

# I Am A Stranger and Pilgrim (part 3)

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- [ 0 : 00 ] I invite you to turn again in your Bibles to John chapter 14. John chapter 14. We're going to be reading the first six verses here. And then we'll be turning back to Psalm 119.
- But we'll begin here at John 14, 1-6. On Jesus' last evening with his disciples, before his death, he says this, Do not let your hearts be troubled.
- Trust in God. Trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.
- And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me, that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.
- Thomas said to him, Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way? Jesus answered, I am the way and the truth and the life.
- [ 1 : 15 ] No one comes to the Father except through me. Then turn back to Psalm 119. Psalm 119. We're going to begin reading at verse 9 and read through verse 19.
- How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart.
- Do not let me stray from your commands. I've hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Praise be to you, O Lord.
- Teach me your decrees. With my lips, I recount all the laws that come from your mouth. I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches.
- I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees. I will not neglect your word. Do good to your servants.
- [ 2 : 14 ] And I will live. I will obey your word. Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. I am a stranger on earth.
- Do not hide your commands from me. Let's hear God's word preached. Well, brothers and sisters, we are one week closer to our destination as we are journeying home to heaven.
- The apostle Peter calls us strangers and pilgrims in this world. And then he just tells us to live like it. That our identity would shape our living.
- So we're asking, well, what does the life of a stranger and pilgrim look like? And so far we've seen three things. First of all, it's a holy life that's set apart from this world unto God.
- And it's marked by abstaining from sinful desires that war against our soul and doing so in the fear of God, a reverence for God. That's what it is to live like a stranger here, to be different from the locals, to be obeying God's word, living a holy life.
- [ 3 : 30 ] And then secondly, we saw that strangers and pilgrims are to expect persecution and ridicule from the world as we're passing through on our way to heaven.
- You find that in Israel's journey into the promised land. They just want to pass through, but they won't let them. They get persecuted along the way.
- I was shocked to read in World Magazine this week that one in nine Christians in the world today, or last year, experienced serious persecution.

One out of nine. Look around you. One out of nine. Serious persecution last year. And then it said roughly 70% of the world's Christians live without the right to do what we are doing here this morning, just to worship freely.

I had to read that twice to make sure I wasn't reading it wrong. Seven out of ten Christians today don't have the freedom to do what we did.

[ 4 : 39 ] Could we pause and pray for them? Our Father, we're humbled. It's even here that we have brothers and sisters, and so many of them that are experiencing the very things that we are studying and reading about, that pilgrims are different from the people of this world, and their holy lives are like light shining in the eyes of those that love darkness, and that they strike out against them in persecution.

They're our brothers and sisters. They believe in the same Savior. They've been born of the same Spirit. They have the same Father in Heaven, the same promises, the same Bible, the same destination.

Would you help them? Would you keep them from falling? Would you keep them from denying the faith? And wherever they're meeting today, whether at home alone, whether in secret places, would you come, Lord Jesus, and pour out your encouragement into their hearts, that they might hear your encouragement to them to persevere to the end.

Help them, we pray. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. Amen. Strangers and pilgrims can expect persecution from the world.

And thirdly, we saw that to live as a stranger and pilgrim is to know that our best things are at home in Heaven and being willing to wait for them, even willing to go through hard times on our way to get to our inheritance.

[ 6 : 16 ] And that brings us to the fourth thing today. The life of a stranger and pilgrim here is a life that makes much of the Bible. Strangers and pilgrims love this book.

It's the treasure. It is more precious than gold. It is sweeter than honey to the taste. Our text is just that last verse read for us. Psalm 119, 19.

I'm a stranger on the earth. Do not hide your commandments from me. In this verse, we get to listen in as one of God's children are talking to him.

And that's an interesting point in itself to consider, isn't it? What would we learn about you by listening into your prayers? Well, there's two parts to this man's prayer.

There's his identity and then there's his petition. Psalm 119, 19. First is identity. Here's a man who knows who he is.

[ 7 : 24 ] And if you listen to him pray, you'll hear him telling God who he is. And that is instructive again in itself because I wonder, do you ever tell God who you are?

You know what it does? It helps us to not pretend what we aren't. When we come to God, we just tell him what we are. That's what David's doing here.

And it also helps us to know what to ask for because our identity helps shape our petitions. David says, first of all, I am a stranger on earth.

