

A Sure Foundation

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Date: 24 July 2019

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[0 : 00] Let me turn to the book of Psalms, Psalm 138, Psalm 138, the psalm that we were looking at last week. And we can read from verse 6.

Psalm 138, reading at verse 6. And we want to consider again the words that we have in verse 8. Now, last week we were looking at these words and we saw that although we are not yet perfect, that we have this glorious hope that the Lord is going to make us perfect.

And what we want to consider this evening is the foundation on which we entertain this hope of perfection, this fulfillment of God's purposes.

Now, the nominal Christian would dispense with any consideration of this altogether. For the nominal Christian is quite assured that he's going to heaven.

[1 : 44] We read there in Matthew's Gospel of the Lord warning us of the many on that day that will claim to have done many wonderful things in his name, to which he will reply that he never knew them.

And he keeps emphasizing to them the necessity of hearing and taking seriously the teaching that he gives.

Now, the nominal Christian is unaware of his own imperfections. And therefore, he's not troubled by them. He thinks that he's ready to go to glory at any time.

But that's not the case with the true believer. In order to carry the weight of glory that he knows is awaiting those who are the Lord's, he believes that the foundation on which this weight is to be placed must be capable of bearing the weight of it.

And Jesus made clear in that chapter that we read also that we have to build upon the rock. And the wise man will consider the words of Jesus.

[3 : 01] But those that aren't so wise just take things for granted. They become complacent. And ultimately, they will lose the kingdom of heaven.

So the heart of the believer is based upon the Lord himself. It's not based upon any of his own resolutions.

It's not based upon his own moral power. It's not even based upon his works of grace. It is solely based upon the Lord himself.

Because everything else he knows is but a sandy foundation. Our hope is based upon the Lord. The Lord will fulfill his purposes for me.

It's the Lord that's going to fulfill his purposes for me. Your steadfast love, O Lord, and Jews forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.

[4 : 12] So the Lord is the rock on which we build. And it's the Lord who alone will provide for us the security that our souls are looking for, the assurance that we seek for as we journey through this world.

And if we're building upon this work, if we're focusing on the Lord himself, we believe that his work is perfect.

And we believe that anybody who builds on this work will not be put to shame. So the first thing I want to consider with you is the foundation on which we build is made up of God's love.

What's the relationship of God's love to the perfecting or fulfilling his purposes for his people?

Well, we believe that the holy love of God would not be satisfied with anything short of perfection. God's love is focused on that which is perfect.

[5 : 35] Now, to consider that God would love something that is imperfect, we cannot even contemplate the thought of that.

Because God hates everything that is imperfect. He even hates the sins of the souls that he has loved.

He loves young souls, but he hates the sins that he sees in these souls. And in order to satisfy his own demands, his own love must make provision to make perfect that which he knows is imperfect. And therefore, he has made provision out of the love that he has for his people to purify and make them perfect in holiness.

And that's going to be true of all believers, not just some believers, not just 99% of perfection. It's going to be 100% perfect.

[6 : 52] Anything that would come short of 100% perfect cannot enter into heaven. And it's to these ends that he has set forth the ministry that he has given to the church.

We read in Ephesians chapter 4, verse 11, that he gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints.

Till we all come to be a perfect man to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. And it's to this end that he works everything in our providence to make sure that this perfection is achieved.

For we know that all things will work together for the good of those who love God. Now, an adder that this work should not fail, he's not committed this work to us, even when we come to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He has committed this work to the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that will bring on this work that will perfect his people. And it's towards these ends that the Holy Spirit is working so that he might present his church to himself a glorious church, not having a spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

[8 : 41] That's what we read in Ephesians 5. So the motive that lies behind the perfecting of the saints is God's love for the saints.

And that love will achieve that which he has purposed to achieve. For every poor, weak, imperfect sinner that has put their trust in Christ who is wrestling with the flesh, the world, and the devil, they can rest assured that he's going to make them perfect.

Because they're goodness in whom. They're not putting any confidence in the flesh. They're not putting any confidence in themselves or anybody else. They're putting their confidence in him.

