

W103_Seven_Steps_To_Glory.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made at the chapel of the opened book. Under the covering title of the pyramid, the Subdivision, the Epistle to the Colossians and the present series ends this evening with the seventh step in the Seven Steps to Glory. Those of you who are listening to this recording, if you care to join us, will you switch off for a little while and read with us from the Scriptures? One Thessalonians Chapter four starting at verse 13, reading right through chapter five to the end. One Thessalonians Chapter four starting at verse 13, reading right through chapter five to the end. Before we turn from this reading that we've just had, it might be wise for you to know and to remember that there are two different words. For sleep. In one Thessalonians 4:15. The word sleep. Is a word that means to fall asleep involuntarily. Fall asleep in death. But in chapter five, where we have in verse seven. They that sleep sleep in the night. And verse ten, Whether we wake or sleep, that is a different word. That means to compose yourself, to sleep. And you could translate it verse ten, Who died for us that whether we are watchful or drowsy, we should live together with him. That canvassing requested you see. Living together with him does not depend upon our watchfulness or our overcoming or our running or our suffering. That's settled by grace. But the other aspect of sharing with him in any element of his writing or glory or crown or whatnot, that cannot be entertained by those who do not watch and wait.

[00:02:13] And then in one Thessalonians four, it says in verse 17. And then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them. That is to say, in answer to verse 15, that they shall that those who are alive and remain shall not go before them which are asleep. They're all going together. Then we have another aspect in verse 23 and the very God of Peace. That Chapter five sanctify you wholly. Now that means complete and is explained to sanctify you completely, that is to say, body, soul and spirit. That is to say, you're a living person. So they will entertain. You see, in the days when Thessalonians was written a legitimate hope that they may be living at the moment when Christ returned. The moment you get to the end of the acts of the Apostles, that hope is then postponed and it's still postponed. And we this evening are going to consider something to do with the blessed hope that belongs to our calling. If he is rather gone temporarily, if taken away with themselves, their covenants and their promises, then the hope of Israel. He must be suspended. And unless God has given us an indication, then we are groping. We have no definite statement. But those of you who

are acquainted with the epistle to the Ephesians, you know that as soon as he given the first statement concerning the wonderful position of being chosen before the foundation of the world and blessed in heavenly places, he says, now I'm going to pray for you that you may have a spirit of wisdom and understanding.

[00:04:03] He may give you a spirit of wisdom and understanding that you may know what is the hope of his calling. Well, he introduces it there as though it was something that you ought to be aware of. He's not saying. Of course, I have no need to pray for you brethren, because you know all about it. He says, No, I've got to pray for you that you should get to know all about it. Well, this introduces the last of the seven steps from the being reckoned to be crucified with Christ until at last we emerge out into the light and glory of realization. I changed. You see the word for reckoning with. There is no reckoning with whether you're on the top rung. You're out in the blue. Not one of us has ever been crucified. Not one of us have ever died for our sins. Not one of us have ever been buried. It's all reckoned with. When we get to the last but one, we are reckoned to be seated together where Christ sits at the right hand of God. We are reckoned to be.

[00:05:15] So we're not there actually. But one day the reckoning is all to be a thing of the past. It will have led us step by step with Christ until He who is our life is made manifest and we are manifested with Him in glory. So let us this evening bring this series to a conclusion by considering this final phase manifested with him. A word or two with regard to the place of hope may be wise for all of us. The figure that is introduced into the scriptures is an anchor. We hope we have as an anchor. It's not only an anchor that short and steadfast. But here is another thing to be always reminding ourselves. It enters into that within the veil because an anchor is useless if it cannot find a ground. Billy swaying about would be more damage than good. Our hope is only our value is it's definitely fixed in the finished work of Christ within the veil. We have an anchor. And. They do say that as a person is looking down, say, on a harbour from a cliff. You could tell which way the tide was running if there were anchored ships, because an anchored ship always swings around and faces the current. And you can tell whether a Christian has some conception of his blessed hope, for he turns around and faces the current instead of drifting and believing what anybody thinks. Well, then we have other statements.

