A Glimpse of Heaven

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[0:00] Well, if we could, this morning, with the Lord's help and guidance, if we could turn back to that portion of Scripture that we read. The Gospel according to Matthew. And if we take as our text the first two verses of chapter 9.

Did I say Matthew? It's Mark. The Gospel according to Mark, chapter 9. From the beginning.

And he said to them, Truly I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death, until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.

And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them.

Over the past couple of weeks, while I was away on holiday, I've been wrestling with the idea of leaving our study in Mark's Gospel.

[1:06] And taking a break from it for a while. Because, I suppose, if we're honest, doing a continuous study in a book of the Bible, it sometimes can become quite heavy and tiresome.

And that's not something you want to hear about God's Word. But it does come that way. And so I was considering putting Mark's Gospel to the side for a little while.

But then I began to think about, well, what other book or what other topic could we take up instead? And praying about it and thinking about it. I was wondering, well, what could we do next?

Because there's more than enough material in the Bible for our consideration. But the reason why we are continuing our study in Mark's Gospel today is not because I couldn't decide where to go next.

Or where to look and what to look at. It was rather that I couldn't think of a better subject for us to consider than the person and work of Jesus Christ.

[2:07] Who better for us to focus our attention on as those with sinful hearts and broken lives and battered experiences than this Jesus?

Who better for us to follow through the narrative of Scripture than the Savior of sinners? And who better for us to listen to and to learn from and be challenged by than this Christ who loved us and who gave himself for us?

Who better for us to witness giving his life as a ransom for many as God's only begotten Son? Because, my friend, is it not the case that by considering who Jesus is and what Jesus has done for us, we will have our heart warmed and our soul enriched and our faith strengthened and our love increased for Jesus?

And so, why would we want to go anywhere else other than right here? Right here in this passage where Jesus is being revealed to us once again on the pages of Scripture.

But in this passage in particular in Mark chapter 9, we're going to be given this greater revelation of who Jesus is. In fact, Jesus is going to reveal his glory to us.

[3:31] And Mark wants us this morning, he wants to take us on a journey. He wants to take us on a journey and he's going to take us on a journey to the top of a mountain.

And he's going to give to us a glimpse of heaven. What heaven is like. What the glory of Jesus is like. He's going to give us a glimpse of heaven. And there we're going to see the full revelation of Jesus given to us.

But I want us to see that in this passage, Mark highlights three stages in this journey. He highlights three stages. He highlights to us before the mount, upon the mount, and after the mount.

Before the mount, upon the mount, and after the mount. So firstly, let's see what happened before the mount. It says in verse 1, At the conclusion of the previous chapter, in chapter 8, Jesus had explicitly told the disciples what was going to happen in the future.

We read in chapter 8, verse 31, that Jesus said, He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

[4:58] And although the disciples didn't fully understand what Jesus meant by this, they had, however, grasped that Jesus is the Christ. Because Peter, he confesses in verse 29, Jesus asks, Who do you say that I am?

Peter answered, You are the Christ. So they knew that Jesus was God's chosen king, who came to bring salvation. But the method by which God was going to bring about this salvation, It wasn't by Jesus overthrowing the Roman authorities in Israel, and sitting upon the throne of King David.

No, salvation for Jesus, it was going to be accomplished, and applied by his death, and his resurrection. But the disciples, they couldn't grasp how this was ever going to be possible.

And even more so, they couldn't grasp the fact that the death of Jesus was going to come about at the hands of the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes.

Because in their mind, they were asking, Why are the religious leaders going to put Jesus to death? Why are the clergymen, the ministers of the day, why are they going to kill Jesus?

They are the ones who are the upstanding figures in the community. But what confused the disciples even more is that Jesus went on to say that the only way to be his disciple is to first of all deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow him.

Which to their ears, it only meant that becoming a disciple of Jesus, you were saying, I'm going to die. You're going to die to self, die to sin, and if need be, I'll lose my life.

Because Jesus says that, in chapter 8, he says that, whoever desires to save his life, will lose it. But whoever is willing to lose their life for my sake and the gospels, they will save it.

