

Witnesses to Jesus

by Norman Meeten

This sermon emphasizes the believers' identity in Christ, highlighting the preciousness of being chosen, the call to be a peculiar people, and the need to manifest the life and nature of Jesus in every aspect of life. It encourages living as a spiritual house, offering spiritual sacrifices, and showing forth the praises of God by reflecting Christ's example of servanthood and suffering.

Scripture: John 14:20, Ephesians 1:4, 1 Peter 2:9, 1 Peter 2:5, John 13:15, 1 Peter 2:21

Topics: "Identity in Christ", "Living as a Spiritual House"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the believers' identity in Christ, highlighting the preciousness of being chosen, the call to be a peculiar people, and the need to manifest the life and nature of Jesus in every aspect of life. It encourages living as a spiritual house, offering spiritual sacrifices, and showing forth the praises of God by reflecting Christ's example of servanthood and suffering.

Transcript

My wife was away talking. Praise God. One of the great joys of gatherings like this is that we can get to know one another realistically in a very practical and intimate way and make friends and forge bonds of love in each other's hearts which will never be broken.

Amen. And we may not see each other for years and years but those bonds of love forged are fixed. Dear Jan's nodding her head, known her many, many years as I have many, many other years.

Dear Eddie, when she was a student at London University, others. Praise God. Just lovely, lovely to be amongst God's people, to realise that we're a part of his family, that we're intimately joined together by his spirit, indivisibly joined.

Amen. Now Julian has highlighted two very significant words, one which comes from the word servant or bondservant which he rightly corrected for us, slave, slave, doulos. And the other one was witness which means martyr.

Amen. And those are the implications of being involved in the life of the Lord Jesus. He laid down his life for us, we also are to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Praise God, it's not a picnic. We're invited to identify with him in all that he was and did and accomplished on our behalf. Glory to his name.

Julian also emphasised the fact that the book of Revelation was written to churches which were under severe persecution. And in fact all of the disciples, with the exception of John who wrote the book of Revelation, all died as martyrs. They didn't just believe the word, they literally lived it and died it, literally, physically.

And of course there are people around the world today who are literally laying down their lives physically for the testimony of Jesus. And that's why in countries in which I have been involved in more recent years, well not so much recent years but many years, where it's becoming almost impossible, where political legislation says that they will eliminate, eliminate those of us who call ourselves Christians. Amen.

And sometimes people say, aren't you afraid? No. No. Are we prepared to be slaves? Peter wrote two letters and of course again they were written to the persecuted church.

And he wrote them in order to clarify and encourage God's people, many of them who would literally lay down their lives for the Gospel. Hallelujah. Amen.

Let's read in chapter 2 of 1 Peter and we'll read from verse 1 down to the end of verse 10. Now I'm reading the old King James, if you have another version you can follow and if it deviates from the truth you'll have to change your Bible. Well I went a long time ago, I went to a meeting in Reading in the early days of the fellowship there and in the course of preaching I preached from Galatians chapter 1, which is one of my favorite chapters.

It pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me and they'd all got a version of the Bible which said to me, when I said burn it. And at the end of the meeting there was a great pile of Bibles sitting in the room waiting to be disposed of. Just one too little word beloved was a perversion of the truth.

Dragging us right back into the old covenant. Yes God was with them but it wasn't until the day of Pentecost and we'll see that more clearly in a moment. It wasn't until the day of Pentecost that he was in them.

That was the radical change from the old covenant beloved to the new covenant. That's a simple definition of the two covenants. The old covenant was external, the new covenant is internal.

Blessed be his name and by God's grace may we live in the reality beloved of the new, not in the old. Let's read then. A cornerstone, disallowed indeed of men but chosen of God and precious.

You also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in Scripture, behold I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious but unto them which be disobedient.

The stone which the builders disallowed the same is made the head of the corner, a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence even to them that stumble at the word. Being disobedient whereunto also they were appointed. But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people that you should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light which in time past were not a people but are now the people of God which had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

In time past you were not a people but now are the people of God. And if you look at the last verse in the chapter it says for you were sheep going astray but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your soul. You were but you are now.

Praise God. Peter writes to the scattered churches beloved to encourage them and remind them of who they really are and what they really are in Christ. Amen.

Sometimes we have a tendency to forget, underestimate who we really are, what God has really accomplished and made available to you and me. Praise God. Don't underestimate what God's done.