[00:07:09] The first epistle of John says he that hath this hope on him purify himself even as he is pure. It is a purifying element because it's continually lifting your thoughts and expectations away from this poor little world to that most glorious one that is yet to be. And in Romans, the eighth chapter reminds you that hope that is seen is not hope. Because if a man see it as he was, he had expected. So it always indicates something which is on in the distant future. And that is where faith comes into the story. For Hebrews 11 says, faith is the substance of things hoped for and the faith of Hebrews 11 is complete. Many times said to be seeing that which is invisible move by things not seen. And then if you remember that the papyrus which has been discovered containing letters and bills and all sorts of things to do with the days of the apostles, this very word substance is found in that papyrus. It was a legal term and it could be rendered. Face is the title Deed of things hoped for. You've got the title deeds. Now you're going to enter into possession. Then that's the difference between faith and hope being realized. And then we might say. Among other things like Abraham, who against hope, believed in hope. Believed in hope. Without hope. You couldn't believe because nothing would come. So that they are connected together.

[00:09:02] And then we must give one more, mustn't we? One Corinthians 13 says these three faith, hope, charity or love. And then he goes on to say, And the greatest of these is love. But those three come together again and again. And if at any time you are wishing to make a little study for yourself, go through the New Testament and find how many times in the New Testament, somewhere in the vicinity of a verse or two, you will find faith and hope and love coming together. You find them in Ephesians when he says, I've heard of your faith and your love, I now pray concerning your hope. And there are others which I leave for you to have the joy of finding. Without it come to first of all, the key, the text, which is to be the basis of our thoughts. Colossians Chapter three verses 1 to 4. Colossians Chapter three verses 1 to 4. If ye then be risen with Christ. So he's assuming what we've already considered that we are reckoned to be raised together with him. See those things which are above where Christ did it on the right hand of God. That assumes that we're not only raised together with him, but reckoned to be seated with him because this is the basis of all our hopes and expectations. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead or ye died and your life is hid with Christ in God.

[00:10:47] When Christ who is our life shall appear, Then shall ye also appear with him in glory. It's rather a moot point. Whether the word appear is the better translation of this word or whether we should translate it to be made manifest. I rather leave to make manifest because the word appear has in my mind the sense of somebody moving somewhere. He suddenly appears, whereas the other is the possibility that he is veiled at the moment. But even in glory, the angels and principalities and powers are not seeing him yet. But a moment will come in God's good time, where he will stand up and be made manifest. And that will be the first movement of the second coming. The other parts will take place in their right order. First of all, the manifestation in glory. Then some will meet him in the air. Then thirdly, his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives. Three spheres of blessing. Three aspects of the second Coming. Well, now that means that we ought to be watchful. That is, God has been pleased to distribute certain words dealing with this second coming. If he has, it would be very helpful for us when we are considering it ourselves and teaching others that we watched our set and we didn't mix them up. There are two words. That I think we ought to become acquainted with.

[00:12:26] Most of you know them already, but I have to speak as though you don't. That was the first word is the word parousia. P. A. R. O. U. S. I. A. It is used quite apart from the second coming of the presence of Timothy, the personal presence. It always means personal presence. It is used in secular Greek for the coming of a king to a city and the decorations and the banquets and so on that had to be arranged for his parousia. It was a technical word concerning the visit of a king to a part of his dominions. And so we find it in the Scriptures. That is one word. The other word is epiphania, with which we are acquainted with the prayer book. The word epiphany. And that is based upon a word that means to shine, to shine out, to be manifested. Now, those two words are not used indiscriminately. We don't use the word epiphany when we are dealing with Matthew 24, when we are dealing with the second coming in. Matthew 24. It is the word Parousia. And this is exciting for us to remember is this. That the word parousia is the dominant word used for the second coming right through the Gospels, right through the epistles, right up to the end of the Acts of the Apostles. Acts 28 and then the word parousia is dropped. Paul never uses it of the second coming again.