That's who I am, Lord. I'm a stranger here. Now, we know what it is to be a stranger. When I visit foreign lands, I really feel like the stranger I am.

The signs may be in a different language. It's different. I can't understand them. It might be English, but spoken differently. You know what that is.

[ 8 : 21 ] We're confused a bit. The customs are different. The laws are different. The scenery is different. Everything's different. And we say, I'm in a strange place.

But then we come back home in Indiana. That would make a good song, wouldn't it? Back home in Indiana. And what do we feel? Right away, we feel at home. They're speaking my language.

The signs are all in English. The ways, they're my ways. But the people, they're my people. And we are right at home. This is where I belong.

Now, we notice that David is not a stranger merely when he's in foreign countries. He's saying something far more extensive and profound. He says, I'm a stranger on earth.

There's no home for me anywhere on earth. I'm a stranger to it. It's a stranger to me. Because my heart and affections are at home in heaven where God my Savior is.

[ 9 : 27 ] And the one thing I have desired of the Lord and that I seek after is that I may dwell in the house of the Lord forever. I'm forever to behold the beauty of the Lord. I'm just traveling through this strange land.

And my chief business here is to arrive safely there. And to take as many people along with me as I can. That's his identity. Stranger on earth.

His petition is the desperate plea of a stranger on earth. Do not hide your commands from me. You see how he's matching his petition to his identity.

Do you do that in your prayer? Lord, we're the sheep of your pasture. We're the flock under your care. Now, please feed us and lead us and protect us and go with us.

We're just sheep. We easily go astray. Oh, what a wretched man I am, Lord. Would you help me, Lord Jesus, against this unwelcome tenant in my heart?

[ 10 : 40 ] I'm your servant, Lord. Give me discernment that I may understand your statutes. I'm your temple in which you dwell. Oh, help me to glorify you in my body, which is your temple.

I'm a Christian. I bear your name, oh Christ. Help me to hallow it, to make it known, to make it magnified in the sight of this world.

That's the sort of prayer we have here in verse 19. I'm a stranger. Identity. Do not hide your commands from me.

My petition based on my identity. Here's a man desperate for the word of God because he understands who he is.

I'm a stranger in the whole earth. I'm far from my homeland. It's a strange place, Lord. I'm not familiar with these sites, these places. I've not been here before.

[ 11 : 43 ] I only get to go through life once. This is all new territory. And I've got to get it right once. I must find my way home to heaven. Do not hide your commands from me.

I'm afraid of losing my way. There are false guides to deceive me. They all say, follow me. I'll take you to what is truly good. And there's false signs pointing, this is the way to life.

Turn here. And there are deceitful traps that appeal to my sinful nature within. My desires within. There are by-paths that people have taken and never have returned to the straight and narrow.

There are even ways that seem right to a man. They look right. They feel right. They seem right. But they end in destruction. Oh, don't leave me to myself.

Don't leave me without the true map from heaven. Or I'll surely miss my way and be lost forever. Do not hide your commands from me. Now that's the desperate cry of a stranger on earth.

[ 12 : 50 ] Someone who knows how badly he needs the word of God to guide him safely home. Right through the minefield of this world. He's desperate for the word of God.

And you see that all the way through Psalm 119. It's not just verse 19. It's the cry of a desperate man for this book. It's the whole psalm.

Read it. And say, that's the cry of a stranger. Who knows how badly he needs the word from heaven. Lord, your word, it's a lamp to my feet.

It's a light to my path. Oh, shine on my path or I'll surely stray. Don't hide your commands from me.

That's simply the negative of what he just said in verse 18. Open my eyes that I might see wonderful things in your law. Don't hide them from me, but reveal them to me.

[ 13 : 54 ] Is the idea of these two verses. Verse 32. I run in the path of your commands. Because they mark out the path where true freedom is found.

They mark out that narrow road that leads to life. Don't hide them from me. I must have them. But teach me.

And teach me like only you can. Teach me to follow them. Not just to know them. Teach me to follow them. You know, only God can teach that way.

But as for all his pilgrims, they will all be taught by God. So teach me to follow your ways. And I will keep them to the end. Give me understanding. And I will keep your law. And obey it with all my heart.

