

Resurrection Blessings

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Preacher: Rev Paul Amed

[0 : 00] Our worship, we sing to God's praise from the Psalm 103. We'll be singing, first of all, from the Scottish Psalter, page 369.

O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord, and all that in me is. Be stirred it up his holy name to magnify and bless. Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God, and not forgetful be of all his gracious benefits he hath bestowed on the verses 1 to 5 of Psalm 103.

O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord, and all that in me is.

He's headed up his holy name to magnify and bless.

Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God, and not forgetful be.

[1 : 22] All of his gracious benefits he hath bestowed on me.

All thine iniquity circumcised, most graciously forgive.

All of his gracious, O my soul, the Lord, and not forgetful be.

Who doth redeem my life, but thou to death may shod for thou.

Who thee with loving kindness, the unended mercy's crown.

[2 : 47] Who with abundance of good things, does satisfy thy mouth.

So that in love, the angel's age, reneweth thy youth.

Let's now unite our hearts in prayer. Almighty and ever-blessed God, with the psalmist we would indeed say, O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord, and all that in me is.

O loving Heavenly Father, help us, we pray. Help us by the power and the presence of your Holy Spirit to do just that. To bless our God. To acknowledge that you are indeed the sovereign creator and sustainer of all things.

You are the one with whom we have to do. And you are the one, albeit creator and sovereign, the one who comes to us, who meets with us through your own beloved son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

[4 : 07] And thus you become our Father. And as your children, we can cry. We can cry out, Abba, Father. We do bless you, Lord. We just want to bless you more and more and more with all that is within us.

We find ourselves so often struggling. We find ourselves doubting and fearful. But hey, we thank you tonight that we can come. We can come. There's no constraint upon us to stay away, but more of a constraint to be in this place tonight.

To worship you. To meditate upon your word. To fellowship with God's people. And to be reminded once again that you are indeed the resurrection and the life. We can say, Christ is risen.

I know he's risen from the dead. Why? Because he lives within my heart. And we pray that that would be the experience of everyone gathered here tonight. That you might know the risen Christ ruling and reigning in your heart.

And so we bless you, Lord. We bless you for all that you are, for all that you mean to us. And again, we would come with a spirit of humility and an attitude of gratitude, Lord, for your lavish providence over us.

[5 :15] You've blessed us beyond our understanding, beyond our imaginations, oh Lord. Who could number all our blessings if we were to try that, Lord? Who could count them? And so we come and we bow before you.

Lord, we mention this edict. And we rejoice in the knowledge that there is a call to the Reverend Callum Smith. And we pray, oh loving Heavenly Father, that you would continue, as you have done, to go before this congregation and to make the crooked places straight, to break in pieces the gates of brass, to cut asunder the bars of iron.

And all things will be done according to your will and your purpose. We ask your blessing, Lord, upon him and whatever family he may have, even at this time. And many, Lord, would come and to show their opinion, to show their hope.

Indeed, Lord, to show their faith and to sign this call. And we thank you also, Lord, for the Reverend James McKeever. And we thank you, Lord, for his ministry in this place, for all that he does, Lord, in the preaching and proclamation of your word and for the pastoring of your people.

How blessed we are. Even across our island, oh Lord, we have those who proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, even in these dark and difficult days. And so as we gather, we pray that you would be mindful of us, each one.

[6 :37] As we seek to draw near to you, you would draw near to us. And we remember, oh loving Heavenly Father, those who have lost loved ones, who know bereavement, sadness and sorrow.

For families, oh Lord, whose lives have been changed, some in the twinkling of an eye, others through a long illness. But we pray that your Holy Spirit would minister to each one.

They would know the comfort, the nearness. They would know that God is in the midst. They would know he understands. And that Christ himself has promised to come alongside.

The one who knows our infirmities, our weaknesses, our tears. The one who understands. And we bless you tonight, oh Lord, that we have one, the risen Christ, who understands, who knows.

And above all, Lord, and sometimes we say it so often in a flippant way, yet nevertheless we say it again, you love us. You love us with a deep love. A love that proved itself, evidenced itself on that cross on Calvary's hill.

