

No more strangers or foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints. (ii) (Quality: good)

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Preacher: Hyde, Leslie S B (1916-2001)

[0 : 01] Thy prayer avails. A wonderful revelation is spoken of in those words attributed to Rutherford.

I stand upon his merit. I have no other stand. And this is the confession in respect to the Lord Jesus Christ of these fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

They are but one voice. There is no argument in this household. There is no opposition in this household.

They are well satisfied that salvation is of grace. And once we get beyond the mere reception of these words as part of the things that we believe, get beyond into the experience of it, to see the necessity of it, to feel the beauty of it, and to know the joy of it, Christ has that one by whom and through whom we may comfortably come into the presence of God.

Whoso has seen me hath seen the Father. A great mystery. But how beautiful when our faith is able to believe it, I won't say grasp it, but to believe it.

[1 : 50] There was a time when we understood none of these things. Do we understand them today? If we do, then it can be said of such, now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

When we begin to rejoice in the merits of Christ, it refers us to his life, and what a meritorious life it was.

it was not a meritorious life in which he himself could be so satisfied, if I can put it like that, that my meaning is this, as we might be satisfied as natural fallen human beings.

It was no, not part of the Lord Jesus to attract praise unto himself. in his life he lived perfectly, he lived uprightly, but it was in the behalf of, and for the sake of, his own church, he might live a life for them.

Now, are we strangers and foreigners to this? Or can it be said, now therefore you are no more strangers to the perfection of Jesus' life, and not only to be admired, but to be rejoiced in, as we realize that that life was lived for us, a perfect life, keeping the Lord to perfection, dotting every eye and crossing every teeth, so to speak, nothing was missing at all, and we shall meet a perfect life.

[4 : 03] There shall enter into heaven only that which is perfect. We are reminded toward the end of the revelation, there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

This means that if we are to enter heaven, we need to be washed in regard to our sinful life, and to be clothed with Christ's life.

life. If we are washed only, we stand naked. So we need to be washed, and we need to be clothed. What meritorious washing, washing in meritorious blood, and what meritorious clothing, the meritorious righteousness of Jesus Christ, without a seam, this garment wove, it is worked in everlasting love.

Now therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners as the apostle to these people, these saints at Ephesus, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

You can rejoice together in having the same faith, rejoicing in the same Lord, hoping in the same Saviour, loving the glorious Trinity.

[5 : 53] there will be no disruption in the household of faith when Christ is seen in his glory.

Hence, we sometimes sing the lines, when is it Christians all agree, and let distinctions fall, when nothing in themselves, they see that Christ is all in all.

Sometimes the things that oppress us in regard to daily things seem to come in between, and have the soul in its liveliness and living characteristics, will long to get free.

Long to get free. Now God is able to make us free in the midst of all the things that press us down. We come to so many conclusions which are carnal, sometimes perhaps our thoughts have gone along like this, if only I could get into a quiet room, if only I could be isolated from everybody else, but maybe some of you have proved at least that that doesn't bring Christ into the soul.

That good servant of God, John Warburton, you know, I think it was John Warburton, who so wanted a parlor, and he hadn't got one in the house that he was then living, and he thought if only he had a parlor that he could go and shut himself away from everybody, then all would be well and he would have such wonderful meditation and could expect such revelations.

[7 : 52] But he soon discovered that the devil liked the parlor as well as he did. so we shall need something much more, though on the face of it it may be decidable, than just quietness on our own, isolation on our own.

But the pilgrims and strangers, which they are, we are pilgrims and strangers on the earth, God may come to us in the midst of busy scenes, and drop down a little of heaven upon our spirits.

And then we shall be isolated, and then we shall be completely shut off with all the busy throng that may be around about us, because by the power of the Spirit, we shall be, as it were, lifted up to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

and then the apostle will be able to say to you and to me, if that is so, now therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

The desire of the quickened soul is to ward Christ. He sometimes echoes the words of Paul to the Philippians when he said, that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection.

[9 : 32] Who by searching can find out God? Thus is thus the testimony of the Scripture goes. Who by searching can find out God?

Is he never to be found? he is found by divine appearances and by gracious revelation. The world are strangers to divine appearances and gracious revelation.

But if we come within the circumference of the text, we shall not be strangers to divine appearances.

Now, when we speak about divine appearances, we're not referring to that which is physical or that which is even visible physically, but that which is communicated to our soul through the channel of faith, we cannot begin to explain or describe to a person what this really is, a revelation of the Redeemer.

But you may hear it preached from time to time, and you may say, I cannot understand it, what is the man talking about? But let the occasion come in your life when you get this visitation of the Lord, this divine appearance, then you'll recall that which you had heard through the preached word, then you will begin again to understand what was meant on that occasion.

[11 : 41] Are we strangers to divine appearances? Divine appearances when the Lord stoops so low?

Because you know he comes down to his people. He came down to the man that fell among thieves.

people are not asked to go up, we're asked to look up, but what do we see if we look up? Shall we not see Jesus in the clouds?

