

5.3.23 am

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Date: 05 March 2023

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Good morning. A warm welcome to the service. I don't think I'm seeing any visitors with us this morning, but everybody is very welcome. And remember, there's tea and coffee at the end if you're able to stay behind.

The evening service is at six, so be encouraged to come to that. We're in Genesis still, six till seven, so be encouraged to come to the evening service. Ladies' Fellowship, Little Fishers Road to Recovery, all at the same time and in the same places.

So you can note that and pray on for these ministries. Prayer meeting on Wednesday in person and on Zoom, half past seven. Cammie will be leading the prayer meeting on Wednesday. I have to be at a meeting in Inverness.

That's not going to take me back till late on on Wednesday night. So Cammie will lead the prayer meeting. And we're into the communion weekend next weekend. And so we've got the details there of the services.

On Friday morning, we've got the Gaelic service. And it's the Reverend Dolan, Dolan MacDonald. And then from Friday night through till Sunday night, we have the Reverend Ian Morrison, who is Peggy's brother, Chrissy's son.

[1 : 15] And we look forward to seeing and to sharing with him over the course of the weekend. On the communion Sunday, evening fellowship as usual.

And there's a sign-up sheet for food in the foyer. And hospitality team one are on duty. You've got the details of that there. And I think these are all the notices.

I am spying some who are not quite visitors, but they're returning friends. So you're especially welcome to be here this morning. These, I think, are all the notices.

The rest you've seen. And these are all that I'll draw attention to just now. But we'll begin this time. We'll worship now and we'll sing to God's praise. We'll sing from Mission Praise 449.

The words on the screen. Love divine, all love's excelling joy of heaven to earth. Come down. Love divine, all love's excelling joy of heaven to earth.

[2 : 37] Come down. Come down.

Come down. As thou art called of passion, pure-bounded love thou art, visit us with thy salvation, and an heavenly trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe, thy loving spirit into every troubled rest.

Let us all in thee inherit, let us find thy promised rest.

Take away the love of sin, alpha and omega be, and all faith as is beginning, set your hearts on liberty.

[4 : 05] Come, Almighty, to deliver, let us all thy gifts receive.

Suddenly return, and never, nevermore thy temptations be.

Healing would be always lasting, serve thee as thy horse above.

Pray and praise thee without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.

Finish and thy new creation, pure and spotless let us be.

[5 : 07] Let us see thy great salvation, perfectly restored in thee.

Change from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place.

Till we cast our clans before thee, all same wonder, love and praise.

One thing that I do want to just say in advance of the communion weekend is that if there is anyone here who is kind of wrestling with that question of should I come forward to the table or should I not, and you're wondering about that and are looking for some guidance, then feel free to come and speak to me or any of the elders in advance of the weekend.

The session will be open from Friday through till Sunday, and so of course there's the invitation to just come, but if you're thinking and praying this through and want to speak with somebody, then just know that the door is open and we would be very happy to speak with anybody who is considering coming forward.

[6 : 45] Let's now unite our hearts in prayer. Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this, your day, and we thank you for the desire that you've put in our hearts to be in this place and the opportunity that we are given and the freedom that we still enjoy to be able to come together to this place in the name of Jesus.

And we thank you that you've promised that where even two or three of us would be gathered together, that you would be with us in the power of the Holy Spirit. And so we thank you that we're here.

We thank you even for those who may be here and who don't perhaps have the desire to be here, but have been brought here anyway. We thank you, Lord, that you work in our circumstances and through the relationships that we are in to bring us to the place that you would want us to be.

And we thank you that you are a God who, in the power of your Spirit, that sometimes gently and gradually there is that call to come to Jesus and trust in him.

And for some of us, that's our testimony. We saw the love of Jesus. We saw our need of him. And over the course of time, gently, gradually, we came to trust and to press our faith in Christ.

[8 : 10] And yet we know that for others, the testimony can be quite different. We think of the Apostle Paul, so determined against Jesus, so much hate in his heart for those who call themselves Christians.

And yet one day, suddenly, he was confronted with the power and the glory and the love and the grace of Jesus. And he came. And we thank you that you are the God who does not change.

