

Seek God and call to Worship:

I will exalt You, my God and King;
I will bless Your name forever and ever.
Every day I will bless You, and I will praise Your name forever and ever.
The LORD is righteous in all His ways and kind in all His deeds.
The LORD is near to all who call on Him, to all who call out to Him in truth.
He fulfills the desires of those who fear Him;
He hears their cry and saves them.
The LORD preserves all who love Him, but all the wicked He will destroy.
My mouth will declare the praise of the LORD;
let every creature bless His holy name forever and ever.

Prayer of direct Access:

Our Father in heaven you have fulfilled your desire to dwell with us, to walk with us, to commune with us-

By the work of your obedient Son who in his physical body has made peace between us. Thank you for this wonderful life you have opened our eyes to see. For forgiving us all of the sins we have committed against your majesty. And now for enfolding us into your sanctifying plans, to rebuild our characters and our personalities into the likeness of your beloved Son our elder brother, our Lord Jesus. In today's service and reflection please help us to understand more of the wonderful future you have planned so that we might become strong in hope. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Song; *I Will Rise, by Chris Tomlin*

There's a peace I've come to know though my heart and flesh may fail
There's an anchor for my soul, I can say "It is well"

Jesus has overcome and the grave is overwhelmed
The victory is won He is risen from the dead

And I will rise when He calls my name, no more sorrow, no more pain
I will rise on eagles' wings before my God fall on my knees
And rise, I will rise

There's a day that's drawing near when this darkness breaks to light
And the shadows disappear and my faith shall be my eyes

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Scriptures:

- Matthew 25.14-30 (ponder how Jesus is urging his disciples in this parable to realise how much he wants them to trust him for rewards)
- 1 Peter 1.1-9

Hymn: Away with our sorrow and fear! Charles Wesley

1. Away with our sorrow and fear! We soon shall recover our home;
The city of saints shall appear, the day of eternity come.
From earth we shall quickly remove, and mount to our promised abode,
The house of our Father above, the palace of angels and God.
2. By faith we already behold that lovely Jerusalem here;
Her walls are of jasper and gold, as crystal her buildings are clear.
Immovably founded in grace, she stands as she ever has stood;
And soon, at the end of our race, we'll rest in that city of God.

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Bible teaching sermon: You have Property in heaven waiting.

Being sure of security in the future is big for us humans. As a nation, we hold 231 billion dollars in Future Funds for our suspected needs in infrastructure needs and a whopping 4.1 trillion dollars in all our superannuation funds to look after our needs when we are no longer earning. That's property held for each Australian citizen that will be accessible in the future, everything being equal.

Many look forward to the coming weekend. Or we have our eyes fixed on our upcoming holidays. And children are so excitable over a coming birthday or visit of a favourite rellie. The phrase 'how many sleeps to' has been heard in every household from children's lips.

We are built that way. We live for fulfilled expectations.

The Bible says 'a hope deferred makes the heart sad'. Captors try and break the spirit of their prisoners by promising freedom only to deny it at the last moment

Hope may well be stronger than memory. God has made us that way He has built us to taste the sweet fruits of fulfilled hope. It is one way he teaches us the truth of his faithfulness.

Hope in the Bible is a wonderful reality. We do well to 'keep hope alive' as the old African spiritual goes.

Israelites had solid hope in their lives for the future of their families and livelihood. Read through Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua and see the dozens of references to 'inheritance' the legal blessing of each family with land and home in perpetuity. While a blessing for the families of Israel, it was also a type, an image of the greater inheritance awaiting Christ's people around the Globe.

Christians ought to be clear about this matter of hope. The moment you receive the Lord Jesus as Christ and Lord you have an immediate component of hope entering your life. It is an immediate quantity of wealth that is put into your name. And it is being held in the safest place anywhere. In heaven. In the very place where Christ himself the Son of God lives and reigns.

Jesus said to His disciples before he left the earth, "I go to prepare a place for you." Several years later, Jesus Himself communicated to one of His faithful saints, the apostle John,

You Have Personal Property Stored In Heaven

further exciting information about what is being held for each and every one of His people. We should be informed of this.

