

The making of a man of God

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- [0 : 0 0] We'll read and turn to God's Word again in the chapter that we have, as we've read already, Genesis chapter 39. Genesis 39, and I want to read from the beginning again.
- Where we read, And Joseph was brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmaelites, which had brought him down thither.
- And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man, and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And then again, I want to go to the end of the chapter, verse 20, And Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound.
- And he was there in the prison. But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.
- And so on. The story of Joseph is one which is well known to us.
- [1 : 1 1] It is one of the most intriguing and one of the most fascinating stories. particularly when you look at it in the context of God's providence, the marvelousness of God's providence.
- And by that we mean, of course, the way in which God brings about events in life. The way in which God makes something to happen on one occasion.
- And then he commits himself in all of those events to his own particular purpose and his plan.
- And I don't need to tell you how many turns or how many changes there are in the events or in the fortunes of Joseph. How, of course, at the very beginning he had fallen out with his brothers by being the favorite amongst his brothers on the part of his father who gave him a special coat.
- And how his brothers hated him. They sold him as a slave and they brought him down to Egypt where he was to be sold as a slave, as a servant to Potivar. And you know, of course, the rest of the story how, at the end of the day, the very person who came into Egypt as a slave became the prime minister, second only to the king, Pharaoh himself.
- [2 : 3 0] That's what we mean by God's providence. All of these things were ordered and directed and governed by God himself. There were no accidents.
- There were no coincidences. There were no chance happenings. All of these things were ordered and governed by God himself. That's what we mean by providence. God's ordering of events so that his own plan and his own purpose will take place.
- Now, I want to look particularly at this chapter and I want us to ask the question, what does it mean that the Lord was with Joseph?
- Because here we have a man who is not only being used by God to fulfill his purpose, but here we have a man who loves God. A man who is committed to God.
- He is what we might call a man of God. A man who loves and who is determined to serve and to follow his God. And in other words, he then becomes an example for all Christians.

- [3 : 35] It doesn't matter what testament we look at. The man of God is the same in the Old Testament as he is in the New. The only difference is that his knowledge was different. His knowledge, our knowledge of God is far greater than Joseph's was. Nevertheless, despite his lack of knowledge, here is a man who excels. He excels as a man of God. And I want you to notice that a man of God is formed. He is brought about. The man of God is the product of much testing and trial and different providences that God brings to pass in a person's life. And the whole thing is summed up in these words, the Lord was with Joseph. In other words, what we're asking this morning is this. What is the making of the man or the woman of God? What does Joseph, what does this passage have to teach us about the making of the man of God? That's the way I want us to look at it. Then, I want us to see that the text that we have in front of us this morning in verse 2, the Lord was with Joseph.
- [4 : 48] I want us to look at it in two particular directions. First of all, I want us to notice that the Lord was with Joseph in that God determined in himself to accompany Joseph in every situation and in every circumstance where he found himself. In other words, when we read these words, the Lord was with Joseph, that's not some kind of sentimental phrase. It's not as if the Lord was with Joseph. It's not. It doesn't mean that God watched him from afar. It doesn't just mean that God remembered Joseph or God was aware of Joseph's movements. It means that God was actually present with Joseph every step of the way. It means also that God was for Joseph. It means that he was on his side. It means that he was accompanying him. He was in him and surrounding him and with him and for him. He could say, if God be for us, who can be against us? He was given that awareness and that consciousness that God was with him, that the Lord was with him as his companion every step of the way.
- [6 : 00] And that is true for every child of God. That's the great promise that everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ has. I will never leave you, says God. Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. These are not just sentimental thoughts. They are reality. And it would do us good to remember that reality takes place every single day of our lives. It is a truth every moment, every turn, every circumstance, that God's people have the presence, the actual presence of God with them. God is in the midst of his people. It means that God was with Joseph. Now then it also means that not only was God with Joseph in the difficulties that he faced. And we'll come on to some of these difficulties in a moment. We'll come on to three of them in particular. In every situation that he faced. But God was actually in the difficulty itself.
- [7 : 04] These words are not just simply meant to be understood that God was with Joseph despite the difficulty. We can say that for sure. But we can also say that God was with Joseph in that he was in the very circumstances that Joseph faced. And I want to illustrate very briefly the two ways in which we are led, we are able to understand Joseph's circumstances. And it's only in the light of hindsight that we're able to understand them in this way. First of all, if we look at it in the context of the whole of the story of Joseph, what we can say for sure is this. That God is preparing Joseph for his office, for the great task that he is going to have for him.

