



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Hebrews 2:11-16

"The Brotherhood"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Seth, and good morning. Well, we are in Hebrews chapter 2, and last week we considered the tenth verse. That begins this new section, so I'm going to look at verses 11 through 16, but I'll begin reading with verse 10;

10For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. *(We can translate that "the captain of their salvation through suffering."),* **11**For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one *Father*; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,

12saying,

"I WILL PROCLAIM YOUR NAME TO MY BRETHREN, IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION I WILL SING YOUR PRAISE."

13And again,

"I WILL PUT MY TRUST IN HIM." And again, "BEHOLD, I AND THE CHILDREN WHOM GOD HAS GIVEN ME."

14Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, **15**and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. **16**For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant, (*or 'the seed'*), of Abraham.

Hebrews 2: 10-16

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word and bless our time of study in it together. Let's bow in prayer.

LORD, we do ask Your blessing upon us. It is a great privilege, as I so often say, and I think we all if we are understanding things correctly, know this is a great privilege—to be with Your people on this Lord's Day, and every Lord's Day, doing what we do; reading the text of Scripture and expounding it.

And that is a great privilege whether we understand that or not, because this is Your inerrant Word, and this Book, as our author will tell us later in chapter 4, (*vs12*), is a supernatural Book; 'It's alive, it is powerful; it's sharper than any two-edged sword. It divides us up, it analyzes us, it evaluates us,' And if we put ourselves under it, as we are obligated to do, we will be changed and transformed—and so Father, to be here just reading the Scriptures is a privilege, a blessing.

So I pray You would bless us as we consider the text that we have read;

"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart

Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my rock and Redeemer." (*Psa 19:14*)

So bless us with sanctification, and if there be any in this auditorium that are without faith in Christ, transform them Father. Bring them to faith in Him, and justification...being declared righteous in Your sight.

LORD, we have material needs, as well. We are material beings and we suffer the difficulties of life in a fallen world, and so we pray for those who have asked for our prayers. We all need Your blessing; those who are sick, those who are dealing with chronic illness, those who are away, we pray that You would keep them safe. We pray that You would bless the health of those who are struggling, and we pray that all of us would look to You with grateful hearts, knowing that we are blessed by You every moment of our lives. And we pray that we would be very much aware of that and Your absolute sovereignty over the affairs of life.

Well, bless us now LORD as we sing our next hymn; prepare our hearts for a time of study and worship together. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

(Message) In the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth is a large portrait by John Singer Sargent of Edwin Booth, who was the greatest actor of his day—at least in America. I've seen it a number of times, and when I see it I think of an incident that occurred in his life.

Once during a social event, a young, aspiring actor, who was trying to gain the older actor's favor, asked, "How many brothers and sisters do you have, Mr. Booth?" The room got uncomfortably quiet as the actor answered slowly between puffs on his pipe. He said, "I forget the lot of us...I'll name them, you count them."

He began naming them, from the oldest to the youngest, and then asked, "How many is that?" "Nine, Mr. Booth."

By now, the young man had realized he had committed a major gaffe. Edwin had left out one, his younger brother, John Wilkes. He rarely spoke of him; friends never mentioned him. When his younger brother shot President Lincoln in 1865, he so tarnished the name of 'Booth' that Edwin would forever be ashamed to even mention his name.

Well, that's not surprising. What is surprising...really, amazing, is what we read in Hebrews chapter 2, verse 11—that, 'Jesus is not ashamed to call each of us His brother!'...we who have sinned against 'heaven and earth'.

The reason He is not ashamed is given at the beginning of the verse: 'We have been sanctified by Him.' He is the One, who by His sacrifice, made us different, made us new people:

He paid for all our sins,
Cleansed us of our guilt,
Set us apart from the world,
Reconciled us to God,
And made us members of His family so that we are now,
 "sons of God", (Rom 8:14), and 'brothers of Christ'. (vs11).
We are what Philip Edgcumbe Hughes called:
 "The Brotherhood of the Redeemed".

I know of nowhere in the Bible where Christ is called 'our brother'. We are called His brothers; He is not called 'our brother'. He's our Lord...but He cares for us like 'a best brother'. Proverbs 17, verse 17, says that, "...a brother is born for adversity." And that is true of no one more than Jesus Christ. He comes to our defense, He never hesitates to do that—and He is never late. And like some idolized older brother, He has whipped the biggest bullies in the neighborhood: Death and the Devil.

