

What We Really Need

by Wayne Guindon

Wayne Guindon's sermon emphasizes the critical need for hope and support in the Christian journey, especially during trials and suffering.

Duration: 53:29

Scripture: 1 Peter 1:1

Topics: "Evangelism"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by praying for the message to touch hearts and emphasizes the importance of clinging to God in the current times. The speaker shares a story of missionaries who traveled a long distance to spread the word of God, highlighting their dedication and commitment. The sermon then takes a somber turn as the speaker recounts a tragic accident involving gang members and a bus driver. The speaker poses the question of what truly matters in life and challenges the audience to reflect on their priorities, urging them to focus on spiritual matters rather than material possessions.

Transcript

Good morning. What time does the meeting go till? 11.30? I would like to thank you for inviting us here. I'd like to open up the Word of God this morning to 1 Peter, chapter 1. 1 Peter, chapter 1, and we'll read the first 12 verses.

Verses 1 to 2, we have an introduction. Peter introduces himself to his listeners. And then verses 3 to 5, he pronounces a blessing, and we've been talking about that this morning, the blessings that God has brought us into.

And then something a little bit we don't like to think about or talk about, verses 6 and 7 talks about trials. And then verses 8 to 12, he touches on something that is able to keep them looking forward, hope. And the Bible says a heart without hope wants to give up, wants to throw in the towel.

So I'd like to read about these first 12 verses this morning. But first, we'd like to speak the Lord in prayer. Our Heavenly Father, we need your help this morning.

And Father, we pray that this message would touch hearts because the Word of God is living and powerful. It's sharper than a two-edged sword. And Father, at times we go through the motions.

Every church is the same. We have people that are really on fire for God and others that just come along for the ride. They're there because their mom and dad are here or because their friends are here.

And the message of God isn't very important. So Father, we pray you would touch especially these hearts to realize in the days that we're living, it's important to cling to God. Okay, verses 1 and 2. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Capodacia, Asia, and Bithynia.

Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Grace unto you and peace be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations or manifold trials, that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls, of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently who prophesied unto the grace that should come unto you, searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, which things the angels desired to look into.

The Lord will bless unto us the reading of his Word. I want to first of all start by asking you, what is the most important thing in your life right now? What really matters to you? As you're sitting there, you're sort of thinking about, you know, well, Christmas has come, and you know, and my friends, they got a PlayStation 3 last year, and now there's a new, improved version coming out. Yeah, that's the most important thing.

Or, no, my friend, he just got his license, and he has a shiny new car, and yeah, I'd like to have that new car. Or, no, my friend got a laptop, and I want a laptop just like his. Or he got an iPhone, and I want one of those iPhones because you can do all that stuff on there.

Like, people are so motivated by things. You know, it reminds me, I was a missionary in El Salvador for 10 years, my wife also and my children, and we worked together in the work of the Lord. I remember the time when my little girl was born.

She's 7 years old, almost 8, so about 8 years ago, going back to a time, we're driving down the road. She had been born about 6 weeks early, and we had to take her back to the hospital for a checkup, and we're driving down the road, and we're following this pickup truck, and all of a sudden, the pickup truck swerved out of the way, and I'm thinking, why is this guy driving? They drive crazy down there, but this was extra crazy. So, all of a sudden, he swerves out of the way, and I looked ahead of me, and here is a man lying on the ground in front of me.

He had been driving a bicycle, selling ice creams, and there's ice cream cones all over the ground. There's melted ice cream, and he's lying on the ground, and there's a great big pool of blood all the way around his

head. So, I pulled over to the side of the road, and then I backed up.

I get out of the car, and I'm back there, and I started looking at him, and I started to talk to him. So, I looked at his bicycle. It's all wrecked, and his ice cream cones.

So, I talked to him, and I said, you know, I'll buy you another bicycle. Would you like another bicycle? He didn't answer. How about a PlayStation 3? They weren't even invented back then, PlayStation 3s.

They're probably still in PlayStation 1. Would you like a PlayStation 1? How about an iPhone Touch? Do you think that's what he needed? What did he need? He needed help. He needed life. He needed to be brought to a hospital.