And he says, What will it profit you? What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world? And loses his own soul? And so in effect, Jesus was saying, I'm not the only one who's going to die.

You are going to die. And you're going to die for my sake and the gospels. And you know, this is hard-hitting stuff to these poor disciples. Because the disciples, they never saw this coming.

[7:18] They never thought that for one moment, Jesus was going to die. They thought he was going to be king. He was going to have glory. They thought of greatness and glory and power.

That's what they had on their mind. Not humility, rejection, and death. The disciples didn't understand what Jesus was talking about. But then Jesus adds to their confusion by saying, at the beginning of chapter 9, Truly I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.

And although it's a new chapter, these words are still part of what Jesus is saying in chapter 8. But as we read through the narrative, we can see that Jesus has unintentionally, he's confused the disciples.

He's told them that the Christ must suffer many things and be put to death. Then he said that they must die for his sake and the gospels. But now he's saying that they won't die until they see the kingdom of God coming in power.

And he's telling them that they're going to see something that they've never seen before. Some of them, he says, are going to get a glimpse of his future glory.

[8:38] They're going to see what the kingdom of God is all about. And they're going to see it before they die. And they're going to see it on the top of a mountain.

Because the transfiguration of Jesus, it was a foretaste of what would happen later. When the kingdom of God would come in the fullness of power after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus.

But with all their confusion and misunderstanding about the identity of Jesus, the transfiguration, it was going to be proof. Proof and assurance and this guarantee and this seal of the future glory of Jesus.

And this is what we often misunderstand about this verse, in verse 1. Jesus isn't speaking about an event in the distant future. He's speaking about the transfiguration.

Which is why Mark immediately explains what Jesus meant in verse 1. By slotting in the event of the transfiguration. In other words, the time difference between verse 1 and verse 2 is six days.

[9:53] Because it says, there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power. And after six days, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up a high mountain by themselves and he was transfigured before them.

Jesus fulfills his promise of not tasting death until they see the kingdom of God come with power. And you know, although it was a short period of only six days, it was a beautiful promise.

because despite telling the disciples that they will face death for his sake and the gospels, Jesus assures them that they will see his glory before they die.

He promises them that they will be kept alive until they see the kingdom of God come in power. Jesus, he comforts them by saying that before they enter the valley of the shadow of death, they are to fear no evil because to them he guarantees that on their mountaintop experience they will see his glory.

And this was a wonderful promise and assurance to make to the disciples and this great comfort to give them. Especially in the hostile climate that the disciples were entering into.

[11:19] They had the promise that they would not die until they saw his glory. But you know the opposite is true for the Christian today. Because we must enter the valley in order to stand on the mountaintop and see his glory.

We must go through hard, hard providences in this life before we stand on the mountaintop. It's through much tribulation said Jesus that we will enter the kingdom of heaven.

and how often I would be reminded that we don't know what a day or an hour will bring in our lives. We don't know what's around the corner for us. We don't know what's going to come.

But what we do know is that even when we are in the valley we always have the promise that the mountaintop is coming. The mountaintop is coming because Jesus assures us with that same promise we will be kept until we see him in his glory.

That's what we were singing about in Psalm 121. The Lord shall keep our going out and our coming in from this time forth and even forevermore kept until we see him in his glory.

[12:40] But the disciples who would be kept to see the glory of Jesus they're named here and they're named as Peter and James and John.

They are this inner group within the twelve disciples who were selected to go up this high mountain to witness the glory of Jesus being revealed. And I suppose the first question we ought to ask is well why just three?

And why this three? Why Peter, James and John? What about the other nine disciples? And many suggestions have been given as to why Jesus chose this particular three.

The reformer John Calvin he makes the interesting observation by saying that Jesus chose just three because that's the number of witnesses that the Lord required for proving that something actually happened.

But I think there's more to it than that because when we go back to chapter 5 when Jesus raised Jairus' daughter Jesus chose the same three to come in and witness her resurrection.

[13:48] And then Jesus later on after this event in the garden of Gethsemane he chose the same three again. And so I believe that the reason Jesus chose this inner group out of the twelve disciples who had been called and chosen it was because they Peter, James and John they were being separated and prepared for a specific work.

