

The glory of salvation

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[0 : 00] I thank your minister and yourselves for your very warm, very kind welcome, and for the invitation to me to come and to minister the word of God among you this morning. I count it a personal privilege to be able to do so. I bring the greetings of my church, the Harper Memorial Baptist Church in Glasgow to you. They will be remembering this congregation in prayer this morning. I invite you to turn with me to the word of God and we shall read together from the first epistle of Peter and the first chapter. 1 Peter chapter 1.

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the full knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Grace unto you and peace be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy have begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations. That the trial of your faith be much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Whom, having not seen, ye love, in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of

Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you, by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, which things the angels desire to look into. Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation. Because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.

And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear. For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently, being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of men as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.

[4 : 46] And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. Amen. And so reads God's word.

I'm going into the Tower of London and seeing the crown jewels for the first time. Quite a wonderful experience to see this vast treasure store, the crowns of state, swords, scepters, all the magnificent jewels. Upon first sight, one's breath is taken away to discover this wonderful treasure. And yet the

interesting thing is that you can stand there and be breathless as you see these things for the first time. And alongside you can see those men whose job it is to guard those jewels standing there in a matter-of-fact way. They have seen them every day for so many years, and they may not take them for granted. It is the easiest thing to take those which are the most precious things in life for granted. To become familiar with them. To lose a sense of awe and of wonder.

This is true with regard to spiritual things. That we can become familiar with the truths of our salvation. We can lose the sense of awe and of wonder.

And my purpose this morning is to seek to bring before you something of the awe and the wonder of the salvation which is ours in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We hear a lot of talk in the day and age in which we live of calling people to make decisions for Christ.

[6 : 53] And surely the thing that we ought to be seeking is that they should make discoveries about Christ. The psalmist in Psalm 45 says, My heart is in doubt in a good matter. I speak of the things that I have made or I have discovered concerning the King. My tongue is as the pen of a ready writer.

He has made discoveries of the King. And he is launching forth into his subject. Well Peter in this epistle is writing to those people who were scattered, discouraged, disowned, dispossessed. Simply because they were Christians. And his purpose in writing is to encourage them. To remind them of who they are and what they are in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And the first part of this letter is taken up with him expanding the doctrinal realities of the Christian faith. And then as with most of the New Testament epistles he goes on to remind them of their moral and their ethical responsibilities in the light of the doctrinal realities.

He is saying to them first of all, This is what you are in Christ. This is what Christ has made you. And then toward the end of the epistle he says, This is what you must be.

[8 : 24] This is what you are. This is what you must be in the light of what you are. Now I want to turn your attention in this opening chapter to the glorious nature of our God Lord's salvation that Peter describes here.

He reminds them of what they are in Christ. And then on the basis of that he gives them certain exhortations. Now in this first chapter he has reminded them of their election, their regeneration, their redemption, their living hope, their glorious inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them and so on.

And all of these things he sums up in one word in verse 9. He speaks about the salvation of their souls. And all that he has been speaking about up until this point, he sums up in this one word, salvation.

You receive, he said, the salvation of your souls. It is the most glorious thing to be a saved person. Now from verse 10 to verse 12, he continues this theme, seeking to encourage these hearers by bringing to their attention various aspects of this glorious salvation.

And he is showing them that all that they have and all that they are in Christ, first of all, has been the theme of Old Testament prophecy.

[9 : 56] You see that in verse 10. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you.

Searching what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.

This salvation, he says, is the theme of Old Testament prophecy. Then in verse 12, he shows them that it is also the message of apostolic preaching.

Unto whom it was revealed that not unto them, or not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

And he is speaking there about the apostles preaching this salvation. And then at the end of that verse, he says, the salvation which is ours is the subject of angelic inquiry.

[11 : 06] Which things the angels desire to look into. Your salvation, he says, is the theme of Old Testament prophecy. It is the message of apostolic preaching.

It is the subject of angelic inquiry. The prophets announced it. The apostles preached it. And the angels admire it.

This is what he is saying about their salvation in Christ. It is the theme of Old Testament prophecy. That is his message here in verse 10 to the beginning of verse 12.

And he is lifting up their eyes, you see, to see the dimensions of their salvation. To cause them to realize that to be a Christian is the most marvelous thing in the whole of this world.

It is all the grace of God from beginning to end. It stretches from eternity, which was, to that which is. And it is a salvation which is eternally secure.

