2 Corinthians - Commentaries by Unknown Author

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, God's Unspeakable Gift

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Question: 2 Cor. 9:15. What is God’s unspeakable gift? H.H.H.

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Scripture Queries and Answers, Scripture Queries and Answers: God's Unspeakable Gift

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Young Christian: Volume 19, 1929, True Riches

“Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.” (2 Cor. 9:15).

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things.” (Rev. 21:7).

Edification: Volume 3, "Through His Poverty."

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich” (2 Cor. 8:9).

“HIS POVERTY.” Whose? That of our Lord Jesus Christ. He, the Son of God, Creator of the worlds, Up-holder of all things by the word of His power, Heir of all things, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

He for the glory of God His Father and for our salvation and enrichment stooped to POVERTY, to become a Man and die. Stooped to Bethlehem’s manger, to the Nazareth workshop, to the homeless stranger ship of the Galilean hills, to the shades of Gethsemane and the deeper shades of Calvary’s cross, to the judgment of a thrice holy God on our behalf, the judgment which would have sunk us into the depths of everlasting woe.

HIS POVERTY. Never can we measure the depths of this. There on Golgotha’s tree the waters entered into His soul, there “deep called to deep” at the noise of the waterspouts of wrath, there all the waves and billows rolled relentlessly over Him. The human mind in its finiteness cannot penetrate the depths of all His sorrow, on the distance He knew when He cried, in the bitterness of His abandonment in righteousness by God, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?”

Wonderful poverty indeed!

“Though He was rich”! Riches had been His eternally. The angels were His ministers doing His pleasure. All things were His in His everlasting glory.

That sentence carries us into the recesses of the past. There He was rich. Not below in this world. Here He was ever poor. Laid in the manger of the stable at His birth, the King of glory amid the cattle in their stalls. The Nazarene in the despised Nazareth of Galilee of the Gentiles. His creatures had their burrows or their roosting places but He, the Creator, had not where to lay His head.

His riches were in glory eternal. His poverty was here, as we have seen. Never can the creature estimate His Godhead riches in glory. Never can the creature measure the poverty to which He stooped at Calvary.

“THROUGH HIS POVERTY.” What accrues to us from that which He endured when “poor” for our sakes? Something of this we know now, the fullness awaits us in the Father’s house when we shall be with and like our Lord—for His glory conformed to His image.

We are “blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ.” But every blessing is hall-marked with the words, “Through His poverty.”

All that which we enjoy now comes to us through that channel.

All that which we shall enjoy forever on high flows through that channel also.

Forgiveness is “through His poverty.”

Redemption and justification, and peace with God are “through His poverty.”

Sonship, everlasting life and the Father’s house and eternal glory for us are “through His poverty.”

Wonderful poverty—His. Wonderful riches—ours.

And we know His grace, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, He who is now honored and glorified—made Lord and Christ at God’s right hand.

Yes! we know that grace and yet can never know it fully. We think of the glory of Him who showed it. We think of the cross of Calvary where it was expressed. We think of the deep need in which we were plunged. We think of the heights of present blessing which are ours. We think of the glory of God into which He will introduce us at His coming. And as we think of these things we wonder and we worship, amazed at His grace which passeth knowledge. But in that grace we boast and delight now and shall boast and delight eternally.

And when the glory is gained and we surround the throne with our praises how gladly shall we sing, “Thou art worthy... for Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation and hast made us unto our God kings and priests and we shall reign on the earth.” And all that we have and are in that glad day of glory we shall delight to own is “Through His poverty.”

Inglis Fleming.

Edification: Volume 9, Our Scripture Portion.

(2 Cor. 8:1 — 9:15).

To be of any profit this article must be read in connection with a Bible, opened at the above passage.

HAVING opened his heart to the Corinthians, both as to his own experiences and as to their need of separation from the world of unbelievers, and having expressed his joy in their obedience to the Word of God, and the confidence as to them which this gave him, Paul now felt ready to write to them more particularly concerning the collection then being made amongst the various Gentile assemblies for the benefit of poor saints in Jerusalem. He had alluded to it briefly in the closing chapter of his first epistle. He now refers to it at length in chapter 8 and 9 of this epistle; and in urging the Corinthians to liberality he brings out some very important instruction.

There has been a very remarkable display of the grace of God in the assemblies of Macedonia, and it has been put permanently on record, so that not only the Corinthians but ourselves might be stirred up by it. Some of us might be inclined to think that a recital of the devotedness of others, with a view to stirring up sluggish saints, would be an appeal to rather low-down motives and not a worthy proceeding. Here however we find the Spirit inspiring the Apostle to do this very thing. So we never need be afraid of telling how the grace of God has wrought in others. Such recitals not only reveal the grace of God to us as a real and practical thing, but also they serve to convict us of our own shortcomings: and both these results are much to be desired.

The giving of the Macedonian believers was remarkable. Paul himself could bear witness that they gave according to their power. This in itself was a big thing. It means that having righteously discharged all their proper living expenses, they then gave up to the limit of their ability. They did more than this however. They gave beyond their power; that is, they denied themselves what might be considered proper living expenses in order to give to the Lord and His people. And this they did in the most willing-hearted way, begging Paul to accept the money and undertake the responsibility of having it distributed to the saints. They had caught the spirit that was exemplified when the tabernacle was to be made, and it was reported to Moses, “The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make” (Ex. 36:5).

And there is more even than this; for they exceeded Paul’s expectations in another direction. They began their giving at the right point by first giving themselves to the Lord. Yielding themselves to the Lord they necessarily yielded to Him all that they had. Thus their possessions they regarded as the Lord’s, to be used at His direction; and consequently they carried out the will of God in placing themselves and their possessions in the hands of Paul.

This, without a doubt, is the only true way to look at this matter of giving. God does not merely claim our superfluity but all that we have, because He claims us. When we see this, we at once become conscious how far our standard of giving falls below the standard set by the Macedonians. They were characterized by a liberality that was enhanced by their deep poverty and the fact that they were in the midst of a time of much affliction. What moved them to their liberality was the abundance of their spiritual joy. They had by faith so real and joyous a grasp of the things of heaven, that they could afford to be liberal with the things of earl.

Is liberality in giving a characteristic feature of modern Christian life? We fear there can be only one answer to that question. What devices are resorted to in many quarters in order to raise funds! What advertisements and appeals are issued! What lamentable stories as to shortness of funds! Doubtless a great deal of the trouble arises from people taking up causes and launching enterprises to which they were never called by God. Still, it also indicates that many a believer is withholding more than is meet, and it tends to spiritual poverty — to themselves as well as others. There are exceptions no doubt, in the cases of some who acknowledge their stewardship and give largely according to their means, and of some very few who have given with a liberality that is astonishing. But they are the exception, and not the rule.

We are more like the Corinthians than the Macedonians, and we need to be stirred up, as they did, by this shining example. So Paul had begged Titus during his recent visit to carry the matter to completion. Giving is spoken of as a grace, you notice, and this indeed it is, if rightly considered and carried out. It becomes a potent method of expressing the working of the grace of God in blessing. If our own hearts are filled to overflowing with blessing from God, we are bound to overflow ourselves in giving to others. Verse 7 is a very gentle and tactful rebuke to the Corinthians — and, we believe, to ourselves also. Whether we can be said to abound in faith and in all diligence may be doubted, but we evidently do in utterance and knowledge. Is it not true that we know in our heads, and we utter with our lips, a good deal more than we express in the form of large-hearted giving?

Verse 8 shows that the Apostle did not wish to be understood as issuing a command on the subject. If we gave only because we were commanded of God to do so, our giving could no longer be spoken of as grace. It would be done under the compulsion of law. No, the forwardness and zeal of the Macedonians was to be a stimulus merely, and the giving for which he asked was to be an expression and proof of the sincerity and genuineness of their love. Love always delights to give.

The working of the grace of, God in other Christians may act as a stimulus to us, but nothing short of the supreme working of the grace of God in Christ can supply us with the mainspring and motive we need, if we are to be characterized by the grace of generous giving. To that mainspring we come in verse 9.

How often verses which are like sparing gems lie embedded in the discussion of matters which seem very ordinary and even common-place! This is a case in point. The Corinthians had been quite ready to consider the making of this collection. They had willingly taken up the idea a whole year before, and, yet they had so far failed to bring it to completion, and actually give the money. What would brig them to the point? What, but the fresh sense of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ?

This marvelous verse is an epitome of the New Testament. “Though He was rich,” carries us back into the depths of His Godhead glory before His incarnation; the glory that is unfolded in the opening verses of John’s Gospel and elsewhere. “Yet for your sakes He became poor,” opens out into the wonderful story of His life, sufferings and death, as recorded in all four Gospels. “That ye through His poverty might be rich,” indicates the wealth of blessing and glory into which we are introduced by Him and in Him, as unfolded in the Epistles and the Revelation. And the whole story is the supreme expression of GRACE; which consists in the down-stooping of Divine love to meet man’s need, not merely according to the need that is met, but according to the love that meets it.

Having used this grace as a powerful lever to move and uplift the hearts of the Corinthians, the Apostle turned to enunciate a few important principles that are to govern the Christian yin his giving. In the first place, we are to give out of that which we have; not that which we used to have, or that which we hope to have in the future. We are to live and act in the present, trusting in God as regards the future.

For, in the second place, he did not contemplate the Corinthians being always, or in every matter, in the position of givers. The time would come when they would be receivers, and the flow of gifts would be toward them instead of out from them. Indeed, if Romans 15:25-27 be read, it will be evident that there had already been a rich flow of spiritual giving from Jerusalem to Corinth. Now there was to be a flow of giving in material things from Corinth to Jerusalem. The thought of God is that among His people there should never be a vacuum, but rather a flow of supply according to the need.

Verse 15 quotes Exodus 16:18 in support of this. Reading Exodus, one might suppose that the verse simply meant that each gatherer of the manna was able to rightly gauge his appetite and gather accordingly. The way the verse is quoted here shows however that there is more in is than that, since it is cited in support of the principle of sharing with others what God may have entrusted us with.

Verse 16 to 24 are occupied with details concerning the administration of the funds collected, which was to be in the hands of Titus and two other brethren. Though the circumstances then existing have passed away, there are points of abiding interest which we ought to notice. Paul had exhorted Titus to take up this service, and he on his part did so with willingness and alacrity. He did not count a service of this kind as beneath him. Nor did the unnamed brother who was a gifted evangelist; nor the second unnamed brother, of verse 22, who was a man of diligent zeal in Many things, though not perhaps a man of gift in the gospel, nor an apostolic delate like Titus. All three evidently recognized that to be bearers and administrators of funds, which were given as an expression of Divine love working in the hearts of saints, was no mean service.

Again, it is evident from verse 19 that the churches that gave the money chose the man who was to have the handling of the money on their behalf. This is in accord with the choosing of the seven men of honest report to “serve tables,” as recorded in Acts 6. So long as men provide the wherewithal, it is within their competency to select those who shall administer their bounty. In contrast to this, we do not read of; saints selecting those who are to fill the office of elder, bishop, or overseer. But that is because such are called to exercise their spiritual functions on God’s behalf, not man’s. Hence God and not man must choose. We read of those whom the Holy Ghost had made overseers. The most that man can do is to recognize those whom the Holy Ghost has appointed.

Further, everything had to be done honestly as before God, and also in the sight of men. It is not enough that the thing shall be handled in a way that is right before the God who knows all things. It must also be obviously right before the eyes of men who only see a very little way, but who are often very critical of what they do see. Verses 20 and 21 show this. So these men were marked by carefulness that all should be so handled as to be to the glory of the Lord, remembering that they were messengers of the churches, which are spoken of as “the glory of Christ.” Let us remember that this is the proper character of every true assembly We shall not think lightly of such, if we do remember it.

In the first five verses of chapter 9, Paul renews his appeal to the Corinthian saints. They had been so very forward a year before, when the matter had been started, that he had even boasted of them to the Macedonians, who had now outstripped them altogether in actual performance. Let them now really act, and act at once, so that their contribution might be seen to be a gift of the heart, and not something extracted from them almost as a matter of extortion. This fresh appeal is followed from some fresh considerations calculated to back it up. More, important principles connected with the matter of giving are brought to light.

For instance, giving is sowing; hence the laws of sowing and reaping apply to it. If seed be scattered with a sparing hand there is a scanty harvest: if with a bountiful hand a bountiful harvest. It cannot be otherwise whether in nature or in connection with the things of God. In giving to others we are sowing grace; and the Apostle reminded them, “God is able to make all grace abound toward you” (verse 8.) Verses 10 and

11 also speak of the harvest of blessing that will be reaped especially in things spiritual.

But the giving to be really pleasing to God must be cheerful giving, If done grudgingly, or because one is pushed into it, there is not much value in it in the sight of God. Every man will purpose in his heart according to the state of his heart. If our hearts are right, and enlarged by dwelling in the love of God, we shall give not only bountifully but cheerfully also. We shall give after the style of God Himself; and God loves those who are like Himself.

As we give we are sowing not only grace but righteousness also. Psa. 112:9 is quoted, in which the man is described who is characterized as "good," and "upright," and "that feareth the Lord." Such a one disperses of his substance and gives to those in need, and his kind giving is not spoken of as grace but as righteousness that will remain forever. Are we accustomed to look upon giving in this light? We have received so much from God that it is only right that we should take the place of givers, if God has entrusted us with a supply of either material or spiritual things. If we do not give, but rather hoard up or expend upon ourselves and our pleasures what is given to us, we are positively unrighteous. Let us take time to mark, learn, and inwardly digest this fact, so that our lives may be ordered in keeping with it.

Moreover the results of large-hearted and cheerful giving are so very blessed. There is the supplying of "the need of the saints." This in itself is a very good thing. Who, that has seen the comfort and joy of some poor saint, when relief has reached them through the liberality of their brethren, could doubt it. Beyond this, however, God is glorified. The action "is abundant also by many thanksgivings to God." The saint, who has been helped and relieved, gives thanks to God again and again for the gift and those who ministered it to him. Presently too those who gave find themselves so blessed and enlarged of God that they begin to give thanks that they were ever privileged to give. We have you will remember, the very best authority for saying that, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." And finally the poor saints, who have nothing to give in return, do repay what is given by an answering affection and by earnest prayer. The givers reap the blessing which flows from the love and prayers of those whom they have helped.

What a marvelous train of happy results is attached to giving! No wonder it is enumerated amongst the "gifts" of Rom. 12, or that elsewhere we read. "To do good and to communicate forget not." What spiritual enlargement flows out of it! And conversely, how often is spiritual poverty the direct result of the neglect of it! If believers are stingy in their handling of material things, the holy government of God will leave them poor and straightened in spiritual things.

All giving by the Christian flows from that which has been given to him from God. Hence the Apostle cannot close his exhortation on this theme without leading our thoughts to God's supreme gift from which all our giving flows. It is so great a gift as to be beyond all our powers of expression or description. We can only utter thanks for it.

God has given "His only-begotten Son." We read also of "the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him;" and again that, "the gift of God is eternal life." And other such-like verses there are. We believe that here in the mind of the Spirit all these great gifts are treated as one gift, which demands eternal thanksgiving from us.

As we add our hearty, Amen, to the thanksgiving, let us see to it that we have such a lively sense of the greatness of the gift that we diligently practice the grace of giving ourselves.

F. B. Hole.

Christian Friend: Volume 3, 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 Part 2

4. We have only now to consider the philanthropic phase of the unequal yoke. Many will say, "I quite admit that we ought not to mingle ourselves with positive unbelievers in the worship or service of God; but then we can freely unite with such for the furtherance of objects of philanthropy—such for instance as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, reclaiming the vicious, in providing asylums for the blind and lunatic, hospitals and infirmaries for the sick and infirm, places of refuge for the homeless and houseless, the fatherless and the widow; and, in short, for the furtherance of everything that tends to promote the amelioration of our fellow-creatures, physically, morally, and intellectually."

This at first sight seems fair enough; for I may be asked if I would not help a man by the road-side to get his cart out of the ditch? I reply, certainly; but if I were asked to become a member of a mixed society for the purpose of getting carts out of ditches, I should refuse-not because of my superior sanctity, but because God's Word says: "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." This would be my answer, no matter what were the object proposed by a mixed society. The servant of Christ is commanded "to be ready to every good work;" "to do good unto all;" "to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction;" but then it is as the servant of Christ, and not as the member of a society or a committee in which there may be infidels and atheists, and all sorts, of wicked and godless men. Moreover we must remember that all God's philanthropy is connected with the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the channel through which God will bless—that the mighty lever by which He will elevate man, physically, morally, and intellectually. "After that the kindness and philanthropy () of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior." (Titus 3:4-6) This is God's philanthropy. This is His mode of ameliorating man's condition. With all who understand its worth, the Christian can readily yoke himself, but with none other.

The men of the world know naught of this, care not for it. They may seek reformation, but it is reformation without Christ. They may promote amelioration, but it is amelioration without the cross. They wish to advance, but Jesus is neither the starting-post nor the goal of their course. How then can the Christian yoke himself with them? They want to work without Christ, the very one to whom he owes everything. Can he be satisfied to work with them? Can he have an object in common with them? If men come to me and say, "We want your co-operation in feeding the hungry, in clothing the naked, in founding hospitals and lunatic asylums, in feeding and educating orphans, in improving the physical condition of our fellow-mortals; but you must remember that a leading rule of the society, the board, or the committee, formed for such objects, is, that the name of Christ is not to be introduced, as it would only lead to controversy. Our objects being not at all religious, but undividedly philanthropic, the subject of religion must be studiously excluded from all our public meetings. We are met as men for a

benevolent purpose, and therefore Infidels, Atheists, Socinians, Arians, Romanists, and all sorts, can happily yoke themselves to move onward the glorious machine of philanthropy." What should be my answer to such an application? The fact is, words would fail one who really loved the Lord Jesus in attempting to reply to an appeal so monstrous. What! benefit mortals by the exclusion of Christ? God forbid! If I cannot gain the objects of pure philanthropy without setting aside that blessed one who lived and died and lives eternally for me, then away with your philanthropy, for it assuredly is not God's, but Satan's. If it were God's, the word is, "He shed it on us abundantly THROUGH Jesus Christ," the very one whom your rule leaves entirely out. Hence your rule must be the direct dictation of Satan, the enemy of Christ. Satan would always like to leave out the Son of God; and when he can get men to do the same, he will allow them to be benevolent, charitable, and philanthropic.

But in good truth such benevolence and philanthropy ought to be termed malevolence and misanthropy; for how can you more effectually exhibit ill-will and hatred toward men than by leaving out the ONLY ONE who can really bless them for time or for eternity? But what must be the moral condition of a heart, in reference to Christ, who could take his seat at a board, or on a platform, on the condition that that name must not be introduced? It must be cold indeed; yea, it proves that the plans and operations of unconverted men are of sufficient importance in his judgment to lead him to throw his Master overboard for the purpose of carrying them out. Let us not mistake matters. This is the true aspect in which to view the world's philanthropy. The men of this world can "sell ointment for three hundred pence, and give to the poor;" while they pronounce it waste to pour that ointment on the head of Christ! Will the Christian consent to this? Will he yoke himself with such? Will he seek to improve the world without Christ? Will he join with men to deck and garnish a scene which is stained with his Master's blood? Peter could say, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Peter would heal a cripple by the power of the name of Jesus; but what would he have said, if asked to join a committee or society to alleviate cripples, on the condition of leaving that name out altogether? It requires no great stretch of imagination to conceive his answer. His whole soul would recoil from such a thought. He only healed a cripple for the purpose of exalting the name of Jesus, and setting forth its worth, its excellency, and its glory in the view of men; but the very reverse is the object of the world's philanthropy; inasmuch as it sets aside His blessed name entirely, and banishes Him from its boards, its committees, and its platforms.

May we not therefore well say, "Shame on the Christian who is found in a place from which his Master is shut out"? Oh, let him go forth, and in the energy of love to Jesus, and by the power of that name, do all the good he can! but let him not yoke himself with unbelievers, to counteract the effects of sin by excluding the cross of Christ. God's grand object is to exalt His Son, "that all should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." This should be the Christian's object likewise; to this end he should "do good unto all;" but if he join a society or a committee in order to do good, it is not "in the name of Jesus" he acts, but in the name of the society or committee, without the name of Jesus. This ought to be enough for every true and loyal heart. God has no other way of blessing men but through Christ; and no other object in blessing them but to exalt Christ. As with Pharaoh of old, when the hungry Egyptians flocked to his presence, his word was, "Go to Joseph;" so God's Word to all is, "Come to Jesus." Yes, for soul and body, time and eternity, we must go to Jesus; but the men of the world know Him not, and want Him not; what therefore has the Christian to do with such? How can He act in yoke with them? He can only do so on the ground of practically denying his Savior's name. Many do not see this; but that does not alter the case for those who do. We ought to act honestly, as in the light; and even though the feelings and affections of the new nature were not sufficiently strong in us to lead us to shrink from ranking ourselves with the enemies of Christ, the conscience ought at least to bow to the commanding authority of that Word, BE NOT UNEQUALLY YOKED TOGETHER WITH UNBELIEVERS.

May the Holy Ghost clothe His own Word with heavenly power, and make its edge sharp to pierce the conscience, that so the saints of God may be delivered from everything that hinders their "running the race that is set before them!" Time is short. The Lord Himself will soon be here. Then many an unequal yoke will be broken in a moment. May we be enabled to purge ourselves from every unclean association and every unhallowed influence, so that when Jesus returns we may not be ashamed, but meet Him with a joyful heart and an approving conscience!

Christian Friend: Volume 3, 2 Corinthians 6:14-18: Part 1

Amongst the numerous hindrances to thorough consecration of heart to Christ, which I earnestly desire for myself and my reader, "the unequal yoke" will be found to occupy a very prominent place indeed. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what partnership hath righteousness with unrighteousness [or rather lawlessness] and what communion hath light with darkness And what concord hath Christ with Behan or what part hath a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:14-18).

Under the Mosaic economy, we learn the same moral principle. "Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled. Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together. Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woolen and linen together" (Deut. 22:9-11; Lev. 19:19).

These scriptures will suffice to set forth the moral evil of an unequal yoke. It may with full confidence be asserted that no one can be an unshackled follower of Christ who is in any way "unequally yoked." He may be a saved person—he may be a true child of God—a sincere believer, but he cannot be a thorough disciple; and not only so, but there is a positive hindrance to the full manifestation of that which he may really be notwithstanding his unequal yoke. "Come out... and I will receive you,... and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." That is to say, "Get your neck out of the unequal yoke, and I will receive you, and there shall be the full public practical manifestation of your relationship with the Lord Almighty." The idea here is evidently different from that set forth in James: "Of His own will begat He us by the word of truth." And also in Peter: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." And again in 1 John: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God." So also in John's gospel: "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." In all these passages the relationship of sons is founded upon the divine counsel and the divine operation, and is not set before us as the consequence of any acting of ours; whereas in 2 Corinthians 6 it is put as the result of our getting out of the unequal yoke. In other words, it is entirely a

practical question.

Thus, in Matthew 5, we read: “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; in order that [] ye may be the sons of your Father which is in heaven: because He causeth His sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust.” Here, too, it is the practical establishment and public declaration of the relationship, and its moral influence. It becomes the sons of such a Father to act in such a way. In short, we have the abstract position or relationship of sons founded upon God’s sovereign will and operation; and we have the moral character consequent upon and flowing out of this relationship, which affords just ground for God’s public acknowledgment thereof. God cannot fully and publicly own those who are unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for were He to do so it would be an acknowledgment of the unequal yoke. He cannot acknowledge “darkness,” “unrighteousness,” “Belial,” “idols,” and “an infidel.” How could He? Hence if I yoke myself with any of these I am morally and publicly identified with them, and not with God at all. I have put myself into a position which God cannot own, and as a consequence He cannot own me; but if I withdraw myself from that position—if I “come out and be separate”—if I take my neck out of the unequal yoke—then, but not until then, can I be publicly and fully received and owned as a “son or daughter of the Lord Almighty.”

This is a solemn and searching principle for all who feel that they have unhappily gotten themselves into such a yoke. They are not walking as disciples, nor are they publicly or morally on the ground of sons. God cannot own them. Their secret relationship is not the point; but they have put themselves thoroughly off God’s ground. They have foolishly thrust their neck into a yoke which, inasmuch as it is not Christ’s yoke, must be Belial’s yoke; and until they cast off that yoke, God cannot own them as His sons and daughters. God’s grace, no doubt, is infinite, and can meet us in all our failure and weakness; but if our souls aspire after a higher order of discipleship, we must at once cast off the unequal yoke, cost what it may; that is, if it can be cast off; but, if it cannot, we must only bow our heads beneath the shame and sorrow thereof, looking to God for full deliverance.

Now, there are four distinct phases in which “the unequal yoke” may be contemplated; namely, the domestic, the commercial, the religious, and the philanthropic. Some may be disposed to confine 2 Corinthians 6:14 to the first of these; but the apostle does not so confine it. The words are, “Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.” He does not specify the character or object of the yoke, and therefore we are warranted in giving the passage its widest application, by bringing its edge to bear directly upon every phase of the unequal yoke; and we shall see the importance of so doing, ere we close these remarks, if the Lord permit.

1. And first, then, let us consider the domestic or marriage yoke. What pen can portray the mental anguish, the moral misery, together with the ruinous consequences, as to spiritual life and testimony, flowing from a Christian’s marriage with an unconverted person? I suppose nothing can be more deplorable than the condition of one who discovers, when it is too late, that he has linked himself for life with one who cannot have a single thought or feeling in common with him. One desires to serve Christ; the other can only serve the devil: one breathes after the things of God; the other sighs for the things of this present world: the one earnestly seeks to mortify the flesh, with all its affections and desires; the other only seeks to minister to and gratify these very things. Like a sheep and a goat linked together, the sheep longs to feed on the green pasture in the field, while, on the other hand, the goat craves the brambles which grow in the ditch. The sad consequence is, that both are starved. One will not feed on the pasture, and the other cannot feed upon the brambles, and thus neither gets what his nature craves, unless the goat, by superior strength, succeeds in forcing his unequally-yoked companion to remain amongst the brambles, there to languish and die.

The moral of this is plain enough; and, moreover, it is, alas! of but too common occurrence. The goat generally succeeds in gaining his end. The worldly partner carries his or her point, in almost every instance. It will be found, almost without exception, that in cases of the unequal marriage yoke, the poor Christian is the sufferer, as is evidenced by the bitter fruits of a bad conscience, a depressed heart, a gloomy spirit, and a desponding mind. A heavy price, surely, to pay for the gratification of some natural affection, or the attainment, it may be, of some paltry worldly advantage. In fact, a marriage of this kind is the death-knell of practical Christianity, and of progress in the divine life. It is morally impossible that any one can be an unfettered disciple of Christ with his neck in the marriage yoke with an unbeliever. As well might a racer in the Olympic or Isthmian games have expected to gain the crown of victory by attaching a heavy weight or a dead body to his person. It is enough, surely, to have one dead body to sustain, without attaching another. There never was a true Christian yet who did not find that he had abundant work to do in endeavoring to grapple with the evils of one heart, without going to burden himself with the evils of two; and, without doubt, the man who, foolishly and disobediently, marries an unconverted woman, or the woman who marries an unconverted man, is burdened with the combined evils of two hearts; and who is sufficient for these things? One can most fully count upon the grace of Christ for the subjugation of his own evil nature; but he certainly cannot count, in the same way, upon that grace in reference to the evil nature of his unequal yoke-fellow. If he have yoked himself ignorantly, the Lord will meet him personally, on the ground of full confession, with entire restoration of soul, but in the matter of his discipleship, he will never recover it. Paul could say, “I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be disapproved of.” () And he said this, too, in immediate connection with “striving for the mastery.” “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one obtaineth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every one that striveth for the mastery is temperate [self-controlled—] in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air,” (1 Cor. 9:24-27).

Here, it is not a question of life or salvation, but simply one of “running in a race,” and “so running that we obtain,” not life, but “an incorruptible crown.” The fact of being called to run assumes the possession of life; for no one would call upon dead men to run in a race. I have got life, evidently, before I begin to run at all, and hence, though I should fail in the race, I do not lose my life, but only the crown, for this and not that was the object proposed to be run for. We are not called to run for life, inasmuch as we get that, not by running, but “by faith of Jesus Christ,” who by His death has purchased life for us, and implants it in us by the mighty energy of the Holy Ghost. Now this life, being the life of a risen Christ, is eternal, for He is the eternal Son; as He says Himself, in His address to the Father, in John 17, “Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him.” This life is not conditional. He does not give us life as sinners, and then set us to run for it as saints, with the gloomy foreboding that we may lose the precious boon by failing in the race. This would be to “run uncertainly,” as many, alas! are trying to do, who profess to have entered upon the course, and yet know not whether they have life or not. Such persons are running for life, and not for a crown; but God does not set up life at the goal, as the reward of victory, but gives it at the starting-post, as the power by which we run. The power to run, and the object of running, are two very different things; yet they are constantly confounded by persons who are ignorant of the glorious gospel of the grace of God, in which Christ is set forth as the life and righteousness of all who believe on His name; and all this, moreover, as the free gift of God, and not as the reward of our running.

Now, in considering the terribly evil consequences of the unequal marriage yoke, it is mainly as bearing upon our discipleship that we are looking at them. I say mainly, because our entire character and experience are deeply affected thereby. I very much question if anyone can give a more effectual blow to his prosperity in the divine life, than by assuming an unequal yoke. Indeed, the very fact of so doing proves that spiritual decline has already set in, with most alarming symptoms; but as to his discipleship—and testimony, the lamp thereof may be regarded as all but gone out; or if it does give an occasional faint glimmer, it only serves to make manifest the awful gloom of his unhappy position, and the appalling consequences of being “unequally yoked together with an unbeliever.”

Thus much as to the question of the unequal yoke, in its influence upon the life, the character, the testimony, and the discipleship of a child of God. I would now say a word as to its moral effect, as exhibited in the domestic circle. Here, too, the consequences are truly melancholy. Nor could they possibly be otherwise. Two persons have come together in the closest and most intimate relationship, with tastes, habits, feelings, desires, tendencies, and objects diametrically opposite. They have nothing in common; so that, in every movement, they can but grate one against the other. The unbeliever cannot, in reality, go with the believer; and if there should, through excessive amiability, or downright hypocrisy, be a show of acquiescence, what is it worth in the sight of the Lord, who judges the true state of the heart in reference to Himself? But little indeed; yea, it is worse than worthless. Then, again, if the believer should, unhappily, go in any measure with his unequal yoke-fellow, it can only be at the expense of his discipleship, and the consequence is, a condemning conscience in the sight of the Lord; and this again leads to heaviness of spirit, and, it may be, sourness of temper, in the domestic circle, so that the grace of the gospel is by no means commended, and the unbeliever is not attracted or won. Thus it is in every way most sorrowful. It is dishonoring to God, destructive of spiritual prosperity, utterly subversive of discipleship and testimony, and entirely hostile to domestic peace and blessing. It produces estrangement, coldness, distance, and misunderstanding; or, if it does not produce these, it will doubtless lead, on the part of the Christian, to a forfeiture of his discipleship and his good conscience, both of which he may be tempted to offer as a sacrifice upon the altar of domestic peace. Thus, whatever way we look at it, an unequal yoke must load to the most deplorable consequences.

Then, as to its effect upon children, it is equally sad. These are almost sure to flow in the current with the unconverted parent. “Their children spoke half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews’ language, but according to the language of each people.” There can be no union of heart in the training of the children; no joint and mutual confidence in reference to them. One desires to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; the other desires to bring them up in the principles of the world, the flesh, and the devil: and as all the sympathies of the children as they grow up are likely to be ranged on the side of the latter, it is easy to see how it will end. In short, it is an unseemly, unscriptural, and vain effort to plow with an “unequal yoke,” or to “sow the ground with mingled seed;” and all must end in sorrow and confusion.1

I shall, ere turning from this branch of our subject, offer a remark as to the reasons which generally actuate Christians in the matter of entering into the unequal marriage yoke. We all know, alas! how easily the poor heart persuades itself of the rightness of any step which it desires to take, and how the devil furnishes plausible arguments to convince us of its rightness—arguments which the moral condition of the soul causes us to regard as clear, forcible, and satisfactory. The very fact of our thinking of such a thing, proves our unfitness to weigh, with a well-balanced mind and spiritually-adjusted conscience, the solemn consequences of such a step.

If the eye were single (that is, if we were governed but by one object—namely, the glory and honor of the Lord Jesus Christ) we should never entertain the idea of putting our necks into an unequal yoke; and consequently we should have no difficulty or perplexity about the matter. A racer, whose eye was resting on the crown, would not be troubled with any perplexity as to whether he ought to stop and tie a hundred weight round his neck. Such a thought would never cross his mind; and not only so, but a thorough racer would have a distinct and almost intuitive perception of everything which would be likely to prove a hindrance to him in running the race; and of course with such a one, to perceive would be to reject with decision.2

Now were it thus with Christians in the matter of unscriptural marriage, it would save them a world of sorrow and perplexity; but it is not thus. The heart gets out of communion, and is morally incompetent to “try the things that differ;” and when in this condition, the devil gains an easy conquest, and speedy success in his wicked effort to induce the believer to yoke himself with “Belial,” with “unrighteousness,” with “darkness,” with “an infidel” When the soul is in full communion with God, it is entirely subject to His Word; it sees things as He sees them, calls them what He calls them, and not what the devil or his own carnal heart would call them. In this way the believer escapes the ensnaring influence of a deception which is very frequently brought to bear upon him in this matter—namely, a false profession of religion on the part of the person whom he desires to marry. This is a very common case. It is easy to show symptoms of leaning towards the things of God; and the heart is treacherous and base enough to make a profession of religion in order to gain its end; and not only so, but the devil, who is “transformed into an angel of light,” will lead to this false profession, in order thereby the more effectually to entrap the feet of a child of God. Thus it comes to pass that Christians in this matter suffer themselves to be satisfied, or at least profess themselves satisfied, with evidence of conversion, which, under any other circumstances, they would regard as utterly lame and flimsy.

But, alas! experience soon opens the eyes to the reality. It is speedily discovered that the profession was all a vain show, that the heart is entirely in and of the world. Terrible discovery! Who can detail the bitter consequences of such a discovery—the anguish of heart—the bitter reproaches and cuttings of conscience—the shame and confusion—the loss of power and blessing-the forfeiture of spiritual peace and joy—the sacrifice of a life of usefulness? Who can describe all these things? The man awakes from his delusive dream, and opens his eyes upon the tremendous reality, that he is yoked for life with “Belial?” Yes, this is what the Spirit calls it. It is not an inference, or a deduction arrived at by a process of reasoning; but a plain and positive statement of Holy Scripture, that thus the matter stands in reference to one who, from whatever motive, or under the influence of whatever reasons, or deceived by whatever false pretenses, has entered into an unequal marriage-yoke.

Oh, my beloved Christian reader, if you are in danger of entering into such a yoke, let me earnestly, solemnly, and affectionately entreat of you to pause first, and weigh the matter in the balances of the sanctuary, are you move forward a single hair’s breadth on such a fatal path! You may rest assured that you will no sooner have taken the step, than your heart will be assailed by hopeless regrets, and your life embittered by unnumbered sorrows. LET NOTHING INDUCE YOU TO YOKE YOURSELF WITH AN UNBELIEVER. Are your affections engaged? Then remember, they cannot be the affections of your new man; they are, be assured of it, those of the old or carnal nature, which you are called upon to mortify and set aside. Wherefore you should cry to God for spiritual power to rise above the influence of such affections; yea, to sacrifice them to Him. Again, are your interests concerned? Then remember that they are only your interests; and if they are promoted, Christ’s interests are sacrificed by your yoking yourself with “Belial.” Furthermore, they are only your temporal, and not your eternal interests.

In point of fact, the interests of the believer and those of Christ ought to be identical; and it is plain that His interests, His honor, His truth, His glory, must inevitably be sacrificed, if a member of His body is linked with “Belial.” This is the true way to look at the question. What are a few hundreds, or a few thousands, to an heir of heaven? “God is able to give thee much more than this.” Are you going to sacrifice the truth of God, as well as your own spiritual peace, prosperity, and happiness, for a paltry trifle of gold, which must perish in the using of it? Ah, no! God forbid Flee from it, as a bird from the snare, which it sees and knows. Stretch out the hand of genuine, well-braced, wholehearted discipleship, and take the knife and slay your affections and your interests on the altar of God; and then, even though there should not be an audible voice from heaven to approve your act, you will have the invaluable testimony of an approving conscience and an ungrieved Spirit—an ample reward surely for the most costly sacrifice which you can make. May the Spirit of God give power to resist Satan’s temptations!

It is hardly needful to remark here, that in cases where conversion takes place after marriage, the complexion of the matter is very materially altered. There will then be no smitings of conscience, for example; and the whole thing is modified in a variety of particulars. Still there will be difficulty, trial, and sorrow, unquestionably. The only thing is, that one can far more happily bring the trial and sorrow into the Lord’s presence when he has not deliberately and willfully plunged himself thereinto; and, blessed be God, we know how ready He is to forgive, restore, and cleanse from all unrighteousness the soul that makes full confession of its error and failure. This may comfort the heart of one who has been brought to the Lord after marriage. Moreover, to such an one the Spirit of God has given specific direction and blessed encouragement in the following passage: “If any brother have an unbelieving wife, and she think proper to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And if any woman have an unbelieving husband, and he think proper to dwell with her, let her not put him away. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy ... For what knowest thou, O wife, if thou shalt save thy husband or what knowest thou, O husband, if thou shalt save thy wife?” (1 Cor. 7:12-16)

2. We shall now consider “the unequal yoke” in its commercial phase, as seen in cases of partnership in business. This, though not so serious an aspect of the yoke as that which we have just been considering, will, nevertheless, be found a very positive barrier to the believer’s testimony. When a Christian yokes himself for business purposes with an unbeliever—whether that unbeliever be a relative or not—or when he becomes a member of a worldly firm, he virtually surrenders his individual responsibility. Henceforth the acts of the firm become his acts, and it is perfectly out of the question to think of getting a worldly firm to act on heavenly principles. They would laugh at such a notion, inasmuch as it would be an effectual ‘barrier to the success of their commercial schemes. They will feel perfectly free to adopt a number of expedients in carrying on their business, which would be quite opposed to the spirit and principles of the kingdom in which he is, and of the church of which he forms a part. Thus he will find himself constantly in a most trying position. He may use his influence to christianize the mode of conducting affairs; but they will compel him to do business as others do, and he has no remedy save to mourn in secret over his anomalous and difficult position, or else to go out at great pecuniary loss to himself and his family. Where the eye is single, there will be no hesitation as to which of these alternatives to adopt; but, alas! the very fact of getting into such a position proves the lack of a single eye; and the fact of being in it argues the lack of spiritual capacity to appreciate the value and power of the divine principles which would infallibly bring a man out of it. A man whose eye was single could not possibly yoke himself with an unbeliever for the purpose of making money. Such an one could only set, as an object before his mind, the direct glory of Christ; and this object could never be gained by a positive transgression of divine principle.

This makes it very simple. If it does not glorify Christ for a Christian to become a partner in a worldly firm, it must, without doubt, further the designs of the devil. There is no middle ground; but that it does not glorify Christ is manifest, for His Word says, “Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.” Such is the principle, which cannot be infringed without damage to the testimony, and forfeiture of spiritual blessing. True, the conscience of a Christian, who transgresses in this matter, may seek relief in various ways—may have recourse to various subterfuges—may set forth various arguments to persuade itself that all is right. It will be said that, “We can be very devoted and very spiritual, so far as we are personally concerned, even though we are yoked for business purposes with an unbeliever.” This will be found fallacious when brought to the test of the actual practice. A servant of Christ will find himself hampered in a hundred ways by his worldly partnership. If in matters of service to Christ he is not met with open hostility, he will have to encounter the enemy’s secret and constant effort to damp his ardor, and throw cold water on all his schemes. He will be laughed at and despised—he will be continually reminded of the effect which his enthusiasm and fanaticism will produce in reference to the business prospects of the firm. If he uses his time, his talents, or his pecuniary resources in what he believes to be the Lord’s service, he will be pronounced a fool or a madman, and reminded that the true, the proper way for a commercial man to serve the Lord is to “attend to business, and nothing but business;” and that it is the exclusive business of clergymen and ministers to attend to religious matters, inasmuch as they are set apart and paid for so doing.

Now, although the Christian’s renewed mind may be thoroughly convinced of the fallacy of all this reasoning—although he may see that this worldly wisdom is but a flimsy, threadbare cloak, thrown over the heart’s covetous practices—yet who can tell how far the heart may be influenced by such things? We get weary of constant resistance. The current becomes too strong for us, and we gradually yield ourselves to its action, and are carried along on its surface. Conscience may have some death-struggles; but the spiritual energies are paralyzed, and the sensibilities of the new nature are blunted, so that there is no response to the cries of conscience, and no effectual effort to withstand the enemy; the worldliness of the Christian’s heart leagues itself with the opposing influences from without—the outworks are stormed, and the citadel of the soul’s affections vigorously assaulted; and finally the man settles down in thorough worldliness, exemplifying in his own person the prophet’s touching lament, “Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing was of sapphire: their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets: their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick” (Lam. 4:7,8). The man who was once known as a servant of Christ—a fellow-helper unto the kingdom of God—making use of his resources only to further the interests of the gospel of Christ, is now, alas! settled down upon his lees, only known as a plodding, keen, bargain-making man of business, of whom the apostle might well say, “Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present age.” ( )

But perhaps nothing so operates on the hearts of Christians, in inducing them to yoke themselves commercially with unbelievers, as the habit of seeking to maintain the two characters of a Christian and a man of business. This is a grievous snare. In point of fact there can be no such thing. A man must be either the one or the other. If I am a Christian, my Christianity must show itself as a living reality in that in which I am; and if it cannot show itself there, I ought not to be there; for if I continue in a sphere or position in which the life of Christ cannot be manifested, I shall speedily possess naught of Christianity but the name, without the reality—the outward form without the inward power—the shell without the kernel. I should be the servant of Christ not merely on Sunday, but from Monday morning to Saturday night. I should not only be a servant of Christ in the public assembly, but also in my place of business, whatever it may happen to be. But I cannot be a proper

servant of Christ with my neck in the yoke with an unbeliever; for how could the servants of two hostile masters work in the same yoke? It is utterly impossible; as well might one attempt to link the sun's meridian beams with the profound darkness of midnight. It cannot be done; and I do, therefore, most solemnly appeal to my reader's conscience, in the presence of Almighty God, who shall judge the secrets of men's hearts by Jesus Christ, as to this important matter. I would say to him, if he is thinking of getting into partnership with an unbeliever, FLEE FROM IT! yes, flee from it, though it promises you the gain of thousands. You will plunge yourself into a mass of trouble and sorrow. You are going to "plow" with one whose feelings, instincts, and tendencies are diametrically opposed to your own. "An ox and an ass" are not so unlike in every respect as a believer and an unbeliever. How will you ever get on? He wants to make money—to profit himself—to get on in the world; you want (at least you ought to want) to grow in grace and holiness—to advance the interests of Christ and His gospel on the earth, and to push onward to the everlasting kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. His object is money; yours, I trust, is Christ; he lives for this world; you for the world to come; he is engrossed with the things of time; you with those of eternity. How, then, can you ever take common ground with him? Your principles, your motives, your objects, your hopes, are all opposed. How is it possible you can get on? How can you have aught in common? Surely all this needs only to be looked at with a single eye in order to be seen in its true light. It is impossible that any one whose eye is filled, and whose heart is occupied with Christ, could ever yoke himself with a worldly partner for any object whatsoever. Wherefore, my beloved Christian reader, let me once more entreat you, ere you take such a tremendous step—a step fraught with such awful consequences—so pregnant with danger to your best interests, as well as to the testimony of Christ, with which you are honored—to take the whole matter with an honest heart into the sanctuary of God, and weigh it in His sacred balance. Ask Him what He thinks of it, and hearken with a subject will and a well-adjusted conscience to His reply. It is plain and powerful—yea, as plain and as powerful as though it fell from the open heavens—Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

But if unhappily my reader is already in the yoke, I would say to him, Disentangle yourself as speedily as you can. I am much mistaken if you have not already found the yoke a burdensome one. To you it were superfluous to detail the sad consequences of being in such a position; you doubtless know them all. It is needless to print them on paper, or paint them on canvas, to one who has entered into all their reality. My beloved brother in Christ, lose not a moment in seeking to throw off the yoke. This must be done before the Lord, on His principles, and by His grace. It is easier to get into a wrong position than to get out of it. A partnership of ten or twenty years' standing cannot be dissolved in a moment. It must be done calmly, humbly, and prayerfully as in the sight of the Lord, and with entire reference to His glory. I may dishonor the Lord as much in my way of getting out of a wrong position, as by getting into it at the first. Hence if I find myself in partnership with an unbeliever, and my conscience tells me I am wrong, let me honestly and frankly state to my partner that I can no longer go on with him; and having done that, my place is to use every exertion to wind up the affairs of the firm in an upright, a straightforward, and business-like manner, so as to give no possible occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully, and that my good may not be evil spoken of. We must avoid rashness, headiness, and high-mindedness, when apparently acting for the Lord and in defense of His holy principles. If a man gets entangled in a net, or involved in a labyrinth, it is not by bold and violent plunging he will extricate himself. No; he must humble himself, confess his sins before the Lord, and then retrace his steps in patient dependence upon that grace which can not only pardon him for being in a wrong position, but lead him forth into a right one.

Moreover, as in the case of the marriage yoke, the matter is very much modified by the fact of the partnership having been entered into previous to conversion. Not that this would in the slightest degree justify a continuance in it. By no means; but it does away with much of the sorrow of heart and defilement of conscience connected with such a position, and will also very materially affect the mode of escape therefrom. Besides, the Lord is glorified by, and He assuredly accepts, the moral bent of the heart and conscience in the right direction. If I judge myself for being wrong, and that the moral bent of my heart and conscience is to get right, God will accept of that, and surely set me right. But if He sets me right, He will not suffer me to do violence to one truth while seeking to act in obedience to another. The same Word that says: "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," says also, "Render therefore to all their due.... Owe no man anything;" "Provide things honest in the sight of all;" "Walk honestly toward them that are without." If I have wronged God by getting into partnership with an unbeliever, I must not wrong man in my way of getting out of it. Profound subjection to the Word of God, by the power of the Holy Ghost, will set all to rights, will lead us into straight paths, and enable us to avoid all dangerous extremes.

3. In glancing for a moment at the religious phase of the unequal yoke, I would assure my reader that it is by no means my desire to hurt the feelings of any one by canvassing the claims of the various denominations around me. Such is not my purpose. The subject of this paper is one of quite sufficient importance to prevent its being encumbered by the introduction of other matters. Moreover, it is too definite to warrant any such introduction. "The unequal yoke" is our theme, and to it we must confine our attention.

In looking through Scripture, we find almost numberless passages setting forth the intense spirit of separation which ought ever to characterize the people of God. Whether we direct our attention to the Old Testament, in which we have God's relationship and dealings with His earthly people, Israel; or to the New Testament, in which we have His relationship and dealings with His heavenly people, the church; we find the same truth prominently set forth, namely, the entire separation of those who belong to God. Israel's position is thus stated in Balaam's parable, "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned amongst the nations." Their place was outside the range of all the nations of the earth; and they were responsible to maintain that separation. Throughout the entire Pentateuch they were instructed, warned, and admonished as to this; and throughout the Psalms and the prophets we have the record of their failure in the maintenance of this separation, which failure, as we know, has brought down upon them the heavy judgments of the hand of God. It would swell this little paper into a volume, were I to attempt a quotation of all the passages in which this point is put forward. I take it for granted that my reader is sufficiently acquainted with his Bible to render such quotation unnecessary. Should he not be so, however, a reference in his Concordance to the words "separate," "separated," and "separation" will suffice to lay before him at a glance the body of Scripture evidence on this subject. The passage just quoted from the book of Numbers is the expression of God's thoughts about His people Israel: "The people shall dwell ALONE."

The same is true, only upon a much higher ground, in reference to God's heavenly people, the church—the body of Christ—composed of all true believers. They too are a separated people.

We shall now proceed to examine the ground of this separation. There is a great difference between being separate on the ground of what we are, and of what God is. The former makes a man a Pharisee; the latter makes him a saint. If I say to a poor fellow-sinner, "Stand by thyself; I am holier than thou," I am a detestable Pharisee and a hypocrite; but if God, in His infinite condescension and perfect grace, says to me, "I have brought you into relationship with Myself in the person of My Son Jesus Christ, therefore be holy and separate from all evil; come out

from among them and be separate; “I am bound to obey, and my obedience is the practical manifestation of my character as a saint—a character which I have, not because of anything in myself, but simply because God has brought me near unto Himself through the precious blood of Christ.

It is well to be clear as to this. Pharisaism and divine sanctification are two very different things; and yet they are often confounded. Those who contend for the maintenance of that place of separation which belongs to the people of God, are constantly accused of setting themselves up above their fellow-men, and of laying claim to a higher degree of personal sanctity than is ordinarily possessed. This accusation arises from not attending to the distinction just referred to. When God calls upon men to be separate, it is on the ground of what He has done for them upon the cross, and where He has set them, in eternal association with Himself, in the person of Christ. But if I separate myself on the ground of what I am in myself, it is the most senseless and vapid assumption, which will sooner or later be made manifest. God commands His people to be holy on the ground of what He is: “Be ye holy, for I am holy.” This is evidently a very different thing from “Stand by thyself; I am holier than thou.” If God brings people into association with Himself, He has a right to prescribe what their moral character ought to be, and they are responsible to answer thereto. Thus we see that the most profound humility lies at the bottom of a saint’s separation. There is nothing so calculated to put one in the dust as the understanding of the real nature of divine holiness. It is an utterly false humility which springs from looking at ourselves—yea, it is in reality based upon pride, which has never yet seen to the bottom of its own perfect worthlessness. Some imagine that they can reach the truest and deepest humility by looking at self; whereas it can only be reached by looking at Christ. “The more Thy glories strike mine eye, the humbler I shall be.” This is a just sentiment founded upon divine principle. The soul that loses itself in the blaze of Christ’s moral glory is truly humble, and none other. No doubt we have a right to be humble, when we think of what poor creatures we are; but it only needs a moment’s just reflection to see the fallacy of seeking to produce any practical result by looking at self. It is only when we find ourselves in the presence of infinite excellence that we are really humble.

Hence therefore a child of God should refuse to be yoked with an unbeliever, whether for a domestic, a commercial, or a religious object, simply because God tells him to be separate, and not because of his own personal holiness. The carrying out of this principle in matters of religion will necessarily involve much trial and sorrow; it will be termed intolerance, bigotry, narrow-mindedness, exclusiveness, and such like; but we cannot help all this. Provided we keep ourselves separate upon a right principle and in a right spirit, we may safely leave all results with God. No doubt the remnant, in the days of Ezra, must have appeared excessively intolerant in refusing the co-operation of the surrounding people in building the house of God; but they acted upon divine principle in the refusal. “Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity budded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel; then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither.” This might seem a very attractive proposal—a proposal evidencing a very decided leaning toward the God of Israel; yet the remnant refused, because the people, notwithstanding their fair profession, were at heart uncircumcised and hostile. “But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel.” (Ezra 4:1-3) They would not yoke themselves with the uncircumcised; they would not “plow with an ox and ass;” they would not “sow their field with mingled seed;” they kept themselves separate, even though by so doing they exposed themselves to the charge of being a bigoted, narrow-minded, illiberal, uncharitable set of people.

