

Our True Comfort in Life and Death

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[0 : 01] Well, later in our service, Willie, our senior minister, will be opening God's Word with us once more as we come towards the end of our studies in the book of Genesis. And this morning we'll be reading from chapter 49, verse 28, through to chapter 50, verse 14.

And you'll find that on page 43 in the Visitor Bibles. If you don't have a Bible with you, it'd be helpful to get one. So if you put your hand up, I'm sure one of our welcome team would be very glad to bring one to you.

So that's on page 43, across to page 44, Genesis chapter 49, beginning at verse 28. All these are the 12 tribes of Israel.

This is what their father said to them as he blessed them, blessing each with the blessing suitable to him. Then he commanded them and said to them, I am to be gathered to my people.

Bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place.

[1 : 20] There they buried Abraham and Sarah, his wife. There they buried Isaac and Rebekah, his wife. And there I buried Leah. The field and the cave that is in it were bought from the Hittites.

When Jacob finished commanding his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his people. Then Joseph fell on his father's face and wept over him and kissed him.

And Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. Forty days were required for it, for that is how many are required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days. And when the days of weeping for him were passed, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, My father made me swear, saying, I am about to die.

In my tomb that I hewed out for myself in the land of Canaan, there shall you bury me. Now therefore, let me please go up and bury my father. Then I will return.

[2 : 31] And Pharaoh answered, Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear. So Joseph went up to bury his father. With him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, as well as the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's household.

Only their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen. It was a very great company.

When they came to the threshing floor of Etad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and grievous lamentation. And he made a mourning for his father seven days.

When the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning on the threshing floor of Etad, they said, This is a grievous mourning by the Egyptians. Therefore, the place was named Abel Mizraim.

It is beyond the Jordan. Thus his sons did for him as he had commanded them. For his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place.

[3 : 49] After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father. Amen. This is God's word.

Amen. Well, do turn with me in your Bibles to the end of the book of Genesis, chapter 50, or the last little bit of chapter 49 and chapter 50.

All about the death and the funeral of Jacob, the great patriarch of Israel.

Well, now, it often is a funeral that brings great clarity about what someone really lived for, what their life was really all about. And that's certainly so for Jacob's funeral here in Genesis, chapter 50. It is actually the grandest funeral recorded in the whole of the Bible. And it makes even the pomp and ceremony of a British state funeral pale by comparison. Our late queen's funeral was magnificent, it has to be said.

[5 : 02] It's one of the few things we can still do properly in this country is a state funeral. But this outshines that one quite by some margin. Everything here is very, very significant indeed.

And we see that even in the structure of the account. The message is very clear. The dominant theme in this whole reading is the burial place.

It's the tomb of the patriarchs. It is the place of Abraham's secure possession in the land of Canaan. So the account begins, you see, with Jacob's command about it.

It ends with his sons carrying out his command. And right at the very center, if you look at verses 5 and 6 of chapter 50, it's that tomb that Jacob seeks Pharaoh's permission to go and bury his father in.

Jacob was fixed on that place. And that is his true comfort in life and in death, that tomb and a burial place among the people of God's promise and in the place that was a tangible pledge of that promise.

[6 : 17] And you see, this story is preserved here in the Bible for us so that we likewise might understand what is our great comfort in life and death.

And I'll try to explain. But we're going to look at this passage together under three sections. They focus on the message of Jacob's faith, on Jacob's funeral, and on Jacob's family.

First then, in the brackets of this passage, the last paragraph of chapter 49, and then verses 12 and 13 of chapter 50, we see the solemn command of Jacob's faith.

A solemn command that speaks of a certain expectation. And it reminds us that God's people have a great possession, a true pledge of life.

Verse 29 there, verse chapter 49, then he commanded them, and he said to them, I am to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave that's in the field of Ephraim the Hittite in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought to possess.

[7 : 24] Then look at verse 33. When he finished commanding his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed and breathed his last. And right at the end, chapter 50, verse 12, when he had finished, sorry, this his sons did for him as he commanded.