[12:08] Now one evidence of this, says Peter, is the way that this salvation in Christ was predicted down through the ages of the Old Testament. The Old Testament can only be fully and truly understood inasmuch as it is related to the Lord Jesus Christ and his work of redemption.

In very real sense, the Old Testament is without very much meaning until we look at it from the standpoint of this salvation. It is a book full of types and of shadows and of pictures and of promises.

Everything in it has its own importance, but when we read it, it is obvious that it is always looking forward, it is always pointing us onward.

The Old Testament is a book that is filled with a sense of expectation. There is a seeking and a waiting and a longing and a yearning. It was the time before the sunrise.

You begin to see the first streak of light in Genesis 3 and 15. But then with the passing of the ages, the light gradually increases and the prophets were unable to see more and more of that which was to come.

[13:31] God at 70 times and in diverse manners spoke unto our fathers by the prophets and these Old Testament prophecies were predicting Christ and the salvation which is in Christ.

Now these Old Testament prophecies have been likened a number of times to a range of mountain peaks and from the top of each prophetic peak you can look forward and you can see the coming of Christ.

You can go right back to Genesis 3 and 15 and you can stand on the peak of Genesis 3 and 15 and you can look forward and you can see him who was to come who would bruise the serpent's head.

And how often Adam and Abel and Enoch and others must have pondered what was said in Genesis 3 and 15 that one would come who would bruise the serpent's head.

They searched diligently they inquired into these things. Then as you go through the whole of the Old Testament history the prophets continually searched eagerly as God was making his purposes known.

[14:54] You can stand on the mountaintop in Genesis with Abraham and there you see the promise that was given to him that in him shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

How often Abraham must have searched diligently. How often he must have pondered that statement. How often he must have looked into it inquiring yearning longing rejoicing to see Christ today.

then he remembered Jacob when he was dying how he gathered his sons around him pronouncing the blessings in different ways. Do you remember when Jacob spoke about Shiloh coming and unto him shall the gathering of the peoples be.

How often must Jacob and the sons of Jacob inquire diligently into that statement. Do you remember how Jacob when he had pronounced the blessing upon Dan he stops as it were and he says I have waited for thy salvation O Lord.

Pondering searching Moses seeing in the exodus from Egypt seeing in the Passover seeing in the sacrifices in the tabernacle in the priesthood seeing these things in relation to the Christ who was to come pondering about the prophet who would come who would be raised up.

[16:21] How often did David in the signs speak about the life and the death and the resurrection and the ascension of Christ. He is the one who is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows all his garments smell of myrrer and of aloes and of cassia out of the ivory pillars.

David pondered these things. They searched eagerly. They looked into these things with great longing. You come into the spiritual heights of Isaiah and you climb there the mountains of Isaiah and from those mountain peaks you see that he shall be born of a virgin.

His name shall be wonderful counselor the mighty God the everlasting father the prince of peace. Isaiah is given to see that he shall be born of a virgin.

Isaiah speaks of his life and his death and of his ministry. Then you go up to the top of Everest in Isaiah 53 and you see that this will be wounded for our transgressions bruised for our iniquities.

The chastisement of our peace will be upon him. The prophet says Peter they inquired they searched diligently into these things. When they asked the question to which child will the Messiah belong the answer was given he should belong to the tribe of Judah.

[17 : 50] When they searched and asked which family shall he come from he shall come from the house of David. Daniel was given to see that he is the son of man. He would see him in all his glory.

Daniel was given the exact time that he would come. Ezekiel describes him as the plant of renown and within him God would establish the new covenant.

man. Hosea's experience with his faithless wife speaks about the love of Christ for sinners. Jonah's experience in the belly of the royal speaks about the death and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Micah was told that he would be born in Bethlehem. Havia spoke about him as the desire of all nations who would come. Zechariah speaks of him as the branch and how he would ride into Jerusalem on the fall of us how he would be sold for thirty pieces of silver.

He speaks about the fountain being open for sin and uncleanness. Malachi tells us that the Lord whom men seek shall suddenly come to his temple. He would come as a refinement and purifier of silver so that the death, the life, the ministry, the resurrection, the ascension of Christ, they're all there in the prophets.

[19 : 09] And says Peter, these men studied these things, they searched into these things, they pondered these things deeply. Now you remember that that was the theme of our blessed Saviour on the road to immerse.

He expanded unto them, in all the prophets, the things concerning himself and how their hearts burned within them as he did that.

Now Peter is saying to his hearers that in the heart and in the mind of God, Christ was the lamb slain before the foundation of the world for our salvation.

