



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Psalm 112: 1-10

Spring 2024

"The God Fearer"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Seth; that's a great quote from Spurgeon; a great quote from Isaiah.
And a great hymn for our passage this morning, which is Psalm chapter 112. Psalm 112,
verses 1-10,

112 Praise the LORD!

How blessed is the man who fears the LORD,
Who greatly delights in His commandments.

² His descendants will be mighty ^[e] on earth;
The generation of the upright will be blessed.

³ Wealth and riches are in his house,
And his righteousness endures forever.

⁴ Light arises in the darkness for the upright;
He is gracious and compassionate and righteous.

⁵ It is well with the man who is gracious and lends;
He will maintain his cause in judgment.

⁶ For he will never be shaken;
The righteous will be remembered forever.

⁷ He will not fear evil tidings;
His heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.

⁸ His heart is upheld, he will not fear,
Until he looks *with satisfaction* on his adversaries.

⁹ He has given freely to the poor,
His righteousness endures forever;
His horn will be exalted in honor.

¹⁰ The wicked will see it and be vexed,
He will gnash his teeth and melt away;
The desire of the wicked will perish.

Psalm 112: 1-10

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word and bless our time of study in it;
bless us with a time, not only of learning, but of worship. Let's pray.

Father, we thank You for this time together. It's a great blessing and privilege to be with Your people, and to open Your Word, as we do every Sunday, and study it—study Your revelation. This is what we're to do. And we are to have our lives, not only centered in the Word of God on a Sunday morning, but every day of the week. This is what we feed upon, spiritually. This is what nourishes us. This is what gives us perspective on life, and it's our compass. It's essential for our spiritual growth. And so Father, we thank You for it, and thank You that we can meet freely, as we do in this nation, and that we can open our Bibles, and we can read and teach and think upon these things, so we pray that will continue. And we pray for our time in this hour that it will be a rich time of considering the revelation of this Psalm, and that You would give us, not only an understanding of what we have read and what we will consider, but how it applies to us, and the motivation that it should give us to live and serve You. It's a blessing.

What a blessing to do this every Sunday, to meet in the Sunday Schools, to meet in this Ministry of the Word service, to meet in the hour afterwards when we celebrate the Lord's Supper, as He's instructed us to do, and other services that are provided here. LORD, we think of Vacation Bible School that's coming up, and the importance of that ministry, and the blessing that it's been over the years for children, many of whom are now adults with their children coming. That's a blessing. Bless the workshop that's going to meet this week, and then all the preparation that will go into that ministry. And may it be a great success, (as it has been in the past), this year as well.

LORD, we're all in need of Your constant care. We have it, in that we live, and move, and exist in You. And if we did not we would simply disappear, we would not exist. You keep this universe through Your Son together, and You keep us intact, and You bless us every moment of our lives with life. And so Father, we pray that You'd not only bless our lives, physically, but bless us now spiritually, as we sing our next hymn, and as we turn our attention to this great Psalm. We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

(Message) I have a book titled *The Glory of Their Times*, about the early days of baseball. It was published in 1966, and is actually just interviews with old baseball players. Most of the old timers were long gone: Christy Mathewson, Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb. But there were still some around, so the author, Lawrence Ritter, knowing that time was short, and wanting to get their story and hear about baseball in the old days, went around the country interviewing the few that were left. They talked into his tape recorder and he published in his book the interviews verbatim. Men such as Sam Crawford, Al Bridwell, Rube Bressler, and Hank Greenberg—"the Hebrew Hammer", men you've never heard of, men no longer remembered, but men who were 'The Glory of Their Times'.

That title is actually borrowed from the Jewish book, *Ecclesiasticus*, (from the Apocrypha), and the verse, "All these were honored in their generation, and were the glory of their times." 'Honored in their generation'—but not ours.

Fame is fleeting. Life is fleeting. Achievements in sports, or politics, or achievements in life are all soon forgotten. Nothing in this world last for long. Only the things of God endure, and what is done for Him. That's the lesson of our Psalm, Psalm 112. "The righteous," verse 6 states, "will be remembered." "The man who fears the LORD", verse 1 states, 'is blessed.'

