

## Enjoy God Forever

### Preamble:

- Agonised over this sermon
- I had it all planned months ago - series on **Acts 26:17-18**
- About Paul's trial before Agrippa
- Incorporated the **great commission** (v.17)
  - which would've continued from David's message a few weeks back.
- Talked about **conversion** (v.18a), involving:
  - **Saving Faith**
  - **Repentance**
- Lead onto **Justification** (and receiving forgiveness of sins)
- The following week would have lead onto the second half of v.18
  - **Sanctification by Faith**
  - And before that, mentioned the saint's **Inheritance**
    - ◆ Which also would've continued David's message of Adoption couple of weeks back
- **Wouldn't that have been a great summary of the Work of God in our lives to our salvation?**
- I wrote half the sermon up Friday.
- but the Lord had placed in my heart this massive burden to share something else yesterday:
- As our Pastor David often reminds me:
  - **Man proposes but the Lord disposes.**
- So by the grace of the HS
- I ask you all to turn to **Colossians 3:1-5**

### **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

- **Tell about my question to Mum - *It would be good if we could feel God's hugs?***
- **In more recent years, the question changed to -**
  - **How can I walk intimately and continually with Christ ALL day, EVERY day !?**
- Every single servant of the Lord in the Bible **HOLD UP BIBLE**
  - refers to an intimate relationship with the Living God.
- Same for all the theologians, scholars, and servants I have studied through history:
  - The **martyred saints** in John Foxes' book **HOLD UP BOOK**
  - The **evangelists and preachers through antiquity** **HOLD UP GORE'S BOOK**
  - The **preachers of the Reformation** 500 years ago **HOLD UP old red BOOK**
  - **preachers of Revivals & Awakenings** **HOLD UP J.Edwards BOOK**
  - **Missionaries and notable Christians** through history **HOLD UP Who's Who BOOK**
- The Lord placed a burning in my soul ... (and I pray in your soul, too).
- **How can I ...**
  - **grow by the HS**
  - **To be more like Christ,**
  - **to glorify and be nearer to [or ENJOY] our Almighty God the Father.**
  - **Here and now?**

## I. Experiencing God's Presence

- first of all, what is meant by the *presence of God*?
- Recognise that God is omnipresent - which is not what I mean here
- **Genesis 1:1** In the beginning [TIME] God created the heaven [SPACE] and the earth [MATTER]
- Therefore he is above and in ALL things!
- We acknowledge He is everywhere: **Psalm 139:7-10**  
7 Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?  
8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.  
9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;  
10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and **thy right hand shall hold me.**
- God's presence is probably best described as
  - **God's moral attributes specifically towards the elect.**
- Theologically, evidence of the **saint's assurance of regeneration by the HS**
- How can I know I am a true Christian?
- These attributes which are Christ-like, are spiritually given to the sanctified

### **1. Testimony of HS in our Hearts**

- We have a subjective testimony by HS we are God's children
- **Romans 8:15-16** For ye have not received the **spirit of bondage again to fear**; but ye have received the **Spirit of adoption**, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.  
***The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:***
- This is often accompanied with a sense of being directed by the HS
  - In accordance with the Word of God
  - In the paths of obedience to God's will
- **Romans 8:14** For as many as are **led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God**
- **It is NOT an airy-fairy feeling,**
- **we know that the Spirit of God leads us in life (or has lead us, looking back).**

### **2. The Fruits of the HS in Us**

- **Galatians 5:22-23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.
- **Love** - the highest form of spiritual love
  - Self-sacrificing longing for the best of others
  - Eg. Christ's sacrifice for the undeserving sinner
- **Joy**
  - Fullness of joy is found in knowing God and delighting in His excellent character.
  - To be in His presence
  - To enjoy fellowship with Him
  - It is a greater blessing than ANYTHING that can be imagined!
  - This is reflected in a Christian's heart as:
    - ◆ Rejoicing in the Lord
    - ◆ AND in the lessons of the life He gives us