When the kingdom of God was to come in all its fullness that's what they were being prepared for when the kingdom would come after Jesus' death resurrection and ascension Peter, James and John they were going to be the foundation stones of the New Testament church.

They were going to be the vehicle by which the gospel was going to spread from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria because after his denial of Jesus and restoration Peter would be used on the day of Pentecost to preach and thousands were converted.

James was going to be one of the first martyrs in the Christian church and John was going to have this great influence upon the early church through his writing of his gospel and his letters.

But for these men in particular they were to experience intense suffering and death. They would experience the valley before the mountaintop.

[15:16] And the history tells us that Peter he was crucified upside down. James was beheaded and John was exiled to the island of Patmos where that's where he wrote the book of Revelation.

exiled and left just to die. And yet these were the men who were called, separated and prepared by Jesus to be the spark that would ignite the spread of the gospel.

They would be the ones who would spread the gospel from where they were in Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria, through Europe to the uttermost parts of the earth.

And you know my Christian friend, Jesus is still doing that. he's still calling, he's still separating, and he's still preparing people in order to reveal his glory.

Because when we look at our own experience, he is the one who called us. He called us from darkness into his marvelous light. He's the one who separated us, separated us from the world and gave to us this holy calling to be his witness and a light in darkness.

and in everything that we're going to go through in this world, he is preparing us. Preparing us to serve him in this community or further afield.

Because all that we go through in our lives, all the valleys, all the darkness, all the hardship, all the teaching, it's not in vain. It's not, it's so that the Lord will prepare us either to help others who are going through what we went through or for what is coming, for what's ahead of us.

But we still have the promise, don't we? The great and precious promise that we were showing to the children. I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord.

Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you a hope and a future. My friend, Jesus is the one who calls us.

He's the one who separates us. He's the one who prepares us before the mount. Prepares us before the mount. Because it's upon the mount that we see him in his glory.

[17:43] And that's what these disciples were privileged to witness. They were privileged to see the glory of God revealed upon the mount of transfiguration. And so let's consider what took place upon the mount.

We've seen what happened before the mount. But now let's see what happened upon the mount. But look again at verse 2. And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up a high mountain by themselves.

And he was transfigured before them. And his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses.

And they were talking with Jesus. The transfiguration of Jesus, it's one of those momentous occasions during the life and ministry of Jesus.

It's an experience that the disciples would never forget as long as they lived. Because here is Jesus and he's transfigured before them.

[18:48] Now the word transfigured indicates a change that has taken place on the outside which comes from the inside.

A change that has taken place on the outside that comes from the inside. And Mark tells us that the change on the outside was that Jesus' clothes became radiant, intensely white, like no one on earth could bleach them, as white as snow.

And with Mark's description, you can see that he's struggling to find words to describe the brightness and the whiteness of Jesus' clothing. Because he's saying that no detergent, no soap or bleach could ever make this clothing that white.

And I suppose the modern equivalent would be like one of the TV adverts of Daz or Vanish. They're always promising to make your whites whiter. And Mark is trying to get that across.

It's the whitest thing he's ever seen, the brightest thing that he's ever seen. Jesus is described in this indescribable brightness.

[19:58] Because when Jesus was transfigured, the change which took place on the outside, it came from the inside. It came from the inside because Jesus was lifting the veil in order to reveal his glory.

glory, the veil that he had taken to himself at the incarnation. Because when Jesus became man, he veiled that glory in human flesh.

He veiled the glory which he had before he humbled himself and took to himself our human nature. He veiled the glory which he shared with the Father, God the Father, and God the Spirit in eternity.

that bright shining glory and majesty from which the angels in heaven veil their faces, crying holy, holy, holy.

And this is what Paul was talking about in his letter to the Philippians. Though he was in the form of God, he made himself nothing. He emptied himself of his own glory.

[21:06] He veiled his glory from us by taking to himself the form of a servant and been born in the likeness of man and been found in the form of a man, he humbled himself and he became obedient.