This salvation which was yours or is yours, it was the theme of Old Testament prophecy of which salvation the prophets had inquired and searched diligently.

They prophesied of the grace that should come into you, searching water what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.

[20 : 20] Throughout the whole of the Old Testament economy there are indications, there are promptings, there are foreshadowings and prophecies and pictures and promises concerning Christ.

In every age the prophets have searched diligently as God made his purposes known. And these men were pointing beyond themselves, says Peter.

For them these visions and these revelations were often mysterious, they were perplexing, but they embraced them by faith and they endured as seeing the one who is invisible.

Do you remember the age at Simeon? Do you remember what Simeon said, Lord, now let us thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

That which was prophesied, mine eyes have seen in the coming of Christ. But more, the apostle writes in Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 3 and he says this, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?

[21 : 45] Now remember that he is speaking there to believers not to unbelievers. How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?

If Daniel set his face by prayer and fasting, by study and loneliness to seek into the salvation, if Isaiah gathered all the oratory at his command, if Jeremiah wept rivers of tears, if Ezekiel was almost blinded by the splendor of it, then how much more should we value it and appreciate it and treasure it?

for these saints Peter all these died, not having obtained the promise, God having provided some better thing for us.

Do you notice what he says in verse 12? Unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things that are now reported unto you.

Your salvation, says the apostle, is the great theme of Old Testament prophecy. But then he goes on in verse 12 at the end of that verse and he says that it was also the message of apostolic preaching.

[23 : 03] The things which are now reported unto you, by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. In other words, says Peter, when the prophecies had ceased, then the Holy Spirit took up another group of men who were called apostles, and these men, says Peter, preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

Now you will notice what Peter is saying here in verse 12. It was the gospel that these apostles preached unto you. They declared unto you the whole counsel of God.

They did not declare or preach their own feelings, their own experiences, their own emotions. They preached the gospel. You see, many people in the cults, many people in the isms can testify to having had wonderful experiences and sensations and profound changes in their lives.

There are people who can go to psychoanalysts and they can have great life changing experiences. There are people who can go to faith healers and they say that the faith healer has helped them and changed their life completely.

But that is not Christianity. The apostles, says Peter, didn't preach experiences or emotions or sensations nor did they preach conformity to a strict moral and ethical code of conduct.

[24 : 40] Mormonism and Buddhism and Islam they all have very high senses of morality. They all have strict codes of self-discipline and conduct but they are not Christian.

These men, says Peter, these apostles preached unto you the gospel. They preached the facts concerning Jesus Christ and him crucified.

And in preaching these facts they proclaimed this glorious salvation. Paul says, I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

The gospel. Now either men accept the gospel declared by the apostles or they don't accept it. I am a Christian this morning not because I feel certain sensations, not because I have experienced all kinds of strange phenomena, I am a Christian because I believe what God has said in his word. I believe what God has said about Christ, I believe what God has said about myself, I believe what God has said about death and about hell and about salvation.

[25 : 58] And the apostles went everywhere preaching this gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Whatever they went, they declared to men that in the person of God's sin, God has kept his word.

That which was spoken of has happened. Peter on the day of Pentecost, this is that which was prophesied. So that Peter is saying to these people, your salvation is based upon certain hysterical facts.

These things were prophesied in the Old Testament and they have been fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. And every word the apostles went, they declared the truths of the gospel, calling upon men and women to repent and to believe this gospel.

They preached this salvation. They preached that it was salvation from something. And they preached that it was salvation to something.

It is a salvation from eternal destruction. It is a salvation unto eternal blessedness and blessedness. And now Peter is saying to these people, this is your salvation.

[27 : 21] Never forget what it means to be a Christian. Your salvation is the greatest thing in the whole of this world. It is a glorious, God-wrought salvation.

It is the theme of Old Testament prophecy. It is the message of apostolic preaching. prophecy. And he says at the end of verse 12, it is the subject of angelic inquiry.

Which things the angels desire to look into? Now he uses a very interesting word there. Parakuma, to step down in order to look into.

It is the very same word that is used in John chapter 20 in verse 25 concerning Peter himself from the name of the resurrection. He stooping down and looking in to the empty tomb, so the linen clothes line.

It is that word, stooping down, that Peter now uses to describe the activity of those angelic beings which admire our salvation.

[28 : 26] Those spiritual beings who rejoiced when God's glorious creation was brought into existence. angels who ministered in the lives of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Elijah and Daniel and Zechariah.

Those angels who burst the bands of heaven when they announced the birth of John the Baptist and of our Lord himself. Those angels who strengthened Christ in the temptation in the wilderness and in the garden of Gethsemane.

