

Exhortation #5 - the Prize

by Stephen Kaung

The goal of the Christian life is to attain the prize of the calling on high, which is to know Christ and the power of His resurrection.

Duration: 1:01:50

Scripture: Hebrews 12:12-20, Hebrews 13:22

Topics: "Heavenly Calling", "Christian Maturity"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of not falling short of the grace of God. The grace of God is described as both a calling and a supply, calling us into all that God is and supplying us with all that we need. The speaker warns against bitterness and murmuring, as it can spread and defile the whole community of believers. The sermon also highlights the serious responsibility of being a member of the body of Christ, urging believers to edify and not offend one another. Additionally, the sermon focuses on the heavenly calling, urging believers to be companions of Christ and enter into His rest. The concept of perfection is also emphasized, encouraging believers to press on to maturity in Christ. Finally, the sermon highlights the privilege of living in the presence of God and having Him as our home. The grace of God is demonstrated through Christ Jesus, and believers are encouraged to live a life that is pleasing to God through Jesus Christ.

Transcript

Will you please turn to the book of Hebrews, chapter 12. Hebrews, chapter 12. We'll read from verse 12 through verse 29.

Hebrews, chapter 12, verse 12. Wherefore lift up the hands that hang down, and the failing knees, and make straight paths for your feet, that that which is lame may not turn aside, but that rather it may be healed. Pursue peace with all, and holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord.

Watching, lest there be anyone who lacks the grace of God. Lest any root of bitterness spring up trouble you, and many be defiled by it. Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person as Esau, who for one meal sold his birthright.

For ye know that also afterwards, desiring to inherit the blessing, he was rejected. For he found no place for repentance, although he sought it earnestly with tears. For ye have not come to the mount that might be touched, and was all on fire, and to obscurity, and darkness, and tempest, and trumpet sound, and

voice of words, which they that heard, excusing themselves, declined the word being addressed to them any more.

For they were not able to bear what was enjoined. And if a beast should touch the mountain, it shall be stunned. And so fearful was the sight, Moses said, I am exceedingly afraid, and full of trembling.

But ye have come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, the universal gallery, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, and to God, judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, speaking better than able. See that ye refuse not Him that speaks. For a ghost did not escape who had refused Him who uttered the oracles on earth, much more we who turn away from Him who does so from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth.

But now He has promised, saying, Yet once will I shake not only the earth, but also the heaven. But this yet once signifies the removing of what is shaken, as being made, that what is not shaken may remain. Wherefore, let us, receiving a kingdom not to be shaken, have grace, by which let us serve God acceptably with reverence and fear.

For also our God is a consuming fire. Let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father, as we are before Thy Word, we pray that we may be those who tremble at Thy Word and obey Thy voice.

We do commit this time into Thy hands, and ask Thee to encourage us, and to warn us, and to exhort us. In the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

This morning we come to the last exhortation we find in the book of Hebrews. We mentioned that Hebrews is a book of exhortation. Exhortation is to call attention to, to warn against, and to encourage unto.

And in this book of Hebrews, we have five distinctive exhortations. And each exhortation is centered upon a theme, a very important subject. In the first exhortation it is centered upon so great salvation.

The salvation that we receive from the Lord is not a small one. It is so great that it is beyond description. So the Bible calls it so great salvation.

We don't know how great it is. So great. And we know that it concerns with glory.

The second exhortation is centered upon the heavenly calling. We are called to be the house of God, to be companions of Christ, and to enter into His rest. A heavenly calling.

And the third exhortation is centered upon perfection. We are urged to press on to perfection. Not be just babes in Christ, but be full grown, grown ups in Christ Jesus.

That is the third exhortation. And the fourth exhortation is centered upon life in the holiest. We are privileged to live a life in the very presence of God.

Or to put it in another way, we are so privileged that we can have God as our home. And we can be at home all the time. And now we come to the fifth exhortation.

And this fifth exhortation we find in the last three chapters of the book of Hebrews. Chapter 11, Chapter 12, and Chapter 13. And this exhortation is centered upon the goal.

