

Mr Tim Parish

## The full assurance of faith

Good afternoon friends, a warm welcome to our second talk. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Tim Parish, pastor of Jireh chapel, Attleborough. Called by grace in 2010, sent out into the ministry in 2012, and took up the pastorate this year at Jireh.

When the friends wrote to me suggesting this subject for this afternoon it took me back to when the Lord blessed me; and pondering assurance, full assurance, assurance of faith, what did I have, what was given to me, what was blessed to me, what made me, persuaded me, and constrained me to take up my cross and follow the Lord? Was it the full assurance, was it assurance?

So thinking of our subject this afternoon, what does assurance mean? Well, it's certainty about something. It's confidence in something, certainty of a promise, confidence in a promise, certainty about something taking place, confidence in someone in what they have promised to do. What is meant by the term full assurance? Well it implies a stronger level of assurance, it implies full confidence in a promise, being fully certain about something. And so we have our title – full assurance of faith.

What does faith mean? It's trust or confidence in someone or something. Paul writing to the Hebrews said '*faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*'. That is the opening verse in that beautiful chapter in Hebrews, chapter 11, that account of the worthies of faith.

The expression then, full assurance, is used three times by Paul in his writings to the churches. Let us look at the first one: Colossians 2.2. Paul says '*That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ*'. So Paul is speaking here of a **full assurance of understanding**. This is vital for us. If we are born of the Spirit of God, we must be blessed with a measure of understanding. But Paul speaks here of a full assurance of understanding.

So what does understanding mean? To understand; to perceive the intended meaning of something. Understanding it is the present participle, the ability to understand or to perceive the intended meaning of something, or to comprehend it. So we must understand.

A newborn child of God is given understanding of various things. An understanding must be in measure given of their own state and condition as a sinner before a Holy God. It must be an understanding of the certainty of the judgement day, God's anger at sin, and how he will judge that last Great Day. An understanding that we must each individually, personally, and on our own, stand before His judgement seat. An

understanding that we are not right by nature; we are not ready. An understanding that we are sinners and we are not right before God. And an understanding of God's promise. An understanding must be given of the way of salvation. An understanding that there is a people born of the Spirit of God. An understanding that they are sinners, yet in Christ Jesus every single need of them is met. And an understanding that He is a merciful and loving God. An understanding that He shows and demonstrates this incomprehensible love to His dear children. And a desire is given: "Lord let me be numbered amongst those".

Paul desires in this letter that they be joined or united as parts of the human body are joined. That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love. There's this spiritual union. There's a union between each member and Christ the Head. There's an inseparable union and love, and the love may be that which holds them together.

So many of Paul's writings and New Testament writings are speaking of love, and the vital need of it between the brethren; that they be united, their hearts might flow in love one to another and to the Lord.

There are false teachers coming into the churches, and Paul says that his desire is that they are not divided, not moved away from their profession of Christ, that they will be blessed with full assurance of understanding. How that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and to all riches of full assurance of understanding. There's riches, there's glories, there's treasures in this understanding, and a full understanding of the things of God. It's those treasures, it's those true joys, those riches which earth cannot give. That they will be blessed with a full assurance of understanding of spiritual things, not just a head knowledge or notional understanding. This is a vital thing.

So much of religion today is a head knowledge, and the study of God's Word which is good and is profitable, but there must be more. We must know not just with the head as a notional understanding, but we want it in our hearts. It's heart and mind.

We hear of those in recent years who have gone into war-torn countries. You hear them speaking 'we need to win the hearts and the minds of the people'. Well this is it, it's heart and mind, not just the mind. Satan attacks the mind; we need a helmet of salvation as we go out to war day by day, to keep our minds. But we need the heart, and it's in the heart where the Spirit of God works. The Spirit of God dwells within the heart. He puts His Spirit within His people. It has an effect within, and that effect of the work within shows itself on the outward. When the Spirit of the Lord enters into someone's heart and that new birth is given, a new spirit is put within them; there's an effect. And at first it's an inward one, but as they go on to know the Lord there's an outward work. These things that are done within, evidence themselves on the outward. There's a change of thought, there's a change of affections. The things of their past life before that call by grace and the Spirit enters in, those things, they are brought away from. There's a separating from their past life. It must be. It has to be. The work of grace gives a new taste, it gives

new eyes, it gives new ears, it gives an understanding. No longer are the pleasures of this world in the mind viewed as everything, but they're seen for what they are really. As things of just this life. As things that don't endure, those things that cannot endure.