Those angels who were there on the morning of the resurrection. Those angels who welcomed him back on the day of the ascension these angels who are there even now continually before the throne of God praising him despite all their high and their wonderful privileges Peter says they wonder at our salvation.

They are amazed at the glorious salvation that has come to sinful men and women. He says they have an intense desire to know something more of the mysteries of our salvation.

Our salvation says Peter is the talk of heaven. The angels speak to one another about your salvation. They are amazed that God could be just and the justifier of those who are ungodly.

[29 : 48] Which things the very angels desire to look into? amazed that God could adopt into his own family such guilty vile sinners as ourselves.

And says Peter they peer and they stoop it's as if they are looking over the ballast of heaven and they are wondering at the salvation that comes to sinful men and women.

Charles Wesley puts it this way. Tis mystery all. The immortal dies. Who can explore his strange design?

In vain the firstborn seraph tries to sound the depths of love divine. Tis mercy all. Let earth adore. Let angel mounds inquire no more.

it is the theme of angelic inquiry. Now do you see what Peter is doing to these people who felt that they had nothing they were disowned disperse scattered abroad on the face of the earth being persecuted simply because they were Christians feeling as if they had nothing in this world says Peter you have salvation in Christ it is the most glorious thing to be saved that is yours the prophets searched diligently the apostles preached it earnestly and the angels admire wonderingly now if you are a Christian this morning you can rejoice in the glorious God wrought nature of your salvation don't become too familiar with it like the keeper of the crown jewels never lose a sense of wonder at what God has done in Christ but you know there is the application of the doctrinal realities this is what you are now says

[32 : 00] Peter this is what you must be I once heard one of the royal chaplains describing many many years ago visiting Buckingham Palace palace and as he was going to the palace the queen queen mother as she is now but she was the queen then was showing two little girls two princesses into a car he was going in and they were coming out and they were going to a birthday party and he said he heard the queen saying to these two princesses as they got into the car now remember royal children royal manners royal children royal manners this is what you are this is what you must be now you will notice that Peter goes on in this particular section of the letter in verse 16 verse 15 rather as he which has called you is holy so be ye holy in all manner of conversation because it is written be ye holy for I am holy if you are a believer if you are a true

Christian if you have this glorious salvation then says Peter here are the moral and ethical imperatives of this gospel this is what you must be if you are a royal child of God you must be a royal child of God may you notice in verse 13 he begins with the word wherefore in the light of what he has been saying about the glorious nature of this salvation wherefore he says you must gird up the loins of your mind you must be sober and you must hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ there must be he says if you are a Christian in the light of this glorious salvation there must be a determination in your life gird up the loins of your mind and the word that he uses there for gird is the word that is used for tucking up a long garment with the use of a belt or a girdle now some commentators suggest that most preachers your own included and myself included we have our own personal habits and mannerisms and idiosyncrasies you know what his are my congregation know what mine are we have certain mannerisms in the pulpit and some commentators suggest that

Peter may well have been one of those people who had that kind of mannerism that he was always pulling his garments together you know there's some men who are always tightening their belt it is a word that is used about Peter in the gospels do you remember he girt his fish's coat unto him because he was naked it is a word that is used about Peter by our Lord do you remember when you were young you girded yourself and walk wither thou wouldest but when thou shalt be old thou shalt stretch forth thy hands and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not it is that word that Peter is now using to Christians and he is telling them to gird up the loins of their mind he could he could have had in mind his Jewish heroes who would remember that on the night of the Passover from Egypt they ate the

Passover with their loins girded their staff in their hand they were ready and Peter is saying be determined gird out the loins of your name brace yourselves pull yourselves together be prepared and he is using this expression to exhort these people to a greater determination in the things of their salvation now any labourer any working man who is going to start a particular heavy job in the garden in the street he will often tighten his belt and roll up his sleeves so that he can get on with the hard work of labouring now that is what Peter is saying here those of us who are Christians there must be a similar determination in the spiritual life especially those who are involved in any kind of Christian work if you are in the ministry of your preacher of any kind you must be willing to work hard at your task

I read a quote from a Christian journal by a lecturer of one of our theological colleges and he said we are producing the race of spiritual pygmies and that that raising holy hands and strumming guitars but harmful in the pulpit and useless in the study well I hope it's not a reflection on his own college but we find that this is happening all the time don't we young men going into the ministry nowadays they don't have a study they have an office significant isn't it the study is the place where we work hard and Peter is saying you must work hard at your salvation you must work hard at the things of God the man or woman who is going to go on in the Christian life is the man and woman that must gird up the loins of their mind you will never achieve holiness of life and holiness of living by being casual in the things of God we will never achieve spiritual maturity by playing around with Christian things there is no holiness without a determined effort

[37 : 55] God John Bunyan said that the ascent to heaven is like a staircase every step of which will have to be thought for heaven is obtained by stealth it must be taken by violence by determined effort O.M.