They are man's greatest nemeses. The devil, who, as John tells us in 1 John 5:19, 'has the whole world in his grasp'. Death...stalks the whole human race, but Christ defeated them—both!

That is a key lesson in our passage:
A brother is born for adversity,
And Christ took on our greatest adversaries and won the greatest victory.

We are His brethren...we weak and sinful people.

But we are His brethren because He became one of us—took our human nature and died in our place. And in that way, He sanctified us.

And now He is not ashamed of us. Even when we stumble and embarrass ourselves, and shame the family name, He is not ashamed of us. He is not pleased when we do that, He is grieved by it, and He deals with us as a wise God can do—to either correct us or to encourage us, but He never...never leaves us. He is always faithful to us. We need to know that.

That small group of Christians in Rome, to whom this letter was written, needed to know that. They were living in fear of death, fear of martyrdom. None of them had yet suffered that fate, but it was close at hand and they were afraid, weakened.

So the writer will assure them that Christ has already dealt with that enemy. We have a real champion in Christ—a true hero who watches over us and watches out for us. We are His brethren, we are His brothers and sisters, His spiritual siblings. He is one with us. He is in solidarity, or unity, with us. He became one of us in order to save us.

That's what the author is saying here in verse 11 when he wrote that, "... He who sanctifies..." (meaning Christ), "...and those who are sanctified..." (us), "...are all from one..."

[Now, I'm reading from the New American Standard Bible, which has, "...from one *Father*..." (vs11), but "*Father*" has been added. The original text does not state the source of that unity, so every version has its own interpretation of that, or different words are placed in there.]

I favor this, I favor "*Father*". The writer is giving the source of our unity with Christ. Both 'the Son of God' and "the sons of God" share a common connection in God the Father and His love for us—and it's the Father who is praised by the Son in this text.

He graciously determined to save us and bring us to our eternal destiny by the work of His Son, who is 'the Captain' of our salvation. He has done that, and is presently doing that. By God's election and Christ's sacrifice, we have been "sanctified" in the sense that we have been *set apart*...we have been *consecrated* to God for His worship,

and service, and for holiness. But because we have been 'set apart for holiness', we are also being presently *sanctified*...presently being *transformed*. It's the work of the Holy Spirit within us—and in that process He is making us actually holy, transforming our lives:

Sanctification is glory begun, and glory is sanctification completed.

That is a great statement. I didn't coin it, I wish I had, but I'll repeat it. *Sanctification is glory begun*, and we're in the midst of that now. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, you are in that process—and it will end with *glory*. So,

Glory is sanctification completed.

And it will be completed by God's grace and His power. But until it is completed, we stumble and we fail.

We are justified,
we are legally right with God,
we are constituted righteous in God's sight...
but we're still sinners.

Yet Christ is not ashamed to call us "brethren". The Father chose us and gave us to His Son, and He will never forsake us. He will never abandon the mission that the Father gave Him, and He will never abandon us. He will accomplish His Father's will, and He will bring us to glory and perfection.

Now, there is no greater encouragement in life than that.

To reaffirm for them, (and for us), the Lord's solidarity, His unity with us, the author quotes three Old Testament passages that prove that Christ is united with us... always, constantly, united with us.

The *first*, in verse 12, is a quote from Psalm 22, a Psalm that was very familiar to the early church, as it is to us, and one that they knew not only to be about Christ, but one that Christ spoke, quoted. It is a prophecy of the Crucifixion and begins,

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (*Psa 22:1*).

The Psalm then describes the insults of those who mocked Him, some graphic details of the Crucifixion—and of Him alone, by Himself, surrounded by evildoers.

But the last part of the Psalm begins in triumph, when Christ has passed through the sufferings to glory. The Crucifixion is over, He has been resurrected, and He is among His brethren. In verse 22, which is quoted here, (*vs12*), Christ gives praise to the Father;

"I will proclaim Your name to My brethren,
In the midst of the congregation I will sing Your praise."

He calls us His brothers, and He does two things.

First, 'He proclaims God's name to us'.

Now, we've said this on many occasions, I think from this pulpit or from a lectern, that one's *name* in the Old Testament was very significant; it was revelation. It is more than what a name is to us, (an epithet, a label of identification). In the Old Testament, the *name* was the revelation of the person's character—and Christ reveals God's character in His grace to us...and only us!