Speaking to Christians in Colossae, whom he had never met before and whose faith came from the preaching of Epaphras, Paul wrote and assured the believers that they have **property in heaven**: *“because we have heard about your faith in Christ Jesus and your love for all the saints— the faith and love proceeding from the **hope stored up for you in heaven**, of which you have already heard in the word of truth, the gospel that has come to you”.*ⁱ The word stored here refers to what is ‘reserved’, ‘held securely’, or ‘set aside.’

So real is this hope, this certainty that there is something wonderful waiting in heaven for us that it causes believers to love all other believers. It is a powerful motivator. That is something no amount of earthly training or coercion can ever produce.

“Stored up in heaven” refers to individual property that exists right now in heaven with your code, your unique God-given name inscribed on it. It is your property, waiting to be collected. For the church's encouragement, Paul was even given a mystical preview of it, which we can read and enjoy in Scripture.ⁱⁱ This should help us to think ‘heavenward’ and to fix our minds on Jesus and where He is.

This heavenly property is more solid, and more real than anything belonging to us on earth; it cannot be shaken, stolen, or subject to loss of value in any way. It does not deteriorate, in fact it can increase in value, described as a ‘lavish reception’ or ‘grand entrance’ into the kingdomⁱⁱⁱ

What does it consist of? Paul made an even more specific reference in his letter to Timothy: *Now there is **in store** for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.*^{iv}

Not only for the great Apostle but the millions of ordinary unknown childlike believers who simply want to see Jesus, there is a stored-up blessing, awaiting those who long to see and know Him more closely in peace and grace. Perhaps like a family where the will is shared with those who love each other. Those who hold the honour of the family in word and deed. Or like a child longing for the arrival of a loved uncle or grandparent who will stay awhile with them. They know there will be gifts, special conversation and much fun, and they can't wait!

The Apostle Peter in order to encourage believers everywhere through the years and all over the world, gives us a vivid picture when he refers to this heavenly property. He says: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an **inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, reserved in heaven for you**, who through faith are shielded by God's power for the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.*^v ‘Inheritance’ in the Bible, means what is determined and set aside in law. It refers to the possession of property.

If this is new to you, as it may have been to some reading dear Peter's letter, grab hold of it! this is better news than being told you have inherited a million from an unknown

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deceased relative. This is part of the bounty resulting from the death and resurrection of our elder brother the great Lord, Jesus Christ^{vi}.

This property is immense; it includes a never degrading glorious health security, a body that doesn't decay, immortal and glorious. But it spreads out and describes opportunities for employment in the eternal kingdom, it means a totally comprehensive health plan, it includes the company, home and new vistas of love in an absolutely safe kingdom home. And it is designed uniquely for each believer. There is something for you, of your liking, as if it is part of you, waiting for you to see and enjoy.

Prayer:

Dear Father I need to know more about this and to be fully assured of it. Forgive me for being so slack and uninformed when I could have trusted you and found out more. I need to have my eyes fully opened. I want to be truly worthy of the rewards you have for me. Teach me dear Lord of this amazing heavenly property you are holding for me.

In Jesus Name.

Hymn: "Forever with the Lord!" James Montgomery

1. "Forever with the Lord!" Amen, so let it be!
Life from His death is in that word, 'tis immortality.
Here in the body pent, absent from Him I roam,
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent a day's march nearer home
2. My Father's house on high, home of my soul, how near
At times to faith's foreseeing eye Thy golden gates appear!
Yet doubts still intervene, and all my prospects fly;
Like Noah's dove, I flit between rough seas and stormy sky.
3. Anon, the clouds depart, the winds and waters cease,
While sweetly o'er my gladden'd heart expands the bow of peace.
Then, then I feel that He, remembered or forgot,
The Lord, is never far from me, though I perceive Him not.
4. Be Thou at my right hand, then I shall never fail;
Uphold me, and I needs must stand, fight, and I shall prevail.
Knowing as I am known, how shall I love that word,
And oft repeat before the throne, "Forever with the Lord!"

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Benediction:

Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

ⁱ Colossians 1.5

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- ii 2Corinthians 12.1-4 and he wrote about it briefly in other parts of his letters, as did the writer of Hebrews, 12.22-24.
- iii 2 Peter 1.10. It would do good to read the whole section
- iv 2Timothy 4.8
- v 1Peter1.3-5
- vi Hebrews 2.9-13 and following