

Thess 6

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[0 : 00] Let us turn now to the passage read in the second epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, chapter 1.

And we may read from verse 6, 2 Thessalonians chapter 1, verse 6, seeing it as a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you.

And to you who are troubled, rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels and flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And so on. We consider tonight verses 6 to 10 in 2 Thessalonians chapter 1. Now in looking at the first letter to the Thessalonians, and focusing your attention particularly on its teaching concerning the second coming, we notice that there are three events which are always considered as contemporaneous.

They happen at the same time. The second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the judgment of all people.

[1 : 43] At the heart of Paul's preaching to this people, record for us in Acts, was the theme of Christ's coming for judgment.

That is at the very heart of his preaching and of his teaching. And almost every reference he makes to the second coming of Christ is associated with the resurrection of the dead and the judgment that is going to be meted out to all people.

And that is why he consistently reminds the Thessalonian believers of their responsibility to be ready, the responsibility to become holy, so that they might be found blameless at the coming of Jesus Christ.

And it is therefore important as you thread your way through the teaching of the two letters here to the Thessalonians that we understand that, that Christ is coming, that the dead are going to be raised, and that all will appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

And that judgment, as we read of it in this passage before us, is going to bring, as he tells in verse 9, to those who are described as being disobedient to the gospel and without the knowledge of God.

[3 : 27] At the same time, the judgment of Christ is going to usher those who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ into the rest that awaits them.

And Paul seems to speak with a voice of great anticipation when he makes reference to that in verse 7, to you who are troubled, rest with us when the Lord shall be revealed from heaven with his angels.

Now, in looking at the teaching we have here concerning the second judgment, I want to look at one or two things before we come to that judgment. First of all, the picture that is given to us here of the Christians in Thessalonica.

They were, he refers to them in verse 10, when he shall come to be glorified in a sense and to be admired in all them that believe in that day. You will notice that he speaks of Christians as those who are believers, those who are saints, and in verses 5 to 6, those who, because of their faith, are persecuted, troubled by the unbeliever.

So we'll have a look briefly at that thought, what we are told here about the Christians. And then secondly, we will look at how the non-Christian, the unbeliever, is described for us in the same passage.

[5 : 08] We are told that they don't know God. We are told that they are disobedient to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. And we are told in verses 5 and 6 that they trouble the Christians.

And in the light of that, we will then hone in on the teaching we have here concerning the judgment of Jesus Christ when he does come.

And how that judgment is going to be pronounced. How punishment and rewards are going to be meted out. That is the particular thrust of this passage.

Before coming to it, notice what we are told here about the Christians. They believe, they are saints, and they are troubled. Now of course, anyone reading the Bible will recognize at once that whatever else a Christian is, he is a believer.

The problem arises when you come to explain what believing means. Define what faith is. What is it to be? A believer.

[6 : 21] Now some people would answer that question by saying that you accept the teachings of the word of God. You believe what the Bible says. But that in itself is not sufficient to explain what the Bible means by faith in Christ.

Believing in the Bible, believing that the Bible is the word of God is little more than having what people speak of as a historical faith. Believing that God exists is far from sufficient to explain faith in the New Testament sense.

because James tells us that the devils believe. So to believe that God is is not sufficient. You know that the New Testament definition of faith, of believing, is that of trust.

Resting your soul, your life, for salvation upon another. And insofar as it speaks of accepting the teaching of the word of God, it is accepting it to this extent.

That Jesus Christ in the Bible is presented to us as our only saviour. And the only way in which we can be saved is by believing in him alone for salvation.

[7 : 50] And that faith, that exercise of soul by which we receive Jesus Christ as our saviour, has a profound and a lasting effect upon our lives.

The Christ who is received influences your life, changes your life, moulds your life, impels you and constrains you to live in a particular way.

So, we say this about believing or about faith. It is that exercise of the mind and the heart and the will that receives Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

Alone for salvation. And that looks to him always by faith and is moulded always by what he is and by what he says. And closely akin to it is the other description we have of them here in verse 10 as saints.

He shall come to be glorified in his saints. Now, as you know, this isn't a term which belongs or which speaks to people after they are dead or perhaps after the resurrection.

[9 : 08] The believer in the world is a saint. And it doesn't mean either that the believer is a perfect individual, that he is an individual who has no sin, that he goes about like a Pharisee as the Pharisees of old did and say that he is holier than anybody else.

That is not the meaning of it at all. It means that this person who has believed in Jesus and who accepts Jesus Christ alone for salvation is set apart, consecrated to God by the grace of God.

