

Seeing Through Eyes of Faith

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: 09 October 2022

[0 : 00] Let's begin our worship today by singing to God's praise. We're singing in Psalm 27, in the Sing Psalms version. Psalm 27, in the Sing Psalms version, verse 1 to verse 5.

The Lord's my Savior and my light, who will make me dismayed. The Lord's the stronghold of my life. Why should I be afraid? We'll sing from verse 1 to verse 5 to God's praise, and we stand to sing.

The Lord's my Savior and my light, who will make me dismayed.

The Lord's the stronghold of my life. Why should I be afraid?

When evildoers threaten me To take my life away My hundred studies and my foes Will stumble in that day Although an army hands me in My heart will feel no dread Though one of this may shoot arise

[2 : 08] I will lift up my head One thing I'll plead before the Lord And this I'll seek for ways That I may come within God's eyes And dwell there all my days That on the beauty of the Lord That on the beauty of the Lord I constantly may kiss

And in His heart And in His heart May seek to know Direction in His ways For in His dwelling For in His dwelling He will keep me safe He will keep me safe With troubled days With troubled days Within His dead He'll shelter me And all of the Lord And all of the Lord And all of me raise Now let's come to God in prayer

Let us pray Our Father in heaven We have been reminded of the purpose Of coming to worship You Of coming to gather us a people To call upon Your name And to hear Your word proclaimed to us We come with that longing of the psalmist That we may gaze upon the beauty of the Lord Constantly For we would recognize that we need You And how we need You In the world in which we live And all that's going on around us We pray for Your calmness And Your peace upon us as a people That as we come in Your name today That You would still us That You would still us And help us to be still And to know that You are God So may Your word be blessed to each one of us From the youngest to the oldest That You would give us all ears To hear what You are saying to us And also give us eyes to see Eyes to see that in all the chaos around us

That You are still God And that You reign on high And that the glory of Your name Is still proclaimed and heard Far and wide And for that we thank You We thank You that You are speaking to us And that You minister to us In all our different needs So we pray that You will encourage us In our homes and in our families To be a people of prayer To be a people who remember You Not just as we come to worship You For this time But that day by day We will go on in Your strength And that we will seek Your face On a daily basis That we will seek to honour You In our youth and into our old age In all that we do Whether it's in school or at home Or in the workplace Or throughout our communities That You will give us words To speak and share with one another And to encourage one another And ways to help one another We do pray Your blessing on us all together We thank You for all the young ones here today We thank You for the Sunday school

The creche and the tweenies We do pray Your blessing upon all that is done there We pray for our day schools as well And as they look forward to the holidays In this coming week We pray for Your blessing over everyone Parents and families And teachers and staff That You will refresh and be with them all Look after them and take care of them So Lord continue with us in our worship now Help us and guide us in all that we do And hear our thanks and our praise to You As we offer up In the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ For the forgiveness of our sins Amen Well as we were singing in that psalm We were reminded that it is such a good thing To come and worship and praise God together And it is good to come together And worship God on a beautiful sunny day When we feel His warmth A day like today What do you think?

[7 : 11] Is it a beautiful sunny day today? Hands up if you think it is a beautiful sunny day today The sun is shining And we feel the warmth of the sun Hands up if you think that is true No hands going up My goodness You must all think that it is just a terrible day outside Where is the sun then?

So 1 Peter, taking up our reading at verse 7, where we just remind ourselves what we were looking at last week, the tested genuineness of our faith. We go through various trials. And faith is more precious than gold. That perishes though it is tested by the fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 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, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours, searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look. And so on. And may God bless these readings from his word. Again, bow our heads in a word of prayer. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, as we continue in our worship of you, we thank you that you have already sent forth your light and your truth, that they have been what has been the guide to your church down through all the generations. And even at times when churches and people have wandered away from the truth, there is still your light shining brightly, guiding us back to yourself and back to your way. There are times when we have to come just like Bartimaeus because their eyes have been blinded, crying out, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me. We do come confessing our sins.

