

Title: Confirming Your Calling (Part 10) *Toward a Theology of Assurance*
Passage: 2 Peter 1:11
Theme: Making Your Calling and Election Sure
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{{Read Passage}}

R.C. Sproul, in a recent publication, echoes something I've said many times ==>

"There is a passage in the New Testament that I believe is I one of the most terrifying in the Bible. It comes from the lips of Jesus at the end of the Sermon on the Mount. We tend to think of the Sermon on the Mount as a positive proclamation by our Lord. After all, it is in the Sermon on the Mount that He gives the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the poor in spirit . . . Blessed are those who mourn. . . . Blessed are the meek . . . ," and so on (Matt. 5:3-12). Because of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus has a reputation as a preacher who accents the positive rather than the negative. But we often overlook the climax of that sermon, where Jesus says:

"Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name. and do many mighty works in your name?" And then will I declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'" (Matt. 7:21-23)

Here Jesus gives us a preview of the last judgment. He says that people will come to Him, addressing Him by the title 'Lord.' They will say to Jesus: 'Lord, we did many marvelous things in Your name. We served You; we taught in Your name; we cast out demons; we did all of these

things.' Jesus says, 'I will turn to these people and say. "Please leave." Not only will He say, "I don't know you," but "I never knew you, you workers of lawlessness." What is particularly poignant about this terrifying warning is that He begins by saying, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven." Then He repeats that by saying, "On that day many will be called to me, 'Lord, Lord.'" [R.C. Sproul, *Can I be Sure I'm Saved*, 1-3]

Sproul points out that there are only some 15 occurrences in all of Scripture where someone is addressed with a repetition of his or her first name.

Examples ==>

Gen 22 [Abraham about to sacrifice his son, Isaac, on Mt. Moriah and God calls out to him] . . . "Abraham, Abraham! . . . Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him . . ."

In consoling Jacob in his fear to go down to Egypt God appeared to him and said, . . . "Jacob, Jacob" . . . (Gen. 46:2)

Remember God, in Exo. 3 called out to Moses twice from the midst of a burning bush: . . . "Moses, Moses!" . . .

Luke 22:31 Jesus spoke to Peter predicting his fall and restoration saying, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded {permission} to sift you like wheat"

Saul, who was to become TAP, in Acts chapt. 9 was blinded by Christ who asked him, . . . "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

Then there's Jesus from the cross who cries out to His Father ==>
... "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

Why the repetition? There for emphasis. But it was also a way to suggest personal intimacy.

Sproul concludes ==>

"So Jesus says here in the Sermon on the Mount that on the last day, not only will people come to Him and say, 'Lord, we belong to you, we're yours,' but they will address Him in terms of personal intimacy. They will say, 'Lord, Lord,' as if they know Him in a deep, personal way. But despite this assumption of an intimate relationship, Jesus will say to them: 'Please leave. I don't know you workers of lawlessness.' Jesus is saying that there are many people who profess to be Christians, who use the name of Christ, and who call Him by His exalted title, 'Lord' but actually are not in the kingdom of God at all. They do not belong to Him and will not be able to stand at the last judgment. The terrifying aspect of this is that these people are not on the fringes of the church. Rather, they are immersed in the life of the church, heavily involved in ministry, and perhaps have the reputation of being professing Christians. Yet Jesus doesn't know them and will banish them from His presence."

[R.C. Sproul, *Can I be Sure I'm Saved*, 4-5]

If that's all we had to go by, we might fear that assurance of salvation just isn't possible.

Of course, many who call themselves Xn would say just that: It isn't. Assurance, or having a certain knowledge that you are among the elect, is not possible.

This was an issue during the Reformation. The RCC in the Counter Reformation Council of Trent

We can go back to the 16th c. Trent was Rome's answer to the Reformation. And it solidified their stand against the Gospel of grace.

As it relates to the doctrines of election and assurance ==>

That a rash presumptuousness in the matter of Predestination is to be avoided. No one, moreover, so long as he is in this mortal life, ought so far to presume as regards the secret mystery of divine predestination, as to determine for certain that he is assuredly in the number of the predestinate; as if it were true, that he that is justified, either cannot sin any more, or, if he do sin, that he ought to promise himself an assured repentance; for except by special revelation, it cannot be known whom God hath chosen unto Himself.

We could add that even among Protestants, there are many who would say that there is no real assurance in this life.

