

# Given to Us

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 03 September 2017

Preacher: Rev Andrew Coghill

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Romans chapter 5, read verse 5. And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.

Hope maketh not ashamed. The love of God is given to us by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us. The hope that we have in the Lord is no mere wish in the earthly sense.

When we say, oh, I hope something will be the case, I really hope this might happen. It's really what we're expressing as a desire mixed with fear. You know, we are anxious that something should be the case, but part of us fears that it might not be the case.

This is what we term hope. You see, after you've been defeated in something, you no longer have hopes. You're not the same anxiety or fear or whatever. But this hope that we have, it's not a mere wish in the earthly sense.

For example, if you think of an athlete's nerves before they run in the Olympic final, they might be nervous. But at the same time, they might have hope.

[ 1 : 0 7 ] And they're hoping that they'll do well. And they're hoping that they'll win. But there is an anxiety mixed in with that. They might be beaten by one of the other athletes. They might trip along the way.

But rather, this hope in this sense, this hope that maketh not ashamed, is rather, because it is of God, it is the joyful anticipation of a certainty.

The joyful anticipation of a certainty. Rather than the hope of the athlete before he or she goes off the starting blocks and is about to run.

It is the hope of the athlete having won the race, anticipating their gold medal. Anticipating the medal ceremony and the flags and the national anthem and all the glory that's going to be there to step up and receive.

They're hoping for that in the sense they're looking forward to that. But there's no uncertainty anymore. It has been done. It has been accomplished. It has been achieved. This is the hope which maketh not ashamed.

[ 2 : 1 3 ] Now, hope is, of course, essentially a future concept. It is to do with something that has not yet come to pass in that sense.

It's this, you know, if we turn a page, we see in chapter 8, verses 24 and 25, we are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope. For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Just as the athlete might say, oh, when are they going to do the medal ceremony? Come on, I've run my race.

I've calmed down a bit now. I'm back in my tracksuit. When are they going to do it? When are they going to do it? Waiting for it. Hoping for it. But it's not come yet. But the work's been done. The race has been run.

The victory has been achieved. But the medal certainly hasn't come yet. They haven't been awarded their gold medal in that sense. But insofar as we are creatures of time, there's hope being a future concept.

[ 3 : 14 ]     Insofar as we are creatures of time, and remember time is linear, of course. It has a beginning. It has an end. It is a middle bit. There's three parts to it. The past, the present, and the future.

Because we are creatures of time, our hope for the future, the extent to which we feel positive about the bit that we can't see yet, and we can't know because it hasn't happened yet.

How we feel about that future will be dependent on what we have found to be the case in the other two categories, in the past and in the present.

You see how these three make up time together. The past, the present, and the future. And they're all bound up in the one concept of time. Now God is eternal. The past, present, and the future are all bound up in him.

He sees them all in the palm of his hand. He is not bound by time as we are. Just as one God, as three persons, so God in his eternity is all the portions and categories of time are gathered up in himself.

[ 4 : 19 ]     But what we, creatures of time, what we anticipate and what we experience and what we hope for the future will be predicated upon our experience and what we have found to be the case in the other two categories.

The past and the present. And of course these are always running into each other, aren't they? Because the future, say for example, what happens this afternoon, will very quickly become the present when we get to this afternoon.

By the evening, this afternoon will be past. So you know, we're moving constantly through the categories. But we'll be conditioned by what we have experienced in the past. You know, there is the expectation that things will continue as they have done.

If, for example, I were to entrust an important task to somebody who, in the past, I had always found to be consistent, diligent, and, you know, applying their attention to detail, making sure they were always punctilious in every detail of what they did, I would have a reasonable expectation that that task would be fulfilled, it would be done, it would be done on time, and they would report back to me as they ought to do.

If I were to entrust the same task to somebody, you know, I couldn't really be bothered, that doesn't really matter, I'll get it done when I get it done, well, it's not really that important, is it?

