

# The Timelessness of God

by Major Ian Thomas

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*The sermon emphasizes the timelessness of God and the importance of deriving our Christian life from scripture, rather than from experiences or emotions.*

**Duration:** 54:32

**Scripture:** Isaiah 42:9, Isaiah 46:9-11, Matthew 17:1-5, 2 Peter 1:19-21

**Topics:** "Character Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of understanding the nature of our sinful condition and the consequences it brings. He highlights that God, in His kindness and faithfulness, reveals the true nature of sin not to depress us, but to awaken us to our need for restoration. The preacher also emphasizes that God has provided a complete and all-embracing solution for our lost condition through Jesus Christ, who was slain from the foundation of the world. He encourages believers to fully embrace and be available to all that God is, as this is the secret to the Christian life and the source of confidence and peace.

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## Transcript

living within us through his gracious indwelling Holy Spirit. So give us sensitivity to your instructions and the grace of obedience that the Holy Spirit may do his delightful work in clothing our Lord Jesus in fuller and increasing measure with our bodies as we gladly yield them to him that he might be king in his kingdom. And we ask it in his DNA.

Amen. Good to be with you again this morning we're going to turn to the first chapter of the second of Peter's epistles. This is where we shall begin this morning probably won't be where we'll end but at least it'll be where we begin.

The second of Peter's epistles and the first chapter and the 16th verse.

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we make known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ but were eyewitnesses of his majesty for he received from God the Father honor and glory when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased and this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount and so here Peter describes what must have been to him a very treasured memory a wonderful experience we call it today the mount of transfiguration when the Lord when the Lord Jesus appeared to

Peter James and John as they were with him in the mount transfigured before their presence a foretaste of his present glory and this was an experience which was entirely legitimate it was healthy

wholesome and wonderful and one which Peter might together with James and John legitimately treasure and God in his goodness gives to all of us such unique experiences when in a special and a wonderful way we are conscious of the Lord's presence but having reminded those to whom he is here writing of this very wonderful time that he spent with James and John in the mount with the Lord Jesus and Elijah Moses you remember who appeared and with whom the Lord Jesus discussed the death as he described it not that he would suffer but the death that he would accomplish at Jerusalem for the death of the Lord Jesus remember was not that of a noble idealist who drifted tragically to disaster it was an accomplishment it was a divine end the things concerning me said the Lord Jesus have an end

they're not coming to an end they have an end but having reminded them of this then Peter goes on to say this in spite of all of that marvelous as it was to hear the very voice of God himself from heaven acknowledging his own dear son transfigured before our very eyes in spite of all that verse 19 we have a more sure word of prophecy where unto you do well that you take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star rise in your heart knowing this first that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation for the prophecy came not in all time by the will of man but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost now you get the main thrust what Peter is saying he says marvelous legitimate wholesome healthy wonderful as

may have been that unusual experience we've a more sure word of prophecy this amazing book of divine authorship the scriptures given as holy men of God speak as they were moved by the Holy Ghost what Peter in so many words is saying is this truth never ultimately derives from experience no matter how marvelous that experience may be no matter how right no matter how divinely originated no truth derives from experience but experience to be valid experience to be healthy experience to be wholesome experience to be safe must always derive from truth and that is something that we need always to remind ourselves of you see if Peter hadn't crossed that fact then of course his experience there on the mount of transfiguration would have been exaggerated in his mind out of all proportions and of

course in any case his memory could have failed him and human nature being what it is how easily we can multiply our experiences exaggerate them and overemphasize them and it wouldn't have been long before Peter would have been wholly preoccupied with that experience this would have been the criterion of his Christian life and he would have become a transfigurationist and instead of preaching Christ he'd have preached transfiguration he'd have been going around saying if you had a transfiguration experience you haven't well I am sorry you must seek that transfiguration experience because you know that really is the criterion of spirituality until you've had a transfiguration experience like me you know how you go that's what would have happened how this has happened all down the centuries

to what a tragic extent is happening today where people are putting experiences on the market rather than the Lord Jesus himself the blessings instead of the blessing the gifts instead of the gift you see the one that matters is the one from whom everything must always derive the Lord Jesus who is the life the life of the body the one who as God alone has the sovereign right to direct your activity and mine and express himself spontaneously through it 24 hours a day in any way he pleases subject to his divine sovereign and timeless will.