Reflecting the Wesleyan-Arminian tradition, Miley writes in his Systematic Theology that assurance isn't grounded in divine election, it's grounded in sonship or whether one is in a state of grace. However, since grace can be forfeited through sin, one's assurance is only as good as one's present condition.

There are problems on the other side of the spectrum as well. There are those who call themselves Calvinists (hyper) that would contend that you can't know for sure if you're saved, or elect, since you don't know if you will persevere to the end. After all, they would say, I might be an apostate that's yet to commit apostasy.

While that's not entirely illogical, it is rather pessimistic. It also becomes dangerous because it effectively turns itself into a sort of works salvation. If my salvation hinges on my perseverance then I had better be about persevering. And what does this kind of persevering look like? Well, I need to do Xn things (pray, read t/Bible, do good, forsake sin). Suddenly I'm focusing on my works as a way to get to heaven, at least in part, rather than on X. This sort of theology has more in common with t/RC council of Trent than t/Reformation or Scripture.

So we will attempt to navigate between the extremes. After all, t/central point of this passage is making our calling and election certain (v. 10).

We've noted how the text has unfolded ==> (Key is salv. v. 10)

I. Salvation's Sufficiency: The Believer's Inheritance (3-4) {expand}

II. Salvation's Service: The Believer's Fruitfulness (5-9) {expand}

Third Main Point ==>

III. Salvation's Surety: The Believer's Assurance (10-11)

We said that there are 4 questions that relate to these 2 vv. – 4 ?s that address the issue of a sure calling and election.

Just to review where we left off in v. 10. This is about ==>

A. Being Certain About Your Calling and Election

1st question ==>

1. What Does It Mean? (v. 10)

... make your calling and election sure . . .

1. What Does It Mean? (v. 10)

It means that all of those who profess to be followers of JC are to be sure that they are among the called and chosen.

a. Not that we cause our salvation

Note again how Peter began his first letter. 1 Peter 1:3 ==>

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead . . .

(1) Note that: He has "caused us to be born again"

That's a doctrine of grace - He caused us to be born again.

(a) Word is ἀναγενναω

ἀνα (again) + γενναω (to beget or cause to be born). In t/Gk. text, t/active voice gives t/word almost t/sense of a title. Sort of like saying, "God the Birther" (points to his parentage). Like 1 John 5:1 ("whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God")

We are born-again by God's will. He birthed us; He found us. People will say, "I found God!" Well, I didn't know he was lost. No, you didn't find God, he found you. Religion is people trying to find God. Xnty is God finding His people.

We can't birth ourselves spiritually any more than we can physically. But we can examine ourselves to be sure we are in the faith.

God calls the sinner to salvation because he has elected him from eternity. Yet, we are to be sure about our calling and election.

I. What Does It Mean? (v. 10)

B. How Do We Do It? (v. 10)

1. First the responsibility is ours and ours alone

. . . make your calling and election sure . . .

The word "make" is a present middle infinitive. Reflexive. "make for yourself"

This isn't something someone else can do. Other's can't say "*Oh, I know you're a true Christian.*" That can be dangerous. How do you know? I'm not saying that there isn't a time to encourage the doubting, but in the final analysis it's not your responsibility.

The Xn life isn't a decision it's a direction. The emphasis isn't as much on how you started the race as it is how you're running it.

2. Second, it takes diligence

Therefore, brethren, be diligent to make your calling and election sure . . .

The word implies zeal, diligence, effort. Imperative.

Same word is used in 2 Tim. 2:15 ==>

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.

We've already seen the noun form in verse 5.

"It is a term for zeal, effort, and the expenditure of energy. For example, Timothy is to make an effort to come before winter (2 Tim 4:21), and, more to the point. Christians are to make effort to enter into God's rest in Heb 4:11 or to keep the unity of the spirit in Eph 4:3. Thus this term indicates making something a high priority for which one will expend physical or moral effort." [Davids, 187]

We don't take this lightly. We're diligent when it comes to being sure we're in the faith.

HEB 6:11 **And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end.**

c. Third point – We can be sure!

This isn't a call to despair or doubt! It's not to be zealous because we can't know; it's to be zealous because we can!

There are those who believe that assurance of salvation is not possible. Among them are both Arminians and Calvinists.

It's not only possible, it's commanded – Here!

... be diligent to make your calling and election sure ...

A legal term in Gk. lit. referring to something that is valid, ratified, or confirmed.

d. Fourth - Take note of the context

(1) What's the first word?