And still you work in both these ways. We pray for anybody who's here, anybody perhaps who's determined today not to be here. And Lord, who is resistant to you.

Some people perhaps come to our minds even now. And we ask, Lord, that you would be working in their hearts, that you would arrest them, that you would awaken them, that you would enable them to see the glory and the power and the majesty and the grace and the love of Jesus and their desperate need of him.

And Lord, that they would come. So we ask, Lord, that you would be working in the power of your spirit in this place and in every other place where the gospel message is preached today.

[9 : 26] We thank you for the gospel message that we've sang in that opening hymn. We thank you for that love that is divine, that love that excels every other kind of love.

that Jesus, your son, our saviour, came down from glory to this world, knowing that he would suffer, knowing that he would die in the place of sinners.

We thank you that we are able to read the word of God, that we're able to hear in scripture the voice of Jesus calling sinners like us to come to him.

We thank you that he came not for those who consider themselves to be righteous, but he came for sinners. We thank you that when we see that we in ourselves are not worthy, that is when we are caused to look up to the one who is worthy.

We thank you for the Lamb of God who came to be slain on the cross of Calvary. We thank you that his blood cleanses us from all sin.

[10 : 37] So we pray that you would be working, Lord, in our hearts today for any who still are holding on to their sin and refusing to ask for forgiveness. We pray that today might be the day that we cry out to you, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Cleanse me in the blood of Jesus. And Lord, for those of us who are Christians, we pray that you would be working in us, that you would be sanctifying us, that you would be making us more and more like Jesus, that you would take away the love of sin, that you would make us pure, that you would make us spotless, that you would make us more like Jesus.

And we thank you that we have the promise that if we are in Christ, when we go from this world, we are made perfectly like Jesus. We thank you for heaven.

We thank you that we are just passing through this world. And yes, there are trials and tribulations, but we praise you, Lord, that there is a place of rest, a place of newness of life, a new creation that is promised to all who are in Jesus, where there's no sickness and no sadness and no sin and no division and no wars and no death.

So enable us, we pray, to look to Jesus, to make our calling and election sure, to take the salvation that is offered to us freely in the gospel and to know the joy of that salvation in our lives.

[12 : 14] We pray, Father, for those who may be wrestling today and over these next few days, if we see them, with that call to come to the Lord's table.

Give to us, Lord, we pray that childlike simplicity, that we would see the simplicity of what you call us to do. If we are trusting in Jesus, if we are cleansed by his blood, help us to hear that clear voice of Jesus, saying, do this, don't hesitate, but do this in remembrance of me.

We ask, Lord, that you would be with those who are struggling today with different kinds of afflictions, those who are ill, those who are in hospital, those who have had surgery and who are recovering, those who are waiting to have procedures, those who are anxious about many of the stresses of this world, those who are grieving, over loved ones that they have lost from the scene of time and whom they miss.

Lord, at the point of the need of each person that we think of, we ask, Lord, that you would meet them. We pray for those who battle with addictions and who may be in a low place today, and we ask that you would reach them and that they would cry out as the psalmist stood to the Lord Jesus, the Lord, that you would rescue them from the fearful pit, from the mighty clay, and set them on that firm place, the rock of our salvation, the Lord Jesus.

So, minister, Lord, to us, we pray. Help us in our need and go before us in this service. Help us to be those who worship you in spirit and in truth.

[14 : 05] And we ask this in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. Boys and girls, would you like to come out, please? How are you today?

I've got something to show you. And to tell you the truth, I'm not totally sure what it is. Cameron's not here.

I was looking around. I couldn't see Michael. Hi there. Nice to have you today as well. Cameron and Michael, I said last, I think I might have mentioned this last week in the notices, but Cameron and Michael have been working on a project, and so I asked Marley to get it for me.

And here we have, here we have it. So I'll just put it down here. You can just, you can just look at it for a second. So, you can see, can you see all that?

You want to see, can you see all these bits and pieces? Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. There's a screwdriver there, cables, and then there's a big box there, there's a thing at the back.

[15 : 40] So, many of the young ones are watching at home, that's it. So, what was this, Michael?