[ 5 : 37 ]     Chill, you don't have to worry so much about it. Then I wouldn't have a great expectation that that task would be done when it was needing to be done, and that I would hear about it having been completed when I needed to.

Because we base our expectation on our experience of the past and of the present. I cannot say for sure which of these two employees or messengers or people to whom one might entrust an important task, what they will actually do in the future.

Because for all one knows, the diligent one might sleep in, missed a deadline, failed to do it, and the normally lazy laid back one might say, well, this time I'm going to prove I'm wrong.

And we might be found completely, our expectations are wrong. We can't say definitely what will happen, but our expectations are based on our experience in the past and in the present.

That determines our hope for the future and what we expect things to be. Somebody will say, yeah, yeah, I'll do it for you. You think, well, I won't hold my breath, because I know what they've been like in the past.

[ 6 : 50 ]     The context, then, of this verse of the hope which maketh not a shame. This hope which is grounded upon a divine certainty.

The context of this, if we go back to the background of it, verses 1 and 2, is this. Therefore, being justified by faith. And remember, at the end of chapter 4, it said that Jesus Christ was delivered for our offences.

He was put to death in our place for our sins. And was raised again for our justification. His rising again is, if you like, the stamped receipt of the bill having been paid.

Raised again for our justification. Therefore, being justified by faith. Faith in his name. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, if you, let's say, borrowed, let's say, 5,000 pounds from somebody who was a vicious loan shark. Who was known to break fingers and arms and various body parts of people who failed to keep up their payments.

[ 7 : 52 ] And you might go into his office trembling if you knew that you owed money and you didn't have it all. And you might think, what is he going to do to me? Oh no, what's going to happen?

But if you have the sign stamped receipt in your hand saying, look, you have paid this guy all that you owe. Plus the interest in anything else.

You didn't do it, but it's been paid on your behalf. You can go in there with confidence. You can sit down in his chair in front of his desk and say, how are you today? Because you've got the receipt in your hand.

Justified by faith. The receipt is in our hand. The death of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the sins we have committed if we are believing in him. And he's rising again for our justification.

We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through the one who has paid the bill. If there's a loan shark that you owe the money to, but the bill's been paid, then you have peace with that guy because of who has paid the bill.

[ 8 : 55 ] Now God is not a vicious loan shark, obviously. God is a gracious and loving father. Nevertheless, he is a God of absolute justice. Who cannot look upon iniquity.

He cannot turn a blind eye to it. If sin has been committed, the wages of sin must be paid. And the wages of sin is death. And that wages will either be paid by us or by somebody else.

There's no other possibility. Either we pay it ourselves or somebody else pays it on our behalf. And if we are trusting in Christ, then somebody else, Jesus Christ, has paid it on our behalf. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

By whom also we have access by faith into this free grace. Wherein we stand. Wherein we stand. And rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

See, you and I, we wouldn't get near God's grace. We wouldn't get into the throne room of God. Our prayers would not rise above the top of our heads were it not for the grace of Christ and what he has done.

[ 9 : 58 ] By whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand. Like people might say, well, what are you saying? And all these people who pray at other religions and they're worshipping their bonds as best they can.

You say, God doesn't hear. Those prayers do not so much as enter the throne room of God. Those prayers do not simply come into God's presence. He knows about them because he knows all things.

But such are not devotions. They are not prayers. They are not proper petitions to a proper God. They are an abomination to God. They are an offence to God.

People crying out in their extremities. Oh God, just get me out of this please now. I promise I'll obey you after this. But there is no humility or faith or genuineness. And as soon as they get out of the hole they're in, oh, what's that?

They forget about God. Such pleas God hears. Such prayers, if they are directed to him, he hears. But if he grants deliverance and there is no response, it is an offence.

[ 11 : 00 ] It is an abomination to him. It is not in the name of Jesus. It is not in faith. It is by Christ by whom we have access by faith into this grace when we stand.

And when we do, we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. It is in the expectation of certainty. The gold medal waiting to be awarded to the winning athlete.