But verse 10. Don't let me stray from your commands. But rather make me to go in the path of your commands. For there I find delight. It says in verse 34.

[ 14 : 53 ] Do not snatch the word of truth from my mouth. For I have put my hope in your laws. You hear that same desperateness. Don't hide your commands from me. Now you see him eating.

He says, I'm feasting. This is the stuff that gives me strength to journey on home to heaven. And he says, don't snatch the word of truth from my mouth. I need the map of heaven to guide my way to heaven.

To encourage and strengthen me along the way. So send forth your light and your truth. Let them guide me. Let them bring me to your holy mountain. The place where you dwell. Psalm 43. 3.

So if we know who we are. Strangers. This is how we'll pray. Don't hide your commands from me. Or like John Wesley in the 1800s said. I'm a creature.

Notice how he knows who he is. And notice how it frames his petition. I'm a creature of the day. Passing through life like an arrow through the air. I'm a spirit come from God and returning to God.

[ 15 : 55 ] Just hovering over the great gulf. Till a few moments hence I am no more seen. I drop into an unchangeable eternity.

I want to know one thing. The way to heaven. How to land safe on that happy shore. God has condescended to teach the way.

For this very end he came from heaven. And he's written it down in a book. Oh give me that book. At any price. Give me the book of God.

I have it. I have it. Here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be a man of one book. Look. I'm a stranger. I cannot afford.

To have your word hidden from me. Lord. That's the life of a stranger. They make much. Of the word of God.

[ 16 : 55 ] To live is to travel. And since we travel daily. Does it not make sense.

That if we're prone to wander. We ought to. Crave the word daily. Don't let me stray. Lord. From your commands.

I'm coming back. Boy. What am I doing here? That's not the way. We can go so far. In one day. As David.

I love your law. And meditate on it. Day and night. Carefully examining our ways. To see if we're walking in line. With the map. Are you making much of the Bible. In your daily life.

Are you afraid. To take a step. Without it. Lest you. Surely stray. So why. Why is this. Book.

[ 17 : 55 ] Such an important. Treasure possession. Of the pilgrim. There's too many reasons. To give them all. This morning. I just give you. The two reasons. They're found in John 14. They're found in.

The whole Bible. First of all. This is the only. Trustworthy book. About our destination. Heaven. Pilgrim. You're journeying. Destinations. Heaven.

This is the only. Trustworthy book. About your destination. And that's important. For a journey. A journeying pilgrim. We want to know about the place. To which we're going. Don't we?

Well it's here. And more on that later. Secondly. This is the only. Trustworthy book. Giving us directions. How to get there. You see the two. Things.

They go hand in hand. This is the book. That tells us. About our destination. And it's the only. Safe guide. Telling us. The directions. To get. To our destination. And.

[ 18 : 49 ] It is interesting. We see that. Both of those. In John 14. The passage. That Pastor Jason. Read for us. Verses. One to three. Of. Of. John.

14. Do not. Do not let your hearts. Be troubled. Trust in God. Trust also in me. In my father's house. He's telling us. About the destination. In my father's house.

There are many rooms. If it were not. So I would not have. I would have told you. I'm going there. To prepare a place. For you. And if I go. And prepare a place. For you.

I will come back. And take you. To be with me. That you may also. Be where. I am. You see. There's the place. There's the destination. It's a real. Place.

Heaven. My father's house. And then in verses. Four to six. He talks about. The directions. How to get there.

[ 19 : 42 ] To this place. And he says. You know the way. To the place. Where I'm going. And Thomas. Immediately. Objects. And says. Lord. We don't know.

Where you're going. So how can we know. The way. You've got to know. The where. Before you can. Know the way. So. You're seeking directions.

On MapQuest. And. Like Thomas. It wants to know. The location. Of your destination. Before it tells you. The directions. To get there. Right. It says. Destination.

You've got to punch that in. First. If I'm going to give you. The directions. On how to get there. Makes sense. Doesn't it? We've got to know. The location. Of the destination. In order to know. The way there. That is true.

In life. But there is one exception. And that's when the destination. Is heaven. And that's what Jesus. Is saying here. Where is heaven?

[ 20 : 46 ] Well we know. From. Revelation 21. That eventually. The new Jerusalem. Will come down. Out of heaven. To a new earth. This very earth. We're living on. Renewed. Restored.

