

God's Kindness to You in Christ (Part 2)

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[0 : 0 0] well adoring jesus is what we've been left on the earth to do and that's what we'll do for all eternity as we join the lord in heaven upon our physical death here you know everyone everyone will die physically and everyone will experience eternal life everyone whether they believe in the lord jesus christ or not the issue becomes where will we spend eternity our eternal life will we spend it with god in heaven or will we spend it separated from god in eternal judgment in hell today we want to talk more about what it means to experience the kindness of god to us in jesus christ that we might live a life of purpose here and now and then upon our physical death join him in heaven all by his kindness and grace to us we're in first peter chapter two we'll be looking at verses four through eight this is part two from where we left off last week i'll be doing a little bit of review as we walk into this final point that i've made for this section the title of the message god's kindness to you in christ let's read the text that we'll be dealing with i'll actually start up in verse one of chapter two and give you more of the context as we work our way down through verse eight peter says therefore therefore refers back to and this is the word which was preached to you therefore having this word preached to you and knowing now that god has made you born again in christ putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander like newborn babies long for the pure milk of the word of god so that by it you may grow in respect to your salvation if you have tasted the kindness of the lord and coming to him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men but is choice and precious in the sight of god you also as living stones are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to god through jesus christ for this is contained in scripture behold i lay in zion a choice stone a precious cornerstone and he who believes in him will not be disappointed this precious value then is for you who believe but for those who disbelieve the stone which the builders rejected this became the very cornerstone and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word and to this doom they were also appointed now you've heard the saying at times kill them with kindness kill them with kindness which is very hard to do right it's very hard to be kind to those who aren't being kind to you and that's usually when we hear it oh kill them with kindness the lord even tells us that we're not to repay evil with evil but he doesn't just leave it in neutral does he he shifts it into another gear and says be kind be gentle well the bible has some important things to tell us about god's kindness some critical things to tell us about god's

kindness i'm going to jump right in and take you out of first peter into romans 11 so that you can kind of get the flavor of this with me romans 11 verse 22 and i'll give you the context after we read this verse excuse me behold then behold then the kindness and severity of god to those who fell severity but to you god's kindness if you continue in his kindness otherwise you also will be cut off to be cut off is to be separated from life with god that is to be left in the state of being under god's wrath and in the condition of god's judgment on your life and that is the case for our context with the nation of israel they rejected jesus as their messiah they were cut off because of unbelief which is what paul says in the previous verses if you'll look back up into verse 20 quite right they were broken off for their unbelief that refers to unbelieving israel they were broken off for their unbelief but you stand by your faith so he's writing to these people these christians and saying you're different in the sense that you have come to believe and yet that is a gift and he says don't be haughty about it don't be conceited about it you were grafted in by faith you became children of abraham as god grafted you in in christ jesus by faith so don't be stuck up and conceited and haughty about this but then now in the context of verse 22 we see behold then the kindness and and severity of god so you have both for those who unbelieve severity for those who remain in a state of unbelief judgment wrath condemnation for those who turn to god in faith kindness and so he says to those who are receiving god's kindness don't take it for granted if you look at the end of verse 22 if you continue in god's what kindness if you do otherwise you also will be cut off now this is a mandate for us as christians that we're not to live with hearts that become uh cold to or just take for granted and business as usual this extreme miracle of god's kindness and bringing us from being under his wrath and judgment to making us his children and opening up the treasures of heaven to us and saying come wow now we're back to the psalm that we read this morning from psalm 144 who are we that you would take mind of us why would you do that for me have you ever thought that god why me do you know people in your family that are not believers that are not saved do you know christian friends and other people associated with your life that have come to know the lord that also deal with why me why not them that's a great question and the answer is very very straightforward because of the kind intention of his will because he chose you because he's kind does that mean he's not kind to the other people we're going