Psalm 112 has an obvious connection with the Psalm we considered a couple of weeks ago, Psalm 111. They've been called 'a pair'. Their structure is the same; both are acrostic psalms—but their emphasis is different. Psalm 111 is about, 'The LORD, who is to

be feared'. Psalm 112 is about, 'The man who fears Him.' Psalm 111 is a Psalm of praise; God is praised for His great works. Psalm 112 is a wisdom Psalm; it is instruction on the right response to the God of the universe and His works.

Both Psalms begin with the same word, "Hallelujah!" ("Praise the LORD!"). So this is a joyful song of praise to the LORD for His goodness and grace; and that's the psalmists first statement;

"How blessed is the man who fears the LORD,
Who greatly delights in His commandments." (vs1).

The fact that he or she "*delights*" in God's word—His revelation and His instruction on how we are to live, shows that fearing the LORD, being righteous, is not a burden; but as Derek Kidner put it, "An enthusiasm." It's natural, as the word "*delight*" suggests. This is a normal response to knowing the LORD and desiring the LORD. Enthusiasm for the LORD and His will characterized the psalmist. And it characterizes the person who fears the LORD: For that person is naturally enthusiastic about the LORD—about His commandments, about all of His instruction, and all of His revelation.

But to have that, that *enthusiasm*, that *delight*, we must follow the advice of Psalm 111, verse 2, 'Study the works of the LORD, His great works.' Literally, (as you may remember), that means "*seek them*", literally; 'Seek them out and examine them!' That takes some effort; that takes study: Yet the reward is great because they will inform us and open us up to a relationship with Him. We need to know the LORD, personally. But we can't know the LORD without knowing about the LORD. And so we go to His revelation, and we learn about Him—who He is and how we're to live.

And to the man or woman who is a person of faith and understands these things, that creates *delight*, (or as Kidner put it, *enthusiasm*), and we will *fear* Him. Now, not 'cringe in terror before Him', but *reverence* Him, *draw near* to Him, and *delight* in Him and His revelation—and obey it.

We don't fear Him, but we do fear to disobey Him. There is a sense of reverence and seriousness about this relationship; but, 'the fear of the LORD' is the beginning of that. Blessing is found in fear, the fear of the LORD. Being righteous is itself a blessing—it is being whole. It is being the people we were created to be: At peace with God, loving Him, trusting Him, having His life in us—forever.

And there are also blessings as a consequence of fearing Him: The person who greatly delights in His commandments has a sound mind, is generous and courageous. The psalmist lists these virtues and blessings; and the first blessings listed in verses 2 and 3 are blessings of the God fearer's family and his house;

"His descendants will be mighty on earth;" (vs2), and,
"Wealth and riches are in his house." (vs3).

The psalmist's meaning was probably material blessings; prosperity in the home and in life. That was the promise that was given under the Old Covenant when Israel was obedient. We find that in Deuteronomy chapter 28, (verses 1 through 14).

Now, I do think it is generally true that if a person lives a *godly life*, (which is a life of loving his family, an orderly life, and a business of life that is obedient to the Word of God), he or she will have a loving home and a stable life. Proverbs 3, verse 16, says of wisdom that "Long life is in her right hand; In her left hand are riches and honor." That's generally true; but it's not a promise that life for the righteous will always be rosy, and pleasant, and prosperous.

The beginning of Psalm 112, "How blessed is the man who fears the LORD...", is similar to the beginning of the Book of Job; "There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil." He was blessed; he had a large, loving family. Wealth and riches were in his house until they weren't—until Satan brought severe trials, destroyed Job's home, and wasted his wealth and health. So even the psalmist wasn't guaranteeing a life of wealth and

ease. It's always foolish and shallow to expect that in life—to seek that in life. We seek righteousness—and that will result in the best life.

Sometimes, oftentimes, that requires challenges, that requires difficulties; they must come. Job said, "Man, who is born of woman, is short-lived and full of turmoil." (Job 14:1). Life has trials, and life ends. Nevertheless, for the child of God, the person who fears the LORD, those trials are not permanent, not eternal, and are turned to our advantage.

Still, the godly, the righteous, have trials. Their children are not always righteous: The man who is called the greatest theologian in American history, Jonathon Edwards, his grandson, was Aaron Burr: Son of a godly father and a godly mother, Burr was a handsome, brilliant, *reprobate*! Ishmael was Abraham's son; Esau was Isaac's son; and both were fleshly, worldly, unbelievers. It was a trial for their parents. And it happens today; the natural descendants of godly parents are not always godly.