So, I did something I would never recommend here in Canada. You'd be put in jail if you did this. I opened up my car, and I folded down the seat, and I talked to him first, and I got his name, and he was conscious, and I picked him up, and I put him in my car, and I drove to the emergency at the hospital because I knew if he was left there, there's no ambulances like there is here in Richmond, he would have died with a pool of blood around him, and everybody, they would just be looking, and say, oh, look at him.

Oh, isn't that terrible? The poor guy. What did he need? He needed help. And then I got to the hospital, and I ran inside to the emergency room there at the desk, and I said, I need a stretcher.

And the nurse said, oh, they're over there. I said, no, I need somebody to come and take the stretcher to the car. I have a dying man in my car.

They're over there. I said, no, I need somebody to help me. They're over there.

So, I had to go over there and get a stretcher, and I went out, and I got somebody else outside that was watching, and he helped me put the man on the stretcher, and we brought him inside to the room where the doctors looked after him. The man survived. Without help, he would be dead.

Do you know that some of you, you have friends at school? They're not Christians. Without help, they'll never, ever, ever be in heaven. Maybe there's some that are sitting here this morning, and you know your friends here, they're still not Christians.

And, yeah, you like to get together and you like to play Nintendo together or PlayStation, whatever you're playing, and you say, yeah, it's good to hang around with him, but you never, ever, ever talk about God. It's very, very important. There's something very, very important.

I want to read a verse over in Hebrew. It's a couple of verses. Just back up a tiny little bit.

You have James, and then Hebrews chapter 11. And Hebrews chapter 11 is what they call the Hall of Faith, not the Hall of Fame, the Hall of Faith. And verse 32, he says, What shall I say more? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, he was a great man of God, and Barak and Samson and other strong men, and Jephthah and David and Samuel, and of the prophets, whose faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Others had a trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yet moreover the

bonds and imprisonment.

They were stoned. They were sawn asunder. They were tempted.

They were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, in dens, and in caves of the earth.

Wow! What verses! These verses are describing a Christian people that were scattered into the world, and that's how this chapter 1 talks about. In chapter 1, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. Here was a group of Christians that they were being persecuted by the church, the official church in Jerusalem.

Remember, Paul was going around and he was persecuting the Christians and he was killing the Christians and making them confess, making them blaspheme the name of Christ. Do you believe that it's possible that we as Christians in this age, in this year, could enter a time of persecution? You know, in India there's a place called Mumbai where they're going in, the Muslims are going in, and they're burning down churches, and the Christians are chasing them out of their houses, and they're living in the jungle, and they're hiding for their lives. And yet we sit here in beautiful British Columbia, and say, oh, what a life.

It's good to be thankful we heard about Thanksgiving. But let's not think about the physical things for our Thanksgiving. Let's think about the spiritual things.

When Peter starts writing this here letter, he writes about sufferings. Five different times in his letter, he talks about sufferings and he talks about there's sufferings to be expected. So Christians, you and I, we are going to come into trials.

Sufferings are not to be dreaded, chapter 3 and verse 14. Sufferings are to be expected, chapter 4 and 12. Sufferings are to be born patiently, 2 and 23.

Sufferings are to be rejoiced in, 4 and 13. And suffering is in God's will, chapter 4 and 19. Maybe when some of you think about trials, you're thinking, oh, I have a real trial I'm going through.

I'm on level 6 and I want to get to level 7 in my Nintendo game. That's the biggest trial you have. I just can't figure out how to maneuver past this here giant that keeps on killing me.

No, there's more to it than that. There's Christians around the world today that are suffering for their faith. And that same suffering could change overnight in British Columbia.

We have forces working in the United States counter-terrorism forces. We have men that are willing to strap bombs on them and walk in and blow up churches, schools. It's interesting, over the last week they've been making announcements that Christians should not be shaking hands for fear of new academics.

You know, it's amazing. They're not warning anybody else. They're warning Christians.