to deal with that we'll deal with that this morning peter offers us what i told you from last week as i continue into this peter offers us three trustworthy expressions of god's kindness to us in jesus christ and i have said to you that peter is seeking to rejuvenate the souls of these persecuted christians he's writing to he's also trying to help refocus their minds on what's most important about their lives and that is their relationship to god through christ and that nothing in this world can rob them of that reality they are christians god has made them so keeps them so sustains them in that reality and nothing nothing nothing in all the universe can snatch them from his hand he wants that to ground them and give them hope through the difficult circumstances particularly knowing that this persecution is going to ramp up in the coming months and years and lastly i told you last time peter wants to reassure their hearts and ours even as they and we live day to day in what i told you solomon referred to king solomon in ecclesiastes as the vanity of vanities apart from god and without christ there is much much hopelessness in this life we move and flit from thing to thing to try and garner some sense of purpose and meaning in our lives only to encounter one more obstacle that reminds us that this place is horrendous it's full of sin it's full of suffering it's full of things that happen that we cannot explain and we don't know the end game of peter says take heart you are christians you belong to god the father he knows the end game and he'll make sure that you're there at the end to be received by the lord jesus and brought into heaven now please understand fellow christians what we're saying here what peter's saying here is that your circumstances may not change they may even get worse but you don't live by circumstances you live by hope a living hope a living faith in a living word that's what he calls us to and so we have peter telling us in this first point that i mentioned to you last time god's kindness being brought near to him this is his first of three trustworthy expressions of god's kindness we are brought near to god we see that in verse four and coming to him and coming to him as living stones now we really took some time to unpack that last time i'm going to do a little bit of different stuff with you this morning just to give you more of an appreciation for what god has done the initiative that he's taken the love that he has shown we're asking and answering the question what does it look like for me to continue in the kindness of almighty god what does it look like for me to live out and in the kindness of god as a christian every single day of my life and so again peter says in verse four and coming to him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men but is choice and precious in the sight of god now i ask you right off the bat which side do you want to land on the side of men who reject what is precious or the side of god who knows what is precious and will help you know what is precious do you want to spend your life on what is not precious what is trash in the sight of almighty god or do you want to follow

jesus and spend your life with purpose and meaning meaning and purpose that are derived from the fact that you're following on god who's telling you here is what you need to treasure in life here is where here is what is worth living for and god tells us that throughout scripture so what are you basing your life on are you basing your life on your own agenda or are you basing your life on the agenda that god has provided for us in the lord jesus christ it really does come down to that doesn't it that's where we live and breathe and have our being and coming to him him is the lord jesus from verse three if you look back up into verse three if you have tasted the kindness of the lord then coming to him is the issue he wants to deal with it's an expression reflecting welcome it refers to closeness and being drawn near being known by jesus christ and of knowing him because you have become near and dear to him by the grace of god we looked at hebrews 10 22 if you'll turn there it's just a few pages forward here to the book of hebrews 10 22 same concept in verse 19 of chapter 10 brethren since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of jesus that is to come near to god in a way that we used to be reserved only for the priests of israel and only after they went through a tremendous ceremony to be able to do that we enter into that holy place by the blood of jesus by a new and living way which he i want you to notice this friends he inaugurated for us underline that key that highlight that put stars by it it's a new and living way which he inaugurated for us through the veil that is his own body his flesh making sacrifice of himself he inaugurated for us this living way to god and since we have jesus christ as our great high priest over the house of god let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water of course that's the only way we can enter into the presence of a living and holy god is to be made holy ourselves well we have no holiness to offer god in and of ourselves we have the filthy rags of our best efforts and that's how he sees them and so we have been imputed with we have been credited with an alien righteousness it's not et it's jesus right we have been imputed with the righteousness of the lord jesus christ that is that jesus perfectly lived out the law of god without flaw or sin and that has been credited to what credited to us as if we lived it well what did jesus get in the deal if that's what we got well he got your filthy rags your sin all the things that deserve the wrath of god and the punishment of death that's what he got and so that's why he died on the cross for us that transaction happens by faith and that too is a gift from god so kindness upon kindness upon kindness the lord heaps on us and what is peter saying friends he's just saying simply this i understand that life wants to rob you of this reality and knowledge

