

Christ Unseen and Rejoiced in by His People

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[0 : 0 0] so we're turning then to first peter chapter one and our text is found in verses eight and nine and we're going to focus mainly on verse eight but we'll touch in the second part just briefly on verse nine and the subject matter is christ unseen loved and joined in by his people christ unseen we might add known and lived and joined in by his people now there are skeptics in the world who say you can't love someone you haven't seen but leaving aside modern technology zoom and youtube and leaving aside emails in days gone by perhaps you know maybe a grandfather or grandmother and they were brought together through letter writing they never really saw each other so-and-so told so-and-so and suddenly so-and-so wrote perhaps in the wartime especially that's what they did i'm getting a nod there so that maybe you know all that kind of situation so it's easy to disprove and you can't love someone whom you haven't seen because some of these stories tell us not only did they love each other but they had a solid and lasting marriages and yet it was all based on what they wrote to each other back and forth so i'm using that to clear the ground that you can love someone you have not seen and and what we've got here in front of us is the the whole business of how the lord deals with his people he brings us to himself by divine grace we we love jesus so we've never seen him we have learned about him that is to say we've come to know what it needs to be known by us and towards salvation but ultimately it's the work of the spirit of god that brings the light into our hearts um you know me if you know me at all you know i often refer to nature's night and that's because i was very much in nature's night myself and very aware of it when the lord began to work in me you you think you know where you're going you think you know what you're doing and suddenly you're totally and utterly uh shocked into reality when the spirit shows you the true state of things and you begin to know not only what jesus is about and who he is but you come to know him and that's why in the christian life the lord's people can go on not having seen him knowing him loving him and rejoicing in him even when when we tread the path of sorrow often enough the christian knows the lord has planned it out and it is enough that the lord knows and the lord has his hand on our situation and i'm saying that because you don't know if you're having a fairly easy time just now you don't know what's around the corner and it's frankly no use in speculating either we simply don't know we trust him and seen loved known joining so i want us to just keep that in mind as we were reading

there the lord tries us in order to improve upon us in the way of faith and to prove to us us that we can keep going by the grace that he gives us so the first point we're going to look at is simply unseen but loved and known peter says there though you have not seen him you love him though you do not now see him you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory you'll notice i've been adding in no loving him knowing him rejoicing in him and the fact of the matter is it is assumed by peter that those who are believers have come to know experientially by experience and that's why they live in going back to the letters that's how they got to know each other that's how they fell in love with each other reading the letters not having seen each other and we have the work of the spirit enabling us so that we know we live in and the reason that we say you know you live in because earlier on we find it there in the at the beginning of the chapter you were born again oh and to a living hope and that's be speaks the work of the spirit in our hearts communicating the truth concerning jesus in relation to his people and we discovered of course that you know that we song i found a friend oh such a friend he bled and died to save me and not alone the gift of life but his own self he gave me well in that hymn there's a line he he he he loved us before we knew him every new i think it is but it means before we knew him he loved us he loved us who are his today and not only does he know us but we know him remember in john 10 the good shepherd says the good shepherd knows his sheep but it also says they know him i'm sure i told this before but you'll bear with me i had a visiting preacher at a communion in boner bridge and we