Cleansed. From anything. Of the curse. All things. Made new. And this will be heaven. But we don't know. Where our father's house.

Is right now. Do we? We don't know. Where Jesus went. As he ascended. Into heaven. We've not been told.

The precise location. Of heaven. As the Booth brothers sing. It's. It's up there. Somewhere. Right? We don't know where.

And so Thomas is protesting. Well. If we don't know. Where you're going. It's a location. Then how can we know. The way. Aren't you glad.

[ 21 : 40 ] For a Thomas. Among the twelve. To ask such a question. Of our Savior. So that we. Living 2,000 years later. Can hear this. Gospel answer.

That. Perhaps. Was used in your conversion. I am the way. Jesus says. Nobody comes to the Father.

Except through me. You don't need to know. The location of heaven. To get there. You just need to know me. For I am the way. I'm the only way.

To the Father's house. And if you come to me. And you renounce your sin. And you put all of your trust in me. I will get you there. You'll get there on my back. You'll get there on my merits. On my perfect obedience.

To God's law. Which you guys have broken. And on my suffering. The punishment of God's wrath. For sin. Which you deserve. Don't know where heaven is.

[ 22 : 36 ] But I know the way there. It's Jesus. Have you come to Jesus? You know what happens with men. Without this book. And men who don't.

Follow this book. They're left to their own ideas. About the way. To heaven. They're left with their own ideas. About what heaven's like. But also. How to get there. And not a one of them.

Are correct. They're all wrong. They're all lies. Whatever religion. Whatever sect. Whatever denomination. They belong to. Because they all depend. On what man can do.

To make himself good enough. For God. Good enough for heaven. And Jesus says. That's the very thing. That will keep you out. That's the very way. That will lead to hell.

That's one of the wrong signs. That you've been. Suckered for. And that your own heart. Thinks is right. And seems right. But it's just the opposite. Of a man's thoughts. You must renounce your sin.

[ 23 : 34 ] And any supposed. Righteousness of your own. To commend yourself. To the father in heaven. You must know. That it will not qualify you. For heaven. But your best deeds.

Are shot through with sin. And will disqualify you. From heaven. You must put all your weight. On me. I am the way.

The way. The only way. So you come to me. And I'll get you there. Even though you don't know where. It is. Have you come to Christ? Precious Bible.

To give us the true directions. To heaven. Some of you might be unconverted. Here this morning. And. And. We're studying about.

Christians identity. That they're strangers and pilgrims. Who are passing through this life. And going home to heaven. But you have chosen. That this is your home. You like this place.

[ 24 : 32 ] You like its things. You like. All that appeals to your own sinful lower desires. And. And heaven. And Christ. And holiness. Holds no attraction to you.

I just want to remind you. You can't stay here either. We're all traveling. To live is to travel. Jesus says. And we're all either on that narrow road.

That leads to life. Or we're on the broad road. And you don't get to stay on the broad road. You will end up at. At the destination. One day a heart attack will take you.

A car accident will take you. Cancer will take you. And you'll arrive at your destination. And the broad road. That has most people on it. Ends in death.

And destruction. There's. There's heaven as a destination. And there's hell as a destination. I just want to remind you. As we're studying about strangers and pilgrims on earth. You can't stay here either.

[ 25 : 32 ] You have a destination. Judas died and went to his place. Just as much as every believer. Dies. And goes. To their place.

What a precious thing that. That we have the Bible. To tell us. The directions to. To heaven. The precious Bible tells us about. Precious Jesus. The only way to get there.

And that is one reason that. Strangers and pilgrims. Make much of this book. It's precious to them. It led them to Christ. But it's precious because it also reveals.

The destination. It tells us about heaven. Not just the way to it. But it tells us about heaven. Consider. Everything we know for sure about heaven.

Comes from this book. It's the only infallible book on heaven. I wouldn't trade one verse. Of the Bible. For a thousand books. Written by people. Who say they've.

[ 26 : 29 ] Died. And gone there. And come back. To tell us in their book. What it's like. Just give me one verse. From this book. And you can have the thousands. That have been written. I'm a stranger.

I've got to get it right. The first time. I need something trustworthy. I need something. I can put all my weight on. And know I'll never be disappointed.

And I'm going to buy some lady's book. Claim she had some experience. No. Give me. The book of life.