So there is a whole range of things where this work of the Spirit makes a difference. Maybe former friends, ones who you used to hang around with, you don't find them funny anymore. You see what they are doing and what they are seeking are not what you want to do or seek anymore. Grace makes a difference; maybe suddenly, maybe gradually. But it effects the heart and the mind. The Lord works in secret in the heart. Maybe at first loved ones and family cannot see it. It's a secret work, a silent work. As the dew descends at night you can't hear it, you can't see it, but in the morning there is an evidence that it is come. You couldn't see it, you couldn't perceive it at work, but there is the fruit of it; the evidence of it the grass is wet. And so it is with the Spirit of God in the heart and in the mind.

To understand, to confess, to profess, the mystery of God and to all riches there is a full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God. What does the word mystery mean? Things that are difficult or impossible to explain. They are a mystery. And the things of God are a mystery. They are a mystery to the world, the world can see no beauty in the Saviour. The unregenerate Child of God in his unregenerate state cannot see a beauty in God, can not find a beauty in God's Word, will not love His day, will not love His people. It's a mystery to them. These things that are professed by believing Christians, they can't perceive them, they can't see them. They might see a change in someone's life. They might see the outward evidence that a Child of God has been born again, but it's a mystery. And the things of God to a Child of God at times are a mystery.

There should be this desire within us that God will interpret to us, will bring us to an understanding, and to bring us into a full understanding. The soul is brought from death to life, and there's revelation and understanding given. Christ Jesus is revealed. As the sins of that person, that soul, are brought before them, as they are made aware of them, as they are made sensible to them, they are given a gracious concern and exercise over them, that the Spirit of the Lord doesn't just leave that exercised soul in that condition, He then leads that soul to the Lord Jesus Christ. New eyes and new ears are given. No longer do they come and go on the Lord's Day. They come to hear the preaching of the Word. They may have come for thirty, forty, fifty years, but now they come different; new ears are given, an understanding is given. No longer is the talking just a noise, but it's the preaching of the Word of Life. There's a thirst and hunger for it in their heart. There's a hunger for understanding.

Some of you might have that naturally with a thirst of understanding, researching, studying. Maybe there's intellects among you this afternoons and you have a thirst to understand the natural world, and the laws of physics, and whatever other things you might be inclined to. The child of God is given a thirst for understanding.

There's a beauty seen in the Word of God but the new eyes and the new ears longs to hear more, longs to read more, longs to know more.

And so there's understanding and there's the assurance of the understanding, and then there's the full assurance of the understanding. Things are seen and heard that have never been heard and seen before. Though they may have been in the presence of the preaching, and though they may have read the Word of God.

I remember when I went to see my Pastor to tell him what I believe the Lord had done for my soul and I said to him "the hymn book is a new book". He said "Its not a new book, it's the same book, you've had it thirty five years; you've got new eyes". Same with the Word of God. It's not a new book, but new eyes are given and the things which were impossible to do before the grace of God, they come to the soul. You can not give true spiritual understanding to your friends, to your children, or to yourself. God can. Don't we have a lovely encouragement to '*Ask, and it shall be given you*' (Matthew 7.7). '*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*' (Matthew 7.11). This good gift.

In our talk this afternoon, may one and another be prayerfully exercised, "Lord give me this understanding, give me the full assurance of this understanding".

You see I might (I'm using a example) understand the workings and design of a parachute. I understand how to use it, I've studied it. And I know by reading and researching when to use it. But if I put it to it's use, if I go up in a plane and if I have to jump out of that plane, I have the understanding (mercy isn't it) the understanding of the parachute. There is a parachute, I know what it does, I know it's design, I have the understanding of how it works, I know how to use it, I know I must jump out and wait a bit before I pull the cord. I know how and when to use it, and when I use it, I move from understanding to really understanding. I might have assurance, confidence, certainty in all my studying of the design of the parachute, and all the records there are of successful parachute jumps. I might have the assurance, the certainty, the confidence that when I'm brought to take that chute, to jump out of that plane, to pull that cord, then I have a full understanding. I'm brought into a deeper sense because I have moved from a passive understanding to an active one. All my theory, all my research ,and all my knowledge is now in practice. And I have this active understanding of these things.