Therefore, be diligent ...

This connects verse 10 to the rest of the passage. It's another way of saying, "In light of what I've just said."

In light of what I've just said ==>

... be diligent to make your calling and election sure, for in doing these things you will never fall.

It goes back to the beginning of the passage in verse 3
{ {overview the context of vv. 3-9} }

Note the foundation of "faith" as the starting point v. 5.

"This is the admonition which Peter gives to us who believe, to agitate and perform those works by which we shall in this one conviction, namely, that faith alone justifies. Where this then is present, there works must follow." [Luther, 240]

C. Why do we do it? (v. 10)

Why are to we make certain our calling and election? Why is this so important? We see why at the end of the verse as well as in v. 11.

... be diligent to make your calling and election sure, for in doing these things you will never fall.

1. "these things" goes back to vv. 4-7

2. What does it mean "you will never fall"?

Some think it is a synonym for "sin." (you will never sin), but that's not what Peter's talking about. He's not advocating some kind of sinless perfection here.

Others view in the word in the sense of "stumble." As a Xn your walk will be smooth and you won't be tripped up in the race. But as imp. as that is, Peter has something in mind that's more serious. This relates to the entrance into the KD (v. 11).

What Peter has in mind is that by doing these things, by cultivating their relationship with X through spiritual discipline, they will ensure that they

are called and chosen and will not fall away into apostasy. It is to stumble or fall into ruin, something the false teachers whom Peter addresses in chapter 2 had done.

That brings us to verse 11 ==>

D. What is the Goal? (v. 11)

What is the goal of being certain about our calling and election? More to the point, the goal of having a true knowledge of X, a certain faith, the fruit of things like moral excellence, self-control, perseverance, godliness, and love.

Here's the goal; here's the objective ==>

For in this way [That is, by following the path of virtue & being diligent about your calling and election] **the entrance to the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be abundantly supplied to you.**

1. The first thing we need to note is that this is about entering the KD

Entering t/KD is synonymous with inheriting eternal life. This can't be watered down to rewards, or earthly blessing. We're talking about eternal salvation.

a. That's how we see the phrase KD of heaven or KD of God used

That's the witness of all 4 Gospels ==>

MAT 5:20 "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses {that} of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."

MAT 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven."

MAR 10:23 And Jesus, looking around, said to His disciples, "How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!"

LUK 18:17 "Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it {at all.}"

JOH 3:5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

ACT 14:22 . . . "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

(1) Here we have "Eternal Kingdom" – a rather uncommon phrase

It is found in an ancient Roman inscription of Rome's eternal rule. That is, the Empire of Rome. This may be a subliminal rejection against Rome's claim to eternal rule. It's Christ who rules over the KDs of men, not Rome or any political body – not even the U.S.! [cf. M. Green]

It is the Son of Man who comes in His KD (Mt. 16:28).

KD of JC = His deity.

b. So we have here ==>

. . . **the entrance to the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ . . .**

2. The Objective: Getting Home

Isn't this the ultimate objective in the Xn life? To make it all the way home?

Yes, I know we're to glorify God and enjoy Him forever, but we can't enjoy him forever in hell!

One of my key responsibilities as an elder is to see that each of you who profess Christ make it safely home. That you run t/race to t/finish line.

a. When you profess JC as Lord you embark upon a journey

The Xn life is a journey to a finish line. It's not an easy journey. As I've said many times, as we run t/race we see lots of fellow runners who fall by the wayside. They drop out. They fall prey to different roads or detours. It's like you're running along and a sign appears up head that reads, "exit here." It might be "Exit here to Rome." or "Exit here to Mormonism." or "Exit here to disbelief" or "Exit here to a life of ease," or "Exit here to false, damning doctrine" (even though t/sign doesn't say that it's either false or damning). And you see runners, sometimes friends or relatives who veer off. You shout at them, *"No! Don't go that way! It's a road to destruction!"*

Others fall down & you help them up; sometimes you fall and another kind pilgrim lifts you up & dusts you off encouraging you to get back in t/race.

Goal for each of us ==>

2 Timothy 4:7 **I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; 8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.**

b. I take seriously the responsibility that I have as an elder in this church to watch over the souls entrusted to me

This is the responsibility that the elders, or pastors, of the church share. Awesome responsibility.