As we were told this morning don't always be looking back but don't underestimate what he has done beloved and live in the good of it now. And that's what Peter is seeking to do for the people to whom he wrote, to encourage them to live in the good of what they formerly knew. Amen.

We need to be reminded from time to time what is ours in Christ. Amen. Glory be to God.

So let's look at this little passage of scripture, it's full of truth. How far we will get, I might have to stop somewhere along the way. There's a clock up there but I tend to lose sight of clocks when I'm preaching, as Julian almost did this morning but never mind, we got our lunch.

The first thing he tells us is that you are new born babes. Paul writing to Timothy expresses that in a different way, he says in Titus chapter 3 and verse 5. Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. That's another way beloved, Paul is expressing it in another way of telling us we've been born again.

Praise God. Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Glory to his name.

Old things have passed away, behold all things become new. We're no longer the person that we were naturally born, having been born again of the Spirit of God we become new creations. Amen and if you want to understand what it really means to be born again beloved you have to go to John.

And I'm going to quickly run through John's first letter for you, only quickly pointing out and then you can go home beloved and study it properly. I can't do all the work for you tonight. John makes it very clear as to what it really means to be born again and he's very explicit, he keeps on repeating himself.

Repetition in the scripture beloved is very important, it's an indication that God is emphasising something that we need to really grasp and understand and by the grace of God live in the good of. Here we are, 1 John chapter 2 and verse 29. If you know that he is righteous you know that everyone that doeth righteousness is born of him.

And say he who believes in righteousness it says he who does righteousness, in fact he emphasises it in the next chapter when he says little children. Verse 7 of chapter 3, verse 7 chapter 3. Little children let no man deceive you he that doeth righteousness is righteous even as he is righteous. That's one of the even as he which again is repetition in John's first letter.

That's why he says in chapter 2 verse 8 true in him and in you and then he keeps on saying even as he, even as he. He was made sin for us who knew no sin that we might be the righteousness of God in him.

It's not you and I trying to be good beloved, it's recognising that God has invested us a principle which is righteous.

Hallelujah. Here's the second truth and proof beloved that you and I are born again. Chapter 3 verse 9 whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin for his seed remains in him and he cannot sin because he is born of God.

That's a mind blowing statement isn't it? And he repeats it beloved in the last chapter again because it's so important. Paul says in Romans chapter where is it chapter 8 shall we continue in sin that grace may abound he said God forbid. Doesn't mean to say that you cannot sin but you need not and you should not because of the revision that God has made for us in Christ.

And by the very spirit of Christ living in us beloved give us the power to live above sinning. The third great proof chapter 4 this is 1 John chapter 4 beloved let us love one another for love is of God and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. Why? Because we have the nature of God for it says in this same chapter God is love.

And by the spirit the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts to enable us to be lovers. I don't know about you beloved that's the only desire I have in my heart to be a lover. To love the Lord thy God with all my heart with all my soul with all my strength and to love my brethren my neighbour as myself.

Has God made you a lover beloved? Jesus said love your enemies. People said that's impossible but that's the whole point of the gospel beloved. Performing such a radical and amazing miracle in the hearts and lives of men and women that they become lovers.

God so loved. Amen. Love your enemy he said.

The Bible is full of impossibilities. But God. But God glory to his name.

That is the great challenge beloved of being identified with Jesus. Coming face to face with that which the natural man says is impossible. But it's not impossible with him glory to his name.

Number four. This is chapter five verse one. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.

And everyone that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. Amen. Believes that he is the Christ the Messiah the anointed one who lives within.

Praise God. That's the proof that you're born again. Chapter five again and verse four.

Whatsoever or whosoever is born of God over cometh the world. And this is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith. Again Julian was emphasizing the fact that you and I have the ability because of him beloved.

Because he overcame the world we have the ability to overcome. Amen. The great overcomer beloved.

It's placed within us an ability not to go under but to overcome. Glory be to God. That becomes the habit of a normal Christian.

These are the characteristics that John and pens out. Beloved having written the gospel where Jesus said you must be born again. Here's the evidence and proof that it has actually happened.

You are new born babes. Wonderful. When did it happen to you? Glory be to God.

As I said the other day. It's the supernatural intervention of the spirit of God into the spirit of a man or woman that performs this remarkable miracle. That delivers you from what you were naturally born and makes you another person.