A solemn command. And they took it very seriously indeed. And it was a very revealing command because it showed that right at the last, there was in Jacob a deep longing for the land, the land of promise.

And that shows us that above everything else, Jacob was a man of faith. This is not just nostalgia. It's something far deeper than that. This is the third time he has been determinedly focused on his return to the land in his death.

In fact, God promised him that. Do you remember back in chapter 46, verse 4, as he set off to go down to Egypt? No, he must go back to the land. Why?

Well, because the true homeland of Israel and of all of the true seed of Abraham is not Egypt, but it's Canaan. And all of those of faith must make an exodus to the place that they belong, even if it must only be in death.

[8 : 38] I think this is booming a little bit and ringing. Yeah, maybe down a bit. Thanks. Now, you see, at the very last, Jacob was concerned, so concerned to go back there, even though his body was dead.

And that is testimony, isn't it, to the fact that he knew that not even the present physical land of Canaan was his ultimate home. Hebrews 11 tells us plainly, doesn't it, that all the patriarchs knew that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

And they were looking for, and they were waiting for a true homeland, a better country, where God would dwell in the midst of them forever. But you see, this burial place in Canaan was the place of Jacob's great assurance of that great expectation.

So his desire to be buried in that tomb isn't a nostalgic longing for the past. It's a faith-filled longing for the future and for life, not for death.

Jacob had a certain expectation of life beyond the grave, life in the presence of God and God's people. That's evident, I think, in the words that he uses to his sons in verse 29.

[9 : 51] He says, I'm to be gathered to my people. And he's not just meaning there he's going to be buried beside them because it's plain in verse 33. See, we're told he breathed his last and was gathered to his people months before he was actually buried, right back then.

So he expected to be reunited with loved ones in a reunion beyond death. Now, we can't be dogmatic about exactly how clearly Jacob understood all this.

Although, as I've said, Hebrews 11 is pretty clear, I think, of what the patriarch's expectations were. And Jesus himself was very explicit, wasn't he? He said plainly that Moses knew and wrote about eternal life and about the resurrection.

If you read Mark chapter 12, you'll find Jesus discussing with skeptical scholars of his day about the resurrection. I'm being very dismissive of them because they thought the Old Testament knew nothing about resurrection life.

And many scholars of the Old Testament think the same thing today. And what Jesus says to people who think like that is this, you're quite wrong. You know neither the scriptures nor the power of God.

[11 : 08] Don't forget that Jacob was a man who had met with God. He'd wrestled personally with him. He'd seen, do you remember, the vision of heaven opened.

He'd seen a stairway between heaven and earth. He knew that there was a world far greater and more wonderful than this earth. And he knew that that was real. He knew that God was real and his promise was real.

And that is the whole of the Old Testament faith. Bruce Waltke reminds us in his book that for the whole Old Testament, life, life means a relationship with the living God both before clinical death and after clinical death.

And even without clinical death. We read back in Genesis 5, remember of Enoch who didn't die. He just walked with God. And much later on, we have Elijah going up to heaven in a whirlwind surrounded by chariots of fire.

To deny that there is something beyond the grave is simply to show that you don't know your Bible. At least that's what Jesus says. The Psalms are full of that clear expectation.

[12 : 23] Psalm 73 is just one example. He says, I am continually with you to the Lord. You hold my right hand. You guide me through your counsel and afterward you will receive me to glory.

My flesh and my heart may fail but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Forever. Think of Job's great expectation in Job 19 verse 25 where he famously says after my skin has been destroyed yet in my flesh I will see God.

read Isaiah chapter 25 and 26 read Daniel chapter 12 read the Proverbs which so often are talking about the lasting hope of the wise that is those people who fear and love the Lord in the path of the righteous he says is life and in that pathway there is no death Proverbs 12 verse 28 I could go on and on and on but you see Jacob had this certain expectation of an ongoing relationship of life with the God of life and with the people of the God of life beyond beyond his earthly death and as his death approached his focus was on this place of burial because in that place lay his great comforting assurance that that certain expectation of God's promise was personally his that tomb was a tangible possession here and now of the pledge of God's promise for the future and that it was really true for him look at the emphatic words describing the burial place in chapter 49 verse 30 and in chapter 50 verse 13 both places it tells us it was the place that Abraham bought he bought it so he would possess it that is permanently indisputably and if you look back to