That leads me to the Savior. Who is the way. The truth. And the life. It holds. Before us. The truth. About heaven.

In John 3. Jesus says. That he's come from heaven. To tell us things. About heaven. Nicodemus couldn't even understand. The things of earth. Jesus says. How are you ever going to understand. When I start telling you.

[ 27 : 28 ] About the things of heaven. Heaven. The place where he's taking. Those who believe on him. No. To be sure. The Bible doesn't tell us. Everything we want to know.

About heaven. Does it? I've got. Tons of questions. About heaven. Especially about people. Who are there right now. Before the resurrection.

Of the body. But you know this. It tells us everything. We need to know. About heaven. Not a thing is missing. About what we need to know.

And how to get there. Now a lot of what it tells us. Is what's not there. There's no more night. There's no more sin. There's no more sickness. There's no more sorrow. Or sadness. No more struggles. Of Romans 7.

No more curse. No more death. No more mourning. Or crying. Or pain. No more war. Or studying for war. No more devil. No more evil people. To tempt or harass us. No more persecution. None of the cowardly.

[ 28 : 25 ] The unbelieving. The vile. The murderers. The sexually immoral. The idolaters. And liars. Nothing defiling. Will enter into there. Nothing imperfect. Nothing.

That is not. Perfectly righteous. That's what's not there. And. We're given a lot of the negatives. Of what's not there. So that whenever we bump into those things here.

Well. Isn't it going to be wonderful that. I won't. I won't. Experience that ever again in heaven. And then he tells us. What is there. Thousands upon thousands.

Of angels. In joyful assembly. What must that be like. We had six. Seven hundred voices. Singing the praises of Jesus. At Pastor Ted's funeral yesterday.

And we had a foretaste. People. In joyful assembly. Rejoicing in a savior. Who's conquered death. By his own death. And resurrection.

- [ 29 : 21 ] What will thousands upon thousands. Of angels be. And the church of the firstborn. The chosen. Called and faithful. Are there. The spirits of just men. Made perfect. Are there right now.
- And waiting to be joined. With their. Their resurrection bodies. At Christ's return. God. The judge of all mankind. Is there. Jesus. The mediator. Of the new covenant. Is there. Indeed. Jesus is the center of it all.
- Isn't he. Jesus will be. What makes it heaven for me. The lamb is all the glory. Of Emmanuel's land. Will see the king. In his beauty.
- Face to face. Not through a veil. Not through a dim mirror. Face to face. I shall behold him. Face to face.
- What will that be. When with rapture. I behold him. Jesus Christ. Who died for me. To look upon the lamb. That was slain.
- [ 30 : 17 ] For me. And. And when I see him. I'll be made like him. In a moment. In a twinkling of an eye. Changed.
- Into his likeness. To share. His glory. To. Share. His unfading happiness. And to be satisfied.
- Like we've never been satisfied. I will be. I will be satisfied. When I awake. In your likeness. That's a level of satisfaction. That we've not. Quite yet tasted.
- In his. Perfect likeness. In whose presence. Is fullness. Of joy. And. At whose right hand. Is our pleasures. Forevermore. Unmixed.
- With sorrows. Like they are here below. Better. And lasting. Possessions. Knowing. As we're known. Fellowship. Unending. Fellowship. With those who've gone before.
- [ 31 : 11 ] Something better by far. Than your best life. Here and now. Better by far. Is what Paul says. Perfect peace. Security. No fears. No worries.
- Never ending life. Ruling and reigning with Christ. On a new earth. Where we'll serve our king forever. With no weariness. To our service. And all the many different things we do.
- We'll. We'll glorify him. And we will enjoy him forever. Just like we were made to do. And we'll say. Ah. This is what I was made for. I was made for heaven.
- Not for hell. Not for earth. But for this bliss. Of seeing. And being like. And with my savior. In this new.
- Created. Heaven. Paul visited it. He tells us. Whether in the flesh. Or out of it. He didn't quite know. He heard things. That he's not. Permitted to tell. So God's not told us everything.
- [ 32 : 11 ] About heaven. You know what he's done. He's done what the. The wise. Hostess does. She puts out the appetizer. Just to whet the appetite.
- To make us hungry. For heaven. Enough. To get hungry. That we. Might want to go there. Ourselves. And find out. Just what all those pleasures.
- Are. My unconverted friend. We're tasting the appetizer. We're tasting. Life in the spirit. But that's just the deposit.
- Guaranteeing. What is to come. Come and eat with us. Come and partake with us. Of this eternal life. Think. Think of this. God didn't have to tell us. Anything about heaven.
- Did he? I mean. He could have just. Surprised us. There's going to be a lot of. Surprises in heaven. I'm sure. And he could have just. Surprised us. At the end of our journey.
- [ 33 : 11 ] So. So. Pastor Ted. Seventy three year old man. He's up. He's making breakfast. For his wife. And. And he. He dies. He knows nothing about heaven. He just knows that. He needs to trust in Jesus.