Now says Peter we've got a more sure word of prophecy I have every right to look back with thankfulness to God for that particular manifestation that we enjoyed at that particular time but he said I don't derive my Christian life from that I don't derive the message that I proclaim from that God has given us a timeless revelation that is always authentic and ever true it's this more sure word of prophecy so this is the first principle with which we'll begin these morning sessions and that is this that the form of scripture the form of scripture from Genesis to the revelation right the way through the form of scripture is the word of God it doesn't just contain the word of God you don't have to pick and scratch and and find little bits that you think are valid and jettison the rest no from

the beginning to the end the form of scripture is the word of God it is a divine declaration of intent it's something that God had to say and having said it it's something that God intends that you and I should know a declaration of intent and when I describe the word of God as a declaration of intent I don't mean that it is something that God hopes will happen when we make a declaration of intent that's all that is really involved if I say to you it is my intention on Saturday the flight of Portland origin that isn't the final word I may die of a heart attack the day after tomorrow or somebody very kindly may drive me down the road and wind me around the lamppost the Lord Jesus himself may come between now and Saturday all kinds of things could happen it's my intention but there's

absolutely no certainty that it's going to take place it may be your intention and you may have thus declared it to your friends to visit Europe next vacation well that's your declaration of intent but there's absolutely no certainty about it but when you see God makes a declaration of intent it's as timeless and valid and sure as God himself you see there is a historicity about the future so far as God is concerned as there is a historicity about the past so far as we're concerned you see God is timeless we're creatures of time we happen to live on a little planet that goes revolving around the sun happens to do it in what we have divided into 24 hours so we call it a day sunrise sunset then a new day dawn of course if we were a little nearer to the sun our hours would be that much

shorter because we'd go around that much quicker and of course if we're farther away from the sun our hours wouldn't that much longer we'd have to be awake for twice as many hours before we had the chance of going to bed because you see it would take that much longer to go around the sun we're just creatures of relativity God is God isn't God is timeless the Lord Jesus is the same yesterday today and forever there's no past no present no future with God as though they were relatively one to the other God is the eternal I am this is something that our finite minds of course find it very difficult to grasp the only difference between the future and the past as far as God is concerned is that the future hasn't happened yet in human experience that's the only difference I don't

know whether you've seen uh one of those Swiss sort of musical boxes I'm sure some of you if you've visited that country have got one you know you open the lid and it plays a little tune or uh it may be a fruit bowl and when you take the weight off then it plays the tune again have you ever looked inside I'm sure some of you must have done so but you see that tune is pegged out on a on a brass cylinder a brass cylinder it's just a brass cylinder and a little peg all over and and this brass cylinder revolves by clockwork and as it revolves so the little pegs placed differently impinge upon the teeth of what looks like a comb but of course all the teeth are different lengths so each tooth plays a different note and as the cylinder revolves so the teeth sort of pegged out on it impinge

against the teeth on the comb and play the tune so you see in a sense you can pick up that brass cylinder and there's the whole tune pegged out from beginning to end but it doesn't become experiential to you

until in the process of time slowly it turns and in the process of time the tune already pegged out to play and becomes really new experience now that in a sense is God compared to you and to me he can see the whole picture from beginning to end I'm glad that's true if it weren't true we'd never be absolutely certain the Lord Jesus was coming again we can only hope that everything will work out according to plan you know and God sitting up in heaven sort of peeping through damp clouds biting his fingernails hoping you know that everything is going to you know fulfill them is that the