One of the frustrations of t/time in which we live is t/individualism that permeates our culture, an individualism that says, *"I'm a free individual in a free market and I will go and do as I please."*

That attitude has infected t/CH. We don't think in terms of t/body. It's not "we", it's "Me."

We are t/ultimate consumers in a self-driven marketplace. CHs compete w/one another for customers. They do so by appealing to the "self."

The revolving door has become a fitting symbol for today's church. Only one person can fit inside t/door (individualism). And t/fact that it revolves is symbolic of how many jump from CH to CH to CH, never staying in one place, always on t/move.

It doesn't help things when leaders do t/same thing. 2 years in this CH; 4 years in that CH; 3 years in t/next. It's next to impossible to further a long-term objective w/a short-term commitment.

Again ==>

D. What is the Goal? (v. 11)

It's entering the K.D. It's making it safely home.

c. Realized versus Future Eschatology

Someone will say, *"Tony, you make it sound like it's in doubt. After all, I'm a believer in X; I'm on of his chosen ones; I'm seated in t/heavenly places w/Christ; I'm a partaker of His divine nature; I've saved, safe and secure."*

Yes, those things are true of t/believer. But that's not t/point of this passage. This passage reflects a different aspect of all that is our salvation.

As Michael Green observes ==>

"The Christian is called to a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Heb. 11:10). By saying that we are already partakers of the divine nature (v. 4), and that we have nevertheless still to enter the lasting kingdom, Peter retains in his own characteristic fashion the tension between what we have and what we still lack, between realized and future eschatology."

Realized (what we have now); Future (what we are yet waiting for). Irony is that both can apply to the same thing. We can have something now that we're still waiting for in the future.

"I'm saved; I am being saved; I will be saved." Or, as it relates to vv. 3-11 {cite} [Where does laxity end and apostasy begin? We don't know, but that's why we have to contend and can't be lax.]

Again, this is "the already and the not yet"

There are so many things related to our salvation and the KD of God that are certain in fact, but have yet to be fully realized in time. The more I study t/more I see how relevant this is. This fact colors so much of t/NT.

Why we say that t/entire NT period is eschatological (relates to the end times or the end of the age). We even see that in chapter 3 (vv. 8-10).

Here's the goal; here's t/promise ==>

For in this way the entrance to the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be abundantly supplied to you.

IV. Some Thoughts as to a Theology of Assurance

To go back to where we began ==>

A. What About Assurance?

Can we have confidence that we're safe and secure in t/arms of X?

Of course, the answer is 'Yes!' But we have to understand what assurance is all about.

One popular theologian puts it this way ==>

". . . when we speak of assurance of salvation, we're not talking about mathematical certitude, such as belief in the idea that two plus two equals four. We're talking about assurance of a personal state, and the intensity of that assurance vacillates from day to day." [Sproul, 25]

I would venture to say that the majority, perhaps even t/great majority, of Xns struggle with or have struggled with assurance. (I have!)

So if you do, you're not alone.

Remember, when Jesus in Matthew 26) ==> **"One of you will betray me."** ==>

". . . they that were innocent suspected themselves most and, therefore, cried out, *"Master, is it I?"*

So when we hear or read passages like 2 Peter 1:10 / or Heb. 3:12 -- We cry out from our souls: *"Is it I?"* & we cling t/more tightly to t/blood stained robe of our Lord.

A few questions to ask yourself (x5).

1. Do I Have True Knowledge?

Just as His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

God's calling comes through knowledge, here t/k. of Christ.

2. Do I know who God is?

What you believe is as essential as how you believe. You have to be orthodox in your head as well as your heart.

Do you believe in the One Triune God who is the creator of all things? // JC, The Son of God who lived a sinless life and died as a substitute for sinners – that salvation is received solely by faith apart from works? // Do you believe He was resurrected from the dead and sits at God's right hand, that he will come again to judge the world and establish His eternal KD?

3. Do I have a real faith?

a. Remember what we saw in verse 5

Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence: in your faith supply moral excellence, and in [your] moral excellence knowledge,

b. All of this assumes faith/belief/trust

Out of a real faith flow t/virtues listed thru v. 7.

This isn't faith + works; it's a faith that works. If you're not trusting in X alone to redeem you from your sin (sola fide / solus Christus) you're not trusting X.

These first 2 ?s – Are you ortho. in your head and your heart?

4. Am I in the battle?

I know what it's like to struggle, to feel like you're going backwards, to struggle against sin and seem to fall prey to it again and again. But we must continue the fight. We can never lay down our arms.