Obedient even unto death, the death of a cross. But what we have to see is that the transfiguration and this revelation, this lifting the veil to reveal the glory of Jesus, it wasn't for his benefit.

It was for the benefit of the disciples. Because this mountaintop experience, it was to encourage the disciples. It was to remind them that what they are doing and what they are going to do in the future for Jesus, it is all for the purpose of displaying his glory in the world.

And so Jesus reveals his majesty and his glory to these downcast, struggling and confused disciples. But he does so in order to encourage and strengthen and sustain them for the journey ahead.

And you know, that's why Moses and Elijah are there too. Moses and Elijah, they're not only representatives, you could say, of the law and the prophets in the Old Testament, where Moses represented the law and Elijah represented the prophets.

[22:30] And I suppose you could say that the disciples, they represented the gospel. And together, the law, the prophets and the gospel, they are all revealing the glory of Jesus to us.

But I think there's more to it than that. Because if there was ever two men in scripture who knew what it was to struggle and be discouraged and confused in the service of the Lord, it was Moses and Elijah.

If there were ever two men in scripture who knew and who had seen the glory of the Lord revealed to them on the top of a mountain to encourage them and to strengthen them and to sustain them for their journey, it was Moses and Elijah.

Because you remember that when Moses received the Ten Commandments from God on the top of Mount Sinai, when he came down the mountain after forty days, he found the children of Israel worshipping a golden calf.

bowing down to it. And in his disbelief, in Moses' disbelief, and because of their disobedience, Moses, he just smashed the stone tablets on the ground which the Ten Commandments were written on.

[23:44] And yet in the midst of all his difficulty and his despondency, Moses went to pray and he was pleading with the Lord, Lord, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And the Lord answered his request.

Because the Lord called Moses to come back up the mountain for a second time and stand and present himself before the Lord. And when Moses did so, the Lord hid him in the cleft of a rock whilst the glory of the Lord passed by.

And it was that experience which strengthened Moses to serve the Lord in the wilderness for the next 40 years. And the same was true of the Lord's prophet Elijah.

Elijah had witnessed the power of God on the top of Mount Carmel. Standing there with all the prophets of Baal who were chanting and shouting to their false god.

And yet Elijah, he prayed to the Lord. He called down fire from heaven. He consumed the burnt offering and he revealed the living and true God. And Elijah, he had been so hopeful that his experience on the top of Mount Carmel would change the hearts of Israel.

[24:57] He'd hoped that the fire from heaven would turn them from their idolatry and turn them back to the Lord. But it wasn't to be. Because after Carmel, the people didn't change.

Queen Jezebel only got angrier. And so what does Elijah do? He runs away. He feels like a complete failure to the point that Elijah asks the Lord to take away his life.

And expecting the Lord to answer his prayer and decommissioning him from the Lord's service, the Lord comes alongside Elijah and he sits as Elijah sitting under the juniper tree and the Lord says to him, Arise and eat because the journey is too great for you.

And the Lord tells Elijah, this disheartened prophet, to go up to the top of Mount Horeb and that he'll meet him there. And so on the top of the mountain, the Lord passed by.

And as he passed by, a great and strong wind tore the mountain and broke in pieces all the rocks before the Lord. But we're told in the passage in 1 Kings 19, we're told the Lord was not in the wind.

[26:12] And after the wind there was an earthquake but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake there was a fire but the Lord was not in the fire. And after a fire the Lord spoke with a still small voice.

And it was then that Elijah received a glimpse of the glory of the Lord. But you know what I find so remarkable about the experiences of both Moses and Elijah is that when they were at their lowest, and when they were at their weakest, and when they thought that the cause of the Lord was finished, the Lord brought them to the top of a mountain in order to reveal his glory to them and remind them that he is sovereign.

And his plan and his purposes, they're absolutely perfect. And that's why Jesus is standing on the top of a mountain with his disciples.

disciples. But they're not on the top of Mount Sinai. And they're not on the top of Mount Horeb. Mount Sinai and Mount Horeb, they are in fact the same mountain, but with a different name.

But this gathering here in the Mount of Transfiguration, that's not the actual mountain. It's a different mountain. It's different to Sinai, different to Horeb. The mountain which Jesus was transfigured on was sent to be Mount Hermon.