He doesn't decide at an early stage of his life as a 12 or a 13 year old to give himself to God. It is God who makes the decision, who enables him to make the decision.

He constrains him by his grace to give himself to him. Paul speaks of them in another context in this way. Ye are not your own. Ye are bought by that price.

Set apart, consecrated by God for the service of God to live by faith in that God.

[10 : 21] And as they thus live, there is a process of sanctification begun in their lives that is going to culminate or issue in holiness.

Complete deliverance from sin and complete conformity to the mind and to the will and to the image of Jesus Christ.

So a saint is a person who by the grace of God has been set apart by God to serve God, to become like God and at the end of the day to be like God.

That's the saint. God but the interesting thing we are told about these people is this, that while they believe in the world and while they live lives which are dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ, they are,

as verses 5 and 6 tell us, they suffer trouble or to use one word, they are persecuted in the world.

Now Paul puts it like this, a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God so that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God is that you suffer for that kingdom and it's a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you.

[11 : 49] In other words, as this person believes in Christ and as his life is dedicated to the Lord, so he is exposed to sufferings at the hand of his fellow man.

Now it has always been the case and it always will be the case as long as there is evil in the world and as long as grace reigns in a human heart that there will be conflict between grace and sin or between the good and the bad between the right and the wrong.

Christians have always been persecuted. Christians have always been ridiculed and Christians have always been oppressed in the world. There have always been troublemakers of the Christians, people who oppose them.

Now as you know and as you have heard often enough, you don't need to leave your, perhaps you don't even need to leave your own home to discover this. You certainly don't need to leave your community and you don't need to leave this island or this town to discover that there are people who are bitterly opposed to the Christian church and to the Christian faith and to the Christians themselves.

Christians. And what Paul says is this, that though you and I may think that on the face of it, that persecutions and trials may seem to deny rather than to prove that God is right, they do actually prove that he is right.

[13 : 39] And the manifest token, this evidence that we have outwardly does not refer so much to the sufferings of the Christians but to the attitude of the Christians.

You see, God is proved to be right even in the sufferings of the Christians in this way, in that he maintains their faith in himself, in that he feeds their faith, in that he keeps it alive and keeps it going, very often in the first of the most tremendous odds and difficulties, God keeps them going. And the survival of their faith is proof that God is with them. That is what he's saying here. We are bound, he says in verse 3, to thank God for your brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith grows exceedingly and the charity of every one of you all toward each other abounds, even as they meet opposition and persecution and ridicule.

And if God, as someone has said, has so inspired them, there is clear evidence that he does not intend to lose interest or to let them fall short of the final attainment of the kingdom.

Paul puts it another way in Philippians, he who has begun the good work in you will continue it. Therefore, we recognize this from the passage, that if we are Christians, sufferings because we are Christians are inevitable.

[15 : 25] Now, they can come in so many various forms. I don't need to explain that to you. We've spoken about that often enough. People are persecuted. People are ridiculed.

people attack their faith, attack their commitment, attack and challenge the reason for believing, the reason for leaving a life of sin and devoting their lives to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You find it when some people sneer at you, when they laugh at you. You will always find that. I heard someone telling me recently he was walking along the street in the town here one night, going down Francis Street, just after ten o'clock at night.

And there were two young people walking behind him, probably having had some drink, they did have drink, they weren't drunk, but you know what drink can do to young people.

And this person was walking in front of them, a Christian, professing Christian at least, and recognized him. So, walking about two or three paces behind him, what do they do?

[16 : 38] Well, they start ridiculing his faith. They start singing the 23rd Psalm, the Lord's my shepherd. They make reference to the Bible.

Now, that is the kind of thing that I'm talking about. You will always have that in this world. people think they're smart. If they can get something across, put one across the Christian, ridicule the very thing he believes in.

I remember another Christian telling me some time ago, in our place of work, there was a person who was always taking the name of the Lord in vain, always cursing and swearing.

He could hardly pronounce a sentence without taking the name of the Lord in vain. Eventually she had to confront him and she did it with these words, I wish she said, you wouldn't speak of my father the way you do.

But you see the language that people use, the things they do and the things they try to do are proof that evil will always oppose grace, wrong will always oppose the light, darkness will always oppose the light, always, it is absolutely inevitable and if you're a Christian at night and you're suffering persecution, things are rough for you.

[18:10] don't be dismayed at that. That's the way it has to be, it is inevitable. But this is the wonder of the grace of God and this is how you know that God is right.