So also in Nehemiah we read: “And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.” (Chapter 9:2) This was not sectarianism, but positive obedience. Their separation was essential to their existence as a people. They could not have enjoyed the divine presence on any other ground. Thus it must ever be with God’s people on the earth. They must be separate, or else they are not only useless, but mischievous. God cannot own or accompany them if they yoke themselves with unbelievers, upon any ground, or for any object whatsoever. The grand difficulty is to combine a spirit of intense separation with a spirit of grace, gentleness, and forbearance; or as another has said, “to maintain a narrow circle with a wide heart.” This is really a difficulty. As the strict and uncompromising maintenance of truth tends to narrow the circle around us, we shall need the expansive power of grace to keep the heart wide, and the affections warm. If we contend for truth otherwise than in grace, we shall only yield a one-sided and most unattractive testimony. And, on the other hand, if we try to exhibit grace at the expense of truth, it will prove in the end to be only the manifestation of a popular liberality at God’s expense—a most worthless thing.

Then, as to the object for which real Christians usually yoke themselves with those who, even on their own confession, and in the judgment of charity itself, are not Christians at all, it will be found in the end that no really divine and heavenly object can be gained by an infringement of God’s truth. Per fas aut nefas can never be a divine motto. The means are not sanctified by the end; but both means and end must be according to the principles of God’s holy Word, else all must eventuate in confusion and dishonor. It might have appeared to Jehoshaphat a very worthy object to recover Ramoth-gilead out of the hand of the enemy; and, moreover, he might have appeared a very liberal, gracious, popular, large-hearted man, when, in reply to Ahab’s proposal, he said, “I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will he with thee in the war.” It is easy to be liberal and large-hearted at the expense of divine principle; but how did it end? Ahab was killed, and Jehoshaphat narrowly escaped with his life, having made total shipwreck of his testimony.

Thus we see that Jehoshaphat did not even gain the object for which he unequally yoked himself with an unbeliever; and even had he gained it, it would have been no justification of his course.3 Nothing can ever warrant a believer’s yoking himself with an unbeliever; and therefore, however fair, attractive, and plausible the Ramoth expedition might seem in the eye of man, it was, in the judgment of God, “helping the ungodly, and loving them that hate the Lord” (2 Chron. 19:2). The truth of God strips men and things of the false colors with which the spirit of expediency would deck them, and presents them in their proper light; and it is an unspeakable mercy to have the clear judgment of God about all that is going on around us: it imparts calmness to the spirit, and stability to the course and character, and saves one from that unhappy fluctuation of thought, feeling, and principle which so entirely unfits him for the place of a steady and consistent witness for Christ. We shall surely err, if we attempt to form our judgment by the thoughts and opinions of men; for they will always judge according to the outward appearances, and not according to the intrinsic character and principle of things. Provided men can gain what they conceive to be a right object, they care not about the mode of gaining it. But the true servant of Christ knows that he must do his Master’s work upon his Master’s principles and in his Master’s spirit. It will not satisfy such an one to reach the most praiseworthy end, unless he can reach it by a divinely-appointed road. The means and the end must both be divine. I admit it, for example, to be a most desirable end to circulate the Scriptures—God’s own pure, eternal Word; but if I could not circulate them save by yoking myself with an unbeliever, I should refrain, inasmuch as I am not to do evil that good may come.

But, blessed be God, His servant can circulate His precious book without violating the precepts contained in that book. He can upon his own individual responsibility, or in fellowship with those who are really on the Lord’s side, scatter the precious seed everywhere, without leaguing himself with those whose whole course and conduct prove them to be of the world. The same may be said in reference to every object of a religious nature. It can and should be gained on God’s principles, and only thus. It may be argued, in reply, that we are told not to judge, that we cannot read the heart, and that we are bound to hope that all who would engage in such good works as the translation of the Bible, the distribution of tracts, and the aiding of missionary labors, must be Christians; and that therefore it cannot be wrong to link ourselves with them. To all this I reply, that there is hardly a passage in the New Testament so misunderstood and misapplied as Matthew 7:1: “Judge not, that ye be not judged.” In the very same chapter we read, “Beware of false prophets; ... by their fruits ye shall know them.” Now, how are we to “beware,” if we do not exercise judgment? Again, in 1 Corinthians 5 we read, “For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.” Here we are distinctly taught that those “within” come within the immediate range of the church’s judgment; and yet, according to the common interpretation of Matthew 7:1, we ought not to judge anybody; that interpretation, therefore, must needs be unsound. If people take, even in profession, the ground of being “within,” we are commanded to judge them. “Do not ye judge them that are within?” As to those “without,” we have naught to do with them, save to present the pure and perfect, the rich, illimitable, and unfathomable grace which shines with unclouded effulgence in the death and resurrection of the Son of God.

All this is plain enough. The people of God are told to exercise judgment as to all who profess to be “within;” they are told to “beware of false prophets;” they are commanded to “try the spirits;” and how can they do all this if they are not to judge at all? What then does our Lord mean when He says: “Judge not”? I believe He means just what Paul, by the Holy Ghost, says when he commands us to “judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God” (1 Cor. 4:5). We have nothing to do with judging motives, but we have to judge conduct and principles; that is to say, the conduct and principles of all who profess to be “within.” And, in point of fact, the very persons who say, “We must not judge,” do themselves constantly exercise judgment. There is no true Christian in whom the moral instincts of the divine nature do not virtually pronounce judgment as to character, conduct, and doctrine; and these are the very points which are placed within the believer’s range of judgment.

All therefore that I would press upon the Christian reader is, that he should exercise judgment as to those with whom he yokes himself in matters of religion. If he is at this moment working in yoke or in harness with an unbeliever, he is positively violating the command of the Holy Ghost. He may be ignorantly doing so up to this, and if so, the Lord’s grace is ready to pardon and restore; but if he persist in disobedience after having been warned, he cannot possibly expect God’s blessing and presence with him, no matter how valuable or important the object which he may seek to attain. “To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.”

Present Testimony: Volume 5, 1853, God's Rest

"As having nothing, yet possessing all things," is a spiritual enigma which expresses a good deal concerning the saint's present position in this world. It shows on the one side the extent and security of his divinely-bestowed inheritance; and on the other, the futurition of its possession and enjoyment.

"Faith is the substance of things 'hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It gives power and reality in the soul to unseen and future things-things which are designed to mold our whole character, and aims and being, here below, and in which we shall find our heavenly and eternal portion.

So entirely, indeed, is revelation occupied with the presentation of the objects of hope, blended and linked, it is true, with that which is actually accomplished in Christ, that a Christian cannot rightly enjoy the present grace of Christ without looking forward. Nay more, it may be said, that " if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

He who by the power and grace of Christ has been " delivered from this present evil world," is by that very deliverance constituted a child of hope, and set forward on his journey to a future world; and if he be true to his calling, and not like Israel, who in heart turned back again into Egypt, he will understand the meaning of that word, " One thing I do, fbrgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

The grace that attaches our souls to Christ makes us wish for his return. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." Even the cross itself points us to the glory; for He who was "crucified through weakness yet liveth by the power of God." While the very institution of Christ, in remembrance of His death, brings home to the heart the bright hope of His return. "Ye do show the Lord's death till He come."

This hope, which is presented in various aspects, according to the variety of blessing which God hath prepared for them that love Him (for "He hath blessed us with ALL spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ"), may begin at that which is individual-and so far at self-as "in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie hath promised before the world began." But it extends in widening circles, until it embraces all that can be enjoyed in the manifestation of the glory of God. "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Even for creation itself, amidst its groans and sufferings, and subjection to vanity, through man's sin, there is a reserve of hope. "For creation (Gr.) itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

"We are saved by hope;" but, as it is divinely argued, not by a visible and temporal hope, but by one that is unseen and eternal. For this is the generic character in Scripture, of seen and unseen things. "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

To the affections of the saint or the Church of God, this hope is concentrated in the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our. Savior Jesus Christ." And the moral conformity to this hope on the part of His disciples, is found in the exhortation of Christ, "Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord."

The Church will have her proper joy in union with her heavenly Head and Bridegroom, in glory, which is now her stay and comfort in grace. But when she thus takes her place in heavenly joy-her central place of deep and unutterable peace and rest in the affections of Christ, on the marriage of the Lamb-there is still another character attaching to this hope, which stamps it with blessed and glorious features in contrast with all that the history of man and of creation has hitherto known.

There is the happiness to the saint (complete in itself) of being " forever with the Lord"; but there are also the blessed surrounding circumstances in which the triumphs of God's grace and glory will be manifested. There is the bright circle of accomplished blessing, of which Christ is the center and spring, extending to things in earth and things in heaven. For God," hath made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in Him."

God will gather around Himself all whom His love has made happy; as it is the end of Christ's death "to gather together in one the children of God that are scattered abroad." Of this gathering the twelfth of Hebrews presents us with a blessed picture, which I should give thus: "Ye are come to Mount Sion; and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and to myriads of angels to a general assembly; and to the Church of the first-born (ones) who are enrolled in heaven; and to God the judge of all; and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus, mediator of the new covenant; and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel."

These are the constituents of that blessed assembly, that heavenly feast of tabernacles to which we are now come by faith, and in the actual gathering of which the rest of God will be found.

God's purpose in Christ is "to reconcile all things unto Himself.... whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." And it is added, as to the church's portion, "you that were some time alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled." God's final purpose is to bless, not only as now, the souls of His people, nor even, in the fullest sense, to bless individually; but He will gather around Himself, and will bring into His rest, those whom His love has chosen in sorrow and affliction, and whom He has called to be the partaken of His glory. Here, the very world of their existence, and the whole condition of their being, will accord with the grace, that redeemed them to Himself; and will, with sin shut out, and sorrow banished, and need of conflict gone, and the tide of God's eternal goodness flowing unchecked on every hand, form not the saints rest alone, but the rest of God.

It is the believer's entrance into this rest that is the subject of instruction in these chapters; and the moral wilderness which man's sin has made of this world, may well cause our hearts to long and sigh for this coming rest.

It is indeed set before us, like the coming of the Lord, as the proper object of our hope; but like this, amidst the confusion and evil, the difficulties and sorrows of the last days, it becomes also our necessary and only resource.

Man in innocence failed to enjoy this rest; the Israelites in the wilderness, through unbelief, came short of Canaan, which was only the type of it; and Joshua, when he had led the tribes into the land, could not give them rest. But God will not be defeated of his purpose. "Some must enter therein." "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."

In David, after the tribes had been long in possession of the land, the Spirit of the. Lord revives, even to Israel, the testimony of this rest, and presents it as their yet future hope: " saying in David, To-day, after so long a time;" as it is said (i.e. in Psa. 95) "to-day if ye will hear His voice harden not your hearts," etc.

The feast of tabernacles, the type of this rest, is to Israel, practically, like the passover and pentecost, an unaccomplished feast. The Church of God, that can say, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," and can speak of "the day of pentecost being fully come," has as yet known nothing of the antitype of the feast of tabernacles.

Israel-will have its rest under the shadow of the Lord; and the Lord will have His rest in Israel's blessing. "In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord -thy God in the Midst of thee is mighty, He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love; He will joy over thee with singing." But this is an earthly rest. " God's rest," as presented to the faith and hope of His pilgrims now, is a heavenly rest; and we are urged to "labor to enter into that rest."

Whether our hearts are pressing on to this rest or not, it is certain, that redemption, as to its present results (like the type in Israel), delivers us only into a wilderness. Canaan lay beyond the desert; and the tribes of the Lord must needs learn the toilsomeness of the way before they reached their rest. God had not redeemed them from Egypt to leave them in the wilderness; and where there was any sense of his presence, the people could say, like Moses, in the midst of their weariness, "We are journeying to the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you." God will not allow His saints to find a rest in this world, any more than He would allow Israel to find the land of promise until they had crossed the desert and the Jordan. His purpose in redemption is to bring us into His rest; and hence the admonition, " Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of-entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." He would not have His people indifferent about their inheritance, nor "despise the pleasant land;" but would have their faith and expectation and moral position here in accordance with the unchanging counsels of His grace.

We rest in Christ now, it is true, from every burden of sin and condemnation; and our consciences rest from the guilt which Christ's blood has removed; we " rest thus from our own works as God did from His," but this is only that we may without hindrance, pursue our pathway to the heavenly rest.

Toil and conflict in the world for Christ now, are as much the fruit of grace as rest and glory will be by and bye. God cannot rest in the confusion and vanity, and misery and death, which now mar the fairest scenes of this world; and for the same reason, He says, in effect, to His people, " Arise ye and depart, for this is not your rest; because it is polluted."

God's rest is before us; and the exhortation is, "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest." And be it remembered, that, if the pressure of the last days makes us sigh for our rest and deliverance, it is God's rest that He is bringing us into. It is but to lower its character, if we think of it only as the saint's rest.

There is something wonderful in the thought that this rest of God, this final purpose of his heart, has been kept in reserve-unentered through all the ages of the past; a joy to be tasted by His people when the Jubilee of redemption is come. It could not, indeed, be entered before, for Christ, the new man and second Adam, must bring us into it, and be' the ground and center of this rest of God.

The sabbath was the great type of this rest; and accordingly, in Gen. 2:3, it is said, "On the seventh day God ended. His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made."

Creation is here the sphere of this rest; but it is creation before sin had disturbed the order and beauty of God's works, or had cast a cloud of sorrow over that bright scene, in the contemplation of which it is said, "God rested and was refreshed."

As to man, this rest comes in only at the close (if I may so speak) of long ages of labor. Not that this was necessary to prepare the rest itself; for " the works were finished from the foundation of the world;" though in reality, through man's sin, the rest was broken up: however the type of it, in gracious promise, might remain. God could not rest where sin was producing moral disorder and misery and death, and hence the force of our Lord's expression, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

It is necessary that sin and all its consequences should be excluded from God's rest; and hence the necessity of redemption, in order to bring any into the enjoyment. of- it. Rest of conscience, through the blood of Christ, God now gives to a poor sinner, as a preparation for His holy presence; but the rest of God itself is in the wide scene of God's completed works, when redemption shall bring alike the heirs and the inheritance into participation in that rest. It stands necessarily in redemption, because sin is to leave no stain on that which God pronounces perfect; and because sinners are to be associated with Him in this rest. " For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." He must unweave the mighty web of mischief which Satan, since the fall, has cast around man and his lost inheritance, ere the saint can have rest, or God can rest in the completion of His work.

One may, indeed, through grace, enjoy communion with God here, and maintain by the same power of grace the conflict with Satan and all evil, but this is conflict and trial, and not rest. It was in the review of God's finished works in creation that He is first presented to us as having rest; and that rest of God which is future, will be in redemption's completed work, when both the heirs and the inheritance will be in the full power of that redemption which is by Christ.

Nothing in man, nothing in the saint, could procure this rest, nor give title or fitness to enter it. It is emphatically God's rest; and it will bear the stamp of that perfectness which is impressed upon all the works of God.

Nor is this a slight and unimportant circumstance connected with this rest. For all His works are perfect; and thus stand eternally in contrast with the works of man. This is seen in all God's works, whether, in the order and glory of the great frame-work of creation, or in the transient beauty of the flowers of the field. A lily, for example, is invested by the hand of God, prodigal of its infinite resources, with a splendor of attire that man's proudest efforts can never reach. "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

So in His ways of love and grace, there is an absolute contrast to all the principles and the ways of man. There is no parallel to His love. The way He has taken to bring our souls acquainted with Himself is a demonstration of this. He is GOD in His love, as He is in the supremacy of His power and glory; and the rest which He has prepared for His saints will only be the fruit of the fully accomplished counsels of His love.

In a sense it may be said, that God Himself has foregone His own rest, until He can enjoy it with us His poor weary pilgrims, who are yet on our journey towards it.

In His rest in creation, there is no intimation of any being associated with Him in the enjoyment of it. It is only declared that God rested from all His works. But His counsel from the beginning was • to bring, through the second Adam, His redeemed into this blessedness. Hence, when sin disturbed His sabbath in creation, He goes on to work anew; as has been already quoted, "My Father worketh hitherto." And hence also the renewal of the institution of the sabbath, or seventh day's rest under the law. It still held forth as a type the hope of rest, after all the toil and labor which sin had introduced: though an entrance upon it can only be secured by association with Him who brings in by death and resurrection a new order of things in redemption, of which not the seventh but the first day of the week is our constant memorial.

The seventh, or sabbatical year, in Israel's constitutions, presented another re-duplication of the type of a final sabbatic rest. The jubilee also, at the end of every hebdomad of sabbatical years, with all its joyousness, and thrilling sounds of liberty and recovered inheritances, kept up the type and this blessed hope of final rest.

But as to enjoyment, whether in Israel or the church of God, we are taught that the antitype is yet entirely future, save, as to the work of Christ, by which it will be all brought in.

"There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God." God's rest is that to which we are now journeying, when He will again keep sabbath amidst the glorious scenes of redemption's wonders, and not merely amidst the works of creation. At creation's rest " the morning stars sang together;" but when God's rest in redemption is entered upon, " every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth," as well as angels' and the redeemed shall unite in saying, " Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever!"

And their notes of heavenly joy will not be exchanged as upon earth for sighs and sorrow, nor will they ever die away again, as now. For redemption will stamp an eternal character upon the rest, and open an eternal spring of joy.

Girdle of Truth: Volume 4, Fragment: Be Ye Not Unequally Yoked

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

There is allusion in these three verses to several passages of Scripture, the principles of which are peculiarly applicable, and the mind` of the Apostle was imbued with the truth contained in these Scriptures. He had imbibed the sense, the sap-though you will not find the exact words that are here brought together recorded anywhere. The principle is this: whether it be Egypt, you must get out of Egypt-or Babylon, you must get out of Babylon. " And ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." He promises to be more to them than He had ever been to the Jews; He will have them entirely to Himself. Now we are not, like the Jews, to judge only of outside cleanness, but we are to judge the whole spirit of the world; and whatever is not of Christ we are to judge unclean. The world will come in with all that is pleasant to the flesh, but it will bring in all that can trouble, and will bring in judgment.

The Word of the Lord is that which the Apostle gives us, taking the sense of several Scriptures, and so applying them as to express God's mind with peculiar force and clearness. " I will dwell in them and walk in them," &c. He is here laying the ground, and we ought to be able to go on with that which He would unfold to us, and to say, " God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." If we have known the unsearchable riches of Christ, let us live in the enjoyment of our own proper things which God has given us in Him.

When a Christian gets into the world, it is dreadfully far. It- is not that he may fall into its grosser sins, but when he gets into association with the spirit of the world, he gets out of his right sphere, and loses his proper blessings.

The Apostle says, "Our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged!"

He had said, " Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." That is the testimony we go out with to the world. Ye have received this testimony; well then, take care that ye receive not the grace of God in vain: but now be ye enlarged. I want you to leave the spirit of the world, that your hearts may be enlarged; and that cannot be but as you are living in the new world, in the place where God has put you. " Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." This was having fellowship with the world. If I go and dishonor God with idols, He will destroy the idols. He says, " Come out from among them and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."

The Apostle had to write unto them, not as unto natural men, (because they had been converted,) but as unto carnal; he could not write unto them as unto spiritual, consequently was not able to tell them of that which was their portion and really belonged to them: for if they had not been faithful in that which was another's, how could he give unto them that which was their own? Wherever the heart is turned to idols, it is necessarily straitened in itself; it is not living in its own proper sphere, where the riches of God's house have entrance into the heart.

Girdle of Truth: Volume 2, Way of God's Blessing, The

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."-2 Cor. 6:17, 18.

Wherever there is blessing it draws to God and to one another. Our natural state is separation from God and from one another. The spirit of selfishness-the effect of sin-is always separation. If God calls unto unity, He must separate us from evil. Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. It is not a union only in sentiment, but a vital union-a separation from evil, for God cannot bear evil. The great God cannot be where there is unrighteousness. It is unity in God and separation from all evil,-God drawing us into communion with Himself through the Lord Jesus. It is no matter where it is, but there must be separation from evil in cleaving to that which is good.

In verse 18 we get the way in which God reveals Himself to us when separate from evil: " I will be a Father unto you;" and then the position into which we are brought: " Ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

What I would press is the essential character of the position into which we are brought. We find ourselves associated as children in His family. In our everlasting character, in the life we have received, we are sons. We are not servants, but sons, being of this family. We cannot be children of two families. We are children of one family. Being thus children of God, we have no association with anything else. In this way the Christian must be a separate person.

Note the specialty of the character in which He is a Father to us "saith the Lord Almighty." In looking to Him as our Father, we look at Him as Almighty. Our blessing flows from our experience of God. All the exercises of the Christian bring out to him the trustworthiness of God, the certainty of His interference in all things. As regards all the details of life, we ought to bring in the faithfulness and Almightiness of God; in every circumstance to recognize the Lord (Jehovah) Almighty.

Things New and Old: Volume 33, Correspondence

1. S. ., Caermarthen.—Punishment eternal Is clearly the truth revealed to us in scripture. Awful as it is, the wrath of God abideth on the unbeliever. (Matt. 25:46; John 3:36.) If a teacher denies this, then he believes nothing, because God says it is so. He neither really believes the atonement, as scripture speaks of it, nor anything else. He may find when too late that the punishment in the lake of fire is not for a time, or temporal, but eternal. Scripture teaches that from this there is no escape. Give up the plain teaching of scripture, and all is darkness. There is indeed nothing vague as to the atonement. It was Christ, the holy One, forsaken of God, suffering the wrath of God due to us. Nothing can be plainer than Isa. 53 and abounding texts in the New Testament. God’s righteousness is revealed in it. And there is no other ground by which God can be righteous in justifying the ungodly.

On no account should the Christian have fellowship with the infidel who denies the statements of the word of God as to eternal punishment. “What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” (2 Cor. 6:15.)

We have arrived at the days when the little leaven is fast leavening the whole lump. And we have no safe directions but the word of God. “The Lord knoweth them that are his. And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (2 Tim. 2:19.) Read also verses 20-22. It is no doubt a painful path of trial to walk according to the word of God, but it is the only safe one.

In the beginning it was, “Purge out therefore the old leaven.” (1 Cor. 5:7.) In the end, now, it is, “If a man therefore purge himself from these,” &c. (2 Tim. 2:21.) Thank God, there will be a small remnant, “that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” The path may be very narrow: but let us take courage, we only read of one, Enoch, who walked with God; but “he had this testimony, that he pleased God.” As it was then, so it is now: the world is ripening fast for judgment, but a few more days, and then, when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth? In that day we shall not regret having walked in a path of separation from all evil, however lonely. And we can only say, “Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.”

2. J. W., Liverpool.—Isa. 53:12 presents Christ as the mighty conqueror dividing the spoil, and that beyond death. We know Him as such, gone up on high, even now. (See Eph. 4:8-13; compare Psalm 68:17, 18, see margin, “in the man.”) This chapter (Isa. 53.) is Israel’s repentance after they are fully restored, as Eze. 36:22-31. Israel, or the remnant of them, after they have seen Him with wounded hands, will thus repent. (Zech. 13:6.) It will then be revealed to them, that He, their Messiah, has made the atonement for them. They had despised Him, but He had entered in full, deep sympathy into all their sufferings—carried their sorrows. (Ver. 4.) But far more, He had borne their iniquities. (Ver. 5 to end.) And that despised Jesus, having passed through death for them, is the mighty Conqueror, dividing the spoil. This is a figure understood by observing the customs of the East.

The Evangelist: Volume 6 (1872), Acceptance.

THE conscience is made by many the measure of acceptance, instead of God Himself. I must know that He justifies me by the perfect One having gone down into death under judgment for me as the ground of peace, and what God says about that work in His word as the sure warrant for perfect peace in His presence. No doubt the conscience in this way will be purged by the blood of Jesus; but my comfort is, that God accepts and justifies me. It is God which justifieth. A believer is not only justified by faith, but he is called to live by faith.

“IF you look both to the laughing side and the weeping side of this world, and if you look not only upon the skin and color of things, but into their inwards, and the heart of their excellency, you will see that one look of Christ’s sweet and lovely eye is worth ten thousand worlds of such rotten stuff as the foolish sons of men set their hearts upon.”— RUTHERFORD.

The Evangelist: Volume 6 (1872), "Behold, Now is the Accepted Time."

NOT next year, but now; not tomorrow, but today; for we know not what an hour may bring forth. Your case is urgent. To you it may be said, “This night thy soul shall be required of thee.” Tomorrow you may be in eternity. Beware then, we most lovingly say, of trifling with your soul’s salvation, for every one shall give account of himself to God. Remember the solemn, searching questions of Jesus, “What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

Consider then, dear reader, that “now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” Turn to the Lord now. Oh, do not put it off! It is of vital moment. God says, “Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.” Do hearken to God’s voice now, and do not harden your heart. You are doing one or the other—hearkening to His voice, or hardening your heart. Which is it? How very solemn is the fact that under the sound of the gospel men are hardening their hearts, refusing God’s voice, not receiving His word, many hearing as if they heard not, making a thousand excuses for not coming to the stretched out arms of the sinner-loving Saviour, and receiving forgiveness of Him and eternal life. Do, dear reader, solemnly think of this. Beware of refusing Him that speaketh, for God has spoken to us in these last days by His Son, and still He speaks about His Son, His love, His finished work upon the cross, His atoning death, His being raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and now crowned with glory and honor at His right hand. I say, God now speaks to us about His Son, as the only salvation, the only righteousness, the only way of access into God’s most holy presence. How can you escape then, if you neglect this great salvation? You perhaps, like many others, intend to be saved one day; but if you refuse the Saviour now, how do you know that that day will ever come? How many souls are caught in this snare of Satan! They try to satisfy themselves that they intend at some future time to come to Jesus; and, if not before, on their death bed. But, alas! alas! they refuse God’s “now;” they will not come “today;” so that instead of a lingering death-bed, as they imagined, they may be suddenly surprised to find themselves in eternity. How solemn this is, and yet how often true!

Beware then, dear reader, of procrastination! Time is short. Your life is but as a vapor. Eternity may be nearer than you think. The Lord Jesus is coming quickly. You know you are not saved—that you have not peace with God. Still the door is open, and God in His rich mercy still calls to you in the gospel to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ that you may be saved. Do think of this. The gospel is God’s message to you, and He says “today”— “now.” Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.

Once more, beware of refusing Jesus. He delights to save a lost one. He welcomes, cleanses, saves forever, and casts out none that come to Him.

It was a bright clear night in December, and the good ship Harriet, under reefed topsails, was coming up the Channel before a stiff breeze. Every heart on board was glad; for, after a long and perilous voyage, she was “homeward bound.” On the quarter-deck Capt. H. and Edward L., his first mate, were standing talking together. “We shall be in dock before Christmas, if the wind holds,” L. said. “It is not well for a sailor to set his mind too much on anything, but I have set mine on being in the dear old home at Christmas this year. It is four years since we all met at home, and father and mother say it hasn’t been half Christmas without me.”

Captain H. listened to the young sailor’s eager words; then laying his hand kindly on his shoulder, said gravely, “I do not wonder at your wish, Edward. It is a great pleasure to get home, especially to such a happy home as yours is at Christmas time. But there is something I should like you to wish for still more than that. I want you to be sure that when the voyage of life is passed, there remaineth for you a rest in the glorious

home above—

L. was silent for a moment, and grasped the captain's hand in his. "Captain, you have been a kind friend to me ever since I can remember. If all Christians were like you, I can only say I wish there were more of them. And more than that, what you have so often said to me about religion has made me think very seriously. I really intend to serve Christ too, but not just yet."

"And why not now, L.?" asked his friend. "I am afraid you will think me cowardly, if I tell you, captain. The truth is that our people always give a ball at Christmas, and it would be a terrible disappointment to them, if I were to hold aloof. They would say I had turned Puritan, and lost my spirits, and I don't know what else, and it would seem hard to give them pain just on first going home. So I have made up my mind to keep on as usual till after that. Besides, he added, with the frankness of a true English sailor, I expect it will be a downright jolly time, and I'm not inclined to give it up on my own account. But after Christmas, captain, I will turn over a new leaf; see if I don't."

The captain felt that human pleading would have little power to overturn the young man's purpose. In his anxiety, he had recourse to prayer. Standing still, with uncovered head, on the heaving deck, he prayed earnestly, though silently, to his Father in heaven, who could convince his young friend that now was the only certain day of salvation.

L. understood, and felt the unspoken prayer, the words of which he could not hear. His head was bowed too, and his spirit deeply moved; but the tempter was at hand with the deadly suggestion that it was quite as safe, — far better to wait awhile. As the captain bade him "good night," before turning in, he said gaily, "Now don't be anxious about me, captain; Christmas will soon be here, and you have my promise after that."

The captain went below, and left the brave young fellow on deck, bright and mirthful, and ready to quench every feeling of misgiving that the captain's prayer had caused by lively anticipations of home.

Not ten minutes had passed, when the captain heard hurried footsteps on the deck, then the sharp, clear cry, "Man overboard;" when in another instant he had dashed up the companion-ladder, and looked around. He scarcely needed to ask, "Who is it?" for had it not been Edward L. he would have seen him at once among the gallant fellows who were lowering the boat, ready to peril their own lives to rescue the man in danger. Yes, it was Edward L. Reaching over the quarter-deck to draw an entangled log line he had lost his foothold, and fallen overboard, and the ship went on her rapid way without him. Everything was done that stout arms and brave hearts could do; but all was in vain. The men strained at the oars only to see him throw up his arms and sink. Christmas with its mirth and festivity came to others, but not to him; and as he went down in the cold waters, leaving hope and life behind him forever, it would add a terrible keenness to his agony to remember that not many minutes before that eternal life had been offered to him through Jesus, and he had refused it.

Again, dear reader, we beseech you, in the name of the sinner-loving Jesus, to lay to heart this matter of eternal importance—your own soul's salvation. God says now, — what do you say? Do you at this moment bow before God to His judgment of your state, who declares you to be guilty before Him? Edward L. did not believe that God meant what He said; but alas! alas! how soon, how very soon, he found himself in eternity! Oh, then, dear reader, accept God's truth now; bow before Him confessing yourself a guilty sinner now; flee to the outstretched arms of Jesus now; rely on His precious blood now—yes, "today," "now,"— tomorrow may be too late!

Edification: Volume 9, Our Scripture Portion.

(2 Cor. 6:11 — 7:16).

To be of any profit this article mast be real in connection with a Bible, opened at the above passage.

TWICE already had the Apostle spoken of the ministry of exhortation which was his, "beseeching" men (verse 5:20, 6:1). These exhortations were of a more general nature; but in verse 11 he comes to one of a very personal sort, addressing the Corinthians in direct fashion. It is evident that at this point he found his mouth opened and his heart free to bring them plainly face to face with the error which lay at the root of so much that was wrong in their midst. They had not realized that if they remained yoked with unbelievers they would of necessity be dragged into much of their evil ways.

Paul did not bluntly bring them to book on this point directly he opened his first epistle. Whence came the tendency to split into parties and schools of opinion?

Whence the immorality, the love of litigation, the carelessness about idolatry, the disorder in their meetings, the speculative errors as to the resurrection? From the flesh doubtless; but also as imported from the world around them, for Corinth was full of things of that kind. We may learn a valuable lesson from Paul's wise action. In his first epistle he contented himself with meeting the errors which lay on the surface, waiting until that letter had had its effect before he exposed the underlying causes. Now however a suitable spiritual atmosphere had been produced. He had been able to direct their thoughts to the ministry of reconciliation. God and the world are in the sharpest possible antagonism, and therefore reconciliation with the One must involve separation from the other. Hence the opportune moment to speak plainly on this point had arrived.

The Apostle Paul was the man of large heart. The Corinthians were saints of narrow affections. "Straightened," means narrowed, and "bowels," signifies affections. Quite remarkable — do you think not? The average man of the world would assess matters just the other way round, and not a few Christians would agree with him. They would dub the separate Christian as, the "narrow-minded man," and praise the easygoing one of worldly type, as the largehearted man. But as a matter of fact it is the separate believer who finds his center in Christ, and so enters into the largeness of His interests. The worldly believer is limited by this little world and narrowed down to selfish interests. Paul exhorted the Corinthians to be enlarged by separation from the world.

Verse 14 contains an allusion to Deuteronomy 27:10. The word literally is "diversely yoked" though of course if two, of diverse nature and form, such as the ox and the ass, were put together the resultant yoke would prove to be unequal. Any yoking together of the believer and the unbeliever must be unequal because they are diverse in their very nature and character — the one, born of God, a child of light; the other

still in the Adamic nature, a child of darkness. The yoking together of two, so wholly diverse, must prove disastrous.

It is a question, be it noted, of a yoke. The believer is left in the world, and comes into contact with all sorts, as is indicated in 1 Corinthians 5:9, 10. While mixing thus with all sorts he is to be careful to avoid being yoked with any. The most intimate and permanent yoke that the world knows is that of marriage. A believer may yoke himself with an unbeliever by a business partnership. Before he is through with it he may suffer much spiritual loss and the Lord's Name be dishonored; since he has to share in the responsibility of evil things wrought by the unconverted partner. But at least he can get out of it in process of time, even if at financial loss to himself. But marriage he cannot get out of save by death — his own or his partner's. And there are many other yokes besides those in marriage and in business, though not so strong and enduring. We are to shun all of them.

Consider what the believer stands for — righteousness, light. Christ, the temple of God. The unbeliever stands for unrighteousness (or lawlessness), darkness, Belial, idols. Now what possible yoke, or fellowship, or agreement, can there be between the two? None whatever. Then why take up a position which involves an attempt to bring together things which are as the poles asunder? The unbeliever cannot possibly fit in with the things which are the very life of the believer. He has not got the life which would enable him to do so. The believer can entangle and damage himself with the things of unrighteousness which occupy the unbeliever, for though born of God he still lies the flesh within him. Yoke the two together, and what must be the upshot?

No deep understanding is needed to answer that question. The one can only travel in one direction: the other can travel in either direction. The way of the unbeliever prevails, though the believer may be dragged very unwillingly and hence act as a kind of brake on the wheels.

The exhortation then is that we come out from among the unbelievers and be separate, not even touching what is unclean. The believer cannot be too careful to avoid every kind of connection and complicity with what is evil; and that because of what he is in his individual character as a child of light, and also what he is collectively with other believers as the temple of the living God. Being the living God, He not only dwells in the midst of His people but He walks in their midst, observing all their ways. And holiness becomes his house forever.

Some of us may say to ourselves, "Yes, but if I obey, this injunction and consequently break these or those links, I shall suffer a great deal of loss and be in a very difficult position." That is very possible. But such a contingency is foreseen. The world may cast you out, but God will receive you, and be a Father to you. The last verse of our chapter does not refer to proper Christian relationship which is established in Christ which is expounded by the Apostle in Galatians 3:26 to 4:7; but rather to that practical "fathering" of the believer which he needs when-suffering from the world. If we may so put it, with all reverence, God Himself will play the part of Father to him. Hence we are said to be His sons and daughters. When it is a question of proper Christian relationship we all, whether male or female, are His sons.

And notice this: the One who is pledged to play the Father's part is the Lord. Almighty. Here then we have brought tether His three great Names — Father, Jehovah, Almighty. He is Jehovah, the unchanging One, faithful to His word. He wields all power. And the value of both Names He brings into His fatherly care. We need not be afraid to cut all links with the world, cost what it may.

An interesting and encouraging contrast between this verse and Ephesians 6:12 may be pointed out. There are "the rulers of the darkness of this world," or, more literally." the world-rulers of this darkness— Satanic authorities and powers, no doubt, who dominate this world of darkness. We might well fear them, were it not that we are under the protection of the Lord Almighty. The word translated, Almighty, is literally the All-ruler. The world-rulers may be great, but they are as nothing in the presence of the All-ruler; just as this world, though great to us, is very small when compared with all things — the mighty universe of God.

We have then these striking promises from the lips of God. If we are separate from the world, and face whatever loss that may involve, we shall find God acting as Father toward us and we shall enter consciously into the good and sweetness of the relationship in which we are set. Now having such promises we are exhorted (as we open chapter 7) to purify ourselves, and thus perfect holiness in the fear of God. Notice that it says. "from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit." This is a very important word, and very sweeping. Our attention has just been directed to the necessity of a purification from all fellowship with the world in outward things. Yet if we merely practiced separation in outward things, confining ourselves to that, we should just become Pharisees; a most undesirable thing. The separation we are to practice goes much deeper. All filthiness or pollution of the flesh is to be avoided, and all filthiness of the spirit too.

Both forms of separation are called for; the inward and the outward too. The outward without the inward is just hypocrisy. The inward without the outward is at best a very defective thing. At the worst it descends to the plight in which Lot was found in Sodom, though not himself descending to the shocking morals of that city. Abraham was in the happy path of God's will; clean outside the place as well as free from the evil. There are the pollutions of the world: the pollutions of the flesh, the pollutions of the spirit: the last of the three the most subtle of all, because the most refined form of sin. May God awaken us to great carefulness as to it. Holiness when carried to its perfection covers all three. But we are to be carrying it on tards its perfection even now. May God help us to do so.

The Apostle had delivered his soul thus as to the Corinthians and was conscious that the threatened breach between himself and them had been averted in the mercy of God; and those from outside, who had fomented trouble anti had been his detractors had lost something of their power. The Corinthians, under the influence of these men, had been inclined to turn their backs on Paul. Things however were now changed, and he can say simply. "Receive us." They knew the integrity that had ever characterized him, and the fervent love towards them that was in his heart; he was identified with them in his affections whether in life or in death. Moreover, confident now as to their affection for him, he was filled with encouragement and joy. He could tell them now of the happy experience that was his, when tidings of the effect of his first epistle reached him.

Verse 5 picks up the threads of happenings from chapter 2:13. One can read from one verse to the other as though nothing came between them. He had left Troas, in spite of the door for the Gospel opened of the Lord, because he had no rest in his spirit as to the Corinthians; yet when he got into Macedonia conditions were even worse. There were not only fears within but also fighting's without. One can imagine a little perhaps of what he felt as he plunged deeply, and yet more deeply, into sorrows and troubles. Suddenly however Titus appeared, bringing good news as to the effect of his first epistle, which ministered to him great comfort. He had the companionship of Titus, and the assurance that God had intervened in His mercy.

His first epistle had been used to effect two things: first, a thoroughgoing repentance as to the evils he had denounced; second, a revival of their affection for himself. There was of course a very distinct connection between them. As they realized the error of their ways so they saw that his plain and faithful remonstrances were actuated by love; and responsive love was kindled in their hearts towards him. For a time he had been tempted to regret that he ever wrote the letter, but now that its good effect had been manifested he could only rejoice.

This scripture shows us very clearly what genuine repentance really is. It is not exactly sorrow for sin, though godly sorrow of that sort is an ingredient of it. verse 11 shows what repentance involved in their case, and with what zeal and fear they cleared themselves. Repentance of a right sort is repentance to salvation that is, it means deliverance from the thing repented of. Mere sorrow for sin, when confronted with its consequences, is the kind of which the world is capable, and it only works death and not salvation. Judas Iscariot is a sad example of this.

One great thing, then, that had come out of all the troubles at Corinth and the sending of the first epistle had been a mutual expression of love as between Paul and the saints there. Verse 7 mentions, “your fervent mind toward me;” and verse 12, “our care for you in the sight of God.” It was no small thing to put things right as between the one who did the injury and the one who was injured, but it was even greater to bring into display that love which is the fruit of the Divine nature in the saints.

A striking feature of this chapter, from verse 5 and onwards, is the way in which all these happenings are traced to the hand of God. Having sent his first epistle, Paul was agitated and cast down in spirit to the point of regretting that he had written it — even though, as we know, it was a letter inspired of God. Then at last, when things seemed at their lowest, Titus appeared with good news as to its effect upon the Corinthians. This was the mercy of God intervening to comfort the downcast Apostle, as also it had been the mercy of God effecting a godly repentance in the hearts of the Corinthians. The word, “godly,” occurring three times (verses 9, 10, 11), is really in each case, “according to God.” God had intervened, and this was the real basis and cause of Paul’s comfort and joy.

Moreover Titus had come back thoroughly refreshed and joyful. This evidently had far exceeded Paul’s hopes. There had been much anxiety as to them, and many things to blame, as the first epistle shows; and yet the way in which they had received him had gone beyond his expectations. True he had boasted of them to Titus. He had spoken of them with warmth of affection and with assurance of their reality. And now all had been found as he had said. The Apostle’s distress had been turned into exultant joy and thankfulness.

In all this we see how God delights to lift up and encourage His tried servants. The God who thus acted with Paul is just the same today. Why are we not filled with greater and more implicit confidence in Him?

The Corinthians had received Titus “with fear and trembling;” they had been marked by obedience. Paul’s letter had come to them with an authority that was Divine. In it he had called upon them to recognize that the things he wrote to them were “the commandments of the Lord.” Being the inspired Word of God, it had authenticated itself as such in their consciences, and it commanded their obedience. Nowadays some would like to persuade us that we have no logical reason for accepting any given scripture as the Word of God unless we are prepared to receive it as authenticated by “the Church,” unless it carries the imprimatur of pope and cardinals. Nothing could be further from the truth. It was not so at the beginning, and is not so today. The Word of God is self-authenticating in the hearts and consciences of those who are born of Him.

The obedience of the Corinthians to the Word of the Lord gave the Apostle full confidence as to them. He could say with joy, “I have confidence in you in all things.” Are we inclined to look upon this as a rather exuberant overestimate on his part the fruit of the revulsion of feeling he had undergone? It was not so at all. It was the expression of a sober judgment. Saints may be very defective and blameworthy as to many things, but if they recognize the Word of God when they hear it, and yield obedience to its instructions, one need have no fear as to them. All will he well.

It was not that they had any fear of Titus, or that Paul’s letters, though weighty and powerful, put the fear of Paul upon their spirits. It was rather that in spite of all their errors they did tremble at the Word of the Lord, when they heard it.

Are we equal to the Corinthians in this respect? Our day is peculiarly marked by disrespect for the Word of God. In many quarters, professedly Christian, the Bible is looked upon as subject matter for criticism. Let us beware lest we catch the infection of it. Would Paul have confidence in us as to all things? Only if he saw that we too were marked.by subjection and obedience to the Word of God.

F. B. Hole.

Sorrow and Joy: February 2022, As Sorrowful, Yet Alway Rejoicing

As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing” (2 Cor. 6:10)

If trouble and care will try to force themselves upon us, we have nothing to do or say to them, but cast them all upon Him who “careth” for us, and is the master of them. Our only business here, for God, is to glorify Him in every step of the path His grace has marked out for us. Christ is for us in heaven (Heb. 9:24), and we are for Him down here (John 17:18); so that come what may, we should rejoice, and be able to say, “Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight” (Matt. 11:26).

Awake, O North Wind

“Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out” (S. of Sol. 4:16). Blow hot or blow cold, “I am my beloved ‘s, and my beloved is mine “

Why, then, art thou cast down,

O afflicted and tried one? “Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?” Luke 24:38. Jesus knows and feels your smallest woe. So very precious are you to Him that even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. What affects you, affects Him, for you are bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh.

“Sorrow overmuch is suicide of the heart, and buries a man with his head downward.” Over anxiety about one trouble is as the grave to bury hundreds of mercies. Rise up then, O dearly beloved, from your despondency, emerge from the dark shadow, do no more dishonor to your Lord, and let your heart be as the glad welling fount in the midst of the desert, that the weary traveler may be refreshed even at the sight of you. We are responsible to God to refresh and cheer each other, and to comfort one another with the comfort we have of God; it is a work and a witness for Him in the midst of a joyless and thankless world.

As one has said, “If the east wind will blow, put up another button on your coat”; brave the wave of trial as one who, in the strength of the Lord, is more than a match for it. “Be strong, yea, be strong.” God is for you, with you, and in you. You may be in the furnace, and the only loss you will sustain will be your bands, and in company with you will be the “Son of God.” You may not be able to say, much less do, anything. Weakness has a special claim upon God, and God has a special blessing for it. “Them that honor Me I will honor.” We honor God by patiently enduring. “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God.” Give place to care, and it will soon prove to be your master, and you its slave.

The Gloomy Saint – an Anomaly in Grace

It has been remarked that “like the disagreeable saint, the gloomy saint is an anomaly in grace.” What a sad spectacle, a child of God, who makes the young feel old, the old feel older, and the sad feel sadder. Some hearts are full of false sentiment and morbid feeling; they appear to shrink from being happy, and prefer being miserable; others are afraid of being happy, as if God grudged His children happiness. Instead of leaving all things in the keeping of their loving God, they darken the present with the shadows of the future, and suffer the many sorrows of unbelief. They forget that the more they “joy in God,” the more cause for joy He will give them; that the more they praise Him, the more they glorify Him.

“Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice” (Phil. 4:4). “Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:6-7).

While we retain God in our hearts, there is room for nothing else but His peace. A heart full of Christ is a heart full of joy, not my own, but His. “These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” John 15:11. Let His joy rule in your hearts, and be

“A sunshine in the shady place.”

Our Bodies – The Place of His Treasure

A wise man has said, “Be we what we may, and we cannot be worse than we are, nothing in or about us ought to be allowed to interrupt the calmness of conscious victory, or to hinder our power of enjoyment of what Christ is made of God unto us (1 Cor. 1:30), and of what God has made us to be in Him” (Colossians 2:10; Eph. 1:6). The enemy may accuse, and conscience charge, but nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God: we are what we are as created in Christ Jesus, so “that neither death, nor life” need cause one moment ‘s dismay (read Rom. 8:31-39). Everything may appear to be against us, but God is for us, and we are here for Him. “Ye are of God, little children” (1 John 4:4), and He has created and filled our hearts to beat for and to Himself, that His own joy might flow into and out of them. “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God ‘s.” 1 Cor. 6:19, 20. God has created our bodies to place His treasure in, to show to men and angels what His power in, as well as for, us is. “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” Phil. 2:13. And His only pleasure is to see us occupied with and enjoying the Son of His love. If we suffer, it is for Him; if we rejoice, it is for Him; if we bear pain, it is for Him; all we do and say is for Him, because we are for Him, as well as of Him, and He is for us. Christ in you, you in Christ, and Christ in God; so that come what may, we can afford to lift up the head as those who have a right to be happy, and sing:

Christian Truth, Volume 8 and Volume 38

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

“Be not diversely yoked with unbelievers, for what participation is there between righteousness and lawlessness? or what fellowship of light with darkness? and what consent of Christ with Beliar? or what part for a believer along with an unbeliever? and what agreement of God’s temple with idols? for ye are the living God’s temple, according as God has said, I will dwell among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be to Me a people.

“Wherefore come out from the midst of them, and be separated, saith the Lord, and touch not what is unclean, and I will receive you; and I will be to you for a Father, and ye shall be to Me for sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (JND).

Important as these instructions for the children of God were in the day in which they were written, they are as important and as binding in our time. There was the open worship of idols then; but these rules for the Christian cover a far wider range, taking in all the associations we may have in the world.

“Be not diversely yoked with unbelievers” suggests a reference to Deut. 22:10, “Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together,” but a different kind of yoke is in view here. It is a brief statement of great weight, the force of which every Christian must feel, and it calls for separation from the world, in every form and measure.

Perhaps the thought comes to me that I can do much good in association with those who are not believers. Opportunities for service for Christ are there which (I think) I could not have in a narrower path. Besides, I can be an example there to the unsaved, which may (I hope) result in their accepting Christ. What shall be the answer in such a case? There is but one to which I should give heed; it comes from God Himself, and is plainly written in His Word, commanding my obedience: Be not yoked with unbelievers. All other answers to the question, no matter how

attractive in appearance, proceed from the believer's enemy, the devil, though he may make use of a Christian to deliver it to me.

It is God's desire, for their blessing, to have His children entirely separate in their association from the world. If we look no further than within the five preceding chapters of this Epistle, we may form an estimate of what we are to Him.

In chapter 1, we are saints, anointed and sealed and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

In chapter 3, we are the epistle of Christ, written with the Spirit of the living God, and with unveiled face beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

In chapter 4, God hath shined in our hearts for the shining forth of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

In the fifth chapter we are wrought by God for the heavenly body we shall each possess, and in that connection the earnest of the Spirit has been given; the love of Christ constraining us, we judge that we, once morally dead toward God, but now living, should live, not to ourselves, but to Him who died for us and rose again; accordingly, henceforth, we know no one after the flesh; being in Christ we are a new creation, old things are passed away, all things are become new, and all of God who hath reconciled us to Himself; He hath made Him sin for us,—He who knew no sin, that we might be made righteousness of God in Him.

In the well-known and precious passage at the close of Matthew 11, young Christians will remember that there is more than the invitation to the sinner, with a promise made good upon acceptance; an invitation, and a promise to the believer follows:

"Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light" (verses 28-30).

With Christ's yoke taken, how, in faithfulness to Him, can I take also the yoke of the world? It has been truly said,

"Where Christ is not before the heart, the world in one form or another, fails not to ensnare, fair excuses which cover unholy alliances escape detection, and His honor somehow is ere long compromised ... If blessed with Christ for eternity, you cannot, without sin, have relations with the world."

May God preserve the writer and the reader from such dishonor to Himself and His Son!

The admirable completeness of the Word of God may be noticed, in connection with a Christian's marriage, in this chapter and in 1 Corinthians 7:10-16. Here in 2 Corinthians 6, the marriage of a believer to an unbeliever is forbidden by the very language of verses 14 and following, while in 1 Corinthians 7 there are specific instructions for those already married, where the partner is unsaved.

Looking at verses 14, and onward in detail, we see how opposed are the principles, motives, interests and ways of the child of God to those of the world. First, the principles of the one and the other come before us:

"For what participation is there between righteousness and lawlessness? or what fellowship of light with darkness?"

Believers are made righteousness of God in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21), and they are light in the Lord (Ephesians 5:8).

Verse 15. "And what consent of Christ with Beliar? or what part for a believer along with an unbeliever?"

Here the characteristic heads are viewed, and the followers. The word Belial occurs 16 times in the Old Testament, and means simply wickedness,—"sons of wickedness," for example; but here alone in the New Testament it is Beliar, evidently referring to Satan. Impossible that there could be anything in common between Christ, and the prince of this world! Then what part is there for a believer along with an unbeliever? Should it not be plain to any believer that he (or she) can not, as another has said, as a Christian put himself or herself "under the same yoke with those who have only worldly motives, to draw the chariot of life in a path common to both?"

Verse 16. Though idolatry is not practiced now in civilized lands in the measure or in the same way as in the apostle's day, it continues to exist in subtle form, and will break out again in due time and in full character. In 1 Corinthians 6:19, the believer's body is declared to be the temple of God; here collectively believers are His temple. What carefulness should then characterize our thoughts, our words, our actions!

At least three Old Testament Scriptures are referred to in verse 16—Exodus 29:45, Leviticus 26:12 and Ezekiel 37:27; the promise as to Israel in its fullness remains to be carried out, but for us it has been true from the day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

Verse 17 is a command to every believer mixed up with the world. "The unclean" in the apostle's day meant the heathen world, today, it is more, including the great system which Satan has built up around men to make them content without the true knowledge of God; such is the world as the Christian knows it.

