



# Restoring my Soul

HE RESTORES MY SOUL, HE LEADS ME IN PATHS

PSA 23:3

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DECEMBER 2020

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A FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

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# **RESTORING MY SOUL**

*A Five Day Devotional Guide*

**December 2020**

## **Contributing Authors**

Victor Hall

Peter Hay

David Baker

Lachlan Perrin

## **Compiled by**

David Baker

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## The promise to Abraham

The hope that belongs to a son of God is an illumination that we receive by the ministry of the Spirit. It is the means by which we receive, and live by, the faith of the Son of God, and obtain the blessing that God swore to give to Abraham and his children. The apostle Paul described this hope as ‘an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.’ **Heb 6:19-20.**

Yahweh confirmed His promise to Abraham by the word of His oath on Mount Moriah. When Abraham stretched out his hand to slay his son, in obedience to the Lord’s word, the Lord intervened and stayed his hand. He then proclaimed, *‘By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son – blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.’* **Gen 22:16-18.**

Yahweh swore by Himself that all the families of the earth would be blessed in Abraham’s Seed. Christ is Abraham’s Seed. **Act 3:25. Gal 3:16.** We note, therefore, that Yahweh swore by Himself that Christ, the Father’s Son and Abraham’s Son, would be the One through whom the families of the earth would receive the blessing of God. The apostle Paul described this blessing as ‘the promise of the Spirit through faith.’ **Gal 3:13-14.** It is the blessing of being born of God and joined to the fellowship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

## Two immutable things

The apostle Paul declared that ‘God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, *confirmed it by an oath*, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. **Heb 6:17-18**.

The two immutable, or unchangeable, things by which we are able to lay hold of the hope of the promises of God are the *word of God*, and *His oath*. By these two unchangeable things, Yahweh Son was begotten as the Father’s Son and came in the flesh as Abraham’s Son. We note, in this regard, that when Christ came into the world as the Son of Man, He had two fathers – God the Father and Abraham.

In his letter to the Hebrews, Paul drew attention to the sonship of Christ, quoting the prophetic psalm, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You.’ **Heb 5:5. Psa 2:7**. This statement revealed the word of the Father through which Yahweh Son was begotten by the Father as the Son of God.

Paul highlighted the point that the Father, who declared, ‘You are My Son,’ *also* said, ‘You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.’ **Heb 5:6**. Paul was quoting the prophetic psalm of King David, who wrote, ‘The Lord has *sworn* [an oath] and will not relent, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”’ **Psa 110:4**.

The point to note is that the oath assuring that the blessing of Abraham that would come through the Seed, Christ, was the *same* oath through which the Son was designated as Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. Consequently, His sonship and priesthood could never be separated. More than this, we recognise that it is through the priestly work of Melchizedek that we are recipients of the blessing that God promised to Abraham.

## King of righteousness

A key focus in the book of Hebrews is the distinction between the Levitical priesthood of the Old Covenant and the Melchizedek priesthood of the New Covenant, particularly in relation to the Day of Atonement. For example, Paul said, 'The Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience.' **Heb 9:8-9.**

Significantly, Paul explained that the Son was appointed High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek *after* the law of Moses had been given, writing, 'For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the *word of the oath*, which came *after the law*, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.' **Heb 7:28.**

Paul's description of Melchizedek helps us to identify when Christ was designated as High Priest. He wrote that Melchizedek was King of Salem and Priest of the Most High God, '*first* being by interpretation King of righteousness, and *after that* also King of Salem, which is, King of peace.' **Heb 7:1-2.** Paul was saying that although Melchizedek was *both* King and Priest, His identification and expression was first seen, by interpretation, as King of righteousness. His identification and expression as High Priest was manifest *afterwards*.

In the first instance, Christ was anointed for His ministry as Melchizedek when He was baptised by John the Baptist. The first interpretation was as '*King of righteousness*'. Jesus said to John the Baptist, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to *fulfil all righteousness*.' **Mat 3:15.** Jesus then went forth in the power of the Spirit to minister as Melchizedek, with a priority toward proclaiming the kingdom of God. This was His ministry as the son of David, or 'Ben-David'.

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## Our great High Priest

In the third year of His earthly ministry, after Peter confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, Christ's focus shifted towards the priestly work of offering Himself as the Lamb of God. **Mat 16:13-16**. Matthew noted, *'From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.'* **Mat 16:21**.