that god has done this miraculous thing for you and the further you get out in your life you face moving into the default of that becoming something you take for granted it gets dusty it gets worn well then what keeps it alive what keeps it fresh why do some christians just seem to go through life with a bit of a bounce in their step oh they suffer oh they have things that happen to them their heart breaks they grieve but they always seem to be able to move through it and persevere and what is all of that well that's exactly what we're talking about this morning it's supposed to be something that we're all living in together and coming alongside of one another go through life and we suffer and we have hardship and we deal with these realities so listen to this then when we pause and reflect on what scripture reveals to us about our god this god that we know that is pause and reflect on our nearness to god our relationship i have a relationship with the god who made all of this who is high most high in the heavens i have a close and intimate and personal relationship with him i'm cherished by him i've gone from being under his wrath and judgment and deserving of hell to being cherished and protected and safeguarded by this wonderful god when we reflect on that reality it is remarkable it is nothing short of a miracle of his favor toward us so to better appreciate god's remarkable kindnesses to us i'd like for you to consider with me for a few moments the bible's teaching about god's wrath this is what is on the back side of everything that peter has said so far in our text in chapter one and in the beginning of chapter two this is what is kind of behind everything that peter is moving in and saying to us now and he wants these people to grasp this and understand it so what is god's wrath what is the wrath of almighty god well we can understand god's wrath as his righteous displeasure towards all sins that's not my definition i lifted it it's a good one god's righteous displeasure towards all sin notice it's righteous god never makes a mistake in his judgment of sin he never has to back off and say oh shoot my bad i didn't have all my facts straight he doesn't do that we want to look at several quick little references here that give us you you will be familiar some of you who are in the ephesians study with marivi ephesians chapter 2 we're told in verse 3 that we are and i'll just mention it and move on by nature children of wrath all right that's god's designation for those who remain in sinful unbelief rejecting jesus as savior and lord we are all children of wrath and we are that by our very nature children of wrath under the wrath of almighty god then in colossians just a couple of books back colossians chapter 1 verse 21 it says this and although you formally so now paul is speaking to christians and he's going into their past before they trusted jesus to forgive them for their sins he says you were formally in verse 21 of chapter 1 alienated from god you were hostile in mind toward the lord you didn't care anything about god your mind was hostile toward him you didn't want to have anything

[20:11] to do you were rebellious and an enemy of the lord and then he says engaged in evil deeds now this is all from the perspective of god god's perspective is you are a child by nature of wrath living under my wrath as an unbeliever you were engaged in evil deeds and then back over into first peter peter will say something about this a little later in chapter 2 look at that verse in verse 14 2 14 of first peter governors is sent by him that is the king for the punishment of evil doers it's just to take note right now that he is speaking of these people as evil doers this is god's designation for those who remain in unbelief children of wrath by nature evil doers hostile in mind toward the lord this is how we live folks sin is lawlessness sin is lawlessness those of us who sin are criminals because we have committed a lawless acts against the law of god and so we stand accused and judged and rightly so that is in a state of unbelief not trusting in the lord jesus christ for forgiveness of sins it is the rebellious will and actions of people living for themselves and consequently against god so i want to give you a couple of biblical examples of sin that incurs the wrath of god what better place to go for illustrations of this in life than in the bible itself so let's go there let's go to the book of numbers we'll do one from the old testament and one from the new now remember everything i'm giving you right now i'm giving you as kind of a the undercurrent and backdrop of what peter is telling us from chapter 1 and early chapter 2 this is the other side of the coin that peter's talking about right now as he rehearses our salvation in jesus well salvation from what why did he need to come and inaugurate for us this living way because you were on the death way before that that's what we're about to see so the book of numbers chapter 25 way back toward the beginning of the bible and it's in chapter 25 that we'll see this this story we'll begin in verse 1 you'll pick up on this as we go let me advance this do i have it yep there it is numbers 25 1 through 13 while israel remained at shittim the people began to play the harlot with the daughters of moab to play the harlot that is against the lord to become unfaithful to commit spiritual adultery against the lord and who did they do this with with the daughters of moab verse 2 for they invited that is the daughters of moab invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods we're going to have a big party you guys come on over and join us oh and by the way the party is going to be in celebration of all of our idols and false gods that stand against yours and the people came and ate and bowed down to the moabite gods so israel joined themselves to bail of peor and the lord was angry against israel the lord said to

moses take all the leaders of the people and execute them in broad daylight before the lord so that the fierce anger that would be wrath of the lord may turn away from israel so moses said to the judges of israel each of you slay his men who have joined themselves to bail of peor wow now notice what happens then behold one of the sons of israel came and brought to his relatives a midianite woman in the sight of moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the sons of israel while they were weeping at the doorway of the tent of men you get this this man arrogantly parades this woman in front of the entire nation in direct violation and contradistinction to god's own law and prescription about do not join yourself to these people they will lead you astray and make you worship false gods and my anger will burn against you and this guy parades the very thing they're prohibited right in front of all of them while they're bowing and the tent of meeting and weeping here he comes and they all see it now this is the moment when you ask yourself are there no righteous men in israel is no one ready to stand for god in this moment that's where we that's where we are in the story and so what happens verse seven when phineas the son of eleazar the son of aaron the priest saw it ah he arose from the midst of the congregation and took a spear in his hand you got to love this guy now listen to this and he went after the man of israel into the tent and pierced both them through the man of israel and the woman through the belly or the body so what happened the plague that god had sent on the sons of israel was checked was stopped but verse nine those who died by the plague were 24 000 people in a day 24 000 people of israel died as a result of this sin then the lord spoke to moses saying phineas the son of eleazar the son of aaron the priest has turned away my wrath from the sons of israel in that he was jealous with my jealousy among you see this this was a godly act this was a man acting in zeal for god not out of personal anger not out of pride oh i'll show him this man stood for god and righteousness and god rewarded him for it look at this he was jealous with my jealousy among them in verse 11 so that i did not destroy the sons of israel in my jealousy that's what was going to happen god was going to wipe them out therefore say behold i give him my covenant of peace it shall be for him and his descendants after him a covenant of a perpetual priesthood because he was jealous for his god and made atonement for the sons of israel folks here's what's going on the people turned away from god and the other side god's wrath was turned away so that's what we need to be zeroing in on people turn away from god and incur his wrath but then there is a way for god's wrath to be turned away and this is the this is the play that we're