expectation we have of the return of the Lord Jesus no it's as sure as the dawn just as sure as the dawn we're looking forward to his coming you look in the prophecy of Isaiah and the 47th chapter 46 chapter Isaiah 46 and verse 9 remember the former things of old for I am God there is none else I am not I was not I will be I am God and there is none like me and you know if there's one thing that God wants us to know more than anything else it's just precisely and exactly that I am God and in point of fact if only we'd settle for that if only we would settle for that and act on the assumption that is to all our problems would immediately be solved at once for each one of us individually I am God in all that that comprehends be still he says in the psalm and know something there's something

I want you now stop the panic stop fussing stop rushing around be still God and know something what is it I'm God I'm God you see in all our planning in all our programming in all the ambitions we cherish in all our manipulations there's one thing we constantly forget what is it God just happens to be God he that cometh to God must first believe that God was God will be so you simply cherish memories of the past or plan for the future he that cometh to God must first believe that God is and not only that he is but that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him in other words all that God is is available to the man who is available to all that God is now that's the secret of the Christian life all that God is is available to the man who is available to all that God is now if that's

true and you were to settle for being totally available to all that God is what could frighten you if God before us who can be against us so what's the panic this is the sheer glorious sublime simplicity of the Christian life but for some reason other we will avoid that simplicity at all costs and complicated we must we must somehow turn it into a procedure we must somehow turn it into a formula we must somehow reduce it to rules and regulations instead of the glorious fact that God is and all that he is is available to me so long as I am available to him all I've got to do in other words is let God be God and that's the nature of faith that we were talking about yesterday remember the former time things of old he says I am God there is none else I am God there is none like me verse 10 of

Isaiah 46 declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done saying my counsel shall stand I will do how much all my pleasure middle of verse 11 I God says have spoken I says God will also bring it apart I have purposed it I will also do it so you and I are safe only as we are prepared to be caught up into his eternal timeless purposes and plans and of course if we are prepared for that calling to call according to his purpose what can we know all things work together for good to them that are called according to his purpose and are available to that purpose because they love him all things work together for good to them that love God and demonstrate their love for God by being numbered amongst those who are called according to his purpose then

you know that history is on your side you know that all history is waiting for you every every day that dawns is waiting for you when the Lord Jesus Christ came to this world all history was waiting for him because he was the lamb slain from the foundation of the world and he was born precisely at the right moment where should he have been born according to the scriptures in Bethlehem right Micah tells us that

fifth chapter second verse out of Bethlehem is he to come forth from the gates of eternity stepping out of eternity into time born at Bethlehem where did his mother live in Nazareth why should a baby be born in Bethlehem his mother lives in Nazareth well simply because a heathen godless Roman emperor decided for the first time in history to attack the whole then known world that was

subject to the Roman yoke and every individual was commanded by the Roman Caesar to go to the city of their father so Joseph and Mary went to the city of their father David Bethlehem and arrived just precisely at that moment when Mary being great with trials was to be delivered so who organized humanly speaking the birth of the Lord Jesus in Bethlehem when his mother lived in Nazareth a heathen godless Roman Caesar who really organized gosh gosh it was just a few of the pegs on the brass cylinder you see and in the process of time precisely at the right moment Jesus was born and all history was waiting for him of course he could have been born a thousand years earlier and instead of writing 1972 on our notepaper today we would write two thousand nine hundred and seventy two of course he

could have come a thousand years later and instead of writing 1972 on our notepaper today would be seven at 972 you see God's purposes are timeless and of course hundreds of millions of people today are going to bear testament in the fact when they put the date on the paper that Jesus was born according to the scriptures in the timeless purpose of a timeless God now of course this baffles us we could spend a lovely time and maybe we'll have the opportunity one morning I don't know but we could spend a lovely time simply going to the old testament and seeing all the meticulous details of the birth life death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus foreshadowed in advance in the old testament concerning his coming a wonderfully encouraging exercise because you see you and I do not believe that