[7 :43] And yet a love that died, but death couldn't keep you, and the grave couldn't keep you. You did indeed rise again. So we come tonight in that atmosphere of the living Christ.

And not a dead story, but an inspired word that speaks to us of Jesus. So we remember these families, oh Lord, tonight, and others, Lord, who know sadness and loss in these past days, these past weeks, and even these past months, oh Lord.

And we would commit and commend them to you. Lord, we pray tonight for Ukraine. Oh, Heavenly Father, it just amazes us, Lord. We just can't understand at times all that's happening and taking place in that land.

We pray, oh God, we pray, Lord, from the outset that that war would be stopped. And that things, Lord, would get back to normal, if that would ever be possible. But we pray, Lord, for the enemy to be confused.

We pray for the transgressor, Lord, to be removed. We pray for safe passage for those within the cities and the villages of the Ukraine, Lord, that they would find safe haven, even though many, Lord, know not where their destination would take them.

[8 : 58] Lord, again, we have to remember how blessed we are, how peaceful, Lord, we are in this portion of the vineyard where we are planted, when we consider the Ukraine, but not only the Ukraine, oh Lord, many, many countries tonight where once there was the cry of peace, peace, and there is no peace.

There's more of the deviousness, the deceit, the depth of sin, the ravages of sin, the wickedness and depravity of men against others, Lord.

And oh, how we long, how we long, oh loving Heavenly Father. Perhaps, Lord, you're bringing us to that place where now we should be crying out, come Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus, because everything that is happening in our world, oh Lord, is revealed in the scriptures.

There are wars and rumours of wars. There are famines, there are diseases, there are floods. Oh loving Heavenly Father, and yet we know through faith, and only through faith, that you are sovereign, that the devil may have free reign for a time, yet he is on a lead, a long lead.

You are sovereign, all God. He can go so far and no more. And so we thank you, Lord, that we can look to you, we can find in your word direction and guidance and assurance.

[10 : 16] And truly tonight, because of the resurrected Christ, we can say with the Apostle Paul, I know whom I have believed, and I'm persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

And Lord, we pray that every soul gathered here tonight, those who may be watching, Lord, on TV screens, that they've handed over their souls, they have surrendered themselves to Christ, they have responded to his love.

We love him because he loved us first and gave himself for us. How blessed we are to be able to share in the things of the gospel, to gather together in the house of God, and in the knowledge that you are with us.

That's your promise. Where the twos and threes are gathered in your name, you are there in the midst, and in the midst to bless. We give you thanks again, oh Lord, for all that you are and all that you mean to us.

And we pray that each one of us, oh Lord, would indeed have the gift of faith within our hearts and lives stirred up, that we would be prepared to go the second mile. We would show, Lord, our community.

[11 : 20] We would show, Lord, whose we are and who we are, soldiers, ambassadors, followers of Christ Jesus, our Lord. Heavenly Father, we confess our sins before you.

We know we fail and let you down so often. We know that only too well. But help us, Lord, to stop looking at our own hearts, for therein we see deceitful hearts.

But enable us to look to Jesus, the author and the perfecter of our faith, remembering that he indeed forgives us. If we bring our sins before him day by day, he forgives us.

And so we thank you, oh, hey, we thank you for all that you are and all that you mean to us. And ask your blessing, Lord, upon us, owe us for yourself tonight. May we see no man save Jesus only.

May we know the unction of your Holy Spirit. Lord, put the pride away deep within a locked box. And may we just rejoice. Even dare we say, enjoy ourselves, be reminded of what we have in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

[12 : 27] Go before us then, we pray. Forgive us all our sins. In Jesus' name do we ask it. Amen. Amen. I want to read now some verses from Peter's first letter, 1 Peter, chapter 1.

Just a few verses. We'll read verses 1 down to the verse marked 9. Let us hear then and read the word of God together.

1 Peter, chapter 1 and at verse 1. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. To those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood.

May grace and peace be multiplied to you. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

In this, you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor of the revelation of Jesus Christ.

[14 : 24] 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.

Amen. Then, and may the Lord bless to us that reading of his most holy and precious word. We're going to sing now from, sing Psalms, Psalm 23, and it's on page 28.

The Lord is my shepherd, no one shall I know. He makes me lie down where the green pastures grow. He leads me to rest where the calm waters flow.