The godly throughout the history of church have suffered poverty. The church in Jerusalem in the first century was poor and suffered from a great famine. Paul wrote, in 2 Corinthians chapter 8, (verses 1&2), that, "the churches of Macedonia" gave to those poor Jewish believers in Jerusalem, 'joyfully' out of the Macedonian's own "deep poverty". They weren't just poor, they were 'deeply poor.' Paul even says he tried to persuade them not to give...but they insisted. That's what they wanted to do, so they begged him to let them give out of their poverty—the poor helping the poor.

At the end of his life, Augustine lay dying in his bed while the barbarians were at the gates of the city. They soon overran it and destroyed his life's work. He died peacefully in bed. (I don't know how peacefully, but he died before the barbarians arrived.) But Jonathon Edwards didn't die peacefully; he died of smallpox, slowly and painfully.

One of the commentators wrote, "If affluence...", and I think we could add to that, 'health', "If affluence were an evidence of godliness, there would be few godly

people in the world." Paul's ministry was joyful and successful, but filled with all of these difficulties: Sickness, poverty, affliction, beatings, stonings, rejection, imprisonment, and finally an ignominious death, an execution.

The life of the godly is not easy; that's what I'm trying to point out. The life of the godly is not easy. But Paul wrote in Romans chapter 5, (verses 3&4), 'We exult in our tribulations knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance;...' he said, '...brings about proven character, and proven character leads to hope.' These things are turned to our advantage if we're children of God.

And none of that contradicts our Psalm, because there is, what I would call, 'intangible' wealth, 'spiritual' wealth, what Paul referred to in Romans chapter 5. Then, in 2 Corinthians 4, (verse 17), he refers to the difficulties of this life, the difficulties that come with standing up as a Christian. He speaks of an "eternal weight of glory", that's ours in the future.

The godly, those who fear the LORD, have true riches in their godliness, riches in their inner life, that money can't buy—Peace and character that a life of leisure cannot produce. And all of these trials are assumed by the psalmist. He wasn't ignoring the hardships of believers and their experience in life—they're all implied in verse 4 where he referred to "darkness", but did so triumphantly;

"Light arises in the darkness for the upright.

He is gracious and compassionate and righteous." (vs4).

"Darkness" is often *chaos*; like the darkness that covered the earth in the beginning when God spoke light into it. And believers have 'dark days'—they may be due to any number of hardships just mentioned.

And there are other reasons: Bereavement, and betrayal. David, 'the sweet singer of Israel', experienced both from his favorite son, the apple of his eye. Some of the saddest words in the Bible are, "O Absalom, my son, my son." (2Sam 18:33). I rarely read that that it doesn't affect me emotionally. The great, great pain that David went through: "Would I had died instead of you." (ibid.)

Sometimes darkness is caused by sin. Believers fail; and again, David is an example—a great man who had a great fall. And yet, from his own experience, he could have said what this psalmist said:

“Light arises in the darkness for the upright.

He is gracious and compassionate and righteous.” (vs4)

I think no one in the Old Testament received more grace and compassion from the LORD than David did after his sin with Bathsheba, (maybe King Manasseh, but David certainly). But he repented when confronted, and was forgiven.

These words, “*gracious*” and “*compassionate*”, are used in verse 4 of the previous Psalm, (111), describing the LORD. But here they apply to the righteous person—and I think the idea is, ‘Those who have received God's grace will show grace and compassion to others’, which shows that they are “upright.” (vs14). This word, “*upright*”, is the Hebrew word, *straight*. They are not crooked; they are not bent, but they are *upright*, and they follow the LORD's straight, righteous path. And David proved himself to be righteous through his repentance. And God will also afflict us in order bring us back into ‘the straight path’, as He did David.

But whatever the hard circumstance, whatever the trial, whether it is as a result of providence or discipline, there is deliverance. Darkness is ultimately scattered by light. That's the idea of Psalm 30, verse 5; "Weeping may last for the night, But a shout of joy comes in the morning." The sun rises; light dispels darkness in this life—but ultimately in the life to come in eternity.

And that assurance is throughout this Psalm. In verse 3, ‘The righteousness, (the life of the God fearer) endures forever.’ And in verse 6b, "The righteous will be remembered forever." It is in, ‘the forever’, that everything is resolved for us. But in the meantime, this present life is important; it all counts for eternity.