There is a love and there is a compassion and there is this care amongst Christians that is not experienced anywhere else. And if they want to destroy us, it's a pretty easy way to come in and just put some poison on their hands and they can walk around and if they shook hands with 50 people, 50 people and all of a sudden you just happen to rub your eye and the next thing the virus is passing on to you and

into your family, things like that. Things like that are very, very real.

But let's look at the letter itself. Verses 1-2. Paul, an apostle.

I've always said the word apostle means sent one and if you look in most Bible translations that's what it says or Bible dictionaries it says sent ones. But yesterday I was studying and there's a man called Kenneth West who was a Greek scholar but he wanted to take Greek and he wanted to make it easy for you and me that don't have a clue about that foreign language. So he takes the words and he breaks them down and he breaks them down in a way that you and I can understand them.

And he said the word apostle comes from two words. It comes from the word off and it comes from the word sent. So the idea was sent off.

You know there was lots of missionaries that would go into foreign countries and they would go into whether they would go into China or go into El Salvador or Peru or Colombia and these countries or Africa and they would go out into the villages and they would leave their family, their children in a boarding school. They would send them off to boarding school and the kids would be there all alone. The missionaries, they would be sent off from their Canadian friends and families and they'd be sent over to Africa and they wouldn't be heard from again.

They were sent off. So do you know what happened here? Peter was sent off to reach this group of people that were hated. They were persecuted and sent to the four corners of the earth.

We have different places that are named here. They were sent to Pontus, to Galatia, to Cappadocia, to Asia, to Bithynia. Sent to these five different places.

People that were not loved by the rest of the people. And do you know how you and I are? We want to be loved by our friends. We want to be loved by the ones that we talk to.

We want to be loved by the ones that are around us. And these people were hated. But here's Peter.

Remember, Peter was one of the ones that craved the affection of the Lord. He was there with the Lord up on the Mount of Transfiguration. He would always be one of the ones with the Lord.

And when it came to a time when the Lord said, one of you is going to deny Me, and Peter said, I would never deny You. I would lay down my life for You. So then when they come and they grab the Lord Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, and they take Him off to Herod's palace, and they start accusing Him and trying to deliver Him to death, Peter followed afar off.

And he was there warming his hands by the fire with all the people that hated the Lord Jesus. And he wanted to be loved. And when somebody said, oh, you were with the Lord Jesus, no, I don't even know that guy.

Have you ever denied the Lord? Have you ever sort of not actually denied Him, you just closed your mouth and never spoke for Him when you should have? I have done that. I'm not accusing you. I'm not looking down and saying you're worse than I am.

I know what it feels to be silent and the Holy Spirit has been talking to you in your heart, hasn't He? And He's saying, you should tell your friend about Me. Your friend is like that man that was dying on the highway in El Salvador with the blood all around his head. And if Brother Wayne hadn't come and picked

him up and put him in his car, that means my car got covered with blood.

That means my car got dirty. That means I was taking a risk. But today the man is alive.

Did he need a bicycle? Did he need a video game? No, he needed life. So Peter is talking to these people. They were strangers.

The Bible talks about pilgrims and strangers. Two words that are always associated together. Stranger means, I remember when I lived in El Salvador, everybody would look at me and they would say, there goes a gringo.

And I hated being called a gringo. Gringos are the Americans. I'm not a gringo.

I'm a Canadian. But everybody would look at me as different. And even when it was dark at night, I'd be walking down the street and everybody would look, which means whitey.

What are you doing there walking down the street? They could see me in the dark. It's like I must have glowed in the dark or something like this. I'd say, how did they do that? They have really good eyes.

But anyway, the whole idea is I was a stranger in their country. And even though I had some people that loved me and lots of people, I'd be walking down the street and people would say, hermano Wayne, which means brother Wayne. They would call me brother Wayne even though they didn't come to the church.

Everybody knew me by that name. But as Peter goes, he sees these people that are scattered. They were pilgrims.

That means they were going home. They were going home to heaven. And the whole idea, when somebody is scattered, do you know what that means? It always speaks of confusion.

Remember the Lord talked about those sheep without a shepherd. They didn't have someone to look after them. And that's what Peter looked.