Paul then speaks of another assurance and we read of it in our reading- Hebrews 6. And he speaks of the **full assurance of hope**. So we have a full assurance of understanding, and we then have a full assurance of hope. And what does hope mean? Well it's a feeling of expectation and desire for a thing to happen. The expectation of it. But Paul in Hebrews 6.9-12 we read '*But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full*

*assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises*'. This hope; the Christian in his or her profession and life is not to be lazy, not to be slothful, not to be presumptuous, not to take things for granted. But rather to be diligent, striving, pressing, wrestling, endeavouring, not in a slothful Spirit, but pressing onward, pressing heavenward with a desire to be conformed to the image of His dear Son. Not to be content with our profession of yesterday, but to be seeking each day to wrestle, to strive, and to endeavour, that we might grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul write of his desire that *'every one of you do shew the same diligence'* (Hebrews 6.11) in exercising the gifts of grace. The gifts of grace; these things that are the gifts of the Spirit, working in our hearts. These things that are evident around us. Faith and love, and spiritual labour, and diligence. Being diligent in the things of God, and ministering to those of the Saints. Paul speaks of them, he says *'For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end'* (Hebrews 6.10-11).

You see we do not want to be *'the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept'* (Song of Solomon 1.6). Busy, caring for others, but what about our own souls? The same diligence, the same works, the same fruits that are outward, should also be inward. This desire to give diligence. Peter says to *'give diligence to make your calling and election sure'* (2 Peter 1.10). Previous diligence motivates the present and future. In giving diligence to read God's word, to prayerfully study it, to pray your way along day by day. You know all your teaching wont come in theory study of God's Word. There is the need to study and read Gods word. but it is the application of it in your life. It is the Lord using that word and applying it to your situation. It's you being lead and taught by His Spirit. It is when you are brought into tribulations, in reading God's word, in prayerfully pondering your path, that the Lord applies the word of faith and love. A *'fear not'* is given. And a head knowledge of a *'Fear not for I am with thee, be not dismayed for I am thy God'* (Isaiah 41.10) is brought to a heart knowledge. You know the page of God's Word is living in your heart. It is moving from the head knowledge to a head and heart knowledge.

We must read God's Word. This is where the promises are held. But prayerfully read it. Pray the Lord will apply it, will use it, will lead you to it. That you will walk out, you'll trace out your life. That the Word will be a light to your feet and a lamp to your path. That you'll walk out the things that are written out in God's Word. Exceeding and precious promises for the Children of God. You want assurance you are one of His. It's in the reading of His Word, prayerfully considering it and in your life, living it. It being made known to you.

Paul said '*Nevertheless I am persuaded he is able to keep, that which I have committed unto Him against that day*' (Timothy 1.12). What persuaded him? Well it's the grace of the Spirit of God in his heart, it is the reading of the Word of God, the prayerful study of it, and it's as the Holy Spirit applies it; and he is persuaded here and there. And his understanding, the certainty, the confidence, his hope, and the certainty and confidence of his faith is brought to a fullness. Fully persuaded. Previous diligence then, motivates present and future. The Lord applies, the Lord blesses, the Lord encourages, the Lord makes known Himself. The hope is given, and more and more it increases. There's the desire, the spiritual longing, "I want to know more, I want to feel more of it, the hope I have I want a better hope, a more sure hope, a more sure and certain hope, I want to fully hope, fully trust, fully believe".

You've an enemy that will try to pull down, try to take away, try to disrupt. But the soul is benefiting from this diligence and spiritual labour in prayer and exercise in faith, in being brought into something, but praying and committing your way unto the Lord. By praying your way into it, praying your way along it, praying your way out of it. And prayerfully looking back at the '*nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby*' (Hebrews 12.11) and they grow spiritually. And it is a means of attaining the full assurance. It is by this that this full assurance is reached.

Paul's desire is that they do not keep up a level of hope, that they are not satisfied with their level of hope, but that they attain to the full assurance of it. It's a growing in grace. It's a growing in understanding. It's a growing in the full assurance of understanding. It's a growing of hope. It's a growing of assurance of hope. And it's a growing of a full assurance of hope. And his desire is that they attain to this full assurance, to an increased personal interest in the covenant of grace. It's '*ordered in all things and sure*' (2 Samuel 23.5). It's fixed. It was fixed before this world was created.