It's important to note where the Lord proclaims this. It's not in the world, but in "the congregation". It is among the saved, it is among His people, His family. Only believers in Jesus Christ are those to whom this revelation is given...and received.

The world sees the glory of God, it has revelation; it has what is called 'Natural Revelation' of the things around us – nature, the sky. It's Psalm 19:1,

"The heavens are declaring the glory of God...".

And yet, the world doesn't even receive that. What does it do with, 'the great declaration of God's glory'? It says, 'Oh, it just happened; some natural process. There was some tightly-packed particle that exploded and the universe came out of it. That's a singularity. We can't go beyond that; we don't know. It's just a natural realm.' So they don't receive the revelation that's given in 'Natural Revelation'.

But we have 'Special Revelation'...and we are equipped to receive it and believe it. It is given, reserved for God's elect, God's people, His salvation and protection and

constant care is for us. We are His brothers. He nourishes us with the revelation that He gives to us.

Secondly, He praises His Father. And here He is pictured as 'a singing priest', and a song leader—joyfully, triumphantly leading us in praise of our Heavenly Father.

[As an aside: That is, I think, proof of the importance of hymns, and also an illustration of the nature of a good hymn; it's about God. It's about His grace, it's about His power, it's about His greatness and mercy. And the Church should be a singing church, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. That's Colossians 3, verse 16, singing hymns of praise to the Triune God and His work of salvation. And we can give some thanks to the Reformation for that because it's Luther and Calvin that introduced congregational singing...but it was in the 1st century that Paul was encouraging it, here in Colossians and in Ephesians.]

But chiefly, the point here is Christ is in the midst of His people, identifying with us. He is with us, teaching us and leading us, caring for us—and joyful to be with us, unashamed.

That is supported with two more quotes in verse 13, both from Isaiah 8. The first is Isaiah 8, verse 17, and then the second is Isaiah 8, verse 18. He writes,

"And again,

I will put My trust in Him." (vs13).

Now, at first glance, it is hard to see how that fits with the idea of Christ showing His solidarity with us, 'with His brethren'. But it becomes clear from the broader context; this is a passage in which Isaiah writes of Judah's rejection of his prophetic ministry. It was a time of national apostasy, of unbelief—but Isaiah still affirms his trust in the LORD. That's how we are to live in this world. It rejects us, it rejects what we believe and what we proclaim; our response is to trust in the Lord in spite of the world's rejection of us.

That's how we live. —That's how Christ lived as a man, in His human nature. He knew the Word of God. He knew the promises of God; He lived by faith in them, He lived

in complete dependence on His heavenly Father. You see that very clearly in John chapter 5, (vs19), 'What I see the Father doing, I do.'

And He knows our experiences...we see this later as the 'high priesthood' of Christ is developed. But He knows our experiences in life. They were His experiences. He suffered, and He went through the trials and the tests of faith, (that we go through), without fail—but He went through what we experience.

So He understood the experience of those tired and fearful Christians in Rome, just as He knows your experiences in life, and the challenges you have; He has been there; He is with us in that regard. He had to have faith in a time of suffering—and we do too. He understands that, He understands the challenge of it—and He will help us through that to succeed. He is the Captain of our salvation, He is leading us...'So trust Him!'; that is the implication.

The *third* quotation is the next verse in Isaiah, "Behold, I and the children whom God has given me ...". (*Isa 8:18a*). In the original context, it referred to Isaiah and his two sons and disciples. The name of Isaiah's two sons were prophetic; they were given to give a message to the nation. The first promised judgment on Judah, (and that would be the Babylonian captivity). And the second promised the remnant, the believing remnant within Judah that they would return...so it was hopeful. And here, applied to Christ, it refers to all His elect ones...we have hope. We were all given to Christ by the Father to be redeemed, and shall all be saved, finally, in the end. Ultimately, we will be saved and we will be sanctified; none will be lost.

We believers are 'The brotherhood of the redeemed'. Therefore, regardless of the present circumstances and the greatness of the opposition we may face, we have a glorious future—that is certain! We have been given to God's Son, He saved us, He keeps us, and He will to the very end.

So these three quotations affirm Christ's unity with us, His close family relationship with us, and His faithfulness to us. We are His brothers.

We are even called His children, (*vs13b*), that's solidarity, that is real closeness. We are secure, and that's the encouragement here.