And he saw these Christians were scattered all over the place. And he wanted to bring them in. And he wanted to make them feel like there was a community, that they weren't alone, that there were other Christians who would be there to help them and support them.

And that's something we need to do. You know, there was a sister in our meeting over in Ladner. And she really was devastated when a young lady at the age of 35 died.

She was in her bed one night and she took an epileptic attack. And when you have epilepsy, you have seizures, and she banged her head on the night table and died. But you know what hurt her so much? Is this young lady of 35 years of age said, I want you to pray with me every week.

Let's have a prayer meeting. And these two ladies, they would meet and have a prayer meeting every week. Was it the older lady that asked the younger lady to have prayer meetings? No, it was the younger asking the older.

Do you have a prayer partner? Maybe you should think about it. Maybe you should look at one of the younger sisters and say, can we get together and pray every week? Listen, listen, we've had good times in this church and other times we see bad times when there's hardly anybody coming out and the Christians

are cold and they're just going through the motions and they're more interested in the youth night and singing and playing and sports and really doing something for God. You know, last summer, July, we had a group come up from California.

Twenty-seven young people came from Cupertino, California and they come up here to distribute gospel literature. We gave out a gospel tract. We went down to the Steveston one day and we gave out 8,000 gospel tracts that day.

And the three days, July 1st and the two days around there, we gave out 70,000 gospel tracts in Vancouver. A group of young people, they drove 14 hours or it was about 20 hours by the time they got here from Cupertino, California to get here without sleep and they spent a whole week going door to door and going down in the market and going to the SkyTrain station giving the Word of God out. We don't know if anybody got saved and we're not trying to take names, okay, repeat after me and say this prayer, but you know one day they're going to get to Heaven and they're going to say, Well done, thou good and faithful servant.

Have you ever done anything like that for God? What do your young people meetings consist of? If you go on the Internet, you can look at some dramas that young people do. They'll go out into public places and parks and they put on dramas and people look at them and they give them gospel message. I want to encourage you as young people to get involved in the work of the Lord as the day is approaching because the Lord Jesus Christ is coming back again.

So these people, they were saved. They were elect. It means that they were chosen.

We know what it means to elect a President or the Prime Minister or the Premier. It means you choose someone and they do it by voting for the person. But God didn't vote for you.

It says before the foundation of the world, even before this plan was made, before the universe was made, God saw you. He knew your name. He knew the day you're going to be born, what country.

He knew what language you're going to speak. He knew that you're going to have to wear glasses or contact lenses. He knew if you're going to be right-handed or left-handed.

He knew if you're going to like math or you're going to like history better. God knew everything about you. You know, God even planned a wife or a husband for you.

You say, well, I'm not married and I don't even have a girlfriend. I don't even like girls. But God has everything ordered for you.

He wants the best for you. But you know, this whole idea about salvation, is everybody here saved? Can everybody here say, yes, I'm going to heaven. I know my sins are forgiven.

You know, for 22 years, I could not say that. I went to Sunday school and I went to catechism and I went to church and I went to confession and I did all the religious things that the other kids did. But I didn't know what it was to have my sins forgiven.

I knew there was a God up in heaven that was holy. I knew there was a place down below called hell. I didn't want to go there.

But you know, when I got to about 18, I used to make jokes. I said, oh yeah, I'm going to get down with my friends to hell and we're going to sit down and play cards and we're going to drink and smoke and all that kind of stuff. It's nonsense.

Nobody, nobody, nobody actually wants to get down there. None of you want to get down there. But you say, but I don't really want to go up there because, you know, I don't even like being in church for an hour.

I'm so bored in church for an hour. I can't imagine what heaven would be like. Do you know why you're bored in church? Because you're a dead person.

You're spiritually dead. You don't have life. You don't have... It's like the first time you see that girl that you like and you say, oh wow, isn't she wonderful? And your friend says, hey listen, listen, I want to introduce you to this other girl.

No, I got no, no, I can't even look at her. She is everything I want. I know that's the physical aspect.

But all of a sudden, somebody takes you up and there's a guy and a girl takes you up to introduce you to and as soon as you get near, you have to plug your nose. You think, no, I don't want to be near a person like that. But sometimes when people are going to church, everything that they hear, the songs that they sing, everything is negative, negative, negative.