You didn't know me before I was born again. My sisters did. I once chased one of my sisters with a red hot poker.

Determined to put it on her leg. Fortunately for her she was a little more active than me and ran faster than I but eventually I caught up with her. But the time I caught up with her the poker was cold.

But the shock was still there. Amen. I was a nasty little creature.

I really was. I know what I was. Characteristics in all of our lives, beloved, indicate what we're really like until Jesus comes.

Amen. It's when we face up to the fact of who we are and what we are, beloved, outside of Christ that we're led by the grace of God to a place where we repent. It's not God's will that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

That was my word from the Lord this morning. Amen. Because of the provision that he's made for us that he's defined as a saviour of the world.

Who's died for all mankind. Glory be to God. The provision, beloved, there's no limits in the provision that God has made.

Amen. There is provision for the salvation of every human person upon the planet, beloved. But we know that not all will be saved.

Amen. But that's the heart of God. It's not God's will that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

That's why you and I have a responsibility, beloved, of sharing the gospel of our Lord Jesus so that men and women know the provision that's been made for them through the finished work of the Lord Jesus. Oh, glory be to God. I trust that you take advantage of every opportunity that God gives to you of sharing him.

Glory to his name. And that's the first wonderful truth. You are newborn babes.

And it says that you may grow. Peter. Huh? Give the reference.

Back. My wife is prompting me. Give the reference back into 1 Peter chapter 2. You see, I'm not a very good boy.

I have to be corrected again and again. 1 Peter chapter 2. And again in verse 2. That you may grow thereby. How? It tells us.

By the pure milk of the word. The sincere milk of the word. The greatest source, beloved, to enable you and I to grow in grace is the word of God.

Now the word of God, beloved, has to be quickened by the Spirit before it comes life for you. Because it says in 2 Corinthians chapter 3 verse 6, the letter kills. But the Spirit gives life.

And it's when the Spirit of God quickens the word of God, it becomes life to you. Because there's power behind that word to bring it to pass in your experience. Amen.

I praise God for the words that he's spoken to me over the years. Hallelujah. Now there's a wonderful example of this.

Right back in the Old Testament. It's in 1 Samuel. 1 Samuel, madam.

And chapter 3. And it's a story. It's the story of a little boy called. What was his name? Samuel.

Samuel. He was the fulfilment of the word of God. Remember that God spoke to Hannah, his wife, and told her that she would have a child.

She was barren. Amen. And God spoke to her.

And what he said to her came to pass. It's like it says in Isaiah chapter 38. God said it, he's done it.

Amen. That's a wonderful thing. When God speaks to you, beloved, you know that there's power behind that word to bring it to fruition.

God spoke to Hannah, beloved, and she had a son. He called him Samuel. And she nursed him for a little while and then took him back to the temple where he was to serve God in the temple under a man called Eli.

Who was the priest at that time. He was only a young lad. And one night he went to bed.

I'm not sure whether he had a dream or what happened, but God spoke to him. And in fact he spoke to him in such a way that he thought Eli was calling him. And he jumped out of his little bed and ran to Eli and said, you called me? And Eli said, I don't, go back to bed.

And he went back to bed and that happened three times. And then eventually the old benighted Eli, beloved, who was well backslidden along with his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, came to the realisation that God was speaking to this boy. And God spoke to Samuel and gave him a most horrendous message.

Virtually told him that Eli and his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, would die. The boy woke up in the morning, I guess he was trembling at the thought of communicating what God had said to him. He didn't only hear what God said, but he responded to it, beloved, and then communicated it to Eli.

By the end of the chapter it says, Samuel was a prophet from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south. And not one of his words fell to the ground. Amen.

That's an illustration, beloved, of how you grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. You'll read that in the last verse of the second letter of Peter. Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus.

That's how we grow, beloved. Say like the little boys, speak Lord, for your servant hears. Live in the expectation, beloved, that God will speak to you.

As you routinely read his word, day by day, making it the priority of your life. Anticipating that he will speak, sometimes, beloved, more clearly, more definitely, more significantly than at other times. But I discover, beloved, that as I read my Bible day by day, the Lord highlights some particular truth, some aspect of truth and revelation.