had a glebe which is it was 25 acres of arable land but the tradition was the minister kept sheep or cattle or even a horse in the days when it was pony and trap and then the the man who was doing the preaching i thought he knew a lot about sheep you see so he wanted to see them pass his judgment on them so he called them and they took off to the extremity of the glebe so i did what i would do and their heads went up and they looked and zoom they came to me the good shepherd knows his shepherd knows his sheep of course this is a poor illustration of a great point he knows his sheep but they know him and because knowing him is about loving him that's important to us and i'm saying this because a simple sight even of jesus and i'm thinking about his time on earth here didn't make them know him they didn't make it didn't make him them love him it's what his word had to say to them how he taught them how they grew and it's important to keep that in mind that we we don't love him without knowing him we love him because we have come to know him by divine grace in this way heaven taught people are able to say excuse me excuse me for this one but to know no no no him is to love love love him and i do some of you will know where that came from but that's the point it's i'm using it i'm harnessing it in to know him for the profound not what the song meant or the singer but the point is to know no no is to love love love him and to be able to say these words and to follow up with um i do it's worth a hallelujah that's what it's worth a hallelujah that's what it's about to know him is to love him interestingly i want to push this a wee bit further for a few moments we'll have to put this in but i can see the time i'll get into trouble so um i'm pushing this a wee bit further in second peter and and the chapter 1 verse 16 this is the incident he's recalling when they were with him on the holy mount traditionally mount tabor but most of us think it was one of the higher mountains northwest of of capernaum but be that as it may on the holy mount he says we were eyewitnesses of his majesty this is it this is when he was transfigured before them but not even the sight of him transfigured made them know him better it was the words of the father that made the difference then the cloud overshadowed them and a voice was heard this is my son my beloved that made the difference you see what i'm saying this notion of a sight of him is whether i know some people claim to have a division of jesus and so on but my dear friends i can tell you having spent time in chaplaincy work at home and i i met people who had claimed this when they were younger and when they were old they lost that and they had no firmness to hold on to when they needed it and what made the difference was the word of god brought to bear upon them touched their hearts and i didn't say look you're wrong about these visions that's not the way to do it it was to help them to see what they need now and of course a classic is i wait for the lord my soul waits for him and in his word

i will trust and that's the important thing that would mean the difference on the holy mountain peter was you know the story yourselves he was in a bit of a stupa we'll make three booths here one for you one for moises one for elijah and and then it says he didn't really understand what he was saying my dear friends the word of god applied to us by the holy spirit is what makes the difference in our hearts and it enables us to say i know him and i love him it makes a wonderful difference because it enables us to be captivated by his love for us he loved us as i said a moment ago before we knew him and the more we grasp of the wonder of that love for us the more we are all together taken up by it we are in the in the healthiest and purest sense in love with him we apprehend and i would understand in the loveliness of jesus his wonderful sufficiency as the savior of sinners and the everlasting inheritance he is prepared for us we were reading that a bit later on unseen he may be but not unknown and not and loved and i hope that you'll you'll be able to before you leave here tonight even if you've followed him for years i get something from this about the reality of it all you remember at the resurrection appearances of jesus in that upper room somewhere in jerusalem um and thomas was absent and then on the one occasion thomas was present but before thomas was present when the disciples his his his brethren told him he's alive we saw him and what did thomas say unless i see the nail prints and put my finger in them and put my hand in his side i will not believe and then when the time came and he saw the evidence not just the sight of jesus but the evidence as he seemed to need it what did he say he said my lord and my god did he get did he get bonus points for that no he got a rebuke thomas because you have seen me you have believed blessed are those who have not seen me and yet believe and that's what the that's what he goes on to say you have not seen him you love him though you do not yet see him you believe in him and when our own face may be weak and we're going through difficult times and we're wondering at all where we're at in our relationship with the lord you remember what peter said when he was asked the question for the third time do you love me lord you know all things you know that i love you

not then the first thing the second thing and the final thing is unseen but rejoiced in it's in it's interesting here that the present tense is used in the verbal form and you believe believing in him and you believe believing in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible that is a continuation in the present that's intended to be brought out and this is important to us because we go on rejoicing in him in remember in psalm 34 at the beginning i will bless the lord at all times his praise shall continually be in my mouth my soul shall make its boast in the lord the meek shall hear thereof and be glad and that's the spirit working in the psalm writer to communicate just all those centuries before just what is being said here we go we go on rejoicing and then we go on exulting the word in the original is more like exaltation there is a deep feeling that that bubbles up within us and and and and we almost feel like we could shout out because although he's unseen we're not rejoicing in some fictitious character we're rejoicing in the one we've come to love and know we've experienced in our lives and we trust him for what he has done for us in the cross and what he is to us along life's way and of course this believing is important too because it is through believing we've come to know him as colin was saying just the other week true belief through faith in christ it's not just he'd knowledge well he didn't put it like that but you know what i mean it's not just about having your head stuffed with doctrine we have to lay hold we have to make it our very own it has to be precious to us because bible tells me he is precious and to those who believe and the word we translate as precious really is we hold them in honor unseen but we rejoice in him and by the power of the spirit working in us the spirit takes the things of christ and he shows them to us and and sometimes we're we're almost overwhelmed by what we apprehend in our hearts and our minds you don't really get it so much nowadays but some of the old a books on christian experience some of the people and i can say the ladies too where they walked so closely to the lord they spent hours in in in communion with him but it wasn't passing the time of day they were using their communion with the lord to be a blessing to other people and that's what we want to learn from i think from this from this verse the spirit takes of the things of christ so that our hearts uh burn within us as was said of the two disciples on the road to me is we're thrilled