Horton in his lovely little book his reminiscences and his life story he points out the difference between a greyhound and a bloodhound you know the greyhound will keep on running as long as it sees the hare in front of it but once the hare stops or once the hare disappears the greyhound stops the bloodhound on the other hand will never give up it will keep on and it will keep on and it will keep on there is a determination now there are some people who are like greyhounds in their Christian life that are alright when everything is going well but they never seem to keep on going on now says Peter be determined gird up the loins of your mind be alert think about the things that you believe the scriptures lay a great deal of emphasis don't they on the moral transformation of the believer by means of what he thinks be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind says Paul as a man thinks in his heart so is he use your mind in your salvation so much superficiality in the things of God is due to a lack of serious thinking and you don't need me to remind you that we are living in days of great looseness things of God where there is a laxity in doctrinal belief there is a carelessness in Christian behaviour and activity many Christians are saying and doing things that their fathers would have abhorred there are many people who profess to be Christians and yet their Christianity seems to hang loosely upon them it doesn't seem to fit them they don't seem to have any firm convictions they've got no clear resolve they are easily swayed from the truth and if ever we needed this word of exhortation it is the day and age in which we are living gird up the loins of your mind be determined in the things of

God because so much emphasis nowadays is laid upon feeling things in the spiritual life and very little stress upon thinking things through says Peter be alert gird up the loins of your mind be determined and then you will notice he says that they must also not only be determined they must be moderate be sober there is to be determination in your life there is to be moderation in your life gird up the loins of your mind be sober now that follows unlogically from what he's just been saying if you want to think clearly then you need to be sober and any excess of meat or of drink will weigh a man down and it will sink him into lethargy and into laziness and I'm sure that your minister as I can in my congregation can see it the interesting thing about this building is that you can have eye contact with everybody

I have the same in my own congregation having eye contact of course you can see when they're falling asleep and how often it happens on a Sunday evening doesn't it you've had a large Sunday lunch and then somebody gives you a large Sunday evening meal before you come out to church and they're similar as the minister began then their eyes become drowsy and people's heads begin to nod why?

[42 : 01] because they've had too much to eat the excessive meat in the same way as the excessive drink causes a man to be drowsy and so Peter is saying be sober have that self-restraint

from anything that would intoxicate you and people can be intoxicated by various things not just by drink not just by meat they can be intoxicated with sport some men are golfaholics some people can be intoxicated with their family they're so taken up with their family they have no time to think about or to see anything else or anybody else they're intoxicated with people they're intoxicated by their job by their profession the intoxicated man is the man who is so taken up with one thing that he cannot see clearly anything else and Peter is saying to these people in your Christian life you must be sober you must restrain and refrain from those things that would take the edge of your determination don't be influenced by those people who shout the loudest and those people who beat the biggest drum judge things with a kind deliberation be determined be sober if you are not like the man who drinks to excess he makes a fool of himself on a