[19:47] We acknowledge, O Lord, all that we have done past and even in the present, how we sin in so many ways. And acknowledging that even as we go forward, we go forward as sinners in need of help, in need of repentance. But assure that as we come to you, that you are the one who is able to help us to see and to see all things, to see through eyes of faith what you have done for us, the things that we could not do ourselves, the salvation we could not purchase for ourselves, the way to heaven that we could not find by ourselves, the hope of eternal life that we could never afford or purchase in any way.

But we thank you that all has been done for us, that we have in Jesus Christ, the one who is the way, the truth, and the life. And we thank you that we can come anew day by day and rejoice in the hope that he is able to give. And so we pray for your blessing on us as a people, as we come to worship your name this day, as we come to hear your word, that you would truly bless it to our souls. That even these words that we have read of the Lord Jesus, that though we do not see him, we can believe in him and rejoice with a joy that is inexpressible. May you give us all that joy in our hearts today, the joy that only comes from you. And we pray that throughout our land and throughout this world, from the rising of the sun to its setting, that no matter what situation people find themselves in, no matter how dark our days may seem, that we rejoice that the Son of God is shining from on high, that the warmth of your word, the blessing of your spirit is still ours to be had. And so we continue to pray that you will send your light forth and your truth day after day, and that people will come to rejoice in it. We thank you for all our homes and our families, and we thank you for the gift of fellowship and prayer for one another. And we thank you that even as we come in prayer just now, there may be many people on our minds, many situations that we are praying for, and hear the prayers of all our hearts as we offer them up as one. And as we say amen together, Lord, we ask, hear our prayers, and your will be done in all things. Remember those who need you in particular ways. Remember those who are unwell, those who are laid aside at this time and struggling in maybe many different ways, unseen to us, when there are issues of the heart and the mind and even the soul. When there are troubles that surround us that no one else sees, we thank you that you see and that you know, and that you are able to guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus.

And so we pray that you will surround your people, that you will uphold them, that you will strengthen them as every need they have, that they will be able to cast their cares upon you, for you care for us.

We pray your blessing on those who are blind to you in these days. We pray, Lord, that there will be a longing to see, and only you can give that longing to the hearts of the blind. So we pray for you to send your spirit down upon us, an awakening, Lord, in our hearts and in our souls, and to seek the Lord while he may be found, to call upon him while he is near. We pray, Lord, for your blessing over us as communities and as islands. We thank you, Lord, for all that is done for us as a people, for every service that we have to hand, for those who are on call in emergency services, for those who

are working in different aspects of our community life, seeking to benefit the good of all our people, for those who are leaders over us and seek to direct us in the right path in these challenging days, financially and in so many other different ways. We pray, Lord, for you to give wisdom from on high, for you to lead us and to guide us. We pray for our nation and the nations of the world, and we see so many things happening in our midst. We think today of that great tragedy in Donegal for the families who are grieving and mourning there in a community that is so shocked and stunned by these events, a community much like our own, where people will know one another, love one another and care for one another, and I will be hurting so much. We pray, Lord, that you will surround them, that you will draw near to them, that your presence will be known to them, that you would comfort us only you can and give healing in the midst of all of their pain. We remember that for others throughout our world and greater situations as we see too where nations are in conflict and so many atrocities happening. We think of

Ukraine so much in the news and continue to pray for peace and stability there, but we know that throughout the world so many of your people are suffering in different ways. There is a darkness that surrounds so many. There is a wickedness and an evil that is active in so many ways and places, but we thank you that there is greater at work too, that you are in our midst and that you are greater, that you are victorious. And we see that especially at the cross, where we see that even in the midst of the darkness, in the middle of the day, and in all the sorrow and anguish that surrounded it, that still there was life, and that you gave hope to all your people, that even in our darkest hour, we can look and see the one who suffered in our place, but now the one who is risen. On that glorious resurrection morning, the light of the gospel has resounded clearly from that day, so that even today as we gather, we have the hope that is spoken of even here in Peter, the good news of the gospel preached to many. And so we pray, Lord, for your word to go out with power, for it to convict and convert, for it to be found precious to us all, and that we rejoice not just in the word, but the one who is the word, that we would rejoice in Christ Jesus anew, and seek to follow him, and look to him with eyes fixed on him, eyes of faith. So pardon our sins, and hear our thanks, receive our praise, and all we ask, we ask in his precious name. Amen. Before we turn to look at 1 Peter, we'll again sing to God's praise in Psalm 19.