And down to the end, so surely, your covenant, mercy, and grace will follow me closely in all of my ways. I will dwell in the house of the Lord all my days.

The whole of Psalm 23. The Lord is my shepherd, no one shall I know.

[15 : 37] He makes me lie down where the green pastures grow. He leads me to rest where the calm waters flow.

My wandering steps He brings back to His way, In straight paths of righteousness making me stay, And this He has done His great name to display.

Though I walk in death's valley where darkness is near, Because You are with me, no evil I fear.

Your blood and Your suffering be comfort and cheer. In the sight of my enemies that table You spread, The oil of rejoicing You pour on my head, My cup overflows and I'm graciously fed.

So surely Your power and mercy and grace Will follow me closely in all of my ways.

[17 : 26] I will dwell in the house of the Lord all my days. Amen. In 1 Peter chapter 1, in verses 3 and 4, Peter writes, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for You.

And so here we have some of those blessings, the consequences of that glorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. And I would ask at the beginning of this service, does the resurrection of Jesus Christ mean anything to you at all?

We go through the motions, don't we, year by year, and we come and we have these Easter services and we are reminded of the resurrection of Christ.

But does it really mean anything to you? I would ask the question of myself. Does it mean anything to me? Does it affect me? Does it help me want to live a life that betrays that, that shows that?

[18 : 53] Is my faith real and alive? Do I really believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? Do I want others to come to know Him so much so that I visit them, I pray for them, I speak to them about the Lord Jesus when I meet them, whether it's in the street or whether it's in the supermarket?

Does the risen Christ mean anything to me? Does it mean anything to you? Well, well it should. Of course it should. And I'm sure many are sitting here tonight and yes it does mean, it does mean a great deal to us.

In fact, it means everything to us because we know we're not alone and never shall be alone. We have one who's promised never to leave us nor forsake us.

So here, in these two verses, we have a new birth, we have a living hope and we have an inheritance, imperishable, undefiled and unfading or as the NIV has it, that can never perish, spoil or fade, kept in heaven for you.

And I want us to concentrate then on these blessings of Christ's resurrection, this new birth. And some of us gathered here, we can go back a long, long time.

[20 : 09] Maybe we've forgotten or maybe we remember well when we were born anew, when we came to faith in Jesus Christ. And I want to speak about this living hope that we have.

Of all people, we are richly blessed, that we're living in a world where there seems to be so little hope. And yet we can gather tonight and because of the resurrection and because of our belief that Christ has risen from the dead, we have a lively, we have a living hope.

And I want to speak about this inheritance that is yours and mine. We have a destiny, we're going places, we are pilgrims and strangers here on earth. And though we be pilgrims and strangers, we'll never be orphans because God is our Father and he's gone before us and in Christ he's prepared, prepared a place in the house and many mansions and our inheritance is there and sometimes we're not quite sure of what that inheritance is but we know this, that Christ will be there and we'll see him, we'll see him as he is and he'll be beautiful.

and the scriptures tell us that when we see him we'll be like him and so we'll be beautiful.

We may not be beautiful here and now when we get home to glory through all that we have to go through, the trials and the tribulations, the perfecting of our faith, the difficulties, the tears, the sadness and sorrows when we get there, when we get there.

[21 : 40] we'll be like, we'll be beautiful. Do you hope for that?

Do you know that? Is that, is that your, is that your promise? Is that your destiny? Do you have that assurance? Sometimes people say it's wrong to have such a strong assurance of faith in Christ and to know we're going to heaven.

It's not wrong. It's childlike faith. It's trusting our loving heavenly father. It's believing the word of God that I have a place, you have a place through faith in Christ in heaven.

And so God has given us, God has caused us or God has given us new birth. Again in verse 3, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

according to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again or in his great mercy, he has given us new birth.

[22 : 42] The New Living Translation puts it this way, all honor to God and Father, all honor to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for it is by his boundless mercy that God has given us the privilege of being born again, of being born again.

You see, our first birth, our first birth, which of course was a natural birth, that caused us to sink very gradually for some of us, but nevertheless, it caused us to sink downward.