Not the anxiety and hope at the beginning of the race, but the hope as we wait for the medal ceremony. And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also.

Now here's the more immediate context of the first time. Glory in tribulation. That means laying up benefits for us. It's not just that we say, oh, masochism.

Yes, come on. More hassle. More pain. Bring it on. It's not like that. No chasing for the present time seemeth to be pleasant. We're told in Hebrews. Nobody actually enjoys suffering and pain and anxiety.

[ 12 : 02 ] Or if there's something very far wrong with that. But you can't glorify God and just, oh, yes, I love it, I love it. No, it's not in that sense. Rather, it is suffering and it is pain.

But we are able, in the midst of it, and we might even say, in spite of it, well, that's not even the whole story here. In this tribulation, it is rather to recognize that this tribulation is actually doing us good.

And we think, well, how can it possibly be doing us good? Well, it can be a benefit to us. Because if we are in Christ, remember what it says later on in Romans 8, you know, all things work together for good.

Not just for everybody. You know, everything's going to be okay in the end. But to them that love God. To them who are called according to his purpose. That's what it says.

All things work together for good. To them who love God, who are called according to his purpose. Now, if that's the case, and our faith is in Christ and we're loving him, that means that whatsoever befalls us, all the tribulations, the hassles, the problems, the difficulties, the pain, the suffering, the sorrow that comes to us.

[ 13 : 12 ] It's not just wasted pain. Remember what it says in Psalms 56. Put down my tears into my bottle. Are they not in my book? How does a soldier acquire a chest full of metal, Roberts?

It's not about just keeping his shoes shiny and snapping to attention of a great rat. He goes through danger. He goes through suffering and battles and pain and difficulty.

It's because of what he's endured. Or what he has gone up against. Against the odds. Perhaps come through bravely in a situation where many others have died and he has survived.

Or perhaps he's rescued fallen comrades. Or whatever the case may be. All that chest full of metal ribbons does not say, oh, what a smart guy you are. How faithful you've brushed your teeth for 20 years.

And you've always kept your uniform smart and clean. No. It's because of what he has gone through. It's because of what he has endured. Because of the pain, the suffering, the difficulty, the warfare he has seen.

[ 14 : 13 ] We glory in tribulations also. Knowing that tribulation work with patience. It's a few good hard, unpleasant things to go through. I remember talking in a previous congregation to a guy who's, yes, he had a bit of a great problem.

But when he had a great problem, his tongue was loose. This is often the case, if people do. And although this guy was a churchgoer from time to time, he never professed faith, never trusted ultimately in the Lord.

But a lot of the time he worked offshore in his younger days. And with his particular trait. And he would talk about it sometimes when I would go around to see him.

And I said, oh, do you enjoy being offshore? And he says, no, I don't really enjoy it. I don't think anybody enjoys being out there. Which, of course, was news to me. Because from the time when I had grown up as a wee boy, when the North Sea was just opening up.

You know, the people who had the exciting jobs and the people who had the future ahead of him were the people working offshore. On the oil ridge and big money and great careers and big chances. But this guy, of course, in his cups, who don't often tell the truth.

[ 15 : 19 ] And I'll say, you know, nobody would go out there. In the middle of nowhere, North Sea, you're cooped up in this tin box with all these other guys. You work, eat, sleep, work, eat, sleep, work.

The whole time that you're out there, helicopter comes, you get back up. Thank goodness, that's back to your home and your family. No one would choose to go out there in these conditions.

Unless you got well paid for it. Of course, yes, you get really well paid for it. But that's the only reason anybody would go out there. Because nobody would do it unless they were well paid.

But the point of the matter is that all the slog, all the confinement, or perhaps the hardship of working out on these rigs or whatever, there is a reward with it.

All the hard, unpleasant work has the reward of the comparatively good pay. Now, consider doing hard, unpleasant, slogging work instead for nothing.