In other words, he is going to become the prime minister of Egypt. Little does Joseph know it at this stage. But that's God's purpose and his plan for him. That one day, not only will he be released from his slavery, not only will he be released from prison, but he will be the prime minister next only to the king himself.

Now in order for him to function as a faithful and as a dutiful prime minister, he must know the culture of Egypt. He must know the language of Egypt.

[8 : 25] He must be able to trade in Egypt. He must know the daily practices and routines and lifestyle of the people of Egypt. He must be acquainted. He must become acquainted with all of those things in order to fulfill God's purpose for him as prime minister.

So that is why we can see, it's only with hindsight, that we can see that all of these things had their own purpose, that it was God who led him into Potiphar's house.

It was God through that time that made him acquainted with the lifestyle and the culture of Egypt in preparation for the great work that God had for him.

Secondly, he must be preserved. He must be prepared and he must also be preserved.

Preserved from what? Preserved from the kind of temptation and the kind of corruption that he might face as prime minister in Egypt. Now they tell me, the historians tell me, that Egypt was a very corrupt place.

[9 : 35] And as prime minister he was open to all that kind of corruption. And I want you to notice how carefully, how even in the secrecy and in the privacy of Potiphar's house, Joseph is being prepared.

He's being tied in the fire. He's being prepared and preserved in God's keeping him and teaching him that he must say no to any offer or any inclination he has to sin.

In other words, if he fails at this stage, how much more is he going to fail when he comes into the palace of Pharaoh? If he opens himself out to corruption and to sexual temptation, as he could easily have at this stage, how much more is he going to open himself out and lay himself vulnerable to corruption when he becomes prime minister?

You see, God is protecting him. He's teaching him. He's preparing him. He's preserving him for the life that he has for him, for the plan and the purpose that he has for him.

And if anyone could ever ask, why is God allowing me to go through this? Why has God taken me from the security and the safety of my father's house, hundreds of miles into a place I don't know anything about?

[10 : 58] A strange culture, a culture where I'm the only Christian. I'm the only person who worships the true God. Why has God taken me to this place? Why has he made me a slave?

The slave of a man who I don't even know. If anyone could ask these questions, quite legitimately it was Joseph. And little did he know what God's real purpose and future was going to be for him.

God was with Joseph every step of the way. But I want to turn our attention now to the specifics of this chapter because I want to, we've looked at some of the ways in which we can understand these words from the perspective of God's presence, God's accompanying Joseph on every leg of his journey.

But I want now to notice something else. That those words can be understood in terms of God's production in the character of Joseph.

What God produces in the character. In other words, the Lord's being with Joseph doesn't mean to say that Joseph can live any way he wants.

[12 : 09] That's the way we, there is a, there is a, a, a, a, a, a, a, there's a way in which we could possibly understand it that way, isn't there? We could look at these words and say, well, what does Joseph have to worry about then?

Why does he have to concern himself about his character or his behaviour? If the Lord is with us, then that's all we need to know. He's protecting us and he's preparing us and he's doing everything in us and for us. Why do we need to worry about the way we behave?

But that's not what we have in this chapter, is it? The very presence of God. Character. That's what he was doing in Joseph. That's what he does in you and I. Don't be surprised when we go through difficulties and troubles in our lives, in our Christian lives.

Because it is God who is bringing about his character, the character that he wants. Now I want us to notice, very briefly, three things that we can say about the character that God produced in his making of the man of God.

First of all, he produced diligence in everything that his hand found to do. He produced diligence and commitment to everything that his hand found to do.

[13 : 21] Secondly, he produced moral determination to refuse evil, to refuse sin. Even in the most tempting of circumstances, there was no way in which Joseph was going to agree or going to fall into those temptations.

We'll come to that in a few minutes. Thirdly, it produced consistency in his life amidst the most trying of circumstances.

It produced patient consistency in his life. First of all then, I want us to notice how it produced diligence in everything that his hand found to do.

The Lord was with Joseph and he was a prosperous man. That doesn't mean to say he was prosperous in the sense that we mean prosperous in his becoming rich and powerful and mighty. That doesn't mean anything like it. It means that whatever his hand found to do, he did it and he produced results.