A skybox. It was a skybox, it was a skybox, it was a skybox, it was a skybox, it was a skybox, yeah. And, yourself and Cameron, you got a screwdriver out and various tools, and you started to, you've started to dismantle it, so we can see all the different bits of the skybox, and the question is, what's this, that's what it was, it was a skybox, it was a skybox, but what's it going to become?

Ask Cameron. Ask Cameron, he said. Because the thing is, I expect that Cameron and Michael will have a plan.

So, if you don't, don't tell us. Don't tell us, because that's going to ruin the point of the show and stuff. Okay? So you've got a plan, yeah, you've got a plan. We don't know what the plan quite is yet, but there's definitely a plan.

And, and the thing is, who has a plan for our lives? God. God has a plan for our lives. And do you know what his plan for our lives is?

[17 : 11] There's two things about God's plan. What do you think his plan for our lives is? Anyone? Michael?

It's to spread the moon. Well, even before that, what's God's biggest plan for your life, do you think?

And if you want to get a clue for what God's plan is, think about who came to this world. Who came to this world? You're very quiet today. Katrina, who came to this world?

Jesus. And why did he come to this world? Henry? He came to teach and heal. He came to heal.

But more than that, the first, the main thing that Jesus came to this world to do, to forgive our sins, or another way to say that, is he came to save us.

[18 : 14] Jesus came. Jesus came. That's right. He came, and it says, he said it himself, he said he came to seek and to save sinners.

And so God's plan for your life and for my life is that we will be saved. And what do we need to do to be saved?

Henry? And what do we need to pray? Because I want you to know this morning, I want you to know this morning exactly how you can become a Christian.

Because that's right, all you have to do is believe in God, and you're not going to pray if you don't believe in him, so you believe in God. But what do you pray? What? Well, you ask him to come into your life and be your Lord, and you ask him to take away your sins.

And if we do that, then he'll save us. And so God's plan for your life and for my life is to save us. And I want to ask you, boys and girls, look at me.

[19 : 25] Are you saved? Don't answer that. You answer that in your hearts. You tell God that. But are you saved?

And everybody else in the room, are you saved? You know, next Sunday, if we get there, then we'll have communion.

And for those who take the bread, and for those who take the wine, you know what we're saying? I'm saved. I've asked for forgiveness of my sins.

I've asked Jesus to come into my life and be my Lord, and I'm saved. And that was God's plan for us. But it's a two-part plan.

First of all, he wants to save us. And the second thing he wants to do is, and I'm going to teach you a word here, sanctify us.

[20 : 26] Now tell me, put your hand up if you know what the word sanctify means. Michael? To change us. To change us, yes, yes. Yes. Ben, did you have your hand up?

Did you? No? He's wanting to change us. So God, that's right, Michael, he wants to change us. That's what sanctify means. And if he wants to change us, who does he want to change us to be like?

Jesus. He wants to make us more like Jesus. And that's what it means. So, in the playground on Tuesday, you can talk about sanctification.

And in the classroom, you can say, you can throw in somewhere in the sentence the word sanctify and watch the teachers kind of go scratching, their heads and then going into Google and looking up to see what that means.

It means, very simply, God is working on a plan to make us more like Jesus. And at the moment, you know, my life looks a bit like this.

[21 : 33] You know, there's some bits that are hanging off and there's some bits that are a bit broken and there's wires here and there's bits that are half done there and that's the thing about all of our lives.

When we're Christians, we're not saying that we're perfect. We're saying that there's a whole lot of things that God has still got to do in us but he's working to make us more like Jesus.

We're a work in progress. Now Michael, how long is it going to take for you to finish this job and get this changed from being a skybox into a machine that can take over the world?

Should I? Do you think it might take a while? It'll take a while. I think I... Last question. I'm not... Last question.

How long will it take for God to sanctify us to make us more like Jesus? How long will it take?

[22 : 41] It will take our whole lives. From the minute we believe till the minute that we go into to heaven if we're Christians.

God will be working. He'll be taking a bit of this off. He'll be filing a bit off our bad tempers. Be working on our tongues. Be shaping our minds.

And all through our lives from when you're seven to when you're old and grey like some of us he's always working to make us more and more like Jesus.