The price of the calling on high. It is centered upon the better, the heavenly country. The holy city, the New Jerusalem.

It is centered upon the birthright and the blessing of the firstborn. It is centered upon the kingdom. The kingdom that cannot be shaken.

And we find all these as the goal that is set before us. And because of such a goal, we are encouraged and we are also warned about it. Now in Chapter 11, you find it is a chapter on faith.

Sometimes we call this chapter the arena of faith. And it is as if the Holy Spirit has put us into that arena. And let us view these men and women of faith.

These men and women, as we find in Chapter 11 of faith, their faith can be summed up in this verse. Verse 6, But without faith it is impossible to please God. For he that draws near to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them who seek him out.

Without faith it is impossible to please God. This is how important faith is. And what is the faith that is talking about in this chapter? It is the faith that he that draws near to God must believe.

Believe what? Believe that God is. Not in the sense that believe there is God. Because we have already believed that there is God.

We have already believed in God. But the faith here is we believe that God is. Or to put it in another word, that God is the Great I Am.

We believe he is the I Am. As we find in the Gospel according to John. And we also believe that he is a rewarder of him who seeks out him.

Now this is not the initial faith. But this is the more advanced faith. The initial faith is when we begin to believe in the Lord Jesus as our personal Savior.

Now that is initial faith. And we need to have that faith. But it is supposed that we already have it.

So here you find it is the more advanced faith. We not only believe that our Lord Jesus, the Son of God, is our Christ, is our Savior. But we also believe that he is the Great I Am.

And we believe that if we seek him, we will be rewarded. In other words, it is not a matter of gift. It is a matter of reward.

If we believe the Lord Jesus as our Savior, we receive the gift of eternal life. But that is a gift. But after we believe in the Lord Jesus, and we believe that he is the Great I Am.

In other words, he is what he is. He is all that he is to us. He is everything to us.

Then you will find we will be rewarded. These men and women, they have all received revelation from above. Because without revelation there can be no faith.

But you find that everyone mentioned in this chapter, in the arena of faith, they all have received some revelation from above. And when God revealed himself to these men and women, they responded with faith. And through faith they turned their vision into vocation.

Every one of them here you find they have achieved something. The achievement of faith. And they have all been given testimony by God.

That God was pleased with them. But you know the strangest thing is, as you read this chapter, in spite of the fact that these men and women, they have all achieved something for God by faith, and they have all received testimony from above, and yet the Bible says they have not received the promise. They have not received the promise.

Verse 39, And these, all having obtained witness through faith, did not receive the promise. Now what is the promise? They have received a lot of things. They even received testimony from God.

That they had pleased him. And yet the Spirit of God said they did not receive the promise. Why? Because they couldn't.

Verse 40, God having foreseen some better things for us, that they should not be made perfect without us. In other words, this promise must be something corporal. Corporate.

It is not something personal. It is a corporate promise. And it cannot be fulfilled individually.

It had to be fulfilled together. These men and women of faith together with us. Now what is that promise? If you read that chapter you will find it is the promise that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they all looked forward to.

By faith Abraham left his native place, and he obeyed God and followed God to the place that was promised to him. But during his lifetime he never actually received the promised land. He only bought a cave and a yearning field for burial.

That's all he got. And yet the Bible said he was actually looking for something far more than Canaan. God promised him Canaan.

That's true. But through Canaan he saw the promise. And the promise is the heavenly country.

If he thought of his old country he could go back if he wanted to. But he refused to go back. He would rather be a stranger and sojourner on earth.

Why? Because he was looking for a better country. A heavenly country. A city with foundations which God is building.

And we all know brothers and sisters, this city with foundations, as you read the Bible, you know there is only one city with foundations, and that is the holy city, the New Jerusalem. In Revelation chapter 21 and chapter 22 you find this city has twelve foundations. It is a city with foundations which God has built.

And this is what these men and women are looking forward to. And dear brothers and sisters, in a sense, this is what we are looking forward to. Thank God we have an eternal home.