And to reinforce that closeness even more, the writer explains the nature of it in verse 14. Christ's solidarity with us is real because He shared flesh and blood with us. In other words, 'He became a real man with a true body and a reasonable soul'—and to emphasize that, the author says, (*vs14a*), "He...likewise partook of the same..." (of our nature). He came into this world the way we all do, through birth, through a human mother. His conception was miraculous—it was a virgin conception through the mysterious 'overshadowing of the Holy Spirit'. (That's how it's described in Luke chapter 1, verse 35; and as far as I know, that's the only explanation we're given of that conception, that divine conception within the womb of the Virgin Mary.)

It was a work of the Holy Spirit. You have something, I think, of a parallel to that in Genesis 1, (*vs2*), where the Spirit of God is 'hovering over the waters', but there is mystery there...great mystery.

But He entered the world the same way everyone does, through physical birth. And He left the way that we all leave this world, through death—which is the reason He was born. That's the reason He came into this world...not to be an example, (though He is that), not to be a great teacher, (though He is the greatest of teachers), He came to die...that was His mission. He came to die so that by dying, "...He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is the devil..." (*vs14b*).

Now there is, I would say, a kind of apparent paradox in that statement; 'Christ defeated death by dying'. That's almost like saying, 'He won the victory by losing the fight'. Just imagine how completely confusing all of that must have been to those early disciples, those first disciples at that moment of the crucifixion when all of this happened. They thought that He was their liberator. In fact, when they came into the upper room that night to take the last Passover supper, they were debating who would be the greatest in the kingdom—because they knew it was around the corner, it was coming any day. He was their liberator...and then He died. And He didn't simply die;

He didn't die like a Judas Maccabeus, with valor on the field of battle; He died on a Roman cross like a common criminal—a painful and a shameful death. F.F. Bruce wrote, "If ever a cause was lost, it was His; if ever the powers of evil were victorious, it was then."

'So it would seem'...so it seemed to His disciples. What did they do when He was arrested? They fled into the night and went into hiding.

But then, days later, they were out in the open and they were preaching boldly. They were risking their lives to proclaim the message of salvation through the crucified Christ. They learned what was revealed from the very beginning—way back in Genesis chapter 3, verse 15: That it was by dying that the Savior would defeat death, and the one who had the power of death.

The disciples learned that when His victory was confirmed and declared by His resurrection from the dead. And He then gave them that power of resurrection life, and they displayed it in the boldness that they showed after that.

But again, what they learned was that Christ became a man in order to die, because at the cross, He met the devil, disarmed him, and stripped him of all of his power over us. The author of Hebrews doesn't really tell us how this happened...just that it happened. But Paul gives us some help in understanding it. In Galatians chapter 3, verse 13, he wrote, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.' " The guilt that was ours was put on Christ. He was punished for it in our place. We are now 'paid up' with God. His justice is satisfied, fully satisfied—and we have been delivered from the penalty of death.

Satan's power over us was through our guilt and separation from God.

His power has been destroyed. We have been transferred from his domain of darkness into Christ's kingdom of Light, Paul speaks of that in Colossians chapter 1, verse 2.

Yet we still have to deal with the devil and his attacks. Now, Peter tells us that he stalks the world, "...like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." (1Pe 5:8). But his power over us is ended, and his attacks on us are limited.

Early in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, not long after Christian came to the cross, (you'll remember), and the burden of sin fell off his back and rolled into the sepulcher, never to be seen again, and he joyfully set off for the Celestial City, for Heaven...he is met by two men running toward him. They're named Timorous and Mistrust, and they were terrified. They told him of danger ahead. There were a couple of lions in the way that could pull him to pieces...they would devour him. That terrified Christian, but he knew he couldn't go back. He knew there is no going back from where he came, no going back to the City of Destruction. So he went on; he went on in fear of death, and eventually came to the lions.

But he also met a man named Watchful who said, "Fear not, the lions are chained." They were placed there for a trial of faith, to test people's faith. He told Christian to, "Keep in the center of the path, and no hurt shall come to thee." Christian went on in fear, the lions roared, but did him no harm.

Well, that's the devil. He is on a chain, as it were. He can only do what God allows. We don't need to fear him—we don't need to believe him and the lies that he tells us. What we need to do is stay on the path that God has put us on, the only path—be obedient and we will be safe. It doesn't mean Satan won't touch us, he touched Job, but under God's guidance and protection. And that happens to us only for a good purpose, and He uses the trials of life for a good purpose.