the Lord Jesus was born lived and died for our sins and rose again from the dead he is coming back simply because the bible says he did we believe it because the bible said he would not just that he did but that he would in the new testament there is simply recorded for us as what he did that which was foreshadowed in the old testament as that which he would that's all history in advance baffles our finite minds but then when bobby fisher and the russian were playing chess spassky wasn't it fascinated me because you know you'd read the report in the paper of the latest game and you'd find they'd five moves or seven moves and one of them resigned gave up and the explanation was that the man who gave up after five moves knew that 37 moves later he'd be defeated so he wasn't going to waste

his time well they had sort of computerized brains you see and they look at the board and they can see the situation and after five moves knowing that in 37 other moves he'd i resign he knows the end from the beginning well you see god's got a mind like that vastly beyond our human comprehension and i wouldn't begin to try to explain it but he knows the end from the beginning and the most fantastic thing is that in spite of all that into the timeless sovereignty of an eternal god for whom it's always present tense man was created with the capacity to choose for god in the unchallengeable sovereignty of our creator so chose as we shall discover during our evening service to create a man capable of exercising a moral option so in his unchallengeable sovereignty he chose to limit himself by

the law of faith that may be exercised by one of his creatures that says yes or no that let him or done isn't that fantastic now the form of scripture is the word of god it's a divine declaration of intent as timeless and immutable as god himself that's principle number one the form of scripture is the word of god now the second principle is equally simple and it's this if the form of scripture is the word of god the character of the word of god is gospel is gospel the form of scripture is the word of god a divine declaration of intent recorded for us from genesis to the revelation but the character of the word of god the character of that

divine declaration intent the character of everything god has had to say and has been so graciously preserved for us authored by the holy spirit the

character of the word of god is gospel now you understand the term gospel the gospel as you know translated into english simply means good news it's the evangelist it's good news and no matter what god may have recorded for us in this book from genesis to the revelation no matter how severe may appear what he says no matter how turned his warning no matter how resolute his judgment everything that god has to say to you to me in this book is good news good news it's calculated to introduce us to the remedial measures that god has provided for you and for me that in our lost condition we might be restored to our true function now without any apology and in marvelous kindness and honesty and faithfulness to us god tells us exactly the nature of sin and the consequences of sin but not to

depress us not to plunge us into despair but that we might be awakened to the nature of our case and embrace the provision that he's made for us in the one sling from the foundation of the world before ever the world was created if a doctor comes and pronounces a person sick it's not to depress the individual but it is to diagnose his case and to give that individual the good news that there is a provision available for precisely that particular element that he may become wholly well good news how unfaithful the doctor would be to pretend that that person wasn't sick in case he hurt that person seems god doesn't treat us that way he tells us exactly the nature of our case what's wrong with us why it went wrong the awful consequences if it isn't put right and the fantastically good news

that there is complete total all-embracing provision for precisely that condition for any boy any girl any man any woman anywhere at any time in gospel the good news so the form of scripture is the word of god and the character of the word of god is gospel but here again we've got a pause because we mustn't take a narrow view of gospel and by and large the spiritual poverty of the evangelical church of jesus christ derives from the fact that we have emasculated gospel we've reduced it to a mere shadow of its real substance we've talked about gospel meetings as though that simply applied to the unregenerate the unconverted the wicked sinner who needs to claim forgiveness and go to heaven and by and large we've geared our whole church machinery simply to precipitate a particular crisis in a

particular person at a particular time after which as it were we tick them off and then program them into the machine and call that gospel of course that's far divorced from the revelation of gospel in the word of god gospel in the word of god god's good news is calculating to restore the man in totality to that function for which god has created created man as his creature and anything less than that is less than gospel you see so often somebody will say will it be a gospel meeting now what do they mean by that every time you open this book and proclaim its message that's a gospel meeting somebody sometimes comes to me and says is it going to be a salvation message i don't know any other unless i'm going to be a buddhist or a muhammadan or an atheist or something or a humanist or a