[27:40] Mark tells us in chapter 8 that all the disciples were in the region of Caesarea Philippi, which was right at the foot of Mount Hermon. Mount Hermon was the highest, or still is the highest mountain in Israel, at over 7,000 feet.

But what I find interesting about the fact that they were on Mount Hermon is what we were singing in Psalm 133. Because in Psalm 133, the psalmist begins by saying, Behold how good a thing it is, and how becoming well, together such as brethren are in unity to dwell.

And here upon Mount Hermon, here is our Jesus, and he's unveiling his glory before the eyes of Peter, James, and John. And he's doing it in the presence of those who have also seen this all before, Moses and Elijah.

And there's this unity in their gathering. There's this connection in their experience where old meets new, and the law and the prophets meets the gospel. And they're all meeting together as brethren, dwelling together in unity under the veil of King Jesus.

But you know there's more. Because how did the psalmist conclude his beautiful psalm? as Hermon's Jew, the Jew that doth on Zion hills descend.

[29:09] For there the blessing God commands, life that shall never end. The Jew of Hermon is said to fall like rain.

Falls like rain onto the ground. And here upon Mount Hermon, the blessing that God commands, it's going to fall upon the world because of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The blessing which God commands its eternal life. Life that shall never end. And my friend, isn't it wonderful to think that in the unity of God's people, the glory of Jesus is revealed and the blessing of salvation is promised.

And you know that's the promise given to the church of Jesus Christ. That in the unity of God's people, the glory of Jesus is revealed and the blessing of salvation is promised.

But then what happens? Heaven opens and God speaks. And when God speaks, all he says is, listen to Jesus.

[30:24] This is my beloved son. Listen to him. God's God's advice from heaven. And that's the advice from heaven today.

In our brokenness, in our sin, in our heartache, in our sorrow. The advice from heaven. Listen to Jesus. Listen to Jesus.

And see none other save Jesus only. look to no one else and see the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

I have to quote him. J.C. Ryle says, Oh, we have reason to thank God for this vision. We're often tempted to give up because of the cross and the affliction it entails.

But let us see in the story of the transfiguration, he says, a remedy to such doubting. Because this vision of the holy mount is a gracious pledge that glorious things are in store for the people of God.

[31:37] That their crucified, risen and ascended saviour will come again in power and in great glory to take a sense to be with him. But until that happy day, he says, we are in safe keeping.

Therefore, may we wait patiently upon the Lord. May we wait patiently upon the Lord. That's upon the mount.

We have reason to thank God for this vision. So we've seen what took place before the mount and what took place upon the mount. But lastly, let's consider what happened after the mount.

After the mount. Look at verse 9. As they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead might mean. After witnessing such a glorious event, Jesus along with Peter, James and John, they came down from Mount Hermon.

But what we see in verse 5 is that Peter didn't want to come down the mountain. He wanted to stay. He wanted to enjoy his mountaintop experience.

We're told in verse 5, Peter said to Jesus, Rabbi, it's good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.

And there's no doubt that it was good for the disciples to be there and glimpse the glory of the kingdom to come. But Peter's desire to stay, it completely misunderstands the whole purpose of the transfiguration.

Because the transfiguration with Jesus unveiling his glory, it was to encourage and equip and commission his disciples to establish his church and the spread of God's kingdom.

And yet Peter didn't see it like that. He wanted to enjoy witnessing the glory of Jesus, even though he thought it was terrifying, he still wanted to stay.

[33:47] He didn't want to leave this mountaintop experience. He didn't want to go back to the crowds and back to facing all these people and back to the confusion of Jesus speaking about his death.

Peter wanted to prolong this moment and keep Jesus to himself. Rabbi, it's good for us to be here. And you know there are many Christians like Peter.

They live on the mountaintop and they want to stay on the mountaintop because they want to stay within their holy huddle where it's safe and secure and there's no challenge from the world.