And then as I meditate upon it and allow him to unfold the truth and carry me from one place in the scripture to the other, to another, to another. And as I said the other day, I write it all down because I'm visual. I write all the scriptures down.

And by the time I'm finished, I've got half of a full scap full of truth that builds on truth. I often say the greatest commentary on the Bible is the Bible. But you have to know how to use your Bible in order to use it in that way.

That in one sense, you hardly need any other commentary if you will use the Bible, allow the Bible, the spirit of God to take the word of God to interpret the word of God. Amen. What's he said to you today, before you came to the meeting this morning, if you were here? Amen.

I find it a concept. You say I didn't have time. Well, perhaps you should have got up a bit earlier.

Temptation, beloveds, lie there, tucked up in cozy beds. Amen. You have to make time.

If we really believe, beloved, that this is one of the greatest secrecies of growth in our spiritual life, then it becomes the priority of your day. Amen. Read it, mark it, learn it, inwardly digest it, and expect the spirit of God, beloved, to incarnate it in your flesh.

Write it upon the fleshy table of your heart. That's why Paul says you are living letters, read and known of all men. And what's written there by the spirit of God, beloved, is what will communicate.

Glory to his name. Hallelujah. So first of all, beloved, we're newborn babes.

And then you grow. You don't live on the past experience. Praise God for the day when you were born again.

Praise the Lord for that great moment in time when God met you and did a miracle in you. But you can't stay there. If a baby doesn't grow, beloved, then you become anxious.

Huh? You know that there's something fundamentally wrong with the child. That's true in the physical, isn't it? But in the spirit, beloved, it's equally true. Once we're born again, from that moment onward, we should begin to grow.

Amen. Some of us have been away a long time now. I think over 50 years for me.

Born again. Praise God. Some of you may just be beginning.

I don't know. The Lord knows what we're all up to. Amen.

But day by day, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, there a little. Praise God. Building, building, building, building.

Developing and maturing us, beloved, to make us true men and women of God. Glory to his name. Verse 3. 1 Peter, chapter 2, verse 3. If so be you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Psalm 34 says, Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Amen. Amen.

Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. I love the simple illustrations that the Bible uses, beloved, to expound profound truth to us. In John, chapter 7, Jesus said, If any man thirsts, here we are catching up with Bill.

If any man thirsts, let him come unto me and drink, and out of his inmost being will flow rivers of living water. This he spake of the Spirit. Amen.

Are you thirsty? I remember once, many years ago now, I was in Tanzania and we were staying with Graham and Lisa Stephenson. And then Graham invited me to go and travel with him out in the bush amongst the Maasai tribes. And I think we went out for four days.

And I was like a chimney sweep when I came back in. It took my wife to wash my trousers four times before they came anywhere near the semblance of what they should have been before. It was a really dusty journey.

But I've never forgotten that journey. One thing stands out to me more than anything else during those four days. And we went to many places, travelled from place to place.

Graham wouldn't go round the bushes, he'd just drive right through them. And we came to groups of people and eventually we came to a boma. A boma is a sort of a Maasai dwelling, a house.

It's usually a collection of houses in sort of a fenced area. And at night they block up the entrance. We came to this boma and it was like death.

There wasn't a movement, there wasn't a sound anywhere. And Graham said, let's go and look. And we went and looked and we looked into one of the houses.

And they were very dark because they had no windows. And we saw two women lying on a bed and a little boy. And they suddenly woke up and saw us, wondering why we were there, who were we? And they came out and they told us that they'd had no water for days.

And two women from that little boma had gone on a day's journey to get water. Can you imagine how thirsty they were? We had a barrel of water on the back of the Land Rover. We had a cup and we filled it with water and gave it to the little boy.

I have never in my life seen someone drink water like that little boy. He tipped it, it ran down his face. We filled it up again, he drank and drank and gobbled it down.

You could hear it go. Amazing. I thought, I've never been thirsty.

Just looking at that little boy. If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. And he drank and he drank and he drank.

And it was heaven on earth to him. You have no idea. Perhaps you've never been in a situation like that.

But I will never ever forget that little boy. And that cup of water, which we got out of the tank on the back of the Land Rover and gave it to him. He just drank and drank and drank.

If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He's that living water, beloved, to which we are invited to come and participate. Amen.

Not difficult to drink, is it? When you're thirsty. I tell you, that little boy gobbled it down. Amen.