philosopher with some cracked remedy to human needs i am in no salvation as the total remedial purpose of god calculated to get any boy any girl any man any woman back into that relationship with god that allows god oh god to be functional in that individual and restore that individual to god's holy satisfaction to that relationship with himself that allows god in the man to fulfill the purpose which he created him that is salvation anything less than that is a cheap empty nasty imitation of the real thing that sells jesus christ down the river and cheats him of that for which his blood was shed and the church by and large has settled for it that's why you've got hundreds of thousands of sunday christians and they've settled for that and jesus christ has got to listen to the insurance

policy the premium of which they paid one day years ago when they walked the aisle and got baptized and ever since they've been paying just a small annual premium to make quite sure the policy is still in being what a miserable caricature of the real thing gospel comprehends the total restorative purposes of god calculated to bring a man back into that relationship with god himself that for god's holy satisfaction that man may once more on earth function for the purpose which he was created and then forever in eternity that's one of the simplest definitions that you have of salvation is given to us in two very fine verses which you'll find you care to note it in the first of paul's two epistles to the thessalonians the fifth chapter and verses nine and ten one thessalonians chapter five

nine and ten this is what they say god has not appointed us to judgment i call it judgment you see because in the bible it says wrath but you wouldn't know what i mean if i said wrath what i really mean is wrath you see but i can never quite understand why you call it wrath when it's spelt wrong so i call it judgment you see then there's no confusion so god has not appointed us to judgment but to obtain salvation through our lord jesus christ now lest there should be any doubt in our mind or fuzziness in our mind as to what salvation involves it goes on in the next verse to define it god has not appointed us to judgment but to obtain salvation through our lord jesus christ who died for us to what end that whether we wake or sleep what does that mean well in the context of that chapter in

the preceding chapter of course as well you know it means whether i am still physically alive or already physically dead it means whether i'm still on earth with my two feet on the ground or already in heaven it means whether i'm still here or already there whether it is now or then he died for us that whether we wake or sleep we should live together with him salvation that a boy girl man or woman is reconciled to god through the shed blood of jesus christ receives the forgiveness of sins that on the grounds of that redemptive transaction the lord jesus himself might come back into the humanity of that boy that girl that man that woman in both their personalities that from that moment on for every 24 hours they ever live in time or eternity they might live together with him sharing the

very life of their creator so that no situation will ever confront them for which jesus christ in them will be less than adequate no single situation no responsibility no task no problem no temptation with which they may be confronted that they do not face it in the assurance that they live together with him that all there is of god has become available to all there is of them because all there is of them has been made available to all there is of god that is salvation a far cry simply from knowing that because something happened 20 years ago you're on the way to heaven they're not on the way to hell salvation involves the identity of the redeemed sinner with the lord jesus and the power of his resurrection indivisibly indivisibly identified to the presence of the holy spirit within the

human spirit giving absolutely unchallenged access to the human soul so that he christ by the holy spirit teaching the mind controlling emotions directing the will not governing behavior and express themselves spontaneously in the behavior patterns of that particular individual in such a way that everything he does and says and is bears the divine stamp because it has its origin in christ himself and there's no explanation for that person's life say jesus christ that is salvation and all that is comprehended in gospel and if anybody has told you that you've obeyed the gospel simply because one day you accepted christ as your redeemer forget it you began to obey the gospel you took the first baby step in gospel you got converted you were reconciled to god by the death of god's son and you

were made fit for heaven but that didn't make you fit for earth it may leave you fit for heaven and pathetically unfit for earth like hundreds of thousands of truly converted people that's why they're so

difficult to live with but that wasn't the object of the exercise the whole object of the exercise wasn't to change man's destination from hell to heaven the whole object of the exercise was this whom he did foreknow them he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son god's end product in gospel is not destination but character what a man is like not only here in time but also in eternity not only what he's going to be like in eternity but what he's like in time that is gospel that's why people by and large settle for the former and repudiate the latter because they want the