Why? Because you're spiritually dead. You have not been born again. You don't respond to the Word of God.

You do not have a thankful heart. And this is what these verses are talking about in verse 2. It says, elect or chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through the sanctification of the Spirit unto the obedience of the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. So what this verse is talking about is the Holy Trinity had a part in your salvation.

First of all, God has chosen you. Like I said before, the foundation of the world, He picked you out because you were special. No! There was nothing lovable about you.

You were a sinner. But God set His love upon you and in His mercy, the word that is used over and over again here, He had mercy upon you and He chose you. And then we see the work of the Holy Spirit.

He took you and He set you apart. You know, I was born in Prince Edward Island. It's 4,000 miles away from here.

And if you keep on driving and driving and driving and driving, finally you will get to that place. And I was there with all my friends and when I heard about the Word of God and the Gospel, I said, I don't want anything to do with that, but God sent me to British Columbia and to a little town called Ladner. A man phoned me up and said, Listen, we're preaching the Gospel over there.

Would you come in to hear it? And I didn't even want to hear the Gospel. I went to see somebody from back home. That's the only reason why I went out.

But when I was in that meeting, God started speaking to my heart, showing me that I was a sinner that needed salvation. I needed to have my sins forgiven more than anything else. And I got serious with God for the first time in my life because His Holy Spirit was working in my heart, showing me that I was a sinner and that I needed to be saved or I would spend eternity, eternity, in hell and the lake of fire.

And then I realized that on the cross of Calvary, Jesus died for me. He shed His precious blood. When He was nailed to that cross, do you know what He said the first words that come out of His mouth? Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they're doing.

How about those Roman soldiers when they were nailing those nails in His hands? Do you think they knew what they were doing? How about when they were gambling for His clothing at the foot of the cross? Do you think they knew what they were doing? How about the thieves? One on the left and one on the right when they started blaspheming Him? How about the soldiers when they started punching Him on the face? Do you think they knew what they were doing? How about you when you're rejecting Christ? Do you think you know what you're doing? When you say, No, no, no, not today, No, I don't want to be a Christian. No, no, that's for the other guys. That's for the religious... Christianity is for sissies.

It's not for macho men like me. That's the way I used to think. God wants you in Heaven.

That's why He has chosen you. And that's why He set His love upon you and sent His Son to die on Calvary's cross so that you can get into Heaven. And then in verse 3 to 5, we have God's blessing upon us.

And Peter starts off and he says, Blessed be the God and Father. This is the word where we get the word eulogy. You know, when somebody dies, you know, the body is up here, and you go over and you look into the casket, and have you ever gone up to the person? Of course you wouldn't.

No. But you know what? The body is there, and the spirit is where? If they're a Christian, the spirit is up there. But if it's not, and each one of us, we're a step away from death.

You could be driving home from church today, and all of a sudden, your father has the best driving record. He has a road star on ICBC, and he gets a 43% discount, and he has all the bells and whistles of the best insurance policy that he can buy. But somebody that's not paying attention, and they pull, go through a red light, and boom.

And your dad, he looks over at you, because he's driving, and you're there in that seat. And the guy comes into your door, and all of a sudden, you're gone. Did I ever tell you the story? I was in El Salvador.

Brother Ken Rice did. You know what Ken Rice did? He comes here sometimes. Brother Ken and I, we always go to El Salvador together.

Now that I'm living back here, we're going in February again. One day, we're driving out the road, and all of a sudden, the traffic is all stopped. So we pulled over the side, and they said, this is not usual.

Our little town, there's only half a dozen cars anyway, so the traffic shouldn't be stopped. So we get out, and we start walking, walking. All of a sudden, we come up, and we see a big bus.

And then as we get closer, there's about 2,000 people around. And we're thinking, why are all these people around? They're all standing around, looking at this here bus. As we get up close, we walk up in the top of a mound, and when we look down at the bus, and here was the Jeep Cherokee molded together with the bus.