[00:14:08] After 20, he picks up the word epiphaneia and uses that. Why don't you feel that? If that's the case, we ought to do the same? It's recognizing the change of this sensation. And so we find that Parousia is the word that is used when the hope of Israel

is present. It is a dire is a word that is used when Israel are gone. And the manifestation in glory is the object of our hope. For now, just to give you chapter and verse for some of those features, um. Will you turn back now to Matthew 24? And without pausing to comment and explain any features that might present a difficulty, because I want rather to give you a canvas of this subject. We'll have to take it as read that we understand it completely, but we want to be sure of the passages. Now, every reference I give you until I tell you I'm going to change will be the one word Parousia. Personal presence. Matthew 24, verse three. And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately saying, Tell us when shall these things be? And what will be the sign of thy coming at the end of the world? Coming Parousia. Elvis 27. For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the West. So shall also the coming, the parousia and the Son of man be. And then 37. But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

[00:15:53] And verse 39, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away. So shall also the coming of the son of man be. You see, consistently using the one word parousia, whether it's dealing with the hope of Israel and the coming to the earth. Now we'll turn to the epistles. One Corinthians chapter 15:23. Now one Corinthians is an epistle of Paul, written during the Acts of the Apostles during the time that the people of Israel were still a factor in the scheme. During the time when it was still humanly possible that Israel may repent and the times of refreshing commence according to Acts three. One Corinthians 15. 22 and 23. For as in Adam, all die. Even so, in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order. Christ, the first fruits. Afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. Parousia. Now we turn to one Thessalonians chapter two. One Thessalonians Chapter two, verse 19. But what is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ that is coming. Two words here you see one word for presence and the other almost its equivalent at his parousia or coming. And then in chapter 3:13. So. To the end of Establish your hearts and blamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

[00:17:50] I did say we wouldn't stop. But I think I must here because this does not refer to the coming of the saints, the believers, the church with Christ. This is a partial quotation from the Old Testament. The coming of the Lord with all his saints in the Old Testament is in the context and in the parallel passages, proved to be the coming of the

Lord with His holy angels. Because these are waiting upon the earth. Waiting for the coming. It says in chapter one. Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for his son from heaven. And they are expecting either to be here living and remaining or dead, but joining them. Well, it's rather awkward if they are down here waiting for the coming of the Lord and then they're told their hope is the coming of the Lord with all his saints from heaven. They they won't know whether they're coming or going, will they? As the saying is. So we just put that into its right place. And if you want to know the passage which is being quoted, it is Zechariah chapter 14, verse five, and it is associated with the second coming from the Old Testament point of view, coming of the Lord with all his holy ones. And now this. Chapter 415 one Wonderful onions.

[00:19:15] For this. We say adieu by the word of the Lord that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent or go before them which are asleep. The personal presence, the parousia. Once more in chapter 523 and the very God of Peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming parousia of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now two Thessalonians two. Thus. Uh. Verse eight. Now, wait a minute. Sorry. Two Thessalonians two, verse one and eight. Second chapter. Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and by our gathering together unto Him. That's the Parousia. And then we have in verse eight. And then shall that wicked be revealed? Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his parusia or coming. Then notice this verse nine. Even him, whose parousia or coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders. In that one verse we have lying miracles and we have the travesty of the Lord's coming for the very self-same word Parousia is used of of Satan's counterfeit. As it is in used in the preceding verse of the coming of the Lord himself. So you remember when they raised the question about his coming? His first answer was not any signs or wonders in heaven.

[00:21:08] Take heed that no man deceive you. That was his first answer. And here we have the great dissection that will be foisted upon the world. Instead of the true Messiah being coming and heralded by signs and wonders. It will be an imposition worked by the deceiver himself. Well, then we move from Paul's epistles. And are all the statements in Paul's epistles for the work for. To those of Peter, James and John, will you turn to James? You see, it's quite in line with truth that James and Peter should speak about

the Parousia because it is still possible that the people of Israel are there and in view. Chapter five, James, Chapter five, verse seven and eight. Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Verse eight, Be ye also patient. Establish your hearts for the coming of the Lord. Draweth nigh. That coming now. Two Peter one. 60. Two. Peter 116. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. But were eyewitnesses of His Majesty. So there we have a statement. That we have not followed cunningly devised fables. And he picks us up again to your society. Chapter three. Chapter three, Verse four. Verse three says Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? That doesn't mean to say, Will you tell me what book I can look at or what text I can read? No, they are questioning the validity of it.