As far as you're concerned, he has kept your faith alive in the face of it all. He has made you probably in the face of it more persuaded and more determined than ever to keep on believing, to keep on giving your life to him and to persevere unto the end.

That's the proof that God is with you. It isn't proof when you suffer persecution and when things are really going against you.

That's not proof that God is against you. It isn't proof that God is with them. But if you persevere in the faith, it is proof that God is on your side.

And he's going to show that later on. Now then, having spoken to the Christian like that, he goes on then to speak to us of the non-Christian or at least the passage does.

[19:17] And what he says of them is this, they don't know God, verse 10, verse 8 rather, they are disobedient to the gospel of our Lord, and of course carry on the thread that I had, they trouble, they persecute, they annoy, they ridicule the Christian.

Now let's look at these three things very briefly. First of all, a non-Christian person who does not know God. Now those of you who know the sort of catechism will know that by the fall, this is what happened when Adam fell.

We lost our knowledge of God. One of the things we lost was our knowledge of God. Together with our righteousness and our holiness. Now what do you understand by that?

A person does not know God. Because I'm convinced of this, that everybody in this church night knows that there is a God.

We all have an innate knowledge of a supreme being. There is something, there is someone somewhere beyond you.

[20:32] Maybe you can't identify him, maybe you can't put your finger on him, but there is something, there is someone. Your conscience testifies to that day by day.

When you go wrong, you know that you are accountable. And to that extent, all men have the knowledge of God.

Oh, some may deny it. I know that there are people who go out of their way to prove that they are atheists, but they spend their time trying to prove, not trying to get others to believe what they believe, or they spend their time trying to prove to others that they themselves are atheists.

I don't know, and I wouldn't like to speak for them, I don't know how successful they are or not sure whether there is a God or not.

But what this passage is telling us is this, that there is going to come a day when everyone will know certainly that there is. But when we see the words they know not God, this is what we understand from the lips of Jesus himself in his high priestly prayer.

[21:50] This he says is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only God means to know a person intimately, to have fellowship, to be identified closely with that person, to have a passionate relationship with him, to know him for myself, to know him as my own, he is mine, he is mine.

And whatever else is true of the non-Christian, it cannot be true of him that he would claim God in that way, this God is mine, and I am his, we are one.

So the non-Christian does not know God, he is ignorant of God as his God, ignorant of God as his saviour and as his redeemer, he is in spiritual blindness, he is in total spiritual ignorance in this sense that God is not his.

And then secondly, worried about him that he is disobedient to the gospel, they obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now this is a specific example of not knowing God because the gospel of Jesus Christ comes to us all.

And you have to remember this, that there are two ways in which the gospel is to be considered. It is to be considered as a command to believe and as an offer to receive.

[23:31] And I think that first and foremost it has to be considered as a command to believe. If you tonight are ignorant of God in the sense in which this passage speaks of ignorance or lack of knowledge, you see the gospel comes to you tonight.

You may not want to hear it, you may try to shut your ears to it, which are for the past 15 minutes, determined not to listen to a single word that is being said, may be fed up and what have you, annoyed that you're here and wanting desperately to get out.

Well, that may be the case. But the point is, my friend, that the gospel comes to you. You cannot deny that. And a non-believer is a person who does not obey what God tells him to do. And what does God tell you to do supremely in the gospel? He tells you to believe. He tells you to trust in him, to cast yourself upon him, to receive him as your only saviour through faith in Christ. And if you turn away from it, and if you reject it, you are putting yourself into this category, people who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[24 : 49] Christ. And here he's speaking obviously of people to whom the gospel has come and who have refused to submit, who have rejected it.

And then he speaks to them thirdly as those who trouble the Christians, those who persecute the Christians, those who make life difficult for the Christians, those who try to put a stumbling stone in the way of Christians, those who try to destroy their faith.

Now you may say to me, I've never persecuted a Christian. Maybe you haven't, in that sense. But I wonder if you have been a stumbling block to them.

I wonder if there have been times when you've tried to stand between them and their faith. Have there been times when you've tried to lead them astray, tried to ridicule their faith, tried to make them answer for their faith, tried to trip them up, by presenting to them problems that you know of even from the Bible itself that you know full well they may not be able to answer.

And you've stood up away, you've stood aside, have you seen them grappling maybe embarrassingly with these things and you've laughed inwardly at their predicament. Oh yes, there are people like that and that's the way the unbeliever works.