So that's God's plan. And sometimes we look at ourselves and we say oh man there's a whole lot of things that need to change in me. And that's true. But don't be discouraged.

God has a plan. He's working on us to make us more like Jesus. So let's pray and let's speak to God. Lord we thank you that you love us and we thank you that you have a plan for our lives.

[23 : 44] We thank you that your plan is to save us. And we know that that's true because we see Jesus your son who came into this world to be the saviour. So if there's any of the young ones here or any of the older ones in this room or anybody who's watching at home who hasn't yet been saved we pray that even now we would ask you to take our sin away Lord Jesus and to come into our lives and be the manager the Lord of our lives.

And for those of us who are Christians we thank you that you have a plan to make us more like Jesus and some days we know that we're not at all like Jesus.

Some days our tempers can be bad and some days we can do all the things that we wish that we didn't do but we thank you that you don't give up on us and you're always working to make us more like Jesus.

So work in us we pray and give us the strength to be holy to not sin and to want to obey you and to trust you.

So be near to us we ask and go before us now in Jesus name we pray. Amen. We're going to sing now and we're going to sing 988 mission praise how deep the Father's love for us how vast beyond all measure.

[25 : 20] that he should give his only son to make our riches treasure have made the veil of sealing laws the Father turns his face away as wounds which mar the chosen one bring many sons to glory behold the man upon our cross my sin upon his shoulders ashamed I hear my walking voice call out among the scoffers it was my sin that held him there until it was accomplished his dying breath has brought me life

I know that it is finished I will not boast in anything no gifts no gifts no power no wisdom but I will boast in Jesus Christ his death and resurrection why should I gain from his reward I cannot give an answer but this I know with all my heart his wounds I gave my ransom I cannot give an answer I cannot give an answer

I cannot give an answer I cannot give an answer I cannot give an answer I cannot give an answer OK boys and girls if you head please stand in the school Do you want out?

do you want out? here you go and remember to pray for them as they go out and we could turn in our Bibles now to 1 Peter chapter 1 1 Peter chapter 1 and we'll read from verse 10 to the end of the chapter 1 Peter chapter 1 and picking up at verse 10 and Peter is speaking about salvation and he writes as God the Holy Spirit moves him concerning this salvation the prophets who spoke of the grace that was to come to you searched intently and with the greatest care trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow it was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven even angels long to look into these things therefore prepare your minds for action be self-controlled set your hope fully on the grace to be given to you when Jesus Christ is revealed as obedient children do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance but just as he who called you is holy so be holy in all you do for it is written be holy because I am holy since you call on a father who judges each man's work impartially live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear for you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers but with the precious blood of Christ a lamb without blemish or defect he was chosen before the creation of the world but was revealed in these last times for your sake through him you believe in God who raised him from the dead and glorified him so that your faith and hope are in God now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers love one another deeply from the heart for you have been born again not of perishable seed but of imperishable through the living and enduring word of God for all men are like grass and all their glory is like the flowers of the field the grass withers and the flowers fall but the word of the Lord stands forever and this is the word that was preached to you

Amen and may God bless that reading of his word to us we're going to sing again now to God's praise we'll sing from Psalm 22 and we'll sing just the first two stanzas just the first two stanzas of the psalm but I'll read the first the first three my God my God why hast thou me forsaken why so far art thou from helping me and from my words that roaring are all day my God to thee I cried yet I'm not heard by thee and in the season of the night I cannot silent be but thou art holy thou that dust inhabit Israel's praise our fathers hoped in thee they hoped and thou didst them release we'll sing just the first two stanzas of this psalm that looks forward to the cross I will sing these verses in Gaelic and remain seated to sing magia magia magia magia magia magia magia magia magia

[33 : 03] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[35 : 33] Thank you.

Thank you.

And we thank you that they are words that God the Holy Spirit inspired. And we pray, Holy Spirit, that you would work in our minds and in our hearts just now.

That you would give us understanding, that you would help us to be attentive, that you would strive with us. That we would pray, that we would pray, that we would pray, that we would be touched, but that in our hearts we would be touched.

And we would look to Jesus, amen. And we would say, and we would say, we would say, in the harbouring.

[38 : 34] There's an eye there.