Coming out from among the worldly, we hear the words of welcome, of special regard,

"I will receive you (verse 18), and I will be to you for a Father, and ye shall be to Me for sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "Father" is the name of special relationship which God assumes with us. To Abraham He had made Himself known as Almighty; to Israel He was Jehovah, or Lord; to us He is the Lord Almighty, and moreover our Father.

The chapter division here is plainly wrong; the first verse of chapter 7 attaches itself to the close of chapter 6.

"Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us purify ourselves from every pollution of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in God's fear." What is your response to this, dear Christian reader?

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

The apostle in the last verses of the fifth chapter spoke of the word of the gospel he carried to the world,—the ministry of reconciliation. He now (verse 1) addresses the careless believers and mere professors of the name of Christ at Corinth. The two words in italics, “with Him” (added by the translators), may be omitted, for it is as “fellow workmen”, or “jointly laboring” (in God’s service) that Paul, associating others with himself in the work as he constantly did, turns to the Corinthians to whom the Epistle is addressed, beseeching them that they receive not the grace of God in vain.

Those there in whom there was faith needed to be aroused to a walk much more according to the mind of God than was their habit, and they who only professed Christianity must be reminded that lip profession, baptism and attendance at meetings—things good, in themselves,—are valueless before God, without the reception of the message of His salvation into the heart by way of the conscience.

The parenthetic quotation in the second verse is from Isaiah 49:8; there the reference is to the blessing to be brought to man after Christ’s rejection by the Jews.

“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation,” says the Holy Spirit by the Apostle. The time of the promised blessing has arrived, and it must be taken advantage of.

Since the word of the gospel was first published, many millions of human beings have lived and died—gone into eternity, either saved or lost; either as believers, let us say; or unconcerned about their souls; either heeding or ignoring God’s “now is the day of salvation.”

In which of the two classes are you who read these lines, passing on quickly on life’s short journey?

Verse 3. Led by the Spirit of God, Paul writes now of the way he carried on his ministry, the conduct which marked his course as the Lord’s servant, His ambassador; conduct which befitted one to whom it was given in a special way to represent the risen and ascended Christ. Appropriately he begins,

“Giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed.”

This surely is a suited motto for every one who essays to serve Christ! One to be remembered and made effective upon all occasions and in all circumstances.

Verses 4, 5. The apostle continues:

“But in everything commending ourselves as God’s ministers, in much endurance, in afflictions, in necessities, in straits, in stripes, in prisons, in riots, in labors, in watchings, in fastings … ”

The path he trod was that of his Master; in it we see nothing of self-display, nothing of making for himself a place of honor or distinction; no avoidance of trial, whether the circumstances arose from the enmity of Satan, the opposition of ignorant men to the light of God’s truth, or a low spiritual state among the believers.

Verses 6, 7. “ ... In pureness, in knowledge, in long suffering, in kindness, in the Holy Ghost, in love unfeigned, in the word of truth, in the power of God, through the arms of righteousness on the right hand and left..”

We are sensibly led deeper into the ways of the beloved apostle as he had been taught of God. A common worldly saying is,

“Practice what you preach;” that is exactly what Paul did, and it ought to be a distinguishing mark of every one who would serve the Lord.

“In the Holy Ghost” would be under His guidance and direction, not necessarily with power displayed; “in the power of God” brings in power, and this is by the Holy Ghost.

“The arms of righteousness” were Paul’s, not the righteousness of God conferred upon believers, but uprightness of conduct.

Verses 8-10. “ ... through glory and dishonor; through evil report and good report; as deceivers and true; as unknown and well-known; as dying and behold, we live; as disciplined and not put to death; as grieved, but always rejoicing; as poor, but enriching many; as having nothing and possessing all things.” Whether held in honor or the reverse, Paul kept on his course with unaltered purpose.

To his beloved Philippians (chapter 1:20-21) he wrote, “according to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” And to the elders of the Church or assembly at Ephesus who came to him at Miletus (Acts 20) Paul said,

“Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews. ... And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

Never since, we are persuaded, has the Lord had so devoted a servant as Paul.

In verse 11, the Apostle turns again to the saints at Corinth in the warmth of an affection born of God. As we noticed in the first two chapters, the Corinthians had judged themselves on account of their ways as set before them in the First Epistle, and Paul had now much liberty in writing to them.

“Our mouth is opened to you, Corinthians, our heart is expanded. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your affections; but for an answering recompense (I speak as to children) let your heart also expand itself” (JND).

There was ample room in Paul’s heart for these saints; not in equal measure was there room in their affections for him. He sought it now from them, and at the same time would exhort them regarding their associations.

Young Christian: Volume 29, 1939, "Poor-Yet Possessing All Things"

The Lord was “poor, yet making many rich”... “having nothing, yet possessing all things.” 2 Corinthians 6:10.

These high and wondrous conditions were exhibited in Him in ways that were and must have been peculiar altogether His own.

He would receive ministry from some godly women out of their substance, and yet He could minister to the need of all around Him, out of the fullness of the treasures of the earth.

He would feed thousands in desert places, and yet, Himself be hungry, waiting for the return of His disciples with victuals from a neighboring village thus “having nothing, and yet possessing all things.”

Christian Treasury: Volume 8, Faith’s Paradoxes

"Sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing.”

2 Cor. 6:10

2CO 6:10

I often weep, yet I am not sad;Often in sorrow, I yet am glad;Chastened sore, yet I shall not die;Poor I am, yet how rich am I!Naked, yet clothed in fairest dress;Nothing I have, yet I all possess.

Losses and troubles upon me rain;I count the losses my richest gain;I am a fool in the world's esteem;Folly and madness, my choice they deem;Christ's reproach is my richest prize;God's folly makes me divinely wise.

I pass through rivers, yet am not drowned;I walk the waves as on solid ground;The hottest fires cannot singe or burn;The hosts of darkness cannot o'erturn;While He that dwelt in the bush is near,And God is with me, what should I fear?

Say, is the devil more strong than God?Or Pharaoh's scepter than Moses's rod?Lo! in the river and in the sea,In the hot furnace, He's still with me;In the dark valley, and in the grave,Jehovah-Jesus is strong to save.

Soon shall the weary night be o'er,The sun will rise to set no more;Soon shall the winter's cold rain be past,The turtle be heard in the land at last;And soon shall the glorious Bridegroom say,"Arise, My fair one, and come away.”

Oh, what a moment the past will seem,Vanished away like a troubled dream!Not worth a sigh will its grief be thought,When to His presence we're safely brought;Praise our employment ceaseless be,Chiefest among ten thousand He!

J. G. D.

"Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?”

Matthew 6:26

Young Christian: Volume 27, 1937, Be Ye Separate

2 Corinthians 6:17, 18

We come out from among the worldly in order to enter into the relationship of sons and daughters to the Almighty God: otherwise we cannot possibly realize this relationship. God will not have worldlings in relation with Himself as sons and daughters: they have not entered into this position with regard to Him.

Young Christian: Volume 17, Be Ye Separate: 2 Corinthians 6:17-18

We come out from among the worldly in order to enter into the relationship of sons and daughters to the Almighty God: otherwise we cannot possibly realize this relationship. God will not have worldlings in relation with Himself as sons and daughters: they have not entered into this position with regard to Him.

Young Christian: Volume 2, 1912, To Christians Contemplating Marriage

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers” (2 Cor. 6:14-18).

This is instruction for the guidance and encouragement of believers, and is applicable to all their voluntary associations. It should lead a Christian to ask the question, Does God ask me to choose my company? He does, and in doing so teaches us to take into account our relationship with Him. If a Christian thinks of marriage, this scripture instructs him to choose one who is the Lord's, so that they can have fellowship in His things, and be of one mind to serve Him.

If he is a person seeking to walk with the Lord, his conversation will turn to spiritual things, and he will soon discover whether this is agreeable to the one he is keeping company with. He ought to seek by prayer, discernment from the Lord, so that he might make no mistake. It is easy to let our natural affection or liking for a person blind us in such a matter.

A Christian knowingly marrying an unbeliever, cannot count on the Lord's blessing on their union. Often Christians disobey the Lord in the fond hope that the person they allow their affections to run out to, will be converted; but it often turns out a lifelong hindrance to their true happiness, and deep sorrow and chastening follow such a step. How often we have heard the sad confession, "I have myself to blame."

"Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3), is another important question, and suggests that it is not every Christian that is suitable for a life companion. 1 Corinthians 7:39, says of a widow, but it applies to all Christians who have thoughts of marriage, "She is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord."

"In the Lord" means with the Lord's approval.

"In Christ" would indicate our standing before God as Christians.

"In the Lord" supposes two that have the Lord's interests before them, are owning His authority over them, and seeking to have the stamp of His approval on their ways. They own that the Lord has the first claim on each of "His own"; they "are bought with a price," and desire to glorify God in their bodies (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

It is the Lord who has instituted all our relationships, and told us how to walk in them (Eph. 5:22-6:9; Col. 3:18-4:1; 1 Peter 3:1-9). A child is to be subject to his parents, but the Christian child must own the Lord's claims to be higher than his parent's; so with the husband and wife, the Lord's claims come first. A husband who demands that his wife obey him, when it is against her conscience before God, is assuming an authority over her that God has not given him.

How important it is therefore for Christians to make sure of agreement in divine things before entering into a life-engagement.

Obedience to God and love to Him should control our natural affections.

If the Lord has the chief place in our hearts, it will be so (Luke 14:26-27,33). If we do not give Him the chief place, we will find to our sorrow, sooner or later, what a loss has been ours.

In days like the present, of trial and division in the church of God, if a sister is of a gentle, leaning disposition, and knows the truth of being gathered to the name of the Lord, while her husband does not, and is not willing or able to learn it, she is made unhappy by going into meetings that are not on scriptural ground, in her desire to please or even win her husband; or if she holds to what she knows is the truth, then there is a divided house, and both suffer through not considering this question before they were engaged. If there are children, how are they to be taught and guided aright, when the parents are divided and going different ways?

The Lord would have us consider this beforehand. Let those thinking of marriage seriously wait upon and ask the Lord what He would have them do, and they will put the Lord's honor first, and seek to obey His word. They will seek His interests first, through grace.

If two fail to agree before marriage as to God's path for His people, can they walk together, agreed to glorify the Lord as heirs together of the grace of life? (1 Peter 3:7) Can they give up the truth and not suffer spiritual loss? If they put natural affection first, is it not plain that it is not the Lord's glory, but rather their own likings that they consider?

It is quite true that sometimes those who started right at the beginning, have gone wrong. This may have been through not considering together everything that comes to them, and their hearts have consequently been alienated from each other. It is needful to begin right with each other and the Lord, and then through grace to go on together with Him, "as heirs together of the grace of life" (1 Peter 3:7). Natural affection is not enough to carry us through. We need to have the Lord ever before us.

The Remembrancer: 1896, Living to Self or to Christ?

CO 5:14-16{The thought uppermost in my mind, in reading these verses, is just as simple as it is of all importance, and that is, beloved brethren, what are we living for? A weighty question, I need not say, and it is of moment to our souls that we should not shrink from answering it, and that we should answer it in the fear of God. Verse 15 was peculiarly before me, " He died for all, that they which live," that is, the believers, etc. All were dead, believers and unbelievers alike, all were ruined men before God; and the death of Christ is the proof of the condition of every soul naturally; that is, all are lost-all lifeless toward God; that even the Son of. God, who is everlasting life, should need to suffer-should find no portion but death in this world, is the proof that there was no life in it. Everything lay so irretrievably in death, that for Him to die is the only door of deliverance out of it. And " He died for all." It is not said that all should live, though undoubtedly there was life in Him adequate for every soul, life everlasting in Christ: but then, in fact, no soul did, none would, receive Him, not one. Grace therefore has wrought, and given some to receive Him. And therefore it is added, " He died for all, that they which live," that is, they who do believe in Him and have life therefore-" that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again." Now, there is never a question day by day that arises, but what brings out one of these two things, that is, whether we are living to ourselves or to Him who died for us and rose again." And have I not to own the sad truth, how constantly we have to rebuke our souls? How often, not to say in general, the first impulse of the heart is to take that view of everything which would minister to our pleasure, or gratification, or importance? What is this but living to ourselves? When any question comes before us, when anything, either in the way of an evil to be avoided, a loss to be shunned, or something to be gained, some object that comes before us, is it not our tendency to look upon how it will

bear upon us and to give it that turn which will be for our profit or advantage in some way or another? I do not say always personally: it may be for our family, for our children, looking onward to the future or at the present. Now, we are always wrong when we do it., God would not have us to neglect the real good of those dear to us and dependent on us; but the question is, whether we trust ourselves or Christ. Are we adequate judges of what is best for our children? Are we the least biased and the wisest to decide on that which would be for, not the passing profit, but the good which endures forever? It comes to a very simple issue. We have two natures-one which is always grasping for something that will please and exalt itself, and another which, by the grace of God, is willing to suffer for Christ,-and clings to what is of Christ. But as the apostle says (1 Cor. 15:46), not that which is spiritual was first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual So it is precisely in our practical experience. The thought that is apt promptly to arise when there is trial and difficulty, is the simply natural one, how to get out of it-not, how am I to glorify God in it, and turn it to the praise of Christ. Then, again, if there is any prospect of improving circumstances, this is the first thought-that which is natural. Ought we not to be upon our watchtower with respect to this? Should we not have it as a settled thing for our hearts, this is my danger? We may not all be tried in the same way; for that which would be a gratification to one might not be so to another. But there is one sad thing in which we all agree: we have a nature that likes self, and seeks to gratify it, and we have hence a tendency to indulge that nature as the first thought of the heart. But let Christ only come before our souls-let us bethink ourselves of Him, when either trouble or pleasure comes before us, and what then? That which is natural fades away we judge it. We say, That is a thing which brings no glory to Christ-and what are we here for? Let us remember that God has done everything to fit us for His presence, He " has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. 1:12). There is no doubt of that, it remains untouched. But the practical question for our souls is, whether our hearts, knowing the perfect goodness of our God and Father towards us, enter into this great thought—-that He now sets Christ, dead and risen, before us, in order that, in the presence of the angels as well as of men, yea, in His own presence, there may be the wonderful spectacle of beings who once lived for nothing but self, here, by the very image of Christ before their souls, lifted above self altogether.

May we bring this to bear upon whatever may be the circumstances through which we pass day by day! It is the main thing for the walk of every saint. There are other great things for the Church; but they are so much the greater as they are built upon Christ, the Object of each individual that composes the assembly. Let us not deceive ourselves as to that. No position can ever make amends for failure in the habitual thought of the heart. May we search and see whether we are living to ourselves or to HIM who died for us and row again!

The Remembrancer: 1896, Remembrancer, The

" WE WALK BY FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT."

2 Cor., 5:7.

" Not by sight" can we guide our feet,

Safe through the perils we this day meet:

Easy and smooth as the path may seem,

Dangers lurk where we least should dream;

'The net is not spread in sight of the bird,

'Mid Eden's flowers was the tempter heard,

And great is the need when life looks fair,

That we closely cling to our Father's dare.

O keep us Lord when the world seems bright,

Walking by faith and not by sight.

" Not by sight" when a few steps on,

All the brightness of life seems gone:

Our earthly sunshine is clouded o'er,

We see the joy of our hearts no more.

Shall we sit desolate? Nay, but rise

By faith to the good that beyond this lies:

God is preparing in cloud and gloom,

Showers of blessing whence grace shall bloom."

So keep us, Lord, through Thy Spirit's might,

Walking by faith and not by sight. .

" Not by sight!" It is best to lean

On the hand that's guiding us though unseen;

Yes, best in suspense to linger, till

God's time is come to reveal His will.

Best in perplexities far, to wait,

Till He the "crooked things shall make straight,"

Best, for the honor of His great name,

Best, for the blessing we then may claim,

So keep us, Lord, through Thy Spirit's might,

Walking by faith and not by sight.

O foolish those who would walk by sight!

What will ye do in death's dark night?

It is faith alone can triumph then,

Faith in the Savior of sinful men.

Thousands have told with their last faint breath,

How He they trusted was near in death,

He has brought them safe where they see at last,

The meaning of all the mysterious past.

O keep us, Lord, till we meet in Light,

Walking by faith and not by sight.

Food for the Flock: Volume 4, None Righteous

TO-NIGHT we come more directly to the thought on my mind, namely, the distinctive character of the place into which God has called the believer, whether as to Himself, as to Satan, or as to the world, and also how this place has been acquired. We have already had presented the thought that the Lord Jesus Christ, by taking in grace His people's place, has made their place in righteousness: that is to say, the place a believer now occupies is the answer on God's part to the work of Christ on the cross, a work whereby God was fully glorified.

Let us now turn to Scripture and trace therefrom the position of man, that we may see how it came to be a necessity that the Lord should take His people's place if He would bring them into blessing.

Man, in the opening out of God's day, appeared in all the blessedness and innocence in which he was placed in the garden of Eden. It was a bright dawn. But man, acting in his own self-will, departed from that place in which God had set him, and not only forfeited his place, but was driven out from the presence of his Creator. He hearkened to the voice of his wife and the serpent's lie, was driven out from the place of blessing, and was thenceforth a fallen creature instead of the innocent one that he had originally been. He is God's creature still, truly, but he is a fallen one. Now it was not till Adam was driven out from Eden that his posterity sprung up on this earth. We, then, as descended from Adam, start with a nature which is that of fallen man-the very opposite to what God is. We were born in a position of ruin, and our nature answers to the fallen stock from which we have sprung, and is energized by a will that is opposed to God. The result, as to our practice, is that we are thoroughly guilty before God, and have rendered ourselves individually subject to the judgment of God on account of that practice.

Now, if this be our condition, what do we need? On the one hand, as to our state by nature, we need to be reconciled to God; and on the other, our practice being guilty, we need clearance from our guilt, and positive righteousness in addition. These are necessities which arise owing to the state in which we are found, and to, the practice that vie have followed.

In the Old Testament Job, wearied by the speeches of his friends, asks the question, "How should man be just with God? " Now, the epistle to the Romans is the New Testament answer to this Old Testament question: how shall man be just with God is the subject-matter of Let us look at it for a moment.

We, find, in the first chapter, Paul, after setting forth his credentials as apostle, presents the Lord Jesus Christ according to the promises of God, "made of the seed of David according to the flesh," and also "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Thus he presents him as the object of faith. Then, verse 14, he speaks of the value of the gospel, and in verse 16 tells us what that gospel is, namely, "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith." The great subject of the epistle is thus seen to be the Son of God as the object of faith, and the righteousness of God revealed on the principle of faith to everyone who trusts in Him.

The apostle then proceeds to show what made the righteousness of God necessary, namely, the fact that "wrath is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." Therefore, if a soul have not this righteousness, he falls under the wrath that is revealed. He then, from chapter 1:19 to 3:30, enters into an elaborate proof of the guilt of wan. To show what it was that made wrath necessary, he in doing so takes up the two great classes into 'which: the race of man was divided, namely, the

heathen Gentile and the religious Jew. Heathendom is first arraigned, and in verses 19 and 20 we find the first ground on which he proves this guilt, namely, the testimony of creation. The created things of this world bore witness to man, from the time of their creation, of the eternal power and divinity of Him who created them. Of their testimony man took no notice-did not recognize the eternal power and divinity therein set forth-and was on this ground guilty, the testimony leaving him without excuse.

In verse 22 we find a second ground on which the apostle proves their guilt. In Gen. 4 we learn that men began to call upon the name of the Lord, and, after that, Noah became a " preacher of righteousness;" that is, there was a traditional knowledge of God handed down from father to son. On the ground of this knowledge the apostle takes them up. What did those who possessed this knowledge do? Instead of bowing to the God of whom they had this knowledge, they did what men of the present day do: they attempted to measure the infinite by the finite. The infidel nowadays urges that he cannot believe what he cannot understand. And who made your senses? Can your senses measure the God who made them?

So, "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." Man would not own God, would, not have God. God therefore orders that, as they would not honor Him, neither should they recognize what was due to themselves; and, with man who would not glorify God, Satan takes the place of God. Man consequently deified his lusts, made of them a religion, and his religion from that time became not merely a corrupt but a corrupting thing; man's religion itself corrupted -man. Man knew that the God of whom he had a knowledge was opposed to the lusts he loved, and he consequently tried to shut out all thought of God, that he might follow his lusts unhinderedly. This being so, God gave him up to his lusts.

There was, however, one thing that man got at the fall, and which he has had ever since conscience—that which takes knowledge of good and evil. The effect of conscience, in the midst of the evil here described, was to cause men to judge as evil that by which they were surrounded; but, the will not being subject to God, the only effect of the judgment of evil was that they moralized about it whilst they still practiced it themselves, or took pleasure in those who did so. The question therefore arises, would this moralizing about evil, while still practicing it, save them from the judgment of God? The case of this special class the apostle meets in chapter 2:1-16, where he shows that the judgment of God is according to truth, and that consequently the evil-doer would not escape, however he might moralize. " We are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest 'thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" God's long-suffering is shown on purpose that the evil-doer should be led to repentance, but, continuing to practice the evil, he would inevitably fall under the judgment.

Having thus closed the case of the moralizer, the apostle resumes his general proof of the guilt of man, taking up in verse 17 the case of the privileged Jew. The Jew would be ready enough to admit the guilt of the Gentile, but here the apostle turns to him, and asks, What about yourself? You are the one who has God's law; you boast of. it; you are a teacher of this law; and what is the effect on you of the privileges of which you boast, of the law which you teach? You are not governed by it, and the truth is, that the God who gave you this law is more dishonored by you to whom He gave it than by the dog of a Gentile to whom He never gave it at all, so that you are, if anything, the more guilty of the two in His presence. In chapter 3:9 the apostle sums up the guilt of' both Jew and Gentile, but to seal home the guilt of the Jew, the favored one, more distinctly upon him, he turns for a moment to the law, and shows what it said to those who were under it. Here we find one of the most minute and solemn descriptions of fallen man. If he be taken up as to his person, " It is written there is none righteous, no, not one." If, as to the activity of his mind " There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." Or if in the detail of his members, " Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." Such is man as to his practice, and that in the most favorable circumstances that could be; such the verdict of' the law about him If an be viewed individually, the result is that " every mouth is stopped; " or collectively, " all the world subject to the judgment of God." Thus the apostle proves the universal guilt of man, and demonstrates what made wrath necessary.

Man being at a distance from God as to his position, and opposed to God as to his practice, in such a way as we here see set forth, and without righteousness for God, what is to meet his ease, so that he may be not only sheltered from judgment, but God may be free to bless him? Only through an atonement offered to God could man's case be met. But for this a spotless victim was requisite. Could such an one be found amongst men? No; " for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The solemn conclusion, therefore, to which man is reduced is, that, as far as man is concerned, he is lost.

But God has resources deep enough to meet everything, and God presents to us His own beloved Son as the one who is able to open up the way that He may bless and that sinners may be blessed. But in order that this might be so, He must glorify God about sin; He must take the place and bear the judgment due to those for whose blessing He came; He must die. Thus alone could God maintain His own character, and at the same time exercise in righteousness His love and grace. Thus alone could sinners be brought back to God that He might bless them.

In speaking of the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross, it is well to see clearly the double aspect of that work, that is, its aspect Godward-which is atonement; and also its aspect manward-which is substitution. The first is that in which the Lord Jesus has glorified God about sin; the second is that in which He has in grace taken His people's place, has stood as their substitute before God, has borne in His own person the wrath due to their sins, and been made sin for them, that they "might be made the righteousness of God in him."

In Rom. 3 we get the first aspect, namely; atonement. There we find God spoken of as acting in grace towards certain who have sinned, justifying them freely; consequently, we have brought before us the ground on which He can do so consistently with His own character-a holy God who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity-and that ground is atonement. " Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." Is God's character then called in question by this exercise of grace? Not for a moment! The blessed Son of God has come down, died as a. propitiation on the cross of Calvary, and God, having been glorified thereby, having had every demand of His holy nature met therein, is not only free to minister blessing to any poor sinner believing in Jesus, but is consistent' with His own character in so doing. The blood of atonement is the ground on which His righteousness in justifying is declared: " To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Thus we find God has been glorified by the atonement wrought out by the Lord Jesus Christ.

But now to take up the second side-that of substitution. The Lord Jesus comes and actually takes, as their substitute, the place of those who now believe on Him, to receive at the hand of God what was due to them on account of the offenses they had committed. In this we see Him,

not as the victim of atonement glorifying the nature of God, but as the bearer of His people's sins. In the latter part of chapter iv. Abraham's faith is presented to us, and it is beautiful to see how entirely he was above surrounding circumstances; he neither looked in at himself nor out at Sarah, but up to God. " He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory. to God; fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform;" and the consequence was, "it was imputed to him for righteousness. And it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." Here we have, beyond a question, the blessed Christ of God taking in His grace His people's place, and acting as the sinbearer—their substitute. What 'happened then? " The Lord laid upon him. the iniquity of us all." If the Lord has thus taken in grace His people's place, what is the result to them? They are justified-are cleared from all that guilt, under the judgment of which they must have sunk had not another borne it for them.

All this, however, is rather negative in its character. It is clearance from guilt; but there must be also positive righteousness. Righteousness from man God by law demanded but failed to get. In that of which we have been speaking God is seen acting in grace, and we find that when man had no righteousness for God, God, in that glad tidings which is the power of God to salvation, reveals righteousness of God for man. This righteousness the apostle describes in chapters 3:21,22 as a divine righteousness wholly apart from law, "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." Thus, as there is on the one side for the believer clearance from all his guilt, so there is on the other, on the positive side, divine righteousness -righteousness of God.

It is important that souls should understand this-what God's righteousness is, what it is to be made the righteousness of God in Christ.

Creature righteousness consists in the fulfillment of the duties that flow from the relationship in which he stands to one having a claim over him. God's righteousness is His perfect consistency with Himself, with His own nature and character. This is seen in His acts, which display that nature and character. Now, man, as the creature of God, is responsible to have righteousness for God his Creator. This God demanded in the law, which furnished the creature with the perfect rule of his responsibility to his Creator, as also to his fellow-creature. In the fulfillment of this man has utterly failed, and so failed to render to God the righteousness due to Him. The case then stood thus: on God's side, a righteous requirement from His creature by means of a holy, just, and good law; on man's side, complete failure in meeting the righteous, requirement of his Creator.

Thus God was dishonored through the sin-and failure of His creature, and was consequently under obligation to Himself to manifest His. righteousness, that is, His consistency with. Himself, with His own nature and character as. pure, holy, and absolutely intolerant of evil, in the judgment and condemnation of the evil-of the one who committed it. To do so would be His righteousness. To have visited this judgment on man, however, would have entailed the eternal punishment of the whole human race. This God does not desire. " He will (desires to) have all men to be saved." How could this be consistently with His own character, man's case being such as described?

Christ, the Lamb of God, has come; has presented. Himself before God as the one on whom God could display His righteous judgment of sin. Christ has presented an atonement to God for the dishonor put on, Him through the failure of man, His creature. He has glorified God's nature as to all. But in this-offering of atonement to God, Christ has also borne in His own person the judgment, the penalty due, on account of their failure in their responsibility, to every soul believing on Him.,

Thus the entire question at issue has been taken up by Christ. In and on Him, a sacrifice for sin, at the cross, God's righteous judgment of sin has been displayed. God has been glorified as to sin and is, in consequence, free to act in grace to -any poor sinner believing in Jesus. Failing atonement, God was not free,, if one may so speak, to act thus. To have done so without atonement having been offered to Him would have been to have done it at the expense of His righteousness, which -demanded the condemnation of the sinner-the one who had failed to meet God's righteous requirements. Through atonement a way of escape has been opened for -the sinner. God; having been glorified by it, is freed from the obligation of condemning the soul.-'that-believes on Him who wrought the atonement. God has condemned the evil in the person of Him who was guiltless, and can now, where there is faith, let the guilty go free, accounting that not only his evil but himself has been condemned in the condemnation of the One in whom he, through grace, believes-the One who, while glorifying God in atonement, at the same time stood as the substitute for that believing soul.

But more. If atonement have, by glorifying God's nature and character, freed Him from one obligation, it has, through that same nature and character, laid Him under another. He owes it to the man Christ Jesus, who went into death in order to glorify Him, that He (God) should glorify Him (Christ) personally. To do so would be God's righteousness. This He has done, and therefore in Christ glorified as man is seen God's righteousness. But at the time Christ glorified God by atonement, He also stood as the substitute for everyone who believes in Him. God has proved His acceptance of Christ's work by raising Him from the dead and giving Him glory; and, having done so, He owes it to Christ to justify every soul for whom that work was wrought. To do so would be simple righteousness on God's part. In doing so He would -display His consistency with Himself—His righteousness. Every justified soul, therefore, is a monument of God's righteousness, for it is by and according to that righteousness he is justified. He is made the righteousness of God in Christ.

From this it will be seen that God's righteousness is not a thing put to the believer's account. The believer himself is made the righteousness of God in Christ. He stands before God in Christ, clear as Christ. Nor is it Christ's righteousness imputed to the believer, as is sometimes said. It is only as having part with Christ in death that any soul is made righteous, but the righteousness which it is made is that of God.

Thus far, then, we see the believer cleared from all his guilt and having a positive righteousness before God.

We must next look at the sin in the 'believer's nature. The believer is forgiven on the ground of the blood that another, who has borne his sins, has shed. But he finds he has an evil nature in him, and until he learn the fullness of redemption, and what God's action with regard to that nature which He finds within has been, he is troubled; for he argues, and argues rightly, that such a nature never can stand before God. Sins God forgives 'on the ground of the blood; the nature which produced those sins God never forgives; with it he deals in another way. We find that His blessed Son has taken His people's place, not alone with regard to the practice-the sins-but the nature too, and God has in Him, a sacrifice for sin, not forgiven but condemned sin in the flesh. " What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Here we find the nature that is within treated of, and the testimony of God is that He has 'condemned it. The result to a soul that has believed in the Lord Jesus Christ is that, while still conscious of having within a nature that never can stand in God's presence, he knows on God's authority that that evil nature has already been the subject of God's judicial action-has been condemned by God-and that he is no longer associated with it-no longer 'in it (though it be still in him) before

God. What he has now to do is, in full liberty and in the power of that risen life in which the Spirit acts, the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, to take God's part against it, and, reckoning it dead, allow it no place. If this be not done the nature will be active, and the product of that activity will be sins, 'about which God will be obliged to deal governmentally with the believer-His child-that, the sins being confessed, communion, not relationship, which had by these sins been interrupted, might be restored. But-the root sin, the nature, God has already dealt with, not by forgiving it or extracting it from, but by condemning it in, the believer. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." ' Chapter 6 enters into this most fully. " Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." " Our old man " signifies the nature that the believer argues can never stand in God's presence. What has happened to it? Why, God has brought it to an end by the execution of judgment upon it, and by death the believer is discharged from sin. We read, "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." The next verse, "'Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord; or more correctly, " in Jesus Christ our Lord." Now this tells us not only of God's condemnation of the nature, but it tells us of 'the introduction of the believer into a new standing altogether. God's judgment of the Adam nature is seen in the condemnation of Christ when a sacrifice for sin, and, in this, death has severed the believer from the Adam association in which he stood.

But God has raised Him from the dead, the One in whom this was accomplished, even His own blessed Son, and this risen One is the believer's life, and he, possessing this life, stands before God in an entirely new association, not in Adam but in Christ Jesus. Christ has died to sin once, but now lives to God. God has brought Him up from the dead, and the believer is now, as to his standing before God, not any longer in Adam, but in Christ risen from the dead. Blessed be God! the life that we possess is the risen life of the Lord Jesus Christ. The believer was by nature associated with Adam; death has come in and severed this association; next God has come in and raised up from the dead the One who died, and the believer has been introduced into a new association, even with Christ risen from the dead, and has now no standing before God but in that risen One alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Thus, with regard to sin, the believer is delivered. The twofold bearing of the truth is, that Christ has died for His sins, hence he is forgiven; and that he has died with Christ, and hence he is delivered; and that the life that he now has is the risen life of Christ, and that in the power of the Holy Ghost. Hence, also, sin has no more dominion over him, he being no longer under law, which demanded good from a bad man but did not produce it, and condemned the man for not having it, but under grace, which does not demand but does produce.

Under grace a new nature has been bestowed, in which life in the power of the Spirit acts and produces fruits pleasing to God:, " The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith; meekness, temperance; against such there is no law."

But when thus brought nigh to God, does the believer stand-in a mere creature relationship to Him as formerly? No, the Lord Jesus, when revealing Himself to Mary after His resurrection, delivers to her a message which discloses the relationship into which those who believed on Him were introduced. He there says, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." The relationship of the believer, therefore, to God is that of a child to a father. As we have seen, it is '" ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Or as we have it in John 1, " As many as received Him, to them gave He power lo become the sons (or more properly children) of God."

We see how perfectly thus, as to God Himself, Christ has made our place: we are forgiven through the blood, stand before God in divine righteousness in an entirely new place, no longer in Adam but in Christ Jesus, and in positive relationship with God as His children. The Lord give us in some little measure to enter into the blessedness of that into which He his, by taking in grace our place, introduced us!

One point I might just touch on before closing, and that is, that the Lord Jesus Christ has also made our place as regards Satan. See Heb. 2:14, where we read: " Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Satan had the power of death, a power permitted of God, one that he had acquired through the lusts of man. Now, the Lord has taken His people's place, and, by going into death, has broken the power of him who had the power of it, and, as the result, the believer is delivered from the power of him who had that power. Death is now in the hand of the blessed One who is the believer's life, and when the believer does pass from this scene, he is laid to sleep by Jesus, the One who loves him, and who gave Himself for him, and who Himself, as the One who has power over death, exercises the prerogative of laying*His own to sleep. The apostle in Col. 1:12,13, when giving thanks to the Father, who has made His people, His children, meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, adds: " Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness (that is, Satan's power), and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."

As regards Satan, therefore, the believer is, through the work of Christ, delivered from the bondage in which he was through fear of death.

And now let us ask, At what cost has this deliverance, this introduction into the presence -of God in blessed relationship with Himself, been accomplished? At no less a cost than the travail of the soul of the Lord Jesus Christ. He died to make it ours; He lives to bring us into the power of it. May it be ours ever to connect the blessing with what it cost that blessed One to win it for us, so that we may hold it dear; and may we day by day enter more fully into it with quiet, praising, joyful spirits, as we walk with Him here below, waiting that time when He shall come to introduce us into the full fruition of it with Himself on high. [J. L.]

To promote and maintain the rights of One only entitled where they are not owned, or only carelessly acknowledged, is not only the duty but the happiness of a righteous soul.

[J. B. E.]

To Every Man His Work, Walking by Faith

" For we walk by faith, not by sight." (2 Cor. 5:7.)

To a certain extent it is doubtless true that every christian may be said to walk by faith, and not by sight. But the largest charity will not allow us to think that, all christians at all times, in their course through this world, are, according to the force of the principle enunciated by the

apostle, as gathered from the connection in which it stands, practically, and characteristically, walking by faith, and not by sight. Nay, if we turn in upon our own consciousness, it may be asked which of us is found, day by day, and in all our varying circumstances of life, so giving to the things which are unseen and eternal their due and controlling power in the soul over the things which are seen and temporal, as to be habitually, and in the sense of the apostle, walking by faith, and not by sight?

To be saved by faith is one thing, to walk by faith is another. And Scripture does not present these things as so conjoined that where the one exists the other, without care or concern, and without our watchfulness and warfare, will necessarily follow. " By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." This casts us upon God as the gracious and sole author of our salvation, thus endearing His character to our hearts while it gives them their sure and eternal ground of confidence in His favor. But Scripture also speaks to us thus: " Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and please God, so ye would abound more and more." This throws the soul inward upon itself, to see how far its habits and principles, its conduct and feelings, or, as Scripture beautifully expresses it, " The issues of life," are in accordance with the will of God. " For (adds the apostle) ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus." " For this is the will of God, even your sanctification," etc.

The balance of Scripture is destroyed where the mind is occupied alone with privilege and grace, and is impatient of the aspect of duty and obligation. And it is to be feared on the part of those who profess to be separated from the general corruption of Christianity, but whose separation is a thing of naught if it be not a separation to God and holiness, that there may be springing up amongst them a new and subtle kind of Antinomianism, in constantly looking at the Church's abstract position, and perfectness in Christ, as if the mere mental recognition of that secured to each individual a position and acceptance with God which could never be forfeited, and beyond which it was impossible he should be advanced. Every word of God is true; but it is true in application only as far as it is truly applied. Truth is not truth to me until it is reduced to living act. Every distinct proposition of the word of God asks for itself a definite reception by faith, " faith which worketh by love." The ends of a divine revelation are not accomplished in us except as it brings the soul and God together, in the harmony of truth communicated and truth obeyed. This, and not a light kind of secondhand dealing with the terms in which truth is expressed either in Scripture or by men whose hearts have felt its power, is the obedience of faith.

" We walk by faith (says the apostle) not by sight.”

This is not equivalent to the thought that we are saved by faith, however true that may be. To walk is indicative not of a point but a progress. Neither can walking by faith be reduced to the vagueness of a general principle leaving to the individual mind to fill up the undefined outline of its application. Nothing, I think, can give more definiteness and force to this simple but comprehensive proposition, " For we walk by faith, not by sight," than the way in which it is interjected by the apostle in the passage under consideration. It is presented in connection with the most wonderful unfolding of the character and consequences that mark the reception of the Gospel by the soul which are traced onward through all the vicissitudes of our earthly course, giving a victory over every trial and even over death itself; linking every sorrow and suffering, that is met in the power of faith, with eternal glory; pointing the soul, in the dissolution of all its present associations, to a " building of God, a house not made with hands; " and intermediately giving to death this simple character of being absent from the body and present with the Lord; in issue landing the soul in this simple purpose of life, " endeavoring, whether present or absent, to be well-pleasing to Him."

The eye that is steadily directed to the world that is unseen and eternal, will bring home to the soul a thousand intimations of coming glory and of attractive goodness, which are missed entirely by the christian even that is unduly occupied by the things of this world and time.

The spectacle of the starry heavens and all the glory of the celestial sphere may be alike the object of the contemplation of the astronomer in his observatory, and the midnight traveler as he lifts his transient glance ever and anon to the spangled canopy on high. But while the one gazes with wrapt wonder on the limitless fields of space, has his senses bathed in all the glory of revolving suns and spheres, as through his telescope they are seen to thread their mazy way through never-ending galaxies of brightness; the other beholds little more than an outstretched pavilion of blue hung with its tiny lamps, which, twinkling with glowworm brightness, shed their feeble rays to guide him in the bewilderment of his steps. The objects of contemplation are the same to both, but how different are the emotions awakened by them in the minds of each! So is it with the christian that steadily gazes with the eye of faith into the disclosures of that world which faith alone can apprehend, and the christian that does not indeed disbelieve the record of those things which God has prepared for them that love Him, but who, in a practical sense, could hardly-at least in the apostle's application of the phrase-be said to " Walk by faith and not by sight."

In infinite grace, we know God so watches over the feeblest and faultiest of His children, in their course, as to make all things work together for their good. But this is far wide of the truth which was before the apostle's mind in the passage now before us. Here the scope and purpose and entire bent of the soul, whether in active labor or in patient suffering, are directed to the things which are unseen and which are eternal, to the exclusion, as to any dominancy over the soul, of the things which are seen and temporal.

There is nothing more wonderful than the calm and confident way in which each point is explained and disposed of in the questions that are discussed in the opening verses of this chapter (2 Cor. 5). If we think of what death is, what conquests it has made, what is involved in the dissolution of the ties that bind us to the present scene of existence, what utter powerlessness there is in nature to meet the approach of death, what darkness and uncertainty mark all the reasonings of philosophy concerning what is hidden from us in the future by the veil of mortality, we cannot but see and wonder at the love that opens out such a vista of glory and triumph through regions of death and discomfiture of all human power and hope. The body which we now possess, and which is subject to decay and dissolution, is but an earthly tent that death takes down, to be replaced by a " building of God," an eternal habitation, in those heavens where Jesus finds His home and where God's glory eternally reigns.

There may be groaning now because of the weakness of nature, and because of our association with a creation that, through sin, is itself made to groan; but this only compels the more earnest outlook of the soul, and the mere longing desire to be " clothed upon with our house which is from heaven."

But where this is not the object of desire, and where the soul has not a title to this provision of God, what is there for it but the most terrible unpreparedness for a scene on which it is compelled to enter? For what pregnant sorrow is there in the expression, " If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked." This heavenly house must be ours, the soul must be clothed upon with this, or else we must " be found naked."

It is life, and not death, that Scripture always presents to the believer as the proper object of his hope. It is for life and glory that Christ has redeemed us, and not for death and corruption. And God has wrought us for the self-same thing; and the earnest of the Spirit, is the witness and earnest of the inheritance and of glory.

But, come life or death, there is always a ground for confidence. Death may come. Be it so. If we are at home in the body, there is so far a necessitated absence from the Lord. If we are absent from the body, it lands us with Him Who is the object of our desire. " We are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." And the issue of all, where it can be truly said, " We walk by faith, not by sight," is summed up in the words, " Wherefore we labor, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him." Amen.

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Bible Witness and Review: Volume 2, Then Were All Dead

COR 5: 14–14:21

were dead,

From 2 Cor. 2:14 to 7: 1 is a digression on the ministry of the word entrusted to the apostle, which had very opposite results, as it was received or rejected by those to whom he preached (2: 16). The character of this ministry of the new covenant, not of letter but of spirit, is stated in chaps. 3: 1- 9, 10. The circumstances into which it brought him are set forth in 4: 7-18, in which portion he tells us how his inward man was renewed day by day. Next he lets us know that death, which seemed on his road, and, as his end proved, really was before him, had no terrors for him; for he knew, if he died, he had a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and until he should be clothed upon with that, he would, if disembodied, be with the Lord (5: 1-8). But there was something connected with the future which had a powerful bearing on his ministry and general manner of life, and that was the being 'manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ (v. 10). Not that he was afraid of it, though it had a wholesome effect on him (v. 9); but he thought of others, who must be manifested likewise. "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord," he adds,!‘ we persuade men" (v. 11).. The remembrance of that judgment-seat stirred him up to carry on his ministry with all the ability and energy with which God, by the Holy Spirit, enabled him. " We persuade men." He felt he could not do otherwise, when he thought of the future, in which every soul has such real concern. Was he beside himself?-it was for God. Was he sober?-it was for them, for the love of Christ constrained him. Two motives, then, especially actuated him. He was powerfully impressed with the thought of the solemnity of the coming manifestation before the judgment-seat of Christ..He was also constrained by the love of Christ, manifested in dying for all. Were his sympathies, his interests, restricted to saints? No. How could they be, when he recalled to remembrance that every one had to do with the judgment-seat of Christ? How could they be restricted to a class, when he remembered that love of Christ manifested in dying for all?

Now, as we trace out his teaching about ministry in this section of the Epistle, we must see that it embraces in its sphere men, not merely saints. In 2: 15, 16, he writes of them that are saved, and them that perish. In 4: 3 he writes of the lost. In v. 18-21 he acquaints us with the message of reconciliation. In 6: 2 he writes of the day of salvation; hence it is plain that the ministry with which he was entrusted had men, and not merely saints, for its sphere. Nothing less than man in his lost condition does he contemplate, and his salvation is clearly a great object. When, then, he writes of Christ dying for all, the context shows he means what the words imply, all-Christ therefore died on their behalf, for they all were dead. Nothing less than the condition by nature of all men, evidenced by the death of Christ, is his subject in ver. 14. This is in harmony with his teaching throughout this section. Bring in here a limitation, make saints to be all that he has in view, and that he meant that they died with Christ (when he wrote, all died, or were dead), and we have a different field before the eye from that which we have in preceding and following verses. Take this verse in the usual acceptation of Christ dying for all, because all were dead, and we have the harmony of the whole passage preserved.

But is there no limitation? There is, but it is quite in character with all that has gone before. He has spoken of two classes, the saved and the lost, the saved being those on whom the ministry has acted aright. Of such he now speaks, but in harmony with the figure used of death, so he writes of them as the living . Christ died for all, that the living should not live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again.

Now, can." the living" here mean simply the saints alive in their bodies in contrast with saints who have died? Surely the contrast intended is between their former and their present spiritual condition. Of course, unless alive in their bodies, he would not have written, that they were no longer to live unto themselves, but to Him who died for them, and rose again. But if , the living, means simply that they were alive in their bodies, confusion is at once introduced; whereas, if the living means those spiritually alive, all flows on evenly and without violence to the sense. For look at the word , in ver. 14 as you will, it is a spiritual condition that is described, dead as to their souls by nature,. or dead with Christ, if such could have been the apostle's meaning. Then, a spiritual condition having been described as one of death, a spiritual condition is also described as one of life. All then is easy in sense, and natural likewise. How the living came to be such, the ministry and the word of reconciliation explain. But it addressed them first as dead; and they were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. That there was such a class as the living, was the result of this ministry entrusted to Christ's ambassadors; that it was only a class, arose from the fact that all would not receive it.

Present Testimony: Volume N1, 1867-1868, 2 Corinthians 5:12-18

"We commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after

the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."

Bible Treasury: Volume N11, Fragment: 2 Corinthians 5:14

To apply 2 Cor. 5:14 to death to sin, instead of death by it, is more wrong than I thought, because panton is absolute. “He died for all,” and of pantes applies necessarily to the same all.

Bible Treasury: Volume N5, Man's Judgment of Charity and the Christian's

We hear of a judgment of charity when men walk morally, attend to their relative duties, avoid debt, frequent their church or chapel, read the scriptures a little, and say their prayers night and morning. It is counted uncharitable to doubt that they are Christians, still more to be concerned for them as guilty and lost in the sight of God.

How different is the judgment of Christian love as asserted in these verses! “For the love of the Christ constraineth us, having judged thus that one died for all, therefore all were dead; and he died for all, that those that live should no longer live to themselves but to him that died for them and was raised.”

Christian love is not the mere expression of human feeling and superficial circumstances. It is based on the truth of God, and, in order to arrive at this, brings in and applies to the case Christ and His death. There man was proved God's enemy; for He sent His only-begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him. But man would not allow the thought that he was morally dead, dead in offenses and sins, the Jew as truly as the Gentile. The Jew had been warned of it more distinctly and directly than the Gentile (Psa. 32 as in Isa. and in Zech. 12). But for the most it was in vain. “Ye will not come unto me, that ye may have life,” said the blessed Savior grieved at their unbelief. And the Gentile joined the Jew in the worst they could do to One who could and would have given life eternal to all that looked to Him for it. Rarely did they unite; but they did unite to slay the Lord of glory who emptied Himself of the honor proper to His deity, and humbled Himself as man to death, even death of the cross.

Thus He proved His love, as they their hatred, to the uttermost. For only thus could sin be divinely judged, God vindicated, and the sinner cleared. Good and evil met in the cross. Infinite goodness provided the lamb for the sacrifice. Hatred without cause rejected and denied Him who went about doing good, and healing all that were under the power of the devil, because God was with Him. Satan instigated all, but to his own destruction in the issue. The righteous One God made sin for us who had nothing else but sin, and forsook Him that He might never forsake us who believe on Christ and have in Him life that can never die. Wherefore God highly exalted Him and granted Christ a name which is above every name, that in the power of that name every knee should bow of heavenly and earthly and infernal [ones], and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

This will be the glorious purpose of God to be fulfilled in His day, But what is the present result for those who now believe? It is the contrast with all dead, though One, Christ, died for all. Its aim is that they which live should no longer live to themselves but to Him who for them died and was raised. For the God who sent Him in love takes His part in raising Him up and giving Him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God. And His joy is not only in glorifying Him who in that death of the cross was glorified even as to sin, no less than in justifying us who otherwise were lost forever. But now we are not only slaves pardoned with a divine salvation, but we live to Him who for us died and was raised.

The true judgment of love is that all were dead. But One died for all. This alone does not meet the desperate case, unless we believe on Him. Then we live in Him, instead of being only dead in Adam and in ourselves too. And as we judge that some live in Him as believers, constrained by His love and having His life, we apprehend our new privilege and bounden duty—to live not to ourselves but to Him whose death and resurrection have brought us into such a new relationship of blessedness.

It is a paltry idea of Christianity to regard it as mere pardon, and perhaps only a partial measure, with the need of a fresh dole from day to day. Nor is it only to receive remission in the fullness of which Heb. 10 speaks, where the worshippers once purged have no more conscience of sins. Here in 2 Cor. 5 it is the constraining love of the Christ, and the positive blessing of risen life in Him. And we judge not in the vague hope, miscalled “charity,” about every baptized soul, but in the faith of His death to deliver us from our evil, and of His risen life to live of His good, even to Him whose grace wrought for us when dead in sins, that we might live to Him and not to ourselves.

Any other judgment of charity is a lie and a fraud. All turns on receiving Christ out of God's love and His own, and through His word that it may be of faith, and thus according to grace. For no flesh shall glory but to ruin. Let him that glorieth glory in the Lord. And this knits us to the Savior. We hear His voice, not a stranger's, and follow Him who alone is entitled and alone worthy. He is the way, the truth, and the life.

Bible Treasury: Volume N1, Queries and Answers: God to Angels; 2CO 5:3

Q.-Will you explain the statement that “God could not be to angels what He is to man—grace, patience, mercy, love, as shown to sinners?”

O. P.

A.-The first and last of these manifestations here named serve to make all clear. “Grace” means favor, and especially to one altogether undeserving through guilt, which is “love as shown to sinners.” Patience bears with those whose ways are trying; mercy too compassionates

the needy. None of these descriptions can properly apply to the elect angels, who alone of course can be thought of. The Word made flesh, the Son of God, come of woman, explains why it is, and above all when we add His glorifying the Father in life, and glorifying God as God by His death for sin and our sins.

Q.-What means 2 Cor. 5:3?

A.-A solemn warning that, though the deniers of the resurrection were all wrong, one may have a risen body, but he destitute of Christ, as all in fact will be who are not born of God. All must be clothed, all must rise; but then will be manifest that not to have Christ is to be found naked. The risen body of the wicked will not cover but reveal that unspeakable loss.

Bible Treasury: Volume 12, Fragment: 2 Corinthians 5:14

To apply 2 Cor. 5:14 to death to sin, instead of death by it, is more wrong than I thought, because is absolute. “He died for all,” and applies necessarily to the same all.

Bible Treasury: Volume 5, 2 Corinthians 5:9

Paul labored to please Christ, whatever might be the class in which he would be found at the coming of the Lord, whether among those who have fallen asleep before, or among those who will be still remaining, living on earth, when he comes.

Christian Truth: Volume 31, 2 Corinthians 5:16

Jesus said, "I lay down My life, that I might take it again" (John 10:17). We know He has taken it again, and He is now in heaven—the same Person in a glorified body—and if we delight to think of Him as He was, it should be also our delight to think of Him as He is.

"Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more" (2 Cor. 5:16). We are to know Him now in the heavenly position that He has taken for us; we are to have the conscious knowledge of Him there, for in Christianity the believer is connected with Christ in glory (1 Cor. 6:17; 12:12, 13).