As Dr. V. Raymond Edman, late president of Wheaton College, used to remind [his] students, 'it is always too soon to quit.'

If the Lord be for you, who be against you?

Young William Wilberforce was discouraged one night in the early 1790s after another defeat in his 10 year battle against the slave trade in England. Tired and frustrated, he opened his Bible and began to leaf through it. A small piece of paper fell out and fluttered to the floor. It was a letter written by John Wesley shortly before his death. Wilberforce read it again: "Unless the divine power has raised you up... I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise in opposing that (abominable practice of slavery), which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils. But if God be for you, who can be against you? Are all of them together stronger than God? Oh, be not weary of well-doing. Go on in the name of God, and in the power of His might."

Stay in the race; continue in the battle; persevere in faith! I don't care how many times you sin. Confess it; forsake it. Get up and move forward.

The Prince of Darkness Grim? We tremble not for him; His rage we can endure, for lo his doom is sure. One little word shall fell Him!

Pilgrim's Progress.

5. Do I Hate My Sin?

... doing the very thing I hate I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. 19 For the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish. . . . I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good.

Do you struggle with sin / does sin make you feel sick? / Besetting sins?

Sin is a 2-edged sword. On t/one hand it is a sign of life. Other hand, we know that sin is the enemy of assurance.

We are most miserable when we are t/loser in our battles against sin.

B. How Can I Have Greater Assurance of My Salvation?

1. By Spending Time in the Word

Faith comes by hearing.....

"It was by the ear, by our first parents listening to the serpent, that we lost paradise; and it is by the ear, by hearing of the Word, that we get to heaven." Thomas Watson, A Puritan Golden Treasury]

Watson also ==>

"Take heed of drowsiness in hearing; drowsiness shows much irreverence. How lively are many when they are about the world, but in the worship of God how drowsy. . . . In the preaching of the Word, is not the bread of life broken to you; and will a man fall asleep at his food? Which is worse, to stay from a sermon, or sleep at a sermon?" [Thomas Watson, cited in The Golden Treasury of Puritan Quotations, 315]

2. By Spending time with the People of God

3. By Cultivating a Relationship With God (Prayer)

4. By Exercising your spiritual muscles (don't be flabby) {context}

"How have our deceivers written, taught, and spoken against this text. Yet whoever has even the least measure or only a spark of faith, shall be saved when he comes to die. If you however put off believing and in this way think to attain much faith quickly and suddenly, you will then have waited too long. Yet you are to understand well, that they who are strong have enough to do, although we are not to despair even of such as are weak. For it may indeed easily happen that they shall endure to the end, yet it will be difficult and hard, and will cause much worry. But whoever carefully sees to it in his life that his faith be exercised and strengthened by good works, he shall have an abundant entrance. With a calm spirit and confidence, he will enter upon the future life, so that he will die comfortably, despise this life, and go on, even triumphantly, and with gladness be ushered into the eternal kingdom. But those who take another road shall not enter thus with joy: The door shall not stand open to them so wide; moreover, an entrance shall not be supplied so richly unto them. But it shall be narrow and hard for them, so that they tremble, and would rather their whole life should be spent in weakness than that they should die even once." [Luther, 242]

5. Be Sure Christ is the Foundation of Your Assurance

Not your works. Calvin's warning in that regard.

Not begun in the spirit and perf. by the flesh.

Is it about Christ; cf. people who refer to 'better place,' 'with his wife' --
To live is X, to die gain. Gain what? X!

Consider the case of the Illinois man who left the snow-filled streets of Chicago for a vacation in Florida. His wife was on a business trip and was planning to meet him there the next day. When he reached his hotel, he decided to send his wife a quick e-mail. Unable to find the scrap of paper on which he had written her e-mail address, he did his best to type it in from memory. Unfortunately, he missed one letter, and his note was directed instead to an elderly preacher's wife, whose husband had passed away only the day before. When the grieving widow checked her e-mail, she took one look at the monitor, let out a piercing scream, and fell to the floor in a dead faint. At the sound, her family rushed into the room and saw this note on the screen: "Dearest Wife, Just got checked in. Everything prepared for your arrival tomorrow. PS. Sure is hot down here."

W.C. Fields on his death bed

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM compiled in the 16th c. in Heidelberg by Zacharias Ursinus (1534-1583). The catechism has 52 headings, one for each Sunday of the year. The first question, for Lord's Day 1, ==>

Q. What is thy only comfort in life and death?

A. That I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ; who, with His precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; yea, that all things must be subservient to my salvation, and therefore, by His Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life, and makes me sincerely willing and ready, henceforth, to live unto him."

