

The sureness and goodness of God's blessings, (Quality: Average)

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Preacher: Roe, Norman (1939 - 2021)

[0 : 00] Thank you.

And verse 8. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love is appearing.

This morning I spoke to you out of those words in the Paul's epistle to the Colossians, and particularly with reference to verse 23 of chapter 1.

We read, As I said this morning, it's our concern and desire we trust to go forward and to continue in and with those things which we have heard, received and believed, are set before us in the precious truth of the gospel.

It is that which Paul particularly directs and encourages Timothy with, as we've learned in that third chapter this evening, and how that third chapter does well describe the situations that are found and prevailed in the day and generation in which we live.

[2 : 18] As he says there in the opening of that third chapter, This know also, that in the last days, perilous times shall come. And see what a description he gives, and see what a description he gives, and indeed in a very real sense, as that one way or another being manifest down the generations, and no less so in the days in which we live.

But the important point is, what is to be the response of the church, and the people of God, the Lord's people personally, the church collectively, and the church also within its local situation.

What is to be the response to these things that we find and see prevailing, and evidence in self, even within the society in which we live.

We can well be discouraged at what is evident. We can well be troubled and concerned. And I trust we are troubled and concerned in a right way.

But the important thing is, that the apostle, writing here to Timothy, emphasises, when he says, Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

[3 : 48] We are not left then in any doubt as to what is and will be. That sense, that sense, and sadly is evident, of the outworking of fallen human nature, and that left to itself.

We are not then to be surprised, surely, where these things sadly and solemnly manifest themselves in society. They said what is to be the response of the people of God.

It's what Paul emphasises to Timothy here. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.

And does not that also emphasise, we sought to press forth this morning, that with ourselves, we enter in upon a new year, not to be moved away from the hope of the gospel.

But as enabled, as the Lord enables, grants us grace so to do, to hold fast to those things that we have received and believed.

[5 : 03] And not be afraid nor ashamed, that to bear witness and testimony unto him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

And that that glorious truth of the gospel, whatever men may say, either for or against it, we may not, in that sense, be unduly moved by the ideas or the censures of men, but through the grace of God enabling us to continue still in those things which we have heard, which he says here, continuing the things which thou hast learned, knowing, knowing, and have been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.

And see how essentially we're directed with regard to this. He says that, he says that, from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus.

It is thus to the very scriptures of truth, to the word of our God, as the Lord spoke with servant Isaiah, to the Lord, and to the testimony, they speak not according to this word, because there is no light in them.

How vitally important it is that in all, in that sense that is said, and done, and even professed, is surely to be brought to the touchstone of the word of God.

[6 : 50] And what grace we need, friends, so to do, to serve the scriptures. And may that be our exercise and concern, we go forward in this coming year, to search the scriptures, as it was with those of Berea, who commended for it, to search the scriptures, whether what even the apostles preached, that was according to what is found and set forth therein.

And have we not the gracious promise, that with regard, the gracious leading and teaching of the Lord, the Holy Spirit.

Just another thought here, but upon this point, he writes here to Timothy, that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures. Timothy received instruction, both from his mother, and from his grandmother as well, as we are reminded in what Paul writes and refers to in his writing here, unto Timothy, and his encouragement surely for us.

And likewise, the children amongst us are, as I said in prayer, none are too young to be taught of the Lord. As short as indeed solemnly true it is, none are too young to die.

And what a mercy is that the Lord, the Holy Spirit, is not restricting. Know that even in a young child, he can manifest, according to his sovereign purposes, that wondrous work of his divine grace, and all that that may be, abundant the evidence, with the children amongst us.

[8 : 39] Surely it is the substance, chiefly, I trust of the prayers, both of you as parents, of us also, that are grandparents as well, for those of our own children, subject to the sovereign will and good pleasure of our God.

But to come then more particularly, the subject upon my mind of this evening, not unconnected, as I said and emphasised this morning, that be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, and to which Paul refers.

As I mention also, there in verses 4 and 5, that first chapter of the epistle to the Colossians, he says, Since we heard for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, which will not be heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel.