Our sin was the chain that bound us to Satan; that has been broken. We are forgiven and no longer under his dominion. We live in a different spiritual realm. We are now free—and one of the great freedoms we have is freedom from the fear of death. That's what we're told in verse 15. Christ died so that He, "...might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives." Fear is enslaving, and there

is no greater fear than the fear of death. That fear will cause men to do things that nothing else could make them do.

Now, there are exceptions; there are heroes in combat who sacrifice their lives for their companions and their country. (And some who do that who are more afraid of being called a coward than being dead.) But generally, men fear death more than anything. It casts a shadow over everything; it's the end of everything that they know and love' it's the gateway into the great unknown.

And for the unregenerate man, it renders everything in life futile, because ultimately everything in this life will be lost. Death takes us from family, death takes us from possessions, from the world. Remember that parable...the earnest, hardworking farmer who is prosperous and decides to build more barns. And He fills them up with grain, and he's wealthy, and he finally sits down and says, 'Soul, take your rest in ease; eat, drink, and be merry!' But God says, 'You fool! This very night you will be taken!' And he was. 'Now, to whom do all those things go?' the Lord asked. (*Luk 12: 19-20*).

Well, that's the life of the natural man...death takes him from everything that he loves and wants.

Men can put death out of their thoughts, and often that is how people deal with death. You just don't want to think about it—you don't talk about it in polite company. But it's always in the back of their minds, it's always haunting them. And the dread of death isn't only of physical death, it is also of the spiritual death, (that we've been delivered from), of the judgment to come...men have a sense of that; they have a sense of guilt and a sense of reckoning. That is why death is called "The King of terrors."

But Christ has ended its reign. Satan can no longer use death to threaten us and bend us to his will. We are free from the fear of death.

Scottish theologian Thomas Halyburton gave testimony to that from his own personal experience. He wrote of it in his memoirs, how from his early youth he was in bondage to the fear of death...very much afraid of it. It was the knowledge that he was adopted into God's family when he was brought to faith that gave him relief.

A natural aversion to death remained. We don't court death; we seek safety, that's a healthy way to think. We cherish life; it's a gift. What he realized, though, was his battle now, his fight now, was with sin and the temptations that we face, and all of that... the battle that Paul describes in Romans chapter 7.

From that battle, he came to see death as, really, a relief from that...a blessing because we come to the end of what the author of Hebrews will describe in chapter 12, verse 1, as 'the race of faith'. We come to the end of the battle, it's over, and so God has even made death a blessing for us—and he understood that.

But he also realized that he's still a man in the flesh, and he still struggles. And he realized that he may come, possibly, to the end of his life and death will trouble him. But he knew that the Lord is in control and He is able to remove any fear of death and give him great confidence as he faces the end.

Well, we have that assurance from Scripture and know it from personal testimonies, as well as from the lives of martyrs who have gone to terrible deaths with great courage. You wonder, "How could they do that?" It's supernatural, it's God's grace. But it's also having an understanding of God's Word and what He has done for us, and what He is doing for us.

But whether death is easy or hard, (and sometimes it is hard for Christians, it's not always an easy experience, it is difficult), it is the last enemy—but it is a defeated enemy for the believer. Christ will bring us safely through it into His presence. That's the assurance we have; we will triumph in Christ.

That is the assurance every believer has. And that conviction will be strengthened as we increase in our knowledge of the Lord, as we increase our understanding of His Word and know the promises that God has given us and believe them...and walk with Him daily. This isn't the only time we get nourished, (on a Sunday morning). We're to be nourishing ourselves through the study of His Word all week long. That's how we grow, we walk with Him daily.

Christ is always with us, weak as we are, He is not ashamed of us. We are His Father's chosen ones, and He will be with us in our physical death, and He will lead us through that dark valley into Heaven and into glory—and into the world to come.

That is what He will do for us, and what He is presently doing for us...for mere humans. Not for angels, glorious as they are, (not according to verse 16), but for “the seed of Abraham...”, the descendants of Abraham, the author says, “...He gives **help to...**” them. That means He takes hold of us.