So we have a strong confidence, an unshakeable confidence in this covenant of grace, don't we? Because it was before creation, so it can not be altered by anything in creation. It's sure, its certain, its fixed. Isn't that what we want to know more of? The covenant of grace was made between Father, Son and Holy Spirit before the world was formed so therefore man, woman, boy, or girl, can not alter it.

It's '*ordered*', as David said, '*in all things, and sure*'. What a rest it was for David at the end of his life: '*Although my house be not so with God*' (2 Samuel 23.5). What a mess sin has reeked havoc in his life. His house was not so with God, not as he would have it. Ah but he had a resting place. And it's the covenant of grace. It's an understanding of the covenant of grace. It's to be brought to a full understanding of it but then we need a personal interest in it. There's hope for needy sinners, for sinners who feel their need in that covenant of grace. Can we rest with just knowing about it? Do we want to be in it? A partaker of it? A receiver of the benefits of it? This increased personal interest in the Holy Trinity, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

the Saviour, and His finished work. The effect upon their souls and hope of eternal glory and happiness. It's all entwined and an increased knowledge and blessing of it is given, so hope is given. A poor trembling sinner, feeling and understanding his miserable lost ruined state, understanding the certainty of a never ending eternity, understanding that he is not right, not ready. He ventures. What is set before him? Hope; hope in the Gospel, hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. Hope is set before him. But Paul says O to have the full assurance of it, to seek it, to ask for it. What a mercy to be blessed with it.

If we use the parachute analogy again: I sit on the plane, I look at my parachute and my hope, my expectation is, that if I should need to jump out of that plane, I'll take my parachute and I'll hope that it will save me from falling to my death. I look at that parachute, I'm hanging on the side of the plane. If I must jump out of this plane, what is that which gives me hope that I will not fall to my death? That parachute. I've a hope in it, I have an expectation, a desire for the things that the parachute does will be done for me. I look at that parachute and it is my only hope. The plane is going to crash and it's death if I stay in, and if I jump out it's death except I take that parachute. There is my hope of life. My life should be spared is in that thing. And aren't I more comfortable, haven't I such a good hope because I understand it. How much better if I have used the thing before? I have a full assurance of understanding, I can sit on that plane, I'm the most comfortable on that plane. I'm more comfortable than the one who just has an understanding of how it works, he can't write his tried and his proved next to it but he has a hope. But surely my hope is better than his because I've used it. How much more then is my hope when I'm brought into this full assurance of understanding. It brings a hope, doesn't it. It brings a full assurance. The greater my understanding and knowledge of the way that parachute works and how to use it, the stronger and greater my hope is. This is a desire, and we desire, I desire for myself and you all, that everyone of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end. That *'ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises'* (Hebrews 6.12)

And now we move to the **full assurance of faith**. Hebrews 10. 15-23. *'Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before (this is in the prophecy of Jeremiah 31), This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;).'* Well this is the boldness, this is the certainty of things because Jesus Christ is gone on before his people. He has made a

way where there was no way. He has taken His poor trembling people's sins, He's borne them all away, He's carried them all away, He's paid the price, brought about an everlasting deliverance.

The full assurance of faith in terms of Biblical use is to be fully certain or fully confident in that which is understood and hoped for, which at the present time is out of sight. We would see Jesus, but we don't with the bodily eye. He is sitting at the Father's right hand. The work is finished. But we would see him by faith and it is by faith that the believer must live his life.

Those who inherit the promises, walk a path of faith and patience. We read in the previous reading that we should be '*followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises*' (Hebrews 6.12). Faith is not the cause of inheritance, you won't inherit because of faith. Neither does it give right to inheritance. But faith designs a path and a walk of believing. And at the end of that path, the child of God comes to glory. The right of the inheritance is through Christ Jesus. He is '*the way, the truth and the life*' (John 14.6). It's His precious blood, it's His sin atoning death and sufferings, it's His sacrifice that gives right to that inheritance. The elder brother, the only one true eternal Son of God, gives a right to all His adopted brothers and sisters through what He has done. The Father gave Him a gift of countless number of souls in that covenant of grace. And it would cost Him to lay down His life for them. But the unspeakable wondrous love of Christ in receiving that willingly for His Father. Knowing what it would cost Him, He said '*I will*', and at Calvary He said '*It is finished*'.