And we would let's pray, that we may pay, that we would pray. And the great theme of Peter's letter to these Christians is the theme of salvation.

But if we are Christians, we have salvation, we are saved. We may be different in lots of different ways. But what unites us, what brings us together, is the fact that we are saved by Jesus.

And that's Peter's great theme in this letter. He writes to those who were saved. He himself is thankful that he, after all that he's done and all these years, he is saved.

And so we see that great theme coming off the pages of this letter as we read it. And again, if we think about the table. The table that we approach is a table that speaks to us about salvation.

[40 : 03] And how that salvation was made available to us. So with one eye on the text and with one eye on the table, let's proceed and look at some of these verses.

And picking up at verse 10, we can see here that our salvation was planned. So that's the first point we see here, salvation planned.

And Peter writes in verse 10, It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you.

Even angels, says Peter, long to look into these things.

Peter's speaking about salvation that has been planned. Over a long space of time, over many centuries. Involving many prophets, Peter is speaking about salvation that was planned.

[41 : 32] And that in itself is something that should encourage us when we think about God's love for us, that he would plan to save us. Now, if we think about being saved or being rescued, some salvation missions, some rescue missions, in fact, most rescue missions, they're sudden, spur of the moment kind of things.

And if you think about the lifeboat crew, they're sitting in a church building or they're sitting at home and they've got their bleeper on and all of a sudden they jump off their chair. The alarm is sounding.

And immediately they respond. They head to the station. They're out into the ocean. Somebody's in distress. And they're responding to that call to save them. There's a suddenness.

There's an urgency about that. But our salvation, it didn't come about that way. Our salvation is not some hurried response to an unforeseen call.

Our salvation was planned. And God used many prophets over many years. And they spoke about things that they couldn't understand.

[42 : 59] They couldn't see. Peter says they weren't serving themselves. They were serving you. They were writing about things that have been preached to you, says Peter, that you understand now, but they couldn't make head nor tail of them.

Because they were writing beyond their knowledge, beyond their experience, beyond their time. Think about Psalm 22 that we sang. We have these words in Psalm 22, verse 1.

My God, my God, why hast thou me forsaken? Now David is a psalmist. But David is writing about a forsakenness that he never knew, that he never experienced.

David is writing about a forsakenness that he himself did not enter into, but that Jesus would enter into, as he went to the cross and suffered and died for us.

Remember the cry of Jesus from the cross. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? It was the fulfillment of the words of this psalm at so many hundreds of years previous.

[44 : 16] Or think about Isaiah, probably the most, the best known prophecy of the cross that we can go to, Isaiah.

In Isaiah 53, he writes about a cross that he couldn't see, because the cross hadn't even been devised as an instrument of torture at that time.

It was the Romans that took the cross into the experience of the people. So Isaiah, he writes about the sufferings of Christ. And to him, it didn't make any real clear sense.

And yet he writes these verses. He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought us peace was upon him. And by his wounds, we are healed.

We all like sheep have gone astray. Each of us has turned to his own way. And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

[45 : 23] And Isaiah, as he wrote that, he couldn't understand that. David the psalmist, as he penned Psalm 22, it didn't make sense.

But they wrote, as God the Holy Spirit told them to write, because these predictions outlined God's plan to save. So as we pick up this letter, this text, we're hearing about salvation that was planned.

And now as we think about going to the table, we see a picture of that salvation plan. As we go to the table, we remember how Jesus suffered.

That's where we go there. We remember that he was forsaken as we sang in that hymn. The Father turned his face away.

The table is the place where we go and we take the bread and we take the wine. The broken body of Jesus, the shed blood of Jesus. We remember that he was pierced, that he was wounded, that he was crushed, that he was punished, that he suffered.

[46 : 53] So that we could be saved. So as we follow the text, as we follow the text that Peter wrote, and as we approach the table that the Lord Jesus spread before us, we remember that our salvation was planned.

And that should fill us with a sense of wonder and awe at the commitment of this loving God to plan to save us.

Think about the words that we sang, how deep the Father's love for us, how vast beyond all measure, that he would give his only son to make a wretch like me his treasure.