Not long after this, Jesus was transfigured before Peter, James and John on the holy mountain. Concerning this event, the apostle Peter recalled, *'For He received from God the Father honour and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"'* **2Pe 1:17**. **Mat 17:5**. **Mar 9:7**. During His transfiguration, Christ was clothed in the shining white garments of a high priest. This was indicating His forthcoming offering on the cross, through which the great Day of Atonement would be fulfilled. Notably, Moses and Elijah spoke with Jesus about His death which He was about to accomplish in Jerusalem. **Luk 9:29-31**. This was when the priesthood dimension of Christ's Melchizedek ministry was manifest. He was seen, by interpretation, as *'Ben-Joseph'*.

Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. **Heb 5:5**. Rather, He was progressively glorified by God the Father. This happened through the wounding events that He experienced in *'the days of His flesh'* when He offered up prayers and supplications to God. **Heb 5:7**. Christ's offering commenced in Gethsemane as He prayed, *'Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.'* **Luk 22:42**. Jesus learnt the obedience of priesthood through the process by which He was glorified and perfected as the High Priest.



## The end of His obedience

The obedience that Jesus learnt through suffering was His obedience 'to the point of death, even the death of the cross' as the Son of Man. **Php 2:8**. Jesus learnt how to be a high priest in relation to every situation and human condition. For this reason, Paul said, 'We do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathise with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.' **Heb 4:15**.

Christ was the suffering Priest who priested Himself as a perfect offering. In the course of His offering journey, Jesus fulfilled all the Law and Prophets, including the offerings and feasts of the Old Covenant. Notably, through the abusive actions of the high priest and the Jewish Council in the court of Caiaphas, the priesthood of the Law Covenant was disqualified, and the Old Covenant was finished. The Law itself was taken out of the way and nailed to the cross when Christ was nailed to the cross. **Col 2:13-14**.

Just before 3pm, Christ was delivered by the Father from the waters of forgetfulness. Jesus was now the Head of a corporate new creation. He was set, as it were, on the shore of the new kingdom. Knowing that all things had been accomplished, Jesus said, 'I thirst', and received a mouthful of wine in order for the Scripture to be fulfilled. **Joh 19:28-30**. At this point, He had an immortal, but physical, body. The blood of the six wounds that He had received during the course of His offering journey was still on His body.

Christ's final prayer to the Father was, 'Into Your hands I commit My Spirit'. **Luk 23:46**. Yielding His Spirit into the hands of the Father, Jesus entered beyond the veil into the Most Holy Place of Yahweh's own fellowship. He was in the presence of the Father and the Holy Spirit, while His wounded and bloodied body hung on the cross.

## The fountain of living waters

The prophet Zechariah described the blood and water that flowed from Christ's heart as 'a *fountain* for sin and uncleanness' **Zec 13:1**. This was significant, for the Lord had previously declared, 'My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, *the fountain of living waters*, and hewn themselves cisterns – broken cisterns that can hold no water.' **Jer 2:13**. The people had turned away from receiving the water of God's word, to worship foreign gods and to follow worthless doctrines. **Jer 2:4-5. Jer 10:8**.

The fountain for sin and uncleanness brings deliverance from idolatry and self-definition to those who receive this ministry. **Zec 13:2-6**. However, this fountain is not only for cleansing. Jesus said that the water that He gives is 'living water', which becomes a fountain of water springing up to everlasting life within a person who drinks from it. **Joh 4:10,14**. This fountain was not just the water of the word, which the nation of Israel had forsaken under the Old Covenant. The apostle John said that Jesus Christ came '*not only by water, but by water and blood*. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth.' **1Jn 5:6**.

A person who receives the word and life of God, in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings, is being delivered from their propensity to idolatry. Significantly, they also receive the Holy Spirit, who enables them to express this life. Jesus said, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' **Joh 7:37-38**. Explaining these words to us, the apostle John said, 'But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.' **Joh 7:39**.

## The seventh sprinkling

Christ's blood was 'sprinkled' a seventh time when the soldier thrust a spear into His lifeless body, and blood and water flowed from His side. The blood of this seventh wound was the sum of the previous six wounds, through which a full redemption had been obtained for mankind.