[26 : 09] That's what he does. He troubles, he persecutes the Christian because he has no grace himself. He's in the service of the devil.

And you know what the Bible speaks of the devil? He speaks of him as the troubler of the Christian. On whose side are you tonight? Are you a believer or a non-believer?

Are you one of those who wishes well for the Christian or maybe are you one who wishes them ill? If you're not on their side, you're on the other side and there's no neutrality on that side, remember. You're enlisted in the service of one who is bent on the destruction of the faith of every Christian and who will use every means to achieve these ends.

Where do you stand tonight? which leads us to the third and to the final point, the judgment of Christ when he does come.

[27 : 18] Now, the coming of Jesus is explained to us in verse 7 here in this way. When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven. Now, I told you before that there are three terms which are generally used for the second coming of Jesus in the New Testament.

The parousia, the apocalypse, and the epiphany. And they all mean more or less, they are all words which speak to us of the second coming.

They all speak of the same event, of the same coming, and the coming of the same person. The parousia, which is a favorite word in Thessalonians, speaks of the coming of Jesus personally. He is going to come personally. The apocalypse, the word which we have here for revelation, is the coming of Jesus in such a way that every eye shall see him.

It is the revelation of that which is at the moment hidden. No one sees Jesus. But the day is coming when everyone will see him. Every eye will see him.

[28 : 25] And they who have pierced him. What others will see will fill them with joy. What others will see will fill them with terror. But the idea here is that he will be seen.

He will be revealed to be seen by all. And the epiphany, the word epiphany, which isn't used so often, is the word which speaks to us of the manifested coming of Christ.

The way in which he will come will be seen by all. But here it is a coming which will be seen by all people.

And that will end all people's claims to atheism. And all people's claim to agnosticism and to scepticism. There will be no atheists or agnostics or sceptics at the second coming of Jesus Christ. That's what the New Testament abundantly shows us. Well, he is going to come. The question is for what purpose?

[29 : 40] And in what way? We are told here, for example, that he's going to come in flaming fire and with his mighty angels.

Now, there's no point in staying too long at this point here, the mighty angels, because we know that the angels always accompany Jesus. They were present at his birth to herald it.

They were with him in his temptation in the wilderness. They were with him in the garden of Gethsemane. They were there at his resurrection. They were there at the ascension. They will be with him when he comes again. They've got a tremendous interest in the redemption purchased by Jesus Christ.

But that's another theme. The angels have an honoured place in the work of Jesus Christ. But the point here, just for a minute, is this description of his coming in flaming fire or in a flame of fire. Now, does this mean that fire will accompany his coming? Is this a literal or a symbolical description of the second coming of Jesus?

[30 : 53] And in a sense, I want to say this, well, we're not very sure. there'll be wonderful things accompanying the second coming of Jesus Christ. But whether it is literal or symbolical, it emphasises the awfulness and the splendour and the wonder that will be associated with the second coming of Jesus Christ.

And someone gave us, someone put it directly with these words, and I think they are well worth quoting, these words of warning, do not dilute the literal aspect of this scene.

Human language, he says, is stretched to the limit to try and describe the terribleness and the majesty of his coming. The reality that answers to the symbol is far more terrible and far more glorious than the symbol itself.

In other words, if this language is symbolical, then the reality will be far more terrible and far more glorious than the symbol of flaming fire.

It speaks to us of the activity. Fire is energy. Fire is rather the symbol of divine power and the flame is a symbol of fire in motion.

[32 : 24] And this is the picture you have here of Jesus coming at the second when he comes again, that the coming will be so awful, so terrible, that it will strike terror into the heart of the non-Christian and yet joy into the heart of the Christian.

Now, why is he coming? And this is really the thrust of the message here and I deal with it just in a minute or two. Well, here a great New Testament principle is enunciated and is this, God is right in punishing evil and right in rewarding good.

Now, you can't get away from that. It is rooted in the very nature of God himself. And one of the great passages in the New Testament to emphasize this is one we write in 2 Corinthians chapter 5 where we are told that every person will stand at the judgment seat of Christ.

Now, I just want to mention this in the passage. Everybody, Christian and non-Christian. And some people ask the question, would the Christian be judged? And you know, for the life of me, I can't understand why people ask that question, especially when they claim to believe and to subscribe to the confession of faith.

Of course the Christian will be judged. If you deny that, you're denying the confession of faith and the teaching of the Bible, which is at the very heart of your own faith. You read the last chapter in the confession for evidence and for proof of that.