[27 : 13] Psalm 19, singing at verse 7 to verse 11 in the Scottish Psalter, page 223 of the Psalm books.

God's law is perfect and converts the soul in sin that lies. God's testimony is most sure and makes the simple wise. We'll sing from verse 7 to 11 to God's praise.

God's law is perfect and converts the soul in sin that lies. God's testimony is most sure and makes the simple wise. The statutes of the Lord are right, and do rejoice the heart. The Lord's command is pure, the love is crushed, and pours the mother. The God says, the love of the Lord our calling has not

The judges of the Lord are true, and righteous are together.

They more than gold, they much shine gold to be decided on.

[29 : 47] And honey, honey, from the cold, that hopeth sweeter far.

More over me, thy servant born, that he is my true friend.

A great reward provided is for them that keep us safe.

We can turn together to our second reading there in the first letter of Peter. 1 Peter chapter 1. And we can take up our reading again at verse 8. 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, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls, and so on.

[31 : 18] We're continuing our study in this letter of Peter to a people who were scattered far and wide and a people who were suffering in many different ways and situations.

And Peter here is speaking in verse 8 about their vision, what they're seeing, or maybe what they're not seeing at this time, but the promise they have of what they will see.

The last time we were looking at verse 3 through to verse 7. And we were reminded there of the trials that the people were going through, but also of the hope that they had and the inheritance that they had to look forward to at the revelation of Jesus Christ, at the coming of Jesus Christ, the day when everyone will see the Lord Jesus.

But for now he is saying, you do not see him. But he says, you love him. So I begin today by asking you a question.

What is your eyesight like? Mine is poor. And from a very young age, I knew I would need to wear glasses to help me see.

[32 : 31] If I take off my glasses, everything just suddenly becomes a blur. And I can still remember the first pair of glasses I got and just how amazing it was to put them on and to actually be able to see things clearly, everything that I'd been missing out on for so long.

The difference it makes when you're able to see properly. And maybe that's something that many of you know or have experienced in life through long or short-sightedness.

The need to put on glasses, otherwise everything before you is just blurry. So as we dive into this letter of Peter, and we see him addressing this people who were scattered far and wide, living in a hostile world.

They were living in a time just like our own, when the world is often hostile towards the gospel. But here is Peter writing to them with a great purpose.

He's writing to them to help them, to encourage them. But he's writing to them not just to survive or to get on day by day in a quiet way, in a quiet sense, just to get through.

[33 : 47] He's writing to them to help them to thrive, to go on strengthened, equipped in life. And in particular, he's writing to them to be on the mission of God together, to remind themselves of this hope, this inheritance that they have, that they can share, even though they are going through their times of trial.

And they know that as they are living in this world, to live for the Lord Jesus comes at a great cost. And the same is true for ourselves so often today.

To live for faith in the Lord Jesus Christ often comes at a cost. Maybe we don't feel it or know it in the same way as the people in Peter's day or even many others throughout the world today.

We know too, though, that we experience difficulties and trials along the way. And the difference between merely surviving or just getting by in this world and actually thriving is often based on what we see and what our focus is on.

And so what Peter is getting at here in these verses is to have a clear vision, a clear focus, not in a physical sense, but in a spiritual sense.

[35 : 09] And to look at the world around us, not through eyes that are dimmed by sin and the darkness around us, but to look at things through eyes of faith.

To have eyes of faith. To see, even as Bartimaeus saw, a vision restored through faith. Not just seeing physically, but seeing Jesus and following Him in the way.

And so what is your vision like? What is your eyesight like in this sense? How are you seeing spiritually today? Are you looking at things around you and just seeking to survive, just to get through each day as it comes?