Blood and water, and a spirit of grace and supplication, began to flow as a fountain from His heart. **Joh 19:34-37**. Although they flowed from His heart, the source of these elements was the throne of grace in the Most Holy Place, where Christ now was. **Zec 13:1. Heb 4:16. Rev 22:1**. By the blood of Jesus, a way had been made open for us, through the veil of His flesh, into the holiest where He was now seated. **Heb 10:19-20**.

The seventh wounding of Christ's physical body marked the *fulfilment* of the Day of Atonement. Jesus had pioneered and finished the pathway of our perfection as sons of God, and had cleansed the sanctuary with His blood. He was now fully glorified as High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

The apostle John testified of the blood and water that flowed from Christ's heart *so that we may believe*. **Joh 19:35**. John was highlighting that the blood and water is the word of the cross that is now preached to us by the Holy Spirit, through the messengers of God. **1Pe 1:12**. A spirit of grace and supplication accompanies this ministry. This word is our ongoing participation in a meal offering and a drink offering. They are the very elements of the communion. **Joe 2:12-14**.

Those who do not resist God's grace as the word is proclaimed, are caused to look on Him whom they have pierced, and to mourn. However, our mourning is not without hope! The Holy Spirit joins us to the prayer travail of Jesus, which commenced in the garden of Gethsemane. This is what it means to come boldly, by faith, to the throne of grace. **Heb 4:16. Rom 5:1-2**.

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FURTHER STUDY HEBREWS 10

## Our daily participation

After Christ rose from the dead and ministered to His disciples for forty days, He was taken up from the Mount of Olives and a cloud received Him from their sight. **Act 1:9**. This was when the Son of Man ascended back to His throne at the right hand of the Father, and to the glory that He had before as Yahweh Son. **Joh 6:62. Eph 1:20-21**. He is now seated at the right hand of the Father, according to the word and oath of the Father.

Importantly, the Father made this oath so that we might have strong consolation as we flee for refuge to lay hold of the hope that is set before us. **Heb 6:17-18**. Christ is our hope, who has already entered the Presence behind the veil. We are able to flee to Him for refuge in the sanctuary. As we remain connected to Christ, we have an anchor for our soul in the Most Holy Place of Yahweh's fellowship. **Heb 6:19**.

We obtain what Christ has finished for us through His offering, as He priests to us a daily participation in His offering. By faith, through participation in His offering journey, we are being perfected and are *obtaining the blessing* that God swore by Himself to give to Abraham and all his children. Paul summarised this reality, saying, 'For by one offering He has *perfected forever* those who are being sanctified.' **Heb 10:14**.

Paul said that this was the focal point of his letter to the Hebrews, writing, '*Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.*' **Heb 8:1-2**.

## The anchor of our soul

Paul declared, 'Therefore, since we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession ... therefore, let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need'. **Heb 4:14,16**. By the mercies of God, which are new every morning, we are able to present ourselves as living sacrifices in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. **Rom 12:1. Lam 3:22-23**. Grace secures us in this fellowship.

Our soul is anchored in the Most Holy Place because we are joined to Christ, our great High Priest. He is seated there and is ministering to us our participation in His finished offering. As we journey with Christ in the fellowship of His offering, we are obtaining and living by the faith of the Son of God which He authored and perfected for us. **Gal 2:20. Heb 12:2**. Furthermore, our hearts are being sprinkled clean from an evil conscience by His blood, enabling us to serve as priests to His God and Father. **Heb 9:13-14. Rev 1:6**. By this means, the Day of Atonement that Christ fulfilled through His 'once for all' offering, is being fulfilled in us. *We are being progressively perfected!*

Our perfection through Christ's priestly ministry is the fulfilment of the oath that the Father swore to Abraham. Because of the certainty associated with His oath, we can have such strong confidence that, in the midst of every circumstance of life, the Lord is completing in us the good work that He has begun. **Php 1:6**. This is because our great High Priest is ministering to us a participation in His finished work! By this means, our hope is being realised. We are becoming the son whom the Father named us to be in Christ, and are learning the priestly work that we will continue to do forever in the new heavens and earth.

## Let us draw near

Paul exhorted us, saying, 'Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.' **Heb 10:22-23**. We are able to hold fast the confession of our hope as we continue to receive the water and blood that flows from Christ's heart through the ministry of the word by the Holy Spirit.