And so there's boldness. You need, you want, you long for, you desire a full understanding. You desire a full assurance of understanding. A full assurance of hope. You're a dying sinner, eternity before you, but you've a hope in your heart that you're right with God through the Lord Jesus, but then Satan comes in and your unbelieving heart goes along with him. And how willing we are to take his part, for our failings and our faults. And how will I make it right at last? I'm such a poor sinner. And Satan says you can't come again, and the Throne of Grace isn't open for you.

But it's through Jesus, '*boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus*' (Hebrews 10.19), that '*the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom*' (Matthew 27.51) as Jesus cried out '*It is finished*'. As His heart was torn apart, the veil of the temple was rent in twain. What a type the veil was of Jesus Christ in His holy human nature. But there's now a way by, there's now access, there's a boldness, it's reverence, it's humility in the coming sinner (don't be put off by that word the coming sinner- we must be if we are one of His, we must come to the throne of grace), it's that loving welcome. There's an access that the ancient Israelite never had, only the High Priest could go in once a year, and that not without blood.

And you beloved friends, how can we approach? As the old ministers used to say, 'take blood in your basin, not the blood of bull or of goat, but the blood of Jesus by



faith'. And what is it? It is calling upon Him. It is pleading Jesus' sake. Pleading His name, that name which the Father delights to hear. "Lord give me this faith, faith which desires a path, a walk. Faith that leads. Faith that ever so slightly swells even through it might be as a crumb, as a tiny little thing, yet every trial, every difficulty, everything in your life". Think of it; is it swelling that crumb of faith as you're brought.

Sadly, solemnly we must sometimes be forced to the throne of grace. We think we can make our way ourselves but the Lord brings us in mercy. He forces us to His feet. We prove Him. We venture in prayer. Maybe our faith is very small. Maybe at times we feel our unbelief is outweighing it, but when in mercy He hears and delivers, or He strengthens and brings through, what's the effect?- your faith ever so slightly swells. And you go on. And it swells again, and you go on. Faith is joined to salvation. Believers are maintained to it by God. It's not faith in anything. It's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Putting your faith in Christ Jesus. Being brought to a spiritual understanding in hope. '*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for*' (Hebrews 11.1).

I hope in that parachute and it's faith that's the substance of my hope. It's designed that path for me, whereby I place all my hope in it. Faith is joined to salvation. Believers are maintained to it by God. He must, He will. For none shall pluck them from the Father's hand. There's an eternal and everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure'. Patience is joined with faith. As a fruit and evidence of faith. And a child of God passes through and endures this life, growing in grace, in faith, in hope and in charity. And that's love. Unconditional love.

God has said in His Word concerning His people: '*their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more*' (Hebrews 10.17). Paul says that where '*remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin*' (Hebrews 10.18). The price is paid. Justice is satisfied. Nothing is left to be done. It is finished, in and through Jesus Christ the Lord. Therefore the child of God has boldness to approach the throne of grace by the blood of Jesus; that new and living way. Jesus Christ Himself being their Great High Priest, they draw near in prayer and in praise with a true heart. Not a double heart, a true heart. A heart which is quickened. A heart that is made sensitive to sin. A heart that feels to be in need as a sinner, yet drawn and encouraged, constrained and compelled. An unseen hand is at work. Maybe at first with small assurances, but as the work of grace continues, the coming sinner obtains help and mercy. They are not dealt with as their sins deserve or as Satan tells them they will be dealt with. There's a growing in faith. Faith believes the various things in God's word. He proves that '*He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities*' (Psalm 103.10). Faith proves that. Their faith swells. How comfortable then, to the Child of God it is, to come in the full assurance of faith.

How comfortable, how welcome to the soul when approaching a throne of grace, if we are in this full assurance of faith. How pleasing to God. What praise and worship comes from a soul who comes in the full assurance. When we come with unbelief,

we have more sin mixed with us. Unbelief is a dreadful sin for it seeks to steal away from God; what He is, His power, His love, His mercy. And so how comfortable to the child of God when, through prayer and grace, the assurance of faith is raised to being fully persuaded and fully confident that as they venture, their prayer will be answered. What a sweet smelling savour of praise rises from the earth unto God. And how greatly to be desired.