kind of gospel that will give them assurance policies make quite sure they'll get to heaven when they die by any other claims upon their life invalid so that when you begin to tell them something of the implications of discipleship what it really means to be re-inhabited by god the creator and to present your body to him that he may use it for the purpose which he created it they say get off my back i am saved by and large people who talk like that of course have never been regenerate they've been house trained to certain evangelical procedures but they've never been born again and they will die in their sin so we need to be disillusioned in these areas so that we may discover reality gospel is both redemptive and regenerative it is calculated to make a man not only fit for heaven it is

calculated to make a man fit for heaven fit for earth on the way to heaven it demands the death of the lord jesus redemptively and it demands the life of the lord jesus regeneratedly don't let me confuse you with that term regeneratedly i mean by regeneration the genuine spiritual content of that new birth or regeneration that takes place only when the life of god is re-impacted to the soul of man for the life of god in the soul of man is absolutely inseparable from the likeness of god in the character of man and the whole purpose of the redemptive act when jesus died for us was the regenerative purpose to put the life of the lord jesus in us because it's only the life of the lord jesus in us as we shall discover more clearly tonight only the life of the lord jesus in us that gives us a

part of being in the process of time living day by day in the of being on earth seven days a week only the life of the lord jesus in you gives you the part of being what the death of the lord jesus for you gave you the right to become that's why you need not only what he did so that you might become you need what he is so that you can be one is a crisis the other is a process and to say i am redeemed is not to say i am born again to say that i am born again is not to say that i am redeemed they are indivisible the one from the other and now they are simultaneous in time but they must not be confused the one for the other redemption demanded the death of jesus christ for us as a historical act two thousand years ago new birth or spiritual regeneration demands the life of the lord jesus in

us if one demands his death for us and the other demands his life in us how can they be one in the same thing his death for us was designed to put his life in it in other words redemption as an act was designed to precipitate the regenerated process whereby we live together with him his holy spirit we present within the human spirit to credit to the forgiven sin of the resurrection life of his once crucified and now risen and glorified creator god and savior you see on the grounds of the death of the lord jesus for us redemption and as i indicated last evening deriving from redemption what the bible calls justification i am justified justified never sinned just as if i never sinned because the lord jesus died for me as though just as if he committed all my sins that is the basis upon

which i am justified it is redemption that demands the death of christ where god made him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might become the righteousness of god in him he died vicariously as a substitute god made him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of god in him which i have quoted and justification derived from redemption and redemption derived from his death that

allows god to see me in christ so that i'm accepted in the beloved i'm closed with his righteousness i'm wearing the reddened garment that is justification on the grounds of redemption deriving from the death of jesus god sees me in christ now regeneration or new birth takes place when the one who having died for me now being risen again from the dead comes in the person of his

holy spirit to take up residence within my human spirit and by his presence in life abolish that state of death in which i was born for you and i you see were born in that state of death again as we shall discover more clearly in the evening service you see since adam fell into sin no boy girl man or woman has can or ever will die for their sins did you know that since adam fell into no boy girl man or woman has can or ever will die for their sins for a very good reason too late it's already happened in what condition were you born spiritually alive or spiritually dead dead and dead men die dead men can't die if you and i were born spiritually dead quite obviously we couldn't die for our sins it's already happened we were heirs of that state of death that occurred in adam when he died the

only two things that can take place in a person who is dead is stay dead or what come alive resurrection that's gospel but you and i alas have become all too acquainted with the gospel that says come to jesus and you will not die for your sins that's nonsense totally diametrically opposed to the revelation of scripture you don't come to the lord jesus so that you will not die for your sins you come to the lord jesus as one already dead in your sins to come alive to be raised from the dead to have life restored to the lifeless that's why the lord jesus said i am come that you might have life but because the vast bulk of christians have never understood the nature of that spiritual resurrection to equate new birth with redemption but new birth is that resurrection that derives from