Significantly, as we come together for communion, we are to consider one another for the purpose of stirring up love and good works. **Heb 10:24**. To 'consider one another' is to be mindful of the name and sonship of others, and who they are to us. To 'stir up love and good works' is to be poured out as a drink offering on the service and sacrifice of another's faith. **Php 2:17**. It is notable that Paul concluded this exhortation by imploring us to not forsake our gathering together to the Lord's table. **Heb 10:25**.

The apostle Paul exhorted us, saying, 'Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.' **Heb 2:1**. A person 'drifts away' when they let go of their hope, and their soul is no longer anchored in Christ. This is the outcome of fear and unbelief in the midst of life's difficulties. We must not cast away our confidence, which has a great reward – our eternal salvation. **Heb 10:35**. Indeed, we are not those who draw back to destruction, because we believe God's word. **Heb 10:39**. Our hope is being illuminated to us as the love of God is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. By this means, we are walking by faith and are obtaining the salvation that Christ has already perfected for us.

## Strong consolation

How do we *lay hold of the hope* that has been set before us? The apostle Paul declared that 'God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge *to lay hold of the hope* set before us'. **Heb 6:17-18.**

God has revealed the immutability of His purpose to us so that we *might have strong consolation*. However, we do not possess this strong consolation because the hope has been revealed to us. Rather, we possess strong consolation because we have *laid hold of the hope* that has been set before us. Strong consolation is the resurrection life of Christ that is becoming our life in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings. Paul testified to the Corinthians, 'For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ.' **2Co 1:5.**

We will not know this strong consolation by 'taking a stand' on what we perceive to be the infallibility of God's promises. Such a religious pursuit invariably leads to disillusionment. It easily becomes a form of testing God that will bring us under His judgement. On the contrary, we lay hold of the hope that has been set before us by fleeing to Christ for refuge, in response to His word, *to embrace our unique participation* in the fellowship of His offering.

It is important to remember that it is only in Christ that all the promises of God are 'yes and amen'. **2Co 1:20.** It is impossible to please God, or to fulfil His will, outside of the fellowship of Christ's offering. We are laying hold of the hope that has been set before us, as the word of the Father, which is already true in Christ, is becoming true in us. **1Jn 2:8.**

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FURTHER STUDY 2 CORINTHIANS 1

## Laying hold of the hope

Jesus Christ is our hope. **1Ti 1:1**. The hope that is in the presence of God behind the veil is set before us, or *present with us*, when Jesus Christ comes into our heart. **1Pe 3:15**. **Heb 6:19**. In this transaction of new birth, we are born to see the kingdom of God. **Joh 3:3**. The eyes of our heart are enlightened to *see the hope* of our calling as sons of God. **Eph 1:18**. However, as Jesus explained to Nicodemus, we must then proceed to enter the kingdom of God by being born of water and of the Spirit. **Joh 3:5**. We begin to lay hold of the hope that has been set before us when we are baptised into the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

The promises of God are 'yes' *in Christ* because the immutable word of the Father for every son of God has been fulfilled in Him. He is the Pioneer of our salvation. He is our Forerunner. **Heb 6:20**. He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified in Him. **Heb 10:14**. The promises of God are 'amen' *in Christ* because the immutable word of the Father concerning our sonship is progressively fulfilled in us as we participate in the fellowship of Christ's offering.

The apostle Paul described his ongoing commitment to laying hold of the hope of sonship, in the fellowship of Christ's offering, by saying, 'Not that I have already obtained, or am already perfected; but I press on, *that I may lay hold* of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.' **Php 3:12-14**.



## A new form of doctrine

When we are baptised into Christ's death, we are *delivered from* our slavery to sin, and are *delivered to* a new form of doctrine. In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul rejoiced, 'God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.' **Rom 6:17**. This form of doctrine is not theological information. It is the doctrine of our baptism; that is, we are delivered to our unique participation in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, in which the immutable word of the Father is fulfilled in our life.

In the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings, the other law is being circumcised from our heart. This is an important part of the operation that God is performing in our heart. **Col 2:11-12**. However, it would be a mistake to limit the operation of God to the removal of 'the other law'. The major focus of God is to pour His love, which is the divine nature, into our heart through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. **Rom 5:5**. As the love of God is poured into our heart, we progressively become *obedient from the heart* to the form of doctrine to which we have been delivered. It is this miraculous change of motivation that transpires in our heart, which also compelled Paul to proclaim, 'God be thanked!' **Rom 6:17**.