Des Moines Conference: 1985, 2 Corinthians 5:6-11

Reading

Are at home in the body. We are absent from the Lord, where we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body than to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor there, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the of the things done in his body according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest. Under God and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that you may have somewhat to answer them with glory and appearance, and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves it is to God, or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. Love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one dine for all, then we're all dead, and that he died for all that they which lived shall not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. Wherefore, henceforth knowing no man after the flesh. Ye though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. All things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new, and all things are of God, who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit. That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses under them. And that's committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ that be reconciled to God, For He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God. In him. It was said this morning in regard to those who have departed and are with Christ, that they are waiting for the same event that we are. And I I believe it's. Good to repeat that, that the the hope of the believer is not to be absent in the body and presence of the Lord. That's not the hope, the great comfort, and we take comfort in it. But the hope of the believer is the the realization of the purposes of God in having us conform to Christ and glory with himself And I've noticed in regard to. Those who depart. The Lord takes home. There's really very little said in regard to. What should we say? What they, what they are, feel? In other words, we have expressions like this, he said to the to the thief on the cross. Today thou shalt be with me in paradise. And we have in Philippians to depart me with Christ, which is far better, and to hear answers for the body and present with the Lord. But he doesn't tell anything about doesn't. We don't have anything brought out as to you might say what they are enjoying or anything of the sort. It's it's just being with Christ, isn't it? And with the Lord and with him. That seems to be the emphasis. And I think that if we. Speculate beyond that, that we lose the mind of God. We God would not have us to speculate beyond that. We know that they are with Christ. United man, and here it's present with the Lord, and he is the Lord of glory, and as he says to the thief with me. That's him personally, isn't he with him, and as Lord and as Christ, the anointed man. I think that's right. What extent, if any, does this include the Old Testament faith?

There are some presents that cannot hear during this talk. So raise the voice or raise the Father. The question, the question. The question was asked to what extent does this include the Old Testament? St. I was just going to remark on, let's look at it, Hebrews 11, the last two verses, because I think that answers in a way. Although we're not going to get very much said on this because we cannot get it yet what the glory is,

it's called unspeakable or the one who saw it. So it's the person that we're left with. And that's enough. Christ the Lord. And as Jesus said to the believing thief, with me, it's the person that we're left with. To view and to consider not the glory itself, because we cannot get it. But he'll hear those in the faith chapter who died in faith, the last two verses of Hebrews 11. And these, all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise. God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. Now made perfect is the full resurrection state those. Our faith in the Old Testament and of this dispensation are not as yet made perfect in that they have their new bodies as we had this morning, so that they're going to get that at the same time that we do. In connection with that, let's look at First Thessalonians. Chapter 2, where Paul addresses. The Thessalonians, those he loved so much and. Find out what's going to happen. When the Lord comes. 1St Thessalonians 2 verse 19 What is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, all three names given here Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy. The wonderful thing, I think, for us to enjoy is that. We're all going to arrive there at the same time. Whether it be Abel or Paul or any of our loved ones that we have known in the flesh that are called away. They wait for that perfect state and we will all get it when the Lord comes, and we will be there when. Paul enjoys seeing those Thessalonians Saints that he loves so much labored for. But it does say the Lord says through the bleeding thief paradise. Well, that's the word we can get just a little bit of, but the fullness of the glory, we cannot get it yet. We have in Luke chapter 16. Some inside that it might help in connection with our brother's question we have there poor Lazarus. In Abraham's Bosom. Now that's the place of supreme bliss and happiness for a Jew. And we have there for the first time that the Lord himself pulled back the whale and let us take a look into the beyond that is, after death. In the Old Testament we do not have any. Explanation and do not have any revelation that there is a difference. Those who have died in faith and those who have died in unbelief, like for instance with the Saul when he consulted the witch of Endor, and Samuel was permitted to come up, and he told Saul that tomorrow at this time he would be with Samuel.

We know that Saul was not a child of God and there was no revelation in the Old Testament. That there was a division between. The condition of those who have died in faith and those who have died. In unbelief. But the Lord Jesus in Luke 16 does give us an insight into this so we can be based on that scripture. Rest assured that every St. who has died isn't a place of happiness and bliss and this adds to the agony of the unbelievers who can see the portion of bliss and happiness of those who have died in faith yet. That is impossible for them to have part in it or in any way be comforted in their agony. And Hades. You mentioned about the the Lazarus king and Abraham Bosom. Well, I think that that's in contrast with what the Lord says to the to the thief and what we have here. Because at that time you might say, well, we know the Lord had not come and into the scene had not gone back into the glory of men. Once he goes back into the glory as man, he could speak of being with me. That's why he was saying to the thief he was going back into the glorious man. And with the Lord and with Christ, I believe refers to that. It's not, it's not. Being with him, you might say, as as in the Godhead. They we know of course, that God exists 3 persons, the Godhead. But the Lord Jesus as man has gone back into the glory as a man, and those who depart there with him with Christ. It's not just being in a place, is it? In just where they are, it's being with Christ, and that's what I believe in our chapter, which brings out the absence of the body is present with the Lord. It's not just being in heaven. In the case of Lazarus, it was where he was in Abraham's bosom of places of bliss and joy. But here it's now that the Lord has gone back into the glory of the glorified man, is being with him. Well, nor is our hope any different than that from those that have already gone, because our hope is to be with him. That is heaven. That is paradise, isn't it? And that's what he says in John 17, the verse 24. His will. We had the will of God expressed so nicely and brought up for us in the last meeting, but here we have the Lord's will itself. And he says, Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me without, loveth me before the foundation of the world. Well as it was in John 14 and here. Heaven, to a believer is to be with Christ forever and to see Him as He is. All the rest will fall in place because he's perfection. He's joy, the source of it and everything. He was the good wine of John chapter 2. He's the source of joy, will have fullness of joy when we're there. So it's himself for us too. It's all the same, isn't it? But isn't there different brethren between? What the departed Saints now enjoy who are with Christ, and what they and us will enjoy when we will be glorified. Brother Johnson, could you give us some difference there? Well, I believe the prayer of the Lord, of course, is not entered in one departing to be with Christ, is it? That they might be with me and behold his glory. I think that is really when the Lord comes for his own and we're all with him and he is the first born among many brethren. But that's why I met a few moments ago when I said about. There's very little said as to the condition, you might say, of those who are departed and be with Christ, That is, they are with him, with the Lord, and with Christ, and at rest.

And that's really about as much as Scripture has to say, because they are awaiting with us the fulfillment of all that God has purposed for us in the glory. They're not entering into that now. They're waiting with us to enter into that glory. I would like to ask another question. About the blessed hope of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we often refer to as the rapture or the snatching away. Of believers. I would like to ask my brethren to. Give us the doctrine that will encourage parents of young children. Now in the Des Moines meeting, we have lots of small children and we're so happy to have them come to the meetings. We're so happy to see the parents bring their kids to the prayer meeting. And the Bible readings and the Gospel meeting. We look upon these kids as the life. Of the gathering in the future if the Lord carries. Now, brethren, I'd just like to ask that we have a little word on the doctrine. But what happens at the Rapture to the babies? The little kid, the little children. I personally believe that when the Lord Jesus comes from heaven to take the church away, that the little unresponsible ones will go with their parents. And that has been a comfort to me as a Father. And I thought that this question might be profitable as an encouragement to the parents of small children, so that they would have no reason to dread the Rapture. Or have any fear about it that when the Lord Jesus comes from heaven. And gives the shout. The little kids are going to go to. The babies are going also with the parents. I believe that with all my heart. But I would like to ask my brethren to give us the doctrine from the scriptures, that it might be a comfort to the parents of young children. I think that would be helpful that we might get the doctrine from the precious word on this subject. Would you read Ronald Matthew 18 verses 10 and 11, please? Matthew 18, verses 10 and 11. Take heed that you despise not. One of these little ones. For I say unto you, that in heaven. There are angels who always behold the face of my Father, which is in heaven. For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost. These two verses answer at least for me. Better than any that I know of. And I would add to it those dear little ones who have been called away by death, put to sleep by Jesus. Our brothers use the word the the words age of responsibility or accountability, for lack of better. I think that's what we use, and we have to leave that with God, the judge of all. Who does right and perfect but the Lord Jesus here Speaking of those little ones, and they were little ones that he had there then. But it includes all little ones. They are precious to him. And he says in heaven. Now this is literal truth in heaven. Their angels do always behold the face of my Father, which is in heaven. And then he says, the Son of Man has come to say that which was lost. Those little ones are born with a nature like their parents.

That's really the only trouble with the next generation. They're like their parents, they have the fallen nature, but the Blessed Lord came to take care of that for them. And he says to say they have that nature, but they're not accountable for themselves personally because of the age they're they are. Well, I think it'll be the very same thing when the Lord comes. All those little ones. Will certainly be called away and

caught up to heaven, along with the intelligent ones of faith who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. I just round that off with two more verses in the same place. Their angels do always behold the face of my Father, which is in heaven. Well, that's so. They'll be doing his will, of course, after these little ones. And the verse 14 tells us what that will is. Even though it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should, Perry isn't that blessed. And so they got their eyes on the face of the Father, who isn't willing that one of these little ones perish. They're not only watching over them, but they're doing His will toward them. And then there's one other in the next chapter, also, verse 14, I believe. Chapter 19, verse 14. What Jesus said, Suffer, little children, forbid them not to come unto me. Who have thought is the Kingdom of heaven? Oh, it's lovely. Just sort of rounds that portion off. I believe that the Lord has a special place in His heart for these little ones before they reach that age of responsibility. That love doesn't cease, but it doesn't His love as a seeking savior then, which is a little different. He wants them to come to repentance, but how wonderful it is. They're secure and safe. We'll see them, They'll be with us and next with those who are older. And Luke's Gospel, the Lord Jesus there in chapter 19, speaking to Zacchaeus, tells them in verse 10. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. And so those here in this company who have reached the age of responsibility, they are responsible to accept Christ. And if they reject them, they're lost. But the Lord Jesus still seeking them. And he wants them to be saved. And how lovely it is to know that. It's not God's will to anything perish that all my country fence, so the Lord is still seeking. I want to stage up before that. We do not fight with the little ones, the seeking. A child that dies in the age of inaccursability. Is not responsible for the position of being born as a Sinner and comes into the good of the work of the Lord Jesus. Beautiful to see, but we have to realize too that the word of God clearly shows that the position of the parents. Towards God. There's an effect on the family, and we see that several times in scripture when God executes judgment. I mentioned this because some people have advocated that all the little ones, whether they are children or Hussein's or children of unbelievers, will have part in the rapture. I don't believe we have any scripture. To support that lordship. But the children of the Saints, because their parents have faith, go with their parents when the Lord Jesus comes because they're in the age of inaccountability and the Lord Jesus doesn't have to seek them first as he does those who are responsible. The gospel goes out to them and they have a responsibility to personally accept. It and come to the Lord Jesus. As their savior, First Corinthians 7 and verse 14 fair set out, doesn't it?

I'd like to share some other scriptures on to help answer this question in Genesis 7. Verse one. Genesis 7 One and the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house, into the ark. For thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. It was all that, all of Noah's house, that came into the Arbor, the ark of safety, to be saved from the judgment that was coming on the earth. And so when the Lord comes, he'll take the head of the house and all his house with him if he has faith again. You get the same principle in Exodus 10. When the question is asked by Pharaoh Exodus 10 verse 8. And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh. And he said unto them, Go, serve the Lord your God. But who are they that shall go? And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks, and with our herds, where we go. For we must hold a feast unto the Lord. I'm just citing these passages to give the principle that we have found in Acts 16, which I'd like to read next. It's all throughout the Bible. The Principle of Val and thy House so Acts, 1631. Verse 30 He brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house. So when we're saved as to our bodies at the coming of the Lord, and we're raptured into his presence, our house will go with us. That is our our children. Who have not reached the age of accountability. And then that verse our brother just gave us, but we didn't read it. First Corinthians 714 I think is a very good one, it says. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband. Elsewhere your children unclean, but now are they holy? Now that's a verse which is in contrast with what you get in Ezra chapters 9 and 10. Where if a Jew had married a a heathen wife. The child was unclean. And the wife was to be put away, and the children from that union were to be put away. In Christianity, it's the other way around. If there's faith in either the husband or the wife, the child is sanctified. That is, in a position of holiness. Positionally doesn't mean that the child is saved, Doesn't mean there's been a work of God in his soul, but he's positionally. In that position of blessing and what even if the parents are not both saved, I believe the scripture would teach us that if one is saved that the rapture, the child with children of that union will go with the same one to to the glory. What reign does this be seen? One versus 4. 5 errors without security.

Citizens work first corner according to Jesus through lesson Him and wore the foundation of the world that we need the old again with that flame before him in the world. According to the adoption of juror by Jesus collapsed in yourself according to the good plagiarism of goodwill. Why do we agree that we need to or? We need to take up the scriptures as they are presented and apply them to those to whom they are applicable, for instance in Ephesians. Here it's not a question of persons being in in heaven, it's a question of persons occupying a certain position, and would apply only, I'm sure, to those who are Christians, those who are believers in Christ. But we know that there are going to be. A number. There's going to be a great. Vast number of souls who will be blessed for eternity. But not all in the same. In the same position, so to speak, we read into the prayer in Ephesians 3. When he bowed his knee unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom every family in heaven and earth is named, indicating, I believe, that there are various categories. And the the assembly of the church is an esteemed family, a distinct group, and we can't we can't speak of other groups in the same light in which we speak of the assembly. And God has not necessarily given us all of the details as to the the blessing and the position of each one of the families. I remember one of the remarks Brother Mary Hale used to used to make is that God does not answer our curious questions. But he gives us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, and I take that too in this life, that that God revealed in His Word what he wants us to enter into and to know, and what he has not. Detailed in the word. I really believe it's safer to leave that alone with the Lord. We do not know the exact position, I would say, of infants. Who have the Lord has taken in infancy? And others knew as we were saying it, we believe, and I think the scriptures we've had before us does show that the little ones of the believers, the Saints, will go with them the whole house, those who have not reached the age of accountability and have not rejected Christ. Of course we know it does not apply to 1, even though He is reared in a Christian family, if he has rejected the Gospel having come to an accountable age. But under that age, no doubt they will go. And to my mind God has not been pleased to tell us exactly the position of these Infants. But we do know that that they're all blessed, of whom every family is named. He He bowed his knee under the Father. Well, that speaks of grace and of blessing, He doesn't say. I bow my knees under God, but under the Father of whom every family. So we can be sure that every family is going to be supremely blessed, even though all are not going to be a part of the Church. So I would say that we we don't want to take up scriptures that that apply to the Saints.

Simply and. Try to workout something in regard to those who are not a part of the assembly. Through all words of physical. And we take care of our product. We feel for us. We'll have our company, good travel. For the comfort of parents, I like you to speak just the word on the age of accountability. As God has spoken just a little about it in Numbers, Chapter 14. I don't want to put this out as a. Definite number. But it does come out here that way. But rather to read these verses, who shall? God is. Compassionate. And. The judge of all years will do right, of course, and leave the age of accountability fully with him. As to Grace and the Gospel of Yearbook 14 Terror Numbers the. Lord is speaking. In verse 27, Hello Philadelphia with this evil congregation that murmur against me knows that says Murmur against me. I have heard the

memories of the children of Israel, which they murmured girls means. Sitting under them, as true as I live with the Lord, as ye have spoken in my ears, so will I do to you Your practices shuffle in the wilderness, and all that were numbered of you according to the whole number. From 20 years old and upward. I noticed that number. It's under the wall. It's a graphing of feeling which her, her, her grass made. The age of accountability was 20 years old enough for. That lest ye shall run into the water, concerning which I swear to make you well, we're insane. Can you look the son of Jefuna and Joshua, the son of Nun? I don't know what's what he said about your little ones. The little ones are from 20 years old. But your little ones, which he said should be a Prairie them will I bring in, and they shall know the Lord in which he described. I think there's a principle here to comfort us and to encourage us. We do reach an age of credibility, and it is likely in my own thought, when we begin to murmur against God and despise the gospel which we have heard, then we are fully accountable. But these little ones that have heard those things, and they're running in person in the world, and Christians who have not heard the whole gospel. Let's leave it with God. These things aren't revealed, and we're not under law. We're not under definite years as to anything today. But all the grace of God and His compassionate heart, these dear little ones, they're going to be brought in.

India. Well, I think, Robert, you say you're still out there. In the end, there'll be more people in heaven. They're in hell, and I would believe it. That brings it into. I fully believe it includes all. So. We have to take one more. You know what you don't want? You don't live in the rainbow. It's already possible. I I. Believe in the new life. Well, we were not talking about rules with their chronicles. When we're talking about children, we're talking about God, who is gracious and merciful, or who has provided the way. For sin. To breathe eliminated from a soul. That's the law of Jesus Christ. And I was thinking him blow up the answer to what? You're sorry? In verse 2. Or poor elders, they fall on the Tarshish, warring new. Of gracious Lords, merciful so, that render or Greek kindle and repentacy of the evil. There were 120,000 babies left. Other than 20,000 graveyards in the middle of the world, we're talking about the brains these years. Or like wolves from the question of slavery in God's mind, He's gracious towards our dreams and thank God for the Lord. Don't think the question convinced her of the sins of those brains they got wrong. Yes Sir. And the just afterwards were saying, fully agreed.

What restaurant? Between the soon of Adam, which Paul and Steve entirely race of Adam into a state of condemnation. And we all deserve judgment and death because of that is the work of Christ. And the work of Christ has sought infinitely glorified God as to the whole question of sin, that every human being on the face of the earth will go to heaven. Least upon that work, and the only reason they won't end up Lauren is because they've set their willows against God and refused to bow to God's authority and to the atoning efficacy of the world. Rights certainly haven't done that. Slow them down you with the purchase. Blood of grace is their title to the glory. They have not said or will not have them. But Rozzle brothers. And yet who might be in this room that have will steal against God. I won't have them. You go to Hell's Provision hasn't been made for you. Provision hasn't been made. In the Precious Blood of Grace, and that Working from such infinite Ground. And color. Take the water white you saw available. Appreciation for it is for the. The whole world. Will be spirit we all hope you may accept. He doesn't believe you, right? Close. What would that look? Are absent, are present in the body and absent whichever, whichever it was. Why his exercise was to be agreeable, I believe is the way Mr. Darby translates the word here. It says to be accepted of him. Actually, that's not an exercise on our part, to be accepted. We are accepted in the beloved, taken into God's favor. Our acceptance is in another and. It's a measure of it is Christ. But here it is that he might be agreeable, that is, that his life, his walk, and his ways might be that which is pleasing to the Lord. Because I believe there is a sense in which we can bring delight to the Lord, just as a Father. He might love all of his sons equally, but he takes special delight.

In those who? Would be walking in a way that is, that is in keeping with their training and everything their position. And there is the bringing of delight and pleasure to the heart of God. And what he wanted to do, whether absolute or present, He wanted to be pleasurable to God, agreeable to God, and because. In verse 10, we see that it's all going to be brought out of the judgment seat. Everything. And he would desire that that it would be that which is gives God delight and pleasure. As I say too in regard to the judgment seat of Christ. The expression we must all. Is an expression that is very broad and includes every human being. The all everyone will appear before Christ, not at the same time. Not at the same time. We know that the Saints, the believers, will appear before Christ before the Millennium, before he comes out in in power and glory, and those who are destined for the lake of fire will appear before Christ at the great White throne judgment after the Millennium. But the expression here includes all everyone. No one is exempt. Everyone is going to appear before Christ. But as I say, not at the same time. And the Leavers will appear there not to have their sins judged, not to be judged as their persons, or judged for their sins like those at the great White Throne. But everyone will appear to be more Christ. And that's why he says in verse 11. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, because the fault of appearing before Christ. Do not strike terror in his heart. He did. He knew he had perfect peace in regard to that for himself and for believers, but he knew what a terrible thing it was for the unbelievers, the price projector to appear before Christ. Would you explain the expression at the end of verse 10 where it says everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad? Is that in what sense do we understand the? Well, I need the. We need the explanation for that, good or bad? I believe that even with believers as well as young believers, everyone that appears before Christ, they're going to get a perfect assessment of everything done in the body. That is, they're going to have. They're going to see his permanent judgment in the thing. I mean judgment in the sense of his assessment of it, not condemnation. And I think it is receiving the things done in the body. Means that you're going to, we're going to. See everything. In in the right light, he's going to bring everything out. If it's if it's been bad, then it's going to be seen as that. If it was good, it's going to be seen as good. But we want to remember rather that when we appear before Christ, that the judgment seat that we will be in our. Glorified bodies and we will be like Christ. We will not have the flesh within, and we will, we will know even as we are known. We will see ourselves then. As we really are in Christ. I think as we think of ourselves now, we might say, well, I know I'm in Christ, and in Christ I am acceptable to God. In Christ I am one in whom God can delight. But yet there's always within us the feeling that we know what's in our hearts and we know the things that we have done and all of that. So it detracts when we're there at the judgment. See, all of that is forever gone.

There is no Flex, there is no. There is no sense of having a being or being a Wanderers will be there as to like Christ, conform to his image. So I believe even though we will see the things that were bad and they will be seen as Barrett the good and the bad, that we will see it in the light, a different light than what we might look at it now. Now I know there are some that have taken this good and bad as being but believers receiving the good and the unbelievers receiving the bread. But I don't think it refers to reward and punishment myself. I think it refers to seeing the things. We will then see what was good and what was bad. We'll have our we'll have the right judgment assessment of everything. Well, how will the unbelievers see what was good? He didn't. He didn't do anything that was good, did he? Well, I believe that. In a sense, I think that possible. In other words, like the the rich young ruler that came to the Lord when he looked on him, he loved him. I think that there are things that even an unbeliever does that in themselves are good. I would say that I think that even the Lord recognizes there that there are things that are humanly good, not necessarily evil in themselves. But of course, it's not done for the glory of God and it doesn't receive

any any reward. But I I don't think we could say that an unbeliever never does anything good. I can say that I see a 52. Eight would have some bearing upon this. I was only 52. Seven speaks of the time when the Lord will have returned and established his Kingdom. And the eighth verse is by the worksman shall lift up the voice with the voice together shall they sing. For they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again the limit, A voice thought of that as a principal after the judgment seat, of course, when everything has been evaluated in the life of the. Well, the Lord's assessment of it is we've had before. Then we will see I die before. We'll see everything as the Lord sees it. That'll serve in a controversy. That's right in the in the 19th of Revelation they say true and righteous are thy judgments. They we will see everything in its proper life. I don't think it's so much here as to who will receive the good or bad, but the fact that everything done in the body is going to have a true assessment and we will, we will see what is good and what is bad, which we may not always have that that righteous discernment now. Of Jesus Christ. Now if every man's bill wants this authority. Gold stroke, precious gold, food and double everyone's worst salvage. He made manufacturing for the day of Larry the. Revealed by heart on the fire every man's worth of one story. It is if any man's work, that's why she has built their fault, he shall receive a reward. If any time shall be burdened, he shall suffer law while he himself. Violence. Well, under the first Pentium there the 4th chapter two, we have a verse that fits in with this. In verse five therefore judge nothing before the time until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then till every man have praise of God. In the third chapter it's the it's the judgment of the works. But here we see even the motives are going to be judged.

Even the modis hidden things of the heart. Everything is going to be brought out, and I suppose that that there is a in a sense of moral necessity for the judgment seat. We read in Revelation 19 that the wife had made herself ready. We wouldn't want to. We couldn't really, you might say, enter into that scene of glory with the Lord Jesus until every question has been settled. There's so many things that we we might have a wrong thought about down here. And do not understand. But there everything will be brought out, everything done in the body. And I take it it means from the moment that one is born into this world, everything done in the body, they will not be looked at as sins, they will not be dealt with as sins. But we will see whether it was good or bad. That's where I take it. Reconciled across by the 7th son, once more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. For we must all appear before the charge, and see the price, and through the never man. I I'm not taking issue with you, but I must say that I'm having a little trouble with that because the context I think of the chapter is every time the word we is used is used in reference to. Fall the dressing the Corinthians and I believe addressing them as believers referring things we had this morning in the reading meeting. So to suddenly say in this verse that the weed applies to all men, I think troubles me and connects with an occupation that was made that how could it unserved person have anything that is the glory of God in the sense of good of all our righteousnesses are in filthy rags. We renewed for our scripture, so I have to confess it. At this point I'm a little confused with the thought that we must all appear would speak of all mankind rather than just the believers. I hesitate to reply because I don't like to refer to the Greek, but I believe, if you'll check with Mr. Darby's translations and others, the expression the all here is a little different in the Greek than the other that is used in this chapter, and it's a more inclusive word. We the all. You might, you might, it might be written like that. The all of us, not just believers. But we the all of men, all of us. I don't know whether Mr. Darby, I can't recall how he translates that especially, but I do know that in the original, the word the, the Greek, it's it's a little different from. The others there when it says we the all is anyway the all. You know, like I said, all the cars and the car lines are winning every car in the whole world. I've been using every car in the car ride and they all hear is modified blue. So we're always in the spirit shortness of grocery instance here to get a point across. That all within the sphere of greed, whenever we decide that is, it has to be. Literally referred to when Revelation 20. And verse 11.

When I saw a great white throne and him that sat on us from a roof police the earth and the heaven flutter world, there's found no place for them. And I saw the blood, small and great, stand before God, and the books were open. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were just out of those things which were written in the books according to their work. And I see the worth of dead Witcher in it, and dug on hell delivered up the temperature. And there were just every brand according to their work. Through even those who. They're relaxed. They're worthless, will be judged. And their judgment will be according to their work. The Lord, the judge was. They're in chapter 4. There will be the day of the Lord and He will be the judge of all men, but clearly there are two different aspects and timings for that director. Which ought to comfort and really bring enjoyment to the heart of the believer. And the revelation was referred to whose wife hath made herself lovely. And that chapter we believe the order is for us that when we're called in. Thinking of the glory in. Remember the way that we can bring it now. We will be there with Christ in the glory and the glorified body. And prepared for the marriage. We will go, We'll say goodbye. The judgment seat of groove will Everything will be made for the believer. We are the only ones who will be there in that sense to have. What has been done in the body made manifest from there in First Corinthians 4. Whenever Canada says and every man shall have praise of God, there's not a single one that appears there at that time who does not get a reward. Every man shall have praise of God. All to enjoy. This is most wonderful. He's going to reward us for everything that he can. That will be the wife made ready, and it speaks for me, I mean linen, which is the ruthless NASA's world of Saints. What we have done in the world that can shine over to the glory of the bride will be manifested and brought out and displayed in glory. There there will be the loss of many things that we thought were good. Doubtless. But what a comfort and joy it is to swing that he is going to take out breath and manifest even the motives of the heart, things that we don't even know now. Often we can't even recognize the molding for some of the things that we do. And sometimes our motives are very what we set out to do just turns into a complete flop. But. I believe then we're going to get a wonderful reward for the Modi. All the largeness of heart of Christ to do that. Then there is this scene in Revelation, probably. Bringing to light of everything. The wicked dead have gone on, a tremendous difference. It is going on in the work chapter I noticed. That the. In that's first year, 11 knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.

It seems to me that we have a thing we've seen bring here in this verse between the word we and men. Always writing to those Corinthians as believers. The next chapter in the first verse, he says we have workers together. He is writing to those. That is a very different thing in a very different time for believers to appear before the judgment seat of Christ. So Paul and Spark drawn in the 11Th verse here. To the judgment seat of Christ in a second aspect of Revelation, when the wicked live, oh what a thing that will be when they stand before running, the same Lord the judge ends. Oh, make it true. There they are, probably believing second aspect from him here in the beloved first, the terror of the Lord. Whereas it's drastically elastic. It's an old enough it's going to be more like a birthday party where he's going to be rewarded and give us every pleasure of us joy that he can be on display for his glory too. Might be nice just doing the judgment. A little first gone, Chapter 4, where all of those who are his, because we should look to the judgment seat of boys with fond anticipation. Really. And the thought here is inverse on 18. There is No Fear in love. Perfect love cast fear. And the certainly it should. Read this way. Here is love with us. Perfect. It's the love of God with us that we may have bolded us with judge, because else we lose. So are we, the squirrel. It's more for tropical flowers as the holy rood things we've done leave no body including and everything and how wonderful it is. It's all praise. The things that have been done in the Spirit that are for Christ, through the appeal, we're going to have a reward. We don't deserve it, but that's the graciousness of our God

and the Lord Himself. And we will, we will be anxious. Not hesitant, very anxious with old truth to cast anything at his feet. Because it's all of him. Well, thank God all that they will lose, daughter. All that was of the flight was going to be burned up. Go on forever. And would you dare to think of one sad or foolish thought not being eliminated forever? When you go in with glory, why don't you be drunk for women? So there should be No Fear at all, as he is. So are we right now. In this world, one with the joy. Were one with the joy, so fear. Whatever that's good that is refers to threaten. When was his judgement passed? First fear. That's where my judgment was. As he is. As to gentlemen, so are we. In this world. We'll never come into judgment for these. Thank you bore it. Primarily, I'm sure that the the moment here is not the powerful is not bringing out the judgment seat in order to bring out the judgment of the law in connection with his own exercise. Business that weren't war with the 1St 10 shows that it's in it's in connection with his own exercise to be agreeable to the Lord, for we must all appear but when they thought of appearing before Christ.

Comes before him. And he thinks of the lawless appearing before Christ as we held in Revelation. They're going to be there for judgment. We're not going to appear before Christ for judgment. It's going to be a manifestation and an assessment of everything, but when the unbeliever appears before Christ, it's for judgment. Random the believer. It is a manifestation. We will never appear before Christ for judgment, but only to have everything properly assessed so that we have every question settled. But when he, when he thinks it appeared before Christ and I think it's not addicted, Verse 11 would indicate that it all here would be including all men because. As a predictor, all appearing before Christ. What's going to happen to him? Because the persuading of men he would never speak of that in that that matter, is to believers not persuading Saints, but through some persuading men, those who are not the Lord. And the corresponding passage enrollments 14 I'll read it in verse 10 with with verify what you just said. It says in the end of verse 2 But we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, or is written as I live. Stand for more. Every beast shall bounce me and become to confess to God. When everyone of us should give accounting himself and go on, clearly that's everyone in the world goes to the city. I know the translation reads that the judge will see to God, but it's basically the same truth, isn't it? And so the terror of the Lord to the lost caused him to persuade men of the brain's manifestation of a believer. To think of the manifestation of what I was a person is terrible. And so it means their internal room. In fact, that's what he talks about in verse three of our church 5. If so be that being clothed by shall not be followed. Thank you those in Revelation 20. The dead that stand before God will be close to 1 resurrection bodies, and they will be naked before glory, even though they have a new body. We don't know what you're wrong with that body. But there's no. And there will be. The manifestation will find the baby before God without the righteousness to close them and you. That would be there. But the classical reputation of the dress and speed of. Is so important that we should be actually. Live a lorry. Lord would approach the feet of Christ, be my forever long discussion as to the law before which is truly not tumultuous for all things before the Saints year. Dusty fell out. Or stand for the inner suit. But how do we benefit ourselves personally on the track? All will appear before the jacket fleet that we would be exercising to live a life in the life of the church and sleep of Christ. You pull it, the size will far grow. Blind and. And we will find their own.

It wasn't for me and we were so happy to change our mind and relative to Europe or to believe that is what you should be exercised the ball with a bright bullet in the world. Alarms. Close I'd like to tell the story that our Brother Pottery. You certainly have a dream. You're planning before you. George wants to do railing. More immediately. Yes, what will be strong with morality? It is. Like a boring. One floor of the road. Belinda. Flung. Three or four years. How did you get along at school? There are winds on glow. Well, I didn't recall.

Des Moines Conference: 1985, 2 Corinthians 5:11-17

Reading

Since chapter 5, verse 12. For we command not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that you may have somewhat to answer them with glory in appearance and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves it is to God, or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead, and that he died for all that they which live shall not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore, henceforth knowing no man after the flesh. We have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things ever come you, and all things are of God with reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation to it. That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing the trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ and be reconciled in God. For He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Actually, we didn't have anything on the last part of verse 11, did we? Could somebody help us there? But have been manifested to God, and I hope also that we have been manifested in your consciousness. Isn't he talking about the fact that when he thinks of the judgment seat and everything being manifested there? I take it that Paul is Speaking of his own experience here. We would, we would desire to say the same thing, but he's Speaking of his own experience. I believe that that he was adjusting everything in his life at the present time in the light of that judgment seat, so that things that are manifested there would be, he would have them adjusted in his life down here rather than. Having them. Put off until the time of being before Christ, he, I believe he is not conscious of anything that would have to be adjusted there. Because in a sense, the judgment seat of Christ is a time of adjustment, isn't it? That is, if we've had wrong thoughts or we've had wrong motions and wrong actions, it's when we're going to be brought into the mind of Christ as to all of these things. And I think he's saying here that. He was in his own conscience. He was manifest even now. And he was adjusting things, and he trusted that he was. It was true as to his brethren, that there was nothing. Hidden from his brother too, that he was transparent with them. The way I take it. So that if at the judgment seat of Christ, everything is going to be manifested. And if at this present time God is knows all, it's all manifested to Him anyway, then as being believers belonging to the Lord, we ought to live openly as before the Lord at all times. It's all known to Him anyway. An exhortation comes to us whatsoever you do. Do it hardly as unto the Lord. Not unto men. That is, the Lord ought to be the one who is before us at all times. He's seeing and knowing every aspect of our lives. And Paul was living as manifest to God and not greatly concerned about appearance before men, whereas we are so often ourselves thinking, well, what will this person think, and what will that person think, considering?

That we're living before men. Well, if we're living openly before God, it will be all right before men, and we don't have to be concerned about that. So that if he was living as he says, he is manifesting to God and I trust are made manifest in your consciences, Is life open before God ought to have reached their consciences about anything that was wrong in their own lives to change, to be conformed to what was the major

that God puts in before man and not before. What man puts before man? So that the motive comes out in this 12Th verse, we command not ourselves again unto you. But give a new occasion to glory on our behalf, that you may have somewhat to answer them with glory in appearance and not in heart. Those that glory in appearance are linking at the outside. Paul was thinking of the heart which is always manifested to God, and so if we're living as manifested to God openly before him. Then the motive is really what pleases God, not what appears good to man, but what pleases God. We were speaking on Saturday about the judgment seat of Christ, and we might go back perhaps somewhere here in First Corinthians 4 where you get that where the motive is manifest there and there will be a reward for a right motive, even if it doesn't produce what we expect it to produce. And this is a great comfort in First Corinthians 4 and verse 5. Therefore judge nothing before the time until the Lord come. Well, this is the judgment seat of Christ, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the councils of the heart. See, the heart comes in here, the Lord who knows the hearts and knows the thought of our hearts, the motive of what will happen. Then it says, And then shall every man have praise of God. This is a judgment seat of Christ for the believer, and when the motive is opened up there, and it's a right motive. It'll it'll bring praise and there will be reward for it. That's a great comfort. So I judge that in our 12Th verse the motive is, is before us. Here we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf that you may have somewhat to answer them with glory in appearance, that's man's thoughts. But Paul's thought was in heart. I believe these there is the thought of transparency in regard to his. Walking among the Saints, that sometimes there is the fault that things are going to have to be settled, or can only be settled if the judge received of Christ. But if we fall wanted to walk with his brethren in such a way that there was, there was nothing that would have to be put off to the judgment seat. Everything it should be manifest now. I believe it is God's thought that things should be. There should be transparency among the Saints, then our and in our local gatherings and in our going on together. That if there are things that need to be subtle, they should be settled here and not say, well, it'll be settled at the judgment seat of Christ. I don't believe that's the Lord's mind, that we put off everything to the judgment seat of Christ. He wants, He says I manifest now before God and in your conscience. He wasn't aware of anything that had to be settled with his brethren. This verse also eliminates all possible envying, which is a problem sometimes when we see a brother or sister going on so well spiritually and blessings coming as a result, Spiritually speaking. Because the word glory there does have the effect really of of going, isn't it? Of finding our settled satisfaction in a brother who's going on or a sister who's going on for the Lord? Well, and I was thinking.

The thought comes through in a little different way though, but it's the same idea. In First Corinthians 12, the last of verse 25 and verse 26, that word care there could be concerned. They both have the same thought, but that the members should have the same concern or care one for another. Where one body, whether one member suffer, all members suffer with it. It ought to be so for one member be honored or there's something to the honour of the Lord, to the glory of the Lord spiritually in the life. All members should rejoice with it. In a sense, Paul was saying that wasn't he that. Were manifest. Paul could say it's manifest that my desire and all my motives are toward the Lord Jesus Christ and all that he does, and we ought to rejoice when we see that in a brother or a sister not to ever be envious. I believe too you should see here that Paul is is indicating that it's not only that he is his heart and his motives are right before God, but he wants he wants it to be seen and be known that his motives and his heart is right. In regard to his brethren. And it goes on in the thought of verse 13, Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, and or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. That is, he not only was thinking of his own enjoyment personally of the Lord's presence, what he could enjoy in the presence of God, I take it that's the thought of being beside himself when when in the Lord's presence. Whether in prayer or meditation of the Word, why he was it was entirely himself and the Lord, and what he could enjoy himself. But when he was thinking of his, when he was in regard to his brethren, he would have consideration with him, and he would use sobriety, and he would He would think in terms of what would be for the good of his brethren, not just his own enjoyment of everything of Christ. With the Corinthians, it was actually close to coming with the rod for their benefit, but he didn't wish to do that. He held that off. But it was the ministry we had in First Corinthians that they needed, and it was for their benefit and their blessing, wasn't it? In that sense, sobriety had to come in. This card this is Mark. In the next chapter, the 11Th verse, Holy Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, Our heart is enlarged, your straightened in US. You're not straightened enough, but you're straightening your own bowels. He had a large part toward them, and. So our verse here 12 not in heart. He wanted to get at their heart so that their heart would be enlarged. He had largesse heart, and God always has that largeness of heart toward us, and he wants us to have large hearts toward others too. If they have a large park, they won't wear out a brother either. I was thinking in chapter 4, verse 2, the apostle says, but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And again in chapter 10, the apostle says in verse 12. But in verse 11 This blood that was. Especially opposing him there at Corinth, he says, Let such in one think this, that such as we are in Word by letters, when we are absent, such will we be also indeed, when we are present. But we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves, but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves. Are not wise or do not understand. In Chapter 11 verse 13 he says for such.

Are false apostles deceitful workers transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ? And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of light, and therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also being transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works. Notice it says the ministers of Satan. He calls them the ministers of righteousness. He doesn't speak of them as the ministers of grace, but the ministers of righteousness. Well, it strikes me that this commanding himself before the conscience of all at current had a special force, because it was especially a current that Paul was being so opposed and discredited and there was such opposition to his ministry and if they could discredit the vessel. Then they could discredit the message which the vessel brought, and this was the effort of the enemy. To come in and discredit what was of God. Well, Paul says I manifest before God and before all could his opposers say that could they say that in truth they were false, they were not real. So it's it's it's it's the the setting where this verse, these passages are found that give them their peculiar force. He lived before God in his pathway. And these others that were seeking to set aside the word that were setting themselves forward, that were comparing themselves among themselves, making something to themselves. This is what Paul hated and abhorred, and he wasn't a part of that in any way. Well, there's a day of manifestation coming. He was one that lived so completely transparently before God and before others that he had a good conscience. And the secret of that power in the apostles is the love of Christ. In this next verse, there's there's the motive in the heart. Oh, how's heart was so one for Christ, so attracted to Christ that he would do anything for his brethren or even lost sinners too. So again, you get down to the motive. It's the heart. What's in the heart? Doesn't that speak to us? What's what's in our hearts? Is it Christ? Does his love constrain us? And then? I believe that if there is that deep love for Christ, there will be a deep love for our brethren too, who belong to Christ. That's really what's needed, isn't it? Most of all, especially in these last days in assembly, we need that love to be shown and manifested one to another. I was thinking, of course in First Corinthians 13, he brings in the more excellent way and what is it? Divine love. The more excellent way is divine love. But if you look over at Colossians. 313 and 14. It's giving us the way to go on together in Christ. Colossians 3, Chapter 13 Forbearing one another and forgiving one another. If any man have a

quarrel, or there'd be strife against any, what's the basis for it? Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye think of that Well and above all, these things put on divine love. Love what's needed. What is it? Which is the bond of perfectness. Oh, I believe, brother, that's what's needed. When we have anything to do with our brethren, if it's in the sense of forgiveness or forbearing, what's the basis? Even as Christ has forgiven you, so awful to ye, you could just think about the mouth of sins when he forgave us at the cross and then sent. Think of it day by day. He is righteous to forgive us our sins, cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Wonderful, isn't it? We'll have that thought ahead of you, and it'll be a lot easier to bring in this bond of perfectness amongst us. It's love, isn't it? It's the love of Christ that constrains us. Here the love of Christ constraining it seems to be connected with this judgment that He comes to because we thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead, and that he died for all. We know, of course, that he did die for all. That's what God tells us, doesn't it? And he comes to this judgment that if he died for all, then we're all dead. Well, that would do, I suppose, would indicate that that he would find.

Nothing good in in the man in the flesh, but he would find everything in Christ. It's Christ displacing man because every other man is all or dead. There's nothing there. There's no fruit for God. There's no life for God. There's no pleasure for God. It's all found in Christ. All of God's pleasure is found in Christ. And Christ is the one who is fruitful to God. And how much more in the in the giving of Himself and love on the cross of Calvary, giving himself a ransom for all. Because this brings before us His giving himself a ransom for all that he died for all because all were in that condition. And so he he thus judges that there is nothing for God in the first man. There's nothing for God in man in the flesh, everything. There is death, that it's all found in Christ. And that's why those that live, they live to him. That is, he is not only the source of their life, but he's the object of their life. We can say Christ is our life as the source of it, but he's also the object, the object of our life. And that closes out a man in his world. Man in the flesh in his world is seen as being nothing. For God, there all is death. Now. Those that live all were dead. But those that live believers on the Lord Jesus Christ, they have life, they have his life, but here it's that he is the object of that life they live unto him. And we live in him That life is Christ, isn't it? He in us and we in Him. It's a wonderful thing. Henceforth in verse 15 should not henceforth live unto themselves. Times path was enough for that, but unto him which died and rose the gate the wonderful thought I was thinking at first Peter of that four he brings it out with even more emphasis. Verse one I'll have to start, but I'm thinking of two and three. But for as much then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind. For he that has suffered in the place has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lust of men, but to the will of God. Well, Peter tells us what was in the past in verse three. We don't have to read it, but that's all there was. There was nothing else but that we wrought the will of the Gentile of the Lord of the flesh. But oh, how wonderful the rest of our time. Well, in in in Ephesians 5, verse six, we don't turn to it. It speaks of redeeming the time. Well, you know, that part was a little puzzling for a while because you can only redeem and buy back what's gone. I used to wonder how that we can redeem what's gone. But it's speaking about the time ahead, the rest of our time, because Satan is the Prince of the power of the air here. This world is his domain at this time, and so all the time is used up. You know, you figure how much you use. In working and sleeping, in eating and justice, resting, getting things done chores. A little time for yourself is gone. And if you want any time for the Lord, you're going to have to pay. By giving up something you feel you should be doing, you're going to buy it. But oh, how profitable it is. That's redeeming the type. It's all gone. Satan will make sure of it. They'll give you things to do if you don't think they have enough pleasure. Of this world. But we buy it back. And that's the thought of redeeming the time in Ephesians. I believe we buy it back for the Lord. It takes a little effort, but all what we have, well, we've redeemed it for three days. We can't take any credit. We're here by grace. But three days with things we should be doing. Perhaps at all. Things we should be doing with the with ourselves and our grasp. Mainly cutting. But we're redeeming the China we bought. You could call that good business practice, couldn't you?

In Spiritual Things, Good business practice, let's tie it up. Eyes ahead. That track is just felt by our brother violence and I think henceforth, I think this is the first. I don't remember or it wasn't. It was on Peter, probably the rest of your time, What is the rest of your time, brethren? It isn't very much. Doesn't very much today, is probably it. He's coming. And you know, this is the only time we have. There is no time in eternity. And this is the only time we have to live in this scene of His rejection and be identified with that blessed one. This is it. Forever. Never again will you have that privilege. The Son of man, the Lord Jesus spoke that wonderful verse, Even the Son of man. Came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many. He gave everything in his love for us. So now is really that time of buying up those opportunities and the service and. Performing those good practices, business practices spiritually, which will be profitable as you were saying at that judgment seat of Christ. Isn't it a possible brethren, that even in spiritual things we might live to ourselves, or that we are in danger of seeking ourselves in the things that belong to the Lord? We find in the history of the children of God a man by the name of Joanne, who seemed to do much. For the people of God, but when we investigate carefully. We come to see his character as one who was looking for out for self and was trying to gain a position for himself. With David and in the midst of the people of God, and that went so far as to committing murder, eliminating those who were in his way. So I believe self is such a. Terrible thing. And when we seek self into things that are. Fully things. That belongs to the Lord and have to do with His people. That's the most terrible way how self can manifest itself. And we are made-up in such a way that we are in danger of doing just that, seeking ourselves. Well, I believe the Lord will make manifest what is of himself and any of us, and He will also manifest what is of the flesh in any of us, that will all be manifested. At the judgment feet of Christ, many times that is even manifested here, that was manifested in boys in joy of life, and the Lord cutman fell upon him. So that's not important too to know. It is not only that we might live According to him what died for us and but he rose again. It's an entirely new condition. Of life. Entirely beyond this scene. And so I think it's important to notice that it is here in this 15th verse, the one who died for them and rose again. Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flag. I think that's very important, brother, because the the IT brings in the fact that our what we have before us is not a Christ in the days of his flesh on earth. Of course we never forget and we can never. We will never cease marveling at his ways in his pathway through this scene. The the what? How he walked to the glory of God. But the one that we have before us is an object, is the one who is in new creation and raised from the dead. And he's no longer in the the condition in which he was here in the scene in flesh and blood. But He's in that glorified state, isn't he? Yes, he is glorified state and this is in connection with the new creation that he brings out is what follows. Though we have known Christ after the flesh.

Of course the the there were those, the Jews who were in relationship to him as a earthly style. But now that's all fast. We know, of course, that that's what's involved, isn't it? In John 20, when he speaks to Mary, when he says to her, touch me not, or detain me not, or I'm not yet ascended, I'm to my father, your Father, my God, and your God. They were to know him in a new way. No longer as a man on earth, but one in ascending and is the right hand of God. I think it's important to to see that. How many God's dear people seek to live according to what the Lord Jesus was down here as a man, even though they may be saved, knowingly saved, yet to know him as the one who is risen again? And we ourselves have that resurrection light within us to live in the good of that. Mariette Grey or. Two, and the Lord coming and revealing himself to her, had to learn that lesson, that she could not have the Lord visas back in the same way as he had him before he went to the cause. And this what was on her mind. She wanted to have him back in the same way. There was genuine love and affection for the Savior

there, and Lord recognizes that there was lack of intelligence about. It's remarkable that the Lord comes to her first because he realized that there was genuine love and affection for the Savior, and He is to her that revelation of the new relationship that was not only hers but everyone's now as a result. Of redemption accomplished. That His God was our God, His Father, our Father. They were in relationship to the Lord Jesus as the Messiah, the King of Israel. But that all ended in the rejection, at least for the time being. On the cross and there is a new relationship now. That kernel of weed had fallen into the ground and died. And if it died? It would bring forth much fruit. So that when he would be lifted up, he says in John 12, he would draw all many to himself, so that even the disciples would now have a new relationship, much more blessed and intimate than they ever had with him before. They were not one with him. Before the death and resurrection, but one redemption accomplished they are. One with him now, and that spirit links them to him. And to one another, what a wonderful truth that is. And you know, beloved, when we refer to the Lord Jesus as our king. This is really falling short of what we have here. He is not our king. He is the king. But our relationship to the Blessed Lord is not that way. Then we're trying to recognize the Lord Jesus or knowing him according to the flesh, we have a much more blessed relationship. We are His body and His bride. What a wonderful position that is. That is Christianity. When he appeared under Thomas and John, 20 the disciples said, We have seen the Lord. He was thinking too of seeing him as he had seen him before. And so he said. Except I can put my finger into the print of the nails and touch my hands into his side. I will not believe so. The Lord appeared to then again, and Thomas was there, but He didn't do it. He said, my Lord and my God. He saw him then, but differently, didn't he? Already I was speaking in Luke 24 when he appeared to the disciples the third time.

They had been told that he had prison, and they expected to see him back as he was, and in verse 36 as they thus fake Jesus himself stood in the midst of them. And says unto them, Peace be unto you. And they were terrified and afraid. Suppose they'd seen a spirit, because they expected to see him as he was. And he said unto them, Why are you troubled? Why the thoughts arise in your heart, Hold my hands and my feet, that it is my I myself. Handle me, and see, For a spirit has thought flesh and bones, as you see me, have with no blood. This wasn't the same is risen now. Wonderful to see this, isn't it? And of course he showed them his hands to his feet, Went on to open their understanding then. But they didn't. They didn't expect that they expected to see him as they had him before. Not the same thou. What does it mean in Philippians 3 when Paul says in the 11Th verse of that chapter? Of the 10th, 1St that I may know him and the power of his resurrection. What is this that we may know the power of His resurrection? I wondered and enjoyed from my own soul. After all, we get in kings, is it? Or thought by Elijah Gibbs to Shulamite a son and the son grows up to a certain age and then he falls sick and died. The question comes then, why did God give me that son if he means to take them away again? What is the purpose of it all? She doesn't use faith and she sends for the man of God. She goes in fact after him herself. And when Elisha asked, you know is it well, all is well. He likes to know if something had happened. Well the story ends that he comes and the child is raised up again. Now she has a son. It's the same son, but she does have him back in resurrection. Now she owns what God has given to her in this newness of life of which you're Speaking of, isn't it? Is that the power of resurrection that we so may know, and as it says in one hymn, the power of his life, the power of his resurrection in our lives, Because as we have died with Christ. And the more we realized that that his death was our death with him on the cross there we have seen are seen in God's side as did though we are also like Him in the likeness of his resurrection. Isn't the Christians real life that in resurrection we all stop at the cross only and perhaps learn at the end of ourselves is there sealed in that cross of Christ too, But we don't go on the power of His resurrection. Perhaps someone else can enlarge a little bit more on it, but it's a tremendous thought for us when we lay hold of that brother John. Thought that I have had, and I think others have had it too, that the apostle Paul. Had his heart so filled with the glory of our Lord Jesus? And as the Lord Jesus himself went into death and was raised again by the glory of the Father, it was Paul's desire that he too might experience that raising power, the resurrection power of God, that it might be felt in his own body. I don't know whether that is the thought in the concept, but at least I've enjoyed that thought. The Apostle Paul wanted to be so like Christ that he would have the experience of that resurrection power, and that day is coming when he will find it for himself just to some of us may yet to the Lord tarry that long. For some of us it might not be very long, but there are those who are going to experience the power of God in their their bodies, which have gone to decay and are yet going to be raised by the glory of God.