A place where God is all and in all. Because in that holy city, the New Jerusalem, you find the glory of God just manifested in that city. It is all of God.

It is God's eternal home. It is our eternal home. And in that city, Christ is indeed all and in all.

This is the goal that is set before us. But then you find in order to reach that goal, as we are still in the process of arriving that goal, it is as if we are all being put on a race course. And that is what you find in chapter 12.

You know dear brothers and sisters, the moment you are saved, you are put by God on a race course. And the end of that course, of course, is to win Christ. To know Him and the power of His resurrection.

To be conformed to His image. And to attain into the out-resurrection from among the dead. In other words, you find that every brother and sister, as soon as we are saved, God has put us on a course.

A course that we have to run. And we mentioned last time that it is an obstacle course. Because it is not just a very smooth one, but it is one that is filled of obstacles.

And we have to overcome all these obstacles in order to arrive at the goal and gain the prize of the calling on high. Brothers and sisters, salvation is never cheap. It may be free, but it is not cheap.

In order to save us, God has to sacrifice His only begotten Son. His spare, not His own Son, in order to save us. In order to save us, our Lord Jesus gave up His life.

No one take His life from Him. No one can. He said, I lay down my life and I take it up.

Our Lord Jesus laid down His life for us. Salvation is very expensive. So expensive that you just cannot pay for it.

And because it is beyond your payment, so God gave it to you free. But it is not cheap. Dear brothers and sisters, after we have received the Lord Jesus, and we are being put in that race course, do you think Christian life is cheap? Not at all.

Christian life is very expensive. It is costly. Because we have to run an optical course in order to arrive at the goal.

It is not for those who are fainthearted. How should we run that race? We have to lay aside every weight. Now brothers and sisters, weight is different from sin.

Sin is something that easily entangles us. And in Hebrews chapter 12 you will find we have to cast aside the sin that easily entangles us. And you notice the sin there is singular number.

In other words there is the sin. And the sin that easily entangles us in our racing is the sin of unbelief. The sin of unbelief.

We have to cast it aside. And then lay aside every weight. Now weight is not sin.

But it is weight. In other words it may not be sin, but it will weigh you down so that you are not able to run well. Have you ever seen a runner? When he was going to run, he would put on heavy boots, and he would put on a fur coat, and he would put on all kinds of weight.

No. You will find a runner will strip himself of everything that can be stripped, in order that he may run. Brothers and sisters, that is what we are called to.

We are not only to lay aside, cast away every sin, the sin that easily entangles us, but we are to lay aside every weight. Anything that will slow us down. It may not be sin.

It is the will maybe. But we have to lay down in order that we may run with endurance. It is an endurance race.

Not a hundred meters dash. Nor even a cross country. It is a lifetime racing.

We are racing towards the goal. And all the time we are looking away from everything, but looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. You know, when you are running, and you try to look around, it slows you down.

When you are running, your eyes is set upon the goal. That is all you set upon. So dear brothers and sisters, as we are running this race, let our eyes be fixed upon the Lord Jesus.

It is a difficult race. And because it is so difficult, only by setting our eyes upon the Lord Jesus, only by thinking about him, by considering him, we are able to endure the race. We think of our Lord Jesus, how he ran, how he despised the shame, endured the cross, for the joy that is set before him.

We remember our Lord Jesus, how he fought against sin even unto death, shedding of his blood. And brothers and sisters, we have not shed our blood yet. Let us take courage and press on.

It is true that the enemy is trying every way to hinder us, to discourage us, to stop us, to turn us aside. It is true that we have to suffer, but thank God, through the things which we have suffered, we learn obedience. And all the time we remember that our Heavenly Father allows all these hardships and difficulties, and sometimes problems that cannot be explained to happen in our life course, it is all because he is using all these to child train us.

He wants us to grow up, he wants us to develop, he wants to have his own character being developed in us, that we may be partakers of his holiness. So brothers and sisters, do remember these, and as you remember these, then lift up the hands that hang down. I wonder if there is anyone here whose hands have already hanged down.