Genesis 23 perhaps you can remember when we read that story that that is the great emphasis all through the account Abraham acquired a possession property a tangible hold in the promised land a possession in the present that guaranteed his future forever and that's why it was so important for Jacob to ensure that he's buried there not notice verse 31 not to be buried beside his beloved Rachel who was buried on the road to Bethlehem remember but to be buried here with Leah but more importantly with the patriarchs in that possession in the land of Canaan because this is not about sentimentality it's all about faith it's about grasping hold of a pledge that God had given that assured the promise for the future was true and would belong to him it's a refuge in death that guarantees life a burial among those whom God has promised an everlasting home and because he had that comforting assurance and in fact only because he had that could he die in peace he had it on oath that he'd be buried in possession of that pledge of God of life everlasting God's covenant and that's why verse 33 knowing that he drew up his feet into the bed and breathed his last John Calvin the great reformer says death is by its nature formidable and great torments

agitate the wicked when they perceive that they're summoned to the tribunal of God and that's true as we know but he goes on it is the effect of a good conscience to be able to depart out of this world without terror without terror it doesn't mean in a subjective sense of course he means in the objective sense of knowing that there is nothing to condemn us before the judgment seat of God that we are right with God that we are righteous before God as the Bible puts it the wicked is overthrown through his evil doing says the Proverbs writer but the righteous finds refuge in his death Proverbs 14 verse 32 treasures gained by the wicked do not profit but righteousness delivers from death because those who trust and stake everything on the promise of [17:03] God the God of covenant mercy have a possession have a pledge in life and in death of righteousness that is of a clear conscience on that coming day of judgment and that is what Jacob had as evidenced here by his solemn command of faith he found refuge in the burial that guaranteed his deliverance and his life and he had greater personal assurance of that great expectation and so he died a death of dignity and in peace wouldn't it be wonderful wouldn't it be wonderful if we could have such comforting assurance of such an expectation of life going on through death even in the presence of God wouldn't it be wonderful if we could possess what Jacob had in that burial place my friends we have and we can we have a gospel that tells us that if we have trusted in

Christ we have already been buried in the grave that guarantees glorious resurrection to life we have been buried with Christ says the apostle indeed that's the wonderfully comforting assurance that the tangible sign of baptism proclaims every time when we administer baptism here among God's people as we will do this evening Paul says in Romans chapter 6 we were buried with him by baptism into death that's what happened when we were united to Christ by faith he says when we trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ and says Paul if we have been united with him in a death like his we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his we are delivered from the condemnation of our sins by being buried with Jesus and his cross is where he died for our sins and so we know that we also can die and face judgment with a clear conscience we have we have that pledge we have that assurance through the spirit poured into our hearts who bears witness with our spirit says Paul that we are children of God and that we shall live forever as his children without sin because Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead already and we too on that great day will be raised with him and so our baptism into Jesus death into Jesus not of course by the physical act of pouring water or dipping in water or any amount of water washing says Peter in 1 Peter 3 not by that not by anything that we do to ourselves but rather through the spiritual act of God in Christ which baptism proclaims his death for our sins and therefore his resurrection for our justification his resurrection is says!

Peter the pledge of a good conscience towards God for us it's God's pledge to us it's nothing about our pledge to God in baptism it's God's pledge to us of a clear conscience because we are justified before him by his resurrection now friends you see the tangible reality of the empty tomb of Jesus is a far greater pledge a far greater pledge of certain hope for us even than that tangible tomb of him it's a better assurance than any of the gracious and merciful tokens of assurance that God did give to his saints of old and all the sprinkled washings and the cleansings that the baptisms of the temple sacrifices to animals that that proclaimed that that promised in terms of forgiveness of sins those many sprinklings did promise they did assure God's people of certain hope Hebrews 9 tells! how much more will the blood of Christ purify our consciences from dead works to serve the living God Jacob's solemn command is a proof of his certain expectation and of the comforting assurance in the pledge that God had given him to possess and possess it he did by faith but how much more has he given to us in these last days this side of the death the burial the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ it's his grave that takes the terror from our grave it's his death and his resurrection that gilds the bed of our death with light as we sang in the hymn earlier so if we want to live well and die well as Jacob did then let's encourage one another to keep our eyes fixed on the death and burial of Jesus it's his cross it's his grave that takes our guilt away that holds the fainting spirit up that cheers with hope the gloomy day that sweetens every bitter cup for us and that's what