This is what will be the scene on the last day, when time shall be no longer, we shall look up, and we shall see Jesus in the clouds, and he will be coming down, and then we shall be caught up, but he will be coming down, and as we are caught up to him, so shall we rise to ever be with him in heaven for eternity.

Now God, the Spirit gives us some glimpses of these things in our souls from time to time, we are lifted up, attracted to Jesus Christ, a lowly Jesus Christ sometimes.

[13 : 14] We see him in the garden by precious faith. Would it not be a wonderful divine revelation when, as you may be in meditation, and your faith sees seems to see your faith, seat him in the garden of Gethsemane, groaning, sweating as it were, great dumps of blood, and the Spirit of God should speak in your soul, all this I do for thee.

all this I do for thee. What an attestation from heaven to see my Savior in all his sorrows, his agony, and his sufferings, and for him, so to speak, to suddenly bring us into the scene, and make us aware that what he is doing, he is doing for us.

What he is doing is to overcome the power, the powers of darkness, of sin, and of death, and of hell, of the grave.

There are a number of religious people who at the Easter season may think about Christ's suffering, his seven stages to the cross, and so on, but they never get identified with it.

Now, we can be judged of no man here, but this we can consider. Have we been identified with Jesus Christ?

[15 : 08] Can it be said of us, now, therefore, you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God, because he has identified himself with us, and we have been identified with his sufferings, with his love, with his mercy.

Peter was identified with the Lord Jesus Christ in his sufferings by look. Jesus turned and looked upon Jesus.

What will be the effect, then, of the Lord turning and looking upon us? When he thought upon these things, he wept.

When he thought upon them, it is an important view of things that Mark gives us. When he thought upon them, no thought may be very quick in its movement, and the tears of repentance may quickly rush, but this just puts the matter in a right perspective.

he went, and when, as I think it is Matthew, says that he went out and wept bitterly.

[16 : 38] There's that time between the Lord's look and his going out, and in that time he thought upon these things, and then he wept, and he wept bitterly.

Why did he weep bitterly? Because he was identified with, and had an interest in what the Lord Jesus was doing in dying, and offering himself a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God.

Now therefore, you're no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, if we can say in just a little measure, we haven't got to say it in a great measure, we haven't got to say or speak about hours of wonderful revelation, maybe we can go along with that man who said, sweet the moments, the moments rich in blessing, when before the cross I stand.

a few moments of Christ in the heart will exceed a thousand days of mirth, what can we say, can the apostle say to you and to me, now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, there was a time when these things were completely strange, but now they're not, you're identified with the saints of the most high, you're included in the household of faith, the household of God, the household of God must also be the household of faith, because that which supports the household of God is faith and hope and charity, or as we sometimes say, love.

this is the whole binding of the household of God. In the pilgrim's progress, we read of an occasion when Christian came to the interpreter's house, and there are many things which are strange to us, and we need to have unfolded to us.

[19 : 21] And there was much that Christian learned in the interpreter's house. We read in the book of Job, about an interpreter, one among a thousand, and the interpretation was in regard to salvation.

So Job describes his present, or rather Elihu speaks of things in this way, so that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat, his flesh is consumed away that it cannot be seen, and his bones that were not seen stick out.

Yea, his soul boreth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers. Is there salvation? Is there any hope under such circumstances, as we get so near to the grave?

Is there an interpreter that will speak to us about salvation? Is there one among a thousand that God will set forth? If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness, then he is gracious unto him, and saith, deliver him from going down to the pit.

I have found a ransom. His flesh shall be fresher than a child's. He shall return to the days of his youth. The threatenings of drawing near to the grave have sometimes had their impact upon the people's physical capabilities.

[21 : 22] prayers. And they've appeared to become old within a few days. But notice the effect of gospel news.

Notice the effect of this revelation of an interpreter, one that is able to say, I have found a ransom, one that is able to speak about Jesus Christ as satisfying all demands of the law and of justice.

When this revelation is given, then, indeed, this is a feeling. Sometimes, his flesh shall be fresher than a child's.

He shall return to the days of his youth. Maybe some of you would know what that means. If you know what that means, then, you might indeed rise to the wonderful words of Gatsby when he says, I'm blessed, I'm blessed, forever blessed, my rags are gone and I am dressed in garments white as snow, I'm married to the Lord, the Lamb, whose beauties I can ne'er explain, nor half his glory shall.

Now, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. All these blessings come to us through him.

[23 : 04] Just two words, and one word is more important than the other, and that is him. And yet, the word through is not unimportant, because to look at a person is the one thing, and to see the blessings coming to us through him is yet another.

And then, are we strangers and foreigners to the Lord Jesus Christ in his beauty and loveliness?

How we seem to fall so short when we come to speak about Jesus Christ. Indeed, I think it is John Newton who says, we must die to speak of Christ.

No, we must die to ourselves, that's certain. we must have nothing in ourselves, if we're ever to be able to speak anything about Jesus Christ.

If we're ever to be able to say, Christ is all and in all, can only mean one thing, that we must shrink to nothing there. What a view Dr. Watts has sometimes, shrink to nothing, in the presence of God.