But this second birth, a spiritual birth, that is faith in Christ Jesus, it causes us to rise upwards, to come into a deeper and more solemn relationship with God, our Heavenly Father, to faith in Christ, enabled by his Holy Spirit.

So our new birth causes us to rise upwards and to be involved in the Trinity of God in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and for the Trinity to be involved in your life and my life.

We were born enemies of God. Yet through faith in Christ, we've been reborn, reborn as friends of God. Someone has said, conversion is no repairing of the old building, but it takes all down and erects a new structure.

[24 : 12] And Paul writes, but God being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive.

made us alive with Christ together. Without Christ then, we were dead in our trespasses and our sins. We needed to be brought alive spiritually.

But in our own strength, our own power and our own wisdom, we could never do that. We couldn't make ourselves spiritually alive. There may have been times, there may have been an occasion, when we tried to turn over a new leaf, or to get a new lease on life.

But we couldn't do it, we just couldn't do that, no matter how hard we tried. We could not change ourselves by stopping a few bad habits, or changing some of our attitudes, or even just trying to be a wee bit better, or a wee bit good.

we needed, we needed a new heart, a new engine room, a new vision. We needed a new life. And praise God, praise God, he gave us that new life.

[25 : 29] We didn't need reformation, we needed regeneration. You see, reformation is just whitewashing, whereas regeneration will wash you whiter than snow.

Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Reformation will put new clothes on a person, whereas regeneration will put a new person in those clothes.

And so the Holy Spirit came. The Holy Spirit came to us, whether it was under the preached word, through some illness, through some affliction, maybe some deep sadness, maybe conviction of sin, a longing for forgiveness, perhaps that time when you were burdened with guilt.

Whatever it was, the Holy Spirit came, and he met us. He met you, and he met me in our need. and praise God.

Praise God, praise God for that. The Holy Spirit met us where we were. And where were we? We were dead in our sins. And he made us spiritually alive, and being made spiritually alive, we were then able to repent of our sins and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

[26 : 57] What a blessing, what a privilege that we can confess that Jesus Christ is Lord tonight. We're living in a world, an anti-Christian world. You see that.

You see the changes in our world. And yet tonight we gather. We gather and we can confess and profess that Jesus Christ is the Lord of our lives.

You know, we were not born again because we repented or exercised faith. We repented and exercised faith in Jesus because of the Holy Spirit's work in us.

We were born again from above. It was a work of God. It was a supernatural work of God. Of his conversion experience, Billy Bray said, I remember this, that everything looked new to me, the fields, the cattle, the trees.

I was like a new man in a new world. Do you remember that? Do you remember those days? For some, it was deep and so real and so dramatic like the Apostle Paul on the Damascus Road being broken and brought down upon his knees and his face.

[28 : 12] Had to be broken so that Christ could remake him. For some, it was like Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened. In a sense, the penny dropped.

But listen, it was the same Holy Spirit. If you're in Christ tonight, if you can confess Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, then you have been born anew and the same Holy Spirit touched your life.

Whether it was the Apostle Paul, whether it was Lydia, whether it was you and I sitting here tonight. The fields, the cattle, the trees, I was like a new man in a new world.

That's what the new birth does to you and in you. It opens your blind eyes to a new world. It changes you from the inside out. It gives you a new heart.

We read in 1 John 3 and verse 9, no one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him. And he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.

[29 : 18] It's all of mercy, all of grace, it's all of love. It is God's doing. It is God's doing, because Christ not only suffered and died and paid the price for our sins, paid the ransom price, but he rose again.

He rose again from the dead. The grave couldn't keep him, death couldn't keep him, Satan couldn't keep him, sin couldn't keep him. He conquered it all. And there are a measure of that conquerorship is in your life and my life.

C.H. Spurgeon says, from the word of God, I gather that damnation is all of man, from top to bottom, and salvation is all of grace, from first to last.

He that perishes chooses to perish, but he that is saved is saved, because God has chosen to save him. Because God has chosen to save him.

I've given up asking why. I don't know why God chose me, but I know he did. The scriptures tell me that. It's pointless now trying to figure out why, because I know also that it was all of grace.

[30 : 36] There was nothing in me, nothing in me what I was doing then, nothing in me what I do now. It was all of grace. We are the people in debt even to knights.