There's a verse or two that we might read to find that power of resurrection and Ephesians one brother. Disney for interruptions. But before we leave chapter three, I think the answer is even right, verse 14 of that third chapter. All means in verse 10 I pressed toward the mark for the prize of the nativity is calling on high on the Christ Jesus. So that's possible, for I think the answer is given, right? For example, yes. I was only going to read about the power of the resurrection that seemed to be on John's heart, the power of that resurrection in in Ephesians 3. Verse. Verse 17 to start. Let the God of our Lord keep us. Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation. In the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding, being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints, and what is the now. Notice this, the exceeding greatness of His power to us Word. Notice that to us word which believe we walk by faith. In Tarant again, who asked for to believe according to the working of his mighty power, mighty power which he wrote in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places. I believe in a Philippians 3/4 was enjoying all of this by faith, even before the actual experience which Paul Rita hasn't got yet. As to the resurrection of his body, so this is the in principle what we have in our chapter, Resurrection and the judgment seat of Christ and the glory and ourselves associated as being firstfruits also Christ the first fruits. Afterwards they better Christ at his coming. So this is Christ the head of a new creation that's before us in our chapter now. In connection with that expression, his resurrection too, he point out that his resurrection was a resurrection out from among the dead, that is, the others were left behind in in the state of death that we have that expression. In in Philippians, the out resurrection from the dead. Not just the resurrection of the dead, but coming out and leaving those behind. And that's really the principle of the new creation, isn't it? He's the He's the beginning. Of this new creation as being raised out from among the dead, as we have in our chapter that all are dead and the Lord Jesus died for all but He's been raised again and is raised again out from the dead. He's the beginning of the new creation and those of us who live now as believers are in that new creation. And that's verse 17, isn't it? Because in the King James the expression new creature. Is in a way perhaps misleading. It should be more, more or less in this way. If any man be in Christ, it is a new creation. That is, we're in Christ, in new creation. It's not so much the fault here of the of one being made a new creature, as it is that we are in new creation in Christ. Christ is the beginning of the new creation and. Everything else is in death. Christ raised out of death, and we are in him in new creation. God has has begun a new a new creation, an entirely new thing has begun, a new a new creation, an entirely new thing. Because the old thing, man in the flesh, the first man and his whole world, everything built up by him, was not forgotten. You know, I believe it's good for us to enter into the fact that God desired to have man for his pleasure. We read in the 4th chapter of Revelation that everything was not only created by God, but for his pleasure. God desired man for his pleasure that was announced when the Lord Jesus was born into the world. Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace, good pleasure in man. God desired good pleasure in man, but.

The first man did not afford him that pleasure and all that that man had built up in this world is not for the pleasure and delight of God and really had separated God and man. The first man brought in separation, alienation because of sin. And so now in new creation, God has that which is in which he can delight. There's nothing in the new creation that is not acceptable to God. And delightful to God and the Lord Jesus and resurrection is the beginning of that. You and I, as believers now have part in it. We're in new creation now. God has begun anew. In Revelation chapter three in Laodicea, the Lord Jesus is presented as the head of that new creation, and that is very important and it's for us good to recognize because. I believe most of us would agree that we're living in Lao, DC in days, and the way we have to understand this is that not only, as we already have pointed out, do we not know the Lord Jesus any longer. The way the disciples knew him when he was here on earth, we do not recognize and know each other in the old order of things. In our relationship with one another, we have to recognize that we are new creatures in Christ. And when somebody comes into our midst, who in this world has a position of wealth and education? That doesn't mean a thing in the things of God. We do not like. James rebukes the Saints. That is, somebody in rich clothing comes in, we give him a more important place than the poor brother, and so on. We're looking. At each other in the old creation really, and not in the new creation. And there are some beautiful stories that have been passed on to us. How this has wonderfully been demonstrated amongst the people of God, the story. Goes about of a nobleman in England who was a Christian. And in those days they didn't have cars, you know, they had horse and buggy, and he had a servant, and that servant would hitch up the horse and get his master to meeting. But when they were at meetings, that master said under the ministry of that servant, because that position of master and servant didn't play any role in the assembly. That servant had a gift of the Lord and that servant. Would minister spiritually to the needs of his master and. The daughter, I understand of this man. Had written down some of the sermons and the things that their servant had given, and published them. Another example in Europe, in Germany there was a general. In World War 1. Among the brethren Pontiban was his name, and they had a publication in the newspaper. I read a made fun of this man who was known to be a godly man, and they presented him as sitting at the feet of a Shoemaker, being instructed by a Shoemaker. And it came to the attention of the king, you know, and he called this man to answer for this. And he requested it that in any way embarrassed His Majesty he would resign his position. But the answer was he should consider this as not having taken place. But the point I'm making is that even the world recognized that this man who had a high position in the world, was not recognized in this position among the brethren, that he had to sit and submit. To another one who was considered according to worldly standards way below him. But he was hit at the feet of that man and he instructed in a spiritual way by him. Beloved, we live in loudly sea and days. We have to watch out that we don't make anything out of man in the flesh.

And that we recognize what there is in each other of Christ, and esteem each other accordingly, and not according to wealth and influence and position that a person might have in this world. We do not know each other according to the flesh. We know each other in new creation, and there are new relationships, new order of things that control our relationship with one another. Are you present? Allow me to make a little remark here as what our brother says. It's a revelation to me, but for the glory of the Lord. This general Van Phibon. Preached in the barracks in Hanover, in Germany, and was the means of my Father's salvation. My father is along with the Lord. But this general who commanded the soldiers in the in time of duty, when, as a gospel preacher in the barracks of the soldiers to preach Christ, my Father was one that got saved. I hadn't heard your story before, Brother Heinz of all about. What you say about Christian position, the Lord? About verse 16, then a few more remarks. Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the Flash. Yeah, though we have known Christ after the flash, yet now henceforth know we him no more. We go back to John Chapter 7, and see how his brethren, the Lord's brethren spoke to him in the 4th 1St. And then we'll go to another bird. In John's gospel, really the Lord Jesus is looked at as rejected by his own people, to whom he had come and been presented as Messiah from the very first chapter. But he was performing wonderful works, and so his brethren come to him and say in verse four of John seven there is no man that doeth anything in secret and he himself. Seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world. Now turn to the 12Th chapter, and the Lord. Ending up his public ministry, here we see what he does. It's very instructive in the 36th verse of John 12. What do you have? Like believe in the light? That he may be the children of light? These things fake Jesus, and departed and did hide himself from them. He had been rejected as the Messiah on earth. He had all that power of performing those miracles, of feeding the multitudes, of bringing blessing to the world, and he demonstrated as the power of God against sin and its effect. But he had more to do. He must go right down into death and. Rob the enemy of the power of death. And deliver them who through fear of death for all their lifetime septic to *******. So the Lord went on. He did not set up his Kingdom on earth in this ruin that was there. He had the redemptions work to finish. And so he went on to the cross and died, and rose again. And he's never coming back to go on with his work that he did before the cross, not to come down and be a Messiah on earth, which we might say. Much of Christian would like to kind of have that sort of a thing of Christ who can come here and bring blessing and make things happy and good on the earth. Christian has departed down to that level in lots of their teaching, and it's not so and never will be. So. He's finished that work. He's arisen Christ. He's the Christ and the glory. He's going to come and set up his Kingdom, but now he's pointing us to the resurrection state, the new creation and all the blessing that we have in heaven. And helping us to get through a world that's still rejecting Christ. To reach this Christ in glorious false homesick. To get there, but to enjoy the power of that resurrection now and to walk by faith as we're having in our capture, Have all this knowledge of things, by faith that it brings to us. And now to enjoy the one who is the head of the new creation, we can see that God has worked twice in creation. There is the old creation.

And Christ is the Creator in both instances. And now there is the new creation. And oh, how wonderful to have part in that creation. And that's what we're brought to here. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new. So we have all this that's better and all the wonders of it and. Straight. Is so emphatic that his son will never come and suffer again. He he perfected that work. It's all complete, and now we must rest in it and never drop down to the level of things as they were before the cross. Because this really means he gave us a new life, doesn't it? He never, He never repairs the old and the new creation doesn't mean that we are created anew ourselves. We have the life of Christ now. That's the thought. It's completely new because it's that life that Christ has. The life I have now never had a beginning. And will never have an ending. It's the life of Christ and it can only do one thing and that's please God, can't do anything else, can only please God. And that's completely new. That's why it's all things to become new. So we should really realize what we have received is the life of Christ. We're one with him. I'm in Christ and he's in me. And each one of you can say that. And that's lovely, isn't it? The Colossians one were three verse one. If he then be risen with Christ, that's a state in which we are now. That's not looking forward to that resurrection of the body which will be a body resurrection, but now in our original with Christ. There is a difference between quickening that's giving of life and resurrection. The resurrection takes us beyond the myriad partation of life, and that is, it associates us with Christ as the risen man and in the glory. And so we are quickened together with him and we are raised with him and then finally seated in the heavenlies. So it's a new position in resurrection that we're brought into by the power of the Spirit of God and in association with Christ in the new position that he has. The Old Testament Saints had life. But they didn't have the power of the resurrection. They weren't brought into association with the risen and glorified man. And we're united to that man by the Spirit of God. Now that's Christianity. So we Resurrection

goes beyond just life. It's life in the power of the resurrection of Christ. And it's a new position to be enjoyed. And it's it's a new creation as we have it here all together, apart from the old. Something altogether new of which Christ risen has become the head and the expression. And we have this life as you've been bringing out, but it's it's in the power of resurrection. Remember in John 20 and when the Lord Jesus appeared as the risen man, he breathed into the disciples the breath of his resurrection life and said receive he the Holy Spirit. So we have the Spirit of God is the power of life in association with the new risen position that he's now in as the risen man. The nice point, Chuck, and it's distinguished in two verses in Ephesians. To just to read it to see the difference between quickening and raised up. Verse five gives us quickening and verse six gives us raised up. I'll just read it Ephesians 25 and six, even when we were dead in 10. Well, it's God, read verse 4. But God, who is rich in mercy for his great lover with he loved us even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with race. Like race are you saved? And hath raised us up together, made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Quickening and resurrection are two different things. They're very nice here.

Thesaurus is correct. The power. Well, it's wonderful to see the expression in verse 18 that in this new creation, all things are of God. We know that since all things are of God, there there's nothing in the new creation that is not. For God's pleasure in which God can delight in. I'm more and more impressed rather than how that that God should be the center. Of all of our lives and our thoughts. You see one of the things that that sin brought in was making man the center of everything. Everything revolved around man. But I believe the Christianity and the new creation, We see that God is the center of everything and Christ and not man. If we make man the center and the object we are, we're going to miss the true character of Christianity and the blessing that God has and what is for his pleasure. Everything is for God's pleasure, and everything centers and revolves around him. But we find that this, this first creation in which we find ourselves in our circumstances, man has put everything in such a disorder that. It's not for God's pleasure, and so it's entirely set aside. And he has now an order of things in which everything is of himself. All things are of God. And that's what's going to be brought into power in the coming day. I believe the Millennium is a little preview of it, but of course the eternal day is the coolness of it when God is All in all. But even in the Millennium, we're going to have a world where God is supreme, and where Christ is supreme, and where the will of God rules, and where a man is a ways and false and habits and practices and pursuits are set aside. And I think it's wonderful to think of that. And if we already belong to that order of things, we already belong to it. It's not something that we we have to say. Well, we think God is going to do this one of these days. He's already inaugurated the world to come. He's already instituted that new creation. Now it's only known in a spiritual way, in a moral way. We as to our bodies, we still belong to the old order. That's why we've grown in these bodies in Romans 8. Even we who have the first fruits of the Spirit be grown in these bodies, because our bodies belong to the old order, but not as to the inner man belongs to the new order. And the the life that we live should be characterized by new creation. That is it. We should derive our desires and our interests and our motives and our pursuit from what belongs to this new order of things that God is instituting. And not what comes from has its source of man's life in this world. I believe that's what our brother was trying to bring out yesterday in regard to the the sources of supply in Egypt being turned to blood. We're to see that everything that emanates from man's world has the touch of death, opponent. And it's only that which comes from God's world, the new order of things that has life. But he goes on in the thought of reconciliation. He says, who hath reconciled us to himself? I'd like to just compare that with what we have in the first chapter of Colossians. And verse 20. Having made peace through the blood of the cross, this piece here is not the peace that we have with God, or the peace of God. But it means that all of the holy and righteous claims of God have been met, so that God's nature is, as it were, satisfied by the work of the cross, the blood of the cross, and by him to reconcile all things unto himself.

I read this verse because here we see that there's a time coming when all things are going to be reconciled and as God looks down upon this world now, he does not find it a scene of delight. It's a very ugly scene I'm sure, and but there's a time coming when he's going to have pleasure and delight even in the created scene about us, as I referred in Revelation 4. All things were created by him and for his pleasure. But even the created scene, even this creation is. Is not pleasurable to God now because it's not in the state that God would desire that it be in, We know that the curse was pronounced. Even upon this physical creation, when sin came in. And so the whole creation is suffering under that. And as I say, it isn't really the way God would have it to be for His delight and pleasure, but it's going to be in the coming day, and that is a result of the work of the cross, the blood of the cross. But in verse 21. We see that while the reconciliation of all things are future, those of us who were alienated in our minds and enemies by wicked works, yet now, now hath he reconciled. We are before him now in. Cleared of every sin and guilt and all uncleanness, we're we're before Him in such purity as we have at the end of verse 22. Holy, unblameable, and unruh, provable in his sight, that he can find delight and pleasure in his people. He does not have that delight and pleasure in the world that is the created scene, because the effects of sin has not been removed from it. But the effects of sin have been removed from the believer. There is not a trace of it. In his sight, as we are in Christ before Him, not one trace all of the ugliness of sin and all of the ugly results of sin, not one trace of it is seen in the believer as he is in Christ before God. So complete is the work of Christ, and we are holy, unreprovable, and. Unblameable in his sight. Well, God can take pleasure in one who is like that and. We have to write. We have to distinguish between what we are and reconciliation in Christ before God and in new creation, and what we are in our responsible path down here. We have to own that there are things in our responsible path as believers here in this scene that God does not find pleasure in. But here I believe in. Reconciliation is what is what we are as a result of the work of Christ through that blood of the cross. And through through death he now has brought us to God in such. Perfection in himself that God can have delight in his people. That says the groom speaks of the bride in the Song of Solomon. Even when she gets away, he says my undefiled my love and my love and so on. He always sees her in the perfection of what he has made her in himself, and he he sees that always and pronounces it even when there's failure. That's the lovely thing, isn't it? In Christ, I like to think of the prodigal in connection with reconciliation. When he returned to the Father, when he repented and returned and the Father fell upon his neck, I'm sure the son was conscious of being forgiven. He knew forgiveness but and he was willing and would have been content to be as well hired server because he thought of his of his. Just desserts and how he had dishonored his father. And it would have been enough for him to have been forgiven and yet be just as a hired servant. And I suppose when we think of things from our side, we think mostly of our being forgiven.

Justified all of our sins put away, and how undeserving we were, and yet we've been forgiven for Christ's sake, and it's wonderful to know that. But the Father did not bring the Son in to the table to eat of the fatted calf in his rags. He put on him the best rule. Well, he put the best robe upon the prodigal, not because the prodigal asked for it, or even thought about it, or even necessarily wanted it. That was there. It was for the father. The father did not want to look over at his son at the table and see him with the effects, see him with that which attached to him in his wanderings. He didn't want to see the rags. The rags was attached to his, to what he was when he had left the father. And gone away. But he wanted to see him there in a way that that the Father could delight in him and be look upon him with pleasure. And that's why he had the best robe in the shoes on his feet and the ring. Not because the particle desired. He would have been content to be a hired servant and even in his rags as long as he was back and forgiven. But it was for the Father. And I I think that's the side of reconciliation or God's side of

reconciliation from our side. We know that the enmity has been removed, no longer enemies in our minds and alienated from him, but from his side. We're brought to him in such a way that he can have pleasure and delight in US, and more so than what he had in us before we fell. Right Adam, when he fell. Or before he fell, he was for the pleasure of God, and reconciliation does not restore what was lost in Eden. I think that's so important. It's far more blessed. Than the relationship we have now, than what it was before Adam ever fell. There is this teaching, as if the cross and the work of Christ merely restores what was lost in Eden. God never does that. God never restores what man in his unfaithfulness, the ruins, But he brings something far more blessed in, and that's what we have today. We know him as Father and we dwell with him and he dwelt with us. The prodigal son never could sit down with the Father and feast on a roast lamb before he left into that far country. You know, he didn't really know the Father until he came back and they could sit down and it was a mutual joy. I used to think more in the past of our side of things and I certainly enjoy. God side in reconciliation that he has that son back. It's precious, isn't it? Is it not remarkable that it is God who does the reconciling? Here in this world, is the offended who needs to be reconciled. Man has offended God, but as God who turns to the. That demand here in this world away from him, who reconciles the offender to himself. Contrary to whatever man can think or do. But God's ways are always that way and we find as has been spoken before and thinking of what the what it would be in the new scene. That all things are of God. There God himself should be with them and be their God. They should be his people. But you turn to Romans 5 and you find there that he is the one in whom we may joy, and will have joy. And he is the one who is a workout. Has given us the reconciliation, not the atonement, but the reconciliation. Then all the change really has to be on our card. We had to impress so much on in these meetings that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever to Israel. God said I am. I change not. He is the Changeless God, absolute perfection and holiness.

So what he does come down with this ministry of reconciliation and change us and suit us to him. But we need to get this change of heart to realize that we are sinners and to receive the gospel. And then he does a brand new work that's suited to him. What a wonderful thing it is to have this Ministry of reconciliation given to us. On a day it is that we can preach this gospel and beseech and in God's stead that sinners be reconciled to God. All the change must be on the sinners part and to walk together, except they be agreed of the Father would have Son there in the glory to walk in communion with Him. So we've got to get the change down here through the gospel. Are you finished, Brother? If you can and I didn't want to interrupt you. But a number of persons have requested. That the scriptures which were mentioned yesterday afternoon in the Bible reading. Be brought before us as to the position of the unresponsible children. So perhaps those of you who inquired would like to get your pencil out and. Make a record of the scriptures which were referred to yesterday afternoon in our Bible reading. We found that there were a number of discussions resulting from our Bible reading yesterday. In fact, in our own home we talked about it into the night and the subject that we talked about yesterday afternoon was the subject of many conversations during the day. And so I have been asked by a number of people to just give us a few thoughts and the scriptures which were referred to. For our comfort and encouragement in relation to the position of the unresponsible children. Now the question was asked yesterday afternoon as to the rapture. What will happen to babies and children? Who have not reached the age of accountability, what will happen to them at the Rapture? The answer which we enjoyed in the meeting was this. That where there is a believing parent. The unresponsible children will go up to glory with their parent. And the scripture referred to is First Corinthians Chapter 7, verse 14. Another scripture that was mentioned was Genesis Chapter 7 verse one. And also Exodus chapter 10 and verse 9. It was also mentioned yesterday that since a baby. Or an unresponsible person was not indwelt by the Spirit of God. They could not be part of the Church. First Corinthians chapter 12, verse 13 tells us that by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body. So an unresponsible person could not be a part of the Church that is of the Bride of Christ. Because they would not be indwelt by the Spirit of God. Now another thing the question was brought up, what happens to the children in homes where there is neither parent? Who is a believer? These unresponsible children will not go up at the rapture. They will stay with their parents. They can be blessed in a future dispensation. But of course. Their Christ rejecting parents will be without hope. Now that's what we enjoyed yesterday as to the rapture or the coming of the Lord, and I thought it was helpful for the parents of OF who are bringing their little children here. You do not have to be afraid of the rapture, that when the Lord Jesus comes, you do not have to be afraid that you will leave your little baby crying in the chair. Your little baby will go up to be with Christ forever in a sphere of blessedness. And you have every right and joy from the Holy Word of God to look forward to the rapture on behalf of your little baby.

Now another subject that was mentioned. Now remember, this is another subject. This is not the subject of the rapture. This other subject was the question of death. What happens to the unresponsible infants who die? And the answer that was given to us is that those little babies and unresponsible persons. Who die. They are also blessed with Christ because of the propitiatory, propitiatory work of Christ. And the scriptures given to us were Matthew 1810 to 14 and Matthew 19 and verse 14. Now another scripture that was brought before us is very important. And you'll want to make a note of it, and that's Ephesians chapter 3 and verse 15. Where it says of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, and the better translation of the word whole family is every family. So unresponsible persons. Taken to glory either at the rapture or in death, will be blessed forever in one of God's families for his glory, because of the value of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ, which these unresponsible persons have never rejected. Dear brethren, these are the things which are most surely believed among us, and I would like to encourage every parent who has a little baby or a child which has not reached the age of accountability. And that age, as was mentioned yesterday, is known only to God. It is known only to God, and we're off base if we try to fix an exact time. But for the comfort of those of us who are parents and grandparents, let us comfort our hearts to know that the little babies will not be left crying in their chairs and in their cribs, that when the Lord Jesus comes, they'll go home with us there, be forever with him in a sphere of unspeakable blessedness. Could we sing number one in the appendix?

Des Moines Conference: 1985, 2 Corinthians 5:1-5

Reading

For we know that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God and house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. For in this we grown earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. If so be the being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this Tabernacle do groan being burdened not for that way would be unfold, but clothes upon. That mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath brought us for the self, same thing as God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather, to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we

labor that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body. According to that he has done whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest under God. And I trust also have made manifest in your consciences. For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf. That you may have somewhat to answer them with glory and appearance and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves it is to God, or whether we be sober. It is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead, and that he died for all that they which lived should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him has died for them, and rose again. Wherefore, henceforth knowing no man after the flesh. Ye though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. All things are passed away. Behold, all things have become you, and all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world under himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and have committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ and be reconciled to God, for it made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Thinking of this portion that came before me, especially in regard to. What has been before us in our prayers and in the hymns that were given out just now as to? It seems that the Lord is stirring up our hearts in regard to. Being in the glory with the Lord Jesus. Being home with him and at the same time being a feeling, the pressures of the wilderness and the being in a place of testing and trial. And also that there might be an exercise to enter in to even now. In measure, as we have the earnest of the Spirit to enter in to that which. We're going to be in and all of its fullness when we're taken home to be with the Lord Jesus Christ. I was thinking in the 4th chapter where we have the expression. The Gospel of the glory in verse 4. And the King James it says to the light of the glorious gospel of Christ. But it's literally the gospel of the glory of Christ. And that opens up to us. The one who is in the glory, the Lord Jesus. And that great scene of glory and bliss. And new creation which we're going to enter into in all of its fullness, but that which we can enter into now in spirit, that is, by the Spirit we can enter into these precious things at the present time and toward the end of the fourth chapter, the apostle.

Speaks of the inward man and the outward man in verse 16. The outward man is perishing. And the inward Man is renewed day by day. And that was my exercise that we might in the reading of this chapter and taking it up, that there might be in some measure that renewing of the inward Man. The outward man is perishing, but the inward man is is being renewed day by day and in verse 18 while we look known at the things which are seen. Of course we we can't help but see what's about us and our circumstances too. But they're not to be an object. But the things which are not seen and I believe in this 5th chapter we have. Some of these things brought before us that this the how, that we're going to be in that glory in glorified bodies. And we're going to be there like Christ, and we're going to have everything brought out at the judgment seat. And while on the way, we would be exercised to be agreeable to him, pleasurable to him, and to live for him, and to be in the understanding and enjoyment and power of the new creation. Because if any man be in Christ, it's a new creation. And that's even now. We know that it's going to be in full display in the coming days, but even now we are in new creation in Christ, and even now we are reconciled. So perhaps the Lord might be able to use this chapter to to. Bring before us more and more the things that are eternal and divine. My own exercise is that I feel that the enemy is seeking to discourage and wear out. The Saints and circumstances get before us and we get occupied with and how we need to have the things that are eternal. And divine before us, because the things that. In connection with our circumstances are only temporary. It's only for a little while. And the Apostle speaks that in the end of chapter 4. And this 5th chapter really is a continuation, I believe, of that which he's Speaking of in the end of the fourth chapter. To have the word eternal in this first verse and in the 2 verses preceding it. One thinks of that verse we often quote. I think we heard it today in prayer. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms comfort there. What we have by faith here is that which is eternal in this 18th verse of chapter 4. My brother Harry Hale used to say to us that everything that we have that is sure and certain and lasting, we have by faith, many would say. You might tell me that Tokyo is the largest city in the world. And I could say to you, how do you know it, earthquake might have caused the city to crash down 10 minutes ago. That is things down here. Can be shaken and will be shaken. And do not endure, but what we have by faith does. And we have a mathematical ratio expressed in that 17th verse that our brother was referring to. It starts with our light affliction. We don't always agree with that little word light there when it comes to affliction, when it gets the burning kind of hot in our own lives and. That's normal and natural in these bodies that we are living in now. And the Lord feels with it. Yesterday in the prayer meeting we read in Isaiah 63 that. The verse that says in all their affliction he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence bear them and carried them all the days of old. Then also in the 48th chapter of Isaiah says, I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

We are feeling these things so much nowadays, brethren, and it stirs us. Doesn't these afflictions. They're hard, they're difficult. But who is feeding them with us? Oh, to think of the one who was their savior in that old dispensation, and bear those children of Israel the multitudes of them. He bear them, and He carried them all the days of old, and He brought them into the desired haven, that is, into the promised Land. In spite of all their failures and weakness, He bore with them, and He carried them, and He brought them in. He brought them out of Egypt, and He brought them in, And his ways were made known in the wilderness. So it is with us, these afflictions, Who do they come from, and who is feeling them With us? Well, we don't always think they're light, but the ratio is expressed worketh for us. Well, I should read on our light affliction, which is but for a moment that's part of the the mathematical ratio. We're trying to bring out light and momentarily. Then it worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, language that really is as grand as we can think of to put before us those things that are ahead, the glory, the eternal God. And. Those eternal things that are. Ours in Christ even now, and lie ahead, and then in our chapter it begins with. This body. Changed and. A house not made with hands, eternal in the heaven is these bodies that we live in. They're very temporary, what we are living in now as to the life sustained by this blood pump that we've got. But we're going to have a body like unto his own body of glory. That's part of the gospel of the glory and. It will be an eternal body suited as we were singing in that first hymn. We shall behold thee as thou art, and thy full image bear. You and I are going to have that new body, like under that body of of glory that Christ has now in the glory. There is another world. There is a world above, and I think we need to. To consider that more and more beloved brethren, that world above where the Lord Jesus is now. God has already. Inaugurated. Might say a new world. We know when the in the beginning we read in Genesis one God created the heavens and the earth, this world in which we are living now, this, this universe. God began with the physical creation and then he made man and put him in it. But in the new creation, the world above, he begins with a man, the man Christ Jesus, and he's there and he's there in a glorified body. And he's there as our forerunner, and this is the anchor that we have for our souls is passing through here. We know he's there as our forerunner because we're going to be there. In the glory and in a glorified body. And so in our first verse it says we know that's certain. Now what we don't know is if our this earthly house is to be dissolved. What is certain is that we have a building of God and house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. That's the body that God is going to give us. It's a spiritual body, financial, like unto his body of glory. It is this body, of course, but it's made. It's be adapted to that glory, and in a spiritual way. But is thinking of how it's presented here that the certainty is that we have?

This building of God and the uncertainty is if our earthly house. Of this Tabernacle be dissolved, we know that man looks upon death as a certainty. But with the child of God, we know it is, and so is it. It's only if it be dissolved, if it should be, because we're looking not to be unclothed when we're looking to be clothed upon to that house from on high. And so here the certainty is that we're going to be, we're going to have bodies conformed like into His body of glory. And the thing that we do not know is whether or not we will. Pass through death here, but we know we're going to be in that glory with him and that body. But you'll please explain to us. What it means when it says we have a building, what does that mean? We have a building? I believe it refers to the. Body. That we are going to be clothed upon, as he says in the verse 2, desiring to be clothable with our house which is from heaven. That's I suppose, he uses the word house as the thought of a of habitation. It's what we're going to abide in the body in which we're going to be found in. And it's it's we have it, I believe, in the sense that it's going to be fashioned like unto his body of glory as Stephen looked up. Into heaven and Saul. Jesus. He's there in a glorified body, and that's the body we're going to have. I don't mean by that, that we're going to lose our identities. But it says in the Philippians that will be fashioned like unto his body of glory. Feeder in second epistle. Along that line, the first chapter feeder, second epistle, first chapter, first 13 and 414 sort of clarifies that he says, yeah, I think it me, as long as I'm in this Tabernacle, that's his earthly house, that's his body to stir you up by putting you in remembrance. Knowing that shortly I must put off this my Tabernacle. His body. He's going to put this lap. So will we. In death, of course we'll exchange it. If the shout comes, it'll be immediate. Wonderful, isn't that thought? But put off this house, this body, even as our Lord Jesus Christ has showed me, Well, he's talking about death there. But as you say, not all of us will go through that. It says it's appointed under Men once to die. But the perfection of Scripture has kept the word all out of that verse. It isn't appointed unto all men once to die. And it said that it wouldn't apply to us today, would it? Because I would say most of us don't expect that at all. We expect him. But we'll put off this Tabernacle, our house, our earthly house. It's a building, it's our lodging place, but we have a new one. That will be put on immediate with the shelf on it. Yes, you remind me of what was said about visiting. Saint Who is really? Apparently on their deathbed, or nearing it, or feeling pain and affliction and sorrow and longing to be home. And sometimes we pray for them, and sometimes they ask the Lord to take them home. But that's not the best prayer. The best prayer is come, Lord Jesus, so that we don't pass through that article of death. We really shouldn't expect it, even though the doctor might say three months or three weeks or a year. No, we ought to be looking. For the Lord to come for us, that's the very best. So the if is very encouraging in this verse. We don't expect to have to do that. Of course, when he sends for us, it will be lovely too. But the very best is for him to come for us. Then, in connection with these bodies, it's it's in a brother was referring to Philippians 221. Who shall our Lord Jesus Christ? Who shall change our body of humiliation? It's these bodies that we live in that are going to be changed.

Even though they might be dissolved, even as Moses who was buried by God. No man knew where God buried him, and then the Lord when he gave the. Disciples A preview of the coming Kingdom, and especially in Luke, where. We also have a glimpse of the Father's house, that home to the which we are going on that occasion. He brought forth Moses and Elias and. One of them, of course, was buried by God, and no man knew where and centuries before. Time doesn't enter into the thought of God or affect him in any way. He brings Moses out, and he brings Elias out, who did not pass through death. So this is a preview of what is lying ahead of us. So we don't expect to die. But if we do, we have this building of God, this house not made with hands, eternal in the heaven. Meanwhile some of U.S. drone. Isn't this another one of the grand truths of eternal security? It's throughout the word of God. And how solemn it is when there are some who do not believe it, some who profess to be Christians and do not believe it. The KNOW. You know, there's no doubt about it. We have that these eternal things that the 18th verse speaks of. And we're joined heirs with Christ and everything is ours in Christ. But the wonderful part about it is you might look at that first Peter, this time, first Peter. The wonderful thing about it is. That inheritance is eternal. And notice how it works in verse 4. This is what we're begotten for. To an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, But fadeth not away, and it's preserved in heaven for you. Well, isn't that precious? These eternal things are there. We know we're going to enjoy them. But notice the step further in verse five. You who are kept, You who are kept by the power of God through faith under salvation. Do we not have salvation? Of course we do. Of our souls. It's eternal. But this is the salvation of our bodies. It's coming. That's what we're talking about, isn't it? The salvation of these bodies will be changed, rather like unto Him, so to be revealed. Wasn't it wonderful that not only is everything ours in Christ, because we're joint heirs, God has committed everything to Son, but it's kept for us. We're kept for it. That's eternal security. That's assurance. We know. We know when death takes one of our loved ones. This is a very painful thing. Thing for anybody? But what a comfort it is that the body that is put in the grave. It's really only the house, the shell. That person, when that person was alive. Every human being is a tripart human being, spirit, soul and body and when death takes place. The Spirit leads that house, and Scripture does identify also the person with that house. Like a brother already indicated that Moses was buried. That was only his body that was buried there or an act. We find that. Stephen was buried and he's identified with the body there. But we know that this scripture, especially in others, identify the person with the Spirit, and what a comfort it is to know that their loved one is not there in the grave. We know from this Scripture absence from the body present with the Lord, or to depart, and to be with Christ in Philippians is so much better. These scriptures in Philippians and here deal with the intermediate state between. Death and resurrection. So the comfort is that we know that person to be in the presence of the Savior.

And naturally we love not only the spirit of that loved one that is departed, we also love the whole being, and we miss them very much. But what a comfort to know them to be with Christ, but now the groaning and the desire to. Be closed upon. You know, especially as people get older, we feel more aches and pains and. People who are haltingly the eyesight gets poorer, memory gets poor, and all of this and then campaign. And it is not wrong, beloved, that even in those circumstances we longed for the clothing upon that is not death that is to be changed, to be brought into his glorious likeness. That is certainly true, as a brother already pointed out. We ought to always look for the Lord Jesus to come in order that we see Him personally above everything else. That ought to be the predominant thought in our hearts and in our minds, to see Him as He is. But it is not wrong, according to this verse, that we long to be delivered from this body that gives us so much trouble at times, and suffering and pain, and to know that the. The work of the Lord Jesus also is going to accomplish that. We will get a new body like unto the body of glory, and then we will be like him in everything. Already we have our soul salvation. We already are a new creature in Christ. Inwardly we have a new life. But then we will be in every way like him. What a glorious prospect that is. His desire here, isn't it that he might be clothed upon? That is that he might have that body we've been speaking about that we will. Have when the Lord Jesus comes, it wasn't his desire to be unclothed as he read as we read in verse 4. The unclothed state would be if the body is dissolved. Isn't it one if we if one is absent in the body present with the Lord is spoken of as being unclothed here, that is their body is asleep. Sleep in Jesus is referred to the body. You certainly know that the soul is not asleep. Very much in the in the presence of the Lord be, it's far better. And they're in the presence of the Lord, but they're unclothed. That is, the body is separated and the body is is laid away. And it wasn't his longing that that he'd be uncooled but clothed upon. Now to me that suggests that he wasn't just thinking of getting out of all of the difficulties. That one has in this pathway in this life, it wasn't just to get free from trials or testings and labor and that, but he actually desired what we would be brought into or what we're going to be brought into when the Lord comes. It's more the positive side, isn't it? It wasn't just saying I want to

get out of all of the difficulties of the pathway. You can get out of them by being unclothed. If one is taken home, called to be with the Lord by, he is at rest. At the time, he's no longer in a place of testing and trial and difficulties, but that would be unclothed, and he's not looking for that, he said. That isn't what I desire to be unclothed. Oh, if the Lord wills it that way, it is far better. But that isn't what he was looking for. What he was looking for is to be brought into that for which God has laid hold upon us, that we might be those many brethren conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ in every way. Even as to our bodies, and I might say too that we have here, you might say 3 conditions, we have the. Closed condition, closed upon. And as we've been saying, that refers to our bodies being changed. At the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the unclothed, as we were saying, would refer to a believer departing the body and being with Christ, absent the body, present with the Lord. But in verse three he speaks about those who will be found naked, and that's not exactly the same as unclothed.

Naked, I believe, refers to one who is in an entirely unsuitable condition before God. Just as Adam felt when he sinned in the garden, he felt that he was not fit for the presence of God and he wasn't. Sin had come in, and God had the clothing to make him suitable to be with with the Lord. So the naked state would refer to those that are left behind, I believe when the Lord comes, when all of the Saints of God are clothed upon with those bodies of glory. Those left behind are in a state of nakedness. Wholly unsuitable for God's presence. And of course, they're lost. And so and the apostle says in verse three, I believe that there's going to be two classes. When the Lord comes, those are going to be clothed upon with glorified bodies, and those who are going to be exposed to the judgment of God is unsuitable for His presence, the naked. And as we speak of these things, we know that that we do not have in Scripture a definite time, day in or hour, and a year of the Lord's coming. And certainly it would it would behoove each and everyone in the audience today to know that they would be among the company. Who are clothed upon with that body from heaven and not be found naked. Being found naked would be as a lost Sinner still in your sins and exposed to the judgment of God. That's what he pleased to say. Like Isaiah on 61 and 10, he says, I will greatly rejoice in the Lord. My soul shall be joyful my God, for he hath closed me with the garments of salvation. He has covered me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom, deck of himself with ornaments, as a bride of north or South of their jewels. So every true believer is close to that bond of salvation and. How wonderful it is and curious to bring from our left praise and worship Thanksgiving to him. And receiving that body is, is you might say, in a sense, the culmination of our salvation, isn't it? As our brother ballman was reading in Peter, it's that salvation ready to be revealed. And if you'd gone on in Peter, you would see there that we have received the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls that we have now, that we await that salvation. It's ready. Everything has been accomplished. It isn't that something has to be done. It's all a result of the work of Christ. It's a part of our salvation, the receiving of these glorified bodies. So our verse is our brother ready and Isaiah, I believe, fits in very well, and in that sense we are already clothed with salvation. But we're waiting that that final element, so to speak, of our salvation when we have the glorified bodies. Sort of like the prodigal he was given the best robe, but in a sense, I believe that would include the glorified body too. We have the we have salvation as to our souls now, and we are reconciled and brought to God. But here, here it's the the culmination of it all, the salvation. Well, we who are down here in this scene. Are looking for the coming of our Lord Jesus. And I would understand too from here. That those who have been taken out of the scene. To the Lord are also expecting the coming of our Lord Jesus. The being fought upon will be for each one at the same time. Now there's a warning in these thoughts for any who are not in Christ, for any who are still in their sins, because should they die in such a state, it's naked eternally. There are there's nothing to cover them at all, and that's why they cast as the blackness of darkness forever out of the presence of the Holy God. I was thinking of the last plea in the Revelation the Lord makes Revelations, chapter 3, verse 18. He's making a plea in our day. It's really today. And notice what he says. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire. That's the righteousness of God. Of course the fire speaks of judgment and that's how you receive it. The Lord Jesus Christ went through that judgment for us. We have the righteousness of God through him in him that thou mayest be rich. We were talking about our eternal inheritance.

And white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed. And that's what our brother read from from Isaiah, the robe of righteousness. And that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear. That's the plea, Of course, anoint thy eyes have that would bring in the spirit of God that thou mayest see. You can have your eyes open, but, oh, how solemn it is, if any do not hear this last plea of counseling of the Lord to all, because he's speaking to those who are religious. Who are religious but lost And they think they're all right. How solemn to awake in a lost eternity. Negative. That's the way they'll appear before the judgment seat. Before the Great White Throne. Pardon me? The Great White Throne. They'll be speechless. It's all exposed that there's nothing there. But there's sins. Well, it's a solemn warning. We're enjoying the better part of it. But I trust there isn't any in their sins here today. If they are the Lord constantly to be closed, the best Grove of righteousness, then you'll have that body waiting, waiting you a new body where it's going to have it. Now the unbeliever is also going to be raised in the second resurrection, or the resurrection unto judgment. The first resurrection is the resurrection of the life. But it won't make any difference whether you look at a Sinner in his body here on earth, or when the Sinner is raised to appear before judgment. He's naked in either condition. He is unfit for the presence of God. That's a very solemn thing, isn't it? We know that only the believer will get a body like unto his glorified body. But it's also a very solemnizing thought that that body that the unbeliever will have is not going to deteriorate or pass away ever for all eternity. And and in this body they'll be cast into hell. Very solemn thing, isn't it? In the new translation of first verse one, it says this earthly Tabernacle house and I was thinking how that his brother Clem was pointing out to us. The last verses of chapter four are all a contrast between what is temporal, what is for a time and what is eternal. To live our lives for time would be the height of folly for a Christian. The very body in which we live is a Tabernacle house. It's not called a building of God, a house not made with hands, that speaks of permanency, that speaks of something which will abide forever eternal in the heavens. But what we're in now is just a tent. A tent which can suffer and feel all the afflictions and the sorrows and the trials and difficulties of the pathway and every one of us is going to go through. This kind of thing. If none of us is exempt from it, we're all going to feel these things. We're all going to know what death means when our loved ones may be taken away. And all the all the kind of treatment that is received down here as the part of the Saints will be ours to feel. He felt it in all their affliction. He was afflicted. He felt it perfectly. But here we have that which is permanent and abiding. And, O beloved Saints of God, to live our lives as though to set up our houses. To ornate them and decorate them and all these things as though this is our home down here. It's all false. This is all passing. We're just passing through. It's just a tent, which you can set up in a moment and take down in a moment. That's what this we're living in just a tent, a Tabernacle house. But we have what is eternal ahead. That's our portion. And young people, we plead with you to consider your ways. If you make this scene. The object before your souls. You're making a tremendous mistake. What is the great emphasis today in the world? You can hardly see an advertisement in that. It's feeling good. It's being healthy, it's building up your body, it's an exercise program and and all this kind of thing. They're living for time. They're living for temporal things.

And for us to fall into that kind of current of things, and not be living in the sense of that which is eternal and which is ours, and which is ours, and can never be taken away from us. Oh, what folly for a Christian to do that the Lord is rustling up our nests. He is sending trials and difficulties to make us aware that this is not our home. This very tent in which I'm living is soon to pass away. And there's something on the

head which is eternal. That's what he sets before us here. To just live by faith, we have that I believe four times in the Bible, once in the Old Testament, and three times in the New. The just shall live by faith and the just. So you can put the emphasis on adjust and you can put the emphasis on live and you can put it on faith. The faith is what comes in here. So much, I believe. Because of what we have had in the end of chapter 2, the things which are not seen. Those are the things that we have by faith and through this whole of what we'll call the Christian age or the church period, the day of grace. Faith is being tested. Very, very much tested by God who gives the faith, He gives the faith, he tests the faith and he rewards for the faith. Perhaps some have had these kinds of thoughts. It's rather common to us as we read the Bible and look back in the Old Testament and see how God blessed his people in baskets and store and kept them from many of the diseases which came upon the Egyptians if they walked well and went on with Him. And now in this dispensation. It seems, and I believe it's so. That very often it's those who walk well and our devoted souls that suffer affliction and are not delivered out of those trials. And then if we look on and read further in the Bible, we come to the millennial day, when miracles will be performed and those who go on on the earth obediently will be blessed very, very abundantly blessed for those thousand years, and if they're faithful, go on to the eternal day. But today is the day of affliction. Today is the day of trials. You look at Paul and you see it. Oh, how many things the writer of this epistle went. Through the very first thing that was showed to him. When he went to Ananias was how great things he must suffer for my namesake. Why is it? Well, it's because we are blessed so richly. And eternally through what we have by faith, and if we can see and enjoy what we have in the Newman in Christ, and that is eternal and secure. Then we'll be happy even though. Like Stephen Martyred could say, Lord Jesus receive my spirit and you read church history? How could those martyrs go through the fire and the flames? Well, they were looking on. Like the Lord Jesus said to Thomas, blessed are they who have not seen me and yet have believed. That's the test today. We have not physically seen the Lord Jesus, but morally. Oh, we look at this book and we see that blessed Savior who is the man in the glory, and we look onward and upwards there. And down here in the bodies we grow, but we're going to get new ones, and it's the Lord's coming that will bring them to us. So he puts before us all these wonderful things that we have by faith, and contrast them to the things that are down here with your physical and temporary. And which would you rather have? Well, to have the Lord and to have all that He has given us by faith will help us and encourage us. And it's not wrong to grow because we belong to the old creation as well as the new. We're kind of a peculiar people in that way, too, we have parted to creations.

But we don't have the new body. These old bodies are very much subject to the things that come upon us, come upon mankind in general, because of sin, even death itself. But even should the body be dissolved, that's nothing for God to bring that forth and to display it in glory. So we as we take to those who have gone before, mentioning Paul or Stephen or Moses or any of them. They're going to have that body of glory. And we're going to have our bodies of glory. We are living changed. And the sleeping Saints, the little stern child that was taken recently thinking of one of the most recent. And this is comforting too, when we think of those who have been put to sleep in Jesus, that in the three cases where we find that he raised the debt, they were in various stages. That is. The little girl, JIS daughter, had just gone to sleep, just passed away, and he went in and raised her up. Then he comes to follow on in this history to the young man, the son of the widow of Maine, who is in the coffin on the way to the cemetery, not buried yet. And he touches that fear and pulls him forward. Then we come on to. The grief of Lazarus and Martha says he'd been dead 4 days by this time. He stink of dissolution had already set in. He raises each of them. And so it will be, I believe. With the Saints, when the Lord comes, some will just have died, some will be on the way to the cemetery, some will have been buried for hundreds and even thousands of years. But this one who has this power, will call them forth, and will be changed then the glory. We have these things by face. That wasn't in God departable Lord Jesus Christ. It was passed past time. Blessed is involved, cursed and blessed and condemned the placement, and that by second we simply experienced what we already have. I separate them by realizing my habits, not by thinking I do to the end of it. That one in Ephesians is the eternal purposes of God, so it looks back and half blessed in his purposes. Always been so as to our enjoyment of it. We can say according to this chapter, we know and we have these things, but that's faith. I suppose it's Paul here the the he was drawn toward this. That he desired. As you'll notice the wording is that 20 feet of groaning is groaning is in connection with desiring to be clothed upon. And again, in verse four, in this Tabernacle we've grown being burdened. And he's burdened that his burden was that he might be closed in both cases. In other words, he was. He was so. In the realization of what God had for him and all of his people. He was in the enjoyment and realization of that gospel of the glory. To such an extent that he wanted to be in it. He wanted that to come to pass. That's what he was. That's what he was anxious for. He was anxious for that time when when God's purposes were fulfilled. We see it, as I've already said in this in its might say, initiation in Christ being foreboding to the glory, but the fulfillment of all of God's purposes in regard to his people are still future. And that's what he was looking for. That was what he was anxious about.

Well, I suppose that's the way God would desire it. But we have to confess that we are more or less too often. Rather than being attracted, we're driven toward the glory, so to speak. That is, it's because of the difficulties of the past. And so in order to to escape the trials and so forth, we long for the Lord's coming. And I wonder sometimes if perhaps that is not why the Lord allows many afflictions so that we might. Earnestly long for His coming. And because we don't really enter into his coming from the standpoint so much of being, of desiring to have all of the what he had purpose for his people to be fulfilled. If we were very comfortable and everything, we're quite well with us at all times and at ease. We might not be so attractive to that fulfillment of being taken up and being with the Lord Jesus and the glory. So these afflictions are serviceable in that way, I'm sure that God allows it. And as our brother Clem said, it's the IT is not always tied in with those who are not going on well with the Lord. Those who suffer most severely might be those who are more for the Lord even than their brethren. But it is a word to all of us that that Edward, as it were, give us to be more taken up with what God has purpose for us. In blessing and the glory and not down here. That's born out first five. Let's put the sense brother, because it says now we that have run us in the self same thing as thought. So this suits the purposes of thought that he is bringing us through the circle path, that he might show forth his glory and his purpose of it. And so the desire for the believer that he might be clothed with light, that mortality might be swallowed up with life. This is all in the purposes of God. This is desire that all of us should spend eternity with him in a place of blessings through sin, which came in and estranged us from God to lose that blessing. And so He brings us back, and He works the work in us, because it is modern will, nothing of which we can post, nothing of which we can say of ourselves. But He not only brings us to himself with faith in Christ, but He forms us and shakes us. And gives us that desire. Or immortality that we might be clothed upon with life. And I was thinking about the wonder of that word life at the end of verse 4. Because we've been Speaking of death, of those who may die young or die in the middle-aged, or those who maybe have been in the grave for many years. And we've also hit the term asleep in Jesus. So on God's sight life is to be able to be with Him throughout all eternity. And that is the eternal estrangement from him. And so this clothing which we're thinking about might be swallowed up with life means that we have that eternal life to be ready for the presence of God to be made since by his presence. And if man refuses to salvation, which God has to all for whosoever will, then God has no alternative. And then that's death. And that's eternal death, and so life and death. In the sense of Scripture is not what we often think of in this scene, which is the life and death of our bodies. The life that is suited for the presence of God through forgiveness in Christ, for its eternal, is training. That fifth verse brings in two things that you've brought one of them so nicely that all

this we're talking about weeping, wrought as we are now. For glory is the work of God, and it brings in a sense of the thought Paul has in Romans 8. If God before us, who could be against us, remember this is the work of God. Faith itself is the gift of God. But then he brings in that second thing the Spirit of God. It's not wonderful. That's another gift. And the spirit of God here is brought in for the earnest enjoyment that we have. Isn't it true that it's the Spirit of God now that occupies us with the heavenly things in Christ? And so it's wonderful to see the two things brought in now in this fifth verse. God did it. It's all in the consoles and purposes of God before the foundation of this world, and it was by sun, no other way.

All in Christ, and by Christ. But God did it, and then He's given us the earnest of the Spirit of God. How wonderful it is, brethren, We have that one in us who will occupy us with Christ, and with heavenly the things we enjoy and well enjoyed fully soon. Enjoy the 1St. Chapter of this name, The Fiscal Second Epistle. The first chapter in the 21St and 22nd verse. Now He will establish us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us is gone. The anointing, I believe, is where power, who hath also sealed us, and that for security. And there's no one can separate us from His love, and give him the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. And so I believe that's for intelligence and enjoyment. Until this morning we can sit here and enjoy these precious truths. And I was thinking of that verse in First Corinthians 10 and 13. It connects with the trials that we go through while waiting for the Lord to come, that says, but God is faithful, and how wonderful it is to be reminded that God is the. And so we have His Spirit involvement to comfort us and to encourage our hearts, as well as to teach us to God's ways. It was mentioned that God sends the trials to his people these especially in these days, perhaps in a more. Felt way among us. As a wonderful verse in the second Song of Solomon, I'd like to read in connection with that what is God's purpose in the trial? Song of Solomon, the 4th chapter. And the last verse, verse 16 awake. Or north wind, and comes our S blow upon my garden at the spices there of me blow out. We know what the north wind is for the gardener or the farmer. It just smells cold and prejudice. The South wind can bring on really heat and drought, but here the spirit of God mentioning a week or north wind. What does God expect from me when He sends me a trial? That like the garden of spices, and it is said that spices have the peculiar character when they form their blossoms and their fruits. There must have come a time of the north wind or the hot summer wind blown over those spices in order to release the fragrance thereof. That God wants from you and I in our trials, that we should send forth the fragrance of Christ in our lives in it and prevent the purpose of God is reached. Why he sends the trial. It's not just allowing it to come, but actually sending it as a current to this country. He calls for that north wind. What is the Saint of God going to do? You know there's a vast difference. You enter a hospital and visit them and here are groaning people. Complaining people and they would just have your ear to have them pour out all their troubles for you and complete. When you go by a bit of the sin of God, a smile on the face, you know he's in pain. But how? How he loves to talk about his Savior. We'll hear about him. The North Wind or the South has done its work and that's the purpose of God and beloved. Maybe our prayer be that God may not in vain apply. Wasn't that North Wind and salvage, But it bring out the fragrance of Christ in our lives. Doesn't always work that way. A Christian has the flesh too, that can turn sour, bitter and discouraged with his heart. That's not what God leads us down for to suffer. In tight the garden you're Speaking of, as long as Solomon would be the assemblies today. This says Bethany in the Lords time, would be the assembly today where those of his own are gathered and he could be in their midst and take up the fruit and enjoy it. But I was thinking, you know, the word Bethany has two meanings necessarily. So it's the House of affliction and it's the House of response. And both meanings are necessary.