redemption new birth is the coming back of the life of god into the soul of a redeemed sinner that abolishes death by the presence of life that's regeneration that's new birth that puts god back into the man what does that demand our spiritual resurrection demands his resurrection so redemption derives from his death for me and justification derives from that redemption and god sees me in christ but my regeneration derives from the resurrection of the lord jesus and his presence now by the holy spirit in me through whose presence i share his resurrection life because he lives i live also so that from the resurrection there derives our new birth or spiritual resurrection and this is what paul meant as i reminded some yesterday morning as he wanted more intimately to become acquainted with

the lord jesus so that he might enjoy more fully that spiritual and moral resurrection lifts him up from among the dead even while still in the body living together with jesus so from the resurrection of the lord jesus there derives our spiritual regeneration or new birth and from our spiritual regeneration or new birth there derives that moral resurrection that is called in the bible sanctification the death of jesus redemption on the grounds of redemption justification on the grounds of justification god sees me in christ on the grounds of the resurrection of the lord jesus that is imparted to me his resurrection life regeneration on the basis of that re-imparted life of jesus christ regeneration sanctification because if justification allows god to see me in christ sanctification

allows the world to see christ in me anything complicated about that justification allows god to see me in christ but on the basis of that spiritual regeneration that puts christ back into me god back into the man sanctification the measure which i allow the lord jesus now living in me to use my hands work with my feet speak with my lips look with my eyes hear with my ears think with my mind love with my heart react in every area of my being under his indwelling motivation the measure which i allow the lord jesus living in me actually to behave through me close his activity with my humanity that is the measure of my

sanctification that allows the world to see christ in me by the things i say by the things i do by the attitudes i adopt by the decisions that i make by what i am and what's

that destination or character character and the world knows that i'm living together with him that's all gospel that's gospel so each morning each night i've been preaching the gospel for god created man to be inhabited by god exclusively not by sin but god and the end product of our salvation is when once more god inhabits his creature again exclusively so the consummation as john reminds us in the third chapter of his first epistle is this beloved what manner of love the father hath bestowed upon us that we should now be called the children of god he said we do not yet know in full what we shall be but he said in spite of that this at least we do know what is it that when he comes we shall be in heaven like him like him we shall see him as he is and then be ever with the law this says

john we do know that in the day that the lord jesus comes we shall see him as he is and we shall be exactly like him well what's happened in that day the final glorious consummation of that salvation that begins with the redemptive act that precipitates the regenerative purpose putting god back into the man and it leads to that consummating climax when once more we are totally absolutely like him where we arrived back in genesis chapter one haven't we what did god say of man when he created him genesis chapter one let us make man in our image and in our likeness and in the likeness of god made in him so what's happened when salvation has gone full cycle we've been restored from created likeness to recreated likeness and gospel has done its work and restored us to our true function to give

a physical visible image of an invisible god that's salvation and the measure of your spirituality in mind the measure of our spiritual maturity is not our business not our activity it's our likeness how much can be seen of god in me that's how mature i am i can master all the doctrines of the bible and be the most obnoxious person to live with i can be the most eloquent preacher in the pulpit and be detested by my own family is that maturity is that spirituality says paul i can speak with the tons of angels and have not a wit of compassion no love and he says your angelic unknown tongues are nothing but noisy gongs and tinkling cymbals it's the character of god that counts in terms of our spiritual adulthood and all that is involved in gospel that makes me not only fit to heaven that

makes me sit on earth on the way to him at god the form of scripture is the word of god the character of the word of god is gospel and here we've got to conclude and here we'll pick up the threads tomorrow the last principle the third which is obvious the form of scripture is the word of god the character of the word of god is gospel and the content of that gospel is jesus christ not christianity jesus christ not blessings jesus christ not gifts jesus christ not procedures of jesus christ not the great commission jesus christ from whom everything exclusively must arise to be valid and if it doesn't forget it it may be an exact replica of something spiritual because the flesh can simulate every form of writing but it's phony any activity that does not derive from my relationship to jesus