We owe the Lord Jesus everything. We owe him it all. To Nicodemus, Jesus said, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Jesus was telling Nicodemus that entrance into God's salvation. It was not a matter of adding something to all his efforts. It wasn't about topping off his religious devotion, but rather cancelling everything out and starting again.

You must be born again. Becoming a child of God then. It's not about what we do or how we excel.

It's not about how good we might make ourselves. It's about seeing ourselves as sinners, as seeing ourselves as dead to the things of God and lost eternity.

[31 : 50] It's not about what we can do for God. It's about what God has done for us, what he has done for us through his own beloved son, Jesus Christ.

I wonder for a moment does that name Jesus. Is that also precious to you? I hope it is. We have heard the name so often.

I'm sure there are people gathered here like me. We've heard the name Jesus in prayer. We've read about the name Jesus in our Bibles, in Scripture. Sometimes we get just a little complacent.

It doesn't seem to touch us any longer. Yet in that name is our salvation. In that name is the depth that he came to reach you and I, to lift us out of the mighty clay and the fearful pit.

In that name, in that name is our life, our eternal life. In that name is the peace that we have, the peace of God which passes all understanding. In that name we have assurance that we belong to the Lord.

[32:56] I'm very privileged. I live opposite the Roman Catholic Church and you wonder how is that a privilege? Well you see from my living room window and from my bedroom window I can look over and on the roof of the Catholic Church there is a cross.

So every day I see that cross and I'm privileged that I'm able to think just a little about what it costs Christ to redeem me and to make me the kind of person that I hope I'm coming to be.

And remember it's Jesus. It's Jesus who said I tell you the truth you must be born again. There's no escape from that.

That's not an American thing. That's biblical. That's scripture. That's the voice of Jesus. Jesus said it and Jesus means it.

There's no entrance into the kingdom of God, into the family of God unless one is born again. Have you ever heard such phrases like pull yourself together, turn over a new leaf, turn yourself around, get a new lease on life, try again.

[34:16] will all these things refer to something that men and women attempt to do. They may refer to things that you and I once tried to do, but a person needs to be born again.

Something only God can do. Do you ever despair? I wonder if there is anyone here who ever despairs of being saved.

You want to know, you want that assurance that your sins are forgiven. You don't know in your heart whether you are hell bound or heaven bound.

You're not quite sure if you have any part in Christ at all. Well, let me say this, if you have despaired of any of these things, then this kind of despair is one of the first steps to heaven.

Indeed, of being born again. you see, no one ever came to Christ because he or she knew that they were one of the elect.

[35:22] They became, they came to Christ because they needed Christ and because they wanted Christ. Is there anyone here tonight who needs Christ?

He's there. He's available. He's in the scriptures. He has risen. A missionary was speaking to a remote tribe of people who had never heard about the life and ministry of Jesus.

Seated in the front row, listening intently to what the missionary had to say, was the chief of the tribe. As the story of Jesus came to its climax, and the chief heard how Christ was cruelly crucified, he could restrain himself no longer.

He jumped up and cried, stop, take him down from the cross. I belong there, not him. You see, he had grasped the meaning of the gospel.

He understood that he was the sinner, and that Christ was the sinless one. You see, do you see now then, the Son of God hanging on the cross in agony, with blood flowing from his wounds, and can you say from your heart, I belong there.

[36:40] I belong there. If you can, if you can say that you're not far from being born again. Let's go one step further.

Put your trust in I, put your trust in the Saviour, put your trust in Jesus Christ. Never mind what people say, what your family say, what your position is, what denomination you are, never mind about all of that.

Put your trust in Jesus as your Saviour, and then you can say, then you can say with the Apostle Paul, I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I live, but Christ who lives in me.

And the life I now live, in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Let me quote C. H. Spurgeon again. I believe the doctrine of election because I'm quite sure that if God had not chosen me, I would never have chosen him.

[37 : 47] And I'm sure he chose me before I was born, or else he would never have chosen me afterwards. The grace of God that sought us out, that drew us to himself, that caused us to be born again, that made us to be spiritually alive.

No wonder Peter calls us to praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for in his great mercy, he has given us new birth.