Without the reflection of the affliction, you don't have that blessed response. Isn't it the afflictions that really put us on our knees and turn us to him? And then the response comes when he undertakes. So Bethany has that double meaning, and I believe it's necessary fiction. North wind response from the South breezes flow. He comes in and undertake. You know, in Egypt we have often reminded ourselves the children of Israel were in the land of Goshen, which was very suitable for the occupation. And if the Lord would not have allowed the circumstances to change by raising up a king who knew who did not know Joseph, they would probably have been perfectly content to remain in Egypt. But through these difficulties they remembered the promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and they longed to be out of that place, to be in the land of promise. So we see there an example in the life of the people, the history of the people of God, how God uses these things. And there's also another side, and that is that. That we have to like. Hendricks already indicated be careful not to put too much emphasis on the body and. We have to remember that in the things of the Lord we must not lean on the arm of the flesh on our natural. Gifts and abilities, even physical strength and so on. And how often has the Lord like with Jacob, behold? To touch the seed of his strength. So that he would not continuously, as he had throughout his life, tried to secure what the Lord had promised him in his own strength and energy, by his own manipulation. And so we have to be mindful of that, that we do not lean. Our own intellect. And our physical strength or on our own emotions in the things of the law that we recognize, we are a new creation, that there are new things that govern our spiritual beings. John says in his epistle he does not yet appear what we shall be. That it is not manifest at the present time, and when we when we think of ourselves and the Saints of God, all of the Saints in this scene. It isn't. We're not manifested now as to in the way in which God has purposed us to be when we're with Christ. I was thinking of that in this fifth verse. He that hath wrought us for this self. Same thing. We can't. We can't determine what we've been wrote for by looking round about down here. We have to look up into the glory and we see Christ in the glory and we can say God has wrought us with the self. Same thing. That what he wrought us for to be there in the glory conformed to his image. And not only that, but he's given us the earnest of the Spirit, that we might have some enjoyment of it. Even at the present time that we might have, might be able by the Spirit of God. To look into an open heaven and to see what God has purposed for us in Christ, and to know that this is what he has wrote us for what a grand purpose God has. And I I believe as we look round about, we looking round about, we are impressed with the weakness. We're impressed with Feebleness. And many things that would even dishearten us. But when we think of what God is wrought as far this South St. He hasn't taken us up just for a little while here, But He has taken us up for this and this to be eternally with Christ, and informed to His image in the glory and in every way suitable to Him, and for his pleasure and for his delight. That's what God has wrought as far. And He's given us the Spirit now that we might enter into these things in some measure. Because I suppose that's the fault of the earnings of the Spirit, is it not?

We don't enter into them in all of their fullness, but it's it's the same thing, but just on a lesser scale. I think of the little words, words of that hymn of Mr. Darby, when he says there are no stranger, God shall meet thee stranger thou in courts above. But he's not meeting a stranger God. That is, he's meeting one that he has known and enjoyed. I believe that's the earnest of the Spirit. We can enter into these things now, even though we're not yet in the glory. We're even now, a new creation. And now we have the Spirit of God indwelling us at the earnest to give us to look on these things. You know, in the 4th chapter. I repeat that again while we look not on the things that are the scene, but the things that are not seen. You know, we find that. Some have the habit of window shopping. We just go around and look at things. Well, I wonder if we could apply that to to the eternal and divine things. How much are we looking at those things? We that's what Paul was looking at. He was looking at the things that are eternal and divine, and he became so. Occupied and so attracted by them, he says. I wanted the end of them. I want to be there, where all of these things are. That's what his great desire. And he says God has wrought us for this very same

thing. Now it's only by the Spirit that we enjoy anything of God at all. It's every thought we have. That word and of God is the Spirit of God, and that's what makes us different from all others in this world. And it's a wonderful thought. Not only well the Spirit give us these thoughts today, we're doing something that most of this world wouldn't ever think of doing, of sitting here with the word of God, open the Bible, and feeding. But it's the Spirit of God that does it. We can enjoy things, and we can discover things that this world can't know only by the Spirit of God. So we should make much of this wonderful gift, the Spirit of God who has indwelled us. And I was thinking in in First Corinthians the second chapter, it tells us that in verse 9. That I have not seen, nor ear heard, neither entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit no other way. For the Spirit searches all things, yeah, the deep things that God. And now notice the 14th verse. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, their foolishness unto him. Neither can he know them. They're spiritually discerned. And so, brethren, it's wonderful, the earnest of the spirit, because the spirits working here today in each one of us, and collectively to let us enjoy the things of God, the deep things of God that those in this world, the wisest of this world, can't know. Mt 12. 212. Call from. The bottom.

Still Waters Family Camp: 2018, 2 Corinthians 5:10-11

Reading

Whatever God's blessing. Father, our God is opposed to now before this morning, this time that's been set aside to continue in this passage. And Father, we consider crews that Apostle Paul is ready for the Corinthians that we can take into ourselves. We pray the Holy Spirit would take the same truths and apply it to us. We would be an enjoyment of these things. We consider the fact that indeed, any moment we can shed these bodies of mortality and take on these truths that we're reading about. So we pray that we may have open hearts to hear these things. Pray for the Holy Spirit to have free liberty and guidance in the meeting. And we do. Lovely Lord Jesus, we look forward to that coming, perhaps even today. My name we pray, Amen. The reading this morning is in Second Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 10. 2nd Corinthians chapter 5, starting at verse 10. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. For we command not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that she may have somewhat to answer them, which glory in appearance and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, or whether we be sober it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead, and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves. But unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know ye no man after the flesh? Yeah, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new, and all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ stead be ye reconciled to God, for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. At the end of the last meeting our brethren were remarking about verse nine that it is not a positional thing, it is a practical thing that the Christian laborers to be agreeable to the Lord and and seeks to please the Lord and all that He does. And the verses that the verse that we began with gives us, it leads right. It follows right from that thought. We labor to be agreeable to the Lord, knowing that there are things that are going to come under review in a coming day when we have gone to be with him when he has taken us home to be with himself when all of the redeemed from this present age and from the Old Testament Saints as well that heavenly companies together but and then primarily in this context with having to do with those of us. Who are part of the Bride of Christ? When there will be that time when there's a judgment seat of Christ, where he brings under review a number of different things, there are a number of scriptures we could look at. It might be profitable for us to do so, but this being one of them.

Where? Where the deeds that are done in our body will come under review, we have in other places. I'll just list a few of them. I don't know if I can remember all of them off the top of my head. Others here will be able to help. Then Matthew 12. Every idle word shall be reviewed. In Romans chapter 14, our convictions on on having having to do with spiritual exercises those things that the Word of God does not does not outline and give us rules for that we need to be before the Lord about and and exercise discernment and and and do those things with a view to pleasing him and not stumbling our brethren and in view of the fact that he is our Lord. So our convictions there in Romans 14. And then going on to. Chapter three of Second Corinthians. The the work that we do in the Kingdom will come under review at the judgment seat of Christ, and in the 4th chapter of Second Corinthians our motives will come under review. All these things the Lord is going to go over with us and. And the Scripture says, Then shall every man have praise of God? It'll not be with a view to judgment. Certainly will not be punitive, but it's with a view to reward those things that were agreeable to him, those things that pleased him. He looks forward to commending you dear Christian saying well done, good and faithful servant. Yesterday after the meeting. There was a little conversation about verse nine and. And I just like to asked him if he wouldn't mind sharing what he shared then because I think it ties into. What you were just saying, Steve, and I think that entire chapter that he was referencing is a beautiful picture. So I'll leave it to you, brother. So. I'm going to read the verse again in our chapter, Chapter 9, then in the new translation. Wherefore also we are zealous, whether present or absent, to be agreeable to him. And I was just thinking of of the description that we have of the mighty men in Second Samuel. I believe it's chapter 23. Turn there just briefly. Second Samuel chapter 23 and I'll just read 1/2 a dozen verses starting with the verse 13. And three of the 30 chief went down and came to David in the harvest time under The Cave of Adolam. And the troop of the Philistines pitched in the valley of of referendum. And David was then in in hold. And the Garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem. And David longed and said, Oh, that one would give me drink of the well of Beth of Bethlehem, which is by the gate. And the three mighty men breakthrough the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem. There was by the gate and took it and brought it to David. Nevertheless, he would not drink thereof, but poured it out under the Lord and he said, be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this. Is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? Wherefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men and I was just thinking of this in relation to what we have here in in verse 9, where if we labor that whether present or absent, we may be. Accepted of him or agreeable to him. This example that we have in these three mighty men is David's wish was their command. They were driven by affection for David. And he said it. It's almost like he thought it. And they took that as a direct command. And they went and they brought a great.

Potential for harm to themselves. They went and drilled that water of that well of Bethlehem and brought it to David. And I believe that that is a beautiful example of what we have here in verse 9 there's. What's our motivation? Steve is talking about the motivation. What's the motivation that we have? For this, and you know a little bit further down, we'll talk more about it. It says in verse 14, For the love of Christ constraineth us. But what greater motivation do we need than that? In connection with verse 9 and 10 in our chapter, I would like to read 2 verses in Philippians chapter 2. Second part of verse 12. But now much more in my absence, workout your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who worketh in you both who will and to do at His good pleasure. And we know in recent time they are believers talking about doing good works and labour to the labour they have to do before they appear before the Judge Masita Christ. But as it was mentioned yesterday, for the believer, the judgment is behind us. It took place. 2000 years ago and. To use the verse about our own to work out our own salvation in fear of the judgment seat of Christ, we have immediately after that verse 12 second Philippians, we have verse 13 for it is God who worked in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. So in the end God is taking all the glory for everything for our own salvation for the labor we do for. For for everything from A-Z. So it's going to be a day of manifestation of all those things that we've done in our body. And it's interesting that the new translation, Steve, maybe you can help me with this, but I think it says for we must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ. Is that right? Yeah. So that's the point is the Lord is going to not only are we going to appear before the judgment seat of Christ, but it's going to be a day when when Christ will manifest. Those things that we have done in our bodies, as to whether or not they meet his approval or not. And as to your point, Steve, it's not in a punitive way. Not at all, but it's it's in view of reward and what he could commend as being done for himself. And to your point, brother Radutes, it's amazing to think that he will. He'll reward us for those things that he gave us the motive to do and the power to do and. At the end, it was all of him, and yet he's going to turn around and reward us for that. It's, it's, it's amazing the, the grace of God shows out the heart of God, doesn't it? What is amazing to me is that even after we get the new nature, the divine life from Christ, after He imparted, that was after we are born again, even when we are sealed and indwelled with the Holy Spirit, it is still of Him, the will and the ability to do the work for Him. So how much more before we are saved? Everything depends on Him. There's a picture of this in First Corinthians three. Yeah, First Corinthians 3, verse 13, it says every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built, thereupon he shall receive a reward, which is what we've been talking about. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire. And as we see all the creatures around us. Somebody was asking me the other day. Beaver Dam because they saw a pile of sticks. Beavers have to build a good dam. They don't have a choice. Robins have to build a good nest. They don't have a choice. Deer run as fast as they can run. That's the way God made him. But man has been given the choice to choose how we're going to live. And it's all, it's those two things, God's sovereignty, man's responsibility, God's sovereignty is 100% true, but it's also true that we have responsibility. God's entrusted these things to us. The the parable of the 10 talent shows us that. And so we have a choice. The Lord's entrusted these things to us, and if we use them for him, we're going to be rewarded.

And all of us, as our brother Steve said, all of us are going to get some reward. But there are so many people that waste their life, they live their lives for themselves. And it's not a happy path here. Being selfish is not happiness. Living for others. The happiest people I know on this earth love other people. They serve other people. They give to other people. Taking and taking and taking is not a happy pet. And there. There's coming a day when it's all going to be manifest and what we did for Him is going to be beautiful. It's going to be awesome for his glory. And what we did for ourselves is going to be lost. Apostle Paul. An axe is still in. I think that Indians. By him relieved and move and breathe every day when we wake up is because he wants us to wake up and because he has a reason for us to wake up. He has a job for us to do. If he don't have nothing for us left in this world, he just take us home. But if you wake up this morning and you're breathing and you're walking and you're thinking, it's because he has something for you in this world still. And he gave us the ability like the brother was mentioning. He given us the he put the good works in front of us that we walk on it, that we walk and, and make that good, good works. And he give us the ability and he give us the strain and the knowledge to do that good works. And he's the one who is doing everything in us. He give you the ability to do it, even though the strength he give you the the the brain to do the things and also. He's giving, he's doing everything, and he got to reward you for it. What an amazing God we got. And we need to do that thing somebody in the morning and the prayer was mentioned that verse that. Who sees something? I don't remember exactly the birds, but maybe somebody can help me with hands to do good and don't do it is for him is sin so. It's many things we can do to do well and to do the good works that the Lord wants us to do. And He's giving you the ability to do it, and He got to reward you for it. And you know, one day when you have a crown and we see all that and we see His glory, what an amazing time we're going to be to take your crown off and throw in His beard and recognize that He did everything. All the glory is His. All the glory is His. Brother Richard Hagen, I appreciate you turning us to 1St Corinthians 3. Does it help me to realize that I gave a wrong reference earlier 1St Corinthians 3? I said Second Corinthians 3 for our work in the Kingdom and it is First Corinthians 4 for the motivations that we that because of the fact that we have within us the flesh and our motives may not always be pure as we seek to serve. And the apostle Paul addresses that in first Corinthians 4 and I. Given the wrong reference for that earlier as well, so I appreciate you pointing us in the right direction. Like our brother has spoken of motives. I have to admit I'm lacking a bit of confidence today. But that verse you referred to as James 4 and 17 brother and it reminds me of Romans chapter 12. When we speak of motives. First one. I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. It's very similar to the verses we have in Hebrews chapter 13. Yeah. That I like very well verse 20 Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect.

In every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever, Amen. And we know in Romans 14 it says so that every man shall give account of himself unto God. And so it should be our reasonable service to do that good thing. That we should be being trained up for it should be our. Our desire. I read a little pamphlet one time and I'm not sure I spoke of this to somebody yesterday, I think. I think it might have been Mr. Darby, but I'm not sure. And he spoke of when he. Gets before that judgment seat. We often think that there might be this little mound there of our sins, but he said no. It's like that little hymn. My sins were as high as a mountain. And it's going to stretch so far up. It's going to be so far up. We don't contemplate the things that that we do wrong. We try to consider the things that we do right so much. But we should be. Focus so much on doing His will like the Lord Jesus did. I do only those things which are pleasing or righteous in His sight. Chapter Brown. Read somewhere he gave an account of a dream that he had and you'll remember the chapter. Brown was a labouring brother and no slouch in the things of the Lord. And he had a dream that he was standing at the judgment seat of Christ and there was a huge pile that was being burned and. He was just at a loss his whole life. Is there and it's giant bonfire and he was really discouraged and the Lord was standing there and he turned him and said, don't worry Brown, we'll find something. And so he I I like that story because it really brings out the fact that what the brethren have been talking about that the focus of

the judgment seat of Christ is on reward and all that we will suffer loss. That's what first Corinthians chapter 3 says there will be that which is burned away. And, and in and of itself, that's should be a disappointment to us. We'll recognize missed opportunities that we could have provided service for the Lord and, and there will be lost and that will hang our hearts. But the focus of the judgment seat of Christ is on reward. As we've been saying, the Lord who knows all, He knows our hearts, He knows everything we've done, He knows our thoughts. He's going to search high and low and he's going to find everything. Because that's his heart. And we can't forget to when we are at the judgment seat of Christ. It's not like how we are right now. How do we get there? When does the judgment seat of Christ happen? It's after we rapture. It's after we're with them. And what happens at the rapture? Will become like him. I don't like to when I visualize the judgment seat of Christ for to believe her. I don't see it as a face to face. I see us standing next to the Lord and Him having his arm around us. It will be like Him. How could there be judgment in the sense that we think of judgment generally because we're like Him. It's impossible. He would have to judge himself. It's impossible. And so there will be the aspect of reward that we've talked about, but I think even more than that, it'll be the act, the aspect. The magnifying of the grace of God when we see that pile burned up and for the first time we see how truly bad we are, how truly sinful we are. We're going to be able then to say and you still went to that cross. We want the judgment seat of Christ. We really do. It will have its effect for all eternity that we have a proper appreciation of how great the grace of the Lord Jesus is that He went to the cross. For a Sinner like me, because I don't know what kind of a Sinner I am, I have somewhat of an idea, but it falls far short because I'm accustomed to sin. I was born in it. I I practice it and I'm surrounded by it. I'm accustomed to it. In a way you kind of get in the almost numb to it to a certain degree. But when we stand there beside him. Like him? Then for the first time we'll have a full view. We'll see things through his eyes. We'll have a full view of what we were and how great his love and his grace were now.

It is the judgment seat of Christ, and this is not the only aspect of it. For those that have not accepted the Lord Jesus Christ, it is a fearful thing. And then the next verse will speak about that, but it goes all the way from here. I believe this will happen probably pretty quickly after the rapture. But the judgment of Christ, it goes all the way to the great white throne, and that's the final judgment. And there it says very clearly that they will appear before the throne. There's no standing at the side of the Lord Jesus. There won't be an arm put around those people there. He will act in the character of a judge. And every single one will receive their their proper judgment. It's a very solemn thing to read of that in Revelation 20, but here? It's brought before us something that would motivate us in our pathway, not something that would scare us. The judgment seat of Christ for the believer is not a scary thing at all. I'd like to be the 1St and the 1St epistle of John. Thinking about what you said, Mark. The first Epistle of John in the first chapter. 2 verses maybe first John chapter one, verse 5. This is the This then is the message which we have heard of him. And declare unto you that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. Verse six. If we say then that we have fellowship with him and walk and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. The blood of Jesus Christ, your Son, cleanseth us from all sin I was thinking about. What you said, Mark, standing at his side as that review of the life goes on. You know, righteousness really opens the doors to communion. Sometimes I'll speak for myself. I kind of think about it the other way. I think love opens the door for communion and righteousness as judgment of sins. But you know, really it was the love of God that led the Lord Jesus Christ to the cross, took the judgment. It's the light that brings out community. And so, you know, when we stand at the Lords side and we have that review of our lives and there's plenty of instances in our own lives, we each know it. The things that that needs to be burned away. Will be in agreement with. You know, because righteousness leads to community. When the light shines in and everything is exposed, that's when you have communion. It has to be exposed. The more we allow it to expose our lives today, the more intimate that communion really is. The more we try to hide things, the less communion there is. And in that day and in that judgment, it's opening the doors wide open. For the most intimate communion you'll ever have. With the Lord and we can enjoy that in a certain sense today, and it's practical. And it goes with one another to be an open book as much as we can. It's beautiful. Yeah, I appreciate. I appreciate your comments, brother Keith so good. And Mark, like you said, you know, we really want the judgment seat of Christ. We really do deep down because to your point, it's going to bring out that intimacy, you know that we that we long for and you know, throw it all eternity and we'll have but I believe it's going to put. The put us over the top, if I could put it that way, in praise, because when we look at what the Lord has done and we get a true. Appreciation for what we were because we don't know how bad we really are. I mean really, let's be honest, I don't understand how bad my heart is. And it's the judgment seat of Christ that is going to reveal it all and that is going to put me into a place. Of praise and worship to Him that I don't think we could have without the judgment seat of Christ. It is so necessary for eternity. Read a verse in Revelation chapter 4 which what Josh is saying.

The four in Revelation 4 verse 10, the four and 20 elders fall down before him. That sat on the throne and the worship Him that liveth forever and ever and cast their crowns before the throne saying thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, honor and power that has created all things and for Thy pleasure they are and were created. I think we'll realize that after getting those rewards and seeing that that really it was the Lord that created any kind of thought towards him or anything that we did for him, it was because of Him. And because of that, we'll discuss our rewards. So it might be helpful to have a picture in the Old Testament, and I think that the chapter that we were at earlier is a beautiful example of this. The most of the chapter 23 of Second Samuel is is a picture, I think, of of a judgment seat we don't read in chapter 23 of any of the wrong things of David's mighty men. I have no doubt that there were things that they did that were not pleasing to David. But in this review he talks about the things that were pleasing to David. And David is a beautiful picture of the Lord Jesus, and we've already spoken of that. But I think that there's also a little picture of this judgment seat that we've been talking about in the first couple chapters of First Kings. And I just want to touch on a couple verses. Because I think it it brings it out. I can put my finger back on it. And interestingly, before we read these verses in in chapter 23 of Second Samuel. There's some people that are missing from that list that we might have thought were should have been in that list, and one of them is Joab. And and so I want to just touch on a few verses here in the first chapter. If I can put my finger on it. Umm, yeah. Sorry, I'm not seeing it right now, but he David. Tells Solomon that he is to remember. Those that helped David 27 Yeah, show kindness. Unto the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table, for so they came to me when I fled of Absalom thy brother. The solemn thing is the next couple verses. And behold, thou hast with the shimmy eye the son of Guerra, the Benjamite of Bahram, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to man AM, and so on. And he says, Hold him not guiltless in verse 9. And then he speaks of of Joab in verse 5. And it's so sad to see. And to read these verses because. We are going to suffer loss if we have done those things that displease the Lord. And Joab, he, even though he was the captain of the host, he did things that displeased David and he suffered loss. At the end of David's life when there was a review made, Joab suffered loss. And I want to just encourage our hearts. We're going to those things that we've done for the Lord. He knows about them and he's going to reward us for them. But. The opposite side of that is true. Those things that we have done that displays him are are going to be things that are are to our loss. I was thinking of the same thing in relation to Hebrews Chapter 11. Hebrews Chapter 11 is a list of people that are commended for their faith and.

There isn't any mention in that chapter of that which was wrong. There's a lot that we could find in Jacob's life that was was not commendable, and yet that's not mentioned in Hebrews Chapter 11. But I will say that there are descriptions in Hebrews Chapter 11 That are longer than others. And went on. Isaac is very short. Well. That may be similar to the judgment seat of Christ. There would be those that have long commendations and that some of us others that may be a little shorter. Bart made a comment that I think. Would do well to just. Follow up and just emphasize how important it is and that is the distinction between the judgment seat of Christ and verse 11 where it talks about knowing that therefore the terror of the Lord. And Mark clearly laid out that there was a very stark distinction between the two. There is no terror of the Lord for the Christian. Why? Because of the last verse of our chapter. For He hath made Him to be sin for us. He knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God. In Him there is no terror. For the Christian because of that and then First Thessalonians chapter. UH-5. And verse eight it says, But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for in home, at the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Or for comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also you do, so we should be. Encouraged to recognize that. This terror of the Lord that we're Speaking of in verse 11 has nothing to do with the Christian. And it is, it's possible if you just read this without rightly dividing the word of truth, to come to the conclusion that they go together. And that's not correct. So for the sake of the young people, I just wanted to clarify that that the terror of the Lord has nothing to do with us, but it is something that should motivate us in our service for preaching the gospel. And Acts Chapter 7, Acts chapter 17 and verse 31, it says because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world and righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained. And so there is a day coming of judgment, and we have knowledge of it. And like we were talking about a few reading meetings ago, it's like that train. We have knowledge of the trestle being gone. The trestle is washed out the train once it passes that certain point. Is going to go into the abyss. And if we're on that train with knowledge of that, why would we keep ourselves silent? We have the responsibility of carrying that message of judgment and then also of hope. Of the. The escape from that judgment and we need to be faithful in that responsibility. And separating those two in connection with what you said there, how does that relate to Hebrews chapter 12? Verse 28 says Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, or let us hold fast, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear for God as a consuming fire. There is a place in a Christian's life for reverential fear, right? But there's a distinction between reverential fear and terror. I'd like to hear further. Position on that. Well, I think that I think what you say is is correct, Tim. And you know, just going back to the scriptures of brother Matt brought out how in First Corinthians 13.

Is that the day shall declare every man's work. Verse 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it that is, the day shall be revealed by or in fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. And so I think that links up well with Hebrews. Chapter 12, verse 29, our God is a consuming fire. So again, to repeat what you said, Tim, it's again, the judgment seat is not a time of terror for the Christian at all, but God will judge. And again, fire is, is an apartment type of judgment throughout Scripture, the fire God will judge everything that is inconsistent with himself that manifests itself in the life of the believer and he will bring that out so morally, physically, spiritually, whatever. That manifests itself in our life. God is going to. Pass judgment on it in that day and again, not our sins. Our sins are not the. The topic of discussion, if you will, at the judgment seat of Christ, it's the deeds done in the body and whether or not they receive a commendation for things being done for him or not. And, and Matt, you, you gave a good example yesterday about an art show. Can you maybe repeat that? I think that's helpful to give an idea as to, you know, what type of judgment we're talking about. Yeah, it's, it was explained to me. It's like a, a County Fair. And the judge goes and he looks at each one of the exhibits. And he gives ribbons. There's a blue ribbon and a red ribbon. And he's giving rewards, as was explained. Tim, I think he also answered it when you said that. Reverential fear should be a motivation for us, like Steve mentioned at the very beginning of the meeting, that it's not only our actions, but our thoughts, our motivations and all things that will be taken up in that time. And so if we look at ourselves individually or look in the mirror, whatever way you want to address it, do we have a healthy reverential fear? A little him comes to mind once again. He sees what we do and he hears what we say. My Lord is watching all the time, time, time. That being said, I totally agree, but a higher motivation is love as a father. I could be a a dictator and my children have a responsibility from scripture to obey your father and mother, and I could hold that over their head and I could probably accomplish some things, but how much more can we accomplish if I if I seek their affection? And they do. What I ask and they honor me based on the response of love from their heart. It's a much, much higher motivation. But you're right, we should have a referential fear, Paul told those ones in First Corinthians 16. To do all your things with charity in me. I think that some of what we're saying is here. In verse 15 it says, and that he died for all the day which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. And in Galatians 6 verse seven, it says, Be not deceived. Don't kid yourselves. God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. The universe is an echo. Whatever you send out, you're going to get back. What goes around comes around and it picks up speed. Be not deceived. And that is on both sides. There are people who sow bad stuff and they say, oh, this isn't going to happen. This is no one saw, no one knows. You're kidding yourself. Nobody gets away with anything. Even if you don't get caught right here, you carry that on your conscience. So he says he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. Why are things wrong? Why is this wrong and this not wrong? It's wrong because it's bad for us. It's sin because it hurts us. It's not that God is up in heaven. And he says, well, I don't want you to have fun about this, but this is OK. But not too much of that. He looks over what he made and he said, you know what? This is how the universe works and I want you to be blessed. And he gives us a boundary and he says, you can go clear to the very edge. And dear, beloved brothers and sisters, we have the opportunity. Do we want to walk as close to Christ as we can, or do we want to walk as far away as we can without falling off?

The edge may it be that our hearts burn within us, as our brother mentioned being willing, as our brother mentioned our motives. I talked to a guy one time at the college and he said God has three wills in in Romans 12 is good, acceptable and perfect will. And I said, don't tell me that you don't want God's very best for your life because I don't even want to hear it. You got to be kidding me. God wants to bless you and you don't want it. You think you know better than he does. You're kidding me. So he says right here, he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. Where if we do what's wrong, we're going to reap that. Nobody wants a harvest of weeds. Nobody does. And you have to think about this. When you plant evil, you are going to reap corruption. And then he goes on and says there's two sides of this. But he that soweth to the spirit shall shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. What a hope. It's like our brother said, it's, it's not, it's not something about us. It's an opportunity that we have because he gave us the opportunity. He gave us the energy. He gave us all that, but we get to choose. Are we going to live our lives for Christ? If we do, we're going to reap life everlasting. And it starts right now. Our brother mentioned about communion. When you speak kindly to people, what do you get? You get kindness. When you're mean to people, when you diss people, what do you get? That whatever goes around comes around. If you don't believe me, go up to somebody and say you look horrible today. What are they going to say back to you? If you say it's good seeing you, what are they going to say back to you? There you go. And then he says right here, let us not be weary in well doing. Be encouraged dear beloved brothers and sisters, don't be weary in doing the right thing. Sometimes

we look around and we say that guys cheating on his taxes, look at the house he lives in. That person is doing this. That person cheated on their test. They didn't do all their study and they got a better grade than me. It says don't be weary and will it in well doing for in due season we shall reap if we faint not and our brother just had a harvest. And he came here because they got done with harvest. Well, he doesn't plant the crop and harvest it the next day. The same is true in our lives, and so often we don't judge what we know is wrong because it's not harvest time yet, but the harvest is coming. Dear beloved brothers and sisters, don't let anything in your life go on that you know is wrong. It gets bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger. If God convicts you of something, stop. If you're driving the car, pull over. It's that important. And get right with the Lord and confess. That the terror of the Lord does not apply to the Christian can be seen in the effect that it produces. The apostle Paul says, knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, we preach the gospel, we give them the information they need about the love of God and the grace of God, that they would not have to be exposed to the terror of the Lord. And someone might say here, but it's the Lord. The Lord is in relation with his people, isn't He? I'd like to turn you to Second Peter chapter 2. Verse one, there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privilege shall privilege shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them. And bring upon themselves swift destruction the scripture is speaking about. Thoroughly unbelieving people. They come to you in the name of the Lord, bringing false doctrine. And they are headed for swift destruction. And yet the scripture says the Lord bought them. He didn't redeem them, but He bought them. All men in this world, saved and unsaved, belong to the Lord on the by virtue of purchase. And and so these that is not that that is something that helps us to understand I think this verse. That it is the terror of the Lord. There is one universal Lord. It is our Lord Jesus Christ. And to the lost, what is coming is.

Is calculated. To invoke sheer terror, the eternal judgment of God. Is is is not something that can be taken lightly and you and I, who know the relief of our sins, forgiven. We have a better perspective of what the terror of the Lord is because we've been given as we've been speaking about. Divine life and the ability, the capacity to be able to at least enter in in some degree. To eternal truth, to spiritual truth and realize what it is we've been saved from and what it is that the that the man of this world is headed for. And the apostle Paul says we persuade men. It's not that by persuasive arguments we can turn someone away from destruction. I don't think that's the idea because we realize that fallen man as we've been. Had brought before us in the meetings here fallen man cannot respond, and so on have spoken of the sovereignty of God and salvation. But I believe that what he means here is that. That everything that he can do within his power to communicate to the lost center what lies ahead if he won't turn to Christ. That's what he'll do. That's what we would do. When we give the gospel, it is in earnest appeal to the lost. But we we feared, we feared the Lord with respect and love. We fear him because we know that he's holy. Somebody was. Saying one phrase Monday morning, Christians. We need to be a Monday morning Christians because Lord's Day or being here is so easy to be a Christian. I mean, we are Christians. We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, we say. But when we are between our brothers, it's so easy to speak about him, to praise him, to sing songs. But when we go back to the world and we got to work or you're going to school. You need to. Fear the Lord in the sense of you love him like the brother says we love him and we know who is who, who is he and by that love that fear. I respect him and I am a Christian. Even Monday mornings and Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday and until the next Lord's Day. Brother was saying that and and when he he was preaching the whole week. We need to bring to our inner lives the Lord. And love him and respect him because he I tell my kids he is everywhere. Like the brother was saying that song, he is watching you day and night. He's watching us day and night. I remember traveling with a brother from San Diego, Bill Worth that. Now he's with the Lord. We was traveling from Tijuana, visiting the assemblies, him and me. And we get to an assembly. I don't want to say which assembly. But we get to that assembly in Mexico and we were sitting at nighttime and we was about to read. And in the wall was an antenna cable coming down, down, down, down, down, down to a little, a little table in the corner, but was nothing in the table. Yes, the cable coming down. And brother Bill said, ask the brother over there of the house. Brother, what is that cable over there? And the brother said a cable antenna and what that is for? For a TV in the corner and the brother said where is the TV? It's not there. We know that you was coming, so we take it away and put it in the closet. And the brother says, brother, you shouldn't fear me, fear the Lord, fear the Lord. Don't hide from me. You cannot hide stuff from him. The more in the He's seeing that in the closet. He knows that you hide it in the closet. Don't fear the brothers, fear the Lord and respect him. Mr. Verse in first John Four that says there is No Fear in love. We love him because he first loved us. There's no terror and love. We still have due place for reverential fear. And I would just say that this terror that we're Speaking of here is a very real thing.

Very early in my career I went on a call one time where there was a very sick man and we were treating him and he wasn't very nice. We were, they called us. We didn't just show up at his house. He was having some health problems and difficulties. So they called us and we came and I was working with the rest of the crew to try and provide some relief for him. And stop breathing. His heart stopped. So we changed course and started working to resuscitate him and took about 6 minutes. And by God's mercy, we were able to get him breathing again and get his heart started again. And for the rest of my life, we'll never forget the look on his face. It was abject terror. I have no idea where he was, but it was not a place of comfort and peace. Thank God he had another opportunity, put him on an ambulance and he was gone. Never had another opportunity to interact with him but I made a very marked impression on my soul. There is reality to this terror. Brother Keith, you were going to say something? Think the word pictures given are more than accurate. Thank you. I was mentioning because at the beginning that the judgment is behind us and because of that we could call God our Father. But being Father he's still in a position of authority and the government of God still applies to believers and non believers. Like Matt said, there is always a consequence for everything we do. We've been talking about the judgment seat of Christ, and we've been mainly talking about what it is, but here in the chapter. I think for verse 11 shows us that it's not something that we enjoy, but it's something that should have a practical present effect on our life. And one of the effects has been talked about that we persuade men. How do we know a little about the terrible if we know that we as those who have been redeemed by Christ, who paid for sins, all, everything done in the body will still come up for review. Imagine not having a covering for one single one. Of those sins that you've done, and you still have to face the holy God. We have a covering for everything because the Lord Jesus died for our sins on the cross. But imagine the terror of 1 standing before the great white throne and their life will be in review too, because God opens the books that has the deeds, that has all the acts that man has done. He hasn't forgotten any smallest thing. And even for the smallest thing you have not covered, you know, speaks of those early in the chapter that are naked. You have no cover for their sins. And so that's the first practical effect that it should have on our lives when we think about the judgment seat of Christ. That we realize there will be people that it will appear before the one who knows everything and if they don't believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, they'll have to answer for every single one of those sins. But there's a second thing here in verse 11/2. He says, but we are made manifest unto God and they trust also are made manifest in your consciences. I think that's the same word that's used in in verse 10 or speaks of us being manifest before the judgment seat of Christ. And so another practical effect that it should have when we think of the judgment seat of Christ and we realize that everything will be put on display between US and the Lord. I don't think it's going to be a public thing that we're all watching, but everything will become in the open. I think Paul is saying here, I already tried today. To lead my life in a way that's manifest. You know, in chapter four, in the first meeting, we talked about renounce the hidden things of dishonesty. He tried already now to live in view of that. They were

everything would be manifest. And he didn't want to lead a life that put up a front that was different from what he really was. And so I think when we are occupied and and meditate upon the judgment seat of Christ and we realize there's going to be a day coming before the Lord where everything will be manifest. And as Alejandro said, he already sees everything today.

Why not lead our lives in an open way today? That's a great effect. That's that's something that motivates us in the pathway. Considering the word persuade and. I'm not an English major or anything, but I'm pretty sure that that's an action type word and you see that Paul uses it quite often. And so I listened to brother Matt over there and he was very persuasive to us to get right with God if we have something in our life, his voice elevated, he was adamant about it and expressive. And Alejandro the same way when he spoke a few moments ago. And, and so we spoke of that reasonable service. The Lord Jesus went and did it all. We've accepted it. Should we not want to persuade? He said. I would have all men to be saved, and you can remember. In Acts, when King Agrippa did say almost thou has persuaded me almost and so it should be that we would want to go and and speak like Matt Alejandro and and give it our very best. Not just all you need to know the Lord Jesus Christ as your savior. Again, I say John Kent and. You need this, you need this, you got to have this. And I can't quite do it like Matt did. But you know, I think Paul too said that I persuade men everywhere. And it's a, it's a type of trying to convince, trying to show, trying to sway. And we're going to have those ones like King Agrippa that, say, almost persuaded me. So I was thinking about that very thing a little bit here and how we had before us in the 4th chapter, how there's a testimony in the life of a believer, at least there should be. And sometimes we say, well, I'll, I'll let my life do the preaching for me or spend. There's an element of truth to that. If our life doesn't match up with our words, then we have no power or no weight behind what we say. But we have a responsibility not only to be a testimony in our life, but also to speak. And to tell others about Christ as you've been bringing out, so we persuade man. We also get later on in the chapter that and it says at the end of verse 19 and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. So that implies that there's an element of of preaching that you and I are responsible to do to go out and tell souls about Christ. I think it's a kind of a cop out when we just say, well, I'm just going to let my life just do the preaching for me. I, you know, I there's more to that. We may not all have the same ability and gift, We may not all have the same charisma or passion, but what we do have is the Word of God. Paul told Timothy preached the word. Paul said to the Romans, Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. We're told that we're born again by the word of God. Of his own will begat he asked by the word of God. And while we may not be clever in our persuasive words. We can give the word of God. And it is that that the Spirit of God uses to impart life to begin with. And then to convince, convict, excuse me, convict, the soul of their sins and of their need to convince them. We all have that in our earthen vessels. If our vessels are willing and clean and broken and the light can shine out, it's the light of the Word of God and that is the active element. That is what's important here. Romans 10/14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have no belief? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not here? And how shall they hear without a preacher? We need to go and give the the word of the Lord you need to. You don't need to be gifted to read verses to a friend, to present to him the Lord Jesus Christ. In his death and what he did for you. I remember, and this is not to put the man, but I remember some years ago when I used to, I used to work on on the shop where I work and we was sitting at break time and and people knew that I was a Christian and and they asked questions. Sometimes they ask questions to trick you and to make you fall, but nevertheless they ask questions and we were I was telling about the Lord Jesus Christ.

In particular to two guys, two guys who was there hearing and they hear the gospel. I tell him about the Lord Jesus Christ. They quit the job no longer after they quit the job, one of the guys who was sitting there who I tell him about the Lord Jesus Christ. He was drunk in his house. Neighbors called the police. Police scam took two cars come two policemen tell him we're going to take you with us he say let me go upstairs and put a sweater the police nicely say OK go he goes upstairs he has. A semi automatic rifle. He comes out from that room shooting the police. He killed one of the policemen. The other one going aside and the daughter of this guy was there and he was shooting that repeatedly, just shooting, shooting even when his daughter was there. And police come out, shoot him and kill him. You die. The longest I know. This guy never received the Lord Jesus Christ, but he here about the Lord Jesus Christ. The other guy, months, years after that, one day I was eating lunch on the street and I hear Alex Alice screaming and I turned around and was Nick and he says blessed be the name of the Lord. I know now that the Lord is true. I believe in Him and He saved me. One belief. One die and the longest. I know he is in the place of torment now. We need to preach the gospel, brothers and sisters. We need to. It's a world who need to hear. Like I told you before, no, because we save anybody. We, you cannot save nobody. But he can. We're out of time, but the children are all here and I just think, you know. YouTube can tell people how to be saved and I knew this story of this one boy and he loved his friends so much. And he wanted him to be saved so bad. That they were playing one day and he told him that the Lord Jesus again and he told him how to be saved and the friend didn't quite know what to do about it and. So the one that wanted them to be saved, he said OK, you have to get down on your knees. So the boy get down on his knees. Well, you have to close your eyes. The boy closed his eyes. He said now you have to ask the Lord Jesus to wash your sins away. So a boy said, well, Lord Jesus washed my sins away. He said you have to ask him to come into your heart. And so the boy asked him to come into his heart. He said now you have to say Amen. He said Amen. And I don't know if that boy really put his trust in the Lord Jesus or not, but the other boy sure was persuading him to do so. You can tell your friends how to love the Lord Jesus and to be saved too. Let's pray, Lord Jesus, we just thank Thee for this time over thy word. We look forward to that coming day and thou put thine arm around us, go through our lives and that'll manifest thy rich and matchless grace and how it? Took us through our life and Lord Jesus. Thou receive the glory, we will cast any crown that we receive at thy feet. And just praise Thee for all eternity or Jesus. We long for that day. We look forward to it. Perhaps today we will be caught up. Be with and like Thyself to start that process that we've been considering, which will only redown to Thy honor and glory throughout all the ages of eternity. We thank Thee, blessed Lord, for Thy grace and mercy to us. We just marvel at it. And so we praise Thy holy name. We pray thy worthy name, Lord Jesus.

Amen.

Still Waters Family Camp: 2018, 2 Corinthians 5:1-9

Reading

Great. Lord, we are thine thought by thy blood. We are thine Thy claims, we own ourselves. To Thee we'd holy give. Reign Thou within our hearts alone, and let us to Thy glory live. We ask as we open Thy word, that we might have more instruction and help, and that Thou wouldst open to us Thy word and open our hearts to receive it. We ask this as we give thee our thanks, committing ourselves to thee. Our loving Father in Jesus name, Amen. Read in Second Corinthians chapter 5. 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 For we know that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God and house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan earnestly,

desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, if so be, that being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened. Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath brought us for the self, same thing as God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always, always competent, knowing that whilst we're at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. Before we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him, For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in His body, according to that He hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, But we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences, for we commend not ourselves again unto you. But give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that you may have somewhat to answer them, which glory and appearance, and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, or whether we be sober it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constrained with us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead, and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves. But unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh? Yeah, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new, and all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry. Reconciliation to it, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ stead be ye reconciled to God, for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Just to recap what we had in chapter four, we spoke about how it brought before us the outflow of Christ in the life of the believer and the various exercises that we ought to have. That would help us. Help that outflow shine out brighter and brighter. There were various things that could hinder that light from shining, if you will, and which were touched upon on the on the in chapter 4. And so various exercises were brought forward there that we ought to have so so as not to prevent that light from shining through us. Now in chapter 5, here we have various things that motivate us in our service for Christ.

And it's been pointed out that there are three main ones, you might say, in this chapter. The first one we considered at the front end of this chapter was the coming of Christ in terms of the rapture to bring us to bring the church home to glory with himself. And so we have the rapture put before us where certainly we. As when we live and we we. Go forward in our ministry for Christ that certainly is a motivating factors if not as we look on to that moment when we'll be caught up to be with the Lord himself. The other one was the judgment seat of Christ that the the in terms of the believer. That's where a faithful service will be rewarded and then at the end of the chapter we have the love of Christ. Certainly something that motivates us as we consider that it is really the greatest motivation going. God was motivated to send his Son out of love for you and me. The Lord Jesus was motivated to die for us out of love for our never dying souls. And in turn, we ought to be motivated out of love for all that He's done for us, to give up our lives for His cause. So that's just a little bit of an outline. We'll fill it in, Lord willing, as we move along, but hopefully that that helps set things up. There is one word that. That I've circled in this first verse and it says for we know that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God and house not made with hands eternal in the heavens if. So we expect the Lord Jesus to come at any moment. We don't expect to die. That's not the proper hope of the Christian. Is that right? When writing of the of the writing about the rapture and speaking to the Thessalonians, the Apostle Paul himself said we which are alive and remain so that he anticipated that moment to occur even within his lifetime. And now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed. We have every reason scripturally to expect that we may not pass through the article of death. As we start this first section or this first motive that Josh outlined in the rapture, the condition of glory that we know which it's a certain thing. It's not something we we think might happen, but it's something we know in this, in these verses, it might be pretty confusing because Paul uses several terms that we're not using on a daily basis. And I think if we just define what they are, it might help us understand this. Little section, this first section of the chapter better. There's four terms. There's clothes unclothed, clothed upon and naked, and they all four mean something very specific that helps us to understand what he talks about. When it speaks of clothes, it just speaks of being in our bodies as we are now. We're clothed and it it speaks of a Tabernacle, something temporal. It's not our permanent condition and we will have for all eternity. And it speaks of unclothed. And that would be when there's that separation of the body from the spirit and the soul. That's when a person goes to the article of physical death. It's like he puts this body off his unclothed. And then the third one is clothe the palm. And that speaks of our future condition when we will have our changed. Bodies are glorified bodies. We're clothed upon. And once that happens, it won't change anymore. That's permanent. And then the last one is naked. That speaks of having no covering for our sins before God. So if we keep those four terms separate, I think it clears up these verses quite a bit.

Yeah. Maybe somebody could explain having a building of God and house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. Right with the thought, brother. President referred to the the glorified body that awaits the believer who's whose body humiliation is dissolved and death at this time. So I think it connects much with the end of chapter 4 where it talks where Paul talked about the things which are seen and the things which are not seen. The things which are seen are temporal. The things which are not seen are eternal. He's been talking about the life that we have, the life of Christ, and how wonderful, powerful that life is and how it can shine out. And then what were to happen? What we see around, if we look around, we see all of everyone in this room has a physical body. It's something that's seen, but there's something that's not seen. That's the life, the life of Christ that's inside you and me. It was said previously that the things which are not seen are actually more real than the things which are seen. That life that's inside of you and me is more real and more permanent. Then the bodies that we have today. And so he goes on in this chapter, he says, now if this body that you see on me and I see on you is dissolved, that life is going to have a body with it because of the permanency, the eternal nature of that life that we have. And I think that that speaks volumes to me because we have a life now. That is capable of sustaining a body for all eternity. The bodies that we have today are sustained by blood and by breath. The life of the flesh is in the blood. If you were to lose enough blood, your body would die. Our physical bodies that we have today would die, but there's going to come a day. But we're going to have a body that's not sustained by blood in the same way that our bodies today are. Those bodies are going to be sustained by the power. Of the life of Christ. We have that life already. We just don't have the body yet that goes with that life, but we have the the life itself. It's an unseen thing, but it's eternal and we have it right now. I noticed that Brother Mark was careful to say that these bodies will be changed and glorified, but he didn't say a new body. Because the body that you're sitting in now is a. While it is fitted for this round that our brother Josh is talking about and in that sense is transient. Our God is going to raise the bodies of the Saints who have who sleep now at the rapture, and the Apostle Paul teaches us this in chapter 4 to the Thessalonians. First Epistle to the Thessalonians. And this body is going to be.

Reading

Oh Lord, tis joy, to look above and see thee on the throne, to search the heights and depths of love which thou to us has shown, 106. Do you think it's starting perhaps the 1St 14? Yeah, I would like to go back if it's not too much to just get the contacts from verse 10, if that'd be all right. In Corinthians 5, starting at verse 10. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that He has done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that you may have somewhat to answer them, which glory in appearances and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead, and that he died for all. That they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we know man after the flesh? Yeah, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. All things are passed away, and behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and have committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ, then be reconciled to God. Free hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

I just, uh, suggested we read from verse 10 because it's such an important part of teaching in Scripture, the judgment seat of Christ. And I know sometimes it's presented in a way that results kind of a negative feeling, but I really believe, brethren, when we get home to glory, we're going to be thankful to have his evaluation about everything. I think we're going to be thankful to see everything put in its true light. You know how often down here in this world, there's differences amongst brethren. Brother feels this way and another brother feels that way, and it's never exactly resolved. There at the judgment seat, everything is going to be put in clear light of his presence and his evaluation of it, and it will settle all those differences that there were. So I really look at the judgment seat of Christ as something positive. I hope we haven't left the idea that it's purely negative. There will be loss, of course, in to 1St Corinthians 3 because of things we have done that will be burned up. But I do believe that it is something that is positive. Am I right in that? Amen. At the judgment seat of Christ, our appreciation of the Lord Jesus will go up immensely. When we see his evaluation of our life, we. Think we're candidates for mercy? We'll learn. We'll see the mercy of God as we never saw it in this life, and we will. It will feed our souls to praise and him. We'll see the things that have to be burned up and we'll say, thank God they're burned up and thank God for his mercy to me and bearing with me. And what he saw in my life and so it will be a very positive. There's the aspect of responsibility and again as was mentioned another day it's we won't perhaps be thinking about it, but our capacity for eternity is being developed now and yet at the judgment seat of Christ when the evaluation is given and we see. The grace of God and the mercy of God and the control of God for our blessing over our life through the activity of life. It will tune our hearts to worship and praise Him far beyond what we are presently able to do. I remember your father-in-law saying it will give us abundant reason to praise Him for many, much, many eons. The judgment seat of Christ, we'll see the grace of God and there's so many things in our lives down here, trials that the Lord has permitted that we've never really gotten the full picture on there. He's going to say, I'm going to show you now what I was doing. And when he gets done, we will say, Lord, thank you for allowing those heavy trials in my life. I can see now. Which you had in mind and it's going to be wonderful, Brandon. It says in Romans Chapter 11, right at the end of Romans Chapter 11, the apostle Paul has just gone through the epistle of Romans. He's written, and he looks back and sees the wisdom of God and he gives a note of appreciation, you might say, to doxology verse 33. So Romans Chapter 11, verse 33, oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom. And knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out for who hath known the mind of the Lord, who or who have been his counselor, or who have first given to him? And it shall be recompensed unto him again. For on him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever and ever forever. Amen. Amen. And so there's the wisdom of God. And we don't often think of that, do we? We ought to, but the Lord is allowing what He allows in our lives and circumstances because. Of his perfect wisdom and we ought to be thankful for the wisdom that he has in his dealings with us. And he says in Romans chapter 5 verse 20 as well, He's going to deal with us according to his grace, not only love, not only mercy, but in his grace he's going to reward us. He's going to review us. And it says in chapter 5 verse 20, but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

And so he's going to review and in Greece he's going to reward us. We don't do, we don't look for the reward, for the selfish motives, we might say, but it's a given as an encouragement and it's presented to us as an encouragement. And so this passage of Scripture, as you say, Brother Bob, is written perhaps in a positive sense for the believer because it gives them fresh courage and just the sense that the Lord is going to review our lives in his perfect wisdom, his perfect love. And it's not going to be with a critical spirit, you might say. But His desire is to look upon us in grace and thank us for identifying with Him in His rejection, to thank us for bearing something of the reproach of Christ in this world. For He's going to thank us. Just think, He's going to thank us for what we did, for His name's sake in the scene. We don't deserve it. But He's going in, in perfect wisdom, perfect love. Just review our lives. And what was not for His glory will be set aside and never mentioned for all eternity. So are we saying that not only our works are going to be in review at the judgment seat of Christ, but we're also going to see his working, how he works to make all things work together for good? And would you say that at that time we're going to see the upper side of the tapestry? We're now perhaps we only see the underside and we see all these snarls and tangles of. The thread and so on. It's not a pretty sight, the underside of the tapestry, but by faith Romans 828 and here's another KNOW we know we know that all things work together for good. And so we would it be right to say that we can also look forward to the judgment seat that we might see the upper side of the tapestry. And to see how all things do work together for good. If that be the case, I'm looking forward to that time. Presence and not see it all. Even in Israel. In a future day, Isaiah 26, verse 12. Says, Lord, Thou wilt ordained peace for us. Where thou also has brought all our works in US. So that's it. The Lord met for us in his death and sufferings. There's an illustration given. It's probably a thread well known to to some of us here, but I can remember under the ministry of our late brother. HE hayhole. Whom I knew well in my teenage period. He used to often give the illustration now. To put it in perspective here. I'm in a liability, I'm I'm in deep debt and furthermore, I'm bankrupt. I, I can't do anything about it. They're going to take away my house and I may be charged and. And maybe incarcerated. So Bob, Tony comes along and he says, John, I, I've known you for years and I see your predicament here. Give me give me the whole situation and let me see what what is really the problem. So after a few days, he hands me an envelope and he says, John, it's it's all settled. You don't have to worry about it anymore. Well, I said thank you, Bob. This really gives me relief.