For the forgiveness of his sins. And so on. But he knows nothing about heaven. And then suddenly. In a moment. He's. He's surprised. There's a heaven at the end of this journey. It could have been that way. I suppose. But it's not that way.

He has chosen to reveal. Heaven. To us. Now there's a reason why he did that. He. It's not capricious. It's not. Without reason. Why did God tell us about heaven?

Why no one reason. Is that we might. Be encouraged to persevere all the way through this journey. To get there. And that's given over and over.

In so many ways. Old and New Testament. Alike. To. To help us persevere. To keep us from turning back. Because they can get hard on the journey to heaven. Through this world that persecutes.

[ 34 : 10 ] And this world that everybody's enjoying their good things now. And we've got to wait. All that comes at us. It's hard. And. And so Jesus is saying. But my father's house.

Is at the end of the journey. Let me tell you something about it. Just to whet your appetite. So that you'll keep going. When things get. Tough. Jesus knows it's not easy.

Being a stranger. And a pilgrim. Going to heaven through this world. Can I just remind you. He was the stranger and pilgrim here. He's been on this journey. The very journey we're taking.

Before us. Tempted in every way like we are. He knows the route. And he knows how difficult it is. And so he says.

Oh. Get your eyes on the destination. Remember where you're going. Christian. That you don't. Be overwhelmed. And give up. Short. Of the goal.

[ 35 : 09 ] He was the ultimate stranger. And pilgrim. And he's determined.

To get all of his pilgrims. All the way home to heaven. And to cheer us along the way. With the knowledge of heaven. Through all of our tears. Our pains. Our broken carriages. All the things that.

Trouble us. He keeps holding the reward. Out before us. He knows there are trials. Dark on every hand. And we cannot understand. All the ways that God will lead us.

To our blessed promised land. So he says. Keep your eyes on the promised land. That's the theme of the book of Hebrews. Isn't it? One of the dominant themes. Of the book of Hebrews. That he takes us by the hand.

And leads us through. To the. To the promised land. By faith. And he. He's trying to encourage. These Hebrew Christians. Who've had to step away. From all their. Their family life.

[ 36 : 06 ] And. The religious life. Of the Jews. To embrace the Messiah. The despised. And rejected Messiah. And now they're being persecuted. And their. Their goods are being confiscated.

And they're being put into jail. There's worse suffering coming. Lord Jesus says. Get my brothers and sisters. A drink of water. Get them some food.

Something that will. Give them strength. To go on. Until each one. Arrives before God. And Zion. And so the book of Hebrews. Is written. To encourage them. To persevere.

Well. You've got better. And lasting possessions. And you know that. They're better than the ones. That have been confiscated. So don't throw away. Your confidence.

It will be richly. Rewarded. And you need to persevere. So that when you've done. The will of God. You will receive. What he has promised. Those rewards of heaven. Are to back in us. Onward.

[ 37 : 06 ] For we are not of those. Who shrink back. And are destroyed. But of those. Who go on believing. And are saved. For the righteous. Will live by faith. And faith.

Is being sure. Of what we hope for. And is being certain. Of what we cannot see. That's our home. Heaven. And the Savior. Who waits.

To welcome us there. And that's why. This forward look. Of faith. Is so critical. In the book of Hebrews. We persevere.

As we look. To the unseen heaven. That we hope for. The unseen Lord. Who is there. And that's how Moses. Persevered. To the end. It's how he. How he persevered.

In the face of temptation. How could he. Refuse all those. Treasures of Egypt. And all the pleasures. That went with being. The son of Pharaoh. Pharaoh's daughter. How could he ever. Make it through that.