Lift up the hands that hang down, and the falling knees, failing knees, make straight path for your feet, pursue peace with all, and holiness, without which no one can see God. Dear brothers and sisters, in pressing on towards the goal, the prize of the calling on high, negatively, we need to lift up the hands that hang down, strengthen the failing knees, straighten our path, and positively we need to pursue peace with all, and holiness. You know, pursue, the word pursue is very meaningful.

You do not pursue without any goal. If there is no goal, you are wandering, you are not pursuing. If you are pursuing, you must pursue after something.

And dear brothers and sisters, we are to pursue. Christian life is not a life of looting. It is not a life of wandering.

It is not an aimless life. Christian life is very purposeful. We are pursuing after something.

As a matter of fact, we are pursuing after someone. We are pursuing after Christ. And here you will find we are to pursue peace with all, and holiness.

Now why is it that these two things are especially mentioned? Pursue peace and holiness. Now the reason probably is, as we are running this difficult course, you know, we may be, we may feel it is so difficult, so hard. And we may begin to faint, and probably we will begin to lose our peace.

In other words, as we are struggling and striving, as we are trying to press on, you know, sometimes our eyes get off from the Lord Jesus, and we begin to look at ourselves, and we begin to feel that how strenuous we are trying, we are trying our best, and yet with trying our best we get nowhere, and we get so frustrated, and we begin to lose our peace. Lose our peace with God. We may even begin to murmur against God.

Why is it that God makes it so hard? Or we may look at other people, who seem to have a much easier time than we are, and because of that we get very jealous about it. Or in the pursuing, we become so ambitious, so competitive, we want to be above everybody, and when we see somebody that has gone ahead of us, oh we become very envious and jealous of them. Or if we run ahead of other people, we begin to be very proud of ourselves, and look down upon our brothers and sisters who move so slowly.

We lose peace with our brothers and sisters, and yet dear brothers and sisters, the one whom we are pursuing is the Prince of Peace. In other words, in this pursuing it is very easy to get lost, and yet the very purpose of pursuing is to take on the character of the one whom we pursue. What's the sense of achieving if we are not developing his character in us? How easy it is when you see people who are really pursuing as it were, and they think that they have found the truth or some truth, and they begin to be so proud of themselves.

They begin to give people the feeling, we are holier than you are. They begin to look down upon their fellow citizens, their brothers and sisters. Dear brothers and sisters, is it worth it? They lose the character of the one whom they pursue, and what is it that they get? Little truth? Some interpretation? It's nothing.

It is the character, character of Christ that has to be built within us in the pursuing, because he is the one whom we pursue. So here you'll find pursued peace and holiness, because his very nature is holy. Our Lord is holy.

Holy means uncommon. It is different. It is not natural.

It is supernatural. It is not you and me. It is he.

It is all of him. Dear brothers and sisters, that's what we are pursuing. We are pursuing after holiness, because without holiness no one can see God.

You know the word holiness literally means holy making. Holy making. In other words, we are to be made holy.

We are to be made like him. Or to put it another way, we are to be transformed and be conformed to his image. We are to let him be our character.

Let him characterize us. This is what holiness really means. Not I, but Christ.

That is holiness. And we are to pursue after that holiness. That we may be made partakers of his holiness.

That we may yield the fruit of peaceful righteousness. Isn't that wonderful? Peaceful righteousness. Now can there be a righteousness that is not peaceful? Sometimes people can be over-righteous and when you are over-righteous it is not peaceful at all.

But here you'll find it is peaceful righteousness and holiness. This is our goal. And because of this you'll find a triple warning.

Immediately following. Watching. Lest there be anyone who lacks the grace of God.

Now the word lacks means falling short. Watch. Lest there be anyone fall short of the grace of God.

Now isn't that wonderful? That we all have the grace of God. Now what is the grace of God? The grace of God is on the one hand, what he has called us to. And the grace of God is on the other hand, what he has supplied us with.