focusing on right now god's wrath was turned away or averted averted by phineas making atonement on behalf of the people by righteous actions to honor god in his ways god's wrath was turned away or atoned for by the righteousness of this man does that sound familiar sin being atoned for and turned away by the righteousness of one man okay let's go to the new testament and let's see this played out there it's in romans chapter one a somewhat familiar place to our church family for those of you who've been here a while we've often turned to romans one for this kind of an example we're going to pick it up in verse 18 for the wrath of god is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who do what who suppress god's truth in unrighteousness because that which is known about god is evident within them for god made it evident to them god has written his law on all of our hearts all of us come into the world with this inner innate understanding that there is a god in the heavens verse 20 for since the creation of the world god's invisible attributes that is god's eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen how how do we all clearly see these attributes of god well they're understood through what has been made creation so that they are without excuse in god's sight for even though they knew god they did not honor him as god or give thanks there's the issue but they became futile in their speculations and their foolish heart was darkened professing though to be wise they became fools they exchanged the glory of the incorruptible god that is relationship with him worship to him for an image in the form of corruptible man birds four-footed animals and crawling creatures that's the issue in moab with the women who seduced all the men of israel into this giant orgy of disgusting worship to their gods these were gods that they set up in opposition to the one true god that's what's going on in romans one therefore in verse 24 god gave them over see that god gave them over as consequence to what they'd chosen in the lusts of their hearts to impurity so that their bodies would be dishonored among them they exchanged the truth of god for a lie they worshiped and served the creature rather than the creator who is blessed forever amen and then it goes on to say that for this reason god gave them over to degrading passions their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural in the same way men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their errors you go down through this the list here is incredible just as they didn't see fit to acknowledge god any longer then god gave them over to a depraved mind that is a useless mind a moronic mind to do those things which are not proper not proper to whom who gets to to judge what's proper god being filled with all unrighteousness wickedness greed evil full of envy murder

strife deceit malice they are gossip slanderers haters of god insolent arrogant boastful inventors of evil disobedient to parents without understanding untrustworthy unloving unmerciful and although they know the ordinance of god that those who practice such things are worthy of death they not only do the same but also give hearty approval to those who practice them how far do you have to go not only do you do these things but you encourage everybody else to do it even though you know that the result of all of this is death that's why god says i gave them over to a moronic mind a depraved mind a mind that can't even rationally reason its way into some type of morality that would at least say to them we're trying because we know the outcome would be death no they just blow past all of that and do what they want to do god gave them over that's scary isn't it that is terrifying now church do you see this happening all around you absolutely all right this is why god's left the church on the earth we're here to show the way out the way to safety the way to rescue the way to redemption the way to hope beyond all of that that's why we're here how then in light of this reality can anyone truly have any confidence or ability to come near to this holy god in the way peter's saying this seems like a pipe dream who rightly holds guilty sinners under his just sentence of death and eternal punishment he does and so how in the world can we come to well peter himself has answered in a resounding rehearsal of the outpouring of god's grace and mercy to avert god's wrath and bring people close to him in in light of what he says here in first peter two verse four and coming to him as to a living stone how did they get from that position that we've been reading about under the wrath of god and all that evil and unrighteousness in their lives expressed at various levels in in everybody's life how did they get from that to peter being able to say to them with confidence come near to him and and say this is the most perfectly natural thing that you could possibly do having tasted the kindness of god come to him why wouldn't you come come on don't live distant and down and depressed and dejected and discouraged rise up you have every reason to rise up and come to him that's last time that was last time well here's how peter answers the question that we have how can anybody come to him and really do that first peter chapter one verse one peter an apostle of jesus christ to those who reside as aliens or strangers or pilgrims scattered throughout pontus galatia cappadocia asia and bithynia who are chosen by god and we're talking about people who've been chosen by god according to the foreknowledge of god the father by the sanctifying work of the holy spirit to obey jesus christ and be sprinkled with his blood just like we read in hebrews may grace