That word that is used there, *help*, is the word used in Matthew's Gospel, when Jesus took hold of Peter, who was suddenly sinking while he was walking on the sea. He took his eyes off Christ, saw the waves, the wind, and he began to sink—he cried out for help! —and Christ ‘laid hold of him’ and snatched him out of it. That's the same word here, for His “help” for us; He ‘takes hold of us’. Jesus helped him, helped Peter, and He takes hold of us, as well. As He snatched Peter out of the deep, He has snatched every one of us, every believer in Christ, ‘from the burning’, (*“the fire”*), as we read in Zechariah chapter 3, (verse 2). Well, that's what He has done, that's what He is doing; He snatches us from difficulty; He is our helper.

He does that, though, for “the seed”, or, “descendants of Abraham.” (*vs16b*).

The readers of this letter were Jewish, Hebrew Christians, and so they were literally the natural descendants of Abraham. But His help isn't limited to them, and the writer here probably is using that expression as Paul did in Galatians chapter 3, verse 7, “...be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.”

“Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness”. (*Gal 3:6*). He is the believer—he is the great example of faith and justification. And so we're sons of Abraham if we're believers. These are the only ones that Jesus Christ, ‘the Captain of our salvation’, is bringing to glory:

They alone are the brotherhood of the redeemed.

They alone have the assurance of life to come,

Freedom from the dread of death,

Deliverance from the power and deception of the devil.

These are the ones that He calls 'His brethren', 'His brothers'—and ladies, you're included in that. We're all "brothers of Him", we're all "sons".

Sons were heirs, and so female and male are together considered "sons" because we're heirs of God.

So, He died for us who believe in Him.

He died so that we could believe in Him.

He died to gain that faith for us.

Everything was purchased for us by Him at the cross.

The great issues of life were settled at the cross.

But He also lives for us. He is not a dead Savior. If Christ had remained in the grave, He would not be our Savior.

But God raised Him from the dead. He is alive at the Father's right hand, and He is presently living for us, ministering for us—the Son of God, the Almighty God is constantly caring for us at this very moment, praying for you at this very moment. Can you think of a greater privilege and blessing than that? Christ is with us, united to us; we never walk alone in this world. He is boldly and joyfully with us, His brothers and sisters.

I'll close with this, and I've quoted this before, but Robert Murray M'Cheyne made a statement that I greatly appreciate. I remember the first time I read it while I was reading through, *Memoir and Remains of Robert Murray M'Cheyne* put together by Andrew Bonar; but this is a statement he made that is both touching and profound.

He had an older brother, David, who was his childhood hero. David took care of him. David talked to him about the Lord. David was a godly man whose death in July, 1831, deeply affected Robert, and in fact was the catalyst of his conversion. He wrote a friend years later,

"This day eleven years ago, I lost my loved and loving brother; and began to seek a Brother who cannot die."

That's Jesus Christ to us— a Brother who cannot die.

He always lives for us, to help us in everything and bring us safely through the trials of this life and this world into glory—and He will surely do that. In fact, it won't be Peter at the pearly gates that receives us—that's a myth. It will be Jesus Christ, who will embrace you the moment you arrive...and He'll embrace you with joy. He will rejoice in your presence there more than you will. He is not ashamed of us.

Does He call you "Brother!"?

He does if you are a son of Abraham, a believer in Jesus Christ.

That's all a person must do, is put his or her trust in Christ. Not trust in oneself and one's deeds, but trust in Christ, wholly and completely. That makes us a brother of Christ, the Son of God, with a glorious inheritance.

If you have not believed, "...we beg you..." as Paul put it, (*in 2Cor 5:20*), "...be reconciled to God..."; trust in Christ, come to Him. If you have never done that, look to Him; rely solely upon His sacrificial death for your eternal life, and you will have it. You will have forgiveness and life everlasting.

(Closing prayer) We do thank You, Father, for the sacrifice of Your Son, and that we are secure in Him. Our lives are hidden with Him on high; no one can snatch us from Him, that's Your grace and Your mercy. We thank You for it.

May we think of this throughout the week:

Think of what He did for us,

The sacrifice He made for us,

And who we are in Him...

And the glorious future we have.

We are blessed beyond our ability to comprehend; Thank You.

Now,

The LORD bless you and keep you;

The LORD make His face shine on you,

And be gracious to you;

The LORD lift up His countenance on you,

And give you peace.

In Christ's name.

Amen.

(End of Audio)