[24 : 27] this is a great miracle. It doesn't mean to say that we are extinguished because the life is there.

The desire of the soul is that Christ may be everything, first and last, that Christ may be all in all.

Are we therefore strangers, we shall have to bury our personal testimonies. Our heart must speak. He that believeth hath the witness in himself.

Therefore, you will know what God has done with you, as well as what God has done in you, as well as what God has done for you.

He remembered us in our lowest state, in our nothingness, when we strung to nothing. For his mercy endureth forever.

[25 : 38] Can it be said concerning us this evening, now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

God, this is an experience that they will know something about. They may wish it was more often their experience, but it is good if we can speak of it once in our lives.

Pride of the heart will seek for a big experience. That is, an experience which will set us up on high above other people.

And if our pride carries us too far, if we don't speak it with our lips, we may find it in our heart if we speak to others who have not attained to some things and say, well, fancy, haven't you known that?

But you know, true humility will never bring us to that point. Because what we do know, the little two of us know, is by God's favor and God's mercy.

[26 : 57] What a different man Saul of Tarsus was after his conversion. Afterwards he said, by the grace of God I am what I am.

And further more he says, as having nothing and yet possessing all things. And this is the speeches of the children of God that are taught by the Spirit, by the grace of God I am what I am.

If I am indeed born of the Spirit, it's by the grace of God. If I've been quickened, if I've been revived, if I've been instructed, it's been by the grace of God.

If I've known the truth of this world lies in wickedness and will be burnt up at the great day, it is by the grace of God. If I've known that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, it is by the grace of God.

And if I've known the experience of his looking into my heart and saying, I love thee well, my child, it is by the grace of God. And if I'm kept day by day, it's by the power of God, but it's also by the grace of God.

[28 : 21] We shall have to sing loud hallelujahs to the grace of God. Where does that lead us to? Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty might be rich.

Now what a sight this will give of the Lord Jesus Christ, who in a manner of speaking laid his glory by. That is, his glory was veiled in his human nature.

The glory of God on the earth would have a consuming quality. people could not stand before it. So, his glory, the glory of his Godhead, was veiled in his manhood.

But nevertheless, have we seen his glory. We beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Now we are begotten by the word of truth, and the grace of God is communicated. Therefore, coming back to these words, there are no more strangers and foreigners.

[29 : 51] Has the truth of God quickened us? Have we known the grace of God in our own souls? that has put a difference between us and the Egyptians?

You know there's a great goal fixed. If we are chosen in Christ, if we are quickened by his spirit, if Christ has died for us, there's a great goal fixed.

We shall never perish with the ungodly. People may put their question mark against us. But our life is hid with Christ in God, beyond the reach of harm.

Salvation is of the Lord. And that salvation is described in the Old Testament in Jeremiah's prophecy. Is this not a brand plucked out of the fire?

We do well to think upon that expression, a brand plucked out of the fire, a helpless brand that could not pluck itself out of the fire.

[31 : 08] If it was left in the fire, it would be consumed entirely and burnt to ashes. But God says, is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

these, now my mind just goes to this, that these words I believe are referring to Joshua the high priest, which is in prophecy of Zechariah.

But Jeremiah's prophecy does speak about my word being a fire. And therefore, it is the word of God that tries the people of God, and shuts them up to God, brings them into a realization of what the wrath of God really means.

Not just the word itself, but the word when it becomes the lively oracles of God. And then God stands forth in his glory, puts forth his mighty hand of salvation, and snatches that poor wretch from the fire, the fire of his wrath.

This is the surety, the surety standing in your place, enduring the wrath for you. Now therefore, you're no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

[32 : 41] We must come to speak of at least one more point this evening, and that is, yeah, no more strangers and as foreigners to the love of God in Christ.

The love of God is set before us in eternity past, in our own lives, and so on.

We notice it in the opening hymn that we read, we sang, all the elected trained were chosen in their head to all eternal good before the walls were made, chosen to know the Prince of Peace.

What a privilege it is to know the Prince of Peace. To consider the glory of God's election, chosen to know the Prince of Peace and taste the riches of his grace, chosen to faith and hope, to purity and love, to all the life of God, to all the things above, chosen to prove salvation sure, chosen to reign forevermore.

Now the love of God is seen in his initial sages, so to speak, in the love of the Father, according to the thought, loved of God, chosen of God, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.

[34 : 19] Now this choice is based on love, and that love is everlasting love. As we mentioned this morning, the people of God are loved from eternity, loved when they are in their sins, as we noticed.

But God who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins. How glorious a truth this is. How wondrous is the love of God, that he should have loved us when we had no love to him.

How much more so shall we set a value upon that love when we have felt it in our souls, the love of the Father. Son, the love of the Father in sending his only begotten Son, the love of the Son in coming so willingly, and may we not say so lovingly, and the love of the eternal Spirit in quickening the souls of the election of grace into life.

Simon to try to glue around person in gefunden or the Cathedral will stop förämä a strength does to help rug in