The love of God that is poured into our heart through the Holy Spirit *is the same love* that was poured into the heart of Yahweh the Son, through the Holy Spirit, when He was begotten by the word of the Father as the Son of God. **Col 1:13**. **1Jn 4:7**. On the Mount of Olives, Jesus prayed to the Father for His disciples, and for each of us, saying, 'I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that *the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.*' **Joh 17:26**.

## The fruit of Christ's travail

The love of God was revealed and declared by Jesus through each wounding event that He endured from the garden of Gethsemane to the cross, in full obedience to the Father's will. Furthermore, the love of God that was *poured into* the heart of Christ was *poured out* from His heart as the fruit of His travail on this same obedient pathway of offering. This is an amazing point! We know that the end of His obedience was not in His own hands. It was in the hands of the Father. The fruit of Christ's travail was fully seen when the soldier pierced His side with a spear. Blood, water *and the Spirit* flowed like a river from His wounded heart. **1Jn 5:6. Joh 19:34-37. Zec 12:10.**

The Holy Spirit has not been given to us to help us to cope with life in a fallen world, or to help us to achieve our own religious aspirations. The Holy Spirit is not empowering our carnality. Rather, it is the Spirit who frustrates our attempts to fulfil the will of God in the strength of our own flesh. **Gal 5:17.** The primary work of the Holy Spirit is to join us to the fellowship of Christ's prayer and offering. The love of God that was poured out, as the fruit of Christ's travail, is poured into our heart through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. **Rom 5:5.**

In his letter to the Romans, Paul explained the process by which the love of God is poured into our heart. It begins when we become poor in spirit and cease from asking the Holy Spirit to empower us so that we can serve God in a manner that we have determined for ourselves. Rather, we acknowledge that we do not even know how to pray. **Rom 8:26.** The Holy Spirit helps our weakness by making intercession for us with groanings too deep for words. The prayer of the Spirit in us reveals His desire to take what belongs to Christ and to disclose it to us. **Joh 16:15. Jas 4:5.**

## Love poured into our heart

It is important to recognise that, as sons of God who have been set free from our slavery to sin, we have the capacity to choose whether we will set our mind on the things of the Spirit *or* on the things of the flesh. **Rom 8:5**. If we do not prioritise the need to pray regularly in the Holy Spirit, it reveals that our mind is set on the things of this world, and that we are placing our trust in the strength of our own flesh. Praying in the Spirit keeps us in the fellowship of prayer where the love of God is being poured into our heart. **Jud 1:20-21**.

The Holy Spirit joins us to the travail of Christ, who searches our heart with eyes like a flame of fire, and makes intercession for us according to the will of God. **Rom 8:27**. As our great High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek, it is Christ who prays to the Father on our behalf, 'Not My will, but Yours, be done.' **Luk 22:42**. Significantly, the Father's *first response* to the prayer of Christ is to begin to pour the love of God into our heart through the Holy Spirit, who is also making intercession for us. When the love of God is poured into our heart, it is a *birthing action* by the Father in the fellowship of Christ's travail.

As those who *love God*, because the love of God has been poured into our heart, we can then be assured that God is working all things together for our good through the course of each day. **Rom 8:28**. The immutable purpose of God is being fulfilled in our lives as we continue to participate in the fellowship of Christ's offering. Paul concluded his discussion on this process by declaring, 'I am persuaded that neither death nor life ... shall be able to separate us from *the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*'. **Rom 8:38-39**.

## Your life is hidden

In his letter to the Colossians, Paul said, 'If then you were raised with Christ, *seek those things which are above*, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things on the earth.' **Col 3:1-2**. There is no reason for us to be concerned with the events that are transpiring in the world, or to be consumed with the affairs of this life, because we have already died with Christ! The world has been crucified to us and we have been crucified to the world. **Gal 6:14**.

We recognise that the world, and everything in it, has been judged by the offering of Christ. **Joh 12:31**. In the end of the age, both the earth, and the works that are in it, will be burned up. **2Pe 3:10**. Significantly, if we have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope that has been set before us, we no longer belong to this world. Our citizenship is in heaven where Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father. **Php 3:20**. Paul said, 'For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.' **Col 3:3**.