and peace be yours in the fullest measure blessed be the god and father of our lord jesus christ who according to his great mercy has caused us to be born born again to a living hope through the resurrection of jesus christ from the dead to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away reserved in heaven for you who are protected by the power of god through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time in this you greatly rejoice even though now for a little while if necessary you have been distressed by various trials so that the proof of your faith being more precious than gold which is perishable even though tested by fire may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of jesus christ and though you have not seen him you love him though you do not see him now but believe in him you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls as to this salvation the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries seeking to know what person or time the holy spirit of christ within them was indicating as he predicted the sufferings of jesus and the glories to follow well it was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the holy spirit sent from heaven oh things into which angels long to look therefore prepare your minds for action keep sober in spirit fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of jesus christ as obedient children do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours and your ignorance but like the holy one who has now called you to himself be holy yourselves also in all your behavior because it is written you shall be holy for i am holy what a promise if you address as father the one who impartially judges according to each one's work conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your feudal way of life inherited from your forefathers but with precious blood as of a lamb unblemished and spotless that is the blood of christ for he was foreknown before the foundation of the world but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you who through him are believers in god who raised him from the dead and gave him glory so that your faith and your hope are in god now since you have in obedience to that truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brothers fervently love one another from the heart for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable that is through the living and enduring word of god

[40 : 20] all flesh is like grass all its glory like the flower of grass the grass withers the flower falls off but the word of the lord endures forever and this is the word which was preached to you therefore putting aside all malice deceit hypocrisy envy and all slander like newborn babies long for the pure milk of this word so that by it you may grow in respect to your salvation if you have tasted the kindness of the lord and coming to him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men but is choice and precious in the sight of god you also as living stones are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to god through jesus christ that's peter's answer to the wrath of god folks do you understand every other religion on the face of the planet requires its penitence christianity christianity is the only religion on the planet that god took the initiative to turn away his own wrath on our behalf god did that and it cost him the most precious thing in the world to him his own son we turn away from god and deserve his wrath god sent jesus christ to turn away his wrath so that we could receive his love and enter into his heaven we're the only place on the planet with that message and people need to hear it as we look back on what peter has taken pains to tell us and his readers from ancient times we can summarize it like this god sparing us his wrath and giving us life in jesus christ i'm a preacher of the gospel it's too tempting i can't pass it up i got to do a little more with this it's glorious romans back to the book of romans look with me at chapter three verse twenty one god's work to propitiate what a word turn away that's what it means to satisfy his wrath toward us we saw in first peter chapter one peter speaking to that issue now we turn to romans chapter three and look at verse twenty one but now apart from the law the righteousness of god has been manifested being witnessed by the law and the prophets even the righteousness of god through faith in jesus christ for all those who believe for there is no distinction for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of god that's the problem being justified as a gift by god's grace through the redemption which is in christ jesus whom god displayed publicly as a propitiation in his blood through faith this was to demonstrate his righteousness because in the forbearance of god he passed over the sins previously committed for the demonstration i say of his righteousness at the present time so that he would be both just and the justifier

of the one who has faith in Jesus now you say what does all that mean go to Romans chapter five and we'll get a little bit more insight into what Paul's talking about here in terms of justification by faith the role that faith plays in all of this and God's initiative in helping us when we were at our worst Romans five beginning in verse six for while we were still helpless that is helpless to help ourselves out of the state of being under God's holy judgment and His wrath at the right time Christ died for the ungodly He died for the ungodly He died for the people under the wrath of God verse eight but God demonstrates His own love toward us and that while we were yet sinners under the wrath of God Christ died for us much more than having now been justified by His blood we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him for if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His son much more having been reconciled we shall be saved by His life amen we shall be saved by His life so friends Jesus was our substitute on the cross hanging on the cross as our substitute paying the price we deserve for our sins He was not dying for His sins He didn't commit any He was dying for the sins that the Father laid on Him and that would be the sins of all the people whom God knew would come to believe in Him whom God appointed to believe through the gift of faith and so Jesus died an efficacious death an effective death a purposeful death He didn't die to win the potential of salvation for people He died to win His people to Himself praise God He didn't die to give me a chance to believe the gospel He died so that Jeph would believe the gospel oh man listen now that's reason to get up off the ground and dust yourself off and say you know what I'm gonna persevere I owe that much to my God strive Paul said I strive in holiness by the power of all even in His striving Paul gave all the glory to God but we are told to strive in holiness those who are saved will persevere in that salvation guaranteed and this is the kindness of God to us Jesus as our substitute propitiating atoning for turning away God's wrath against us as Jesus hung on the cross God placed the sins of His people on His son and then God poured out the full measure of His wrath against our sins on His son the full measure so that Romans 8:1 will tell us now there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus Christian you do not live under the wrath of God say Jeff what happens when I sin God punishes me God slams me I'm back under the wrath again now I gotta start over absolutely not you live in the position of being in the righteousness of Jesus Christ and God sees you that way so that when you sin you have an advocate with the Father who is Jesus Christ the Lord the one mediator between God and man constantly making intercession for us on our behalf is that not true amen Jesus saves you Jesus keeps you saved Jesus brings you into salvation and glory it's a win-win all the way around folks we know