[ 16 : 17 ] Like a slave would have to do. In slavery, you have to do all the work you're told. However grueling, however unpleasant, however horrible the work might be, however confined you might be, whatever the bad conditions are, you get nothing.

You get nothing from it. As far as you're concerned, it's for somebody else. There's no benefit to you whatsoever. Now, here's the distinction. If you are going through tribulation as a believer, if you are suffering the brickbats of the world, the pain, the sorrow, bereavements, and all the other human difficulties which are our lot, because we are fallen human beings in a fallen world, nobody gets a free run.

You go through all this pain, this suffering, this tribulation, and you go through perhaps additional tribulation, because you are a Christian, all of this is like slogging away out there in the North Sea, and the money's going into your bank, and the credit is stacking up, and you come home and you check your bank balance at the cash machine, oh, that looks much better.

Maybe it was all worth it. Maybe, maybe not as far as that's concerned. But where God is concerned, the credit that is stacking up through our tribulation, it's not that we earn our salvation in any way, but it does us good, because it prepares us, it fits us, it goes toward our preparation, our credit, as it were, in that sense, building up fitness preparation for glory.

None of it is lost. Not one sigh, not one teardrop, not one heartbreak or groan, is for nothing. With God it is all gathered up, all of you.

[ 18 : 10 ] Remember the feeding of the 5,000 and the 4,000. What did he say to the disciples? Go out and gather up all the broken pieces, that nothing be lost. Nothing is lost with the Lord, nothing is in vain.

Now consider just doing this in the world. Consider all that you go through if you're an unbeliever. All that you go through in the world, in the flesh, in the sorrowing, in the suffering, all that there's so much pain in this world.

And just because you don't believe in a righteous God doesn't mean, oh, you have a high old time and it's brilliant in this world. No, it isn't. Everybody goes through the same suffering, sorrows, bereavements, illnesses, sicknesses, difficulties, or if they don't, it's not because they're in Christ or out of them.

Nobody gets a free ride. But all the slog, all the heartbreak, all the pain, all the hard work, all the tribulation you will go through in this world without Christ, it is like doing all this work as a slave.

You get no remuneration, you get no reward, there's no benefit, there's no credit for it, you're just literally slaving away. Slaving your life away until you die.

[ 19 : 23 ] That is what you do as a slave. That is what we do when we are slaves to this world. We are only set free to actually, as it were, get some benefit from the slog, the hard work, the tribulation of this world when we are free in Christ.

And then, credit begins to build up benefit from all the slog and hard work and difficulty and pain and tribulation that we go through. We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation work with patience.

The more you go through it, the more you become accustomed to it. Let's take the offshore as a case of mine. I've never been offshore in my life, so I'm speaking through non-experience, but just speculation here.

Somebody who's been out on the rigs for like 10 years and yes, they've been doing similar work, doing their job, they're trained, whatever, out there, they know the conditions, they know sometimes storms can arise, sometimes the chopper won't get through and they're delayed and they're going home.

All these difficulties they're an old hand at it. Somebody else comes out and it's his first time in the rig. And when there's a storm comes up, he's a wee bit anxious and he begins to sway and he's not used to all the fact that you just eat, sleep, work, eat, sleep, work and all the confined money.

[ 20 : 42 ] He's just not used to it and he's just not, he's not, he's not into the way of it. Maybe the old hand needs to take him aside and explain things to him, but one thing that he has, this experience, is he has learned patience.

He has learned it through his own tribulation. It's not that he's had an easy 10 years on the rig and this young man he's having real trouble. The old guy, he's had this trouble, he's had the tribulation, he's gone through the experience, he's had the storms, he's had the breakdowns, he's had the blowouts, he's had the danger, he's gone through it, he has built up this tribulation tribulation and the experience which causes it to think, look, this is just part of it.

This is how it goes, you get through it. I've been through it, you'll get through it. Tribulation, work of patience and patience, experience. Now, when it says experience here, it's not the sense of, you know, building up the knowledge of the past in that sense or like we've been talking about with the old hand as opposed to the new boy.