Or are you looking to Jesus and seeking to thrive and to live for Him? That's a challenge the people in Peter's day had. And it's a challenge to ourselves today.

And that is what Peter is encouraging them to hear. To see Jesus in the midst of all their challenges. To live in a world that has, yes, a different culture to the way that we should be living in many ways.

[36 : 23] But to live a life that we don't compromise our faith because of the culture around us. But also to say that we will not retreat from the culture around us.

We're not just going to go and back away from everything that we see wrong in this world. But we are to go forward as a people of faith. With a vision of Christ. And that being a vision that we long to share with others.

So it's helpful that Peter has the reality of life in mind here too. Knowing the sufferings that the Christian will have. But knowing too the great hope that we have in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And to have that vision of Him is so helpful as we walk through this life. As we journey in this world. As strangers, as we've exiled, as we've seen already in this letter.

This is not our permanent home. We're just passing through. But as we are passing through. We can say to ourselves as someone once did. If I must walk the path of suffering.

[37 : 28] Well we can remember that our Saviour has walked it first. And when we wonder will these trials, will they never end? We can look to our Saviour's life.

And remember suffering but then glory. As it says in verse 11 there. The end of verse 11. Inquiring into the person or time of the Spirit of Christ Jesus in them was indicating.

When he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. He suffered for us. That our inheritance would be to be part of his glory too.

So we look to our Saviour. And he is reminding us to keep our eyes on him. To look to him. So we're going to look at this in three different headings.

First of all, thinking of it all under the heading of seeing through eyes of faith. Seeing first of all, we see what others can't. Secondly, we see what has been done.

[38 : 34] And then thirdly, we see what others long for. So the first thing we see is we see what others can't. As Peter is writing from his own experience.

And we looked at this in the first part of our study. He was writing as one who had lived with the Lord Jesus Christ. He had walked with him.

He had seen him. He had seen the Lord and been with him. And he'd gone through many different experiences. Many different ups and downs in his own life.

But here he is now writing to our people who haven't seen him. And we see that clearly in the change between verse 7 and verse 8.

He was saying in verse 7 that we are waiting the result of praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ. That day when he is going to come and we are going to see him.

[39 : 31] But then in verse 8 he says, Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with a joy inexpressible.

So he knows what it's like to see Jesus. But he's writing to our people who cannot see him. And not seeing can often lead to questions.

When we are seeing something clearly in front of us, we understand it better. But when we are not seeing something, even when someone is talking about it, we can struggle to understand.

Think about sitting in a classroom when you are learning. And someone is describing a situation or something to you. It's more difficult to understand when you are not actually seeing it.

But if you are taken to a place and you are shown something and you see it for your eyes, you begin to understand. For example, the mechanics of how some kind of machine works.

[40 : 36] You may be being explained to you how an engine works and you just, as it is being spoken of, you don't understand. But when you see something in front of you, you begin to recognise the parts and what everything is doing.

So Peter is speaking having seen. But he's writing to our people who have not seen. And he's saying to them though, even though you do not see him, you love him.

And how can you love someone you haven't seen? Well, he's trying to understand who he is. And especially to understand through faith.

Peter here refocuses their attention, not on the sufferings going on around them, but on the one who has suffered for them. He focuses their attention on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Though you do not see him, you believe in him and rejoice with a joy inexpressible. You don't see the physical Jesus in front of you today.

[41 : 37] But you see of him. You hear of him. You know of him in other ways. You know of him through his word. You know of him through his providence. You know of him through his creation.

We see the Lord in many different ways. And though we do not see him face to face, we can still love him. Because of the difference he has made in our lives. And it is only through eyes of faith that we can see that.

We see what others cannot see. We see things that we didn't see ourselves in the past because we were blind. Until Jesus opened our eyes, we couldn't see or understand.

But by grace, he opens our eyes to love him. To see him through eyes of faith. To rejoice with a joy inexpressible.

And even though there are things that will seek to take that joy away from us. Those trials that we go through. Peter is saying, refocus. Look to Jesus. Trust in him.