When we consider the meaning of our baptism and its ongoing reality for our life, we recognise that our old man has been crucified with Christ. **Rom 6:6**. However, it is also *the life of new creation* that we lay down in the fellowship of His offering. **1Jn 3:16**. It is the life of new creation that is hidden with Christ in God. If our life is hidden, it means that we are safe and secure. Our hope is secure and steadfast. We are no longer preoccupied with our profile and achievements in this world, or in the church. Rather, our preoccupation is to reveal Christ, and our brethren, who are members of the body of Christ.

## Revealed with Him in glory

As a son of God who is hidden with Christ in God, we do not reveal our own sonship. Importantly, this does not mean that our sonship is not seen or revealed! We know that Jesus Christ did not come to reveal Himself. His preoccupation was to reveal the name of the Father, and to be obedient to the Father's will. Nevertheless, the nature of His obedience to the Father's word was completely consistent with the name and the priestly work that He had received from the Father before the foundation of the world. **Heb 5:5-6. Joh 8:28.**

In the same way, when the love of God is poured into our heart, we are motivated to reveal Christ and to be obedient to His word. The love of God enables us to offer ourselves, and thereby fulfil the command of Christ to lay down our life for one another. **Joh 13:34.** However, because we will do this in a very unique way, according to the name that we have received from our heavenly Father, the firstfruits of our sonship is seen as we reveal another in the body of Christ.

Having identified that our life is hidden with Christ in God, Paul continued to say that 'when Christ who is our life is revealed, then we will also be revealed with Him in glory'. **Col 3:4.** We know that this verse has a specific application to our resurrection to immortality in the last day. **1Jn 3:2.** However, it also describes the fundamental principle of offering that exists in the body of Christ, here and now. It is important to remember that the glory of our resurrection body at the last day will be commensurate with our growth and maturity as a son of God in the fellowship of offering in the body of Christ, during our lifetime. **1Co 15:35-49. 2Co 5:1-10.**

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FURTHER STUDY 1 JOHN 3

## Faith, hope, and love

In the context of discussing our growth and maturity as a son of God, Paul admonished the Corinthian church by saying, 'Now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.' **1Co 13:13**. Faith, hope and love are all virtues that belong to Jesus Christ. As we press on to lay hold of our unique participation in the fellowship of Christ's offering, these virtues of Christ are given to us and become our most precious possessions. The love of God is the divine nature. It is the foremost of these three virtues because *our faith works by love and our hope is fulfilled* as the love of God is poured into our heart through the Holy Spirit. **Gal 5:6. Rom 5:5.**

In his letter to the Hebrews, Paul helpfully *expanded his admonition* concerning these three virtues. He emphasised that it is our personal accountability as a son of God to continually lay hold of the fellowship in which these virtues of Christ are established in our life. An ongoing commitment to abide in faith, hope and love is the hallmark of a firstfruits Christian who is pressing on to maturity as a son of God. **1Jn 3:14.**

In relation to faith, Paul said, 'Let us draw near with a true heart in *full assurance of faith*, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.' **Heb 10:22**. The faith of Christ is given to us as a gift when we receive the word that is ministered to us by His messengers. Rather than *drawing back* in unbelief or condemnation, the faith of Christ compels us to *draw near* to the throne of grace to obtain mercy and to receive grace each day. The mercy of God is expressed toward us in the blood that cleanses our conscience, and by the water of the word that sanctifies us, so that we can present our body as a living sacrifice to God.

## Exhorting one another

When we meet and relate together as families and friends in the body of Christ, it is our opportunity to encourage and *exhort one another* to abide in faith, hope, and love.

In relation to hope, Paul said, 'Let us hold fast *the confession of our hope* without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.' **Heb 10:23**. Jesus Christ is the High Priest of our confession. **Heb 3:1. Heb 4:14**. When we encounter difficult circumstances in our life, we do not need to waver in anxiety or let go of our confession. Rather, we hold fast to the confession that Jesus Christ has already accomplished the perfect will of God for our life. He is now seated at the right hand of the Father. As our great High Priest, He is faithfully ministering His resurrection life to us in the events of each day as we continue to embrace our participation in His offering.