[22:19] Jacob's solemn command proclaims to us and points us to ultimately something far far better but now let's much more briefly look at two more things that we shouldn't miss in this passage first of all in verses 1 to 13 of chapter 50 the splendid cortege of Jacob's funeral and that speaks of a coming exodus and it reminds us that God's people are part of a far far greater purpose that involves the whole wide world and all its peoples verses 1 and 2 describe very real and

personal grief Joseph wept for his father Jacob was very old very old and his death certainly wasn't sudden or unexpected so it was no surprise but Joseph still wept and losing a loved one is very painful isn't it especially losing a parent doesn't matter how old they are it's very real very human scene here and it reminds us doesn't it of the Lord's tenderness and the

Lord's nearness to us in our grief Joseph Joseph the beloved son is there to close his father's eyes in his death just as God had promised remember before he went down to Egypt don't miss that detail it tells us doesn't it that God knows that God cares about the things that matter deeply to our hearts to our emotions the things about our families our griefs our sorrows he knows he cares and his tender mercy is near to us so there's Joseph's grief and then there's the embalming that was a big big thing for the Egyptians of course that reflected their belief in some kind of afterlife they were very confused about it but they knew there was more and I think that's a point worth noting isn't it that deep down people know that there is more to life than just this earthly life and our mortal bodies people talk about that don't they when someone dies people who are not

Christians who have no real understanding of faith but they talk about their loved one being somewhere and they go and visit graves and talk to them and people have a sense of that even hardened atheists who would dismiss that kind of talk they're often very concerned aren't they to leave some sort of legacy for the future in their life is there something about them will live on and people will still think of them that their life has some meaning and some significance deep down people know that we are more than just caterpillars but Joseph is not here indulging Egyptian religion don't be mistaken it's perhaps interesting I think in verse two that we're told he gets his own personal physicians to do the embalming usually it was the priests and the magicians of Egyptian religion who did the embalming it looks as if Joseph is deliberately distancing himself from that and he's certainly not embalming Jacob to seek immortality through Egyptian mantras and religion it's simply in fact to do the very opposite he's being embalmed so that his body will be taken away from Egypt to the one place where life was to be found beyond the grave in the bodily hope of life with a covenant

God the God of promise but as we can see the personal grief actually is only a part of this story because the nature of the funeral of Jacob shows us that it was a very public witness and indeed it was a prophetic witness remember who it is that Moses is first writing for he's writing for his exodus generation of people the people of Israel who themselves had gone up out of Egypt and were journeying once again to Canaan to the promised land and I think we can see that in the events that Moses chooses to record here about Jacob's funeral even in the very language he uses he intends to show to his people that God was foreshadowing greater things here in Jacob's own exodus from Egypt the funeral is prophetic of that greater coming exodus which they knew had now been fulfilled in their own life and in their lifetimes and actually the language here is strikingly similar to the language in the book of

Exodus verse 6 go up go up is the term used all the time through the book of Exodus when the people went up under Moses and it's repeated here again and again verse 7 so Joseph went up and there are many other terms from the Exodus account that fill this account we've got flocks and herds we've got chariots and horsemen and so on a very great company went up verse 9 read the book of Exodus that's the language you find all through there and the route that they took here almost certainly followed exactly the route taken by Israel in their Exodus under Moses later on do you see it's as if Moses is saying to his people do you see do you see God's pattern this is how God works and he's in control he knows what he's doing and Moses people of course were looking back on this and they would easily see the pattern of God's work somewhat an encouragement it would be to them as they went up out of

[27 : 47] Egypt to Israel and I think it's encouraging for us too isn't it when we read the Bible when we read in scripture the way God works and the things he does and the way he works through his people even very sinful people very wayward people but we can recognize so often can't we the same pattern in our own experience and that's why we have these scriptures of the Old Testament Paul says that through their encouragement we may have hope as we see how God works and we realize God is still working in our lives sometimes when life seems a great struggle for us or when our ministry our witness seems to!

