

Why Bother?

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 18 February 2015

Preacher: Rev. James Maciver

[0 : 00] Well, let's turn to 2 Peter, chapter 1. We're going to pick up our study there where we finished last time, which was at verse 7.

For if these qualities are yours and increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so short-sighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.

Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure. For if you practice these qualities, you will never fall. For in this way, there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We've already seen in this chapter how Peter has set out the things that God has done for his people. And last time we looked at the previous verses here where we also saw the things that God requires of us to do in response to what he has done.

How we are to add to our faith, as it says there from verse 5, supplementing or supplying to your faith virtue and virtue knowledge and knowledge, self-control and self-control, steadfastness, steadfastness, godliness, and so on down through to the end of verse 7.

[1 : 29] So these two issues, what God has done in giving us this life, giving us through this knowledge of Christ, his power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness.

And in verse 10, he's really in a sense summarizing all of that for us. Because verse 10, therefore, brothers, you can see therefore is drawing conclusion from what's gone before.

Be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure. And then there follows some other references quite similar to the previous verses. And verse 10 is in fact really in many ways the core or indeed the key to this short letter.

In fact, you could really say that verse 10 is in fact the key or the core of Christian living in this life. That it's about making our calling and election sure.

We'll look at that in a minute. But that as the core is something we'll deal with first. Something that gives you a key into the whole purpose of why Peter felt it needed, this epistle, this letter needed to be sent to those people that he was writing to.

[2 : 40] Then an attachment to the verse 10, you can say before and after it, are three things that are closely attached. If we take verse 10 as one crucial concern.

The concern to make our calling and election sure. To be diligent. To give all diligence to that. That is the one concern. The primary concern in the passage.

And then there are three consequent benefits of doing that. There is what we can call in verse 8 a guard against being minimalist.

Just doing the least possible in terms of Christian service. And secondly in verse 9 doing this. This concern.

This crucial concern. One other consequence of that. Second consequence is to maintain good vision. Because he talks here about if we lack these things.

- [3 : 38] If we're not doing this. Then we've become short sighted and blind. Having forgotten that we were cleansed from our former sins. And the third benefit is in verses.
- The very last bit of verse 10. Which leads into verse 11. Where he says that you will never fall. But he will actually richly provide it for you. An entrance into the eternal kingdom.
- Of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So these three benefits. Are direct consequences. Of what you are instructed to do in verse 10.
- Making our calling and election sure. So that's why we're putting that first. And then logically it follows that the consequences. Are things we need to look at after that.
- And all of that goes back to what he's been saying previously. Because as I said. Verse 10 is really a summary in many ways. Of what he's been saying there. Verses 5 to 7.
- [4 : 35] The list that he's given there of things. That we need to supply to our faith. Or add to our faith. How do you make your calling and election sure? What is that about?
- That verse gives people a lot of problems. It isn't necessarily an easy verse to get behind. And to explain. But it is not about doing these things.
- So that God will then call us and elect us. It's not about doing something that will lead to God. Granting us his favor. And then we come into his favor.
- And receive his calling. And we become his elect children. God has from all eternity elected his people. God calls those that he elected in eternity.
- He calls them in time. He joins them to Christ. He calls them by his spirit. He brings life into them. Or brings them into life. We all know that.
- [5 : 30] So it's not obviously saying here. You do these things. In order that you will end up being called and elected. He's talking to people. As we've already seen at the beginning. To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours.
- People who profess to be already Christians. People who are already saying and showing that they've become believers. That they've become followers of Christ. It's to them that he's now saying.
- What you're actually professing to be. What seems to be the case in your life. You've got to go about confirming. Confirming it to yourself. Confirming it to others.
- That this is indeed what you are. Because as we've seen the false teaching. That Peter is so concerned to write against. Is a false teaching that is really attacking that sort of idea.
- That you need to give all that effort to your Christian life. Some false teaching will say. Well of course you don't. God's done everything for you. And you can relax and just let God do everything for you still.
- [6 : 34] You don't have to be overly concerned. About all of these things that are in this list. Just relax. Let God do it for you. Well Peter is saying. No. How do you make certain.
- How do you actually confirm if you like. You could translate verse 10. How do you confirm. That you are a called and elected Christian. Not by waiting and saying.
- Well if I'm called. And if I'm going to be called. And if I am elect anyway from all eternity. It will happen. What Peter is saying is. Those who are called.
- Those who are elect. Are those who are doing their additions. They are those who are adding to their faith. They are not hanging back and saying. Well if this is the case in predestination.
- In the foreordination of God. It will come about anyway. They are concerned. To do these things. And being doers of these things. They are setting about confirming.
- [7 : 31] Being diligent. To confirm their calling. And their election. To make it sure. As he's put it there. So it's really about. Getting assurance.