In other words, it is the grace of God that calls us. His grace calls us into all that he is. And then his grace supplies us with all that we need to enter in.

Now that is the grace of God. And the grace of God is here with every one of us. You are saved by grace through faith.

The grace of God is already here. The grace of God has called us into all that he is for us. And the grace of God has supplied us with all the energy, all the strength, all the power that needs to enter into him.

It's all, it's all given to us. All we need is by grace through faith. In other words, believe.

Take it. Respond to it. Receive it.

And if you do not respond to grace calling, and if you do not receive grace supplying, then you fall short of the grace of God. In other words, the grace of God is there, but you are not able to enjoy it. You fall short of it.

And if you fall short of it, there is no excuse. You cannot excuse yourself and say this because I do not know what he has called me to. You cannot say because I haven't found any supply from him.

No, he has already shown you, he has already given to you, but you do not receive it by faith. There will be no excuse. But thank God it is just fall short of the grace of God.

It is not fall out of the grace of God. You know, in Galatians chapter 5 verse 4 is fall out of the grace of God. Now that is serious.

Most serious. But even if we should fall short of the grace of God, in other words, you do not arrive at that which God has called you. You become lazy.

You are contented with the little that you have. You belittle God. You despise his calling.

And you do not reach out and rely upon his grace that is sufficient for your every need. Now if you are doing that, you fall short of the grace of God. Be careful about that.

And then he said, lest any root of bitterness spring up trouble you and many be defiled by it. You know it is very strange. Usually those who fall short of the grace of God will find the root of bitterness in them.

You know, if you really embrace the grace of God, you will find within you worship and praise. But when you fall short of the grace of God, then you begin to blame God as if it is all his fault. The root of bitterness begins to arise within you.

Now look at the history of the children of Israel. Because they did not apprehend the grace of God, they turned against God and murmured against God. And you know, even in Matthew chapter 25, that wicked

servant, you know, because he was lazy, he was wicked.

He did not want to work with the talent that the master had given to him. So he buried it. And then when he faced the master, he blamed the master.

He said, you are a hard master. Now that is the root of bitterness. But dear brothers and sisters, the problem is, if the root of bitterness should arise in your heart, you will find it will not only affect you, but many will be defiled.

Why? Because we are one body. That's why it is cooperating. We are running together.

It is a team record. And you find that if any one of us should be bitter, soon you will find it will spread to the others. Just like murmur, a little murmur somewhere, maybe at the extremity of the camp, and gradually you will find that murmur will travel, and it travels faster than light, and it will enter into even the center of the camp, until the whole camp begins to cry.

Many will be defiled. Dear brothers and sisters, it is a tremendous privilege to be a member of the body of Christ. But you know, it is a very serious responsibility too.

We are responsible not only for ourselves, but we are responsible for our fellow members. Be careful that we edify people and not offend them. And then the third thing is, lest there be any fornicator or profane person that he saw who for one year stole his birthright.

You know the word profane is the very opposite of holy. Profane simply means, instead of being set apart for God, instead of being sanctified, instead of being uncommon, we become common, we mingle with the world, we love the world, we become one of them. That's profane.

Like Esau. For the love of one meal, and that is not a luxurious dinner, it is a snack. For the sake of a bowl of soup, he stole his birthright.

And because he stole his birthright, he couldn't get a blessing connected with that. Dear brothers and sisters, we have a birthright. Do you know the church is the assembly of the firstborn, whose names are registered in heaven? Because our Lord Jesus is the firstborn, therefore the church is the church of the firstborn.

We all have that firstborn right in Christ Jesus. We all are priests and kings. We all have a double portion.

That is our birthright. That is the blessing that goes with our birthright. But dear brothers and sisters, we may lose the blessing of the birthright if we become profane.

Instead of loving Him, Christ our Lord. And thank God, we are further encouraged. Dear brothers and sisters, we are not coming to Mount Sinai.

We have come. You know here you find a contrast. A contrast between two mountains.