And the first love was of such a measure that he did not spare his only begotten son. Well, he will freely give us everything that is necessary to bring us to that point of perfection which he has purposed to achieve in us because of his love for us.

The second part of this foundation that I want to consider with you is the righteousness of God. We trust in a covenant keeping God.

[10 : 17] Now, the covenant that we trust in is a covenant that was made in eternity. A covenant that was made between the passions of the Godhead.

And the terms of the covenant were that the second passion of the Godhead the Son of God would undertake to provide for us a redemption.

that he would make it possible for us to be redeemed so that we might be perfected and therefore that we might be glorified and enter into God's presence forever.

Now, this is what we rely on. the covenant that God has made on our behalf.

In accordance with the terms of that covenant the Son of God undertook to take to himself our nature and in our nature to give perfect obedience to all that God required of his people and to undergo the penalty for his people not fulfilling everything that was required of them.

[11 : 49] So he was prepared to suffer what we ought to have suffered and he was prepared to die the death that we ought to have died. Now, that was a price that was demanded by the righteousness of God in order for us to be redeemed.

Now, Jesus fulfilled these terms and as a result of fulfilling all that the Father had given him to do the Father raised him from the dead he ascended up and high he was crowned with glory and honor and he is sitting on the throne of the universe.

His life has provided everything that is necessary for the perfection of his people. Now, would it be righteous of God to accept the price that he demanded needed to be paid if he then were to withhold the benefits?

That would be unrighteous. And if God finds satisfaction in the suffering of his sons, how much more satisfaction will he find in the glorifying of the saints for which his son died?

The righteousness of the covenant demands that all who believe in Christ should be perfected.

[13 : 41] God cannot withhold the blessings that are necessary for the perfection of his people from his people. He cannot withhold it because his own righteousness demands that he needs to

glorify all who have put their trust in his son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

His work, his finished work, demands that all the blessings that are necessary for us will be applied to us by the Holy Spirit.

And as the Spirit brings on his work in the lives of his people, they shall be perfected. They shall be as perfect as the work that Christ had to do in order to earn his blessing for them.

And they will be, as Jesus said on the Son of the Mount, perfect as their Father in Heaven is perfect. And this is the sure foundation on which they are going to build.

This is the rock that they also give heed to his teaching well-building. They will not focus their attention on anything that they themselves might be able to do as a result of the grace that God has given to them.

[15:09] They will focus on what God is doing in them and what he's already done for them in the Son Jesus Christ.

And that's the basis of the high priestly prayer which we read of in John chapter 17. I'm just going to quote a few verses from John 17 which brings before us that it's all focused on the righteousness of God.

And salvation is focused on the righteousness of God. The finished work that was required in the terms of the covenant has now been fulfilled.

And this is what Jesus is reminding the Father of. I glorified you on the earth having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

And then if we skip down to verse 10, he says, all mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.

[16:29] So, for Christ's finished work, the Father is now glorifying the Son by applying the benefits of that work to his people.

Verse 17. We read, sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth. This is what the believer builds on.

This is what he takes to himself. This is what he focuses on. This is what he puts his trust in. This is the foundation on what he builds. And then in verse 23, he says, I am you and me, that they may become perfectly one.

so that the world may know that you sent me and love them even as you loved me. And then his appearing is made to the righteousness of his father.

In verse 25, O righteous father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you sent me.

[17:44] they know, because this is what the people are trusting. They believe that this is the Christ, this is God's chosen king, this is the Messiah, this is the Savior, this is the only one that can redeem this people.

They know that you have sent me, and O righteous father, even though the world doesn't know you. they know, because this is what the basing of confidence in, the righteousness of God is the sure foundation on which we can build.

And as Paul said, what can we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? If this is what we're focusing on, if this is where our world is, if this is our foundation, there's nothing that's going to knock us off that foundation.

Our salvation is sure. And thirdly and finally, we build on the faithfulness of God. Now, we lose a lot by comparing the faithfulness of God to the faithfulness of men.

And forget what God says concerning himself. God is not a man that he should lie, not a son of man that he should repent. Has he said and will he not do it?

[19:22] If we put a little confidence in what he said, then he will do it. And he's got no need to repent of it because he knows that this is what's going to be achieved.