[42 : 40] Perhaps the greatest example of this kind of situation was Thomas. Another of the disciples. And after the resurrection, you read about it in John chapter 20.

Thomas was there with, or he wasn't there when Jesus appeared to the other disciples. And Thomas said, unless I see, I will not believe.

And a week later, he saw. And what did he say? He said, my Lord and my God. But what was Jesus' response to Thomas in John 20?

He said, have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.

Who was Jesus speaking to? Who did he have in mind? Those people Peter was writing to scattered far and wide. Those who had not seen him yet had not, but yet believed.

[43 : 46] And he's saying blessed. They are blessed. He's writing to his church down through all the generations. Church going through, God's people going through all their trials.

We have not seen him, yet they have believed and are blessed. He's writing to ourselves today. We have not seen him, yet we have believed through eyes of faith.

And we are blessed. So what helps us to see in all of these situations? It's the eyes of faith.

Otherwise, we cannot see.

I remember in school, and perhaps many of you experienced this as well, either through school or through having medicals for work. Part of the test you would go through would be an eyesight test, but also a colorblind test.

And you'd be shown, maybe you opened a book that had all kinds of different colored dots on it, and there'd be a number or a shape that you had to recognize. And if you weren't colorblind, it was easy to see.

[44 : 53] You could see the numbers, maybe 25 or 16, and amongst all the dots. But to a colorblind person, there's nothing there. They cannot see. That colorblindness is hiding everything from them.

It's impossible to see if they're colorblind. It doesn't mean it's not there. It is. And you could say to the person, look, it's there on the page, but because of their colorblindness, they just cannot see it.

And it's the same when it comes to seeing Jesus. When we know him, we see him. Because he's opened our eyes. We've got eyes of faith. But all around us is a people who cannot.

It's the gift of faith that enables us to see. And so what's our focus? During a time of recession and depression many years back, similar to the situation our own nation is finding ourselves in, or the world is finding itself in, there was a man who was asked to go and speak to a room of businessmen to try and get them to refocus in the midst of all of the challenges.

And the man who was invited in to speak, he brought in a sheet of white paper, he put it up on a board, and he just proceeded to do a black dot with a pencil.

[46 : 18] He then asked the men in the room, what do you see? The first person replied, I see a black spot. The second person replied, I see a black spot.

And so it went on, one after another, they all said, we see a black spot. The man, he had expected this. And he turned to them and said, yes, there is a black spot, but none of you are seeing the big sheet of white paper.

Your focus is on the small instead of the greater. And that's really what Peter is saying here too.

He's saying to us, our focus can be on the troubles and the trials of life.

And that can be just like the dot. But the greater picture is that God has a plan and a purpose for better for all of his people. So we are to see through eyes of faith, things that others cannot see.

We see through eyes of faith, to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. But we see too, as we go on here, we see through eyes of faith, what has been done.

[47 : 38] The eyes of faith help us to see clearly what has been done for us. How do you see yourself in life?

What do you see in your life that you're happy with, that you're satisfied with? Or what do you see in your life that's maybe still lacking? Sometimes we are not seeing clearly and our focus is wrong.

Just like the men in the room who all they could see was a black dot. Perhaps our focus is on the tiny thing in life that seems like the biggest issue in our life.

Instead of focusing on the greater issue of who God is. It would be easy for those who Peter was writing to to just focus on the struggles and the problems around them.

And to then be tempted just to forget about God and to find peace and joy in the things of this world. To begin to think that God isn't with us.

[48 : 45] We're going to have to go this alone and sort all this out for ourselves. God has disappeared out of you. He's not even with us in our greatest times of need.

We're going to have to achieve our own salvation or fix eternity for ourselves. But verse 10 goes on here to say that we see this salvation.

We see what has been done for us through eyes of faith. It begins in verse 9 really obtaining the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

What has been done for us through Christ on the cross. He paid a price that we could never pay for the salvation of our souls. And concerning this salvation the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was being to be yours searched and inquired carefully in the scriptures inquiring what person or time the spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.

