

Hebrews 12:1-17

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: 15 October 2017

Preacher: Rev George MacAskill

[0 : 0 0] let's turn in our Bibles then to the passage of scripture which we read Hebrews chapter 12 and let's read again verse 14 Hebrews chapter 12 verse 14 pursue peace with all men and holiness without which no one will see the Lord as God would help me concentrating on that last clause that last phrase and holiness without which no one will see the Lord without holiness a person can be converted without holiness a person can be forgiven without holiness a person can be born again but without holiness no one can enter through the gates of heaven that essentially is what the words of our text are saying the Bible states regarding heaven there shall by no means there shall by no means enter anything that defiles and yet sinners are defiled and heaven will be full of sinners how come what's the explanation how therefore do sinners who are defiled get into heaven and the answer is their sins are forgiven and they are first of all made holy before they enter heaven were made holy the best illustration

I can think of is having a empty ticket for either a sports final or something or an exhibition you've got a ticket you pay for your ticket you've got the ticket you've got your right to go in no one can stop you going you've got the ticket but you arrive at the exhibition hall or the sports stadium or whatever it is and there's a style and you have to go through this in fact it's the same in some railway stations you've got your ticket you've got a right to it no one can stop you getting in you've got a right but you come to these styles and you put your ticket in and the style opens but they're only 18 inches wide and you happen to be 30 you happen to be 48 inches wide you can't get through but you've got a ticket you've got a right but you physically can't get through until you get rid of excess baggage until you get rid of excess weight the moment any sinner anywhere anytime trusts his soul to Christ he has a ticket for heaven no one has a right to stop you coming to heaven but because of your excess weight because of our sins because we're the stain of sin we can't go through the style until we're fully satisfied that's the explanation without holiness you can't get through the gate to heaven so how are we what is holiness first of all what is holiness without it you can't get through the gate what is it

God alone is holy God alone is holy so holiness is being like God becoming God like but wait there is such a difference between God in heaven and we sinners on earth how can we even find out what God is like we're to become like God if we're to get into heaven how do we find out what God is like well that's why doesn't there need to be something in between God and us so that we can something we can identify with yes that's one reason why God sent his son Jesus Christ he's the goal between man on earth and God in heaven if you want to know what God is like look at Jesus he is God he's the second person of the

Godhead but we're to become Christ like we're to behave as Christ behaved on earth we're to be Christ like in behaviour and in disposition so we ask what was Jesus Christ like so that we can endeavour to become like him well Jesus always had his father in his mind he always thought of what his father would want he always had his eye on his father he never took his eye off his father and he only did what his father asked him to do do you remember Bethesda the poor Bethesda Christ healed the man that was 38 years was it with the palsy and then he walked away and he said

Jesus why not spend another 20 minutes and eat all the vegetables why just one do you remember they more or less asked me that in John chapter 5 well in verse 19 we've got the explanation John 5 19 then Jesus answered and said to him most assuredly I say to you the son can do nothing of himself but what he sees the father do for whatever he the father does the son also does in like manner so Jesus keeping his eye on the father what he was doing he discovered after healing the man at the pool that the father was not healing anyone else that day so he kept his eye on his father and went and did what his father was asking him to do for the rest of the day he always kept his eye on the father he always had the father in his sight he always had his father in his mind and if we're to become holy we're always to have

[8 : 13] God in our mind so that whenever we're propositioned whenever we've got options to choose the first thing that comes into our mind is not now what would I like what do I want but we're going to realize now what does God want what would please God what would he want me to do Jesus Jesus always said his father in his mind and secondly he always agreed with his father however inconvenient it may have been for him on earth however embarrassing it might have been however unpopular it may be Christ became unpopular in the world crowds following them crowds and then he'd say something and they were offended and they walked no more with him until the disciples themselves the twelve disciples themselves said will you also go away do you know what it's like to have blinded numbers no one knows better than the saviour the saviour that blinded numbers and I remember your present minister

Andrew Kogel saying to me when we were talking about something like that he said George how many disciples did Jesus start off with I said 12 and then he said how many did he finish with and right away I said 12 not he said 11 Judas is carrying himself left from the twelve no one knows more about blue numbers than Christ the son of God but keep your eye on Christ keep your eye on Jesus now it's not only that he always had the father in mind it's not only that he always agreed with the father sometimes we don't agree we know God wants to do it it doesn't come naturally the third thing is he always delighting in his father's will we're back to catechism number one man's chief end is to glorify

God and enjoy him enjoy him enjoy him enjoy him can we enjoy God do we enjoy worshipping God do we enjoy reading his bible his life do we enjoy praying to him that's a test what was Christ like what was he like Christ sometimes marveling he was never confused but he was amazed at things and I'll remember he told two things only two things amazed Christ when he was on earth one was the unbelief of some people he marveled at that unbelief that coercion the other thing that he marveled at he marveled at so great faith outside of Israel