It was a hit-on collision. And right there in the Jeep Cherokee, there was four guys, and there was two lying down in the back, two young students. They were gang members, and they were running away from

the police, and they died instantly.

How about that bus driver? The bus driver didn't plan on having an accident that day. These gang members ran into the bus. It was like that.

He didn't have a chance. I don't remember what happened to the bus driver. I think he was just hospitalized because he was up in a bigger vehicle.

But anyway, the Apostle Peter says in verse 3, he says, He has begotten us, or the word there is the word born. He has made us alive. Twice we have this word born again in the first chapter of Peter.

Where do we have that expression born again? Over in John's Gospel, chapter 3, when the Lord Jesus talked to Nicodemus, He said, You must be born again. Except a man is born again, or a woman is born again, they cannot see the kingdom of God. And over in John's Gospel, he talks about being born again as being born from above.

You know, did any of you people here ask to be born? I hear lots of teenagers say that. I didn't ask to be born. Why are you always balling me? Why are you always on my case? Leave me alone.

I didn't ask to be born. People complain about being brought into the world. It wasn't my choice.

Why are you always picking on me? None of us have a choice about being born. But God has given us life. But how did that come about? You and I, we are alive physically.

Dead spiritually, alive physically. And God's Spirit starts dealing with our hearts and He starts to convict us of our sin and realize that we're lost and we're in bad shape if we don't smarten up and get our act together, as we say. So all of a sudden we say, I have to get this here problem fixed up.

You ever have somebody with cancer? What is the first thing they want to do? They want to go to the cancer clinic. They want to go to the naturopath doctor. They don't want the chemotherapy or they try to avoid, but they want to get fixed up so that they're okay.

But we have been born again because of God's mercy to us. We have a living hope because Christ is seated on the right hand of the Father. And then God has something special for us in verse 4. We have an inheritance incorruptible.

It's eternal. It's indestructible. It's not covered with the germs of death that every one of us are covered with that are going to die.

One day each one of us here, we're going to die. We have an inheritance that's undefiled. It's not stained like the things here on earth.

It's celestial. And it fades not away. It will never grow old.

You know, I have a cell phone. I bought it a couple of years ago. And when I first had it, you could charge it up and it would last about four days.

And then about six months later, it would last about three days. A year later, about two days. Now it lasts about one day.

Why? The battery is wearing out. Right now, you look at yourself and say, well, I'm 20 years old. That means I have another 60 years.

I'm going to live to be 80. No, my grandfather was 96. I'm going to live to be 96.

That means I have another 86 years, 76 years left. Do you think you have 76 years left? None of us. No, do we? No.

We're all fading away. But God, He has a treasure laid up for us that are Christians. And it's reserved.

It's guarded. It's in the most secure place in the universe. It's in heaven.

And then for us in verse 5, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last day. Do you know that God keeps His people? I believe that a person, once you are saved, you can never be lost. But do you know there's a big problem with that verse or that type of thinking? And there's a lot of confusion with that type of thinking.

You say, well, I know a guy, he was a Christian and now he doesn't go and now he's doing drugs and now he's doing this and he's doing that. Well, the problem is he said he was a Christian. And that's what it talks about in Matthew's Gospel.

Many shall knock at the door and say, Lord, Lord, open unto us. And the Lord will say, I never knew you. We can't look into one another's hearts and say, he's a Christian, she's not, he is, she's not.

None of us knows what's in the heart of the other person. Our sister was talking about Romans chapter 5 and verse 8, but God commended His love or demonstrated His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. And then we have that wonderful verse in Romans chapter 10 and verse 9, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth and believe in thine heart that God has raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

You shall be saved. So we hear somebody saying, yes, Jesus is my Savior. And we say, oh, congratulations! It's the best day of your life.

But do you know what happens? The person said it just to make his mom happier, his dad happier. Do you know what happens? Some young guys, they see a Christian girl and they say, oh, she's beautiful. And she's clean.

She's not like the girls in the school. And she doesn't swear and she doesn't use bad language. And she's always so polite.

And they sort of start hanging out. And she says to him, you know, I can't go out with you, you know, because you're not a Christian. What do you mean you can't? Well, because the Bible says that a Christian or non-Christian we're not supposed to get married.