I can't remember how many cups of water we gave him. But he drank and drank and drank until his thirst was quenched. Was your thirst quenched that night, beloved? Quenched with the living water.

Of course, the greatest exposition of this lovely truth, beloved, you'll find in John chapter 4. Wonderful illustration. Turn with me into John chapter 4. As I say, Jesus utilised very simple illustrations to expound most profound truth. Someone once wrote, I can't remember her name, she was the founder of a community in Sussex somewhere called St Julian's.

But I can't remember the name of the lady. I read her book a long time ago. And this is a sentence that she wrote.

She said, sometimes, or often we try to take people from where they are not to where they don't want to go. Instead of starting with them where they are and leading them on to where they need to go. Should I repeat that? So often we try to take people from where they are not to where they don't want to go.

Instead of taking them from where they are to where they need to go. And this is what Jesus did. again and again.

That's why he utilised ordinary, down-to-earth, common things in the experience of men. That's why he talked about bread, that's why he talked about light, that's why he talked about doors, that's why he talked about sheep, that's why he talked about water. That's what John chapter 4 is all about.

Jesus was sitting by the well, we're told, near the city of Samaria, which is called Syca, near a parcel of ground. This is John chapter 4 verse 5. Then cometh he to the city of Samaria, which is called Syca, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there, Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey sat thus on the well and it was about the sixth hour.

Number six, beloved, in the scripture is the number for man. Amen. Hadn't been sitting there very long and a woman comes.

She's a woman of ill repute. She'd had five men and was living with number six, but that didn't stop Jesus moving out to her with love and compassion. And he said to the woman who'd come to the well to draw water, give me a drink.

That's in verse 7. For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat. What a tragedy, they missed it all. Then said the woman of Samaria unto him, how is it thou being a Jew, ask drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with Samaria.

One, she was a woman. Two, she was a Samaritan. Three, she was virtually a prostitute.

And yet Jesus loved her. In the great economy of God laid down before the foundation of the world, he had a plan of salvation for her. Glory be to God.

He didn't write her off. He didn't hold her at arm's length. He didn't despise her.

He didn't condemn her. Glory be to God. Beloved, we're so prone to be critical, to shy away from people of ill repute.

But Jesus didn't. Glory to his name. Jesus answered and said unto her, if you knew the gift of God and who it is that says to you, give me a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.

The woman said unto him, sir, thou hast nothing to draw with and the well is deep. From whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well and drank thereof himself and his children and his cattle? And Jesus answered and said unto her, whosoever drinketh of this water will thirst again. But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.

But the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well or a spring of water springing up into everlasting life. And the woman said unto me, give me this water. Hallelujah.

The word well there, beloved, is actually a spring of water. I remember when I went to school, school lane, came down from a hill and on the bend in the road there was a spring in the middle of the road. The local corporation, beloved, had spent a small fortune trying to remove the spring.

They'd concreted it over, they'd carmacked it over, they'd tried to canalise it here and there, but every year, beloved, it was still bubbling up. The inexhaustible supply of the spirit of God. Hallelujah.

Wonderful. He said I will put within you a spring of water that will spring up into everlasting life and you will never, never, never thirst again. We used to sing a chorus when I was a kid, what, never thirst again? No, never thirst again.

What, never thirst again? No, never thirst again. Glory be to God. We don't sing things like that.

Why don't we, beloved? Because we veered away from the truth. There's magnificent truth tied up in that little simple statement. The story is simple.

By the time it was all over, beloved, and of course Jesus faced her up with her need and told her to go and get her a husband. She said I haven't got a husband. He said no, you've had five and you're living with number six, but he didn't write her off, beloved.

Amen. By the end of the conversation, she went back to the psycher from where she came and she said come see a man. Come see a man who told me all things that I ever did.

Is not this the Christ? When she went back, beloved, she witnessed to him. And they believed because of what she said to them. But then later they met him and they said we believed when you told us, but now we believe because we have heard him ourselves.

Moved from a second-hand position to a first-hand position. Glory be to God. And that's what's so vital, beloved, that you and I hear for ourselves.

Praise God what other people can say to us. Amen. That's important.

And the Lord will use other people to speak God's word to us. Praise God. But essentially we have to come to a place where we hear him for ourselves.

We know that he's spoken. Glory to his name. Back into 1 Peter chapter 2. You're newborn babes.