I've not seen such great faith not even in the church as it were so great faith he marveled at these things but our bible tells us he was never discouraged but I sin there very often I get discouraged but I'm not Christ like when I get discouraged what was the prophecy he will not fail nor be discouraged I would be Christ like or not to be negative or not to be discouraged not to be pessimistic and you know Jesus he actually was never disappointed what did he do when he was disappointed because you know they had a great evangelistic campaign once in the bible

Jesus sent them out to three towns chrysan by seda caperna evangelistic crusades and I preached reading sent the disciples out they came back reverently speaking with a tail between their ears no converse no converse failure was it failure what did Jesus do what did Jesus say to them Matthew 11 25 at that time what time the time when they came back from what you and I call an unsuccessful evangelistic campaign at that time Jesus answered and said I thank you father lord of heaven and earth because you've hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to beings you see

[14 : 51] God doesn't hide the gospel but he does hide it from some in order in order to reveal it to others but can we be thankful when we have no success as it were in the witnessing no success in the gospel as it were isn't it a challenge well that verse even so father for so it seemed good you know any time I read that verse I think of a story in a I think a refugee camp in a home for paraplegics there was this little black boy born born blind born apartheid no hands couldn't use his hands or his legs and in this home there was a very important

VIP who was an atheist going around the home and being shown and the matron of the home introduced him to this little boy and she explained to the VIP who born a poor kid born blind so the VIP said oh what now then young man what now what do you think of your god he made you like that what have you got to say to your god would the boy bowed his head and said father even so father for so it seemed good in your sight there's grace there's grace without holiness then you can be forgiven without holiness you can be on your way to heaven if you're not converted here tonight you can be converted in one moment by trusting committing your soul to Christ and you're on the road to heaven but there's an hour to get at the end is to get through you need to be satisfied you need to be made holy you need to be made like

Christ do you know there's no verse in the bible that says that we're predestinated to be saved there's no verse in the bible that says that what the bible says is we're predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son that's the scripture predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son now the first step in that process is perversion to Christ forgiveness of sin being given a title being given an admission to get to heaven as it were that's the first step but it's a process from the onwards so we ask the question how does one become like Christ we have to keep an eye on him and become like him well as

I've said before first step you must be forgiven your sins must be forgiven or the process of becoming Christlike can't even commence it only commences once you forgive the process isn't for 20 years or 30 years or 40 years the process is life long long only and death are made perfect it might only be a few weeks like the thief on the cross might only be a few hours like the thief on the cross but boy what he learned in these few hours it's a lifelong process forgiveness a title to the eternal life instant the moment you believe you're not becoming fit for heaven becoming ready for heaven a lifelong process having been forgiven we are then made holy through faith in Christ we are made holy by living a life of faith in Christ now that is exactly what the previous chapter 11 in Hebrews is all about by faith by faith

Abel by faith Enoch by faith Noah by faith Abraham by faith Sarah by faith all the parents Isaac Jacob and so on Moses by faith they lived such a life of testing and trials us that's what we're taught there the whole chapter is about that you see there were saying to some people I don't know if you noticed but the word the word faith is only twice twice in the whole of the old testament but if Hebrews chapter 11 teaches us anything at all it teaches us that patriarchs lived by faith the concept of faith pervaded their lives that's what Hebrews 11 is emphasizing don't go by the times a word appears in the

[21 : 05] Bible Trinity the Bible teaches the doctrine of the concept of the Trinity now God the Father God the Son God the Holy Spirit sacrifices us makes us Christ through the remainder of our lives the question now is what do the Father Son and Holy Ghost use to make us Christ like four things I'll just mention first of all you'll know them I'm sure the word Jesus Jesus if ever there was a prayer on earth that was heard and answered and perfect surely it was Christ's prayer in John chapter 17 the intercessory prayer where Christ prayed for his church and his people in that prayer he says sanctify them through thy truth thy word is truth you and I by reading the Bible by hearing the Bible by meditating the Bible through that we are made

Christ like don't ask me how it works don't ask me how it works but it works that was the prayer of Christ and our prayers answered we're sanctified through by the work a second thing that God uses to make us Christ like is prayer building yourselves up in your most holy faith building yourselves up in your faith praying in the Holy Ghost through praying by praying we're built up in our faith sanctified we read by the word of God and prayer sanctified by God through prayer when we pray when we pray God sacrifices sinners third thing