Saturday evening how many men in the streets of Glasgow and I'm sure in the streets of Stoneway make a fool of themselves because they've been intoxicated and on the Sunday morning and the Monday they are ashamed of what they've done now says Peter in the spiritual role be sober don't be carried away in such a way that you are doing things of which later you will be ashamed now we're living in days where there are many new fads and many new fancies abounding and people particularly in the city of Glasgow become intoxicated by them there are some very good but very weak minded people who are telling us that they've made wonderful discoveries concerning spiritual truth and spiritual experience that are like with some new doctrine that Peter and Paul and John never saw they've got something far superior to anything that the saints and the fathers and the reformers of former years have ever known and scores and scores of people are being carried away and they are making fears of themselves in the name of these new things and we see grown men and women behaving like overgrown school children in the worship of God and these things are advocated by men who tickle their ears who create fancies in their imaginations and they do all kinds of things which are completely illogical I have a church not too far from me that went charismatic and another group joined them and they decided to have a public marriage of the two groups and all the women went there in wedding dresses and they all danced at the marriage in the name of the gospel we have people in Glasgow professional ministers who call themselves and advertise themselves as Christian clowns and they go around as Christian clowns in the name of the gospel and there are many people who are being intoxicated by them and Peter is saying to you and to me in the day and age in which we live be serious take these things seriously be sober don't be flippant and casual and frivolous in the things of God we have a glorious God wrote salvation and we must be determined in the things of God and we must be serious in the things of God that word be sober carries with it the thought of being awake be awake in the day and age in which we live you can be spiritually asleep you see my wife and I we dream every night almost every night without exception our breakfast conversation is talking about our dreams and some of them are very real my wife is often in the company of the royal family she's even most of the royal children in her dreams I've been all over the world in her dreams we talk about them we dream in colour and that is supposed to be significant but you know as real as these experiences are they're only dreams I have a son who never stops talking the problem is he talks in his sleep as well and sometimes I have to go into his room and turn him over he's talking in his sleep I have another relative who walks in his sleep he often comes downstairs in Liverpool and he's going to catch a number three buzz he has to be turned around in his sleep but the point I'm making is this that that can happen in the spiritual life there are people who are dreaming dreams they think it's reality there are people who have all the talk they can speak spiritual language but they're spiritually asleep they can move they can walk they can go to all the conferences they can go to the communions but they're spiritually asleep it is possible to have all the appearances and not have the reality and Peter is saying here be awake be alert in the light of what God has done for you and in closing he tells them not only to be determined and to be moderate but he says be expectant hope hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you once he says you were without hope either for yourselves or for this world no hope in the hour of death no hope for the world which is to come you were without

[48 : 17] Christ and without hope but now you have been begotten again to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead we are looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ so says Peter hope only hope is a vital element of your Christian salvation you've been born again to this glorious hope all your hope on

God is founded you must exercise that hope despite the day of age in which we live despite the state of the church despite the small things that are happening despite the opposition despite the cults despite Islam and all that's going on he says hope to the end never lose hope never despise the day of small things hope in God and hope on to the very end for those unconverted members of your family hope on and pray on never lose hope for the land in which we live never lose hope for the church of

Christ in this day never lose hope hope to the end says Peter this is the glorious thing that kept men in ages past what was it that kept John on the island of Patmos he hoped for the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven what was it that kept Baxter in the midst of the civil wars he looked for the saints of a lasting rest what was it that kept Banyan there in prison in Bedford he looked for the celestial city what was it that kept Samuel Rutherford in Abedin he dwelt on the glories of Emmanuel Islam they hoped and they hoped and they kept on hoping in the light of the glorious salvation that God had given to them why says Peter your salvation was prophesied in the Old Testament it was preached unto you by the apostles with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven the very angels desire to look into it whyfore guard up the loins of your mind be sober and hope to the end for Christ is coming he shall yet be seen his enemies shall be scattered he shall vindicate his people and he shall present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy may God enable us to hope on to the very end we shall bow together in prayer our gracious God and our heavenly father we bless thee for the glorious salvation which is to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ and we realize that it has come to men and women not without great cost but through the precious blood of Christ we thank thee for who he is and for what he has accomplished and we rejoice in the knowledge that the head that once was crowned with thorns is crowned with glory now and we look forward to the great day of his appearing until then we ask that thou would keep us trusting keep us believing until the hour of our receiving those promised joys in heaven we trust thee to do these things for Christ our saviour's sake amen our closing psalm is psalm 72 the last three verses of the psalm psalm 72 from verse 17 to

Tuenus Effingham before we sing I would liken union to thank Mr. Hughes for his ministry here this morning the thought struck me towards before he finished was that maybe some people here would think that I asked him to take this thing I didn't but I couldn't be struck I couldn't help me being struck by the if you forgive me for saying it the almost familiarity of it I know that you've been acquainted to this particularly of late and I was absolutely thrilled to hear that wonderful emphasis being placed here today upon the application of the great doctrines of the word of God to our lives as believers and now this is his first visit to this congregation to the pulpit

I feel persuaded that it won't be his last and I want to thank him for that day ministry here this morning and to remind you also that Mr.

[53 : 26] Hughes will speak tomorrow evening in the primary school at the meeting on the aspects of the European missionary fellowship and I'm sure that what you've heard today will move you to try and be present there tomorrow evening and perhaps I should have certain connection with that earlier on that in our own emphasis upon the Romanian appeal in the past few weeks that two of our communication I know they won't thank me for naming them but I'm going to Margie and lamardo McLeod leave I believe tomorrow with transport for Romania and I'm sure that our prayers will accompany them