You're growing up, growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus. You've tasted that the Lord is good. And of course if you were to go into John chapter 6 where we went on Sunday morning I think it was, where Jesus said I am that living bread.

Eat me, drink me, let me be the life of you. Let me nourish your inward man and build you up in your spiritual life. Glory be to God.

Central, beloved, to the gospel. As I say, if you want to understand what the church is all about, read Acts chapter 2. They went from house to house breaking bread with gladness and singleness of heart. And it was in the context, beloved, of their everyday living.

In the context of their meal. It wasn't a ritual. It wasn't some religious ordinance, beloved.

It was a simple remembering of what the Lord had done for them at Calvary. Praise God. They broke bread with gladness and singleness of heart.

Amen. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Amen.

Are we hungry, beloved? Are we thirsty? For him, the living bread, the living water. Eat me, drink me, let me get on the inside of you, let me be the very life of you. Amen.

Nothing that, beloved, will ever satisfy any human being. Glory to his name. Verse 5. It says, you are living stones.

He's told us that you are newborn babes, that you grow, that you've tasted, the Lord is gracious. And then in verse 5 it says, you are living stones, built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Amen.

Beloved, this is the fulfilment of that great prophetic word of Jesus in John chapter 14 verse 20 when he said, at that day you will know that I am in the Father, you are in me, and I am in you. Then you've got a promise in verse 23 of the same chapter. Father and I will come and make our home with you.

And then if you go into John chapter 17, beloved, he prays. Let's turn to that John chapter 17. I love John chapter 17, the great so-called high priestly prayer of Jesus.

Amen. It's a prayer that's divided up into three sections. The first section relates to Jesus and his relationship with his Father.

The second section relates to those who were with him at the time on the earth. And the last section, beloved, relates to you and me. Let's read from verse 18.

As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that thou hast sent

me and hast loved them as thou hast loved me. Praise God. That's why you're called in Hebrews chapter 3 verse 6, beloved, God's house, Christ's house.

Amen. It's the fulfilment, beloved, of his prophecy. It's the ratification of his promise and it's the answer to that wonderful prayer.

Glory be to God. Wonderful prophecy, promise, prayer. All from the lips of the Lord Jesus telling us, beloved, why we are living stones built up into a spiritual house.

Of course that applies to us individually, beloved, but more wonderfully it applies to us corporately. We are Christ's house here. Malcolm reminded me, on Sunday I think it was, we used to meet down in a little hut for which he paid five pounds, he told me, until it fell down.

And then they built this splendid place. And then he had to tell the people, don't fall in love with the building. Because God doesn't live in a building like this.

Praise God, it's a very nice meeting place, thanks Malcolm for allowing us to come. A very nice place to meet. Praise God.

It's your home, beloved, the place where God meets you. Read that little book at the back, beloved, you'll find out how the people behave then. In the story, beloved, they invite a widowed lady to come and have supper with them.

As the meal came to an end they said to her, normally when we finish our evening meal we pray and read the scriptures together. Would you like to join us? She said, I would be delighted, no pressure. I would be delighted.

Praise God, and she stayed. And then a little while later she brought friends and before they knew where they had, beloved, they had a house overflowing with people. And it was the church in their house.

Praise God. And I think then they had to divide and have two houses and so it was. Praise God.

Your house, beloved, could be a venue where God comes and meets and nourishes his people. Won't cost you anything. Amen.

It may spoil your furniture, beloved, it may spoil carpets. This is where you have to, oh dear. You know, we're so, who, someone was talking to us about this the other day.

Maya. Maya, that's it. There's Peter's wife Maya in Tiverton.

She was a very particular lady. I used to go to their home years and years ago when they, when they began and the Lord began to birth the church in their home. Amen.

And she was a very, very particular, she worried about her carpet, she worried about her furniture, she worried about this. But it ended up that every meeting, beloved, they'd pick up all the furniture, carry it out and put it on the lawn outside to make room for the meeting. And of course it wasn't very long, beloved, before her carpet was spoiled and there is other.

But amazing, beloved, there were people in that meeting, the very first meeting that we had in that house, a man and a woman were born again in the Spirit of God and they are still going on. Glory be to God.

Because this dear couple, beloved, opened up their home.