It is then this, that hope which is laid up for you in heaven. And what is that hope that is laid up, the apostle says here, for you in heaven, addressing as he does, yes, brethren, there in the church of Colossae, but addressing them as believers, through the grace of God, as those that not only brought to hear, but to receive, in faith and love, that which had been preached unto them, with regard to that which God has appointed and provided, for the redemption and salvation, of ruined, wretched, guilty sinners, in the person and work, of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

There in the case, surely of each one of them, as it is, with regard to all taught, of God the Holy Spirit, that brought to know, their ruin and wretchedness, through sin, and their own personal sins, and transgressions, and thus justly, condemned, by and under, the demands of that Holy Lord of God, so as to be brought, to realise, solemn as it is, indeed, indeed, we do not lay down, as it were, strict guidelines, for the Lord, the Holy Spirit, to work by, but this, we may be assured, of all that the Lord, that thus calls by his grace, all are brought to know, their ruin, and wretchedness, through sin, and that there is no hope, no help for them, outside, and apart, what God has, revealed, provided, and revealed, in the person, and work, his only begotten, and dearly beloved son, has gloriously, sat before us, in the truth, of the gospel, well, what a hope, what an expectation, there was, the apostle, refers to here, with these Colossian believers, and not only, as it was, as it was, so with them, but is that likewise, which is the portion, of the living, family of God, still, you know, as the word declares, if in, this life, only, we have, hope in Christ, we are, of all men, most miserable, or we would be, thankful, and ever thankful, all that we receive, the Lord's, great, providential, dealings, with us, of his provision, for us, his care, over us, indeed, of what is manifest, the work, in us, of his providential, dealings, of his love, and of his mercy, but if, in this life, only, we have, hope in Christ, we are, of all men, most miserable, as the apostle, reminds us, writing, this epistle, to the Corinthians, and that, remember the connection, there, regarding, those, that were denying, the resurrection, of the dead, or saying, the resurrection, was passed, already, as if, there was, no future, hope, or expectation, and certainly, not, for those, that are dying, as Paul says, and what is, the blessed testimony, of his word, now, is Christ, risen, from the dead, and become, the first fruits, of them, that slept, the point,

[13 : 35] I'm just making, is this, there is, a glorious hope, and expectation, all Paul, as Paul expresses, here, what he writes, in this epistle, to Timothy, and it is, generally, considered, that this, was the last, epistle, that Paul wrote, yes, he gave, gracious instruction, to Timothy, as a faithful servant, of Jesus Christ, he warns him, also, at last likewise, those evils, that will, and do abound, are, and he exhorts, and encourages, not only Timothy, the Lord's people, still, to continue, in those things, which they, have learned, have been assured of, knowing of whom, and we have, learned that, and oh, what a mercy, is this, if thus, we have learned that, not, and that, and the gracious, instruction, and teaching, of the Holy Spirit, and that, through his blessing, upon, his own word, for I'm sure, of this, that that is, a way, a means, that the Lord, not only teaches, but establishes, his people, in the faith, it is, in it, they're receiving, to his blessing, upon his own word, about, which I've heard, and thus, been assured of, you know, friends, the precious truth, is this, that those things, that we have heard, and have received, are set before us, in the word, oh, what an assurance, is given us, therein, that this is, the word, of the Lord, the word of him, that speaks, and cannot lie, he, that the words, of him, with the Lord, the creator, the heavens, and the earth, and upholds, all things, by the word, of his power, surely, looking at it, in this aspect, of it, cannot we see, the grievous, evil there is, in even, any questioning, regard, questioning, of the word, that the Lord, has spoken, cannot,

I trust, we are brought, to see, the very evil, of unbelief, ah, not one of us, can claim, we are free, from the very, sinful working, of it, as found, and rooted, in our, fallen nature, oh, how mercy, is for us, to be brought, and brought, in a sense, again, and again, as it was, with that man, that brought, his afflicted son, to the disciples, of the Lord, who, but unable, to help, and when, the Lord, appeared, upon the sea, he says, if thou, couldst do anything, have, have mercy, upon us, he's the Lord, says, all things, are possible, to him, that believe, ah, ah, silver, that dear man, cried, and that did tears, Lord, I believe, help thou, mine unbelief, ah, we know, indeed, the Lord's, gracious deliverance, from all those, sinful, staggerings, of unbelief, to which of ourselves, we are so prone, but, as I was saying, the apostle then, exhorts, encourages Timothy, to continue in the things, which thou hast learned, and been assured of, knowing of whom, thou hast learned them, and directed, he does, to the holy scriptures, and how thankful, above all things, we should be, that we have, the word of God, the holy scriptures, and all, not only, that we have, the holy scriptures, but we have, that great gift, of our Lord,