And our deeds significantly touch, and affect, and influence the lives of those around us. Verse 5,

"It is well *with* the man who is gracious and lends;
He will maintain his cause in judgment."

Again, those who have received grace show grace. Generosity is a clear evidence of the new birth. When Zacchaeus was converted, his clenched fist became an open hand—he was transformed from a greedy tax collector to a generous giver; from a miser to a philanthropist. And he did it immediately, he did it joyfully.

You don't have to be rich to be generous. Paul told the Ephesians, (4:28), 'Stop stealing and work!', so that they could, "share with one who has need." The LORD sees that, and the LORD will provide for the provider.—That's the life of faith. The life of faith is stepping out and doing the difficult thing when it doesn't seem to be the rational thing—but it's the biblical thing, and God supplies.

This is the life of the *righteous*, the *upright*. They live by faith, and one of the emphasis here is, 'that life of faith is demonstrated in generosity.' It's the virtue the psalmist here seems to emphasize as characterizing the person who fears the LORD.

And it's the good life. Again, being *righteous*, *upright*, '*saved*', is a blessing in itself because, in that life that is ours, we have the knowledge of God. We have the knowledge of God...we know God, *personally*: What a blessing! That's joyful, but it's also living correctly, living as we were created to live. And that's joyful!...that's reward in and of itself—and not only that, but a blessing to others.

But that life also has great reward. There are glorious consequences to living selflessly, righteously, fearing God, trusting in Him. And the psalmist states that reward in verse 6. It is eternal;

"For he will never be shaken;
The righteous will be remembered forever." (vs6).

"The righteous" are men and women whose lives are grounded in God's Word. That's what they "*delight in*", according to verse 1; that's what creates *enthusiasm* within them—the Word of God, the revelation of God. And as a result, they are stable. They are unshakable in the storms of life.

And they have fame... "forever"! "The righteous will be remembered forever." (vs6b). Men sell their souls for that; to be admired, to be remembered; and very few get it. Those who do become celebrities. They have a life of what we call 'fame'. But it doesn't last. A year after they, 'retire from the game', or leave office and 'out of the public eye', the public eye turns to the next guy, or the next woman. Fame is fleeting.

But not for the righteous. Their deeds in life are "remembered forever" by the multitudes of saints in heaven, by the multitudes and myriads of angels in heaven and on earth, and most of importantly, remembered by the Lord God, the Three-in-One, and remembered forever. There is no end to it.

But we don't have that 'fame' in this world. If an apostle, (according to Paul, 1Cor 4:13), is the "offscouring" of the earth, (and that's how the world looks at it), then how do they look at us? Fame, fortune, is not for the people of God in this world. Maybe to some degree, yes, but generally no; that's not what we receive in this world. —Fame is fleeting. But with the LORD, and with our eternal inheritance, it is forever, and something far beyond anything a person can experience on this earth.

The psalmist continues his description of 'the stable life of the righteous' in the present—in this present age, this transient age, (in a world that is presently "passing away", as John describes it in 1 John 2, verse 17), The righteous man in this age is calm in times of uncertainty. Verse 7, "He will not fear evil tidings."

This is a dangerous world we live in. We know that. You don't need me to give examples of that. It's always unstable. And so there are always rumors of war or economic, financial setback. The Lord told His disciples that in the Olivet discourse. And these things happen—and they cause people to fear. And fear is itself a trap. It can

cripple a person; it can keep him or her from acting decisively, or it can scare a person into acting unwisely, in a panic.

But the person who fears the LORD is not easily shaken. He's "steadfast", (vs7), the psalmist said. Not because of something within him personally, (not because he's so smart, or she's so brave), but because he or she is trusting in the LORD. —That's what it is to fear the LORD. And that implies, as I've already said and indicated, a real relationship with a real person, who does the great works of Psalm 111: The works of creation, and works of providence, and works of salvation. He is the God who can provide. And in verse 5 of Psalm 111, the psalmist spoke of the basics: "He has given food to those who fear Him."

We don't need to resort to breaking the law to get what we need; we can't do that. Instead, we are trusting in the LORD to provide—that is fearing the LORD. And it is based on *knowledge*, having a sense of *awe*—knowing He is all powerful, and all faithful, and full of compassion. The person who fears the LORD clings to the LORD, and he doesn't flee from Him—and the LORD proves Himself reliable to all who do. As we walk by faith, step out into difficult circumstances in life, but do so because we know this is God's will, we see His hand of provision.—He provides. And this is what we're to be; this is the kind of people we're to be.