Or think about the words of the first hymn, love divine, all loves excelling, joy of heaven, Jesus, Jesus, to earth, come down.

And he came all the way down from the glories of heaven to the grimness of Golgotha, to the horror of the cross.

[48 : 25] That's how far he came down and it was planned. Because that's what was necessary for our salvation and God loved us enough to make this possible.

So if there's anybody here this morning and you're doubting God's love for you, think again about this salvation plan.

There's anyone here this morning and you're thinking, God can't love me because of who I am and what I've done and how I've let people die and all these different things. Think about this.

Think about how far God went to plan your salvation. Read the text. Look at the table. And pray that that sense of wonder and awe and love of God would wash over us.

Peter says to us in verse 12, angels long to look into these things. But it's hidden from them. They've never tasted grace.

[49 : 47] But this salvation plan is revealed to us so that we can see how much God loved us. and so that we can see how much we can trust.

Salvation planned. Secondly, salvation promised. Verse 13, sorry. Peter says, therefore, and that's the word that connects the plan with the promise.

Therefore, based on God's plan to save you, he says, now let's think about the promise that God has made that he definitely will save you.

Therefore, prepare your minds for action. Be self-controlled, set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.

So Peter, he's talking here about a salvation that is promised. it's assured, it's God's promise. The God who cannot lie has promised this salvation to us.

[51 : 06] And very often, it's the promise of something in the future that gets us to the present. Think about the runner. the runner as they pound the tarmac and as they sweat and work through the pain.

It's the promise of the prize that gets them through the pain of the race. Or the student, for example, the student, it's the promise of a place at university that gets them through all these hours of study.

And disciples of Jesus are promised two things in this verse, in verse 13. You can underline the word hope and you can underline the word grace. That's God's promise to us.

He promises us a sure and certain hope and he promises us grace. And these two things are linked.

Peter says, set your hope fully on the grace to be given you. Now, when we think of hope, we, we think of something that's, that's uncertain.

[52 : 14] You know, we might say, it's nice just now, I hope it won't rain today. And we genuinely hope it won't rain today, but it might. You might say, I hope he's finished in the next 10 minutes.

And I might. It's not certain, though. Depends how fast you listen. That's our hope. It's all, it's flimsy, it's unpredictable.

It's not guaranteed. But God's hope, that the hope that we read of in the New Testament, it's a sure and it's a certain thing. And this hope that Peter speaks of in this verse, it's sure and certain because it's linked to grace.

See, hope and grace are put together here. So what is grace? Well, let's go back to the phrase that we're always repeating. Grace is God's riches at Christ's expense.

G-R-A-C-E, God's riches at Christ's expense. God's forgiveness, God's peace, God's joy, God's security for us, God's heaven for us, at Christ's expense.

[53 : 28] And where was Christ expended? He was expended at the cross. So in the text, we have a future promise of grace, this fullness of grace, and this sure and certain hope.

And now, take your eyes from the text and think about the table. table. And the table is the place where we are given a picture of how that grace and how that hope was paid for.

So we can be sure it's ours. Imagine you got a letter tomorrow morning and in the letter you were told that your dream car was going to be delivered to the house next week.

For me, it would be an oak green Mark 2 Golf GTI 1992. Low mileage, one lady driver, you know, full service history.

For Margaret, she's after some James Bond car. Poor Kenny's shaking in this chair. But imagine you got a letter saying your dream car, it's yours.

[54 : 56] It's going to be delivered to your house next week. Now, you'd read the thing and you'd think, that's amazing news, but immediately you'd be doubtful. I would be. But how could these doubts be overcome?

Well, the doubts could be overcome if inside the letter I opened it up and I could see that there's a receipt of the payment for this car, and a confirmation that it's going to be delivered to my address at a certain time.

Then I would believe. Then I would rejoice. And you know, this is what we see at the table. We see how the grace and the hope that is promised to us, we see how it was paid for.

We see that it was paid for, not with perishable things like money, says Peter, in verse 18. He says this is something that was paid for with the precious blood of Christ.

And the table is the demonstration of that. We're forced to look to see how Jesus paid for the grace and the hope that is ours. So, we can rejoice in the fact that our salvation is promised.