The word that is translated here, experience from the Greek. Elsewhere in scripture, it is translated as the word proof. In 2 Corinthians 2, verse 9, for example, we read, For to this end also did I write that I might know the proof of you whether you be obedient in all things.

Now, the word translated proof is the same word as Paul uses for experience there in Romans 5.4. Also, chapter 13, verse 3, Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you is not weak but is marking your proof.

[ 22 : 22 ] It's the same thing, experience. Likewise, Philippians 2, verse 22, we read, But ye know the proof of him, that is of Timothy, that as a son with a father he hath said with me in the gospel.

It's this word again which is here translated as experience. And the word in Greek is actually a word document, document, or document, the men in the circle.

Now, what does that sound to us like, document? It sounds a bit like document, doesn't it? Document, documentation, evidence, certification, proof.

And that's the word that is being used here, that your experience, your tribulation work of patience and patience experience in the sense of documentation, proof, cast iron, proof of God's working on your behalf and bringing you through these tribulations, bringing you through these difficulties.

The guy in his first time out in the woods, he may be nervous or anxious and all the conditions are new, maybe he's a bit homesick, all the rest of it. The old hand, he knows how to pace himself.

[ 23 : 35 ] He knows about the difficulties, there's going to be. He doesn't expect an easy time. If he's a nice guy, he'll take the young one under the shadow of his wing, he'll look after him, he'll guide him through his first time.

But he hasn't had it easy. But he has learned to cope with it. He has built up the experience, the documentation. He has built up the proof, particularly if he's trusting in Christ, that the Lord will bring him through these things.

He has seen God's grace in action in his life. In the Christian life, all the tribulation that we go through builds up this patience and patience proof, experience, documentation, evidence that God is faithful.

And because we have the evidence of the past, the documented proof of how God has dealt with us in the past, as he has been in the past, so he continues to be in the present, therefore we have hope for the future.

We have the certainty of hope. If we look, for example, if we see a little further down, verse 8, God commendeth his love toward us and while we yet soon Christ died to us, Christ died to us, notice, Christ died to us, that's the past tense, that God commendeth his love, it's present tense, God commends, he is presently commending, it's ongoing, he is doing it just now in the present tense, it is the present, we have the proof of what God has done in the past, we have the evidence of God's present ongoing care for us, and therefore if two out of the three categories of time we're suddenly to stop there, what is our expectation, what is our hope for the future, God who's always been faithful, he's always brought us through, he continues to be good to us now in the present, therefore what do we expect for the future?

[ 25 : 39 ] Hope maketh not ashamed, this hope that we have in God, we will not have cause to be ashamed, we won't end up looking fools because of it, because God who begins a good work, as it says in Philippians 1, verse 6, he which have done a good work in you, will perform it completely until the day of Jesus Christ, this is what we have, this hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, now although the actual wording that is used to you for the love of God, shed abroad in our heart, God's love, love, it could be understood in a literal, technical sense, it could be understood in terms of that God makes his holy, with his holy ghost he makes us love him, and because we love God more, we didn't used to love him, but we love him now, this is evidence of the holy ghost working in our hearts, and you could take it that way, but almost universally it is recognised that the love of God is not yet it's

God's love for us, it's God's love to us, it's not our love to God, God is primary in this, God is always primary, if you think about our relation to God, God must always have the precedence, Colossians tells us, in all things may have a preeminence, 1 John 4 verse 19 the woman tells us, we love him because he first loved us, it's God's love for us, which is shared from our hearts, the holy ghost enables us to see, to recognise how much God loves us, we love him because he first loved us, likewise verse 10 of 1 John 4 here in his love, not that we love God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins, the one who causes God to become favourable towards us, hereby know we that we dwell in him and he has because he has given us of his spirit, the holy ghost, and we have seen and do testify that the father sent the son to be the saviour of the world, because he sent his son we can testify, he sent his spirit, he sent his son in our own hearts by the holy ghost which is given unto us, he gives him the spirit, now in the letter to the