What they profess to be. Coming to have that confirmed. It doesn't happen overnight. God is certainly able to. Give us from his spirit.

Such an assurance spiritually. By his spirit. Bringing that to us. To assure us that we are children of God. But that's very exceptional. It comes about.

By doing. The things that Peter here is outlining. And stressing for us. We need to do. It comes about step by step. We're not earning our salvation. We're confirming it.

That it's in fact. True of ourselves. And. That's similar to. What 1st John actually says in chapter 5. 1st John chapter 5.

[8 : 27] There talks about. The same sort of idea. Of confirming. Something to be true. Genuine. In verse 13.

There I write these things to you. Who believe. In the name of the son of God. That you may know. That you have eternal life. He's not saying to them.

I'm not sure if you believe or not. What he's saying to them is. I have. Every evidence that you have believed. That you are believers. But now.

I'm writing this to you. So that you will confirm that. That you may know. That you have. Eternal life. It's important. For every Christian. This is for all Christians.

This is not just for elders. For ministers. For. People that in some. Forms of Christian teaching. Today. You would say. Have reached an elite. Sort of level.

[9 : 20] Of achievement. Leaving the rest of us. Behind. This is for every Christian. Every believer. It's important. To every believer.

It's important. That we work at the issue. Of knowing. That we are Christians. And knowing. That we are called. And knowing. That we are elect people. Of God.

Because as we'll see. These three benefits. Are really very much. Part of. The structure. Of everyday. Christian life. Faith. And hope.

And looking to the future. How do you do that? What is involved? Well. Like we've said. What's involved in making. Or calling an election. Confirmed. Is that we do these things.

We add to our faith. We. Have. That. Exercise. Of. What he says there. In the previous verses. Without spending. Too much time on that.

[10 : 15] But it's not just about. Self-examination. A lot of people think that. What Peter is saying here. Is just go on. Examining yourself. All the time.

And don't do much. Else but that. You have to really. Look into yourself. All the time. And look inside yourself. For evidences. That you're a believer. That you love the Lord. If you keep on looking.

Inside yourself. You're going to be. Largely disappointed. And largely. Failing to find the things. That you're looking for. In any great detail. Because being over.

Obsessed. With self-examination. Really. Is the way. To become. Quite static. And at a standstill. In the Christian life. It can be easily. Overdone.

It has to be done. A measure of it. Is required. By scripture. But if we just do that. Every day. And little else. Then it's going to end up. With our being. Pretty static.

[11 : 13] Christians. What Peter is saying is. Make your calling. And election. True. Yes. It involves. Self-examination. But look out of yourself. Look to Christ.

What do you make of him? What is he to you? What do you think of him? Have you accepted. All his work. As completely. As you should. Then look at.

The other things. That are there. Just get on. With it. Peter is saying. Don't spend too much time. Looking at yourself. Just get on. With adding to your faith. Virtue. And to virtue. Knowledge.

And to knowledge. Self-control. And in steadfastness. And godliness. And brotherly affection. And love. For if you do these things. And they increase in you.

Then you will be. Making your calling. And election. Confirmed. That's really. In a sense. What it's about. You accept God's work.

[12 : 07] What he's done for us. And you get on. With the work. That he. Requires of us. That we. Need to do for him. That's the one. Crucial. Concern. In verse 10.

What about the three. Consequent benefits. Well in verses. Verse 8. You first of all. Find the first of these. If these qualities. These things. That he's mentioned. In the list. Are yours.