Jesus Christ, the gift, of the Holy Spirit, who shall, lead, guide you, as he said, to his disciples, into all truth, surely, we are brought, to realize, how we do, ever need, that gracious, leading, and teaching, as said of the Lord, the Holy Spirit, we have, the Lord's promise, oh, may we truly know, as we gather here, from week to week, that his spirit, remaineth, amongst us, but, to come, particularly then, to this point here, this, what Paul speaks, of the hope, of the gospel, it's a glorious, reality, it's expressive, yes, in one sense, of that, which is future, and yet, it is that, which is a, blessed, reality, indeed, unto the living, family of God, as we are brought, to receive, and believe, the testimony, that God has given, of his only begotten, and dearly beloved son, we see here,

Paul then, writing, quite possibly, the last epistle, that he wrote, and what a testimony, he bans, yes, to the faithfulness, of his God, and Saviour, that through all, that the apostle, had passed, and that was involved, for him, in that work, to which the Lord, had called him, and even now, when he was brought, there, to ultimately, answer for himself, before Nero, and though, the experience, the son, experienced this, all forsook him, no man, stood with him, you know, must not matter be, a severe trial, to the apostle, remember, how he had been, owed, and used, of the Lord, how many, also, not only, could profess, being blessed, for the ministry, of this servant, of God, we're not denying, that there were those, that did love, and were concerned, for the apostle, but obviously, in the situation, were not able, to be with him, at this particular time, of his trial, but he expresses it, in this, there were those, that evidently, and sadly, not only had turned, against him, but had fallen away, from the faith, at my first answer, no man, stood with me, all men, forsook me,

I pray God, it may not, be laid, to their charge, nevertheless, and friends, what a mercy, it is, there is always, that nevertheless, it concerns, the church, and people, and people, of God, nevertheless, the Lord, stood by me, and strengthened me, delivered me, out of the mouth, of the lion, and he will, deliver me, and preserve me, unto his heavenly kingdom, as he testifies here, and all, that of which, the apostle, thus, could bear witness, and testimony unto, that the unchanging, love, and faithfulness, of his God, is not that surely, which in that measure, the Lord's appointments, for them, is that which is, evident, in his gracious, dealings, with each one, of his own, whatever friends, we may face, in this coming year, as I said this morning, we know not, what the future days hold, but one thing, we can rely upon, and that is, the unchanging, love, and faithfulness, of our God, and Saviour, and that, which Napoli, has appointed, and provided, for his people, as revealed, in the truth, of the gospel, what Paul, speaks of, as that hope, of the gospel, and what friends, hope for us, as ruined sinners, is found, and arises, from that, which is revealed, and set before us, in the truth, of the gospel, oh, that, as Peter, could himself say, we have not, followed, cunningly, devised fables, made known, unto you, the power, and the coming, of our Lord,

[22 : 35] Jesus Christ, yes, he says, we are eyewitnesses, of his majesty, and what a testimony, he gives there, to the greatness, and glory, of our Lord, Jesus Christ, but also, friends, we are not, followed, cunningly, devised fables, when, with regard, to those things, revealed, and set before us, the precious truth, of the gospel, oh, how it speaks, and testifies, of that, of that, access, and acceptance, with God, for guilty, needy sinners, wherein, and by, whereby, we have, that access, unto God, as he has, reconciled us, unto himself, through the redemption, that is in Christ Jesus, the blessings, of pardon, peace, and of, eternal life, yes, that, that hope, of the gospel, as I said, if in this life, only we have hope, in Christ, we have all men, most miserable, if all, that is received, from our Lord,