So I open up the envelope that night and I thought it was around $10,000 that I owed, but I looked at the the the bill and here it is $100,000. I said mine. I had no idea that my debt was so large and Bob had to sell his house and his car and everything to pay for it. I'm filled with Thanksgiving, I think, to apply that to the judgment seat of Christ. That we will. Know in deeper and fuller measure what it costs the Lord to put away our sins, how great the debt was, and He gave all that He had to meet our deepest need. It's going to fill our hearts with praise, brethren, for all eternity, and not one word will pass His blessed lips that He remembers our sins and our failures. Well, it should humble us now. In fact, we're not told to forget our sins, we're told to be humbled by them. But not to be occupied with them, but to be humbled by them, to walk softly. But the Lord is going to unfold all the measures of His grace as Robert has brought before us in that coming day. It will take eternity, will be too short to utter all his praise. I like that verse in Revelation 4. The two verses in Revelation 4. After the judgment seat of Christ. I think these verses show the climax of the grace and the mercy and the love and the righteousness of of God that's been extended to us. And as we see that which we've done, that was not for his glory. It's burned up, it's taken away. There's no more record of it. But then what's remaining is for his honor and his glory. And it's not for a reward. It's not for our glory. It's not for our our prestige. No, it's for the Lord. And in verse 10 of chapter 4, the four and 20 elders fall down before him and sat upon the throne before him that sat on the throne and worship him, that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying so there's rewards that we may get those crowns from the judgment seat of Christ. They're not for us, they're for Him, and we cast them at His feet. Verse 11. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure. They are and were created. And so the thought here is that there's eternal worship and praise for the Lord, giving Him glory for what He's done for us in our lives, and for His glory in His honor. I have a question. Uses the word terror. We've been talking about the judgment seat of Christ being something that's positive. And I understand the Great White Throne to be something that's very negative and would be terrifying. Why here is the word terror used when it seems most of the rest of this is Speaking of the judgment seat of Christ, which although the bad things will be brought out, it will be a net positive. And I I do understand the judgment seat of Christ to be at a completely different time and in a different character than the great white throne. But why is this word used here? I take it that the great White Throne is one of the sessions. Of the judgment seat of Christ that he has different times when he judges. It's like a judge in a used to go from county to county to judge different cases. And so this is the Lord Jesus. He's the same judge. And then when it is concerning believers, it's about our works. But then as we mentioned at the judgment of the nations in Matthew 25 is a different session. There you have those that will enter into the millennial day, into the reign of Christ, the sheep and the goats that will go into everlasting punishment. That's another session. And then the Great White Throne is another session, and that will be terrifying. And given that, we persuade men.

Does that make sense? Thank you. Amplify a little bit and connect it with the verses that follow. The meditation on these chapters began with a summary remarks about chapter 3 being the ministry, and then we have the minister and so on that does the ministry. The apostle Paul here in these verses particularly, they almost seem disconnected, but they're not. How does he suddenly start talking about letters of commendation in the next verse? Do we need a letter from you? Is connected with the sense of the responsibility that Paul had in his own soul with review to the fact that he had been entrusted to a service for the Lord and he was going to have to give an account for it. And so he recognized in that service that he would give an account for the souls of men that he had the responsibility to present the gospel to. And knowing the consequence for them, the terror of the Lord that they were going to face at the great white throne judgment, he felt in his own soul the real responsibility that he had, that there was coming that judgment seat of Christ for him in which he was going to have to give an account for his service in that regard. And so he then goes on in the next verse For, for we commend ourselves, not ourselves again to you. Well, what, how does he suddenly start talking about that? Go back to the previous chapter that begins this whole series on ministry and ministers and so on, and look at that. And it's what's connected with what this verse is. So go back to chapter 3 and verse one. Do we begin again to commend ourselves, or need we as some others, epistles of commendation to you, Corinthians, or letters of commendation from you? Now he gives his answer to that question. Ye are our epistles written, and our hearts known and read of all men. For as much as ye are manifestly prepared to be the epistles of Christ ministered by us. Written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart. For such trust we have through God, Christ to God Word. Not that we're sufficient in ourselves to think anything of ourselves are sufficient as of God, who hath made us able ministers, that is, the Saints to whom He's writing these words. Were Saints to whom God had entrusted him the responsibility of bringing his service for God to them. And he saw already some result of it. That ministry that had been entrusted to him was now written on their hearts. There had been a response in them, and he was. He recognized that, and he was thankful for it. And now in this chapter, some of the question came up because some of them. Were interested in Corinth in outward appearance. And not the work in the heart. And yet the true service to God is a work that always doesn't generate necessarily some impressive outward appearance. But if it's a service of God on a good foundation with good material, it will result in as a work in the hearts of souls. And when we give account that the judgment seat of Christ, the good and the bad is going to be seen in the context of. If it was a God, it produced a result that lasted in the heart. If it was of myself alone, it might have produced a lot of good outward appearance, but nothing that went into a eternity. It was that which was only to be burned up. And so in the next verse, verse 13, he says, whether we recite ourselves is to God. There is an aspect in service in which.

We have to be between ourselves and God. And that's just between US and God. It's not with respect to others. And so Paul could recognize in serving others and in the view of the judgment seat of Christ, he had first to have his own fellowship with God that wasn't necessarily even seen by others or seen that you might say even as a work itself, but as a fellowship, a communion that then he says. Whether we be sober, it's for your cause. That is when we think about it and we act and we serve. We serve for the benefit and blessing of others and so any who have served this weekend, one another at the dinner table at our brethren that have been preparing for us to be here this weekend, those who have spoken up verbally in the meetings and so on. Is it been for the blessing of one another? Well, the judgment seat of Christ will reveal that and the desire of. The soul of the minister, It should be the sense that it will have that which lasts permanently for eternity. It's important to relax that in Second Corinthians, the epistle, the 2nd Corinthians, Paul was defending his apostleship, wasn't he? And so they were attacking him. Those were a mixed company. There were those that were real believers, they were in the assembly, and then there were those that had come in among them and sought to have a position of. Prominence among them. And so they accused him of being crazy. He was, really. He is devoting his life and his energies entirely to the things of God. And so they said, So he says, We commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf. So he was working before the Lord, doing his work, serving the Saints of God, ministering the truth, and delivering to the Saints what God had given him to deliver by revelation, that you may have somewhat to endure them, which glory and appearance. And not in heart. So there was a lot of fluff, there was theatrics and all kinds of things to try to deflect the attention from the truth of what Paul was ministering. And so they he lived so much for Christ and was so devoted to the cause of Christ. They accused him of being crazy. Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God or whether we be sober is for your cause. But he says. I'm doing what I'm doing for the cause of Christ. And so if you and I have the motive of really the appreciation of Christ and his work and we seek to

labor in view of the judgment seat of Christ. We see that in the we can give him the praise and the Thanksgiving of our hearts that the judgment seat, but we can reflect our appreciation for the Lord by serving him in this scene. By doing it with devotion, why the world will look upon us and perhaps even other believers say you're crazy. I mean get a life. There's there's other things to do and Christianity isn't all there is to life. But really I think it's Paul that quotes that says it in Colossians chapter three. He says Christ is everything. Christ is everything. And so This is why. They were really berating him, but he left it with the Lord. He says the judgment seat of Christ. I'm not going to commend myself. I'm not going to defend myself in this way, but you can see that it's of the Lord. And that aspect of that, too, that's important is Paul does give what might be called a defense. But the defense is not a motivation to maintain his own reputation. It is because if they don't recognize the service that God had given to him as an apostle, they would lose. And it was his heart's desire for their blessing that he recognized that if they didn't accept him, they were not going to accept the ministry that God had given him. For their blessing. And so he was reminding them that you ought to be thankful for what you are because the ministry that God has given me has that which is produced in your hearts. The response that's going to be for your eternal blessing. I say it lest we think that we have a need to defend ourselves to maintain that we are right. That's not a that's not the Lord.

The Lord did not defend himself in His own life with the intent of maintaining a reputation. He did it when he had to speak for the glory of God, but not for himself and for the glory of God, that souls might be blessed through it if they responded properly to it. Could it be said that way? To really defend the work of the Holy Spirit which happened to have been done in Him. Respect to the Corinthians. So he's really defending the Lord. And then we have verse 14, and I think this is so beautiful, for the love of Christ constraineth us, brethren, when we think of the Lord Jesus, the eternal Son of God coming down into this world. In the form of a man. And going all the way to the death of the cross, the Lord Jesus went through this world. They said to him, are you only a stranger here? And he was really a stranger here. He came from the father's house and I've often thought that's why he wasn't really interested in having his own house, said The birds of the air have their nests, the foxes have their their caves, but the son of man has nowhere to lay his head. Why didn't he have a house? Because he came from the Father's house and there was nothing to compare with that. Just think of how the glorious Son of God, the creator of the whole universe. Went to the. Trial at the Sanhedrin and how those chief priests came up and spit in his face. Are just Marvel breathing thinking? Has that spittle ran down his face? Was there any reaction to that? They just watched him and there was no reaction. He did not defend himself and he went to the most awful death, the death of the cross, Pilot says three times. I find no fault in this man, and yet condemns them to the most awful death possible. There he hangs on that cross. There he suffers those three hours of darkness, the wrath of God and all its fury falling upon him. Did that ever quench that stream of love? Never could. Oh brethren, we think of His love. It does something on the inside of us. That is inescapable. It's not a constraint. Nobody is standing over me saying you got to live straight in your life for Christ. No, it's something inside of me. The love of Christ constrains us. It's a inward constraint. And so this is one of the motivations. We thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead. I think he hung there, his mangled body dead on a cross. So it goes on in verse 15, and that he died for all that they which live. We still have our lives, brethren. Should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. You know, I think of the American dream is live it up. Nobody else is going to defend you. Defend yourself. Brethren, how contrary to Christianity that is.

May the Lord help us to recognize it. We live in this culture and I have to say I've been affected by it. This principle of self pleasing. Even Christ pleased not himself. Are we followers of this man? The love of Christ constraineth us. That word constrain is not a common word in the English language today. It might help to look at another verse, Luke chapter 12. Verse. 50. Excuse me? Find the nerves here. Yes, Luke chapter 12, verse 50. Where the Lord Jesus says, but I have a baptism to be baptized with and how am I straightened till it be accomplished? That's the same Greek word as constrained in in 2nd Corinthians 5. The Lord Jesus was straightened, He was held. He was gripped. And as he was held. To the. Duty of the Cross. So off the lot, the love of Christ. RIP us for His glory. I have a question in connection this and I want to make a comment. We have an Acts chapter 20 Paul making this statement verse 26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. Now, if I understand this right, as we've been talking here. Bob made a mention that there is a judgment that people will be terrified of, but in my understanding that's incidental in here that Paul is saying he says we and includes himself being before the judgment seat of Christ in Acts 20. He says that he has acted in a way that. His hands are not guilty of the blood of any He's warned, He continues to warn that. And then here we have this thought that knowing, and we all know this, that lost men and women are headed for a lost eternity and they're going to face the terror of the Lord. So if we love Christ. And Christ, we know, loves us. And as Bob was saying, and you think upon that and somebody mentioned that. I think yesterday about. That that you focus on his love and our love grows for Him and then we have it. What how scripture tells us that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts and we sometimes talk about all we need to do is get out of the way and let it flow through. The capacity to love the unlovable has been shed abroad in our hearts. So we have, as we have expressed, Robert was talking about motivations. So if I understand this right and this is my question, then Paul is basically saying, I know what's going to happen to people. They're going to face terror, I'm going to warn them. The love of Christ draws me after to serve him to do the warning. And then the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, so we can love the unlovable, because many times. It's difficult to speak to people, to warn them, but because he does that, we do that. And if Paul can say that in Acts 20 that his hands are clean, then between these two things, the motivation lost men are going to a lost eternity. We're like a car headed towards a bridge out ahead. If we're standing along the road and we have any care at all, we would jump out and warn them. If you go down the road, you're going to go off the bridge. It's it's out. Then we knowing the terror of the Lord, knowing that I had it, is this terror. We warned them and that the love of Christ motivates, that motivates us because we know they're headed for lost eternity and we've been saved from it. And then the love of Christ that draws us after this is like two sides of this thing. So then because we're going to stand and give account one day, then warning men because of the terror down the road, we're not worried about the terror for ourselves. There isn't any, but because lost men and women are going to face it.

Then that's us, because we're going to stand and give an account, Paul says. I'm confident I can give a good account. We should be able to be able to say that is that. Am I getting this right? The Lord has committed to us and. In an actual fact. God doesn't need to be reconciled to us. We need to be reconciled to God in the the thought that the Lord Jesus has to plead with the Father for the salvation of the lost is really a misconception. The heart of God is growing out in fullness of love and we should be a reflection of that. So the reconciliation is on our part, the thought that God gave. Needs to be reconciled to us in some sort of a compromise is not is not what Scripture teaches is that is that right, brother? In verse 15 that he's Speaking of propitiation. So he died for all that is that Christ in his death made all men savable. He made it possible for all to be saved. And so propitiation really has two parts and the first part is God's part. God has been satisfied with the death of Christ and. Christ has dealt with sin. According to the wisdom of God, and according to the purpose of God at the cross of Calvary, sin has been judged on a righteous basis. But then it says they that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves. And so the second part of propitiation has to do with substitution. Christ took our place upon the cross of Calvary. We don't preach substitution to the Sinner who is lost because. It's really propitiation that we preach in the gospel of the grace of God. God has made all men saveable because of the work

of Christ. But because He died for me, because He died for you, if you've accepted Him as your Savior, it compels us. His love compels us to live for His glory, so that it says that we that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. And so we have such appreciation for the fact that Christ took our place upon the cross. He bore the judgment for our sins in his own body on the tree. He paid the price and the motive was love. Our hearts just go forth to him and say he's worthy of our whole lives, not just a part of our lives, but he's worthy of it all. And so that's how Paul lived and has really what the motivation is that he presents before the Saints in this epistle. Is to give it all to him. Well, that comes naturally from a saved soul. Recently I had the marvelous privilege of leading a lady in her 80s to the Lord. And as I sat with her, it's a Bible study in the little town called Washington. And as we sat together afterwards, she came to me with tears in her eyes and said, I know that the Lord Jesus is not in my heart. I know that I'm not saved. I want to be saved and would you talk with me? So I shared the gospel with her Again. We went over scripture by Scripture. She bowed her head and called on the name of the Lord to save her. You know what her first motive was? She asked me to take the Bible that she had in Bible study and underline every verse I had shared with her and put a piece of paper in each page starting with the first verse because she had a niece. That was like a daughter to her and she said this weekend I'm going to visit her. I want to lead her to Christ. Is that the love of Christ constraining us? That was her first thought, was to go and lead someone she loved. To the Lord Jesus Christ I think it is.

Club that transcends our highest thought demands our light, our soul, our wall, and we measure the love of somebody by the sacrifice they're willing to make on our behalf. So we think of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus. Made for you and for me, and made for all who are willing to accept. That mighty work that he accomplished at the cross of Calvary. So I think the love of Christ is that which warms up our hearts to Him. But it also warms up our hearts. To the world around us. Because we find out that God was in Christ. Reconciling the world to Himself, God would have all men to be saved and to come to acknowledge. Of the truth. But the source is love of Christ. But there's something else, the love of Christ. The appreciation of it warms up our hearts to one another. To our brother, our sister, We see them in Christ. We think of what the Lord Jesus said. Over in John 13. And verse 34. John 13 verse 34 A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. How much? As I have loved you that he also loved. Loved one another. Now that's a high standard. We think of the intensity of the love that the Lord Jesus manifested, the cross that we might become his eternal companions, the value that he places upon us. And we are to love one another in this same way. I remember a brother used to often pray. He said, help us Lord, to see one another through the eye of Christ. Our hearts will warm up toward one another. It's nice in verse 17 and goes on to speak of the new creation. We're a part of a new creation race of men and so it's part of Pauls doctrine that he's not the spirit of God doesn't fix up, patch up and renovate the old man, so to speak. The old nature that we have man is thoroughly corrupt and he was found his nature and he's entirely corrupt. And so there's a new creation. Therefore, if a man be in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new. And so by new birth we're brought into that new life. And so it's a work of God. We have here in verse 16 the fact that we don't know the children of Israel knew the Lord Jesus as a man, as the Messiah, the one who came and presented himself as their rightful King. But that's not how we present himself to you and I in the day that we live in. Yeah, we have known, though we have known Christ after the flesh. Now, those that were at that time in the land of Israel knew him as a man, yet now henceforth know we him no more. So we know the Lord Jesus as that risen man. He's the head of a new creation race of men. And when you accept that the Lord Jesus as your Savior, you became a part of that new race of men. So there are two races of men living upon the earth. There are those that are a part of the fallen race of man, and then there are those that have new life that are part of that new race of men. The largest are connected with the beginning of the chapter more intimately than we might at first recognize. We started in the morning, this morning or yesterday too, on the beginning about the body and the condition of the body and so on. And the Lord paying the price for the body. But what is the body a house for? What's the body a house for? For the soul and the spirit. And you don't pay a lot of money for something unless it has value.

What value did the whole soul and spirit have in the condition of verse 16 or verse 14? Dead. Do you spend a lot of effort and money and pay a big price to buy something that's condemned? To put a house in of something that's condemned you and I were worth in ourselves nothing in our state of death and sin. And so the love of Christ, put aside the constraint side of it for a few moments. What is the love of Christ? The love of Christ is that which died. For all. So that. We who live verse 16 How do we live? We live because Christ died, but there's an important, at least important for the enjoyment of the soul sense of it. We had this morning the Holy Spirit of God. As a earnest. In. Us. Does the Spirit of God indwell something that's useless or valueless? No, it doesn't. So when did the Spirit of God indwell us? In Christ, as he was known as a man on earth, no. Not that man. The man that's in view here is the man that died himself. He died for all. He went into the place of death, and when he rose from the dead, he rose in what I'm going to use the words, a totally different condition of life. He here was a man who, like us, was mortal. And in the body which he had, sinless as it was, he died, and that body was taken to a cemetery to be buried. We know it was not. On the third day, he rises from the dead. And he is alive as the first fruits of the new creation resurrection. And so he says to them, I am come that you might have life. And that she might have it more abundantly. That life has eternal value. Not the life you're born with. Not the life I'm born with. It didn't have eternal value. It was a sinful life. It wasn't in itself worth dying for. Accepting that in resurrection Christ, the first born from the dead arises on the third day. Immortal. Not subject to death. Oh, that's a life that has value. He rises into glory. And then? That life is imported to us, and that life is worth. The change of having a body suited to that life that is to be enjoyed in eternity with the Lord. And so it's the beginning and the first fruit of a new creation that life is. When is the Holy Spirit seal? Not until that life is in heaven. Not until that person who imparts that life to us, that we share in that life, he says no, not until I'm glorified will the Spirit come and seal. And so the Holy Spirit waits to seal until the condition that it is sealing is that which is associated with what's not temporal, what what's eternal. It's called eternal life. And it's eternal in its character, and that character of life is sealable. By the Holy Spirit as that which is permanent for all eternity. And what we await for is the last piece, if you will. And he says yes, and he's going to finish the work. He's going to redeem the body as well, so that the body is suited to the life.

That we have that eternal life, and then we raise in glory. And when we look at the love that did the work that's just been described, that love enjoyed in the soul constrains us. And it connects us with eternity. And so we labor in time in view of that which remains and is eternal. And our work, our service, ought to be in a constraining love in view of. That which lasts for eternity. Verse 16 has helped me to understand why the Lord Jesus in resurrection. In John 20 says to Mary the first person he appeared to. He says in verse 17, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my father, but go to my brethren and send to them. I ascend unto my father and your father, and to my God and your God. Mary wanted to have the Lord Jesus back as she had known Him in the flesh before. And the Lord Jesus in effect said, no, Mary, don't touch me. You're going to know me now in a way that is far superior. You're going to know me now in new creation. And so the Lord Jesus in resurrection is the head of new creation. Wonderful to think about it. And verse 17 then comes on it says if any man be in Christ he is as an italics. There is a new creation. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new, and all things are of God in new creation. All things are of God. Wonderful brethren, to realize that we are part of new creation even now. But I believe that's why the Lord Jesus said to Mary touched

me not we know that they touched him later on. And it wasn't improper, but Mary wanted to have him back as she had known him down here. And he basically says, no, Mary, you're going to know me in a far superior way now. So then he brings in the doctrine of reconciliation as our brother John has mentioned that God did not need to be reconciled to man, but man needed to be reconciled to God. And when it speaks of reconciliation, the thought is always in connection with our alienation from God and that we were enemies of God. The brother chapter Brown used to say that we were born into this world with our backs towards God. We were enemies and our minds and by wicked works, and we needed to be reconciled. And so God has reconciled us. It means that He has by himself through the work of the Lord Jesus. Made us so that we're no longer enemies and we delight to be in the presence of God. We delight to be enjoy the communion of our God and of our our Father. But it was an act of God. And so we've been reading about these some of these doctrines that are brought out in this chapter. And it's important for us to realize that perhaps in the book of Romans, the the epistle to the Romans, the Spirit of God goes through all of those things that God has done for the blessing of man. He's forgiven us. He's he has reconciled us. He has done all of those things, but also there are things that God has done for his own pleasure and largely in the epistle to the Ephesians and the Colossians, he outlines those things that he has done for his own pleasure. I would suggest that what he has done here is in connection with bringing us into a new creation race, a new race of men, those that are. No longer tainted. We're not characterized by sin. He sees us in the place of Christ acceptance. So to be in Christ. Therefore, if any man be in Christ or in Christ place of acceptance before God, that's where he sees us. He does not see us in a place of as those that are saved sinners who might say, but as those that are accepted. As he is in this world, so are we. As he is, so are we.

In this world we're accepted of God, and so He's done these things for his own pleasure. He's done them in love, He's done them in grace. We're the recipients of this great blessing, but he's done them for his own purposes, because of his great love, but for his own pleasure. To amplify a little bit. 1St and then go back. And it helps us to understand as we go through about what our brother's just saying God. Can have pleasure in man. In his creation because. Be reconciled to God is thoroughly changed if you look up reconciliation in the dictionary. You will find it thoroughly changed and it's the man that's returned to godliness. And so when we go back through there. Where did he start at here and with these passages that we're reading and if I said to you. My salvation was not a reward. Would that stand here is up in the back of your neck? Well, my salvation was not a reward. My salvation was a gift. Yeah, it was a gift. I couldn't do anything to receive that salvation. It's what comes in Ephesians 2 and 10 about the good works after the salvation, after we have had faith. Turn with me to Hebrews 11 and verse 6 together. Hebrews 11 and verse 6. But without faith. It is impossible to please him. If I was to preach the gospel here to somebody that's unsaved, I could take this verse and I could sell them. You've never pleased God one time until you've had faith and trusted in His gift above all other gifts, the gift of His Son and the Son's finished work at Calvary. If you can't have the faith to simply believe and trust in that, you've never pleased him, OK? And I can see that in this beautiful gospel, in this, but it's not in the gospel. It's in an epistle to you and to me. But without faith was where I first pleased him. Now let's finish reading it. For he that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Those things that we were talking about rewards before I just said our salvation wasn't a reward, it was a gift. It's the works after salvation and we have to look at who is the rewarder. The one that's going to give the rewards and we've heard about the three things that are are are precious that are good and three that are bad that would hay and stumbles going to get burned up because it can't go up into heaven. They were worthless things, weren't they? If we're going to build upon, we build upon the pure foundation that He laid, and then we build upon it. We need building material. We need the good building material. When you build something, you don't want a piece of wasted stuff that has no value. But look at here. If I diligently seek Him after my salvation. The rewards will start to come turned in a second John, our times about up, second John and verse 4. This Schofield labels this the pathway of truth and love that our brother asked a question about some people been answering on it. Second John verse 4I greatly. I rejoice greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment for the Father.

This here is referred to sometimes as the law of Christ. Verse 5 Now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee. But that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another, and this is love, that we walk after His commandments. This is a commandment that, as ye have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it. Moses laid down a law, and Moses demanded love. That was external, wasn't it? The law of Christ is not external. We've been hearing that it's in the renewed heart and it flows from the Holy Spirit spontaneously. You can walk over to the brother and you can put your armor on them. You can say I finally saw some beautiful grace in you. Maybe you rubbed me a wrong way a long time ago. Now the grace is flowing out of me spontaneously. The love, it's constraining me to love him. Love covers a multitude of the other person's sins. Love covers a multitude of sins. It means the other person's my sin can cover. Their sins. And so we see here that I'm constrained by this flowing forth of the Holy Spirit with the love that is within me now, because I got a renewed heart, took away that old Stony heart. And we see this, this pathway of truth and love that we can walk in. And it it's a beautiful thing to love one another, isn't it? I don't want to take any more time. I'll let somebody else finish up. Ambassador for closing note here and uh. It's our responsibility, brethren, is it not to? To represent our Lord Jesus here in this world. We're not part of this scene and the whole world system that is under condemnation and awaiting judgment, but we are here for a purpose. Not to please ourselves, which will last, we too often do, but to please the Lord and His interests, which are eternal, of eternal value, and to represent Christ. In Ottawa, where I live, capital of the country, we have the ambassador to Brazil. Three years ago I met him and his wife. But he's a stranger in in Canada. I know where he lives and so on. But he has nothing to do with the politics of Canada. If he meddled at all in the political affairs of the country, President Lula would recall him. He is there for one purpose, to represent Brazil in Canada. And are we not here for that purpose, to represent our Lord, to hold forth the word of life? To use the opportunities that we have to point souls to the Savior, the way of escape from eternal judgment. The last verse of the chapter. To reconcile us to God, Christ died for all. Because we all have sinned, and it was necessary for our reconciliation that the sins be removed from the sight of God. But there's something. Very important beyond that. What about what we are? What we have done is one thing. What what we are. We're sinners with a ruined nature. And the Lord Jesus Christ in his death fulfilled the second part of what's necessary to properly reconcile us to God, so that there could be a ministry of reconciliation, so that there could be ambassadors for Christ. And that's the 21St verse. He hath made him to be sin for us. That is the Lord Jesus.

Came before God at the cross, not only to pay for my sins, but to stand before God in all that I am in Adam and all the responsibility. And what am I in Adam but sin? My whole nature is corrupted in Adam, and he stands before me. Who he who knew no sin himself takes my place, and yours too, of course. Why, That we might be made righteous in him before God. And so he deals with that nature and dies to it. And what's necessary for us? Well, we need a new creation. And so we have his resurrection life. Which has a perfect nature, we share in it. And in that when we have our new body, then the whole matter of sin is eternally taken care of. And in that we now are fully, perfectly reconciled to God, because not only what we've done has been taken care of, but what we are has been addressed and perfectly taken care of as well, so that we share the life of Christ. And have perfect communion and fellowship with God and all the animosity that was in US. As was said, we were born with our back to God. That's before we ever did a sin. That inborn animosity is totally removed when that nature is totally taken care of.

And put it before God in death, so that we have a new life and a new nature. And now we're reconciled to God and the consequences. In verse 20. We are made, or verse 21, we're made the righteousness of God in him, and so we stand before God perfectly righteous forever, and that's permanent. That's eternal. Sometimes people say I don't know what my ministry is. Everyone here. In verse 18. Has been given the Ministry of Reconciliation. Everyone. The appendix #70 in the appendix. Anything of the Realms of the Blast. I dream of. Oh boy.

The. Also saying #67 #67. First John, chapter 4. Verse 17. Here in. Is love. Herein is love. Made perfect.

That we may have boldness in the day of Judgment because. As he is. So are we. In this world.

St. Louis Conference: 2022, 2 Corinthians 5:5-13

Reading

170. And shall we see the? President Grace. Of our hearts tree. Lord. We're reading in Second Corinthians chapter 5. Maybe we could start with verse 5. Two Corinthians 5, starting at verse five. And he that hath brought us for the self, same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that He hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. But we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. For we commend not again ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that you may have somewhat to answer them, which glory in appearance and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.

For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead, and that he died for all. That they which lived should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we know man after the flesh. Yeah, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new create creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ, Dad, be reconciled to God, for he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin that. Yesterday we were talking about the body. And the house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. And that we're going to be transformed into. And. Verse five begins, He says He that hath brought us for the self same thing as God. Who also have given unto us the earnest of the Spirit and I think this is helpful to understand the Spirit of God is in US and testifies to us the reality of this these things so that Paul can say here in verse six. Therefore, we are always confident that beautiful brethren, the confidence of faith. Verse eight We are confident, I say, and willing rather, he said. So the confidence of faith, no doubting there, goes along with that verse that we read this morning in the meeting. God is not given unto us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind. We have so much in this world to make us question everything almost. You don't know what to believe when you read what's put out as news. You don't know whether to believe it or not. But here's something, brethren, we can be confident about. These are realities. This body may get sick, it may even die, but we have confidence that we have a building of God. Oh brethren, that should fill us with consolation. And faith to go on amidst whatever he has called us. To go through in this light. I like to call it Christ confidence because it's the faith that we have is in a person and we have confidence and it it grows over time because every time you prove him out, your confidence grows because he doesn't fail you ever. And every time you prove him out again and again and every hitherto you have in your life as you travel through and travel down the path of faith, every one of those moments. Increases that confidence where you can say I have Christ confidence about all of these things. You may have doubts and as our brother said, certainly the news and what the world reports. We don't know what to believe about those things, but we can misunderstand the word of God. We can have wonder about what something actually means or how to apply it in our life and so forth, but never about Him. Christ confidence, no one can take that from you. self-confidence. Now, each one who has a skill and a job, who's learned to do it well, you have some self-confidence about that. If you're a Christian, you also know that the Lord helps you do your job. But the self-confidence you had because you have a skill to repair a car or fix a computer or do whatever you do fine, even that can be taken away. But no one, no one can take Christ's confidence from you. Because it's aimed at Him. And even when you start with a weak faith and at times you may have a weak faith, it's in someone who has no weakness at all. And Christ confidence will get you through things and difficult times in a way nothing else can. If you think about it in that fashion, not just being confident, but having Christ confidence because it's himself that gives that to you. So you may face something.

And you don't know why and you're going through a difficult time and you don't like it. And you may even crowd to the Lord. I don't like this. It's painful. It hurts me, Lord, but I choose you, I trust you. And it makes a difference. That confidence, that's Christ confidence. It's from him. It's out of him. And it cannot fail you ever because he can't fail you. And every time you test Him and he likes be put to the test. I'm not saying tempting God, I'm saying you put him to the test because He says in His Word something and you stand on it. He cannot fail you. He will not fail you and that will increase your confidence. So if the Lord doesn't answer your prayer, Sam. Is that going to shake your confidence? No. I think that is important because Paul asked the Lord three times. Lord, take away this throne in the flesh. Lord says no. My grace is sufficient for these. So there's times when he doesn't answer because we ask according to our need. We're told to, but it doesn't mean the Lord's going to always give the answer the way we want. I think that's important to understand. But even no is an answer. And you can have a piece about that. Then you know, you know what he says about the matter. But then there's people who pray and they get discouraged because they don't get any answer. Well, what does the Lord say about that? He himself tells two stories, the importunate stories, one about a judge and one about a neighbor. It's as though the Lord says to us, Pester me, these two people in the stories were pestered until they give in. God says, pester me. He's not like the judge, He's not like the neighbor who does it out of irritation, but he wants us to come back. I was talking with a brother once. I said doesn't appear that way, that he asks us to pester him about something. Yes, he does keep coming, Keep coming, keep coming. It may take years and years. You it, your prayer may be answered after you're dead, especially about a soul being saved. So you go. But if he says no, like brother Bob said, you stop if you get a clear no. OK, OK, Lord, you've told me your grace is sufficient. I can accept that. And we need to accept that. But if he doesn't say no, don't stop, don't stop. How many people have heard stories where they prayed for a

child or a grandchild or something, and then they get saved After grandma's gone, after grandpa's gone down the road, they get saved. Well, those prayers even followed after death. Pray, pray, pray, pray until you hear no or the Lord says yes. That's what I believe is the meaning of the instant in prayer. It doesn't mean pray through your sleep in 24/7. It's the sense of not giving up. The Lord wants that from us. He wants this kind of thing, a child who keeps coming, who keeps coming. It honors God, and God says in his word, he that honors me, I will honor. If you. Deflating buying a house and you come to some agreement with the house owner to buy the house. The next thing that happens is some money. Down payment as expected, as a proof of your seriousness about your intent to buy the house. It's also called earnest money, and that's what's in view here. God has purpose. He has wrought with the intent that we are going to have a Tabernacle for our new our new lives. That is going to be ours, and we're looking for it in this chapter. And so He says He has brought us for that purpose. So what's the proof, What's the earnest that God will carry through with His purpose?

What's it say He says He hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit, And so the Spirit of God has been given to us as an earnest, as a proof, as a demonstration of the seriousness of what he purposes doing for us. And the result of that earnest of the Spirit, it produces confidence. And how far does that confidence go? Or even through death? Even through death, It's not simply present request of the Lord or confidence that the Lord is going to be doing this or that in our lives. But he says we're confident, I say, to be absent from the body. That is, we're confident because of that what has been given to us, that even if we die. That is, our present body is separated from our soul and spirit. The earnest is proven beyond a question of a doubt that God is going to fulfill, and we are going to enjoy that which is given to us, that for which He has wrought, that we will have that building. God not made with hands eternal in the heaven. Uses the term earnest as well in Ephesians chapter one. And there again, it is a down payment, so to speak, the security to show that he's going to complete a work. And so in Ephesians chapter one, and we could just read the last part of verse 13, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. Which or who is the earnest of our inheritance? Until the redemption of the purchased possession. And so you and I have an inheritance. And in this sense it's shown to be the everything that Christ has. The inheritor of and so he will inherit all created things and beings. That's all his. He made the purchase at the cross, He bought the field and everything in it. But the creation is still under the power of sin. And Satan, and he says that you are going to inherit it as well. You're going to inherit this scene, all created things. You're where heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ. Now how do you know that you are going to be enjoying that inheritance? How do you know that you will be with Christ inheriting it? You have the indwelling spirit of God. He's given the earnest of the Spirit. And because you're indwelled with the Spirit of God, the Spirit works with you to show you to that you will inherit, that you will enjoy the creation when it set free. So this is one of the things that the Spirit of God does is show us that. Because we have the earnest of the inheritance. It's the down payment, as our brother Dawn has said. I just want to point out there's another couple of things that the Spirit does. The Spirit of God has given us for the purpose of and in chapter one of Second and 2nd Corinthians, we might just read it's a couple of verses there, verse 21 Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ hath anointed us, is gone, who hath also sealed us. So we're anointed with the Spirit, we're sealed with the Spirit, and he's given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. Three things. And so when it speaks of the anointing, it speaks of us having the discernment by the Spirit to discern between good doctrine and bad doctrine. We have the unction of the Spirit. We're not going to go into it, but it's first John chapter two. He goes into that. We know all things. We have the capacity to detect false doctrine. We're anointed with the Spirit. But then when it comes to being sealed with the Spirit, that has the sense of being eternally secure. When you believe the gospel of the grace of God, you were sealed with the Spirit. The Spirit came. To indwell you and the work is complete. It's sealed. It can never be undone. You're perfectly secure. When it speaks of the earnest, it speaks of how you have. God has given you the Spirit as a down payment and He will fulfill all of His promises. So you don't. You're not currently ruling over the inheritance, but you will rule over the inheritance. You have the earnest of the Spirit. You know you do not have a glorified body. Your body is not glorified right now, but it will be glorified. How do you know?

You're indwelled with the Spirit of God. It's the earnest, it's the down payment. He will finish the work. How do I know that I have the Spirit? When I asked that question in, in Africa, well, you have to speak in tongues and then everybody knows you have, then you know you have the Spirit of God if you can speak in tongues. Well, I've never spoken in tongues, so maybe I don't have the spirit. So how can I know that I have the spirit with the earnest? I understand the earnest of the spirit and I understand why I, how I can know I have the spirit, but I, I pose that question, how can I know that I have the Spirit of God? What did you tell those brother? I said the right thing. Well, I like there's a verse in Galatians 3 verse 14. I don't know, maybe this may have some input on that. Galatians 3, verse 14. At the end of the verse it says that we might receive the promise of the Spirit. Through faith. I think faith and trusting what the word of God says. Is what gives me confidence to know that I have the Spirit of God. But maybe someone else can expand on that. Scripture says faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. So the starting point is the word of God. God speaks. And when there is a reception of that by faith. Then God works in us to give us confidence. Because his word says so. So how do I know I have the Spirit? Because the Word of God tells me I have the Spirit. There are many, many things that I know simply because God says so. I don't need some external proof of them. I don't need some feeling. It's based on faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God and when we accept the word of God. That's true. That's a matter of faith then. There are many things that we have confidence of knowing simply because we read it. It's God's word, He says it, God says it, I believe it. That settles it. And if we try to introduce proof. That goes beyond that simplicity. We're going to introduce doubt. We will inevitably be looking for something external or in us that gives us that confidence. But that's not the way God works. And what Tim says IA 100% agree. And Galatians is in keeping with that fact that faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. And God by the Spirit that dwells in US, speaks to our hearts and says that's true. And so the Spirit of God has his place in it. But the place that it gets us fuzzy is when we start asking God for something external to prove it to us. And so there are many instances in Scripture where people said, well. Don't let there be any water on the fleece. So God didn't get water on the place. Was that enough? No. Well, then put snow water on the place. And so it's an example of someone that was looking for something to confirm from God that he really meant something. And the Scripture shows us that that's not the way of confidence. That's not the source of faith either. And it's God has said.

Could I just continue that with Romans 8 just to continue the question, I don't have a comment, but just Romans 8 and verse 15 and 16. I'll read it says for ye have not received the spirit of ******* again to fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry ABBA. Father, the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. Do these verses relate to the to the question? If so, how do they relate? How does that work? I think we can say when the Spirit of God has liberty in our life, he will produce the the understanding and the enjoyment of our relationship. So it's dependent on whether the Spirit of God is free to do what he will do, and that is to produce the enjoyment of the relationship of knowing God as our Father. So that is that is you might say that somewhat subjective in the sense that. I actually feel that God is my Father. Nothing wrong with subjective truth, but subjective truth has to come by way of faith. In other words, it has to be based upon the Word of God. And the Word of God just told us that the Spirit of God will give us a sense of knowing God is our Father and we will enjoy that relationship with God. I wonder if we can just jump back to the chapter. And continue, because sometimes we

get a little bit hung up on. You know these things and we we, we can't just roll right along into the chapter. And would it be possible for us to do that? I think that's what we have in verse seven. We walk by faith. Not by sight. We tend to base our convictions on what we see. You have eyes in your head, yeah. Use them, but don't go by what you see, go by what God says. And as Don has said, faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. And that's so important for us. We are, especially in these Western nations, are geared to believing when we see something. Brethren, we walk by faith, not by sight. Doesn't mean we shut our eyes. No, you use your eyes, but what controls your life is not what you see. It's about what you see in the Word of God and read. And God produces faith in that way. It's it's very important to be challenged in our souls. Why do I believe that? Is there a verse that gives you to understand that? And as to Tim's question, I like to think that there are evidences of the Spirit of God. We have in Galatians chapter 5, the fruit of the Spirit, Lovejoy, peace, long-suffering, etcetera. That list of nine things that will be evident in the life of a believer. But it's not for us to be looking at ourselves, brother. That's not faith, that's sight. We don't walk by sight, we walk by faith. And I like to think of the testimony of Scripture as to that. Abraham, God said come outside your tent and look at the stars. Your descendants are going to be like the stars of heaven and multitude and like the sand by the seashore. And he didn't even have one son, and he was getting up in years. Everything indicated the opposite. He chose to believe God. When there is no evidence for it and that's what it comes down to when God says something in his word, brethren, do you believe it or do you say I don't know See, I know what that's I know that says that, but I I just don't know is that her response rather than this is a test and I think that little verse seven is so key to having this confidence.

With the Lord our brother, who read from Romans the Spirit, bearing witness with our Spirit. That's a real experience. You may say it's subjective, but it's an objective truth. It's true. Anybody who's been saved very long has experienced moments where the Spirit of God does bear witness, and that is a real thing. It happens and you experience it, and along the way it's part of the work that He does. In this idea, we live in a world amongst evangelical Christians where those who are charismatic and so forth are taking over the evangelical world. And there are plenty of false teachings in the you. You can get a young Christian that is told that if you don't have the evidence of speaking in tongues along with the baptism of the Spirit, you're, you might not even be saved. And the others who will say, OK, you're saved, but you don't really have the spirit until you have this, this evidence, this external evidence that people see. It was brought up when I was a young Christian, that harness figure where we work. And this fellow was there and I said, well, this is strange miracle that's taking place here. These people around you that are Christians in this place are leading souls to Christ and you're not. And you say you have the spirit and they don't. So that's an even greater miracle. Explain that to me. He didn't have an explanation. He finally came back and said, well, I guess you have the spirit, but you don't have the fullness of the spirit. So there are people who try to teach those things and if they get a young believer in their hands, it can be confusing and they they, they say things and do things. That appear to be miraculous or supernatural, and they may be, but not from the Lord. It's not about trying harder to believe. Or thinking maybe I haven't tried hard enough. It's like brother already brought out. Faith cometh by hearing, Hearing by the word of God, exposure to the word of God. Will produce this change. The only thing left to do is not to fight it. Not to resist it. It's not trying harder to do something. Is it safe to say that? I was going to comment that the Spirit of God and the Word of God always agree. And when we encounter. These situations where a person says he's directed of this spirit and we find it contrary to the clear teaching of the Word of God. We can. Correctly conclude that the Spirit of God is not directing that person. Another thing that we might comment on is the Spirit of God doesn't occupy us with ourselves or our spiritual growth. It the Spirit of God is a person, a divine person. In dwellings a believer, we don't have two divine persons inside of our bodies, we have the Holy Spirit of God. And he is very carefully grieved. We have the exhortation. Ephesians 4. Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. We're never told to pray for the sealing of the Holy Spirit that took place when we believed the gospel of Christ, His death, His resurrection, His precious blood. The Spirit of God sealed us, giving us eternal security and as mentioned, a foretaste of what we are going to enjoy in that coming day. And He doesn't direct our thoughts inward unless we have grieved Him by what we have done, or the way we have acted, or some angry word that proceeds from our lips. Spirit of God. Is grieved and we need to confess where we have failed. I don't want to get away from the chapter, but we're we are exhorted to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The best example I have given is I think it's Doctor Burtons comments on the Spirit of God. Here I am in in Bob Tony's house and he's invited me to come and I have a room there.

I have the key for the room and. I, my wife and I, we occupy that room and enjoy the hospitality of Bob and Barbara. But supposing Bob came and said, John, here are the keys for all the rooms in my house. You are more than welcome to enter any of them. At any time when I fill the house now I have access into every room. That's what the Spirit of God wants to do in our lives. He wants to have full control. Sometimes we say, well, there's, there's a part there that I just want to keep for myself. I, I have a special. Aspiration to do this and. I want to have my own control of this part of my life. Then the Spirit of God is not occupying you with with your eternal inheritance and he's not at liberty. There's some hindrance there or how easy it is for us to grieve the Holy Spirit of God. And what happens then? We only know too well. We are miserable, and rightly so. A Christian can be the happiest person in the world, should be, but he can also be the most miserable, because if the Spirit of God is grieved in my life, I can't enjoy the things of the Lord and I can't enjoy the world as I did before, so I'm miserable, and rightly so. How careful we should be that divine guest, not an influence as we have in the Pentecostal system. It is a divine. He is a divine person. Dwelling in the body of the believer until the day of redemption. Visions 4. What's the day of redemption? I thought you already had the redemption of your soul. Yes you do. The redemption of the body, as we've been Speaking of is something future. So how precious that now in Christianity, not so in the Old Testament. Another thing I might mention is we don't have another baptism of the Holy Spirit. I think we're clear about that. The baptism of the Holy Spirit took place at Pentecost, the 2nd installment under in the time of Cornelius in Acts chapter 10. But not another baptism of the Holy Spirit, but joined into the body when a person believes the gospel of his salvation. Is that right, brethren? I enjoyed reading in the book of Acts the other night. It said about Stephen that he was full of faith. And full of the Holy Ghost, full of faith. That's a topic, isn't it? It has turned with me to Revelations Chapter 3 a minute. Look at verse 20 in Revelations chapter 3 and 20. You're in the in the message to Laodicea and Leo Dicia. He had looked at him and he says thou art Luke warm. In verse 16 and neither cold nor hot, and I will spew thee out of my mouth. The Lord has diagnosed this day and age. He is diagnosed easier to every one of us sitting in this room in the last day and ages of our condition. And when he gets down there in verse 18I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire. And he gets down to verse 20. He says, Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come into him and Sup with him, and he with me. You just got done saying and talking about the condition of my heart, the condition of your hearts, that door there. This, this is about the church. I don't want to take it right now and use it in the gospel. That's perfectly fine. We don't see the word salvation here. We don't see the words born again. We don't see quickened, etcetera, etcetera. He's knocking at the door. He himself is the door. I am the door. If any man enter, any shall be saved. In an unsaved one in this room can stand and look at that door all day. If they don't enter in, they're never going to get saved. It doesn't any good and good to have a knowledge and look at it, but this is written to the Christians, isn't it? This is the written to the last day and age of the body of Laodicea and he's saying I'm knocking at your door. I've paid the price I own. I am the rightful owner of your body like we've been reading about in Second Corinthians.

He bought it and he purchased this body. It's his, he says. You have locked the door from the inside. Are you going to unlock the door and let me come in and Sup with you? The two that were walking on the road to Emmaus, if you turn back to Luke and read about it, they were scaled across your eyes and they didn't know who was walking with them, but he was talking to him about everything and it was just fill in their hearts. When they got done, they said, did not our hearts burn within us? Do you have heartburn for the Lord? You don't need an Alka Seltzer for that heartburn. Hey, that's, that's what he's saying here. Come on. Do you have a little part of that house that has one of the doors that's still locked and you don't give him the keys to that little room? Thank you, John. Are you hiding that little bit in there and carrying it with you as a Christian still? That's what he's boiling down to. You know, some of these things that we look at here and we read and we understand there's two passages in the Word of God that just thrill me once found in Ephesians and it says about His eternal purposes, and He has had an eternal purpose for each and every one of us. And when it is all said and done, he is going to glorify in how everything has taken place. And he had an eternal purpose in that passage in Jesus Christ. When I go to Isaiah 55 verses 8:00 and 9:00. It says for my thoughts and my ways are above your thoughts and your ways. And when I can't understand a scripture, I give it over and just trust in faith. Like our brother said that he said it, it is finished, it's done. He rightfully owns this body and he should be at that door and be able to come in to any part of this house. Yes, I have to. Look at self with self examination. Getting back to our chapter here, verse six it says. Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. Verse 8 says we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. That's what happens when a person comes to the end of his life, that's a believer. The moment he is absent from the body, he is present with the Lord. That wonderful confidence to know for a person that is a real believer. But then he says in verse 9, because we need to keep going brother, and wherefore we labor that whether present or absent we may be, it should be acceptable to him. So we labor and the next verse talks about the judgment seat of Christ, something that's going to take place. In the future. Where everything in the believers. Life is going to be reviewed. So he's talking about that in verse 9, whether present or absent. We labor that we may be acceptable to him. Oh, brethren, what does he say about it? You know, in our culture here in the United States, we're so here so much about you. Do your thing. You do what you want to do. Everybody should respect your rights and your desires. Hey, that doesn't cut it when it's talking about our lives as believers, brother. And it's not what we want. It's not what we find pleasant. It's what He wants for us. And we should live our lives constantly in view of that moment when we're going to stand in His presence and everything.

Absolutely everything is going to be evaluated at the judgment seat of Christ. This is one of the motives, brethren, that we're talking about in this chapter that is very important to keep before us. Lord help us, Brandon. Just go back for a moment to the eighth verse and relate an incident that was recounted by our brother Ralph Reed. Who now is in the Enola, PA assembly? Ralph had a position where he often would. Get together with administrators of various hospitals. On one occasion he was touring a floor with the main hospital administrator and a nurse came running out of one of the rooms very distraught, and the hospital administrator went over to her and said what seems to be the problem. And she said I promised my patients wife. That I would record his last words and he only said two things and I just don't understand what they were. And I'm afraid I can't communicate that to her. And the administrator in the presence of our brother Ralph Reeb said, what were those two words? And she said absent and present. So. The administrator turned to Ralph. Do you have any idea what she might be talking about? Ralph happened to have a pocket testament opened to 2nd Corinthians chapter 5. Read this first And she said, I'm so glad that I can report that to his wife. So that gave her joy. When she heard those words and that last message communicated to her. In these verses that we've read, 3 conditions. One is that we are at home, or should say present. We are present in the body. So right now we're present in the body. We're alive. We're not at home yet. To be at home is to be. Completely. There with our spirit, our soul and glorified body, then we'll be at home. And so we're present, it says in the body or we're absent where we're absent from the Lord. And then a little bit later on it says in verse 8, absent from the body. That's the second condition or to be present with the Lord. So those three conditions are possible, but the encouragement that's given here, the motive in chapter 5, these first nine verses really and the verse nine is the conclusion of what he says is that wherefore we labor, we should labor in view of the fact that our bodies will be glorified. We're going to be in the presence of the Lord, will be just like him. And because of that, with confidence, we're always confident. Verse 6. And in verse eight, we are confident because of our confidence and faith. We labor because we know regardless of what takes place in this scene, we're going to be just like Christ. Our bodies are going to be glorified. So it should be a motive for us, and it was a motive for the apostle Paul. You'll notice verse seven has brackets, and that is it's a little bit of a parenthesis where we walk by faith and not by sight. So these things have already been said. Are appreciated by faith. In verse eight he says willing rather. Sounds like he'd prefer that, doesn't it? I had the privilege on Thanksgiving Day to visit a little bit with Billy Jennings. The first thing she said to me was I'd like to go home to be with the Lord. I think she is willing rather to be absent than to be present. I've heard other dear Saints say the same thing. I'm ready to go. I want to go home.