And increasing. They keep you. From being ineffective. Or unfruitful. In the knowledge. Of our Lord. Jesus Christ. We've called that.

Guarding against. Being minimalist. In our Christian. Attitude. And actions. And activities. A minimalist. You could say.

I don't know. If. I'm not into. Art. Or anything. But I know. There's a form. Of art. That. Is. That is. Described. As minimalist. It doesn't set out.

[13 : 02] To fill. The canvas. With a lot of detail. It just. Keeps things. To a bare. Minimum. And that's. What makes it. Such. To those. That like. That sort of thing.

Such an attractive. Portrait. Or painting. It's a minimalist. Thing. It's something. That. Doesn't really. Add. A whole lot. Of detail. When you paint. A tree. As a minimalist.

You just. Give the outline. You don't add. Lots of leaves. To it. That sort of thing. Well. There's a spiritual. Minimalism. As well. Where. Peter here. Is guarding. Against it. The kind of.

Minimalism. The kind of. Thing. That's. Set out here. In the verse. Where it's saying. It will keep you. From being ineffective. Or unfruitful. That's being. Minimalist. The first word. Is ineffective.

But it's not. The best translation. And in fact. Barren. In the avi. Isn't. Really. What it means. Either. The best. Translation. Would be. Something. Like.

[13 : 57] Idle. Or just. Wasting. Time. It will. Keep you. From being. Idle. It will. Keep you. From. Frittering. Away. Your time.

Because. You see. If you're not. Doing. These things. You've got. A lot of. Time. On your hands. And if you've. Got a lot of. Time. On your hands. And you're not. Doing the spiritual. Things. You'll be doing. Something else. Peter is saying.

And if you're doing. Something else. Then you're not. Confirming. You're calling. At your election. You're not. Growing. As a Christian. You're not. Developing. Your Christian. Character. So what he's. Really saying. Is if you're.

Doing these things. Then it will. Guard against you. Being a minimalist. Christian. Against you. Being idle. Or spending more. Time. Doing things. Other than. Developing.

Your relationship. With God. And. You know. Very well. As I know. Very well. That that's. The kind of thing. That. In this. World. We belong to. And they're set in.

[14 : 52] Is all. Too easy. To. Actually. Find ourselves. Like that. Because life. Is so busy. And life. Is so busy.

With things. That we rightfully. Have to be busy. With. But for how long. And to what proportion. Compared to things. Which are. Essentially.

Spiritual. In their nature. And things. Which are. Directly. In relation. To God. And. Remember. Well. My mother. Had a word. In Gaelic.

For. Somebody. Who was. Extremely. Picky. When it came. To. A plate of food. Not just some food. But virtually every food. And she would say.

O. Shem. Miarej. On it. And that word. Miarej. In Gaelic. Just really means. Somebody. Who is. Just concerned. To take the minimum. And leaves.

[15 : 45] The most of the thing. Untouched. Now there are. Some. Who. Are Christians. According to that profession. At least. And. For many reasons. You may not want to doubt that.

But if you're a minimalist. Then it's leading into the area. Of doubt. Whether that person. Really is genuinely. What they profess. To be. Because when you. Set before them. A rich plate.

Of spiritual food. They show that they're really. Marriages. They're just picking out. The little tiny bits. For themselves. They're leaving. The most of it. And they just get about. With a minimum.

And you don't actually. Counter that. By. Just. Sheer. Busyness. You can really be. Very busy. In what you might say.

Are really spiritual activities. Or activities. That are gospel. Activities. Or congregational activities. And there may be. Absolutely. Nothing wrong. With these activities.

[16 : 43] But that's not what Peter is saying. He's not saying. Fill your life. With activities. What he's saying is. Set yourself. The task. Of being holy.

Add to your faith. Virtue. Brotherly love. Self-control. Steadfastness. As we've seen. Doing these verses.

That's really. The same thing. As setting out. To live. A holy life. In God's terms. And you see. What the logic. Of the passage is. Is. To.

To prevent. Idleness. Don't just. Try and cram. Your life. With activities. If you set out. Or rather. To be holy. The activities. Will follow.

Because if you set out. To be holy. You'll not be a minimalist. You'll want. As much of the bible. As possible. You'll want to get. As much preaching. As possible. You'll want to be. At the prayer meeting.