Secondly, then, he has given us a lively hope, a living hope. In verse 3, caused us to be born again, to a living hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

The writer to the Hebrews describes the Christian hope as a sure and steadfast anchor for the soul. So when Peter says that God has given us new birth into a living hope, he means that through being born again, we are now safe.

We are safe and secure in God's keeping. Whatever the future may hold, he holds the future. Whatever you and I may have to go through in this life, the Lord knows and he's promised to be with us.

[39 : 14] And just as an anchor holds a great ocean liner in place and stops it from drifting to our new birth in Christ is something that can never be moved or taken from us, no matter how far we may drift from God and sometimes, sadly, we do drift in the stormy currents of life.

But Peter tells us then we have received a living hope, a lively hope. Simply put, this refers to a living confidence that we have a bright future.

hope is a living hope, it's something real, it's impart to us, it's part of Christ in us, the hope of glory, a hope that is certain and real as opposed to the deceptive, empty and false hopes of this world.

And aren't they empty and aren't they deceptive and we hear of these false hopes day by day. But in Christ, we have a lively hope, a living hope.

When the believer speaks of hope, it's a hope that can see heaven through the thickest of clouds. We can see heaven through the thickest of clouds.

[40 : 37] For the believer in Christ, heaven itself is a real place, it's a sure thing. It's not pie in the sky, by and by, but a place.

it's a place prepared for the children of God. It's a reality, it's not seen with the eyes of flesh, but it's made known by revelation and received by faith.

And if knowing God here can mean so much for the children of God, how much more will it mean in heaven? A few minutes in heaven, someone has said, and we shall be ashamed that we ever grumbled.

A few minutes in heaven, and we shall be ashamed that we ever grumbled. We know ourselves, and it's very sad, there are many in our day, and they're pitting their hopes on money, on health, on family, possessions, dare I say, even politicians.

Yet all these hopes are but wishful thinking. Nothing on earth will last. It will all perish. The time will come when Christ shall return and he'll wrap up the four corners of the earth and everything will go.

[41 : 53] But there'll be a new heaven, and there'll be a new earth, but that's a prepared place for the people of God. When the New Testament refers or uses the word hope, it doesn't refer to fond wishes or strong desires.

It means a confident, assurance, based on the word of God and the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. So our resurrection hope itself is a hope that's yet to be finalized, shall we say, yet to be revealed, and yet in Christ, in a sense, it's already taken place because we've not only died with Christ, but also risen with him.

Our hope is resurrection hope. Bless God then. Bless God that there is a resurrection hope in all of those gathered here tonight who are born again by the Spirit of God, and there awaits for the people of God a resurrection morning.

You see, hope is biblical shorthand for certainty. And is that not what you've heard from the preacher this morning, I believe?

that the resurrection is certain. And if you and I are united to Christ, Christ is in us and we in Christ, then your resurrection and my resurrection it is certain.

[43 : 24] Therein we have this living hope. For Peter, when Jesus died, all hope in him was gone and there was deep remorse. remorse pierced his soul and he wept bitter tears recalling the night of his sad denial of the Lord Jesus when he let Jesus down.

This was his darkest hour and now his hope lay buried in that sealed grave, that sealed tomb where Jesus was. But then came that message, that personal message from the women.

Jesus had risen from the dead. And that message was for Peter. Tell Peter that message was for Peter and it was the shaft of light in the darkness.

The revival of his hope, the healing in his heart and new meaning for his life. So from having dashed hopes, which is no hope at all, Peter was transformed.

Transformed into a man with living hope which was given to him and given to you and I. given to us by believing in a living saviour.

[44 : 39] Because it's only, it's only, it's only by the resurrection of Jesus Christ can true hope live and every pain and fear be banished from the believer.

Paul wrote in his letters to the Corinthians, Christians, if only in this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruit of those who have fallen asleep.

Someone once said, our hope is not in the man we put on the moon, but our hope is in the man we put on a cross.

Therein lies our hope. No wonder the preaching of the word is called foolishness. our hope is not in the man we put on the moon, but the man whom we put on the cross.

And so this living hope then, it's linked, it's associated with the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We may have to die, but death for the Christian, it's not the end, it's a new beginning.