- Even in the middle of trials ...
  - ◆ We acknowledge His sovereignty over all things
  - ◆ His providence to put us through the trials
    - To glorify Him (eg. Witness to others how we depend on Him)
    - To spiritually mature us (eg. Teach us a spiritual lesson)
    - To chasten us when we stray

**Romans 8:28** And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

- **Peace** - inward serenity and harmony in relationships, but especially with God
  - **Romans 5:1** Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:
- **Longsuffering** - patience
- **Gentleness** - inward kindness or empathy
- **Goodness** - outward actions of caring and helping others
- **Faith** - trust and obedience to God
- **Meekness** - humility and submission
- **Temperance** - self-controlled
- **Don't be despondent that you don't have these all perfectly!**
- **Ask yourself:**
  - Are these the general characteristics of my life?
  - Do I sense these in my heart?
  - Do others (especially my closest folk) see these in me?
  - Have I grown spiritually over time?
- **Other Fruits: ... By their fruits you will know them**
- The results of your life and ministry.
- Do they produce fruit?
- Ask yourself:
  - Do I discourage others?
  - Do I drag people down?
  - Do I build up the saints and body of the church?
  - Do you edify others in
    - ◆ Conversation
    - ◆ Prayer
    - ◆ Ministry
  - **ie. False Prophet? (Mt 7:16-20)**

### 3. *Abide in Christ*

- Do you long for this communion with God?
- Do you miss it when you can't go to worship or have a quiet time devotional?
- Like Brother Lawrence, do you converse with God in kitchen or the garden?
- Do you seek to obey His every command?
- Does it cause you distress over the littlest sin,
  - And make you weep like Peter when the cock crowed for denying Christ?
- **You long to fellowship with Him all day, everyday!?**

### III. God's Advice to Experience His Presence

#### Colossians 3:5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth

#### Mortify Sin

##### 1. *Stop Lusting after sin*

- Run away from the things that have started your lust of the flesh
  - Whatever they may be
  - Satan ALWAYS attacks you at the weakest spot
  - Once I believe I conquered one form of sin, I get complacent !!!
- **1 Peter 2:11** *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.*
- NB the flesh is the problem ... Jesus Himself said
- **Matthew 26:41** *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*
- If you chronic gambler get one of these emails on your computer for online gambling, delete it immediately.  
Don't read it and think of looking what it has to offer.
- So remove yourself physically from the situation of imminent sin!

##### 2. *Make NO Provision for sin*

- **Romans 13:14** But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.
- Don't go near features that you know may induce lust.
- If you struggle with pornography,
  - don't walk into a sex shop.
- If you are tempted by a lovely bloke,
  - make sure you can never be in a position where you're alone together.
- Perhaps you have a drinking problem?
  - Empty out all the grog in your house,
  - avoid pubs and bottleshops and
  - share your concerns with a trustworthy brother who can uphold you!
- You don't play near the edge of a cliff, when you are aware of the dangers!!!
- This is referred to as causing **iniquity** when you do eventually sin!
- **James 1:14** But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.
- **LUST leads to SIN which leads to DEATH**

### 3. Focus on Christ

Colossians 3:1, 2 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

- Affection = mind or thoughts
- Ie. Set your attention on Christ in Heaven, and the future glory!
- Focus on Christ - as I mentioned earlier
- Romans 13:14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.
- WHAT CAN I THINK
- WHAT CAN I SAY
- WHAT CAN I DO
- WHAT CAN I IMAGINE
- ... TO MAKE ME MORE LIKE JESUS CHRIST !!??

### 4. Meditate on God's Word ~ the Bible

- This morning's Psalm, we read ... [Psalm 119:113-120] **TURN TO THIS PASSAGE AGAIN**

113 I hate vain thoughts: but **thy law do I love**.

114 **Thou art my hiding place** and my shield: **I hope in thy word**.

- Cf. Col. 3:3b *your life is hid with Christ in God!*

115 Depart from me, ye evildoers: for **I will keep the commandments of my God**.

116 **Uphold me according unto thy word**, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope.