Isn't it wonderful to open our Bibles and to see that God did work his purposes out with all his imperfect people way back then and we find ourselves so often reliving the same kind of patterns and we can be assured that God is still working his purposes out now and we see also that we too

like God's people of old we are part of something much much bigger we are part of what God is doing not just for us in our little lives or even our little country but for the whole wide world see even to Jacob's family at this time surely the splendor of his funeral must have spoken to them must have reminded them that they were actually part of something far bigger than just their own little domestic family with their concerns surely it confirmed to them the words of God's constant promise to Abraham and to Isaac and to Jacob and all of Israel his promise to bless them with a homeland in Canaan that a day would come when at last day too would go back as promised to Canaan but also reminding them of something much much more because

Jacob's funeral seems to be prophetic of another dimension of the covenant promise do you remember that a great empire that a great ruler from Israel would one day bless all the nations and rule over all the nations because what's described here in this magnificent funeral of Jacob is a royal funeral he's being mourned like a great king verse three he was mourned for 70 days just like a pharaoh that's what they did for pharaohs and he is a king no less who receives homage from the whole world in his death and he unites the family of Israel with Gentile rulers and with peoples around the world in his death look at verse seven all the elders all the leaders of Egypt are part of his cortege his funeral possession not just the house of Joseph and all his brothers all Israel were there all Egypt and their leaders and also there's recognition here from the surrounding nations of this magnificent company verse 11 tells us the

Canaanites noted it in fact they even named a place specifically to mark it of Elm Israel isn't that a glimpse of what the psalmist sang about the princes of the peoples gathering as the people of the God of Abraham Egypt and Canaan and Israel altogether here the foreshadowing surely of the true king the great messiah exalted also as a king of the world in his death rising from the grave to sprinkle many nations as Isaiah the prophet foresaw and at last bringing the blessing of God through Abraham's seed to all the families of this earth Derek Kidner I think is surely right when he says that Jacob's family with its attendant company of Gentiles rehearses so to speak in miniature and in minor the ultimate homecoming of his sons one day to be escorted to their inheritance from all the nations upon horses and in chariots as Isaiah 66 portrays did Jacob's sons did his family understand and see all of that way back then of course not in the detail and the clarity that we have now looking back but they could hardly not have been struck by the fact that their humble family was somehow caught up in something far bigger something far greater that they were part of that great purpose of God that he had revealed to them for the whole world and its blessing through the covenant

God gave to Abraham even the Egyptians sensed here there was something very special as they joined this great court even the Canaanites their enemies saw too there was something very special something sacred was happening you see Jacob's funeral was a public witness and it was a prophetic witness it pointed far beyond just Jacob and his life and his family it was pointing to the great plan and purpose of God for the whole world and hence it came to pass says John Calvin that the knowledge of the covenant of the Lord flourished afresh among the people of faith the household of Israel but also overflowing you see to the people of the world what a great thing it is when the lives of God's servants even in their death and their funerals when they're when they're prophetic like that when the knowledge of the covenant of God flourishes!

[33 : 27] Because everything about them even in their death points beyond themselves and to the greater grander more glorious purpose of God for this whole world! And I forget many years ago now being at the funeral of one of my childhood friends who was just a couple of years older than me we spent all our summer holidays together with his family came from a wonderful Christian family but he died in his thirties of a brain tumour and he and his younger brother had rebelled and turned his back on the faith of his family his parents his sisters but just a year before his death he was wonderfully converted to Christ I remember visiting him in the hospital in Aberdeen and his face just beaming and he had about a year I think maybe a year and a half when he lived he went back to his community where he had been well known as quite a wild man in many ways but the change in his life could not be again said and you know at his funeral at his funeral in a little church up in the