The time of the sufferings of Christ. We see through eyes of faith what has been done for us.

[50 : 05] But do we believe it? That Christ died for our sins? That he rose again on the third day? That he is coming again?

Can we better anything that he has done for us? No. We could never achieve any of it for ourselves. But maybe for some it just sounds too simple.

Sounds too easy. We live in a world where everything is instant and quick. Fast food is just becoming more and more. Microwave meals so that everything is done quickly.

Well back in the day when they first started bringing these kinds of things out a company had produced an instant cake mix. You see it more and more now. Everything is in one packet. You pour it into a bowl. Mix it together. And it's all done for you. Well when they first started producing these things a company had done this and the instructions said just add water and bake.

[51 : 08] But they weren't selling. Nobody seemed interested in them. They were buying public. We were uneasy about this. A mix that all you had to do was add water.

And so the people thought the company thought we've got to do something about this. So they added another instruction. They changed the formula. And instead of just add water they said add an egg and water and bake.

And all of a sudden people began to buy. It became very popular. Sales jumped dramatically. It just sounded too easy initially.

And so they changed the formula. It was too good to be true. And in many ways that's the way the gospel is to some as well.

The gospel tells us the good news preached that all we have to do is believe. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.

[52 : 06] But it can't be that easy can it? Surely there's something we have to add into the mix ourselves to make a difference to make it right. Well the gospel is saying no.

All you have to do is believe. Faith is the gift of God. It's not of anything we've done ourselves. It is the gift we receive through faith.

The salvation of our souls. The Bible is clear. We're not saved by anything we add ourselves into the mix. We are saved through faith.

Through the sufferings of Christ. And then the subsequent glories. Unlike the cake manufactured God doesn't change anything in this formula.

It's the same today as it ever was. Jesus. But how is your vision? How is your eyesight when it comes to this? Are you still thinking but surely I've got to do something.

[53 : 14] Surely there's something I need to do to finish off this formula this mix. No. It's all done. So how do you see your life and what is your focus?

Well Peter is saying our focus is to be on Christ and his finished work. He has done it all. It is complete. An old man was once sharing with a young friend about his own experience in life. Looking back over many years he said son I'd like to tell you about my life. He began by saying I was born into this world as a sinner.

I was baptized soon after I was born and I became a baptized sinner. As I grew older I wandered away from the church and found pleasure in the things of this world and I became a sinful sinner. However he said I began to realize that my life needed to change and I needed to do something and so I started attending church and he said I became a church attending sinner.

[54 : 32] Then he said one happy day my life was transformed when I accepted Jesus Christ as my own personal saviour and I became a saved sinner.

You know son he said a saved sinner is the only kind of sinner that can find real joy. And the Lord will welcome him into heaven.

Does that life experience does it resonate with you? Maybe that's the way your life has been to baptize going into the world and going your own way becoming a sinful sinner.

Maybe then starting to come back to church and thinking that's what's going to make the difference. But you're still just a church attending sinner. sinner. The key is seeing Jesus and believing in him

loving him with all your heart still a sinner but becoming a saved sinner.

When we see what has been done for us that is what we are to look upon. That's what can fill us with joy inexpressible through faith through eyes of faith seeing what Christ has done.

[55 : 52] So our eyes are to be fixed on him. The final thing we see here then is what others long for. As you look at verse 12 well 10 through to 12 really but verse 12 it says it was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you speaking about the prophets of old and the things that have now been announced to you through those who preach the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven things into which angels long to look.

In these verses from verse 10 to 12 there's people various people and even the angels looking to see what is being said in this word.