But it's also the product of grace. It's God's gift to us. We know that from all of Scripture. If we are reading the Word of God, we see the grace of God, and His sovereignty all through the Scriptures. But it is certainly suggested here as well in verse 8; "His...", (*the "righteous" man of verse 6*), "...heart is upheld, he will not fear." Now that word, "*upheld*", is a passive verb. In other words, it's not something that arises from within us but it is imparted to us. It goes back to a previous Psalm, Psalm 111, verse 8, and God's *precepts*. His *Word*, which He "*upholds*" —'promises'; that He *assures*, that He *guarantees*.

But that's how God's grace is imparted—it's through His revelation, it's through the Word of God; and emphasizing again the necessity of building our lives on the Word of God. It gives wisdom and it gives stability in life—it cultivates courage.

And again, it cultivates generosity. When we come to know the grace of God we want to be like that; we want to be gracious ourselves. And the psalmist comes back to that again in verse 9, a virtue he emphasizes in this Psalm as characterizing the righteous man, or the righteous woman; "He has given freely to the poor...", that, and all 'the righteous deeds of the righteous', "endures forever;" he says. That's what lasts. That's what is remembered and is eternal—the things we do for the LORD out of faith and love for Him.

In 1666, fire broke out in London, in a bakery in the city—and it quickly spread, destroying two thirds of the city. It's known as 'The Great Fire of London'. Christopher Wren was one of the architects who rebuilt the city. He restored 51 churches, and he later said, "If you would see my memorial, look around." And of course the city is filled with his work, most notably St. Paul's Cathedral, which is a landmark of London. That, and many other buildings are a fitting memorial to him—and they've stood for over 400 years now.

But they won't stand forever. Nothing in the world will. Not even the pyramids of Egypt; either time will wear them down, or, "the day of the LORD" will burn them up. Peter wrote that. (2Pe 3:10). Then he wrote, "The heavens will pass away with a roar, and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up." (ibid.) Now that's 'The Great Fire!'

So, in light of that, since these things are to be destroyed in this way, Peter asks the question, "What sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness?" (ibid, vs11). And the answer is, 'Godly people, people who fear the LORD, and live for Him.' Which means live for what lasts, live for eternity—which we do by following the model of this Psalm, Psalm 112, where the psalmist here emphasizes generosity.

Paul quoted this verse 9 of Psalm 112 in 1 Corinthians chapter 9, verse 9. But first he wrote in verse 7 that, "God loves a cheerful giver", and, 'not one who gives grudgingly', because it is, 'Godlike to give joyfully'; it's what God does. Then in verse 9, Paul quoted this Psalm of the righteous man: "He scattered abroad, he gave freely to the poor, his righteousness endures forever." (1Cor 9:9). His deeds are eternal monuments to him—and all of his or her deeds are.

The giver is like a farmer who sows seed for a harvest; and the righteous person will have a harvest in souls of those he or she helped, selflessly, to God's glory. So the righteous life is the life that lasts. That is what will be remembered; that is the monument that will never be shaken or taken away.

And then the psalmist added, "His horn will be exalted in honor." (vs9c). '*The horn*' represented *strength*. It represented *power*, as with the horns of a bull or a ram. The LORD supplies the obedience with strength, with power. God is no man's debtor. When we give, He gives back. When we stand steadfast for the truth, and we don't waver under attack, He supplies more strength and honor.

These are some of the virtues that characterize the character of the righteous: Generosity, steadfastness, courage. "He will not fear," he says in verse 8. He won't fear man because he fears God. He or she trust in Him. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge." (Pro 1:7). Knowledge gives wisdom—and wisdom gives stability and success in life.

It's not so with the world; its end is very different. That's where the Psalm ends, with the demise of the fool, the person who does not fear God.

"The wicked will see it and be vexed,
He will gnash his teeth and melt away;
The desire of the wicked will perish." (vs10)

That is in contrast to the beginning of the Psalm, and the description of the man who fears the LORD: As one who 'greatly delights in God's commands', who is enthusiastic about the revelation of God. He delights in it. He delights in it because he delights in the LORD himself. The wicked do not. Their longings are never satisfied:

"The desire of the wicked will perish." (vs10c).