[17 : 39] As often as you can. You'll want to be. With other Christians. As often as you can. That's how you're going to be. Adding to your faith. And that's really. Essentially. What it's about.

It's a. It's a wild night. Out there tonight. It's really. Gratifying. To see. Such a number. Of you here. That means. You're not minimalists.

To come to a prayer meeting. On a wild night. Like this. But go back. Forty. Fifty years. Would you have walked. A church. Would you have done. What our forefathers did.

Walking miles. On a night. Like this. Just to get to a prayer meeting. Why did they do it? Well you might say. They didn't have any. Old means of getting there. Well if they didn't have. Means of getting there. Couldn't they say.

Well it's too wild. And I've got to walk. Two or three miles. So I don't think. I'll really go tonight. I might get. So wet. That I'll catch. My death of cold. But they did it. Why did they do it?

[18 : 33] Because they wanted. To increase. Their Christian character. They wanted to honor God. Of course they did. And worship God. But they wanted to increase. In holiness. And to become more like Christ.

And if you want to become more like Christ. Then you're not going to be a minimalist. You're going to be a maximalist. You're going to actually put yourself out. In order to get to the things.

That God has given us. By which we grow. By which we supplement our faith. With knowledge. With all these other things. In the list.

So it's a card against. Minimalism. In the sense of being idle. But there's another word there. Which we're also including. In the idea of minimalist. Which is saying. Keeps you from being idle.

Or unfruitful. In the knowledge. Of Christ. In Mark chapter 11. Verse 12. Verses 12 to 14.

[19 : 30] Jesus approached. A fig tree. Full of leaves. The passage does say. It wasn't the time for figs.

And yet. A fig tree. In those countries. Brings out the fruit first. And then the leaves. Come onto the tree. To shade. The fruit. From the heat.

From the sun. So when you see a fig tree. In full leaf. You come. Expecting fruit. Figs. But it says.

That Jesus found. No fruit on it. And then he proceeded. To denounce. The tree. And it's related there. In the passage. To faith. Particularly. Not going to go into that. But this is the point.

He came. To that tree. That was full of leaves. Which ordinarily. As a tree. As a fruit. A fig tree. Full of leaves. Would have. Figs. Growing on it.

[20 : 26] There were none. And what Peter is saying. Is. A person. Whose profession. Shows lots of leaves. Ought to have figs.

Ought to have fruit. You expect fruit. You see. God. Has given us. As he said. By his divine power. All things. That pertain. To life. And godliness.

The resources. Are there. God has provided them. That's what we saw. When we looked at. The early part of the passage. And now he's saying. If these qualities. Be in you. These things. In the list. That you.

Where you have to do your addition. They will guard. Against you. Being unfruitful. If you said about. Being. Holy. If you want to be. As like Christ. As you can possibly be.

Then you're going to bring forth. Fruit. You're going to be. Praying. You're going to be. Often. With God. You're going to be. Studying. Your Bible.

[21 : 22] You're going to love. To be with other Christians. You're going to seek. Fellowships. You're going to be. Attending. Prayer meetings. You're going to be taking. Teaching. Teaching from the word of God. From other sources.

You could be reading. Books about. The teaching of the Bible. All of that. It'll prevent you. From being. Unfruitful. In other words. Being fruitful.

And again. It's not just a matter of. Looking in on ourselves. And asking ourselves. Where am I going to look. For fruit. What is it. I'm looking for. In fruit. In spiritual fruit.

Christian fruit. Because that's. Often. Also a source of. Discouragement. Difficult. Just doing it. By way of simply. Looking in on yourself. What Peter is saying is.

Set out. To be holy. As God requires. And just use. The means. The resources. That he's given us. By his spirit. By his divine power. And as you follow these.

[22 : 21] You're Christian. Character will develop. You will grow. In knowledge. You'll become more. Humble. As you look at yourself. In relation to God. And the more you're learning.

About him. And that Christian. Character. As it grows. Is essentially. The bearing of fruit. Not just to yourself. But other people.

Will notice it as well. And when they notice it. They'll say. There's something. Quite different. About that person. You know very well. That. The most effective.