how it ends you die and go to heaven and live forever in paradise yes hallelujah jesus died paying our penalty for our sins and making atonement for us with god so that god's wrath would be fully satisfied in christ sacrifice on our behalf so peter can say this next and so you also you also we're back in first peter coming to him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men but is choice and precious in the sight of god you also as living stones are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to god through jesus christ i'll say a few things here and move on this is all from last time with a little add to it oh i got to advance there it is this second trustworthy wonderful kindness that god has brought into our lives it's being brought up in jesus christ being brought up in him you also can come near to jesus as living stones fitted perfectly for life in his spiritual family his spiritual house because he has made us priests continually offering spiritual sacrifices of worship made acceptable to him through jesus look you also a living stone fitted into this spiritual house made a priest to continually offer spiritual sacrifices made acceptable to god through jesus christ that's who you are that's what you do that's the purpose of your life today and tomorrow and any other day he gives you breath for life can you think of a higher reason to live i can't i can't find one in the bible to know god to come near to god and to make everything about my life an offering of him in worship lord i offer you my wife my marriage i lay my marriage down on the altar of worship before you lord so that i want to be married in a way that pleases you so that as i relate to my wife i offer it to you as worship and you make it acceptable in the lord jesus christ because i offer it to you in a parent in a way that offers worship to you every day i want to reflect the love of jesus to my children i want to worship you when i gather with my brothers and sisters and i want to make offering to you among my brothers and sisters and i want it to please you in all respects god i want to do my job as worship i want to drive my car as worship i want to own my house as worship i want to offer to you everything that i have in the way of what you've provided back to you in an attitude and a heart of worship say jeff what is worship worship is every day a full person response to the lord jesus christ from a thankful heart you see you never get over jesus so don't take his kindness for granted live in it celebrate it every day and we're looking at ways to do that draw near to jesus that's the first way how do i how do i celebrate the kindness of god what does it look like for me to live in the kindness of god and not take it for granted well here it is folks draw near to jesus every day make everything about your life about him that's not pie in the sky that's just christianity it's what we were saved for the world's the one telling us something else you also are a living sacrifice to god in christ just as jesus

was also a living sacrifice pleasing to god so you live to jesus and to offer your life in what is pleasing worship to god each day your now listen your priestly service is to make offerings of your every word and deed and worship to him from a thankful heart that's what priests do and by god's kindness to you in christ this is the life he has gifted to you in love through the cross of jesus making making you a living stone in his spiritual house you're not just a brick in the wall who was that got that wrong the song just another brick in they got it wrong you're not just another brick in the wall the guy who is it pink floyd thank you rob's helping me reach back i know you're not just another brick in the wall you're not just another christian just another number to god it cost jesus his life to purchase you away from sin he knows you friend intimately it's very personal to jesus to save you because it cost him everything to do it isn't that good very personal very direct your lord knows you well jesus makes your every word indeed acceptable to god as your spiritual service of worship because you're working out your salvation in fear and trembling before the lord that means in faithfulness your offerings made to god from love for christ are received by god forever wow what do you think it means when he says lay up treasure in heaven what god receives from you as worship is laid up forever it's a perpetual gift of worship you can't get your mind around that can you because i can't i know i can't i just say thank you lord i don't know how that works in heaven but thank you well we got to do this one now god's kindness being brought home to him being brought home to him jesus is our everything jesus is our living that is jesus is our ongoing life we don't get saved and then do our own thing we continue to live in the grace of jesus christ it's no longer i who live but he lives in me through me and i live for him this is true because god made him the choice stone a precious stone according to psalm 118 verse 22 that's your verse psalm 118 verse 22 jesus is precious and knowing him makes you and your life precious to god you're precious to god because of the lord jesus christ so my friends jesus christ isn't just the reason for the season this is not a seasonal thing or a fad jesus is the life of life you hear that he is the life of life tragically this is exactly what the religious leaders in israel missed when they crucified christ they rejected the life of life jesus lives he is risen each person who believes in this risen christ this life of life will not be put to shame read on with me in this text verse