[45 : 55] It's what we've been called out for. The hope of our resurrection is the foundation, it's the foundation of our faith. Paul said, and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins, but he has been raised and our faith is not futile.

Our faith is fixed, it's focused in the resurrected Christ. Listen, we know only too well the world is in turmoil today, but those who are saved, those who know this new birth, we possess a hope that is out of this world.

Yet can be enjoyed in this world here and now. It's a living hope. Paul writes, do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?

You are not your own, you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. You were bought with a price.

I am not my own, you are not your own. I don't live to myself and I don't die to myself. I am his. So I seek to live to him and for him and I'll die.

[47 : 14] I'll die to him, I'll die in him. And all of us, all believers, we have this same relationship to the Lord. We all serve the sovereign Lord, whom we have embraced as our redeemer.

there's a verse in Romans 14 and verse 8. For if we live, we live to the Lord. And if we die, we die to the Lord.

So in life and in death, we belong to the Lord. So there it is again. We belong to the Lord. Believers are the Lord's possession now and forever more.

I belong. This is so terrifying and so sad. That we're reading not only in the Ukraine of families that have been separated, of children losing parents and parents losing children.

They're separated, maybe never to see each other again. But in Christ, we belong. We belong to God. Nothing can separate us from the love of God.

[48 : 18] Why? Because it is found in Christ Jesus, our Lord. In life and in death, we belong to the Lord. The sentiment is this, we are entirely his, having no authority over our lives and having no authority over our death.

A.W. Tozer said, the resurrection and the judgment will demonstrate before all worlds who won and who lost. Christ, and we can wait, and we can wait.

A wise woman who was traveling in the mountains found a precious stone in a stream. The next day, she met another traveler who was hungry, and the wise woman opened her bag to share her food.

The hungry traveler saw the precious stone and asked the woman to give it to him. She did so without any hesitation. The traveler left.

Rejoicing in his good fortune, he knew the stone was worth enough money to give him security for a lifetime. But a few days later, he came back to return the stone to this wise woman.

[49 : 37] I've been thinking, he said. I know how valuable this stone is, but I give it back to you with the hope you can give me something even more precious.

Give me what you have within you that enabled you to give me this stone. Give me what you have within you that enabled you to give me this stone.

You see, that wise woman, she could let go of that precious stone because she knew true contentment, true joy, true peace in her heart.

She didn't need riches to give her joy. She had joy in her heart. She had faith. She had love. And she had God's power. God's power that enabled her to let go of that stone.

We are his. Blood brought. A new birth and living hope. He remains faithful to us. He cannot lie.

[50 : 48] He will preserve us. He will keep us. This is the doctrine of the perseverance of the Savior and the preservation of the saints. Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

us. There's a verse we quote. We quote at most funerals very often. For the unbeliever, this verse makes no sense.

Or for the Christian. For the Christian, it makes great sense. It's the very foundation of our living hope. Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life.

Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live. And everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.

What a future we have. What a, it's inexpressible, isn't it? We can't put it in words. He's laid up for us an inheritance in glory.

[52 : 00] Christ has gone there to prepare a place for us. We have a piece of land or we have a house and the title of these have been signed and secured in the blood, in the blood of the lamb.

It's our place. It's your place. It's my place. And so a new birth, a living hope, and finally God has given us that lasting inheritance.

In verse 4, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.

An inheritance that can never perish, spoil, or fade, kept in heaven for you. You know, Peter was the son of a poor fisherman.

Thus his earthly inheritance would have been very, very small. And yet he had left all to follow Jesus, even left that small inheritance. And I'm sure friends and family would have said to Peter, they would have wondered, what's wrong with Peter?

[53 : 03] Doesn't he have any thoughts for the future? But Peter, through his experiences, he now knows he has a greater inheritance ahead.

One that can never perish, spoil, or fade. Kept in heaven for him. Kept in heaven for you and I. And of course an inheritance is something usually left behind by someone who has died.

It's a gift from someone who is not living to someone who is. But in our case, we have an inheritance provided by one who did die, but who is now alive forevermore.

Paul writes, in him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it.

We're saved here and now. We're saved from the penalty of sin. We're saved truly from the power of sin, and ultimately we shall be saved from the presence of sin when we arrive home in glory and when we collect our inheritance.