[34 : 01] And one of the problems I know full well, one of the problems in dealing with this and dealing with the judgment which God is going to meet out to the Christian as well as the non-Christian, one of the problems is this, that you find it difficult to conceive of God judging the thoughts and the actions and the words of Christians.

And yet the Bible tells us that it will. Jesus says it, that every thought and every act and every word of every single one of us will be judged what we have done secretly and what we have done openly. Whether our deeds have been good, says Paul, or whether our deeds have been bad, everything will be judged by Christ. But you see where you and I have to stop is this.

Those who are believers at the judgment seat of Christ, you remember this, will be people who have been resurrected from the dead if they have died before his coming, or people whose personalities have been changed if they have been alive at his coming.

In other words, everyone, every believer will be sanctified holy, will be holy before the judgment seat of Christ. And therefore, the mind and the heart and the will and the disposition of every believer will be in perfect harmony with the mind and the will and the heart and the disposition of God himself.

[35 : 38] They will be one. And the plain teaching of confession is this, that the judgment of the Christian will be to the glory of God. And whatever is to the glory of God will be in perfect harmony with the mind and the heart and the will and the thought of the perfected Christian at the judgment seat of Christ.

whatever will be to his glory, they will put their arm into it. And if it be that the sins of Christians are revealed at the judgment seat of Christ as they will be, they will be sins revealed as sins forgiven to the glory of his grace and they will rejoice in that glory.

and I make no apology whatsoever for taking that strong line on that particular thought because if there's anything in the New Testament that is there and the confession as I said in the last chapter without a doubt teaches the same thing.

we will all appear for judgment. What kind of judgment? Well here we are told that God is going to give retribution or punishment to those who don't know him, to those who don't obey and to those who persecute the Christian.

and the punishment is this, everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.

[37 : 22] Everlasting destruction. This is not annihilation. This is not teaching that those who are unbelievers will be destroyed so that they never again will be, that their personalities will be destroyed forever.

That's not what it teaches. It is a word which teaches the complete ruin of the person who's in this category. The loss of all that makes life worth living.

The loss of the sources and the means by which he received, by which he had contentment in this world. He will be ruined. Ruined.

There is this kind of idea, you see, if you think of a person in business and the business collapses, the word that is often used is ruined. He is ruined. He has lost all that he had.

And this is the case with the unbeliever, that which keeps him in unbelief, that which keeps him disobedient to the gospel. And there are many things. You see, one reason why people don't obey the gospel is they've got so many other things in life.

[38 : 25] They don't want Jesus. So they turn away from him. But in this day, if they die like that, the ruin will be complete. The things that stood between them and the Lord will be taken from them.

They won't have them. And then it is destruction from the presence of the Lord. It is the presence of the Lord that makes life worth living.

Remember how Moses said it. Don't take us away or don't take us up from this wilderness unless thy presence go with us. This is what makes life worth living, the thought of not having God is unthinkable for the Christian here tonight because the presence of the Lord gives him comfort, gives him protection, makes up the source of his goodness.

It is that from which he gets grace and the love of God and fellowship with God and the favor of God and nearness to God, the presence of the Lord.

You see, a Christian here tonight, there is nothing in life that he would want more than to be near to the Lord. He wants closer to him and there are moments when he feels a distance of himself and God so awful, so great.

[39 : 46] He wants it closed. Take me near to thee is the cry of the psalmist. When shall I near appear before God's sight?

Well, the punishment to be meted out to the unbeliever is he is going to be destroyed from the presence of the Lord.

He is going to be cut off from that source of favor and love and goodness and grace. You see, God is near to you tonight. God comes to you in the gospel with the offer of grace and the offer of love and mercy and pardon and fellowship and protection.

He offers you all these things. He offers you himself as your guide and as your savior. But if you continue to live in rejecting that offer, then this punishment awaits you.

You will be cut off forever from these things and from the glory of his power. The glory of his power is the visible manifestation of the greatness of God.

[40 : 58] The visible manifestation of the greatness and the goodness of God. And this is how he describes the punishment of the lostness of the lost.

As someone has put it, if there is any truth in scripture at all, this is true, that those who stubbornly refuse to submit to the gospel and refuse to love and to obey Jesus Christ, in care at the judgment day of Christ, an infinite and irreparable loss, they pass into a night on which no morn will ever dawn, into the blackness of darkness and despair.

There is one point I want to make before closing this service, and it is this. Don't you for one moment think that being cut off from God and from his favor is going to constitute your happiness.