People. That ever witnessed. To you. Were the holiest people. You ever met. Because the holiest person. You've ever met. Whoever they were.

He or she. Were the people. That made the most impression. On your life. On your mind. On your attitude. On your thoughts. Because they had developed.

[23 : 17] This Christian character. They loved God. They wanted to be with God. They loved God's house. They loved God's worship. They loved God's day. They loved God's people.

And they showed that. In the way they lived. That's what. Peter is really saying. That's what we've got to be really. Maybe obsessed. Is too strong a word. But it's getting close to it. We have to be.

Really so committed. To this. That our character. Will more and more. Develop into. The godliness. The holiness. The Christ likeness. That really people.

Will take note of. Maybe they won't want. To be like that. But they can't avoid. Noticing it. What's pathetic is. When someone. Who's a Christian. And says they're a Christian.

Is hardly effective. In any way in life. They pass by people. And they don't even. Take much note of them. There's a puniness. An anemicness.

[24 : 16] A lack of. Developing. Spiritual quality. And you don't want to be like that. Because you don't want to be like that. This is what you're following.

It guards against. Minimalism. And secondly. The second benefit is that it maintains. Good vision. Now look at verse nine. Whoever lacks these qualities.

He's kind of turning it around. And putting it in other ways. Whoever lacks these qualities. Is so short sighted. That he's blind. Seems to be a bit of a contradiction.

That because. Being blind is not the same as being short sighted. Or near sighted. But what Peter seems to mean. Is that if you think of someone. Who's short sighted.

Or near sighted. Somebody who can really only just focus. On things that are quite close to them. And you often. See them squinting their eyes. To just pick out. And focus on these things.

[25 : 11] And if you ask them. Well. Without any assistance. Look to something. 20 meters. Or 50 yards away. Can't see it. It's all fuzzy. They're blind to that thing.

That's actually. At a bit of a distance. They can see things close. But nothing. Beyond that. And if they turn around. And you ask them. Well look behind you. And see if it's any different. It's the same. They're short sighted.

And Peter is using that. As a brilliant illustration. Of somebody who's failing. To do the things. That are mentioned. Here in this list. Or failing to make their. Calling and election.

Sure. As he's put it in verse 10. Because. We have to. If you like. The short sighted person. Here really represents.

The person who says. They're a Christian. But are really just concerned. With that. Which is immediate. Just that. Which is for today. They live for the moment. And they don't seem to really.

[26 : 09] Get beyond. The moment. To look further ahead. They're like the short sighted person. Who can't see beyond. A short distance. They don't really want to see. Beyond a short distance.

But what Peter is saying is. Be a long distance. Christian. Look into the future. As the Bible tells you. Exercise your hope. Look towards the things. For eternity.

As Paul says. In 2nd Corinthians 4. Not the things. Which are temporal. That are eternal. But we're looking for the things. That are unseen. Because they are the eternal things.

So really. Peter is saying the same. In exercising your faith. It's not a matter of just looking at. The things that have. Present importance to you. Or are in your daily life.

Today. And just getting about these things. And not thinking further. Outside of that box. That's being nearsighted. And if you lack these things.

[27 : 04] These qualities. He's saying. That's what you like spiritually. And you see. That's why he's saying. He's forgotten. That he was cleansed. From his former sins. That's a bit of a. A puzzle as well.

What does he mean. But how can anybody forget. That they were cleansed. From their former sins. What does he mean. Well. Think of. The illustration. The short sightedness. Can't see much into.

What's ahead. And you can't see much behind you either. Because. The short sightedness. Affects you in both directions. And the spiritual short sightedness. Really here is.

Somebody who's really. Now. Lost. Sight of the purpose. For Christ.

And for his coming. And for his death. And for his resurrection. Why did that happen. It's the purpose. Of Christ's incarnation.

[28 : 00] Of his death. Of his obedience. It's to cleanse us. From our sins. He's called Jesus. To cleanse us. From our sins.

But this person. Is spiritually. Short sighted. Has lost his focus. On that purpose. For which Christ. Came into the world. Has slackened up. So much. In their life. That they're really not. Focused.