[20 : 33] we're filled we're filled with wonder love and praise the more we get to know him the more we love him and the more we rejoice in him and that's so important for us in the life of faith after in all the spirit is the spirit of faith he works faith in us he puts our faith through the mill at times but he enables us to desire christ as altogether desirable for us you remember in psalm 45 uh my heart is overflowing with a good theme my words concern the king my heart is overflowing reminds me of a wee chorus i had from a hundred years ago joy joy joy with joy my heart is ringing joy joy joy my heart to me is known because of christ my sins are all forgiven that's what my heart knows i'm on my way to heaven my heart is babbling over with his joy joy joy and this is this is getting into the heart of what what peter is saying here you believe in him and rejoice in him with a joy that is inexpressible it's it's you can hardly define it yet you know it had a saying in glasgow some of you will know it well it's better felt than tell it and it's that kind of way it's it's it's it's it's almost like it's bursting to get out of you but it's real and true uh uh jnd kelly he was a an anglican evangelical there from a bygone day he said this joy unspeakable and full of glory it's a joy shot through with the radiance which belongs to the lord that is what he communicates to us you remember in john 17 it is in verse 21 jesus says father the glory that you have given to me i have given to them and of course you've got to distinguish between the glory that is incommunicable and that which the savior did communicate in john 17 21 22 he says that and then he goes on into a different dimension and this is the glory that peter is talking about i have given it to them that's why at times you feel it's it's it's inexpressible it just wants to burst out of you and we shouldn't be afraid of that which we shouldn't be afraid will be looked upon as a bit cranky not at all peter carries us on here to uh the the the consummation of our salvation and that should grip us too you see there there in verse say the first verse nine it's and joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory obtaining the outcome that is the word outcome there is tell us it means the goal

of your faith the salvation of your souls and it's worth saying that what peter has in view here when he says the salvation of your souls it's actually an hebraism because if you go back to genesis and you see there in the book of genesis when god made adam genesis 2 it is and verse 7 god breathed into him the breath of life and he became a living soul nefesh chayim is the hebrew for it a living soul but it doesn't mean you're not thinking about the body you're thinking about the body as well nefesh chayim is body and spirit that's what he made our first parent that's what we are do and what peter is looking at here is you're you're filled with anticipation and so we should be of the glory

that will yet be revealed when it may be that we will be raised from the dust or it may be when he'll come he may come we don't know when he'll come the idea that he he may not come in our lifetime is not sustainable we don't know the day and the hour knows no one and so it's important to have that sense of anticipation one of our famous sons in the scottish church and our minister refers to him quite often as andrew bonner he used to get out in the morning and he would look up to the east and he would say perhaps today that's the spirit that we need it doesn't matter what his particular eschatological view was it's a right approach it's anticipating the goal of our faith the resurrection the salvation of us as body and spirit and we we we ought to encourage ourselves to look into these things uh so that we shall be anticipating them and praying in the light of them and perhaps doing our evangelism in the light of evangelism in the light of them too because it's all too easy to just slide along almost in the manana approach it's important for us to be anticipating this to be longing for this you to rejoice in him with a joy that is inexpressible though he is in sea well may the lord give us a opportunity to think these things over and to be able to say with regard to him we know him we love him we follow him we rejoice in him amen