I know that as you live a life tonight without Christ, without God, you have many means to exercise, and many sources from which you will find enjoyment and contentment.

Of course there are. I'm not saying that your life tonight is one of discontent just because you don't have Christ. Your life tonight, as far as you can judge it, may never have been one of more contentment.

[42 : 42] things like you confess it. But this is what I say to you, whether you like it or not, whether you like to confess it or not, there are times when your state of unbelief proves itself to you by your discontentment.

discontent. There are times when the means that you use for contentment aren't what they were. But that's not the point I want to make. It is this. If you live a life tonight in contentment because there's a distance between you and God, don't you think that the judgment in ushering you away from God is going to usher you away from God to such an extent that you will never think of him, that you will never see him, and that you will never feel him.

Oh no, my friend. You will be cut off from his life and his favor and his love and his fellowship and his power and his help and his grace.

But you will not be cut off from him. Because throughout the ages of an endless eternity you will be confronted by the presence of a God whom you don't want, a God whom you rejected all your life, and a God whom you will hate throughout all eternity.

[44 : 26] That is the destruction that awaits the impenitent. And if you keep on rejecting the gospel, that's the destiny you're carving out for yourself.

But what a different destiny awaits the Christian. And this is the point I'm going to make in conclusion. Because the second coming of Christ and the judgment of Christ will usher them into what Paul here describes as rest, consolation, deliverance.

When he comes, he says, he will come with rest to you, and you will have rest with us. Rest here means release from the tensions of life.

You know, if you have a string, you pull it tight. It is taught. It is taught. It is taught. It is taught. It is if you release it, the tension goes.

And that's the idea of the word here, rest. Deliverance are released from all these things that annoy and plague you and thrive in this world.

[45 : 39] It isn't easy being a Christian. And there are times when you sigh with a sigh of anticipation, with a sigh of yearning for deliverance from all these things.

one that is going to come. When Christ comes, he will come without rest. And then he will come to be glorified in all them that believe.

You see, the Christian at the second coming of Christ will be so like his Lord that his life, his person will reflect Jesus Christ.

He will be glorified in them. they will display, they will radiate, they will transmit, they will advertise, they will display his glory, his passion, his likeness, and what they will be, will show him forth. and then he will be admired in them that day. He will be admired in them.

[46 : 52] You see, we sometimes ask the question, will we know each other at the resurrection? Will we know each other at the judgment seat of Christ? I believe we will. I believe we will.

But when you look at one another, and you recognize one another, and you are reunited to one another in Christ, you know what it is when people come home, people have been away for some time, and they come home.

And you look at these people who have been away, and people whom you love, whom you love, and you see the change in them, and perhaps you talk about them. They put on weight or they're lost weight, they're looking well or they're not looking well.

There's something about them that draws your attention to them when you talk about it. Well, that's the idea here. He will be admired in them. They look at one another, they eye one another, and they wonder at Christ in one another.

They will be startled. They've got so many of the word here, they will be startled. With our light, Christ, the person who is seen is, he will be admired in them.

[48 : 11] Nothing will matter to them that day, even in the recognition of one another, but Christ and his glory and his perfection and his blessedness.

This sets the virgin. This I know, that when I personally enter heaven, I will forever admire and adore the everlasting love which brought me there.

Yes, he said, we will all glorify and admire our Savior for what he has wrought in us by his grace. So, you see, we must live and we must bear testimony to the conviction of an impending judgment. and we must bear testimony to the fact that it is right with God to judge, right with God to punish, and right with God to reward.

[49 : 25] If his reward, if his punishment is based upon his own moral nature and his own moral order, so his rewards will be based upon the grace that enabled us to believe and the grace that enabled us to live to the honor and to the glory of his name.

And I end on that thought. Does the second coming and the judgment of Jesus fill your heart with hope, with anticipation, with longing, yes, and with fear, of course?

Or does it fill your heart with foreboding? Do you dread the thought that all this may be true, and that he will come, and that you will stand, and that you will be judged before Christ?

Well, my friend, I tell you, it is assuredly true. it is inevitable, it is certain, that you will be there.

Will you be there as a believer, or an unbeliever? Why should you not stand there as a believer, when the offer comes to you yet again, from himself, to put your trust in him, for time, and for eternity?

[51 : 01] Let us pray. Bless to us the word of thy grace on you, accept our thanks for thy forbearance, for thy long-suffering, and for thy mercy, and undertake for us, and go before us, for Jesus' sake.

Amen.