On the purpose. Of why. They're a Christian. At all. The purpose. For why. They're a Christian. Is to deal. With things like sin. And to move on.

In a life. Of holiness. That leaves sin. Behind. This person. He says. Has forgotten this. Is living. Just for the moment. And he's just living. Without much of a reference.

To dealing with sin. In a holiness. Of life. And without much reference. To looking forward. To eternity. It's just. A pretty pathetic. Picture. Of someone.

[28 : 55] Who says. They're a Christian. But they're short sighted. So they're blind. In both directions. And they can only see. Just this little. Tiny slice.

Of their life. That's all. They're interested in. So he says. Be diligent. Don't you be like that.

He's saying to them. This is what the false teaching. Of the day. Would have you to believe. That you're just being. Over. Eager.

Over zealous. To. Do the things that. Here. You're supposed to be doing. As a Christian. No. He's saying. If you want.

To avoid. Short sightedness. If you want to maintain. Good vision. As a Christian. Then. Do these things. Have these things. Follow these things.

[29 : 51] Add to your faith. Make your calling. And election. Sure. Because that's how you guard. Against. Minimalism. And that's how you maintain. Good vision. Thirdly.

That's what guarantees. A happy ending. When you watch something. When you're reading a book. And. You want it to be a happy ending.

And it isn't. It's kind of crushing. Isn't it? Kind of disappointment. Maybe you're watching a film. And. You're really hoping. This comes to. A happy ending. For those involved.

And when the film. Takes a twist. At the end. And it's a sad ending. Or. That sort of thing. It. That's. It's not what you really. Would want it to be. But that's just.

Trivial. Compared to. A human life. And what Peter is saying here is. You begin well. You go on in the right way. And the end.

[30 : 47] Will be right as well. For thereby. He says. If you practice these things. You will never fall. You will never come short of. A rich provision.

Being given you. Of an entrance. Into the eternal kingdom. Of our Lord and Savior. Jesus Christ. When he says. You'll never fall. It doesn't mean. You'll never have failures. It doesn't mean.

You'll never have lapses. In your life. What he means is. You'll never fall. In the sense of. Not actually getting in. At the end of the day. To Christ's kingdom. By which he means here. The kingdom.

In the sense of. What's still. To appear. At the coming of Christ. The final phase. Of it. If you like. That we saw recently. In another study. If you do these things. If you're setting about.

Diligently. As he says. In the passage. Then this will be. The end for you. This will be. The conclusion. This will be the glorious. The happy end for you. An entrance.

[31 : 41] Will be abundantly. Provided for you. Richly provided. Into. The eternal kingdom. Into that kingdom. Of Christ. When he comes. And.

That sequence. Is really. So important. The sequence. Of. Beginning in the right way. Going on. In the right way. And that means.

You finish. In the right way. It's guaranteed. That's what he's saying. This will be. The end. This will be. The final. Terminus. For you.

There's a song. Called. The rose. It's not a Christian song. It's a nice song. A song which we've probably all heard many times.

But there's a line in that song. That goes something like this. It's. The soul. That. Is afraid. Of dying.

[32 : 35] That has never learned. To live. It's the soul. Afraid of dying. That has never learned. To live. The ultimate test.

For every one of us. Is going to be. And indeed is now. How do we face death? How do we think of death? How are we approaching death?

Because that's what. What's going to. Really come at the end. Of our journey. In this world. Unless Christ. Comes before that. But Peter is saying.

This is such. This is really such. An important thing. In determining. What you are as a person. What your view of death is.

Not the. Circumstances of death. Necessarily. Not. Whether there might be a lot of pain. At the end of your journey. We're all afraid of things like that. But. But death itself. What is death.

[33 : 36] Itself to us. Peter is really saying. If you live. This life. In seeking to be as like Christ.

As you can. If you accept. All that God has done for you. If you then follow on. To add to your faith. If you make your calling. An election. Sure. Then this will be the end for you. You will have an abundant entrance.

You will have a rich entrance. Indeed. The word that's used there. Is the same. As in verse 5. Because. There is. In verse 11.

Richly provided. Supplement. Is exactly the same word. In Greek. As. In verse 5. Supplement your faith. This really. Means. Supply.