And what's the greatest gift anyone has ever given to you? There may be many things in life that you hold precious gifts that have been given to you that are precious maybe a piece of jewelry a perfume keys to a car an item of technology there are many things that we can appreciate in life and we give great thanks for well Peter is reminding a people here a people who had very little in the sense of gifts in the way that we enjoy so much but he is reminding them that all that they have is right before them and for ourselves today the greatest gift we can have is right before us the word of God and I'm sure at some point along the way you've received a bible it may have been in Sunday school or school may have been through the Gideons distributing them it may have been through a family member or a friend who's given you a bible and maybe written a little message in the front of it it's lovely to receive them and why has that person given it to you why have you received it because the one who is giving it knows the difference it can make it is the word of God that can help us to see and to truly see and it comes with a love and a longing that you would search and know the Christ that it speaks of just as Peter is writing to them in the midst of their trials it's not so their focus will be on the trials but that they lift their eyes and see Jesus in the midst of it and that is the longing that we have for one another too I hope that we would come to see Jesus when you see it spoken of here concerning this salvation the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully they went and they looked into this word the question is have you have you inquired and searched diligently this word and what do you see in it do you just hear it and put it on the shelf to the next time or will you take it away and search diligently and even like

Bartimaeus of old cry out to Jesus son of David have mercy on me help me that I might see give me a vision of faith to see in the midst of everything in life how precious you are if you are seeking a way in this world to know eternal life and the blessing of Christ come and search this word diligently and don't let it go don't put it on the shelf take it out and read it through and see to yourself what it says about the way to life and the way everlasting it is found in Christ Jesus so if you are seeking seek inquire diligently even though you do not see him you can come to love him and rejoice with joy inexpressible obtaining the salvation of your souls the greatest thing you can ever know the joy of Christ and if you are a

[60 : 25] Christian today what will you do with this word are you going to take it home and put it back on the shelf until the next time we meet or is it your meat day by day is it your sustenance day by day is it your longing and your desire not just that you will know it better but that others will know it that others will come and see the beauty of Christ it's a story told of a missionary who was a physician who went to China and was working in the hospitals there he was an eye specialist and back in the days when he went there many people were blind because of cataracts they couldn't see and one man came to this physician's hospital and was cured of his blindness and he rejoiced that he was able to see and he went away rejoicing well a fortnight later 48 blind men came with him to the doctor out of the wilderness out of the wilds they came to them holding onto a rope the one who had been given his vision back at the front leading the way leading the other 48 blind men behind him holding onto the rope he brought them to the physician who was able to cure they had walked 250 miles why did he do it because he knew who could help them to see he knew who could give them their vision back and Christian today if your eyes have been opened if you have eyes of faith you have a great gift to give to others to say come see a man who knows everything about could this be the

Christ may we come and see through eyes of faith the things that others can't the things that have been done for us and the things that others long for to see as Bartimaeus saw to see Jesus with eyes of faith and follow him on the way yes there are many challenges around us there are many

troubles and our focus can so often be on that but let's see the greater let's lift let's let's see Jesus and the hope that he gives in the midst of everything and rejoice with joy inexpressible that he has gone before us to show the way to eternal life but to lead us in that way everlasting let us pray our father in heaven we do rejoice in your goodness to us for all that you have done for us and that even though we do not see you we can love you with all our hearts and rejoice with a joy inexpressible that comes through seeing through eyes of faith we acknowledge our blindness so often and like

Bartimaeus of old we cry Jesus son of David have mercy on me and help us to see the beauty of Christ and all his glory for we ask it in his precious name Amen we're going to conclude by singing to God's praise in Psalm 25 the first version of the psalm in the Scottish Psalter page 231 to thee I lift my soul O Lord I trust in thee my God let me not be ashamed nor foes triumph for me we'll sing from verse 1 to the end of verse 5 to God's praise on let me not be ashamed

Now to save for me. Work down the day of, for tooth shape, Ochocam, The Lord, who stand with thy cross transgress, let shame upon them fall.

Don't take thy grace, O Lord, thy past, Lord, teach thou me.

[65 : 50] And do thou lead me in my truth, and my teacher be.

For thou art all the dust, to thee salvation's end.

And I have all thee all the day, expecting to attain.

After the benediction, I'll go to the door to my left. We'll close with the benediction. Now may grace, mercy, and peace from God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, rest upon and abide with you all, now and forevermore.

Amen. Amen.

[67 : 16] Amen. Amen. Amen.