Mount Sinai and Mount Zion. It is a contrast between law and grace. What is Mount Sinai? It is law.

And therefore you find the description of Mount Sinai is, it is a mountain that can be touched. It is physical. But whoever touches it, must be stoned to death.

It can be touched, but you cannot touch it, because it will mean death. And it is all on fire, obscurity, darkness, tempest, trumpet sound, voice of words. In other words, it was a terrible sight.

So when the children of Israel saw this terrible sight, when the law was given, they so trembled and they begged Moses and said, do not let God to talk with us. Talk to you and let you tell us. And even Moses said, it was so terrible that he was in fear and trembling.

Brothers and sisters, this is what law is. Law says thou shalt and thou shalt not. And can you bear it? Can you hear it without fear and trembling? And when you touch the law you touch death.

Isn't that true? But thank God we do not come to Mount Sinai. We have come to Mount Zion. And here you find Mount Zion of course is not the Zion in Jerusalem below.

It is the Zion in Heaven. We are coming to Mount Zion where God reigns. We are coming to the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, where God dwells among His redeemed.

We are coming to myriads of angels, the universal gathering. Here you will find God has myriads of angels ministering to those who are redeemed. And praising God.

To the assembly of the firstborn who are registered in Heaven, that is the church. And to God, judge of all. He is the judge of all.

And thank God we can stand before the judge of all with holy boldness because of the blood of the Lamb. And to the spirits of just men made perfect. These may be the saints in the Old Testament time.

They are spirits made just, of just men made perfect. And thank God we are coming to Jesus. Mediator of a new covenant.

He is the mediator of the new covenant. He gave us the new covenant. Our Lord Jesus.

And we come to the blood of sprinkling. Not only the blood poured but the blood sprinkled. In other words the blood applied.

We are coming to grace. You know as you read you will find He said we have come. Ye have come.

We may think the holy city is still in the future. But dear brothers and sisters, even though one day the holy city, the new Jerusalem will descend from above and yet the Bible says you have come. In spiritual reality there is no time factor.

It is true one day the holy city will come down from Heaven. But spiritually we have already come. We are already in the holy city.

We have already in grace. We have already received grace. Brothers and sisters do you not know that we are children of grace? Not children of law.

We are not under law but we are under grace. Not because it is grace and not law. Therefore we can be careless.

You know it is very strange. Our human mentality is very strange. If we think we are under law we know we have to be careful.

But no matter how careful you are you violate the law. But when you think that you are under grace then you think you can be free to do anything you like. After all it is grace.

Now don't cheat yourself. Because grace is so much greater than law. Therefore your responsibility towards grace is so much greater than to cheat that you refuse not Him.

This speaks. For if those did not escape who have refused Him who uttered the oracles on earth, much more we who turn away from Him who does so from Heaven, whose voice then shook the earth, but now He has promised saying, yet once will I shake not only the earth but also the Heaven. Dear brothers and sisters, since we have come to grace, to the grace of God, and the grace of God is none other but Christ, we have come to Him, we have come to Christ, therefore let us not refuse Him.

This speaks. God has spoken. He spoke in the past to our fathers, through the prophets, in peace and peace.

But now He has spoken to us in His own Son. Brothers and sisters, God has spoken. He has spoken to us in His Son.

Let us not refuse Him who speaks to us. Let us not excuse ourselves like the children of Israel excuse themselves from hearing. Let us not decline from hearing His voice.

If people refuse to hear Him who speaks on earth, the Oregon God, that is Moses, if people refuse to hear Moses, He will die. How much more if we turn away from Him who speaks to us from Heaven. Brothers and sisters, we are warned against turning away from Him.

If we turn away from Him, then you will find how serious that must be. Let us, receiving a kingdom not to be shaken, have grace, by which let us serve God acceptably with reverence and fear, for also our God is a consumable fire. So here we are being exhorted and encouraged again.

Let us not turn away. Let us not decline. Let us not refuse to hear Him.