six for this is contained in scripture behold i lay in zion a choice choice stone a precious cornerstone and he who believes in him will not be disappointed or shamed why not because this precious value then is for you who believe that's why that's what peter says this precious value in verse seven is for you who believe that's what we're dealing with if you'll look one more place with me here real quickly before I move on to a couple of others Romans chapter eight we're wearing out Romans because this is where Paul speaks to these issues so so critically this is I read and heard and agree this is the most incredible theological treatise ever written in

[57 : 27] Romans eight beginning in verse thirty five who will separate us from the love of Christ will tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword see these are all things common to life on this planet just it is written for your sake we are being put to death all day long we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered but in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through him who loved us I'm convinced neither death nor life nor angels principalities nor things present nor things to come nor power height depth or any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God because he lives I can face tomorrow because he lives all fear is gone because I know he holds the future and life is worth the living just because he lives amen now the question is is your life worth living just because he lives just because or do you need more

Jesus will never disappoint he will never shame as we face off with life and with the moment of our death here on earth Jesus saves we have a living hope because we have a living savior and we will never be disappointed and that's not the end look at this God laying Jesus as the chief cornerstone means that Jesus is what each of the other living stones align with that's us God's spiritual house the church is built on and in perspective to Jesus grace church falls in on follows on and functions with Jesus Christ that's what it means to be a cornerstone the chief choice precious stone of Jesus brings symmetry soundness and stability to the entire building that's the idea behind Jesus as God's cornerstone Jesus as the living cornerstone bears the weight of what brings life and what leads to death in the living structure of the church in other words let me say it this way it challenges each of us to consider what we're measuring our lives by that is what we're lining up with and trusting in to bring this symmetry and soundness and stability to our lives so you have another instance where

Peter is working with the analogy of stonemasons who are laying the foundation of a building and they come to the cornerstone and the cornerstone in that foundation is going to be what all the other stones align to to bring a symmetry in what they're doing a soundness and that stone becomes the load bearing stone that's the image Jesus is our foundation he's our life he's what we line up with it's it's how we measure our life is by him it's not by you you see you can't measure your life by your failures or where will you live you'll live in total discouragement all the time if you keep looking at you and you're stumbling and measure your life by that that's what that's what you'll be in your life just constantly down and depressed and kicking yourself because you're at the center so what does he say don't put your eyes on the earthly things set your eyes set your mind on heavenly things where

Christ is the reason that you put your mind toward heaven isn't so that you're no heavenly or earthly good on the earth you're not living pie in the sky you put your eyes on heavenly things because that's where your Lord is you're looking in other words you're living hope looking to the Lord that's where you aim your life look at this one real quick there are very serious consequences for what we build our lives on and what we live for we must understand the dire reality that professing is not the same as possessing we can profess to know God and still be in unbelief under the wrath of God now this isn't to scare you or cause you to doubt your salvation it's to ask you to test yourself to see if you're in the faith there are all kinds of something they went through a series of things religiously that they're counting on as being something that made them right with

God I made a profession I said the prayer I walked the aisle I got baptized I talked to the priest whatever and they're trusting in that thing the problem is the life that they're living right now doesn't look anything like a person who loves the Lord or wants to walk ask them a series of things from scripture are these things true of your life as a lifestyle are these things things that are precious to you not really then we're talking to somebody we might say hey we need to evaluate whether or not you ever truly come to know the Lord oh but I made a profession yeah but it doesn't look like that ever was a possession it doesn't look the Lord you with me well we don't want to leave people like that we don't want them to come before the Lord at their physical death only to find that

[63 : 39] Jesus says no I never knew you whatever you think you professed I never knew you you didn't live for me this is why I took you to Romans 11 22 and says if you continue in God's kindness then you won't be cut off don't take it for granted draw near to Jesus and live in these things all right I want to share one other thing with you to close this out I have many more things it's just too good let me share two things with you from scripture to leave you with hope in this wonderful saving God that we serve and believe in I want to take you to this to a passage of scripture that deals with this issue of professing and possessing it's in Matthew chapter 21 it's a story it's a parable that