[56 : 15] It's certain. And today we taste something of the grace of Jesus, but what we taste today, it's just a taste.

It's just a wee portion. And Peter is saying there's a greater portion to enjoy when Jesus Christ is revealed, when he returns.

And that's where we've been pointed in this verse. Peter is pointing us forward to that great day when Jesus returns and when we will know the fullness of grace that is ours in Christ and we will know the fullness of our salvation.

Peter's pointing us forward to that great day that's coming. that's in the text. Think about the table.

The table, we take the bread, we take the wine, we remember the death of Jesus. There's that wonderful line in the warrant for the table where we are told by the apostle Paul, do this until he comes.

[57 : 41] the table. We're looking back to the cross. We're rejoicing in the resurrection that he rose up from the dead.

and we're looking forward to that day when the cups and the trays and all that stuff will be put away because we will know the fullness of the marriage supper of the lamb.

so both in the text and in the table, we are being given words and pictures to reassure us that our salvation is promised, it's guaranteed, it's secure.

and the application for that for Christians who are struggling in what we now know as Turkey in AD 60 and for Christians who might be struggling in Tarber in AD 23, the application for us is just keep on keeping on.

Peter is saying to these disciples in that day, yes it's difficult, it's going to get more difficult for them, but he's saying let the promise of the grace and the hope that we are given in Jesus, let that promise shape your mind and your thinking, because that's what will stabilize us.

[59 : 20] If we don't think that way we're going to be unsober minded, we're going to have drunk minds, we'll be all over the place, staggering through this world. So he says let this promise make you sober minded and shape your mind and thinking, let that truth bolster your self control.

Remember, says Peter, the promise of salvation. Salvation is planned, salvation is promised. And thirdly, he says salvation is to be practiced.

It's to work its way out into our lives and that's what I'm trying to get at in the head. Salvation practiced means that if we are saved, that salvation will make a difference to the way that we live.

Salvation will not just be heard through the words that we use when we preach at other people. but salvation should be seen, it should be evident in the things that we practice and the way that we live.

as obedient children, verse 14 says Peter, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance.

[60 : 42] But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do, for it is written, be holy because I am holy. since you call on a father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.

Peter's saying, in the way that you live and the things that you practice, it should be clear that you are saved. Now think about the pilot, the opening illustration.

As the pilot comes into land, there's various checks that they must make. And as we approach the table, we are told, let a man, let a woman, let a boy, let a girl, examine themselves.

When we approach the Lord's table, we are told that we are to examine ourselves, not anybody else. Sometimes I'll visit people and they'll say, well, this one's at the table, and that one's at the table, and the next one's at the table.

What are they doing there? Well, Paul is saying, or God is saying through the apostle Paul in the warrant as we approach communion, let a man examine himself. Because there's enough to see in your life without you looking over your shoulder at everybody else.

[62 : 13] So as I examine myself, what am I looking for? Well, you and I should be looking for holiness.

We should be looking for evidence of holiness. We should be looking for marks in us of lives that look like Jesus.

Peter reminds us in verse 14 that we are children of God. Peter reminds us in verse 17 that we have a heavenly father.

And so we should have something of the family likeness of God about us. You know, sometimes you'll see one of the wee ones and they're charging around here and they're walking through and you know, if you just arrived in the congregation and you had a line-up of the parents and maybe some of the grandparents and then you saw the children, then you would know who belongs to who because you can see the family likeness.

And Peter is saying to us, remember that you belong to God. You belong to his family. He says, remember this is not your home.

[63 : 38] So, live your lives here, says Peter, as strangers, fearing the Lord and awe of the Lord and recognizing that we are heading to a home where we will be together with Jesus.

and then coming to the Lord's table, moving from the text to the table again, we profess that we are God's children.

We're coming to a family table. we're coming to the table and we're saying that we're not ashamed to own Jesus Christ as our Lord.

God. So, in terms of the practice of salvation, the practice that marks our lives, let's think through one scenario that might be bothering some of us.

what happens when we examine ourselves and we come to a realization that we're not living the way that we should be? What happens when we examine ourselves we find that we're treating sin lightly?

[65 : 03] We're not fearing the Lord as we should. What happens if when we examine ourselves we realize that we don't look much like children of God, what do we do then?