Lord, Lord, did we DO (says nothing about Him being their hope / lots of those w/i Christendom.

6. Have as your Goal Work toward a "Happy Death"

Scottish Divine, John Brown:

"The course prescribed by the apostle naturally leads to a peaceful, happy death, and a joyful introduction into the glories of immortality. [on this, see Peter's own impending death in v. 14, TAB] . . . They who do the things enjoined by the apostle shall have 'an abundant entrance ministered to them.' The figure has, it is supposed, been borrowed from the entrance of a ship into the harbor with all her sails set—with the full advantage of a fair wind and a rising tide; naturally enough, by contrast, suggesting the idea of those Christians who have been criminally lacking—have possessed, but not abounded, in these things—and who (through want of comfort, and by forebodings which, in such a case, are likely to haunt the deathbed; and, it may be, too, by something but darkly shadowed forth in the world beyond death), are like Paul's companions in shipwreck, who escaped all safe to land, but after a sad struggle, 'some on boards, and some on broken pieces of ship.'" [Brown, 150-51]

For in this way the entrance to the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be abundantly supplied to you.

πλουσίως (πλουσιως = richly, abundantly || Adverb). Same word used in Col. 3:16.

ἐπιχορηγηθήσεται (ἐπιχορηγεω = to supply, provide || Verb: Third Person Singular Future Passive Indicative). Passive; it is God who opens and provides.

Triumphal welcome home. The metaphor of entry into the kingdom may go back to one of the honors paid to a victor in the Olympic Games. His home city, out of joy and pride in his success, would welcome him back, not through the usual gate, but through a part of the wall specially broken down to afford him entrance. [Michael Green, 84]

Love this illustration John Brown gives ==>

"Or, you may take another illustration from a vessel returning after a long voyage, and being received and welcomed by expectant friends. She has been absent for years—toiling and trafficking in every sea—touching at the ports, and trading in the markets of many lands. Thus approaching at last her desired haven—the harbor from which she set out, whence loving thoughts went with her as she started on her perilous way, and where anxious hearts are now wishing and waiting for her return. She is descried in the distance; the news spread; all is excitement; multitudes assemble—pier and quay, beach and bank, are crowded with spectators as the little craft pushes on, and every moment nears her destination. There she is, worn and weather-beaten, it is true—covered with the indications of sore travail and long service, and with many signs of having encountered both battle and breeze. But all is safe. Her goodly freight is secure and uninjured; her profits have been large; the merchandise she brings is both rare and rich. She is coming along a sunny sea—leaping and dancing, as if she were alive. Her crew are on the deck, and, with straining eyes and palpating hearts, are looking towards the shore. A soft wind swells the sails; the blue heavens are bending over the bark, as if smiling on her course, while the very waves seem to run before her, turning themselves about as if with conscious joy, clapping their hands and murmuring a welcome. How she bounds forward! She is over the bar. She is gliding now in smooth water—passing into port, and preparing to moor, and drop her anchor for the last time. While she does, there comes a shout from the

assembled spectators—the crowds that witness and welcome her approach, loud as thunder, musical as the sea. Gladness and greeting are on every hand—eloquent voices fill the air. The vessel has received an abundant entrance: her crew have been met with sympathetic congratulations; are surrounded by eager and glad friends, hailed with enthusiasm, embraced with rapture, and accompanied to their homes with exultation and song. How different if she had come in a wreck, or struck on a rock, lost her cargo, and her crew saved only with difficulty and peril and all this the consequence of some grave neglect—ignorance, or incapacity, carelessness, or presumption, which attach on them the blame of the disaster. Even in this case, they would have reasons for gratitude, deep gratitude, that they were saved at all. Stripped as they were, their friends would welcome them with love and joy; but pity and sadness would mingle with that welcome—congratulation would sound like rebuke, or seem unserved; and the poor mariners would require them to be reconciled to themselves. Some such difference may exist in the circumstances and feelings of the saved." [Brown, 151-53]

Brown concludes:

How powerful, then, are the motives to comply with the apostles's injunction! All things are ready; he who does not comply must suffer loss; to him who does comply is secured a useful, honorable, happy life—a peaceful, probably a triumphant, death—and, after death, an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." [153]