In *relation to love*, Paul said, 'Let us consider one another in order to *stir up love* and good works.' **Heb 10:24**. In the first instance, Paul was not saying that we need to think about how we can stir up love in someone else. We are *considering and esteeming one another* so that the love of God that we have received is stirred up in our heart toward our brethren! In the fellowship of Christ's offering, our mind is being renewed. We are becoming less preoccupied with our own circumstances, and more focused on how to lay down our life for one another. Offering that is motivated by love to reveal another is *the good work* that the Father has prepared for us to do as a son of God. **Eph 2:10**.

Paul concluded his admonition by saying that we are 'not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but *exhorting one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.' **Heb 10:25**.

## Two kinds of treasure

In Matthew Chapter 6, Jesus highlighted that our choices in life, which are evidenced by our conduct, priorities and lifestyle, reveal the nature of our heart. He said, 'For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.' **Luk 12:34.** Jesus identified two kinds of treasure: the temporal, or passing, treasures of the world; and the eternal treasures of heaven. He said, 'Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth ... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.' **Mat 6:19-20.**

If our mind is darkened and set on the flesh, then our heart treasures the things of the world. If our mind is illuminated and set on the Spirit, then our heart treasures eternal life and peace with God. It is important to recognise that we cannot pursue both kinds of treasure. **Gal 5:17.** They are mutually exclusive, and the word of the cross calls us to choose one or the other. **2Co 6:14.**

'Heavenly treasure' is the divine nature; the eternal life of God that was made available for sons of men through the shedding of Christ's blood. We choose this treasure by hearing, receiving and walking in faith-obedience to the word of life that is proclaimed by Christ's messengers. This word is the light of the gospel of sonship; the light of the knowledge of the glory of God that shines in the face of Jesus Christ. **2Co 4:6.**

The word of the cross grants us faith to join the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. And, as those who are illuminated in their spirit, we are able to see and understand every circumstance of our life as being our participation in Christ's offering journey. As we join the fellowship of Christ's death, by faith, the resurrection life that is in His blood is manifested in our mortal bodies. **2Co 4:10.** The apostle Paul proclaimed, 'We have this treasure [the divine nature] in earthen vessels [our mortal body]'. **2Co 4:7.**



## Treasures on earth

'Treasures on earth' refer to all the passing pleasures of the world that satisfy the desires of our flesh. This includes the alternate 'gospels' and religious activities that we adhere to because we think that they validate our perspective of Christianity. Unless our theological beliefs and religious practices are the outcome of illumination, which is ministered in the word of present truth, our interpretation of faith remains a darkness. Pursuing the treasures of the world progressively deceives us. While we mistakenly believe that we are becoming rich, we are, in fact, becoming empty. **Rev 3:17. Jer 2:5.**

Jesus highlighted this point when He taught the parable of the sower. He likened the heart of a son of God to thorny ground if the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, causing him to become unfruitful. **Mat 13:22.** The key point is that treasures in heaven, which grow from the seed of the word, and treasures on earth, which grow like thorns, cannot grow together! After instructing His disciples to lay up treasures in heaven, Jesus proceeded to say, 'No-one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to [lit. 'cleave' or 'hold fast to'] the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.' **Mat 6:24.**

The word, 'mammon', which can also be translated as 'wealth', is derived from a Greek word that refers to the personification of anything that we esteem as more valuable than our sanctification as sons of God. To serve mammon is to pursue security, control and self-confidence in life through the strength of our flesh. However, when we serve the agendas of our flesh, we cannot reveal the righteousness of God; nor can we mature in, or produce the fruit of, our sonship.

## The faith of Moses

The Lord is asking us to choose the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, rather than the deception of riches offered by the world. We read in the book of Hebrews, 'By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward'. **Heb 11:24-26.**

Moses 'looked to the reward' because he received illumination and believed for his inclusion in the kingdom of God. The same word that ministered faith to him also set the hope of eternal life before him. By faith, Moses chose the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, where the treasure of God's life abounds, rather than the riches of the world. **2Ti 3:12.**

The Greek word that has been translated as 'refused' in the above verse can also be translated as 'deny'. It is the same word that was used when Jesus said, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me'. **Luk 9:23.** To 'deny ourselves' is to stop appraising life according to the responses of our flesh. This requires us to cease from cleaving to the experiences of our past, for which the Lord is ministering grace so that we can truly turn away and leave them behind. **Php 3:13-14.**

Throughout this season, the word has been ministering faith to us so that we can make this choice. Alternatively, when we choose to hold onto the conclusions that our flesh has made concerning past hurts, regrets and points of adversity, we are choosing to suffer outside of Christ. This removes us from the context where grace is available. And we are left wondering how to 'let go' of our troubles.