Jesus Christ, is that, which is to be known, and enjoyed, only in this life, what, friends, amount to, when we consider, the solemn reality, of eternity, ah, as one says, eternity, tremendous sound, and ever, must it most solemnly, be so, tremendous sound, to guilty souls, a dreadful wound, but all of Christ, and heaven be mine, our sweet, the accents, how divine, ah, there we have, as Paul reminds us here, in what he testifies, yes, of the love, and faithfulness, of his God, and through the grace, of God, that was given him, as he could say, in the context, of these words, before us, he says, he says, I am now, he says, as he says there, but he says, he says there, in these words, here before us, for I am now, ready to be offered, a time of my departure, is at hand,

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth, there is laid up for me, a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me, of that day, and not to me only, but unto all them, also, that love, is appearing, ah, Paul can speak, of the faithfulness, of his God, to him, as I say, the sustaining grace, of his God, enabling him, and for all, that he had passed, still to be found, and kept faithful, to that, which he had received, of the Lord, in that preaching, and teaching, of Jesus Christ, and him, that crucified, well, Paul could, be in here, does not this, surely come in, the hope, of the gospel, ah, that hope, which is laid up, for you, he says, in heaven, and of which he speaks, of here, he was about, to receive, himself, not as that, which he had earned, or what he had deserved, though, we do not deny, for one moment, what a faithful servant, of Jesus Christ,

Paul was, ah, but it was not, he speaks, of what he receives, here, not of what he had earned, not of what he had, not of what he deserved, but what was freely, given to him, ah, what he speaks, of here, it's not this, in a real sense, the hope, of the gospel, what God, in Christ, as appointed, and provided, in all the fullness, and freeness, of the same, you know, what Paul speaks, of here, as this crown, of righteousness, could it ever, be attained, by the sinner, could it ever, be attained, unto, even by, as it was with Paul, the most faithful, and diligent, servants of God, know, what Paul receives, what each one, is brought, through divine grace, to believe, and trust, in Jesus Christ, and receives, and receives, only, as it is set, before us, where in those words, that Paul writes, his epistle, to the Romans, the wages, of sin, is death, that's what we earn, that's what we deserve, the Lord, were to deal, with us, well that, must be the result, but the gift, of God, is eternal life, through,

Jesus Christ, our Lord, yes, that eternal life, is that, which is, that sense, that believers, hear, even, it is brought, but from that, death, in trespasses, and sins, into the life, light, and liberty, of the truth, that it is, revealed unto us, the personal work, of the Lord, Jesus Christ, but it is, a glorious reality, of that eternal life, that Paul, has, set, before us here, a crown, of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give unto me, in that day, not to me only, but also, to all them, that love, is appearing, a crown, of righteousness, why friends, this is not only, the blessing, in that true sense, of eternal life, but oh, it is the reality, both of that being, one with Jesus Christ, and one with him, throughout all the ages, of eternity, as well, and see here, that which is the glory, of the believer, as a sinner, saved by grace, they receive, a crown, of glory, a crown, of righteousness, oh, can, can friends, the heart, fully, conceive, the wonder, the glorious reality, of this, ah, he said, and shall give unto me, henceforth, there is laid up, for me, a crown, of righteousness, see the wondrous, provision, of our God, and Saviour, for each, and every, one of his own, shall one, be missing, in that day, shall one, of his own, whom he has loved, and redeemed, from his, laid down his life, from his, wrought out, that perfect righteousness, for whom, he has entered, into heaven, there in the, appear in the presence, of God, for them, shall one of them, either be missing, or friends, fail, to receive, that which he fully, and freely gives, ah, henceforth, that is laid up, for me, a crown, of righteousness, is not this, in the ultimate sense, the very glorious hope, of the gospel, ah, shall we be moved away, from the hope, and expectation, of this, ah, no matter what, in that sense, pressures, may be brought, either, the working of sin, within, or the opposition, mounted, from without, ah, yes, we, in ourselves, we are, we shall, left to ourselves, we never, attain unto, these things, but as Paul, could write, the brethren, at Philippi, he was persuaded, of it, as persuaded, as it is here, that there is, laid up for him, a crown, of righteousness, and will be, given to him, ah, and that, by, the righteous judge, he describes, our Lord,