[ 37 : 57 ] Neck of the. The journey. Well. Hebrews tells us. By faith. Moses. Because he was looking.

Ahead to his reward. Despised. The treasures. And pleasures. Of Egypt. And chose. To be identified. With the. The despised. People of Jesus.

He persevered. Because he saw him. Who is invisible. That's faith. That's looking ahead. And so the Bible. Is indispensable. For our journey. That's the way. Abraham. Isaac.

And Jacob. Persevered. In their long journey. Living in tents. As strangers. And aliens. On earth. By faith. They knew. There was a better country. A heavenly one.

Faith. Kept them content. To live in tents. As strangers on earth. On their way home. To heaven. So. The Bible. Not only clearly. Lays out the way. To heaven.

[ 38 : 51 ] It keeps. Our hearts. And minds. In heaven. Along the journey. And that's as important. As the directions. To heaven. Because if we don't have heaven. On our minds.

And in our hearts. Then. We'll grow weary. About the directions. To get there. But the Bible. Does both of those things. Since you have been raised. With Christ. Set your hearts. On things above.

Where Christ is seated. At the right hand of God. Set your minds. On things above. Not on things. On this earth. For you died. And your life. Is right now. Hidden. With Christ.

In God. And when Christ. Who is your life. Appears. Then. We also will appear. With him. In glory. For our citizenship. Is in heaven. And we eagerly await.

A savior. From there. You can't read far. In the new testament. Without reading. About heaven. Our destination.

[ 39 : 44 ] And the Lord. That we eagerly. Await from there. And I think. If I've learned anything. Over the past five months. It's been this. That the Bible. Is far more heavenly minded.

Than I am. It's constantly. Pointing me heavenward. It's saying. John. Lift up your eyes. Look where I'm taking you.

To be forever. With me. Don't. Don't get your eyes down. To where you don't see that. Or you're in trouble. The Bible. Is so heavenly minded.

It's like our hymnal. It's almost like every other song. The last verse. Is about heaven. And we. We sing right over it. And we. That's there for a reason. And it's seeking to reflect. The reality of scripture.

We need to hear about heaven. We need to. To see. The dim outline of heaven. Is enough to pull us. Heavenward. Stepping.

[ 40 : 40 ] Heavenward. Your redemption is drawing now. It's nearer now. Than when you first believed. Strangers and pilgrims. Need the Bible. To keep heaven on our minds.

To keep us thinking about it. Singing about it. Longing for it. Waiting for it. Preparing for it. And for Jesus. Who is longing. And waiting to welcome us home.

J.C. Ryle gives this helpful illustration. That I'll. Bring a little up to date. But basically. His illustration. If you were 30 years old.

And your employer. Said. We're gonna. We're gonna move you to Australia. And you agreed. To live there. For the rest of your life. And they. Bought a home for you. Wouldn't you be anxious.

To know as much about that. Home. As you could. You're gonna spend the rest of your life there. 50. 60 years. Be a matter of deep interest to you.

[ 41 : 39 ] In fact. It would be strange. If you had no such interest. And then Ryle says this. Now surely. If we. If we hope to dwell forever. In that better country. Even a heavenly one.

We ought to seek. All the knowledge. We can get about it. Before we go into. Our eternal home. We should try to become. Acquainted with it. I suppose today.

You could take a virtual tour. Of that home. Over in Australia. And I want to tell you. Christian. Is heaven your home. This is the closest thing. To a virtual tour. Everything you need to know.

About that place. Wonders. So amazing. We can't even imagine. What those words mean. But there's enough.

That we do understand. That says. With Rutherford. It were a well spent journey. Those seven deaths. Lay between.

[ 42 : 35 ] To get to that. To get to him. So. Don't settle for the world. As your home. But set your heart.

On pilgrimage. Don't. Don't turn back. Keep going. Heaven's just around the bend. And we'll more than reward. All the difficulties. On our journey there. Florence.

Chadwick. From San Diego. Loved to swim long. Swim long distance. In open waters. And she was. Already the first woman.

To swim the 23 miles. Across the English Channel. She did it both ways. And now on the 4th of July. 1952. At age 34. She wanted to become. The first woman.

To swim. The 26 miles. From Catalina Island. To the shore of California. We're told that the weather. Was foggy. And chilling.