117 Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and **I will have respect unto thy statutes continually**.

118 **Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes**: for their deceit is falsehood.

- The consequences of those who do NOT follow God's Word.

119 Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross: therefore **I love thy testimonies**.

120 My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments.

- May I also refer to Joshua 1:8 ...

**This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.**

- "good success" may be translated DO WISELY !
- Spiritually NOT physically !!

- **NOT A PROSPERITY GOSPEL !!!**

- I also remind you what David said a few weeks back that is mentioned in this verse ...
  - ***thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein***
- David quoted **James 1:22 and 25** ...
- **22** But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.
- **25** But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

## 5. *Cultivate Self-control*

- It says in **1 Corinthians 9:25** And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.
- Pertains to an athlete in this instance
- But it's true of all professions or interests
- In other words, be sober and dedicated to what you strive for!
- This is so for worldly matters
  - Where the prize (whatever it is) is temporal and decays
- It is more so for Divine matters
- **Matthew 6:19, 20** Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:
- But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:
- **SO be ready and vigilant for the day of the Lord!**
- **Luke 21:34** And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

## 7. *Be filled with the Holy Spirit*

- This is something we don't talk about much in the Pressie church.
- Over compensating for the misrepresentation of HS in modern Pentecostalism.
- We have failed to present the TRUE character of the Holy Spirit.
- **Romans 8:13** For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but **if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.**
- We can do **NOTHING** to get closer to God without the work of His Holy Spirit !
- Reminds me of the Foolish Galations... **Gal.3:1-5 READ THIS PASSAGE**
- **Explain that they were saved by faith, but think they can grow by works of the law**
- **So we must absolutely surrender ourselves to God = HUMILITY**
- **Depend on His grace, because ...**
- **Philippians 2:13** For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

“I bear my testimony that there is no joy to be found in all this world like that of sweet communion with Christ. I would barter all else there is of heaven for that. Indeed, that is heaven. As for the harps of gold and the streets like clear glass and the songs of seraphs and the shouts of the redeemed, one could very well give all these up, counting them as a drop in a bucket, if we might forever live in fellowship and communion with Jesus.”

— Charles H. Spurgeon

### Summary: Knowing God in the First Place

- Of course, this is all academic if you don't know God in the first place.
- In the earlier part of this message,
- I shared points that you could personally use to check your standing with God.
- I have seen so many people who put evidence of their salvation in:
  - Miraculous works (pentecostal falling over / healing miracles)
  - Long hours or years of service in a local church
- But it is mostly to stroke their own egos or
- Deluded that the works will account towards their salvation
- **Matthew 7:20-23** Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.  
Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that **doeth the will of my Father** which is in heaven.  
Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?  
And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.
- My heart aches for these folk more than the outright ungodly.
- They have heard the gospel and have access to the truth
  - But they are on the path that leads to eternal damnation.
- But while there is breath, there is hope:
- As much as you are able, proclaim Christ and Him crucified
- Not everyone is called to be preachers or evangelists
  - but EVERYONE is called to speak of the hope that is in Christ:
  - ... *sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and **be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you** with meekness and fear:*  
1 Pt. 3:15
- At the very least, ***Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.***  
Matthew 5:16
- Be the reflection of Christ in this world of darkness

- And for those who are called and equipped to proclaim the Redeeming Christ:
- Remember the Words of Jesus (Luke 24)

45 Then opened he **[Jesus]** their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

**Pray for illumination and blessing of His work**

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: **[Christ is resurrected after dying for my sins]**

**Tell folk what Christ suffered and why He had to die for me**

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

**Tell folk the need to turn from sin and towards God**

**Tell folk they must believe and confess their sins**

**Tell folk anywhere God enables you**

48 And ye **[Apostles]** are witnesses of these things.

**Share how God intimately worked in your life**

49 And, behold, I **[The SON]** send the promise **[The HS]** of my **Father** upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

**Enjoy the joyful presence of the Triune God**