But rather, let us, receiving a kingdom not to be shaken, have grace. Do you know that it is the good pleasure of our Father to give us the kingdom? The Lord Jesus said in Luke chapter 12, fear not little flock, and the little flock means the church, because the church in comparison with the world is a little flock. Fear not little flock, for it is the good pleasure of your Father to give you the kingdom.

You know, it is the delight of our Heavenly Father to give us the kingdom. And that kingdom is a kingdom that cannot be shaken. Look at the kingdoms today.

All the kingdoms of the world can be shaken. Many have been shaken, many are being shaken, and eventually all will be shaken. But thank God, God has given us a kingdom that cannot be shaken.

He has promised us. He has given to us. And because He has given to us a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace.

Now, what do you mean by have grace? If grace has not been given, you cannot have it. But if grace has already been given, why not have it? In other words, just rise up and take it by faith. Again you find a principle, by grace go faith.

Grace has been given. We have come to Mount Zion. We have come to grace.

Grace has been given. So dear brothers and sisters, let us rise up and take it by faith, believing that grace is for us. Believing that He has called us to the unshakable kingdom.

And believing that we have sufficient grace to supply us, that we may enter into the kingdom abundantly. Believing that. Let us take it by faith.

Let us serve God acceptably with reverence and thanksgiving. There is only one way to serve God, and that is to glorify His grace. You know, we cannot serve God in ourselves.

We cannot serve God by our own cleverness, by our own ingenuity, by our own strength, by our natural likeness, natural energy. No. It will be completely rejected.

The only way we can serve God is serve Him by His grace. So let us have grace by which let us serve God acceptably. This is the only service that you accept.

It has to be Christ. Christ in you. And let us serve with reverence and fear.

And that is our attitude. In other words, we are always afraid lest our own selves, our flesh, will intrude. Lest we will stretch out the hand of the flesh and be smitten.

That we may serve God in grace. So brothers and sisters, you will find that it is grace from the beginning to the end. It is all of grace.

It is grace, grace, amazing grace. Everything is grace. And grace is Christ.

He is our Lord. And He is our Savior. And He is our Savior.

The God of peace who brought again from among the dead our Lord Jesus Christ. The grace shepherd of the sheep in the power of the blood of the eternal covenant. Perfect you in every good work to the doing of His will.

Doing in you what is pleasing before Him through Jesus Christ. To whom be glory for the ages of ages. Amen.

Here you find in verse twenty, God has already demonstrated His grace in Christ Jesus. He has brought again from among the dead our Lord Jesus. The grace shepherd of the sheep in the power of the blood of the eternal covenant.

God has demonstrated, expressed and demonstrated His grace in Christ Jesus and in all that Christ has done for us. And now He is going to do all these through Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit in each one of us. That He may perfect you in every good work, in the doing of His will.

Doing in you what is pleasing before Him through Jesus Christ. Not only Christ, what Christ has done on Calvary's cross, but Christ in you, the hope of glory. And dear brothers and sisters, again, it is all His doing.

So in other words you find in the book of Hebrews, when all these wonderful things before us, so great salvation, heavenly calling, perfection, life in the holiest, goal and prize of high calling, all these before us. Remember, all these are what grace is calling us to. And at the same time, you find the very same grace is in each one of us to supply us with everything that is needed for us to arrive at the goodness.

It is He who does it, not you. All that you need to do is to believe in Him and call on Christ. So may the Lord bless you.

To Him be the glory for the ages to come. Amen. Dear Heavenly Father, how we do praise and thank Thee that what Thou has done in Christ Jesus and called us into is not a small matter, but it is of such tremendous magnitude that it is really beyond our understanding.

But we praise and thank Thee that by Thy Holy Spirit it is revealed to us, and it is continually revealed to us. And Father, we pray that we may not be those who are all fainthearted, but we may be of those who will rise up by Thy grace and apprehend Thy grace by faith. That we may find that Thy grace who calls us is the grace that supplies us.

And Father, we do pray that truly it may be all unto the praise of Thy glory. In the name of our Lord Jesus, Amen.

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