And well, how do I become a Christian? Well, you know, if you accept that you're a sinner and believe in your heart that Jesus died for you. OK, OK, OK, OK. What do I pray? OK, just let me pray.

And then they pray along and they say, OK, OK, now I'm a Christian. Oh, yeah, now we can go out together. Isn't that wonderful? And they go to young people and they go to church and everything like that.

But they're never a Christian. And after a year or two, they say, oh, I can't be bothered with that stuff. And they stop going.

They end up, once he gets married, he's happy. And that's his last day in church. Be careful, young ladies.

Be careful, young ladies, to make sure the man that you marry is a Christian man, that he's a man of God, that he's a man that you'll be happy to have as the father of your children and be happy to have as your husband, the spiritual leader in your house. Verses six to seven, we'll talk about trials. Trials are something, like I say, that we don't want to think about.

Remember those verses I read over in Hebrews chapter 11? Could you imagine running through the desert and hiding? Could you imagine living here in British Columbia? You know, British Columbia, Vancouver is really, really nice. But, you know, last night, you know, the temperature almost got down to freezing. There was frost on the ground over in Ladner.

Ice. Frost is ice. Okay, what would it be like up around Hope? A lot more.

What would it be like up around Prince George? If you want to hide, you don't want to just sort of go around Hope. You want to get into the mountains to get away from people if they're trying to kill you, right? Would you like to live like that? You say, well, I'd rather hide down around Arizona. It's a lot warmer down there.

But that's what these verses are talking about. It's talking about a time of spiritual persecution when the world is closing in on the Christians. That's what these people were suffering.

You say, we're not going to invite that guy back again because he told us some pretty scary things. But trials, they're necessary for our faith. You remember Paul had a thorn in the flesh.

And what was that about? It was to keep him humble. It was to keep him relying upon God. It was to keep him clinging to God.

We sing that song, What a Friend We Have in Jesus. All our sins and griefs to bear. And it talks about caring everything we have to Him in prayer.

But really, we're not a real praying people. You know, you can say, Our Father who art in Heaven, give us this day. You can say, thank you for the food that we had.

But you're not saying, Lord, will you give me food for supper? The fridge is bare. Will you please give me food for supper? You can't imagine what that would be like, could you? You know, my wife, where she grew up in Guatemala, they had beans and tortillas three times a day. Can you imagine living like that? But she didn't.

She was never hungry. She always had lots of food. But there's kids, you've seen them on these shows like Care Canada.

And their arms are like little toothpicks. And they have big bloated bellies because they're full of worms and amoebas and things like that. And their eyes are bulging out.

Suffering. Trials are priceless. They're much more precious than gold that perish.

Because God wants you to be conformed to the image of Christ. Do you know the Bible says, God hates pride? Are you proud? Are you saying, well, I'm very proud and we're living in a world where self-esteem is really being promoted. And you should be proud of yourself.

You've done a wonderful job. Well, you should feel good when you're accomplishing, when you're doing what God wants. I agree 100%.

But the person that goes around and they have their head up in the air and they won't even say hi to their brothers and sisters and their cousins and their friends. We used to call them stuck up. They're proud.

They're haughty. Verse 7 says, The trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be unto the praise and the glory and the honor at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. You know, one day, God's going to take everything that you've done in your 20 or 30 or 15 years that you've lived here, and He's going to take it all and He's going to put it in a big pile.

And then He's going to take a match. And everything that was not of God is going to burn away. And only what was done for God is going to last.

How do you think your life would be right now? I talked to a young girl, 18 years old, last year. And I said to her, I said, How do you think your life would be right now if the Lord Jesus Christ come back right now? How do you think it would be? She said, It's not very good. I said, What are you going to do about it? Are you going to make some serious changes? Our sister was talking about making a list of Thanksgiving, things to be thankful to God for.

That's a good place to start, isn't it? But how about a time of reading the Word of God? You know, there used to be a time when every Christian read the Bible through every year. You know, I bought a Bible the other day, or I borrowed one from the library. It says, Chronological Bible.