God uses to sacrifice to make us like Jesus is trials and tribulations how we argue with that how we pray against it what does the praise chapter 11 teach us about faith you see some people think that if you have faith and you see you've got a problem in your life and they say well you just pray about it and if you pray with faith it goes away that what you need to stand that what you do is pray about it and it goes away what do we read in Hebrews 11 we do read by faith some escaped the edge of the sword in other words when they saw they were going to be killed by the sword they prayed and

God miraculously delivered them I think that's verse 33 but in verse 35 others by faith were slain by the sword in other words they were able to say alright if it's your will God that I should die just now if it's your will that I should be slain just now I surrender to your will by faith by faith the whole Hebrews 11 teaches us that faith is not for dodgy problems it might do in God's mercy it might do in his great mercy but he says should he what Hebrews 11 is teaching us faith may endure problems go through these trials go through these sufferings go through these tribulations that's what faith is for enabling to go through them

God uses trials and tests and tribulations and afflictions and sufferings to make us like Christ Christ I asked a lot of problems in his life he didn't have a home every night whenever I stayed to night he went up to minister he suffered a lot Christ and I am the stars acquainted with grief and were to be Christ like there's no way to be stupid so don't think something is wrong don't think something is wrong when you have problems in your life I don't know how many people often come out to minister and say you ever since I was converted things have gone wrong in my life what am I doing wrong they're probably doing everything just right through these things were made perfect through these trials were made like

[27 : 03] Christ fourth thing last thing I mentioned we're sanctified by being chastened by God rebuked by God corrected by God what is chastening well verses 5 to 11 what chastening is it's not punishment for doing something wrong Christ took all that when he cried in he's finished part of what he meant was I finished paying for all their sins Christ is people chastisement is not punishment chastisement is correction discipline rebuke yes correction yes instruction yes it's been put back on track we've gone off track and we've to keep on back on track and we're not very willing to do that very often therefore it's more painful than it need to be we've to be correct now never never be thankful that we've never been chastened do you know why because it means you're not a true child of

God verse 8 tells us that if but if you are without chastening of which all all children of God have become protectors then you're legitimate but not sad how do you know what is to be chastened by God don't be deflated because you've been chastened or corrected or disciplined by God rejoice you're a true child of God you're his you're on the way to glory rejoice you've been asking for a mark you're a true Christian you've got it there be chastened by God correct that was wrong with me if you have to confess your sins well he's faithful just to forgive your sins the rod is good

I remember I made a mistake when I was first called as a student all students in the denomination I was in got all calls because there were so many vacancies I made a mistake and I was terrified I was going to make a mistake the second time and I remember I always wondered what the Bible meant when it says in Psalms 33 thy rod and staff comforts me the rod is correction comforts me when I how was that a connection how was that a comfort well when I came to design the second time which is it which where do you want to go on what comfort is well look I made me speak the first hand and the rod stuck my heart but now you'll do it same again you'll correct me I'm a child you'll direct me my rod of correction the rod of discipline the rod of chasing me it's my comfort my conservation that I'm a true child

I don't direct me I put me right where I go wrong again it's a willingness to be put right if you're wrong conclusion just three things pursue or strive after holiness without which no man will see the Lord it won't come naturally okay just summarizing what we'll try to see it won't come naturally we have to strive after it we have to pursue it it's a spiritual thing therefore because it's spiritual it doesn't come naturally there's work involved it's a struggle you can't strive after a thing you can't become holy without three things beginning with the letter T time toil tears there'll be we'll be we'll be sad on the way but you'll wipe away all tears but if you're being satisfied it'll take time it'll take toil it'll take tears but rejoice don't be deflated don't be deflated don't be discouraged second thing growth and development in becoming

Christlike is not a smooth curve not a smooth curve steps and stairs sudden leaps then plateaus then leap then plateaus that's that's don't get discouraged there's steps and stairs there's periods of damp dryness it's not a smooth curve you go 5% every year for 20 years and that's it no no sudden stop sudden stop rough it's irregular that's growth and the third thing about growth you can't see your own growth do you see yourself growing but you see somebody else growing you see somebody else developing growth is a byproduct of feeding and exercise growth can be silent and and push you know what it's like you haven't seen your nephew for three years and he's mad you've grown and the mother and the father thinks oh yes oh the last of my son you don't see it deep you don't see the grass growing you can see a man

[33 : 35] I'm sure I cut the grass just a few days ago and I've got to cut it again it's imperceptible it's silent so don't get discouraged speed is not the important thing the direction is what's important I will become like Christ like Jesus keep an eye on him full of him one last thing if you're not a Christian forget about what it is concentrate on getting forgiveness from Christ that's a start you cannot become holy unless Christ is in you concentrate then if you're not a Christian concentrate on Christ getting Christ and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved may God bless his work his truth let's pray