And you can really put it this way. If you. Supply. The things of this list. Following out. Peter's direction. Following Christ.

[34 : 33] If you do all of that. If you. Supply. All these things. Then at the end of your journey. God is going to supply. In his place. He's going to supply.

This abundant entrance. You supply. The following of holiness. The increase in Christian character. The application to follow Christ.

And to be holy. God has his supplying. At the end of your journey. Something I meant to say. On Sabbath evening. I missed it out. But it gives me.

The opportunity now. To say it. It's a bit. Like that. Quite often actually. Things that. We're just talking in. Vestie. Before we came in. Sometimes the presenter.

Has a tune in his mind. Before he comes to stand. To present. And then when he stands. Something happens. And it sort of disappears. Or gets mixed up with another one. We've all been there. It's the same for preaching as well.

[35 : 30] Sometimes. Before you preach. You know what you're going to say. It's actually written on your. Summary sheet. But. When you get home. You're. I didn't say that. And I meant to say. Well. What it was. What it was. Was this.

We were talking about. The way in which. Resurrection features. As an essential. And how important that is.

In our understanding. And acceptance of it. Well. It's this. On the Appian Way. Which is a famous. Route to Rome. That was built by the Romans. In the days of the Roman Empire.

As you know. Many Romans. Many other people too. Had very large houses. They were well to do. They were pagans though. And as pagans.

They had no conception. Really of. Any hope. In the Christian sense. Pagans sometimes. Thought there was life. After death. But it wasn't. In anything like.

[36 : 25] The Christian gospel. And if you. Look at some inscription. Inscriptions. Apparently. On some of what remains. Of these grand. Monuments. Houses.

And buildings. You'll see. Pagan inscriptions. There. About those who have gone. Those who have died. And they're just. Dreary. Gloomy. Hopeless.

Inscriptions. Other people. Who were Christians. And they often. Had to live underground. In caves. Or in the catacombs. As they came to be called.

And this writer. Was saying. If you compare. The inscriptions. Scratched. Really. Sometimes. On the walls. Of the caves. By these.

Poor Christians. If you compare. Their inscriptions. With those. Of the pagans. Up above. In their great monuments. You'll see. A vast difference. Because.

[37 : 23] Where you find. Above. Just dreary. Dull. Hopeless. Dark. Things. Down below. You often find. Extracts.

From the psalms. Like the one. We sang. I shall not. Die. But I shall live. And I shall discover.

Works. Of the Lord. He has chastised me. But he has not. Given me over. To death. This is the day. The day of salvation. That God has made.

In it. We'll rejoice. Hope. Expectancy. In the caverns.

Whereas in the mansions above. Darkness. And gloom. Peter. And Peter. Is in many ways. Writing. To those who are. By and large. Poor. But rich.

[38 : 19] In faith. And as they were. Rich in faith. So he's calling on them. To make their calling. And election. Confirmed. And to do so. So that they will have.

A guard against minimalism. That they will maintain. A good vision. That they will have. A guaranteed. Happy ending. That they will go.

To be with God. To live with him. Forever. Let's pray. Lord. We give thanks.

For all that is past. For all that you have done. In the past. For all that. Has taken place. In our own individual lives. In the past. And even back into.

Eternity itself. We thank you. For all that we have. In the present. That your power. Has given us. All things we require. For life. And godliness.

[39 : 15] We thank you. Lord. For all the resources. That are so. Abundantly. Ours. In Christ. We thank you. For. Your word. And for your holy spirit. For the opportunities.

We have. To be together. And to listen. To your voice. In the scriptures. We thank you too. For the future. That you have. For your people. A future.

Towards which. They hope. Although at times. Filled Lord. With many fears. We give thanks. Tonight. That your word. Has reminded us. Of this certainty. Of what.

Remains. To be revealed. Because you have already. Done it. In your own plan. Of salvation. Help us. We pray. To. Look. As we should. To the past.

And to the present. And to the future. So that we may do so. Confirming. Our calling. And election. And thereby. Giving further glory.

[40 : 10] To your great name. Hear us now. We pray. For Jesus sake. Amen.