One of the problems, though, that the righteous have, and one of the problems we face daily, is envying the wicked. It's hard not to do that when we see the way they live and the things they have. And we see that very plainly in Psalm 73; Asaph struggled with that very thing. (It's why we love the Psalms because they really address the issues and circumstances that we struggle with—they don't change over time.) And you'll remember Asaph wrote, "I was envious of the arrogant." (Psa 73:3). He writes a whole Psalm about that. He saw their prosperity, he saw their ease—the wonderful life in which they lived, and circumstances in which they lived. "They are not in trouble as *other men*," (vs5a), he wrote. 'They have the nicest stuff; they go to the neatest places.' Asaph envied that—he admitted it.

But that was just a snapshot in time, this 'prosperity of the wicked'. Their end was very different. It was when Asaph went to the temple, (vs17), where he saw the revelation of God there; when he went to the temple, where he got his mind straightened out, his thinking straightened out. There, he says, he got the full picture. God had set them, (the wicked), "in slippery places." Inevitably, they slip, they fall—they lose it all.

The things of this life do not last. The desire, the longings of the wicked will perish—if not because it's all lost, then because they perish themselves, and leave it all behind for their heirs to enjoy and squander. And often that happens in life. A fortune is lost, or health declines. And again, fame fades. Asaph seems to have witnessed this.

But here in our Psalm, it seems that the psalmist is describing, not just how they lose things in life, or how they lose their life, but he's describing the final judgment, when everything is summed up: The wicked, "...will gnash his teeth...", (at the righteous, at the LORD), "...and melt away;" (vs10b),—disappear like the morning dew, gone forever. That's the end of the unrighteous. That's the world. In fact, even now, as I said earlier quoting John, "it's passing away." It is *presently* in the process of passing away, slipping through our fingers; it is not a good investment. The wise understand that, and they live for what lasts; they live for eternity.

C. T. Studd did that. He was an unusual man, blessed by providence. He was born into wealth and privilege; he was educated at Eaton, and at Cambridge.; and he was a gifted athlete. While at Eaton, he was converted. But by his own admission, he took a worldly path at Cambridge where he gained national fame playing cricket, (a 'cousin' of baseball). He was a star—"the glory of his times."

But when his brother became seriously ill he reevaluated his life, and he asked himself, "What is all the fame and flattery worth, when a man comes to eternity?" He realized that cricket would not last—and fame and honor would not last. He wrote, "Nothing in this world would last, but it would be worthwhile, living for the world to come."— And that's what he did.

He left the wealth and comfort of home and he joined Hudson Taylor with the China Inland Mission. Then he served in India; and he spent his last years in central Africa, where he died in 1931 at the age of 70. One of his famous statements, and he left a number of famous statements, but one of those famous statements is, "Only one life, twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last." His life will last forever, and his deeds will be remembered for eternity. Now that's real fame; that is godly fame. That's what the righteous have.

If you're here without Christ, you will not last. Like those at the end of our Psalm, you and your desires will all perish. Then, in a generation or so, you'll be forgotten. That's life...that's life.

But there is eternal life for all who believe in Christ—who trust in Him and His sacrifice for their forgiveness. All who do are forgiven fully and made heirs of heaven and the world to come—world without end. And it's this simple; it's this simple: What the apostle Paul told the Philippian jailer, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."

Trust in Him. He receives all who do.

And you who have, (I hope it's everybody in here), don't live for the moment, live for eternity. And you'll want to, as you study God's Word and *delight* in His commands and His revelation. May God give us the great desire to do that.

(Closing prayer) LORD, what a blessing that is: We're in Your hand, and You're in the Father's hand, and You will hold us fast—and nothing can separate us from the love of God. We don't deserve that; we deserve nothing. But by Your grace, You've brought everyone who has put his or her trust in You into Your family, into Your hand. We're made new; we're a new creation, and we're secure in that love that You have for us. Nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus. We thank You for that.

May that motivate us to build memorials in this world in the righteous deeds that would please You—the fruit of a life of devotion to You and studying Your Word. So LORD, give us a desire for that so that our desire is *enthusiasm* for You. That's Your grace, and that's what the Spirit does when we pray for that for ourselves.

And 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)