Romans, this is the first mention of the holy ghost, this is the first mention of the third person of the trinity, but we see here how it is God himself, in the third person of the trinity, which pours out, that's what means shed abroad in our hearts, the holy ghost is given to us, and it pours out the love of God into our hearts, we cannot help but acknowledge how much God loves us, when the holy ghost is poured out in us, this is the sense of it, again, Titus chapter 3 verse 6, the renewing of the holy ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our saviour, this is what he does, he pours out his spirit upon us, he sheds it upon us abundantly, the sense is of, although it's coming from a single source, that you think of, you know, when you see a dam, and you see perhaps the river beneath the dam, or whatever, that river has been fed by what, by a single hole in the dam, where you see the water gushing out, the dam's not breaking, but there's a single outlet through which it's pouring out, and yet the amount that's pouring out is huge, although it might not seem like a comparison about what's in the reservoir behind it, but this is the sense, the love of

God is poured out, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us. Now, some commentators have distinguished here between assurance of faith and assurance of sense, and the latter being sort of an improvement upon the former.

The assurance of faith, that's when we are looking away from ourselves, because to look at ourselves is so hideous, we look at ourselves, we see the sin, we look within, we see the darkness, the dirt, we see the failure, we see the shortcoming, we think how could God possibly want anything to do with me, and we become this fondant, but when we have faith in Christ, we don't look at ourselves anymore, we look away to him, we look for the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world, and as we look to Christ and we see his perfection, then we have the assurance of faith.

[ 30 : 10 ] Now, faith is the substance of things hoped for, there's that word again, the evidence of things not seen, that which has not yet come to pass, it's the assurance of faith in Christ.

But then as Christ begins to work as the Holy Ghost is shed abroad in our hearts, because of our faith in Christ has brought us through all these tribulations, he enables us then gradually to look back into ourselves, although we may hesitate to do so, and to see that he has begun to change our hearts, that he's begun to change our priorities, he has begun to improve what was in there and change what is now within, to see the changes there in which he has brought, it's as though you walked away from your house to your garden, oh what a mess, I just can't face it, the place is at, look at it, wallpaper is peeling off the wall, there's guns everywhere, there's damp here, the place stinks of damp, look at the garden, it's unwellness, it's hopeless, as there's someone who says, okay, come away, come away, spend a bit of time, have a little break, have a holiday staying, and so and so, and then in due course they say, come back to the house, oh no,



I can't bear, no, come back, oh, you've done a new relationship, doesn't say nothing about it, you won't pick on, it's lovely, and you've cleaned up, wow, it's really good, you've cut the grass, you've weeded it, it's actually looking a lot better than it was, my goodness, and you know you didn't do that yourself because you weren't even there, but it's the same with the heart, you look away from yourself to Christ, and you focus on Christ, the assurance of faith, and then in the fullness of time as the Holy Ghost sheds the love of God into your heart, you're enabled gradually to see, well actually my heart is not the same as it once was, I know why I'm not as I once was, I know I'm not, or I pray I'm not all that I'm going to be, but I can see and I have to be truthful and say, things are not as they once were, the house is not a tip like it once was, the house, the garden of my heart is not the wilderness that it once was, it has been brought under

God's gracious cultivating hand, improvements have been made, changes have been made, I love now the things that once I thought were boring and I had no time for, I love the people that once I couldn't stand, I'm becoming bored and frustrated with the things that used to fascinate me in the world and now I desire the things of the Lord more, the house has changed, the garden has changed, it's maybe not as good as it's going to get, but it has begun to change and this some commentators call the assurance of sense, the documentation, the evidence, the experience of God working in our lives, this is what it means, patience, experience and experience hope and hope make us not ashamed, why does our hope make us not ashamed, because we know from the documented proof and experience of the past, God has begun to change us, God has begun to make a difference in our lives, we didn't do it, the Holy Ghost has done it, the Holy Ghost shed abroad, poured out in our hearts, enables us to see what