He was able to become a trustworthy servant of his master. What an example of someone who could easily have given up.

[14 : 46] He could have said to himself, this is not what I ever planned for my life. He could have blamed God for the turn of events that led to him becoming a slave in the house of Potiphar.

He could have protested the whole injustice of having been taken from his father's house through no fault of his own. And he could have said all kinds of things. He could have gone into a despair.

And yet he was conscious that the Lord was with him even in Egypt. I find that quite astonishing, quite remarkable. That even in those circumstances, he was able to have this consciousness that the Lord was working through every event.

But I want you to notice that it made him diligent. It produced a diligence and a responsibility and a trustworthiness about his character. There was something in Joseph's character that Potiphar came to him and he could entrust whatever it was to him.

In other words, by the end of this description, Potiphar didn't even know what Joseph was doing. He just simply handed over his household. He handed over all his affairs to him, whatever it was.

[15 : 53] He said, look, Joseph, take care of it. And he could walk away knowing that when he came home from Pharaoh's palace that night, everything was done for him. Everything.

Everything was done excellently for him. Everything was done perfectly for him. Not simply, not because God was working miracles, but because God was so using the character of Joseph that Joseph excelled himself.

Whatever his hand found to do, he did it with all his might. He did it as unto the Lord. He did it because, not because of Potiphar. Not because he was trying to win Potiphar's favor.

Not because he was trying to change Potiphar's mind. But because the Lord was with him. He knew that he had a greater master. He knew that he served a far greater master.

And that's why Paul tells us in Ephesians chapter 6 when he's addressing slaves. And what he says here has an application to every single one of us who is accountable. Accountable.

[16 : 55] Because we're all accountable. And he tells the slaves to do. He says, to do your work. Not as men pleasers, he says, but unto the Lord.

Unto Christ. And when you go to work in the morning. The work that God has given you to do. Do you remember that?

That your work in this life is not some unfortunate. And the way that things have fallen unto you. The way that your lot has been cast. It's no coincidence in your life.

The work that you do is the work that God in his providence has given to you to do. And that work must be done as unto the Lord.

That's what Paul says. That's what he means when he tells him that. Do you do it excellently? Do you do it to the best of your ability and to your gifts in this world?

[17 : 57] It's a very, very important principle. It is a very important biblical principle. That we do everything to the best of our ability. Because.

Potiphar saw that the Lord was with him. You notice that? Potiphar, in verse 3. His master saw that the Lord was with him.

Now you say, well how could that be? Potiphar didn't even believe in God. He didn't believe in the true God. He worshipped all those Egyptian gods. How can he recognize the true God? Because everyone can recognize the true God.

You're forgetting. You're forgetting what Paul tells us in Romans chapter 1. That the knowledge of the true God lies within the heart of everyone. It doesn't matter. Even if they haven't even heard of Jesus Christ.

Or the gospel or anything. The knowledge of the true God lies deep within every person. Do you believe that? Are you prepared to believe it to such an extent that you live?

[18 : 54] That you live for God. So that he shines within your life. Because it is evident. It is abundantly evident. In the person who diligently and faithfully with all his heart lives for Jesus Christ.

His master saw that the Lord was with him. The way we live is an enormously important witness to Christ.

Because the way we live will determine whether the onlooker perceives that the Lord is with us.

That's how important it is. The way we live. This master saw that the Lord was with him.

Now, there's another very interesting feature to this particular passage. Very interesting. Because you know what the master did? Potiphar unfortunately took a wrong turn here.

[20 : 03] He made a grave mistake. He began to recognize the presence and the reality of the true God. And instead of doing what he ought to have done.

And repenting and coming to worship and to serve the true God. What did he do? He began to leave more and more in the hands of Joseph. He was quite clever. He was quite canny.

He began to realize that this God is the true God. And he's blessing my household. That's what we read. The Lord blessed the household of Potiphar because for the sake of Joseph. And Potiphar knew full well what God was doing.

He was blessing him for the sake of Joseph. And the more he saw his advantage to this. He was a canny businessman. And he started leaving more and more responsibility. The more responsibility he left.

The more his household was blessed. And he became a very prosperous man. For the sake of Joseph. And for his own ends. And he never turned to the Lord. He never committed himself to worshipping and serving the true God.

[21 : 05] He stopped short. Of becoming what God wanted him to be. And you know it's the same with many of you. It's the same with many of people. Who begin to realize.