[31 : 25] Jesus Christ, he says, persuade, of this very thing, that he, that hath begun, a good work, in you, will perform it, until the day, of Jesus Christ, yes, the work, that his goodness, began, the arm, of his strength, will complete, his promises, yea and amen, and never, was forfeited, yet, a crown, of righteousness, oh, what a glorious hope, of the gospel, this is, but a blessed expectation, and friends, will it not be, the greatest wonder, ah, well does one, express it, thus far, in these words, wonder, above wonders, and it will be so, that says, to see one, black as eye, white, without spot, and blemish, before, his throne, on high, for that, righteousness, spoken of here, is the righteousness, of Jesus Christ, that righteousness, wrought out, for his people, by him, in his holy life, the reality, of his suffering, death, and glorious resurrection, the righteousness, which never, can be sullied, by sin, the righteousness, which is the believers, here and now, ah, but it is that, which is laid up, for them, in heaven, and described here, as that crown, of righteousness,

I cannot, speak of it, in one sense, as a very, as a very, fullness, of that, which the Lord, Jesus, has wrought out, and provided, for his people, in all that has, the, as God, manifest, in the flesh, he indeed, wrought out, for them, in his obedience, and fulfilling, of that work, which his father, had given him, to do, a crown, of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give unto me, in that day, notice friends, what is particularly, brought before us, here, another, part, his epistle, to the Corinthians, the apostle writes, we must all, appear, before, the judgment, seat of Christ, that, one may receive, of the deeds, done in his body, whether they be good, or whether they be evil, all appear, before the judgment, seat of Christ, what a solemn, in one sense, consideration, that is, but our friends, how does the apostle, here, view that judgment, seat of Christ, as it concerns, the living, family of God, all that, by, from his grace, been brought, to believe, and trust, in him, and in him, only, in this life, how does Paul, view, that judgment, seat of Christ, concerns, the living, family of God, see, how our Lord,

Jesus Christ, brings it, before us, in that, well, in those, well-known words, by speaking, of his coming, in that second time, in power, and in great glory, he says, he shall sit, as a shepherd, dividing, the sheep, from the goats, to say, to those, on his right hand, enter, come thou, blessed of the Lord, enter thou, into the joy, of thy Lord, our, what it, it says, and he, and particularly, what is particularly, noted there, and that is, what was, what was evident, in them, the fruits, and effects, of the work, of his grace, not that that is, the ground, and foundation, of their, for which their salvation, what Paul speaks of here, that crown, of righteousness, received by them, depends, no, the Lord, notes there, is a fruit, and effect, of what he has done, for them, what he has brought, in them, that gracious, ministry, of the Holy Spirit, ah, but see here, that, there is, that Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me, in that day, and Paul, not only, in that sense, claims it, as that, which was, for himself, alone, but he says, for also, for all them, that love, his appearing, ah, yes, a crown, of righteousness, this faithful servant, of Jesus Christ, and no less, so, for every, believer, for the grace, of God, in our Lord,

Jesus Christ, for all friends, allowed, allowed by the Lord, all are saved, by his grace, all owe everything, unto him, all receive, everything, pertains to life, and godliness, for time, and eternity, a pardon, peace, and an eternal life, from him, and from him, brought, as a rich, and a full grace, outflowing, as it does, out of, that everlasting love, wherewith the Lord, has loved them, and that everlasting kindness, wherein he, it will, and does draw them, unto himself, not to me only, but also, to all them, that love, his appearing, what a glorious, prospect, is here, you know, coming back, to this point, as we go forward, then, in this present year, oh, may we, through the grace, of God enabling us, not move away, from this hope, of the gospel, but of what, we have, and receive, set before us, in that precious truth, of the gospel, the personal work, of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the very expectation, also, of his eternal, inheritance, that is set, before us here, and it,

Peter, well puts it, see how, there he expresses it, in words of thanksgiving, and praise, unto the Lord, blessed, be the God, and Father, of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God, the God, as a gain, unto a lively hope, by the resurrection, of Jesus Christ, from the dead, to an inheritance, incorruptible, undefined, and that fadeth not away, reserved, in heaven, for you, who are kept, by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready, to be revealed, in the last day, but I'll leave, the remarks there, by the Lord, and his blessing, Amen.