What I need to have for full assurance, and what you will need will probably be different. We are all different characters and of different dispositions. Some are naturally more sceptical and questioning of everything, let alone the things of God. Others may more naturally take things at face value, more believing, and not so questioning in a natural way.

With some the Lord abundantly blesses at the beginning of their spiritual lives and they feel fully persuaded and convinced of their salvation and standing in Christ Jesus. But they won't be left there. That won't be the full assurance of it. That is yet to come. There will be a strong assurance but they will go on to experience the Lord trying and testing their faith. Confirming and reassuring. He works by love, all His dealings are in love. The rod is in love. Correction is a Father's love. It's reassuring and confirming. Their faith is tried and put to the test.

If the Lord gives you a promise, He won't leave you with that promise untried and untested until that greatest test of your faith which is the day of your death. But He'll use that promise He's given, and you'll have to prove it and prove it and prove it so that when you're ready (and God knows when you're ready and God knows when I'm ready) we'll be taken. Not before. It's ordered. There's an establishing, a strengthening, and a settling, to bring them to the full assurance of faith.

And then others may start with small beginnings; here a little, there a little. Barely able to trace out where the Lord began. They can't put a finger on it. They were brought up in the House of God from two weeks old and it's here a little, there a little. And they are brought to this gradual understanding, a gradual bringing to hope, a gradual bringing to faith. They experience the Lord leading them on, more and more into faith and hope through trials and deliverances. Establishing, strengthening and settling them and bringing them to a full assurance of faith. And there they are. Perfected. The Lord will perfect and finish that which He has begun in our hearts. He is the author and finisher of it.

The full assurance of faith then, to use my parachute analogy again, is I sit on the plane which I will be jumping out of. I know it. And I'm fully certain that I will shortly be safe on the ground, and I'm not going to die. I'm certain of it. I haven't jumped yet, but given all my understanding and knowledge I'm as good as on the ground already, through I'm ten thousand feet up in the air in the plane. I'm fully confident that the parachute will work. I know it will as I fully understand it's design, the intent it's designed for, and I'm fully confident that I know how and when to use it. And I fully expect and fully hope, and this full assurance of faith is the fruit of it. I'm in the plane, I've got to jump, I know I have, but such is my faith that I'm as good

as on the ground already. That's the full assurance of faith. But I've still got to jump. I'm ten thousand feet in the air, its a long way up. I've still got to go through the actual process of it. It's not done. It's a very good hope, it's a good hope through grace, it's a sure and certain hope. I'm fully persuaded of it, but I've still got to go through it. It's not happened yet as I'm up in the air, I'm not on the ground. I've got to go through the process. I still must land safely on the ground.

I wonder Balaam in prophecy spoke '*Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!*' (Numbers 23.10). To die, to leave this earth in the full assurance of understanding, in the full assurance of hope, in the full assurance of faith. How comfortable and blessed that deathbed where the soul is ready.

*'Persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day'* (2 Timothy 1.12). And though it's still come, I'm as good as in heaven already except I haven't the benefit of it. But it's so sure and certain, my dear Saviour is sitting at the Father's right hand. His work is finished, He is sitting in expectation. He knows His people will be there.

O to know it ourselves, to be one of them. To find this sweet and blessed place in body of sin and in a dying world, but fully confident and fully persuaded that I will be in heaven at last. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13.12 '*For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known*'. It will be that clear and that sure. It will happen.

He says '*And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity*' (1 Corinthians 13.13). What does he mean? Well friends, great things, faith hope and love. Faith at death will fall away. Hope at death will fall away for the child of God. And love will remain. When that soul is brought to the judgement seat of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ is there and speaks on their behalf and says "behold he/she is one of mine, take away the filthy garments, bring forth the royal robe, is not this a brand plucked from the burning, is this not one of mine?". Faith and hope vanish, and love, the greatest of all, is everlasting.

There's no need for faith and hope in Heaven, but love remains. The love in Heaven of sinners born again, quickened, delivered and brought to enter in. Clothed in the robe of righteousness. Their shame at having once been sinners is hidden and covered, the blood of Jesus has washed away every sin and the shame of being a sinner. They stand in Christ in that robe; holy, unblameable, unreprouvable in the sight of God. What love flows from that soul for eternity in praising God. O that we might know the love of God in our hearts, and our love flowing to Him in return. '*Faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity*'.

The Lord bless His Word, Amen.