At some point in their lives. They begin to see the truth of the living and the true God. And it's possible even to enjoy the blessing and the favor of God.

In our homes. In our workplaces. It's possible to enjoy the good things that God has given to you. How many good things has God given to you this morning? Can you count them?

You think back over your life. You think of all the great things that God has given to you. Through no desert of yours. You haven't deserved it. And yet you can honestly say. God has given me all these things.

Have you repented? Have you turned to him? Have you laid hold on Jesus Christ? Have you come to faith in Jesus Christ? No you haven't. You're quite prepared. To accept the blessings. With no commitment.

[22 : 02] But it won't last. It won't last. Just like it didn't last with Potiphar. Because God so ordered his providence. That Joseph was taken away from him.

And you know. What it doesn't tell you in this chapter is this. But we can deduce it by logic. We can say this. That the moment Joseph left his house. The blessing was gone. If you're enjoying the blessing of God today.

And you've never yet repented and come to faith in Jesus Christ. Then the blessing will only last for a finite time. And it will be gone. And the very means whereby Potiphar was brought to know the truth of the living God.

It was taken from him. And he never heard again. We never hear of Potiphar ever again. What a privilege he had. And what a privilege he lost.

It's a great warning to all of us. Great warning. We can enjoy the blessings of God. And then we can lose it all. Through our own foolishness.

[23 : 04] And through our own sinfulness. He was diligent. In everything that his hand found to do. He was also secondly determined. Because the character of the man of God.

Or the woman of God. Is a character that is committed to holiness. It is committed to holiness. And a commitment to holiness.

Means a commitment to separation. From everything that is sinful. It is as simple. And as straightforward as that. Because you know.

You can almost see the hand of the devil. Working in all of this chapter. Can't you? That when God brings prosperity. And blessing. On one side of the wall. On the other side of the wall. The devil is trying to destroy.

And trying to bring down. And trying to undo. Everything that God is doing. That's the way he works. You can be sure. That that's the way that God is going to work. That that wherever God works. The devil works also.

[24 : 05] Remember that part in the pilgrim's progress. Where he's taken to the house of the interpreter. And he comes to this wall. And there's this fire burning. And one person on the one hand of the wall. Is pouring water on the fire.

And trying to put the fire out. And pilgrim says. I don't know why the fire is not going out. There's so much water going on it. That's where interpreter takes him. To the other side of the wall. To the other side of the fire. And there's someone else pouring oil on the fire.

That's the picture of the Christian life. Isn't it? When God does something. The devil does something to destroy it. And that's what happens in Joseph. Don't be surprised.

When difficulty and trial and temptation. Come into our lives. Because God is using all of that. To test us. To test our faith. And our commitment. And to bring about.

To produce this character. This perfected. Formed. Prepared. Tried character. Of the man or the woman of God. And that's what happened. Through temptation. First of all.

[25 : 02] We've talked about the challenge. Of putting his hand to the task. That God gave him. But then there was temptation. And this was real temptation for Joseph. Joseph was a young man. The temptation was real.

There was anonymity in Egypt. He was away from his father's home. He could easily have succumbed to temptation. In fact. In many ways. It would have been much easier for him.

If he had. That's the way that temptation works. It offers us an alternative. An easier alternative. To God's way.

That's always the way that temptation works. It offers us an alternative. Where we will not have to work out our own salvation. With fear and trembling. It offers us an easy. And a comfortable.

And a very delightful alternative. Just like this was. And I want you to notice. The way in which the subtle. The incredibly subtle way.

[25 : 57] In which this temptation. Works its way. Into the mind. And into the heart of Joseph. And if Joseph had been. Had been anyone else. He would have fallen.

Long before. He was a handsome man. Pleasing in the eyes. Of this wife. This wicked woman. Who had her eye on him. And wanted her to commit adultery. With him.

And suggested that they should commit adultery. No one would have known anything about it. It would have been much. He would have made his life a lot easier. Had he just agreed. With what she said. And I want.

This morning. As to notice the theme. Of this chapter. And I want to make no mistake. About it. That the particular temptation.

Was sexual temptation. And I would be wrong. To the word of God. This morning. If I tried to gloss over. What is patently obvious. In this chapter.

[26 : 55] And what is patently obvious. To anyone who lives. In the 20th century. Western world. And that if there were. Ever a temptation. That faces our younger people.