Read the Bible through in one year. And the lady says to me, She says, You know, my husband does that every year. What does that mean? It means that she didn't.

So do you think the Bible is only for men? Do you think that sisters shouldn't be reading the Bible through every year as the same as their husbands? What do you think? Or you think the Bible, that's only for preachers? How many chapters a day do you have to read to read the Bible through in one year? You have to read three chapters. I think it's 1,089 chapters in the Bible. Right? So it's like three chapters a day.

Somebody says like 15 minutes a day and you'll read the Bible through. Turn off your TV 15 minutes earlier, or turn off your PlayStation 15 minutes earlier, or your Xbox and say, I'm going to take 15 minutes and read the Bible. Then this last section, verses 8-12, says, Whom having not seen ye love, whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I think this verse would remind us of Thomas, Doubting Thomas. The disciples said, We have seen the Lord. Thomas wasn't there.

You know, when Christians stay home from church, they miss something sometimes, you know? So Thomas wasn't there, but he was there the next week. He'd heard about the story. So he was there the next week.

And as soon as the Lord came in, Thomas had said the week before, Except I can put my finger in the prince of his hands and thrust my hand into the sword wound in his side, I will not believe. But as soon as he saw the Lord Jesus, he fell down. He says, My Lord and my God.

And the Lord says to him, Thomas, because you have seen, you have believed. But blessed are they which have not seen and have believed. So this is the group that Peter was writing.

The people that had never seen the Lord Jesus Christ, but they had heard that He had loved them and He had shed His precious blood on Calvary's cross, that He died for them, that they could be forgiven, that they could be redeemed, that they could have their sins forgiven and a clear conscience and a home in heaven. And then he talks about this group of prophets in verses 9-12. And I always had this sort of strange way of thinking about these prophets in the Old Testament.

I always figured the prophet, he was sort of sitting under the old palm tree there over in Israel. And he was sort of sitting there and sort of just looking up at the sun and looking at the coconuts and the bananas and just waiting for God to speak to him. And you know, maybe that's how you are in your Christian life.

You think, well, you know, God's going to speak to me. I'll just sort of sit here and, well, He hasn't said anything yet. I'm going to turn on the PlayStation for a while just to see and I'll pass some time, you know.

Do you know what this verse says in verse 11? It says, verse 10, Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently. So it says they were asking. They were asking God and they were searching diligently.

It means they were taking the Old Testament Scriptures and they would look at this chapter and they would read it through and then they'd flip over. I remember reading something like that over in Isaiah. So then he would look at the verse in Isaiah and then he would flip back over to Ezekiel and he'd read over there and then he'd flip back to the book of Psalms and he'd read over there.

They searched diligently for unto you a child is born, unto you a son is given and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace. And then they would think over in Micah how he was going to be born in Bethlehem. And then they would think about Psalm 22, how he was going to be taken and crucified.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And he'd be putting all these verses together and he'd say, oh, now I'm starting to get it. The Messiah was going to be sent into the world as a baby and he was going to be born of a virgin and he was going to grow up. He was going to be born in Bethlehem and he was going to grow up in Nazareth.

And then he was going to heal the sick and he was going to raise the dead, but he was going to forgive sins. And the people understood that for the first time, that if they trusted Him, they could have everlasting life. But you know, it says these prophets, they didn't even understand it for themselves.

We're living in a life, if it doesn't serve me, if it doesn't help me, then I don't want anything to do with it. But these people were studying the Scriptures so that other people might understand what the Word of God was for. And that's what that says in verse 12, unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you this morning for the opportunity to open up your Word. We know that you have given a message not just to the Jews. First it was given unto the Jews, but they rejected it.

And then it went on to the Gentiles, the rest of the entire world, that every nation and every tongue and every one that was born around the world might be able to recognize Him as Savior. And they might be able to have this joy unspeakable and rejoicing that they might be able to give thanks unto our Savior, the One that died and gave us the gift of eternal, everlasting life. We give you thanks.

Ask your blessing upon these young people that are here today. They have their whole lives in front of them. Lord, may they use it for your honor and glory.

In Jesus' name we pray.

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