Where do we go when we examine ourselves and we realize that we're not practicing what we are preaching?

Well, Peter tells us in the text, and the table takes us back to the cross. to remember the great cost of our salvation.

Because when we start playing fast and loose with sin, almost certainly we've drifted from the cross. We've lost sight of the great cost that Jesus suffered to save us.

So we need to go back there to see the cross again. And Peter says that in verse 18 and following. He says, for you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver and gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

[66 : 36] He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him, you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him so that your faith and hope are in God.

So Peter has taken us all the way back to Calvary. Again. And we need to keep going back there. You and I do not make a fleeting visit to the cross on the day that we are saved, and then wander off in some other direction.

The cross is the place that we keep going back to. It's the place that we must not drift from. It's the place that we must survey. And when we stay close to the cross, when we keep remembering the great cost of our salvation, then we are motivated to repent of our sin.

not play fast and loose with sin. Because we see how much Jesus had to suffer to remove it.

And as we come back to the cross, we are motivated to keep practicing holiness. us. So our salvation was planned.

[68 : 14] And our salvation is promised. And our salvation should be evident, it should be practiced through the holy lives that we are called to live.

And the last thing is salvation is to be portrayed. My time is gone, but what we have at the Lord's table is a portrayal of the fact that we are saved people.

When you come to the table next Sunday, if we see it, we will be sitting with brothers and sisters. who have been saved by the same Jesus, who have the same Father, who have received the same grace.

If we come to the table, we are saying together that we have been purified by God through the blood of Jesus. We are saying that we have been born again.

We are saying that we together are all in the same journey that takes us ultimately to the same eternal home. So the table is the place that we go to portray, to show the world that we are saved people.

[69 : 46] We have peace with God, we have love for God, and we have peace with each other. I hope we do. if not, sort it out before next weekend.

We have love for each other. And you see that in verses 22 to verse 25, but I'm not going to get into them just now.

We are called, verse 22, to love one another deeply from the heart. we are called to show in our sitting around the table the sincere love we have for our brothers.

And going back to there and then, the early church in AD 40, 50, 60, there was a historian called Tertullian.

And when he spoke about the Christian church, the comment that he made that's gone down in history is see how they love each other. And that was what was so compelling.

[70 : 59] The love that the Christians had for each other. There was fishermen, there was tax collectors, there was ex-Pharisees, there was ex-terrorists, and they're all sitting at the one table.

and they all have a sincere love for one another. It doesn't mean that they're hugging each other and kissing each other and some sickly over-the-top displays of affection.

We don't want any of that. But they're sitting around the same table with that shared humble gratitude that they were saved by Jesus.

That Jesus loved them. And Jesus showed them grace. And so they in response, they loved each other. And they showed love and grace and kindness to each other.

So the table is the place where our salvation is portrayed. it's where we express our love for Jesus as our savior.

[72 : 16] And it's where we express our love for each other as those who are saved. So if you're saved, don't dither.

don't get yourself wrapped up in a whole lot of religious mumbo-jumbo. Come to the table and speak about your love for Christ and for his people.

And we'll pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for the salvation that is offered to us in Christ.

We thank you that it was promised. we thank you that it is something that was planned. We thank you that our salvation is something that shapes the way that we live in this world.

And we pray that our salvation, the salvation that you have given to us in Christ, would be something that other people see as they look in on us. So we praise you for the cross.

[73 : 28] We praise you for the great cost that Jesus took to give us the forgiveness and the life and the joy and the peace that we can find no other place.

Help us, we pray, to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved and then profess our faith in him as we come to the table. And we ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen. We'll sing to conclude 755 in Mission Praise, When I Survey the Wondrous Cross. When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died.

My riches gain I cared but lost and bore contempt on all my pride.

For the Lord that I should boast still in the death of Christ my God.

[75 : 04] All loving things that charm me most I sacrifice them to his love he from his head his hands his feet sorrow and love flowing down did e'er such love and sorrow meet our thorns compose so rich are crown where the whole realm of nature mine that were an offering far too small love so amazing so divine demands my soul my life my all and

I may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forevermore Amen