[00:23:15] They say, Oh, it's all very well talking about this second coming. But but here's their objection. Since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. You see, they go right back to the beginning of creation. These people. They they they know. You see, they're not so modest, you see, as to say, well, I suppose if God were to challenge me as he challenged Jove and said, Jove, were you there when I laid the foundations of the earth and poor old Jobe, You see, He said, No, Lord, I wasn't. But these people. Oh, yes. They go right back to the beginning of creation. Do they tell you of God has never intervened, never broken silence and never will convenient doctrine for them. You see that, he says they're willing to ignore it, that God has broken silence. And then you get the evidences both with regard to the Genesis one, verse two, darkness upon the face of the deep. You get the flood in the days of Noah, you get the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, or you get many evidences of sea drying up and letting Israel pass over. God has intervened. You've got to shut your eyes to the teaching of Scripture or deny it.

[00:24:27] So here we have this challenge concerning the second Coming that is verse four and verse 12. Verse 11, seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God. So it's something that should be eagerly expected. There is a rendering which which puts it hastening the coming. Hastening the coming. How can we hasten the coming? If God has a date and God has a time that if we do suffer, pray or hope for country. But that's assuming that it is a fixed date, isn't it?

Because we are told that because of the awful affliction that will be endured during the days of tribulation, for the elect sake, God is going to shorten the days and there's not a soul on earth and perhaps in heaven that knows how many days God's going to shorten it. So there you are. So that means a little bit for you or for me to say, Oh, if we only could walk and witness and stand and pray, perhaps a few days will be taken off. We don't know. It just gives a little possible link between the faithfulness of the believer and the winding up of this awful time. Now, the last reference to the Parousia is in the first epistle of John. So that's Peter, James and John for the.

[00:26:08] Apostles of the circumcision. And Paul, during the time when he ministered to them as well. And then the Matthew 24 second Coming one John 228 And now little children abide in him that when he shall appear we may have confidence and be not ashamed before him at his coming. How are you? Strangely enough, we've got the word appear. John has used the word that when he shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming. That's the one exception. But I think is using it here in a little different sense. Like you get in chapter three, behold what manner of love the father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the Sons of God. Therefore, the world knows us not because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God. And it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him. You see, it's that idea. It doesn't appear what we shall be. But when he comes, that will be settled. And that's the reason why that word is introduced. Now we turn to the specific use of this word epiphania in Paul's epistles. So we go back to the first of Timothy. The first Timothy Chapter six. Verse 14. He says in verse 13, one 7613. I give thee charge in the sight of God who quickeneth all things and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession that thou keep this commandment without spot, unreviewable until the appearance.

[00:28:11] Of our Lord Jesus Christ. There's the manifestation. Until He is manifested, which in his own times, he shall show. Is he when he is manifested? He'll make it obvious. He will show something. And what will he show? He will show who is the blessed and only potentate. The King of kings and Lord of Lords. That challenge will at last be taken up completely. Who is the blessed and only potentate? King of kings. Lord of Lords. Who only have immortality dwelling in the light. Which no man can approach unto. Who no man hath seen or can see. To whom? Be honor and power everlasting. Amen. Do you know the answer? You say yes, as I blessed. Some don't. And some

want to here you see when he appeared, that is going to be brought prominently forward. Then we have in two Timothy chapter one, verse ten. A manifestation which took place. Earlier. And an infestation which has taken place preparing for the manifestation which is yet to take place. Two Timothy 110. He says in verse nine, Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. But now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

[00:29:51] Had to be brought to light. Not only so, but who hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Whereunto. I am appointed a preacher. Then in chapter four, verses one and eight. Two, Timothy four, one and eight. I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom. Preach the word. And then again in verse eight. The 70s. I fought a good fight. I finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me A crown. And once more, without the word appearing, you get verse 18 and the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom. Paul has in view when writing about the kingdom. This kingdom. The Crown crowns go with kingdoms. And he's urging Timothy to notice his. How? And the reward. And so he introduced his kingdom as well as appearing. And the last reference in this series is Titus chapter two. Titus Chapter two, verse 13. Chapter 230. Well, I think we must go back to verse. Nine because of its. A context in such a practical section. Verse nine. Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters and to please them well, in all things. Not back answering and not purloining. But showing all good fidelity that they may adorn the doctrine of God, our savior in all things.