They want to stay and focus upon Jesus and keep Jesus to themselves. But as good and as wonderful and as helpful as it may be to bask in the glory of Jesus, if we're a Christian who only wants to keep Jesus to themselves, then we're insular, we're inward looking, and we're only self focused.

And we aren't actually focusing upon Christ. Because if we were, we would understand the purpose of the mountaintop. It's not to stay there.

[35:07] No my friend, the purpose of the mountaintop is to be encouraged and refreshed and equipped and prepared to go down the mountain again, back down the mountain again, back into the world.

And you know, every Lord's Day, it ought to be a mountaintop experience, where we meet with Jesus face to face, where we have the glory of Jesus revealed to us in the gospel, and we see him in the pages of Scripture heralded before us.

The Lord's Day ought to be a mountaintop experience in order that we're prepared for another week in life's journey. For whatever may come our way, that we may witness for the Lord and be a servant of Jesus, whether that's in our home or in our community or in the workplace.

And that's also the promise of the prayer meeting during the week. It's there for our benefit. It's there to strengthen our faith and increase our love for Jesus and cause us to put everything in perspective within the great plan and purposes of God because our week is filled with thoughts and other things that distract us.

And I'm sure they're good and necessary. But it's in the Lord's house, whether on the Lord's Day or midweek, we can come aside and rest a while and we can say, it's good for us to be here.

[36:42] it's good for us to be here. But it's not good for us to stay here. Because we need to go back into the world and fulfill the purpose of Christ's church, to go and make disciples of all nations.

And you know, on each occasion with Moses and Elijah and with the disciples, on each occasion these weak vessels of the Lord, when they were given a glimpse of his glory and they were encouraged and strengthened in their faith and they were reminded that God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the strong, when they were separated, prepared and commissioned to serve the Lord they loved, they came down the mountain with a desire to call the next generation.

When Moses came down the mountain, the Lord provided Joshua. When Elijah came down the mountain, the Lord provided Elisha. When the disciples came down the mountain, the Lord established his church through them.

When Paul laid down his mantle, the Lord provided Timothy. It's a reminder to us that we can't keep Jesus to ourselves because after the mount, after this Lord's day, tomorrow morning, the Lord will issue to us the same command that he issued to Moses, Elijah and the disciples.

Go. Go into all the world. Preach the gospel. Live out the gospel. Go and live for Christ in your home.

[38 : 27] Go and witness for Christ in the staff room. Go and serve Christ in the office. Go and stand for Christ in the tea shed. Go and be like Christ in school.

Go and live as the light of the world and the salt of the earth. Go and call the next generation to serve the Lord. May the Lord bless these thoughts to us.

Let us pray. O Lord, our gracious God, we give thanks to thee that that call is upon us and help us, we pray, to respond that not only the call of the gospel, but the call to go with the gospel, that we, O Lord, would truly hear it, we would take heed to it, that we would not keep Jesus to ourselves, but do as the psalmist said, tell it to the generation following that this God is our God and that he will be our guide, even unto death.

Lord, bind us together, we pray, uphold us and strengthen us, do us good, bless us on this Lord's day, help us to rest in the Lord and to wait patiently upon thee, go before us then and cleanse us, for Jesus' sake.

Amen. We shall conclude by singing in Psalm 73, again in the Scottish Psalter.

[39:58] Psalm 73, that's page 316, singing from verse 23 down to the verse marked 26.

Psalm 73, page 316 from verse 23. Nevertheless continually, O Lord, I am with thee. Thou dost me hold by my right hand and still upholdest me.

Thou with thy counsel while I live, wilt me conduct and guide, and to thy glory afterward, receive me to abide. Down to the verse mark 26 of Psalm 73, to God's praise.

O Lord, I am with thee. Never the last, continually, O Lord, I am with thee.

Thou dost me hold by my right And still upholdeth me Though with thy counsel while I live Wilt me contoured and died And still upholdeth me After all the other world Receive me to the light Whom up I in the heavens high But thee, O Lord, alone

[42:05] And in fear through my desire Besides thee there is none My flesh and heart Thou faith and fail But God, thou fail me never For of my heart What is the strength And portion forever The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ The love of God the Father And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit Be with you all Now and forevermore Amen