And our not so younger people. In the world. Which we live in today. It is precisely. The temptation. That is given to us. In this chapter. And I would be unfaithful.

To the word of God. If I was to. If I was to try and ignore. What is patently obvious. In this. In this chapter. That if ever.

There was a message. That comes to the ears. Of every single one of us. Through television. Through magazines. Through radio. Through advertising. Through photographs.

Through you name it. It is this. Lie. With. Me. Is that not true? That's what the world. Is telling us. That's what the world.

[27 : 50] Is telling us. Is they're telling us. It doesn't matter. About faithfulness. To your wife anymore. It doesn't matter. About marriage anymore. It doesn't matter. About the old. Victorian values. Look how miserable.

Those people were. And look how happy. We are. In the end of the 21st century. And they say. You only live once. You want to make. The best of your life. You want to do. What comes naturally. To you.

And you want your inclinations. Tell you to do. They tell you. All of these things. And God says this. Thou shalt not. Commit adultery. Thou shalt not.

Whatever form. Adultery means. It can mean. Adultery if you're married. Fornication if you're not married. And Jesus puts the. Jesus completes the picture for us. And he leaves us. With no escape.

When he tells us. That I tell you. He says. Who saw? Looketh at a woman. To lust after her. He hath already committed. Adultery with her. In his heart.

[28 : 48] And the challenge. That lies before us. This morning. As God's people. Is this. It is not simply. A challenge. To keep our bodies free.

It is to keep our minds. Separate. From sin. Because it begins. In the mind. And that's how. That's how Joseph was approached.

The suggestion was put there. I'm sure that she agreed. I'm sure that she never expected him. To succumb to the temptation. The first time. But then she came again. And again. And again.

And we wrote. And we read. And it came to pass. As she spake unto Joseph. Day after day. Verse 10. Day after day.

That he hearkened. Not to her. To lie by her. Or to be with her. Day after day. This was not a temptation. That he faced once. Or twice. Or three times. It was a continual.

[29 : 42] Persistent temptation. By which. He was. By which he was. Pestered by this woman. Day by day. And that's what temptation is. Don't expect.

Temptation to stop. Because if it didn't cease. In the experience of the Lord Jesus Christ. You remember when the devil left him. He left him. Only for a season. Only for a season.

Not forever. He was going to come back again. And that's why Paul tells us. He tells us this. Be prepared. He says. Always be prepared. Always be on your guard.

Always have the full armor of God. On you. By which you will be able to withstand. It is one of the most subtle. And one of the most dangerous.

Forms of temptation. It always has been. And even more so. In the 20th century world. Keep. Yourself. Pure.

[30 : 44] For the Lord. Keep yourself pure. For. The Lord's sake. You follow the makers. The manufacturers. Instructions.

You keep. Your sexual activity. Within the confines. Of the God. Who has loved you. And who wants the best for us.

It is God's word. That we must obey. It is God. That we must follow. And I mean that. Whoever tells you otherwise. Your friends might tell you otherwise. You might. Your friends might be giving you all kinds of.

Of wrong examples. And you might be tempted to follow them. Especially the younger ones amongst us. I want to say this. It is absolutely essential. That this comes from the pulpit. You listen to the voice of God.

You listen and you follow the Lord. And you won't go wrong. And he will never let you down. When you listen to him. And when you follow him. Even when it is hard.

[31 : 41] To do so. And that is what Joseph did. And God rewarded him for it. That is what Joseph did. He knew. That his master trusted him.

But more importantly. He knew that there was a God. He said. He said. God forbid. He said. How can I then do this great wickedness. And sin against God.

He knew that God was with him. He was. That God was his most precious friend. He was. He had a relationship with God. Which he could not lose sight of. It was that relationship.

That he depended upon. Do you have that relationship today? Do you walk. Is every day of your life. A life with Jesus. A life with God. Where you walk with him. You talk with him.

You be with him. You're conscious. Of him. In every step that you take. That's what Joseph was. And that was the key. The great key. To Joseph's success. The great key.

[32 : 36] To Joseph's excellence. In his life. And his witness. But then thirdly. And lastly. I want you to notice. That the making of the man of God.

Involves patient. Consistency. Amidst circumstances. Not of his own making. Amidst circumstances. Not of his own making.

And I want you to notice. The most remarkable turn of events. In this chapter. That even. After all his diligence. Even after.