[00:32:00] The apostle goes out of his way more than once. To give the servant and sometimes the slave a little bit extra. He says it in Colossians servants you obey not with eye service as men pleasers, and you shall receive the reward of the inheritance. You're giving it to them particularly. So he says, you slaves and you servants. It may help you to put up with something sometimes if you know that you have this priceless opportunity of adorning the doctrine of God, our Savior. For he says, this is a this is the reason why I can stress this for the grace of God that bringeth salvation. Hath appeared unto all men that teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts. We should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope I live. The essential sentence out of all those words by saying it like this. The grace of God not

only saves us, but teaches us that we should live looking. That's it. Live looking. But looking where or what? Looking for that blessed hope. At this particular word. Blessed is not the one with which we are accustomed when we read. Blessed with all spiritual blessings or blessed be the God and father. No, no. This is a word. The only word we can find in the English language to translate it is an unfortunate one.

[00:33:29] It's the word happy. It's a deeper word than our word happy, because the word happiness depends upon what happens. But blessed be God. My blessings do not depend upon what happens. They can go on in spite of what happens. And yet, what can we do? We've got no other word. So we have to reserve the word blessed that we get in Ephesians and keep it there. And here we have a happy hope. Fine thought, isn't it? That there is happiness and Felicity in all that goes with it. Associated with this hope. Looking for that blessed hope and the appearing of the glory or the glorious, appearing of the Great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. Who gave himself for us. That he might redeem us from all iniquity that's away from and purify unto himself. That to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Well, there we have then. The. Way in which the two words Parasha previous coming is used in the early part of the Scriptures, and then the epiphaneia is reserved, particularly for the expression of the hope of the church of the one body. Now we'll turn back for the next few minutes. I don't know whether our lights are going to twinkle all of a sudden, but we're just looking at Colossians Chapter three. Those who are listening to this recording might wonder what these lights are about. Well, I think you'll have to wonder just now.

[00:35:12] Colossians three. Look at the two verses. Verses three and four. There is a certain parallelism, if you like, to listen to it. He died. Your life is hid. With Christ. A god. Now listen to the parallelism. When Christ who is our life? That in answer to the fact that she died, shall appear that in answer to the fact that it hid. Shall appear. With him is in answer to with Christ in glory is in answer to in God. You see perfect parallelism. Let's get them again. He died. Your life is hid with Christ in God. Now it starts all over again. Christ is our life. You die. But Christ is your life. A seed, it shall appear. It hid with Christ in God. It shall appear with him in glory. So you see, it's not merely a glorious something. It's in glory. It does indicate a sphere. This has been questioned by some. But you get in one Corinthians 15, the first positive statement that in the resurrection. It is sown in dishonor. It is raised in glory. That is true of all those who are raised from the dead, whether they're going to be on the earth, in the heavenly Jerusalem or far above

all in glory. But then you are told in the same context that one star differs from another star in glory. They're all in glory, but they differ. And there's a different glory of the sun.

[00:37:07] There's a different glory of the moon. There's a different glory of terrestrial things. So you could be on the earth or in heavenlies, and your glory will be associated with your calling. So here we have the summing up of our hope that when Christ who is our life shall be manifested. Not till then friends, but then we shall be manifested with Him in glory. And so that brings us right to the top of the ladder, right out from the blue, right out from the associations with death and burial up through the being united together with him in quickening life right the way up until raised and seated. And then the Blessed Hope realized. Now they we borrow from the scriptures, the exhortations which tell us that if we have this hope in Him, we seek to adore that doctrine of God, our Savior. We seek to purify ourselves even as he is pure. Because one day when we do see him, we are going to be like him. So the the idea is, well, wouldn't it be a good idea if we sought to be a little bit like him Now? Now, may the Lord bless this series. Even if it's lifted out from the bigger context of the seven steps from cross to glory, which we are, we mount up and can only mount up because in the mercy of God, we mount every rung of this ladder with Christ.