## The foundation of repentance

When the word of the cross is proclaimed, the Holy Spirit pours out a spirit of grace and supplication, enabling a hearer to believe the word and to mourn for Christ whom they have pierced. **Zec 12:10**. The Bible describes this kind of mourning as ‘godly sorrow’, which produces ‘repentance without regret, leading to salvation’. **2Co 7:10**. In other words, the gospel blesses us with faith to turn to Christ in repentance.

‘Choice’, for a son of God, is our decision, by faith, to abide in Christ and among His people, rejecting every worldly alternative to the way of the cross that Christ has prepared for us. We are choosing to esteem the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings as greater riches than the treasures of the world. **Heb 11:24-26**. ‘Choice’ is our repentant turning to Christ. And, just as life is full of choices, the Christian life is a life full of continual repentance. The book of Hebrews identifies repentance from dead works as one of the foundations of salvation. **Heb 6:1**. Repentance continues to be a foundation for us when we walk by faith in the fellowship of the word of present truth.

The key point is that salvation is not guaranteed through a born-again experience. We recall, from the book of Revelation, that the presbyters in the church in Ephesus were born of God and were committed to toiling and persevering for Christ. **Rev 2:2**. However, the Lord rebuked them for failing to keep repentance as the foundational culture in their church. They had fallen from first love and were in danger of losing their connection to Christ’s administration of lampstand churches. Jesus said that repentance was the first step on the pathway of their recovery. **Rev 2:5**. If they would recommit to a foundation of repentance, they could be restored.

## Two elements of repentance

Repentance involves turning to Christ and renouncing the hidden things of shame. **2Co 4:2**. The 'hidden things of shame' are perspectives and practices that are motivated by our other law. When we testify about repentance, our testimony should have two elements. It will include our testimony of the place of participation in Christ that we have seen by illumination, and have chosen to turn to. And it should also include the testimony of the fallen cultures and practices that we have chosen to turn from. Hence, the evidence that we have received the illumination of faith will be more than our choice to turn in repentance. It is our choice to leave behind those things that we have turned away from.

The apostle Paul testified, 'I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.' **Php 3:12-14**. Interestingly, we note that the 'one thing' Paul did, involved two actions! Reaching forward to the things that lie ahead requires us to forget those things which are behind. **Luk 9:62**.

When Paul wrote to the Hebrews, he said concerning the patriarchs, 'These all died in faith ... and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had *called to mind* that from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now, they desire a better, that is, a heavenly'. **Heb 11:13-16**. The patriarchs demonstrated faith through their commitment to follow the Lord. The Scripture accounts that, as they did this, they could not remember, or 'call to mind', the cultures, customs and foreign gods that they had chosen to leave behind.

## Looking forward

The book of Hebrews reminds us that 'we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come'. **Heb 13:14**. For many people, this season has been particularly fruitful. However, the Lord is reminding us that salvation is not based upon constantly *adding*. **Isa 5:8**. Instead, salvation is based upon constantly *turning*. Heb 6:1. The Lord is asking us to serve Him, and Him only. Over the past season, the Lord has been ministering grace so that we are delivered from the bondage of pursuing worldly treasures that only serve to choke the word of life. **Mat 13:22**.

Furthermore, the Lord has been ministering grace for us to find resolution and closure on various matters that we need to leave behind. These have included personal views of the gospel, which we have unhelpfully carried with us, constantly trying to hybridise the word of present truth with these old 'gospels'. Other matters have included family cultures and habits, familiar perspectives and lame responses, which only undermine the work of the cross in our homes. Most of these matters have stemmed from past events or relationships.

The Lord has been reminding us that the past is where these things belong. As the Spirit continues to bring illumination concerning these points in our history, we continue to let go of the things which lie behind us. The things of the past belong in the past. It is important to recognise that the things that we won't let go of, won't let go of us!

The word of Christ is giving us the faith to forget what lies behind us so that we can reach forward to what lies ahead. **Php 3:13**. This is the same faith that Ruth received, which was the faith of the Son. Ruth declared, 'Where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die.' **Rth 1:16-17**.

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FURTHER STUDY RUTH 1



Restoring  
my Soul