that naturally you understand that as far as it goes with the limited capacity you have to understand biology or physiology or whatever it is why do you not understand that when the

[61 : 25] Bible describes your condition as being dead in trespasses and sins and you're lying in the grave of a natural death a spiritual death that the word that comes to you to come out of the grave is a word that must be heard and you're saying I can't hear it I'm dead and that is true but because of the one whose word it is because of the power that he possesses he has taken out of the grave of every professing Christian here and if he hasn't done it then that profession is false the basis for that declaration of salvation is invalid because it is his work and Peter was convinced of that little child who was lying in her bed and they told

Jesus she's dead you can't reach her he's already gone and he says Talitha tell me come forward come forth and she heard and she rose but not because of any ability she possessed but because of the invitation that came from the divine power that was Christ and Peter knows that Peter knows that the source of that is above this is what he says he blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ which according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope you know read on in this chapter as you've done already for as much as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers but with the precious blood of

Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot who verily was for! retained before the earth for you and so on this is his conviction if you are not a Christian if you are not a professing believer in Jesus Christ and you're saying I would wish to be I would want to be then acknowledge your powerlessness and just don't sit dormant in your powerlessness acknowledge and recognize that there is a power that can quicken that there is a power that can do what you cannot recognize that your quickening comes from above from the person who has that life to bestow and I realize I'm speaking to the dead and

I realize I'm speaking to the deaf and I realize I'm speaking to the blind and I realize I'm speaking to the dim you can't even pray for your salvation but the scripture tells you nevertheless that to look at God's word to point you where this life is found then even in your weakest condition you can go and stretch out your hand to the one who can do something for you plead for mercy and do not let vain pride don't let your scholasticism because you're convinced he's talking nonsense well it may be nonsense to you but God's word tells you that the source of eternal life the source of everlasting life the source of spiritual life is to be found in the person of Jesus

Christ second thing we notice briefly is what he calls a living hope what's the significance of the word living I think the significance of that word is simple it tells you that there is hope in the world that is not a living hope that there is many in this world and they possess a false hope hope that is no hope a hope that they have generated themselves a hope that they have created in themselves a hope that obliterates the truth and embraces the error that is prevalent in the world in order to secure comfort from them but it is not the living word that God creates in us by his spirit I've often thought of this and used it and mentioned it perhaps to yourselves I remember the various elections that you've seen on your televisions in America or in the UK the celebration that there is of a new political regime taking place and you know the picture is painted of this new life new hope that is held out to people we're going to do things better we're going to improve things we're going to do it our way and our way will yield greater fruit and some people are taken up with that and their hope is kindled and their hope is for a time something that they believe believe in dearly but how often have these hopes proved futile but spiritually it's much more important that there are those who have false hope and their hope is really based on God being not the God of this

[67 : 37] God of scripture God who has said all he has said and recorded in his word and declared to us his interest and declared to us his purpose and declared to us the boundaries and the parameters of the life of the believer and described it to us and explained it to us and insisted that this is what it is like you are saying to yourself well this is not the kind of God that I would like to believe in so you make your own God you describe your own God you paint your own picture of a God who would fit in with your lifestyle and yet it is nothing like the truth and if your hope is founded on such a God then your hope is a fief time meaningless hope Rabbi Duncan in his own sermons on the epistle of Peter he draws attention to this fact of what it was like for the men who were on the road to Emmaus following the crucifixion of Christ and he he says of these men he says their hopes lay buried with Christ in the grave and you can imagine what that was like for them because they had this picture of what

Christ was going to do what the Messiah was going to do the life that he was going to give to them which was so earth centred so worldly and so much taken up with time and the time was then but he died and when that Christ died their hope died with him and he says it was buried with Christ in the grave for as yet he says they knew not the scriptures and how it must be but on the morning of the third day with the words the Lord is risen indeed the church was begotten again these men understood these people had their eyes opened by Christ himself and by the spirit of God applied to their lives and hearts the truths of scripture in a way that they should believe them and understand them and Paul tells us in his own epistle to the

Corinthians chapter 15 you're familiar with it how necessary our hope is to be a hope that is fully resting upon the word of God upon the scriptures of the Old and New Testament upon the scriptures that bear testimony to a living Christ not a dead Christ a risen Christ a Christ who has ascended up into heaven as a Christ who sits at the right hand of glory read 1 Corinthians 15 and he says if it's not true then my faith is not valid my faith is groundless and his logic is laser like it's a waste of time preaching any gospel if the Christ of that gospel is a dead Christ and not a risen Christ Christ the final thing we have here is the sure and certain inheritance that is promised to those who are his like no other read the words of verse 4 an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven for you

Christ has reserved that and the Greek scholars tell us that the word he uses to describe this inheritance is a word that describes to us territory that has never at any point experienced the plundering of an enemy it is preserved it has never had anything taken from it it is ring fenced and the people of God are destined to receive it all the inheritances that we have in this world are in the world and none of them however extensive they are what is true of them they will be eroded in some way whether it is in monetary value or in the depreciation that results from legal involvement it inevitably results in the inheritance being denuded of value but nothing that belongs to the inheritance here will be encroached will be affected it will remain constant and it is promised and every person is a recipient of that promise who has the promise now as believers they will know that

Christ has laid that up for them remember Jesus commends to you and to me laying up our treasure in heaven where moth and rust does not corrupt where the robbers do not break in and steal in other words Jesus repeatedly insists on the truth that what he has prepared for his people will be his people's and no one can take it from them and what he insists on is this that you make sure that your treasure is where your heart is and as long as that is the case then you will come into full possession of that treasure whatever your claims on the treasure of this world whatever you perceive as treasure you may receive these or you may have them taken from you but no one can take this from you let me finish with the words of John

[74 : 19] John's gospel the words of Jesus father he said I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world do you think that Jesus would say father I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me do you think he would be able to say that and not mean it do you think his father would say oh I know you want it but I don't that is not possible father son and holy spirit one inheritance and all the possessions that heaven possesses will be the believers and that day when Christ makes up his jewels may you be one of them let us pray oh lord oh god we give thanks that your word reminds us of the need that there is to come in by the narrow door into the narrow way there are all kinds in the broad way there are all kinds of lives that are lived having passed into the broad road that leads to destruction and only

Christ can take us out of that road look upon us that we may look upon you forgiving sin in Jesus amen the final psalm is psalm 16 psalm 16 verse 8 before me still the lord I set if it is so that he doth ever stand at my right hand I shall not move it be psalm 16 verse 8 to the end before me still the lord I set before me still the lord I set do!

Because of this my heart is glad and joy shall be expressed in Thy my glory and my praise and confidence are rest Because my soul and life to dwell shall not be left by Thee Nor will thou give thine holy one of action to see

Thy will make sure that all life of choices go to the Lord before Thy face that Thy right hand are pleasures evermore May the grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit rest and abide with you all, now and always Amen