[ 43 : 29 ] Chilly. She could. Hardly see the boats. That were. Accompanying her. And still. She swam. For 15 hours. And when she begged.

To be taken out of the water. Along the way. Her mother. In a boat. Alongside her. Told her. You're close to the end. You can make it. Finally.

Physically. And emotionally. Exhausted. She stopped swimming. Was pulled. Out of the water. And it wasn't until. She was in the boat. That she. She discovered. That. The shore.

Was less than. A half a mile away. In a news conference. The next day. She said. All I could see. Was the fog. And I think. If I could have seen.

The shore. I would have made it. I'd have made it. You've already made. The application. The way.

[ 44 : 27 ] Through. The way. Through this life. It's dangerous. To lose sight. Of the shore. We simply.

Don't live right. Without heaven. In view. We grow weary. We grow. Tired. Our troubles. Weigh us down. And we're.

Overwhelmed. To the point. Of quitting. Or to settle down. Here. To live like. The locals. And that's why.

Strangers and pilgrims. Make much. Of the word of God. Because it keeps. Heaven in view. It keeps the Jesus.

Of heaven. In view. And it keeps you going. Doesn't it? It keeps you going. I'm a stranger. On earth. Don't hide.

[ 45 : 25 ] Your commands. From me. That's the. Well. Two months later. Florence. Got back. Into the same waters. And the same thick fog.

And she became the first woman. To complete the 26 miles. And she even beat the men's record. By two hours. The difference. She said that while she swam. She kept a mental image.

Of the California shoreline. In her mind. Isn't that the ability of faith. To see those things. With the mind's eye.

That are unseen. That are in the fog. Behind the fog. The things we're hoping for. Faith. Lays hold of those things.

And that's critical. To the pilgrim journey. Brothers and sisters. We're almost home. I don't care how old or young you are. Compared to the home.

[ 46 : 22 ] The eternal home we're going to. Every one of us. It's just around. It's what a shame. To stop a half a mile short. From heaven. And from Jesus.

Who waits to greet us. And welcome us. Heaven's shoreline. Right before us. Just think of stepping on shore. And finding it heaven.

Breathing new air. And finding it celestial. Of waking up in glory. And finding it home. And pilgrims were never meant to travel.

Home alone. Never alone. Jesus never envisioned. That we would be traveling alone. It's dangerous to travel alone.

Florence needed her mother in the boat beside her. Keep going honey. You can make it. We need that. From each other. Don't we? I was reading.

[ 47 : 28 ] On a website. Of a church. In the Indianapolis area. Just checking it out. There on the welcome page. This statement. We are but one group.

Of his making. Gathered together. To exhort. One another. Toward our. Eternal home in heaven. That caught my eye. I like that.

That ought to be in our documents somewhere. Or better yet. In our hearts. That we are a people. That Jesus Christ. He doesn't want us going to home.

Home alone. He's gathered us into local churches. For this very reason. That we might exhort one another. Toward our eternal home in heaven. And it is in our documents.

Brethren. Hebrews 10. 24 and 25. This is why we don't give up meeting together. This is why we consider one another.

[ 48 : 25 ] How we can urge each other on. And all the more. As we see. The day approaching. It's near. It's coming.

Press on brother. Keep on trusting sister. The night is nearly over. The day is at hand. And the lamb. The lamb is all the glory. Of Emmanuel. Emmanuel's land.

So forgetting what is behind. Stretching toward what is before. We press on. Toward the mark. Of the high calling. Of God. Who has called us heavenward.

In Christ Jesus. Let's. Let's learn. To. Be that body. Exhorting one another. To our eternal home. We can do that even now.

As we sing. And sing to one another. Exhorting ourselves. And each other. To the heaven. That awaits us. Number 599. 599. The night is.

[ 49 : 25 ] Is passing away. The day is at hand. The sands of time. Are sinking. The day of heaven breaks. The morn of heaven breaks. 599.

Let's stand. And urge each other on. To our home. thank you father for your word thank you for your heart that ever you would prepare such a place for sinners to be perfectly forgiven and restored to bear that image of god that image of christ for all eternity to know the very purpose for which you created us to know you and to enjoy you and that forever some here don't have that as their destination wake them draw them and give us all to be encouraged and even now to encourage one another with the time we have together in jesus name amen