He knows the purpose for which his word was sent out. He knows that it's not going to return unto him until that which his purpose to achieve will be completed.

His people will be perfected because they are being sanctified by that word. It is in that word that they put their hope and their confidence. This is why Jesus emphasized to his heroes to take it to the teaching that he gave them.

Now when God began to reveal his covenant to his people it started to become more clear when he revealed it to Abraham and to Abraham he promised an innumerable seed and he also promised to

give them Canaan as their inheritance.

Now it was over 400 years before that promise was fulfilled. Now that's a very long time and many changes occurred over that time.

[20 : 47] Abraham died, Isaac died, Jacob died, Joseph died. Had God forgotten his promise? Where was God's faithfulness in all of this?

the changes that took place over these years, Jacob had tried to settle in Canaan but was forced to go to Egypt because of the famine and he concluded all these things are against me.

Joseph died in Egypt. they enjoyed the favor of the Egyptians for a while when the children of Israel died in Egypt but then they were forced into slavery and no doubt the question would have arisen in their minds where is God's faithfulness to his promise?

Has he forgotten his promise? Well he hadn't forgotten his promise. Although over these 400 years there were many changes wanderings death famines being fought with enemies but what are all of these things to an everlasting unchanging God?

He is not a man. He has got all of eternity before him to fulfill his promises. He is not in a hurry to do that which he has purposed to do for his people.

[22 : 34] And this is the problem that we have at times. We think that we just have to ask and he to instantly answer. What we have to remember is that we are just a small part in a very big picture.

And our minds are playing a role but it's a small role in the overall picture of the redemption of the church of God from beginning of time till the end of time.

people but we should count it a great blessing and privilege if we catch a glimpse that we are playing somewhere because if we catch a glimpse that we are in accordance with the will of God and as God is working all things together to fulfill his purposes for his people so that all of his people not just me or one or two others would be perfected but that all of them might be perfected and as we considered last week that all of them will be raised up perfect on the last day we've got to commit ourselves to waiting upon the Lord and to trust that he is faithful according to his promise that he will fulfill it even although we might not see but he will fulfill it and for those who wait upon the

Lord they will experience the perfection that he promised to achieve in their lives even although it might take thousands of years to come because he must remain faithful if he were to become unfaithful in the minutest detail in any of the promises that he has given to his people then it would be an abdication of his divinity it's his name his reputation that's at stake in the redemption of his people he has put his own name on the line do you think he's going to jeopardize his reputation to send any one of us to hell if we have put our confidence in

Jesus be assured your salvation is safe because if we're lost at the latter then God will have lost his reputation he will not be what he has claimed to be that's how sure your salvation is if your hope and confidence is in Jesus now as we journey towards that goal we will be filled with a sense of our own unworthiness as we consider the worthiness of Jesus we will be aware of our shortcomings in the light of his perfection and the more we catch a glimpse of the glory that awaits for us the more we might be thinking how unfit we are for that glory glory and there will be times that everything seems to be working contrary to what we thought it would be but that's exactly what the saints of world experienced that's what

[26 : 37] Jacob experienced all these things are against me whilst in actual fact they were all working together for his good and we must believe that God is faithful even when there will be times when we think that all these things are working against us there will be times when we will walk in darkness but if we look into the shepherd he will guide us through that darkness even through the valley of the shadow of death but he will remain faithful to his people to the end even when we doubt as Paul says writing to Timothy even if we are unfaithful he remains faithful and he remains faithful because it's his own reputation that's at stake our salvation is depending on his covenant it's depending on the love which was an everlasting love a love with which he loved us from before the beginning of time a love that cannot change it's not going to change it cannot change our salvation was dependent upon his righteousness the covenant that he made and the terms that were to be fulfilled in order for us to receive the gifts that he gives to his church for the perfecting of the saints so that he will accomplish that which he has purposed to achieve he will remain faithful even when we are unfaithful and that ought to comfort us because there are many times that we find ourselves being unfaithful even when we don't want to but thankfully

God is not like us he is not man that he should repent because what he has said will he not do it
may God grant that he would bless these thoughts let's just bow heads in a word of prayer