Christ has begun to do, and this assurance of sense is added to the assurance of faith, it's not in sterile, but if you think of that the physical illustration we've used quite often in the past, you go in the gym, you begin to work, do the exercises, whatever, and gradually your muscle tissue may build up, what's happening there, the old muscle is tearing, as the old muscle tears because it's put under strain, the body repairs it, by laying newer, harder muscle tissue on top, that's what's going on when you're building up muscle tissue, when you're exercising, building up the muscle tone by putting it under strain, and as you build, layer upon layer, that's what's happening here, the layers of assurance are building up, layer upon layer, you become stronger and stronger in the Lord, now if we ever begin to doubt, often Christians do, they think, oh yes, but I'm such a bad Christian, I'm such a failing,

[ 34 : 40 ] I'm such a flawed, God's never going to want anything to do with me, bad enough when I was a sinner saved by grace, but now surely I should have been a better Christian than I am, God commendeth his love to one, it's present tense, he keeps on doing it, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, he already did the difficult thing, when you were a complete enemy to God before, ever you had any strength of your own, while we were yet without strength, like the tickets that were booked online beforehand, before ever we collected them, before ever we got them handed over in an office, they were done long before, and before you and I had any strength, Christ died on the cross 20,000 years ago, that's before you and I were ever conceived in the womb of our mothers, before our grandparents were ever conceived, before we had any strength at all, before we had even been humanly thought of saved by God, Christ died for the ungodly, that's when he did it, when we had no strength of our own, much more than being now justified by his blood, having been saved, having been redeemed by him, now that we are his friends as opposed to his enemies, why should we fear on the day of judgment, because he's done the difficult thing, if when we were enemies we were reconciled to

God by the death of his son, now that he's alive forevermore at the right hand of the father, there he intercedes for us, his life will testify at the last day, saying, oh no, this is one of mine, I died for him or her, but now I'm alive, and my life testifies to say that we shall be saved by his life, now the rest of the chapter, Paul makes much of the fact that one sin by one man, lessen all the sin of the world, it's like a pyramid, out of the sins at the top, and all the sin flows down, all the humanity and all the world, there's a great big wide base of the pyramid, but the reverse happens with Christ, the pyramid goes in reverse, all the massive sins, all the sins of humanity, those who believe, these are absorbed, gathered up, taken upon the one man, the pinnacle of the pyramid, it's in Jesus Christ, the pyramid goes into reverse, take another example, if you're on the ferry and you've got a cup of juice or coffee or something, somebody sits down beside you and they stick a little pin in your polystyrene cup, so tiny you don't even see it's happening, but the next thing you know when you're in your magazine, you're with a liquid all over your table and it's on the floor and

I'm like, what's happening, this tiny little pin but it's bubbling out, all the liquids coming out, how can I get it back in again, how can I push it back through this little hole, can't, there's nothing to be done now, it's gone, it's spilt, you can't suck it up now or lick it off the floor, it's dirty anyway, the only thing you can do, get a new cup, get a fresh cup of coffee, start again, you can't undo the sin in your life, you and I can't push it back through the hole from which it escaped, the only thing we can do is get a new start and a fresh life filled to the brim by the grace of Christ, that is what he offers us, when we were yet without strength in due time, Christ died for the unbrockly, is he going to love us still, is he going to redeem us, this is our hope and this hope maketh not ashamed, we're not going to end up looking fools but put in our trust and our hope in Jesus because the love of

God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given up to us, now Christians may disagree on many things, they may fall out on many things, but the one thing that binds them all is love for Christ, now sometimes that love may be difficult to see, but it will always be there, whatever they may think, whatever they may believe, whatever may be in their hearts, if they have love for Christ, only God could put that there, only the Holy Ghost could bring that forth, love for the Lord Jesus Christ, all else will form to place in due course, this hope that we have, as Hebrews says, an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, hope maketh mother shape, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which we don't buy, which we don't earn, but which is given to us, such is the grace of God.

Most you you