They've now got a church building. I don't know what advantage that is to them but it accommodates perhaps more people than their house did but that's where it all started. Because a couple, beloved, were prepared to give their home.

She stopped loving her furniture, she stopped loving her carpet, she didn't worry anymore if they messed the place up. That's not an invitation, beloved, to go mess people's homes up. No, no.

I tell you if you knew the sort of people that I knew in the early days, beloved, you had to give up worrying. Most of my friends were dropouts and street kids and so on. I could tell you stories, I won't deviate.

Hallelujah. You had to forget, beloved, that you had anything. All my possessions, beloved, developed legs and walked.

I came on occasion, beloved, when I went into my room, my suit had gone, my sweater had gone, my shoes had gone and everything else and I looked out the window and there it was going down on someone's back down the road. I said, come back, I need the coat today. But if you're a slave, beloved, and if you're a martyr, bless God, it doesn't trouble you.

Honestly, it doesn't trouble you. Radical, I tell you, beloved, radical. You're a living stone built up into a spiritual house to offer up spiritual sacrifices which are acceptable to God through Christ.

Amen. Are you prepared, beloved, both in your own person and in the context of your home and all that relates to you? Amen. Go down into verse 7, it's not quite so clear but I will help you to understand it.

It says, unto you therefore which believe, he is precious. And unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builder disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner. Yes, he is precious.

But in the pre-singing chapter, beloved, he says you are precious. Because he is precious, you are precious. Look back into chapter 1 and verse 18, for as much as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things of silver and gold from your vain manner of living, received by the tradition of your fathers but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

Amen. Now you know how precious you are. That's what God paid for us.

He's precious, precious beyond words. He leaves you speechless about it. I'm trying to express who he is, what he is.

Amen. But here it says you are precious. He didn't bargain for us, beloved.

He paid for us with his life, the most powerful currency that the world has ever known. Amen. Hallelujah.

You are precious to him. Wonderful. So wonderful.

Don't underestimate, beloved, what God says. Don't underestimate what God has done in you and is doing in you. Don't underestimate what you mean to him.

I think again, I think Julian quoted from Ephesians chapter 1 where it says we are in his inheritance. Goodness me, what's he inherited? He's inherited, beloved, that which is of inestimable value to him. Amen.

You, me. But you're precious. Doesn't matter what other people think, beloved, doesn't matter what other people say.

You are precious. Glory be to God. Let's go further down in the chapter to verse 9 now.

This is chapter 2, 1 Peter chapter 2 verse 9 says you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people. Amen. Are you happy to be peculiar? Odd, misfit.

But you're a chosen generation, royal. Glory be to God. We've just discovered that we are royal.

And every one of mine has done some research on our family and tells us that we are related to the Dutch royal family. What about that now? Not that it makes any difference. Glory be to God.

Amen. You're a chosen generation. If you look back into Ephesians chapter 1 again, it says in verse 4, Ephesians chapter 1 verse 4, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will.

And so you could read on. Chosen us, beloved, before the foundation of the world. You are not an afterthought in the economy of God.

He anticipated, beloved, your salvation, made provision for it way back before time began. Glory be to God. A sudden realization, beloved, it was all planned.

Nothing accidental about our salvation. He chose us from before the foundation of the world. Why? You read in John chapter 15, you did not choose him, but he chose you.

And ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit. Chose you out of the world. That's why John says, love not the world, neither things that are in the world.

We don't belong to the world any longer. Not to this world, but the new world which Julian was talking about this morning, the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God. Glory to his name.

That's our citizenship. That's where we belong. Wonderful citizens of another kingdom.

Chosen. Why did he choose you? What good did he see in you? What good did he see in me? All he saw, beloved, initially was sin. We sang it tonight.

He saw sin, but he saw beyond sin. Glory be to God. He saw beyond sin through the cross, beloved, to resurrection and the impartation of the Holy Spirit, beloved, to make us true men and women of God.

Chosen to be brothers of the Lord Jesus. He's our God, beloved. The son of God.

He's our God. But he's the son of man. He's the firstborn of all creation.

You're his brother. You're his sister. We belong to his family.

Wonderful. Glory be to God. My older brother, Jesus.

What an honor. What a privilege. It's given us a new name.

I no longer know my meeting according to him. Hallelujah. Chosen.

Royal priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices. A peculiar people. We're called to be different, beloved.