[54 : 34] Our inheritance has been totally guaranteed. It will be there when we get home to glory, regardless of what earthly heritage you and I might have.

Every Christian, every Christian has a God-given inheritance. We're promised peace, love, grace, wisdom, eternal life, joy, victory, strength, guidance, power, mercy, forgiveness, righteousness, truth, fellowship with God, and when we get to glory, these things will be perfected in our experience.

Many of these blessings then are enjoyed here and now, but then, but then, when we see him face to face. Our inheritance then is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for us.

Let me close with a thought on this. What we have waiting for us is incorruptible and imperishable.

How rich we are. We have an inheritance that can never diminish, it can never perish, which means that it is beyond the reach of change and decay.

[56 : 01] It cannot ever be removed nor taken from us. It can never corrode nor crack. What we have is death proof.

We also have what is immaculate and undefiled. It will never spoil. That means it's pure. It is in perfect condition, not touched by any earthly stain.

And sin will never ever defile it because it is sin proof. What we have is infinite and unfading.

It will never fade. It's kept in heaven for God's people. It will last forever. It can never suffer variation in value, glory, or beauty.

It has already lasted since God's elective plan. And you and I are kept for that inheritance. We're kept for heaven. And that inheritance, along with heaven, is being kept for us.

[57 : 07] It is time proof. So our inheritance is death proof, sin proof, and time proof. No wonder David could write in Psalm 16, Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup.

You have made my lot secure. The barrenary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places. Surely, I have a delightful inheritance.

Do you know that? Does that touch you this evening? Does that encourage you? Does that assure you? You've experienced that new birth. You're no longer dead in your trespasses and sins.

Do you have a lively hope? Albeit, we have to understand we go through many sadnesses and many trials, as Peter goes on to speak about the various trials that we go through.

And we have this wonderful inheritance kept for us, a piece of land, as I said, their own title deeds to it, kept by our defence lawyer, Jesus Christ, an advocate and sign in his own blood.

[58 : 20] And we are kept for it by God's power until we acquire possession resurrection blessings.

The consequences of Christ's resurrection. How blessed we are. What a people who have been lavished so freely, so graciously. So we do indeed give thanks to God for that this evening.

Of course, there's much more, there's much more. But for tonight, surely that's enough. Our loving Heavenly Father, once again, we thank you. We thank you for yourself and all that you mean to us and all that you do for us.

We can come to you at any time. We can lean upon you. We can cast all our cares and our burdens upon you because you care for us. We thank you for that most precious gift, even the Lord Jesus Christ, who you sent into this world to suffer and to die for sinners such as we were or as we are.

Who can understand it? anyone can form a way to heaven for good people, but only God could procure a way for bad people, for sinners like us.

[59 : 35] But we thank you even tonight. We can turn from the old ways and we can look unto Jesus, the author and the perfecter of our faith. And so we bless you, Lord, for all of these things and we thank you again that we've been able to gather together to meditate upon your word.

And as we leave this place, Lord, may we think about these things, may we search the scriptures and consider this new birth and this lively hope and this great inheritance.

And remember it's all of grace, it's all of God. Bless us now we pray, go before us and all this we ask is in Jesus' name and for love of him.

Amen. Let's conclude our worship then by singing from Psalm 16, this time again in the Scottish Psalter, page 216.

Psalm 16 at verse 6, unto me happily the lions in pleasant places fell. Yea, the inheritance I got in beauty doth excel.

[60 : 40] I bless the Lord because he doth by counsel me conduct. And in the seasons of the night my rains do me instruct. And down to the verse marked 10, because my soul engraved to dwell shall not be left by thee, nor wilt thou give thine holy one corruption to see.

Verses 6 to 10 of Psalm 16. Amen. Amen. Onn', Get y' reserves Ch■an 2 God bless you.

Be still, the Lord, I said, Send him this, O God, he Doth ever stand at my right hand I shall not with thee Because of this my heart is lack And joy shall be expressed In by my glory and my flesh In confidence shall rest

Because my soul in great to dwell Shall not be left by thee Nor will thou give thy holy one For thou hast shone to see And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ The love of God And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit Rest and abide with us all Now and forevermore Amen Amen