christ that actually allows him as god to be god and pray god in my life is illegitimate it's a cheap carnal imitation of the real thing it will be calculated never to exalt christ it'll always boost my ego that's why peter said marvelous as the mount of transfiguration may have been i've got a more sure word of prophet that leads me not to my past experience but leads me to my present law from whom i know every step i take must arise and every word i speak must arrive and every decision that i make must arrive and every act in which i engage must arrive because you see god hasn't appointed us to judgment but to obtain salvation for our lord jesus who guides us whether we wake or sleep in the body or out of it on earth or in heaven in time or eternity now or then here or there we might

live together with him that's the christian life and you and i have got to get so accustomed to sharing the life of the lord jesus on earth here that when we get to heaven we won't even know we've arrived except to look around and say i that's the christian life that's why there's no fear of death to a believer absolutely none the quality of life which is eternal that i'm going to enjoy in heaven is exactly and precisely that quality of life which is eternal that i'm enjoying now i'm not waiting for the resurrection i'm enjoying it i was raised from the dead at the age of 12 quarter of nine saturday night 13th of august 1927 when the lord jesus by his presence through the holy spirit abolished death and brought life and immortality to life there is coming a day when i'm going to put up

this mortality and the sooner the better there is coming a day when this corruption will be swallowed up in incorruption and the sooner the better i agree wholeheartedly with paul the apostle when he says to me to live is christ to die is gain the only thing that militates says paul the apostle and i agree with him the only thing that militates against my full enjoyment of that resurrection life that is mine now is the limitation imposed upon me by this mortal corruptible body that learned so many bad habits before i was redeemed and is still subject to aches and pains and the sooner i'm released from it the better to be absent from the lord and to be absent from the body and present with the lord he says which is far better but he says i'm not going to commit suicide i'm not going to

accelerate the process because that isn't within my jurisdiction i know that if god in his mercy leaves me in this particular old corruptible dying body for a short period of time before i enter into his maximus presence and share his kingdom forever there it's because he my lord jesus whose life i share has something to do still on earth through me for the furtherance of other people's joy and the furtherance of other people's faith that if my presence on earth no longer furthers he says your joy and your faith i'm hanging around for no purpose in this time i went that's simple isn't it and i'm happy to be in this body just so long as the lord jesus through me can further somebody else's joy and serve as somebody else's faith and then as soon as his work in me is done i'll not demand to

stay on earth one minute longer because to be absent from this old body and to be present with my lord is a million times so much more wonderful if only we would believe that's why paul says fourth chapter of his first epistle to professor london that we're not to sorrow when our brother sleeps as those who have no hope we spend all our days on earth as christians telling others how marvelous it's going to be to get to heaven and when one of our beloved brethren goes to heaven what do we do cry our eyes out oh isn't it terrible she's gone to heaven oh isn't that terrible that man's gone to be with his lord oh how terrible it must be for him to be with christ there is a sorrow in party but my dear friend i'll tell you something as a christian you break your heart because some child of god

has gone to be with his savior you can't be sorry for them can you then who are you being sorry for yourselves come we've got our thinking straight and let god be god right let's pray we're so thankful lord jesus for such a wonderful salvation and for the sheer adventure that you've given to us though we never deserved it of sharing your life on earth on the way to heaven marvelous thank you for the release delivered to victory thank you that you don't give us strength or power or wisdom you are our strength you are our power you are our wisdom all that you are as god is ours for all the rest of god is available to us in the measure which we exercise our option to make all the rest of us available to all the rest of you in life or death in the body or out of it on earth or in heaven in

time or eternity thank you lord you've given us the fantastic privilege of living living together with you that is life more about it we thank you in your own dear name amen

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