Whatever his hand found to do. Doing it with every ounce of effort. Even after the responsibility. That was given to him. And he could truly say. I have never wronged my master. In any way.

I have served him. I have not wronged him. And I have kept myself. From temptation. Even after all of those things. At the end of the day. He ends up in jail.

[33 : 34] And you know. Natural justice. Asks us. Where is the right. In all of this. Natural justice. Tells us. That if a man or a woman.

Does well. He should be rewarded for it. Is that not the case. Or. And if a man or a woman. Does wrong. They should be rewarded accordingly. Here is a man. And he does well.

And he's thrown into prison. For it. As a result. As a consequence. For his doing right. How can you explain that? How can you. How can you. Work that one out? Well you first of all.

Work it out. In terms of the fact. That we live in a world. That has gone hopelessly wrong. And where justice. Is turned upside down. And if ever. There was a group of people.

Or a section of the world. Who know. All about injustice. It is the Christian church. That's why. The apostles. Tell us all about it. If you suffer. For doing. For doing harm.

[34 : 31] For doing wrong. Then that's what you deserve. Says the apostle. But if you suffer. For doing good. That's what God wants. If we take it patiently. Why?

Because the greatest. Injustice. In all the world. Was suffered. By someone. Who never. Ever. Ever. Did anything wrong. In his life. It wasn't Joseph.

It wasn't Abraham. It wasn't Isaac. It wasn't Moses. Great as those men were. But the greatest. Injustice. Ever. Placed upon a man. Was. When Jesus was taken.

And when he was. Nailed to a cross. and if that is what he did to leave an example for his people then the apostle tells us that when he was wronged he didn't wrong again he didn't he didn't seek revenge and so likewise his people must act and behave the same way when we are wronged we must not wrong again we must not repay evil with evil but we must overcome evil with good and that is what Joseph did why did he do all of that?

because the Lord was with him because the Lord was with him in his change of circumstance even when he could find no answers to his logical and the demands of his justice one thing was sure the Lord was with him and there would come a day Joseph didn't know it there would come a day when out of the prison cell within a moment of time that Joseph's position would be changed from being a slave in prison to being the most important man in all of the kingdom and again through the providence of God the question this morning is this do we trust ourselves enough to the providence of God to leave it all to him to leave it all in his hands do we trust ourselves to that one singular promise that God is with us

[36 : 56] God is with us because if he is then the story is not finished just like it wasn't finished in the case of Joseph the story is not finished with us are you facing some difficulty this morning?

are you facing a change in your circumstances? are you facing difficult circumstances? perhaps difficulties that are not of your making you can say this is not my fault this is not where I wanted to be this is not what ought to happen in my life there are many times when that comes to pass in the life of God's people remember this the story isn't finished the story isn't finished and remember this also that Joseph we are told in Hebrews chapter 11 he lived and he died by faith in other words he fell into that category of those who lived looking for a better country those who lived looking for a city with foundations whose builder and maker is God those who lived who saw beyond the circumstances of this world who looked beyond all of those things to our next world and I want you to notice that even after Joseph was made the prime minister even through the grandeur and the office and the prosperity of his place of the place that he had as prime minister and Pharaoh's palace himself you know what?

even that didn't satisfy him because if it had he would never have asked his brothers to keep his bones when he died because we are told in Hebrews chapter 11 that Joseph died in faith he died in faith because he looked for a better country a better city builder and maker his God and all the riches of this world and of Egypt could never compensate for the promise which he laid hold upon by faith in his God is that true for you this morning?

do we hold to that promise? do we look to that future? do we look to that city? do we believe that the best is yet to be?

may God bless his word let us pray blessed Lord and God we thank thee for thy word and for how much thy word identifies with the circumstances that we face so often in our lives and so regularly in our lives we ask that we might be strengthened by that word and that we might be encouraged this morning to look by faith to the one who has promised never to leave and never to forsake to the one who accompanies us and who is in every circumstance that we face Lord we pray that we might call upon thee then that we might look to thee that we might keep ourselves unspotted from the world and that where we have fallen and where we have sinned against thee that thou wilt restore us that thou wilt forgive us and that thou wilt set our feet upon the rock once again on the straight and narrow road we pray that from now on that thou wilt give us that determination that renewed determination to serve and to follow thee all the days of our lives forgive our sins in Jesus name

[40 : 16] Amen