Scottish Highlands his younger brother and his best friend were both saved and came to Christ in a wonderful way and they're still serving the Lord today because you see in his changed life they saw and they became conscious that everything about his life pointed them beyond beyond himself beyond his own death to the coming great exodus from this world to the coming great empire of the

king of life the king of Israel the Lord Jesus Christ himself of whom Jacob's funeral you see also was likewise a prophetic witness and a message it's wonderful you know it's a wonderful thing when the most powerful evangelist in the gathering is the one lying in their coffin and who at their own funeral though they're dead yet they speak a public prophetic witness to their savior because all know what their life was really about and where it pointed and that's what we see here in Jacob's funeral wouldn't it be wonderful if that was your funeral my funeral pointing beyond witnessing to the flourishing of the covenant gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ well as we close let me say something about the last verse verse 14 what are we to think about that after the grandeur of all the funeral with all its solemnity with all its hints of great and wonderful things to come in the future it's just back to our normality in Egypt Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers past is the splendid cortege of Jacob's funeral seems such an anticlimax doesn't it just back but this verse does show us doesn't it the story continuing the story continuing with Jacob's family it's a story that speaks of a continuing exile and it reminds God's people wherever they find themselves in the unfolding story that we have to have patience we have to have endurance and that our present life is a life of testimony because the story is not over yet you can imagine can't you the family wondering why can't we stay now we've come all the way back in this great cortege decaying in the land of why do we stay here why are we going back to Egypt but you see God's time was not yet was it for the great exodus in fact it would be 400 years hence a very long time indeed not yet those are perhaps two of the hardest words to come to terms with in the whole of the Bible's theology not yet it's why they cry how long how long Lord it's the great cry of the psalmist and all the saints down the ages isn't it how long it's even the cry of the saints in glory if you read in Revelation chapter 6 waiting around the throne waiting for the final exodus the great resurrection the full salvation of all God's people but will only be ours when Jesus comes again and we long don't we for an end to our exile we long for an end to this world being under the curse of sin an end to sorrow to wickedness to famines to violence to wars to mourning to death itself all of these things how long why is it not yet it's hard isn't it to know all that God has promised for the future and yet just have to go on in the not yet living as we do in a reality where illness does strike where deaths do rob us and so sadness but disappointment still stalks us so often in our lives but this verse is a reminder the story wasn't over yet there was much grace and mercy still to unfold for this family but also through this family ultimately for the whole world for other nations but the time for their exodus back to the promised land did come as promised Moses people who first read this they knew that they were living it and it's a reminder to us too because God's story isn't yet over not yet still for us and that doesn't mean that God has forgotten us it doesn't mean God is powerless it just means he's patient the apostle [39 : 36] Peter tells us and merciful because he desires that none should perish and none should fail to reach repentance and so what that means is he has much much work still for his people to do in this world and all over the world and he calls us doesn't he like Jacob to point beyond our story to his great story to the everlasting story of God's covenant blessing of life through the Christ of promise he is patient and merciful and so we too must be patient pointing others to what he's shown us his great purpose for this world for all who will be his people live under his rule and leading them to the great possession to the only true comfort there is in life and in death to the only pledge there is of that good conscience towards God on the great day that takes the terror from the grave and that is fine friends as we know in the cross and in the tomb of our

Lord Jesus Christ for everyone says Paul who has been buried with him who has been united with him in a death like his shall certainly shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his that is the gospel of Moses here in Genesis chapter 50 that is the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ amen well let's pray together and we pray using the words of the first question of the Heidelberg catechism how we thank you oh Lord our God for this our only comfort in life and death that we are not our own but belong with body and soul both in life and in death to our faithful savior Jesus Christ that he has fully paid for all our sins with his precious blood and has set us free from all the power of the devil that he also preserves us in such a way that without the will of our heavenly father not a hair can fall from our head indeed all things must work together for our salvation therefore oh Lord by his holy spirit within us assure us of eternal life and make us heartily willing and ready from now on to live for him your son our savior and Lord Jesus Christ in whose name we pray amen to love love to love to love to love to