We really are. We're called to be different. Don't be pushed into the patterns, fancies, whims of this world, beloved.

Don't allow this world to dominate your life. There was a lady's dress designer called Versace. I think he was Italian.

Amen. Committed suicide, I think, in America. He was a horrible man.

I said, if I ever saw my wife dressed in anything designed by him, I'd lock her up. I mean it. A man has a responsibility, beloved, towards his wife.

You can't dress, beloved, and behave. As I said, read 1 Timothy, Chapter 2. A woman cannot dress as she likes. It's not what the fashion designer says.

It's what God says. It doesn't only apply to the women, beloved. It applies to the men as well.

Glory be to God. We're called to be different, to be separate from the world. That's what it means to be sanctified.

Glory be to God. I love the radical nature of the Bible, beloved. I love its application to ordinary everyday living, touching on every detail of our lives.

We can't please ourselves. You're not your own. You've been bought with a price.

Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. Amen. We were once at a conference, one in the early days, up at Cliff.

The only time I ever heard Mr North preach about dress, and he was horrified at some of the dresses that the ladies were wearing, because they were so short. But from his point of view, they were disgraceful. Amen.

Within 24 hours, most of the women had pulled out the seams from their dresses and let them down. Praise God, passion didn't matter anymore. Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you might prove what is that good and acceptable to Him.

Amen. Glory be to God. It's not legislation, beloved.

It's Godly instruction. It's all written in the book. If you don't like it, beloved, then you won't like me.

Sorry. Because I'm a man of the book. I will only tell you what you can find in this book, and if I say anything that you can't find in the book, beloved, then you can take exception to what I say.

Amen. But I'm not ashamed, beloved, of what's written in this book, and I want God to conform me more and more consistently to the revelation of His truth, as it was portrayed in His glorious Son, the Lord Jesus, His first, glorious, wonderful, normal man who ever lived upon the face of the earth, the firstborn. Amen.

Peculiar. Glory to His name, that you should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light. Amen.

That you should show. It doesn't say you should tell or say. It says you should show.

Back into Luke's Gospel, beloved, there's a record of a man who was demonically troubled, demonically, terribly. It's in Luke's Gospel, chapter 8. And after he was delivered, he went and showed people the difference. That's what it says.

He showed them. Praise God. If we live a life, beloved, conformed to the likeness and image of the Lord Jesus, then our greatest honour is to exhibit Him, to show Him, to reveal Him, to make Him plain to others.

Amen. When they look at you, when they look at me, they should see something different. Now, you won't be consciously aware of it.

You'd be in trouble if you were worried about whether you were or whether you weren't. But if, beloved, we believe that we are newborn, that we're growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus, we taste it and found Him lovely. We really believe, beloved, that we are His spiritual house in which He's come to live.

If we'd come to the realisation, beloved, He's made us precious in His sight of inestimable value and worth to Him. If we're amazed at the fact, beloved, that He's chosen us and ordained us to reproduce after His likeness and after His kind, then there should be a manifestation of it. We read it in 2 Corinthians chapter 4 on Sunday morning.

Manifest in our body, manifest in our mortal flesh, magnified in our body in Philippians chapter 2 verse 20. Amen. Glory be to God.

Everything, beloved, about you and me should be a manifestation of the life and nature of the Lord Jesus. Glory be to God. The way we talk, the way we behave, the way we look, the way we handle.

You can apply this principle, beloved, to every area of life. That's how real it is. Glory to His name.

It's all for His honour. It's all for His glory. Further down in the chapter, beloved, it talks about, here it is in verse 21, for even here unto were you called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps.

Amen. In John chapter 13 He said, I've set you an example. What was the example? A slave.

Takes us right back to where we began. Slave, a servant, washing the disciples' feet. Amen.

A testament to the fact that He was the eternal Son of God, beloved, who laid aside His glory and became man, was made of no reputation, took upon Himself the form of a slave. That's why what Julian was talking to us about this morning, beloved, can be a reality. He was a slave, therefore we become slaves if we partake of His nature and live by His grace and the power of His Spirit as He sought to live, or should I say as He lived and we seek to live down here on the earth.

Glory to His name, wonder of wonders. You were, but now you are. Can you say Amen? That's a little better.

Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/m7EBINCbEeg.mp4>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/norman-meeten/witnesses-to-jesus/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net