Jesus told as he confronted the religious leaders who were making now these are the religious elite of Israel and he's confronting them because he knows their hearts and he knows they're not walking with God they're not true believers even though they're religious leaders in Israel they're the movers and shakers in religious life and Jesus confronts them with this parable in Matthew 21 beginning in verse 33 listen listen listen to another parable Jesus said there was a land owner who planted a vineyard and put a wall around it and dug a wine press in it and built a tower he rented it out to vine growers and went on a journey when the harvest time approached he sent his slaves to the vine growers to receive his produce the vine growers took his slaves and beat one Mark says that he sent another and they killed him he sent another and they stoned him again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first and they did the same thing to them but afterward he sent his own son to them and he said oh they will respect my son but when the vine growers saw the son they said among themselves oh this is the heir come let us kill him and seize his inheritance so they took him and they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes what will he do to those vine growers well the religious leaders answered

Jesus and said oh he will bring those wretches to a wretched end and will rent out the vineyard to other vine growers who will pay him the proceeds at stone which the builders rejected this became the chief corner stone this came about from the Lord and it is marvelous in our eyes therefore I say to you the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing the fruit of it that would be the Gentiles that's us and he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces but on whomever it falls it will scatter him like dust when the chief priests and Pharisees heard his parables they understood that he was speaking about them when they sought to seize him they feared the people because they considered him to be a prophet and so

Jesus says you guys profess a lot but you possess nothing nothing of God you don't do the will of God you do just the opposite and that's danger in first Peter Peter is speaking to this very issue of unbelief but for those who disbelieve in verse seven the stone which the builders rejected this became the very corner stone verse eight a stone of stumbling in a rock of offense now folks these unbelievers stumble why do they stumble at the end of verse eight because they are disobedient to the word they are disobedient cut and dry Peter has been telling us all through chapter one that we need to rely on this living and enduring word of God to change our hearts and to teach us what it means to follow in the steps of the Lord and be the people of God Paul spoke to this

I have lots of references Peter speaks to it James speaks to it it's throughout the New Testament one other thing I want to share with you I don't want you to trip up when it says here in this doom they were also appointed to this doom they were also appointed I want to address this and then I'm done because I don't want you to trip up here's what we're not talking about we are not talking about God ordaining or purposing these people to eternal damnation I want to be really careful and clear here I want to give you a reference we won't turn there right now it's Romans 2 4 just write that down Romans 2 4 in the context surrounding that that'll be helpful to you about this point people stubbornly hold to their own agendas and they think lightly of God's kindness is shown to them in the cross of Jesus and as they do that they store up wrath for themselves that's what the passage in

[69 : 17] Romans 2 tells you now let me remind you of Proverbs 1 31 it speaks of people who reject God and his wisdom for their life just like in Romans 1 God gives them over here's what Proverbs 1 31 says God gives them over to what they have chosen as they reject him let me say this clearly God does not purpose ordain or destin people to unbelief they disbelieve and reject God by their own nature and choice and so they are by nature children of wrath by their choice by their nature but God does appoint that all who reject him will suffer his judgment under his holy wrath and that's what

Peter means Peter means they were appointed to this it's like saying this and all of those who disbelieve and remain in disbelief appoint themselves to God's wrath and judgment in that day because that's the way it works you believe and receive eternal life you disbelieve and receive judgment so what can we say then we can say this make your life about increasingly drawing near to Christ that's where you start that's where you stay this is God's precious answer to our problem of sinful unbelief in our daily life with Jesus not trusting God with the details of our lives struggling with that and of not being thankful to God for his incredible kindness to us in Christ folks that's amazing grace isn't it amazing grace and that's exactly what we want to sing about next will you pray with me father

God we thank you for your grace and kindness in the Lord Jesus Christ that as we read these portions of scripture and just read them out and absorb them the message is clear you are a saving God who invites sinners to come to you that they might know the love and kindness the gentleness mercy grace and forgiveness of your heart and so we pray if there's anyone in this room who has not given their life and heart to you in trust and in faith that they will do that by simply coming and praying and saying God please forgive me for my sins please have mercy on me and make me your child and let me live for Jesus and know him let me walk with him and have life and purpose in his name father we pray that you would lead many many people in that way to come to Christ and draw near to him and then know the blessing of drawing near to Jesus every day as we make witness of

Jesus throughout our daily lives whatever it is that we're facing we lay at your feet we trust you we ask you to rejuvenate our souls and refresh our minds and refocus our hearts so that we can bring honor and glory to your name thank you for the truth and thank you for Jesus it's in his name we pray amen