What's so encouraging about that is it's because faith is is in operation so the word of God is enjoyed and it's become a reality to the soul. And so it says here when we walk by faith, well, what an encouragement it is when we do come into. The company of those who are practicing the truth that the Spirit of God has put before us today. That we have this wonderful hope of leaving the this body of, of sin and corruption and being being able to be transformed into that new body. And So what a wonderful thing it is when that faith is operating and when it displays itself in expression what our brothers just mentioned. Faith and operation. I asked your dear mother, what are you going to say when you see him? She says I'm going to fall at his feet. She's looking forward. To a moment in the near future where she can fall at his feet. It's a reality to her. Well, the next motive that he speaks of is the judgment seat of Christ. And he says here we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. And I believe Brother Bob mentioned it's very close to the time of the rapture. We might just refer to it in Revelation chapter 22. The rapture oftentimes in Scripture is spoken of, and very soon thereafter it's spoken of, in connection with the judgment seat of Christ. And so in chapter 22 of Revelation verse 12, behold, I come quickly and my reward is with me. That's really referring to the judgment seat of Christ. It will take place very quickly right after he comes for us. And so it's a motivation for us. We ought to be motivated to live for Christ and to use every hour of every day for his glory. And so Brother Gordon used to say, Brother Gordon Hale used to remind us that we were. Every day of our lives we were preparing to meet the Lord, and we were preparing. A gift to give him. He would use a little illustration of a little box. We're going to present our lives to the Lord and we're going to say at the end of it all, at the judgment seat of Christ will present a little box to him, as it were. This is what I thought about you. And this is the present. This is how I use my life for you. If we live 70 years, we have 25,550 days. And how did we use those 25,550 days? Maybe we get more, maybe we get less, but they were to be used for Him. And so there's the thought here that we're going to stand before the Lord and we're not going to be judged judicially for our sins. He's not going to. The the judgment for our sins took place at the cross of Calvary, and Christ bore the judgment for our sins in His own body on the tree. So we're never going to face the Lord Jesus as a judge for our sins. He will. What He will review is our works here and our motives. There's different things that He will review, but here he's going to review it says the things done in His body. Anything that we've done in our body before we were saved and after we're saved. All will be reviewed and the Lord will delight to review it and to reward whatever He can reward. And then there will be that rejoicing. And so he brings this in as a motivation to live for the Lord and to live every hour for His glory. Then that last motivation, as we've

already mentioned in verse 14, the love of Christ constraineth us, or it compels us. So we have three things that compel us to live for Christ in this world. One is that our bodies are going to be glorified. We're not our place is not in this world. It's in the heavens itself with God's man. And we have the fact that we're going to we're working as it were in this scene that we might bear fruit for him and that our lives might bring glory to him be reward will be displayed.

His appearing, and then we have also the motive of love, affection for Christ, and it compels us to live every hour for His glory, for His honor. In verse 10, it says that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he had done, whether it be good or bad. So it's pretty clear that it's not a question of our persons, it's a question of our works that are going to be reviewed in that day. And it is something to stop and think and that's why we encourage. Believers to read the scriptures. To have God's view of things, because only what's according to the word of God is going to last. In that day. Of the judgment seat of Christ. I would like to make a comment and I hope it's not going to be confusing, but I think it's important that the judgment seat of Christ has various sessions. Now I'm going to explain what I mean. This time of the judgment seat of Christ, it's the question of the believers lives, the works that are done, it's all going to be manifested. But now look at verse 11. And he says knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men it indicates that there's going to be other sessions when the Lord Jesus is going to sit on a throne. We know in Matthew chapter 25 at the end is called the when he's going to sit on the throne of his glory and all the nations, the living nations are going to be gathered. Before him as the sheep and the goats, and he is going to separate them. According to how they manifested faith in the messages message delivered to them by the messengers, that's another session of that same judgment seat. And then of course, there is the judgment seat of Christ at the great white throne. It's the Lord Jesus that's going to sit on that throne and he is the one that's going to judge. Can you imagine the terror, the abject terror that's going to be on the face of someone like Idol Hitler? Or Mussolini or Stalin, when they come to see Jesus. Here comes Pontius Pilate, if he was never saved, to think that he condemned him to that death of the cross and he's going to see him. Abject terror on their faces. This motivates us to preach the Gospel to the lost. And so, knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. Oh, brethren, how important it is, these motivations to think about it. But here in verse 10, it's talking about our lives as believers that are passed in revision. And I want to give you another verse because there's several places in Scripture where the judgment seat of Christ for believers are mentioned. It's in First Corinthians chapter 3. And it's very helpful, I think, to understand this. It says. Verse 10. According to the grace of God, which is given unto me as a wise master Builder, I have laid the foundation and another buildeth thereon. But let everyone, every man, take heed how he buildeth thereon. So we're all builders. And I think that's so good. Tim mentioned that yesterday. We're all ministers. I cringe rather than when we look at certain ones who say are in the Lord's work. We are all in the Lord's work. Even if you have a secular job, you should do that hardly. As to the Lord, you're in the Lords work. And so we're going to have that Lord, that work manifested in that coming day. Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon for other foundation can no man lay, and that is laid which is Jesus Christ.

Now if any man build upon this foundation gold. Silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sword it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built, thereupon he shall receive a reward. Not only does the work remain when the fire has done its testing. Job. But there is going to be a reward given on top of that. But then there's another case here in verse. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss. There's going to be a sense of loss in that day, but he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire. It's not a question of our salvation. It's the question of the. Works being tested. So I just put those there. One other further verse in chapter 4 I'd like to mention because somebody mentioned about motives and the Lord's going to address motives as well. Look at chapter 4 and verse five. He says judge nothing before the time until the Lord come, who both will bring to light. The hidden things of darkness and will make manifest. Here it is. The councils of the heart, and then shall every man have praise of God. It's beautiful, brethren, even sometimes I want, maybe I have the right motive, but it doesn't work out. God looks not only at the work, but He looks at the motive behind it. And I think that is encouraging to us too. There's another aspect of it as well in chapter 12 of Matthew. He says, the Lord himself says in Matthew chapter 12, verse 36 But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. So he's speaking at the day of the judgment seat of Christ. And so those idle words, those words that ought not to have been spoken. He'll pass judgment on, as it were, and we might just clarify that there are two kinds of judges, and there are judges in the land that have authority judicially to imprison people and to find them and so on. But you and I will never face the Lord Jesus in that character. There are other judges that are judges that state fairs and in other matters at an art studio or something, they would judge the work and the quality of the work. And so in that sense, the Lord Jesus will review. Our lives and judge the motives, the quality of the motives that were we acted upon the words that we spoke, the deeds that we did and how we labored in the Christian testimony did we labor according to the instructions given to us in the word of God. Yet is a man not crowned except these strive lawfully and so he has given us the guidelines and so this is. Part of what the Apostle Paul was Speaking of here. In connection with the motives or the judgment seat of Christ, the deeds done. That everyone may receive the things done in His body according to that He has done. And it's a marvelous thing. Our consciences will be absolutely, perfectly clear, and we'll see things just the way He sees them at the judgment seat of Christ, because we will not have the flesh. And we'll have a private audience, everyone of us with the Lord, and after that audience with the Lord. All of those things that are not of profit that we thought we did for the Lord. They'll go on to the burn pile and we'll they'll never be mentioned ever again. And so it's to really the apostle Paul had made mistakes himself in life and I believe he uses this, he states this and by the Spirit inspired of the Spirit to just as a motive to say it's all going to be sorted out at the end.

And what was done for him, he'll sort it out perfectly and then there's going to be a reward. And so it motivated them to live every day and every hour for the glory of the Lord. You might mention one more aspect since we're mentioning different aspects, and that's in Romans 14, and it has to do with personal exercises. And sometimes it's easy to look at someone and be critical of a particular exercise they may have, but in Romans 14 it says in verse 12. So then, every one of us. She'll give a count of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another anymore, but judge this rather that No man put a stumbling block block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. And I know we do have to at times pass judgment on something that we see. I'm not Speaking of that so much if it's unscriptural or or just wrong. You know, we don't. We just don't stand idly by and allow it in faithfulness. We may have to say something, but there are. Matters of personal exercise that we have as individuals and we're each going to give an account. The Lord said to Abraham, walk before me and be perfect. So in Genesis 17. So there is that aspect to just to to round out what we've been hearing, which has been very good. But. When we're we have the judgment seat of Christ is really a manifestation. Our walk and waves every everything will be manifest as mentioned not. For any judicial inquiry. But there is such a thing as a saved soul and a lost life. And the prime example that we are often referred to is Lot. We're going to meet Lot in the glory, without a doubt. Second, Peter tells us he was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked every day. He was in the gate of Sodom, where he should never have been. His whole object was present advantage in this world. He lifted up his eyes, yes, but not any higher than the horizon of this world, and he got what he wanted. The fields of ****** he moved in that direction, picked up a woman that I don't think was a

believer, sat in the gate of solemn Sodom lost his testimony and his family. Was escaped with the skin of his teeth. A believer who lived for the present advantage and the things of this world, and he received them but all. A saved soul. But what was there there that the Lord can could commend in his life? Well, he's in the glory and the Lord the least thing that we do for him. Even a thought upon his names is recorded in the annals of eternity and will be rewarded. And so. We can. Commit everything into the hands of the Lord, knowing that our work will be remembered by him. But there's a warning there. We have it in Jonathan too. You know, when David gave the list of his mighty men who were rewarded when he established the Kingdom, those that had shared his rejection in The Cave of Abdullah. The name of Jonathan is conspicuous by its absence. His name is not there yet. Jonathan truly loved David and encouraged him, but there was a failure there. He didn't share the rejection of David and there was a loss there in the life of Jonathan. A little word where our time is gone. It's a little word of encouragement for each one of us is we can all look look at our lives and find flaws. Maybe wasted time, wasted years, but the Lord has promised that he can restore the years that the locusts have eaten. And and so it may be that there has been a journey that we have been on and part of that journey seems to be barren. But faith and willingness to be found in, in the, in the, in a path that's in obedience to the Lord. We don't want to put limitations on what the Lord can do from this point.

On and so I want to encourage each one of us to walk by faith. That's what we've had here. These all of these things come to us. We come into the enjoyment of them like they walked by faith. God can bring much blessing into our lives. We don't have to look back. And and suffer. Emotionally, we're going to we're going to have a sense of loss at times, but I just want to encourage each one of us. There's the, there's the, the future. Whatever time the Lord reads us here, I think the fact that the Lord says in that verse we read, every man shall have praise of God. There will be something in every believer that God will reward. We welcome still thy faithful word. The cross shall meet its short reward, For soon must pass the little while Then joy shall crown thy servants toil. And we shall hear the Savior say, Arise, my love, and come away. See #282. Master, we would. Love to see the sea of darkness.

St. Louis Conference: 2022, 2 Corinthians 5:1-4

Reading

No. No, sorry. No, no. Verses that our brother Bernie mentioned. Was Second Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 14. Let's say I had that chapter on my heart, brethren. I don't know if that would be suitable for our meditation, but I find it very challenging. A lot of the detail of this chapter, so I suggest that we might read that. Corinthians 5. For we know that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God. And house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, if so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened not for that we would be unclothed, but clothe the pan, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the self, same thing as God, who also has given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

Therefore we aren't always we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor that, whether a present or absent, we may be accepted of Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in His body according to that He has done. Whether it be good or bad, knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. But we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that we ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory and appearances, and not inherit. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us, because with us judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead. And that He died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh? Yeah, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new, and all things are of God, who hath reconciled this to Himself by Jesus Christ. And hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God to beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ that be reconciled to God, For hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Like to go back to a couple of chapters. To give a brief outline of these four chapters, Chapter 345 and six. Years ago, our brother Clem Buchanan gave it in this way, and it's been a very big help to me. In Chapter 3, we have the ministries there. We have the ministry of condemnation, and we have the ministry of righteousness, contrasting the law with grace. Chapter 4. We have the ministers. And. He deals with that in that chapter in Chapter 5, which we have read. We have the motives that animate the ministers. Chapter 6. We have the moral traits of the ministers. So if you can keep that in mind, it helps you to understand these. 4 chapters Chapter 3 The ministries. Chapter 4 The Ministers. Chapter 5 The Motives Chapter 6 The moral traits of the ministers. But I was thinking of this chapter 5, especially in brother Bernie mentioned verse 14. It's one of the most powerful motives for the believer. The love of Christ constraineth us. It's not an outward constraint. It is something that is inward that. Constrains the heart, and that's inward. And that is so important to understand. It's not just outward.

Moral constraints like they had in the law, but it is the love of Christ when we see the awful price that he paid the Son of God. The eternal Son of God, the Creator of the universe, came into this world and let himself be nailed to that cross to save us from our sins. From eternal ruin that does something to the heart that nothing else can do. And it's one of the motives that. That motivates us. That's what we want to communicate to our young people, that it's something that should be operative in all of our lives. So I just suggest this. There's other motives here in chapter 5 that I think are so wonderful as well in verse one. It starts out we know. The beauty of the confidence of the Christian faith. We know Paul. Don't you have some doubt about that? We know, he says. That's beautiful, the confidence with which he speaks. How can he be so certain? Wonderful. It's interesting that in Paul's ministry here, in these first nine verses, he brings before the Saints what perhaps would be anticipation of the glorified state. And so he speaks of it in a positive way. He says we know that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a Tabernacle. We're living in a body. It's in a temporary state in this world. We're living in a body that's not glorified yet, but it will be glorified. And so he brings us out in these next few verses. And it's a part of Paul's doctrine. It's a part of what Paul reveals in his ministry as to the certainty of the future state of the believer in his body. And in the Old Testament, they had some appreciation of it, some knowledge, some hope, you might say, let's read in the. In job chapter I think it's chapter 19. Now Job was speaking

prophetically. He didn't as David did in the Psalms. They didn't understand all that they wrote in, but they were speaking under divine. Inspiration And so in chapter 19 of Job verse 25, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body. Yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself and mine I shall behold, and not another, though my reigns be consumed within me. And so there was a little bit of a revelation prophetically as to the truth that what they had on earth there and they would go into death. That wasn't the final state. And so the apostle Paul in these first nine verses, as I say, brings it out and. Allows that there's an anticipation of the glorified state. Isn't it wonderful for you and I to know not to hope for to think that we might have and so on. But he wants us to know these things and then as you say in verse 14, he brings before us the motive, the grand motivation for the believers life and that is appreciation and love for the Lord Jesus. And what is it that first caused us to? Accept Christ as Savior. Was it a fear of judgment? No. Was it a fear of being an internally lost condition? No, that's really not what it is. It perhaps had some element. The Lord uses some of those things in our salvation, some different passages of Scripture perhaps. But what is it? It's the love of Christ that won us. And so it says in verse 14, for the love of Christ. Constraineth or or compels us. Because we thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead. So the reason you and I received the Lord Jesus as our Savior was that His love was operative and compelled us to come.

And if he hadn't acted in love, then we would never have come. And it's his sovereign goodness and his love. And so when we're saved, then after we're saved, it's the love of Christ that compels us to live for his glory. And so brother Harry Hijo used to have this little expression. He would say, don't try to think about how much you love the Lord. Think about how much he loves you. Think of how much he loves you. And that is what will bring forth fruit in the life. And so the apostle Paul brings out these different aspects of the Christian life. Important to see that the apostle had a special revelation. In in regard to the the body that we will have in in the glory. Of the our brethren who have passed through the article of death. We are consciously in the presence of the Lord. Without any hindrance. But they do not have a glorified body, of course. And the apostle brings this before the Saints. That we have. A hope of a body of glory like unto Christ's body. Not a new body, but this Tabernacle which is something temporary. Transformed at the return of the Lord. Into a body of glory, glorification, we could say. And that is the hope. That the believer has, as is brought before us in these early verses here. In this, in this Tabernacle, we grown because we're still connected with a groaning creation through our bodies and all the infirmities that go along with it. But we're going to have a body like unto Christ and morally like Him. It's beautiful how to put it in verse one we have. A building of God and house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. You know, rather than something I wrestle with in my own mind as I think of that coming day of glory. We think of it, and I don't know that we're capable of thinking of anything else than in the realms of time. But that day will be eternity. And there is no time there. Absolutely. So that the way he puts it is as if it's already there. We have it, a building of God and house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. It's already made, you might say, but I find this so amazingly interesting. Like John said, we're going to have to be. Transformed. If we go back to chapter 15, we read about that Paul, like John, our brother John said, had a special revelation about this. Verse chapter 15 and verse 50. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. The way we are right now is not our eternal state. Neither does corruption inherit incorruption. OK, how is this going to be? And he says in verse 51 I show you a mystery, something that was before not understood. It was amazing with the brother Robert mentioned about Job. He said in my flesh shall I see God?

I don't know how he must have understood that, but it's there. It's written for us. It's it's amazingly wonderful. But then he tells us how it's going to be in verse 52. It says in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump for the trumpet shall sound. So it's at the rapture this is going to take place. And the dead shall be raised incorruptible those that have passed on. And we, the Apostle Paul includes himself those that are living. Shall be changed. We can't go to heaven in these bodies, brethren. We're going to have to be changed. And it's going to happen in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye to remember the conference in California years ago, her dear old brother Dan Jacobson said. When it says in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, it's not talking about the rapture. Wow, that kind of shocked me. It's talking about the resurrection that takes place at the rapture, and it's true, brother. And I believe that's true because the rapture, there's a sequence. The dead in Christ shall be raised first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds. So here it's in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, that we are changed. And it's explains in verse 53 this corruptible Speaking of our bodies. Must put on incorruption, and this mortal shall. Must put on immortality. Just think of my brethren in corruption. Completely impossible that we will ever get sick again. So much sickness and sorrow and problems with our bodies in this world, we're going to be changed into incorruptible bodies and immortality means that not capable of dying ever again. Oh, isn't that wonderful, brethren? That's what's ahead for us. And so that's what he's speaking about, this new body. You know what? What makes me really stop and think, brethren, is when the Lord Jesus rose from the dead. Those that saw him in resurrection. Did not recognize him at first glance. The first one that saw him was Mary Magdalene. She didn't recognize him. She thought he was the gardener. Until he said Mary. Then she recognized. He was so beautiful. You would walk for probably two to three hours with those on the way to Emmaus. They didn't recognize him. You think, in two to three hours talking together. It didn't recognize him, no. Wasn't until they went in and he took the bread and gave thanks. That they recognized him the same when he appeared amongst the disciples. They thought it was a spirit and that makes me think that the body and resurrection is that much different. There's some of us that have a lot of Gray hairs on our head and we're not going to have Gray hairs over there. I sometimes say to a brother and that are getting old, I say, I think I might have to look at you a couple times over there brother to recognize who you are. And it will be different brother, but we will know as we are known. But it's wonderful to think we have a body, we have a house, a building of God. A house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. What a wonderful, beautiful thing to think about. Joseph Sin, Philippians, Chapter 3. About this change that's going to take place in our bodies. And. It's thrilling to consider the contrast because it tells us here in Philippians 3 and verse 20 for our conversation or citizenship. I believe is the thought here is in heaven from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile and I believe better translation would be our bodies of humiliation.

Because we know our bodies are indeed the Temple of the Holy Ghost. And how marvelous to realize that God dwells within you and me in our physical bodies. And the Holy Spirit is God, so we have God within us. But they are bodies of humiliation and. It seems like often as we converse with one another, we're asking about a person's welfare, you know, and there's aches and pains and sometimes the older you get, the more you feel these. But we got something to look forward to. And what does it tell us here in verse 21? These bodies of humiliation are going to be changed and that they may be fashioned like on to his glorious body. His body's glorious and so that's what we have to look forward to. According to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. So this is what the future holds for the believer, and based on the word of God we know. The truth as wonderful to know as you were pointing out, Bob, that first verse we know. And as you read through the chapter, it speaks about knowing this and that. And so faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God. But the language of faith is I know not I hope or I think, but I know. And faith grows as we read the Word of God. And we learn more. Here a little, there a little line upon line, precept upon precept. It's wonderful. I think of the blind man, you know, in the Knights of John. He received his

sight and. Of course the Pharisees, they were opposed to the Lord Jesus. And it was through the Lord Jesus that he received his sight. Well, they would not accept the fact that the Lord had given him his sight. But you know this flying band. He says. This one thing I know. Whereas I was blind now I see now he didn't know all about the Lord at the time. He was going to become better acquainted with the Lord and find out that he was indeed the Son of God who healed him or gave him sight. But I just find real encouragement in that he says this one thing I know. Whereas I was blind, now I see. There's no question, you know, in the mind of this man. That he had sight. He was blind. Now he sees. Well, how is it with you and me? You know God imparts eternal life to us. And he wants us to know it and to enjoy it. And the apostle John could see these things. Have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life? He wants us to be assured of it. So I just appreciate what's being said about knowing. And you know, eternity is ahead. We came across Route 50 today. And there was a sign on a business. It might have even been an illuminated sign. And it said eternity. Are you ready? And here's this businessman presenting. The reality of eternity. On Route 50. Eternity. Are you ready for it? It's so important to be ready. We don't know what a day is going to bring forth. The dear brother over in Saint John, he collapsed on the road, on the driveway, gone into eternity. Wasn't expected, happened suddenly.

Host not thyself, or tomorrow thou knowest not what a day may be before. But how wonderful that the believer, as we read through this chapter, we find what's in store for us. You know, we don't have anything to worry about or to be afraid about. As believers. But if there's an unbeliever here today, you got everything to worry about. Be concerned about your eternal destiny. Helpful to just to comment on reinforce a little bit about what you were saying, brother Bob, there are two things in connection with the coming of the Lord that the apostle Paul was revealed to him and they're distinct. And so the coming of the Lord, the sequence of events that will take place is given to us by revelation in First Thessalonians chapter 5 or chapter four. He says this, I say unto you, let's read it so that we we get it. It's a it's a part of what we call. Paul's doctrine, and it was given to him by revelation. It could not be figured out by reading the Old Testament Scriptures and trying to discern these things. It had to be delivered to him. And so he says, verse 15, First Thessalonians chapter 4, verse 15. For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, he received this from from Christ himself, that we which are alive and remain under the coming of the Lord shall not prevent or go before them which are asleep. And then he gives a sequence of events that will take place. The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. So shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. So it was revealed to Him. They knew in the Old Testament that all of the Saints would come with Christ that is appearing. They knew that, but they didn't know how the Saints would receive their bodies and be in heaven and be able to come with the Lord. And so Paul is reveals this by the Spirit of God and it comforted their hearts men as we read in first Corinthians chapter 15. He tells us about the change that has to take place and those that are alive, those that are mortal and those that are in the graves, those that are unclothed. There has to be a change and so First Corinthians chapter 15 tells us about the change goes into great explanation and so he brings this in in. First Second Corinthians chapter 5 as well, but we might just turn to 1St John chapter 3 and read there. The apostle John has a different line of ministry and he says in first John chapter 3 verse one beloved now are we the sons of God? And it does not appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him. For we shall see him as he is, and every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure. And so the apostle John brings before us that we're going to be morally just like the Lord Jesus. We're not only going to be physically like him, we're going to be morally changed and morally fit to be companion of him. So we don't know, he says. When he shall appear, we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him. And so John's ministry is different. We want to know about the coming of the Lord Jesus at the rapture. If we want to know about the change of our physical bodies, we read Paul's ministry. If we want to read about the moral change, we can read some of Paul's ministry and John's ministry as well. So we are kept in communion with the Lord by purifying ourselves. This hope in him he purifies himself even as he is pure, and that is we exercise ourselves in connection with self judgment. And so if we have the hope of being morally like the Lord Jesus, physically just like him. And we exercise self judgment. We'll enjoy that position that is ours and that future that is bright before us. In that verse two of that chapter it hinges upon.

When he shall appear, it's not when or if he shall appear, it's when he shall appear. Only the Father knows exactly the time when he is going to send him back. When the completion of the body and the last soul is saved. That has to take place too, doesn't it? And when you look at back there in Thessalonians, you see the caught up there in the verse 17. And sometimes we make an emphasis on that caught up. More than we do the seeing him face to face. An emphasis should be on that when he shall appear. Because I was saved in times past, I'm currently being saved right now and I shall be saved. It'll be the completion of my salvation and the return to to godliness that is going to take place in this body. I no longer will say that I was a Sinner on the road to hell. Now I'm a Sinner saved by grace, but when that takes place, Sinner will no longer be attached to this body. Because I'm going to have a body like of him When our brother was Speaking of seeing things, you see things spiritually. We're going to physically see him, aren't we? Face to face? We're not going to see scars. We're going to see wounds. They know where does it say that it's scars? We're going to see wounds. I, I totally believe that. I want to see the one that saved me by his grace. The one that blocked me I'd like to read. Before and comment on it in connection with what we have before us. Verse 15. Chapter 4. Verse 15. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the Thanksgiving of many, abound to the glory of God, For which 'cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day for our light affliction, which is for but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. Or the things which are seen are temporal, temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. The chapters that Bob started with in chapter 3 and 4:00 and 5:00. Are bringing before us the contrast. Between what is temporary and what is eternal, we presently live in a temporary period called time. We are looking forward to that which is eternal. When it's temporary. We look at it in a certain way and we anticipate that which is eternal. But to go back to what Bernie was saying, we all live in the valley of decision, whether we're young or old. In this way is do I live my life? My temporary time here in view of eternity. These chapters the apostle Paul is showing that the ministry. In chapter three was a ministry first of the law. It was, and it said there it was. Temp uses the thought it was temporary. It couldn't continue because it couldn't bring blessing for man. It brought rather condemnation. And so it's replaced by a ministry which has its eternal consequences because it's a ministry of righteousness and of the glory that comes by being righteous and that glory. Exists and, well, exists for eternity. And so it's an important for us not only to and look ahead, which is a wonderful thing to do, but as we meditate on these verses to recognize the importance of the Apostle Paul is giving to them as to living now in a way that is in view of that which is eternal. That's why I believe.

Whether we're doing it or not. God is using time to accomplish purposes. That will last for eternity. So it says. In verse the verses I went read. Verse. 15 For all things are for your sake. Why are they? Because they're working. God is using your experiences of life to establish something for you that you will have forever for your blessing. And so he is working in your life, in the trials and the tribulations and the difficulties and

all the things that we say. Boy, I'm going to be glad when that's done. And that's our perspective, not God's. He puts us through those exact set of things individually, uniquely with everyone of us. And he says, as Paul says in verse 17 of that chapter, our light affliction, which is but for a moment. That's how his perspective of time on it is. But what's the consequence? Works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. That is God is using the temporary momentarily things that we may wish we we would pass by and not choose if it was our choice. But God says I'm using that for your eternal benefit when all things are established and permanent. And so again, just to get the idea, in verse 18, the things which are seen are temporal or temporary. The things which are not seen yet are eternal and consequently, how about your God? These verses are what God is doing, but look at the consequences of time and view of eternity in the next chapter, chapter 5 and verse 10. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. That each one may receive the things done and I'll amplify it. To get the point, the things done in his body and the time he had here on earth. According to what he did in that time of that temporary period called time that he was living. That he may receive according to what he had done and consequently how we live. Time is going to have its effect on us for eternity. One of the very important aspects in which time is working. And important to us in review of In View of Eternity. Is each one of us is establishing the size of our vessel? And as that vessel is enlarged by fellowship with the Lord Jesus, and entering in. And having a desire to know Him and his will. There will be a larger capacity to the vessel to enjoy him for eternity, whether my vessel is a thimble. Or a big every vessel will be filled and every soul will be perfectly happy and content. And yet there will be difference according to the importance that we placed and the choices we made of whether to live life for now. And the temporary pleasure of now, or whether we lived it, as is given in these three chapters, in view of that which is permanent and eternal. Paul says our light affliction. If you read the. List of the sufferings he went through in Second Corinthians Chapter 11. I don't think you would get the idea that it was light affliction. How can he say that it's light affliction? Beaten with rod, shipwrecked the night in the day in the deep. Why do you say, Paul, that it's light affliction? Oh, it's because when you compare it with the coming glory.

You can compare it, you can't compare it. And it's just for a moment. And brethren, I really think when we get up there. And look back at our lives. We're going to say, why was I so occupied with those toys down there? Why wasn't I more occupied with that eternal glory to which I've been called? So it is, brethren. It's interesting to me in this verse two, it says we groan. Why do we groan? You know, in scripture groaning is not the same as complaining. Sometimes we complain, and that's not right. Children of Israel complained and there was consequences to complaining. But groaning is not the same as complaining. Groaning is simply the recognition. That the way things are now is not the way God meant them to be. And so even the Lord Jesus in this life, he groaned. I can imagine the Lord Jesus who is the creator of all. You imagine Adam got up to 930 years old. Just a very few people get up to over 100 now. What happened? Oh brethren, the decadence that has come in because of sin and its results. That's why I think he says we've grown. Yeah, we all have. Some measure of groaning to do. But it's just in view of something that is. Says we earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven. So when we think of that coming day of glory and that body of glory that we're going to have in that day, O brethren, yeah, we do groan a little bit. The time is so brief, and that's why the Apostle Paul could say. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, I just like to say to the young people. Remember that time is short. I used to look at the older brother and think, man, it must be good to get up there. You must not have any more struggle with the flash. I have learned that that's not the case. But young people? Time is short. It just seems like yesterday I was a young person looking old up at older brethren that were teaching us it's not that long. Time is short. The Lord help us to use those brief moments of time in a way that will last for a God's eternal day and not something that will pass away forever. What a challenge to you young people to get the right focus on temporary temporal things. If we look at Romans chapter 8, the Apostle Paul uses the same term. And he says in verse 23, well, let's read verse 22. We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, so the naturally. The whole natural creation groans because of the. Breakdown of sin. They don't know why they've grown, but they they groan. But then it says not only they, but ourselves also. Which have the first fruits of the Spirit? We even we ourselves grow within ourselves, waiting for the adoption to quit the redemption of our body. And so our bodies are not yet free from the power, from the evidence of sin and from the even the ability of sin to sin. We are, we are redeemed. Our souls, our spirits and souls are redeemed. But I think it's chapter Brown used to say you're only partly redeemed. Your body isn't set free yet from sin.

And it needs to be redeemed. But isn't it interesting? The Spirit of God uses Paul to say that you and I are indwelled with the Spirit of God, and we have the capacity to groan because of what sin has done to God's creation. And we groan because of the. Difficulties that we have and so on, but we grown within ourselves waiting for the adoption. And so here in this chapter that we're taking up, it's in this we grow. It represents the fact that you and I have a new life. We have divine life and we have the capacity to groan, you might say, in communion with the Lord. And the Lord groans. He groaned when he was here, as Brother Bob pointed out. And so you and I, because we have a new life, we have the capacity to groan because of what sin has done in God's creation and what is doing now even in our own bodies. So. We've grown earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven. We long to have our bodies glorified. And then it says, if so be that being clothed, that is, we're we're saved, we're clothed, we shall not be found naked. The unbeliever is naked in the presence of God. It has no covering, but you and I will be in the presence of the Lord Jesus glorified in our bodies, the very same bodies that we have here. I know it's a little bit of a digression, but it's a helpful comfort to I believe in in the 110th Psalm. It speaks there of how the Lord Jesus will be. You say, well, what am I going to look like in the. A glorified body. We know that it'll be. Different, there won't be any mark of sin on any of us, but it says in verse three, the 110 Psalm, verse three, it says part way through in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth. And so the Lord Jesus will be seen there in the strength and the beauty of his youth, as it were as a young man. He was cut off in the midst of his days. And so you and I will be like young people in heaven. Not a mark of sin. Not a Gray hair. Not a scar. And no taint of sin, only one man will have any mark of what sin ever did in this world. That's the Lord Jesus. He will bear those marks for all eternity. And the motive of why he went to the cross, as we've read a little bit later on in this chapter, is the love of Christ that constrains us when we think that he's going to have us there in his presence, glorified bodies and the price that he paid to make it a reality. And we realized that it was his love. Why the affections will flow forth in that scene. Above, the praise will never cease. The Thanksgiving will never cease. But it should begin now. It should be evident in our lives. Continually at the present time. Speaking about Brother Roberts and Holt. Whole creation groans, and we ourselves groan. But if you go further in Romans 8, you find out that the Comforter himself groans, the Spirit of God groans, and so if that be the case, groaning is appropriate. It tells us in. Romans 826 Likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself make it intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. I just think that you know God identifies with our difficulties, our troubles. And you mentioned how the Lord Jesus, he groaned in spirit. At the. The tomb of Lazarus. Important to remark that the blessed Lord did not have infirmities. That's a mistake that is made in Christendom. Infirmities are a result of sin in the body.

We don't. We don't need to. Sin because we have an infirmity and the verse that our brother referred to there the Spirit help us our infirmities. It doesn't say he removes the infirmities. So the infirmities are weaknesses that we have in this. Groaning Tabernacle. But the Lord is enters into those infirmities He understands, though he never himself had an infirmity. For instance, the Lord was never sick. That's a result of sin. And I was thinking also of what Timothy says in the first chapter, first chapter, second Timothy chapter one, it speaks of the Lord having. Is now made manifest verse 10 by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ. Who have to abolish death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Now there's the full revelation through the ministry of the apostle Paul that we have now we will have a body incorruptible like Christ's body that was part of the revelation of that Paul received from the glory special revelations that were not given to. Other apostles. And so in our chapter here, when it speaks of being clothed, I judge that that refers to receiving the glorified body when the Lord returns. Now the unsaved will have a body when they stand before the the Great White Throne, but we are not told what kind of a body it will be. But it must be a body, because they're going to appear there at the Great White Throne and give account for their lives. But they're going to be found naked. They will have nothing to cover that awful burden of sin that they will have. So they'll have a body, but they will have they will have no righteousness to stand before the judge of the Lord Jesus. So I just thought we should distinguish that the Lord groaned in sympathy with all the the. The devastation that sin had brought into the world. The sorrow. The trials, the sickness, all of the result of man's sin. The whole creation groans, the animal creation as well because of man's sin. But the Lord groaned in sympathy, though we want to. Guard that point that the Lord, of course, he did not have an old nature, and his body was a holy body. Without any of the signs of sin in any way. Is that right, brethren? I'd just like to. Extend that a little bit. If you go back to Isaiah 53 and write to read verse four, it says Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. What it speaks there in verse 4 is not the cross. If you go to Matthew chapter 8, it explains what that means. He's healing the sick and it says in Matthew 8 and verse 17. The end of verse 16, it says He healed all that were sick that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by Isaiah. The prophet saying himself took our infirmities and bear our sicknesses. He felt it brethren, but he was never sick. He was never infirm because that would be a result of sin. But he felt that, brethren, if we're in fellowship with the Lord and look out of this world around us, we should feel these things too, the terrible misery that's going on in other parts of the world where there's warfare.

I see sometimes pictures of little orphan children trying to make the best of it just just does something to your heart. And we need to feel these things. We need to grow. We see it. The Lord Jesus is going to come back and he's going to hush those groans. But until then, we groan. Here in our chapter, it's more in connection with our own body, I think. But we've grown in hope because. Verse four, it says we in this Tabernacle do groan being burdened. Not for that we would be unclothed. We don't want to die. That's not the hope of the believer. But clothed upon. In other words, transformed. When the Lord comes back, he is going to take this body of humiliation. And transform it into a body of glory. That's what it refers to and says, but clothed upon. That mortality might be swallowed up of life. That beautiful way of putting it, Mortality swallowed up of life. Brother Bob, Robert and Wally had mentioned the groanings, and we're talking about this. There's something precious in the thought of the Spirit of God groaning. He's communicating our groanings. So how many times has a mother and father or anyone been in a situation or have a situation before them with a loved one maybe where you hardly know how to pray, you just tears running down your face, kneeling at your bed, maybe driving in your car. I don't care where it is and you're groaning within because of the situation. And you hardly know what to say, and you just groan. There's something precious in this thought that the Spirit of God that dwells in US is communicating groanings. It cannot be honored. We may be groaning and uttering sounds. But the Spirit of God is communicating the meaning of that, that we can't maybe even put into words ourselves. But he's doing that and knowing that when you're there weeping before God in the midst of a trial or a difficulty does bring comfort. And being reminded when it says that the Lord Jesus, He is touched with the feelings are our infirmities. It's not the infirmities. That he's touched with. It's the feelings of our infirmities. So well, I don't care how old you are, young you are, whatever feelings you're going through, heartbreak, hurt, pain, suffering, wherever you're at, He's touched with those feelings. He feels it. And our God, when he created this universe, put himself in a place where he could feel pain. Because he wanted this family that he's gathering out of this world through the cross and the work of Christ on the cross. But he put himself in a place where he would feel these things. And as Bob was saying, we should feel too, along with our Savior. His heart is towards those who are suffering and hurting. And we should groan with them and we should feel with them. We often we don't. But like Bob says, sometimes we see things. That touch us and it brings a lump up in our throat and we begin to feel it. Some poor orphan or somebody that's suffering, maybe some homeless person along the street or whatever. Somebody that's lost, somebody that's in trouble. We read in something in the news and and we feel it, how terrible things have gone in this world. And maybe we know somebody who's got a grandson or, or, or a daughter or someone who's gone off the rails and we see the hurt. Their feeling and their the prayer meeting on prayer meeting night and they're crying out for their grandson or their granddaughter. Well, we can feel that and we know that he feels it and we know that the groaning of that dear mother and father or whoever that the Spirit of God is communicating those groanings. So I know that anybody who's lived very long has been in that position where you're on your knees and you don't even know what to say. How precious it is.

That the Spirit of God knows how to communicate those groanings to our Father. I'd like to go back to First John chapter 3, just for a brief moment. Everyone here who knows the Lord is their Savior is a minister. You're a servant of God. And these things are real with each one of us. And it says in verse two that we had read earlier, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. What does it mean? We shall be like Him. We can be as much like Him now as we want to be. And it says here in the beginning of that verse, beloved, now. Are we the sons of God now we are the sons of God. So we can become like Christ, not fully like we will in the in the glory when we shall see him, but we shall be like him and and we can be as much like him now as we want to be to be like him morally. I think that may mean sort of like we think like him. We act like him and then if you go over to. First Second Corinthians chapter 5 again and down to verse 18. It's not the verse I was thinking. Sorry, let's go to Philippians chapter 2. And verse, sorry, Philippians chapter one and verse 29. And here's a servant of the Lord, and groaning in this body. And it says in verse 29, For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for his sake. We read in our chapter that we live by faith, not by sight. And that's one of the gifts that have been given to us. Two gifts in this verse. One gift is the belief to believe, that's faith. We need faith to believe on the Lord Jesus to go out and to serve him to be the minister of God. And then it says it's also given to you to suffer for his sake. And so there's going to be suffering, there's going to be groaning in the service of the Lord. And so we need to be aware of that. Paul could say he glories in the in his sufferings. We suffer for Christ and we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is. Let me say 325. So. I understand being thrown together.

No one is doing it for every beginning.

Edification: Volume 9, Our Scripture Portion.

(2 Cor. 5:13 — 6:10)

To be of any profit this article mast be read in connection with a Bible, opened at the above passage.

THE Apostle Paul was marked by a very fervent zeal. It produced within him a great desire to be acceptable to the Lord, to be open and transparent with his brethren, and to persuade men in view of the coming judgment. His zeal was such that sometimes it carried him clean outside himself, and men labelled him as fanatical, as Festus did when he called out, “Paul, thou art beside thyself.” But Paul was no fanatic, for when, thus beside himself it was “to God; that is, God was the Object before him; he was outside himself because God was so truly inside — “he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him” (1 John 4:16).

We may find it difficult to understand this being “beside ourselves,” and still more difficult to explain it. That may be because it is an experience almost, if not entirely, unknown to us. Very possibly we move in circles where zeal of the Pauline stamp would be looked upon as fleshly energy from the spiritual standpoint, and quite bad form from the social point of view. How great then is our loss!

But Paul was not always in an ecstasy Godward. He also knew well how to look out with sober-minded wisdom upon the interests of his Lord. Then he cared in a calculating way for the people of God, the Corinthians among them. And in this, as much as in the other, the love of Christ was the power that wrought within Him and constrained him. That love had been expressed in His death, and it exerted its pressure on Paul, both in his affections toward God and His saints, and also as guiding his judgment. Constrained by the love, he was able to judge aright as to the significance of the death in which the love was expressed.

Christ “died for all.” Here we have His death stated in its widest extent. He did not die for the Jew merely nor for any lesser circle than “all.” This is a fact in which we may well rejoice, but what does it imply? This, that all were in a state of spiritual death: all were but dead men before God. This was the implication of His death.

But what was the purpose of His death? Its purpose was to provide a way of life for at least some, and to alter the whole character of life for these living ones.

Verse 15, you notice, begins with His death and ends with His resurrection. The intervening words set forth the design and purpose connected with those two great facts. They were in order that those who have been quickened into life might find in the risen Christ the Object and End of the new life they live. In our unconverted days we each of us had ourselves as the object and end of our lives. Everything was made to revolve around and contribute to self. Now things are to be entirely different with us, and everything in life is to revolve around and contribute to the interest and glory of Christ. Such at least is the Divine purpose and intention for us.

Verse 16 springs out of this, as the first word, “Wherefore,” bears witness. Because Christ is no longer among us in the life of this world, and because we also now live in connection with Him, a new order of things has come in. Even Christ Himself is known by us in a new way. Paul had not been amongst those who knew Christ “according to flesh” in the days of His flesh. But even if he had been, he would have known Him thus no longer. But also we know no man after the flesh. That is not because men are not in the old condition according to flesh; for the great mass of them are. It is because of the subjective change wrought in ourselves. The Christian learns to look at men in a new way, not because of what has been wrought in them but because of what has been wrought in himself.

What has been wrought is stated in verse 17 — a work of new creation in Christ. As newly created in Christ we find ourselves in a new world. We are not there yet as regards our bodies. That awaits the coming of the Lord. But we are there as regards our minds and spirits. Even today our spirits move amid things totally new, things utterly unknown in our unconverted days; also even the old things of this present creation, amongst which we move, are viewed by us in a new way.

This truth needs to be thoroughly digested by all of us. How much difficulty arises amongst Christians because they know and have dealings with one another according to flesh, that is, on the old basis and after the manner of the world. Then it is the easiest and most natural thing possible to drop into parties and cliques, to have our likes and dislikes, to be tremendously friendly with this or that fellow-believer until some disagreement arises, when an equally tremendous antagonism breaks out. All that kind of thing, even the friendship and the pleasantry and the apparent concord, rests on a wrong basis. It is according to flesh, and not according to new creation and the Spirit of God. If all saints knew one another upon the new basis what a transformation would come over the aspect of things that at present prevails in the church of God.

Verse 18 adds a further fact. We are reconciled to God by Jesus Christ, as well as being a new creation in Christ. Now reconciliation involves the removal of all that is offensive to God in us and about us, including that enmity of heart that kept us away from Him. As the fruit of reconciliation God can look down upon us with joy and complacency, and we can look up to Him with confidence and responsive love.

When Christ was here, God was in Him with reconciliation in view for the whole world. He came to bring men to God, not to arraign them before God, bringing them to book as regards their sins. This we see strikingly exemplified in John 8:11. But God’s overtures to men in Christ, with reconciliation in view, were rejected and He was put to death. It is one of the chief wonders of the Gospel that notwithstanding this His death became the basis of the reconciliation that is being announced today.

We believers are now reconciled to God; and as reconciled ourselves we have a part in the ministry of reconciliation. When the Apostle wrote, “We are ambassadors for Christ,” he probably was thinking of himself and his fellow-laborers and the other apostles, for they were in a special sense put in trust with the Gospel; yet his words have an application to every believer. The church of God is like a divine embassy in the hostile world, and each of us has to remember that we are a part of that embassy, and that our attitude towards men has to be in keeping with the word of reconciliation that we carry. At the end of verse 20 we get as in a nutshell what the word of reconciliation is. The words, “you,” “you,” and “ye,” are not in the original. “God as it were beseeching by us, we entreat for Christ, Be reconciled to God” (N. Tr.).

And if, when we thus entreat men, they turn to us asking on what basis such a reconciliation is possible, we can answer in the words of the last verse. The basis lies in God’s own act, accomplished in the death of Christ.

There is a profound depth in verse 21 That defies all our feeble attempts at explanation. That God should make Christ to be a sacrifice for sin might be explained in terms of those Old Testament sacrifices that furnish a type of His sacrifice. But that God should make Him, who knew no sin, TO BE SIN for us baffles all explanation. Again, we might offer some explanation of how we are justified, of how righteousness is imputed to those who believe. But how we may in Him be MADE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD is beyond us. Sin wholly characterized us, and all that we were He was made when He died on the cross. Righteousness wholly characterizes God, and that which He is we are made in Christ.

On the one hand then, all that we were is removed, and all that God is has been established, and we established in it. Here evidently is a perfect and unchallengeable basis for the reconciliation that we enjoy, and that we are privileged to proclaim to others.

Let us pause at this point to observe; how the Apostle has been led through a considerable digression, from about verse 7 of chapter 4, springing out of the reference there made to the circumstances pressing in upon himself as a minister of the new covenant and the vessel of the light. The digression is completed at the end of chapter 5, and again we see him as a minister, but this time of the word of reconciliation. The word of reconciliation doubtless goes beyond the terms of the ministry of the new covenant, and it is helpful to distinguish the one from the other. Yet we must not divide them as though there were two gospels. The one gospel of God is so great and comprehensive that it may be considered in these varied ways.

As we open chapter 6, we find Paul making a personal application and an appeal to the Corinthians concerning these things. Paul and his companions were fellow-workers in connection with the ministry (the words, “with Him,” are to be omitted); and they had faithfully brought the word, whether of new covenant grace or of reconciliation, to the Corinthians. Now their beseeching was that the grace of the Gospel should not be received in vain by them. Grace is received in vain if it does not work out to its legitimate end and effect. In the epistle to Titus we are told how grace teaches us to live in a sober, righteous and godly way, and the Corinthians were very defective in these things; so the exhortation was needed by them, as also it is needed by us.

Verse 2 is parenthetical and in brackets. The first part of it is a quotation from Isaiah 49:8. The words quoted are addressed prophetically to the Messiah, who was to be rejected, and yet become a light to the Gentiles and salvation to the end of the earth. In spite of His rejection He should be heard and helped of Jehovah; and the hour when He should be heard and helped would be the time accepted and the day of salvation. The latter part of the verse points out that we are living in that very hour. He has been heard in resurrection, and with His resurrection the day of salvation has begun. It will continue until the day of judgment supervenes. That of course is the reason why grace has visited us at all. We are not to receive it in vain.

Having exhorted us thus, the Apostle does not for the moment carry his beseeching’s further (he does this, we believe, from verse 11 onwards) but again turns aside to speak of the features that had characterized himself and his companions. He had said a good deal as to these in chapter 4, and one may be tempted to wonder why he should be led to recur to the matter here. We cannot but think that the reason is that the character, the behavior, the whole spirit of those who are God’s ministers is of the utmost importance. It has an effect upon their ministry which is simply incalculable by us. Reading the Acts of the Apostles, we see what exceptional power marked the ministry of Paul. It was of a type that either brought very great blessing or stirred up the fiercest opposition: it could not be ignored. The power of God was with him; that was the explanation. But why was the power of God with him in this exceptional degree? Because he was characterized by the features mentioned in verse 3 to 10 of our chapter.

First there was the studied avoidance of all that would give offense, for he knew well that any blemish discernible in the servant would be put down as a black mark against his service. The great adversary is continually striking blows against the work of God; first by enticing the workmen into offenses, and then by giving the offences wide publicity so as to discredit his work. Sometimes, sad to say, Christians play into his hands by acting as his publicity agents. They noise abroad their brother’s failure to the blame of the ministry of the Gospel.

It is not enough however to avoid offence. There must be the commendation which flows from good. This was found very abundantly with the Apostle, for he was marked by much patience, or endurance, and that in the presence of a whole host of adverse and trying circumstances, which he summarizes under nine heads. Most of these nine things are clearly specified in the history of the Acts—such as afflictions, stripes, prisons, tumults, Labors. The rest were not absent, as we can see reading between the lines. Through all these things he went with endurance, pursuing the ministry of grace.

And then he himself was marked by grace, in keeping with the grace he proclaimed. verse 6 and 7 speak of this. Again we find the matter summarized under nine heads, beginning with pureness and ending with the armor of righteousness on the right hand and the left. Purity and righteousness stand like sentinels, right and left, before and behind; and protected thus, knowledge, longsuffering, love, truth, are found in the energy of the Spirit and in the power of God. What a beautiful blending of spiritual graces is found here. The servant of God who is armed with righteousness, and yet is full of longsuffering and kindness and love unfeigned, must be like a polished sword in the hand of the Holy Ghost.

We have in these verses then, first, the negative virtue seen in the absence of offence. Then, the commendation springing from endurance under all kinds of opposing forces. Third, the positive virtues connected with both righteousness and love. And now lastly, the paradoxical state of affairs that resulted from the contradiction found between his state as to outward appearance and his state in inward reality. Once more we find nine heads under which the paradox is set forth.

If one looked merely on the surface appearance of things from a worldly standpoint, that which would have met the eye would have been dishonor. Here was a man who had thrown away all his brilliant prospects. Evil reports continually circulated about him. He appeared to be a deceiver, unknown and unrecognized by the men of religious repute. His life appeared to be a living death. Even God seemed to chasten him. Sorrow continually surged around him. He was poor, and possessed practically nothing. What a story!

There was another side to the story however. There was honor, and a good report from God. Sometimes there may have been a good report from his converts; but that was a small matter compared with his joining the company of those others who obtained “a good report through faith,” a Hebrews 11, tells us. He was a true man, and well known on high. He was entering into that which is really life. He was inwardly always rejoicing. He was so serving as to enrich a great multitude. He was like a man rolling in spiritual riches, for he possessed all things. Again we say, What a story! Only this time there is another tone in our voice.

This amazing servant of God was the leader of that little band of men who were spoken of as, “These that have turned the world upside down,” (Acts 17:6) — and no wonder! The ingredients of spiritual power are found in the verses we have just considered. Let us inwardly digest them very well, and may they be a blessing to us in this day of abounding evil in the world, and small faith and devotedness amongst the people of God. F. B. Hole.

Bible Herald: 1878, Letter on Reconciliation, A

With regard to reconciliation, as in 2 Cor. 5:19, as you say, we are nearly at one; for you admit that the world is not (in the usual and literal sense of the word) reconciled to God, but the very opposite. The only difference seems to be about the grammar and the construction of the passage—whether was ought to be looked at as joined with in Christ or with reconciling: you say the latter: I say the former. Where was God? “God was in Christ” in contrast with law. What was God’s gracious object when He was here “in Christ?” “Reconciling.” But was the world reconciled, then, when He was here in that mind and attitude? No. It refused the reconciliation through a living Christ and rejected and slew Him.

This closed God’s dealings with the world, or in other words with man in the flesh, as if he were recoverable: for so bad had man proved himself to be, being utter enmity and opposition to God, that there was no hope for him but through Christ’s death, which ended man and his world, and that God, rich in mercy, began a new work on the basis of the redemption, which is in Christ Jesus; and then a new ministry goes out from a risen and glorified Christ, telling of life and righteousness brought to us, and that we are “reconciled to God through the death of his Son.” The basis of reconciliation is no longer Christ in life with us, displaying God in His goodness and grace, but the death of Christ whereby all that God is has been glorified, and man has been redeemed and brought into the presence of God on an entirely new footing.

But where many seem to stick fast in traditionary teaching is that, as God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, the world was, in point of fact, reconciled (whatever is meant by the word), whereas Scripture informs us that the very opposite took place—they killed the Prince of life, the divine agent in this gracious mission of reconciliation. “Now is the judgment of this world” not its reconciliation. “God was in Christ” in the spirit of reconciliation seeking in divine goodness to break down man’s enmity, but when on man’s side there was refusal and the display of man’s utmost enmity, God’s attitude could be only that of judgment; and there remained nothing for it but the execution of judgment had there not been the coming in of the further grace of Christ giving Himself for God’s glory and our redemption, and being made sin for us that we might be the righteousness of God in Him. The ground of the reconciliation is shifted; man in himself being proved incorrigible, Christ dies and rises for us; and, in resurrection, and on the ground of new creation in Christ, we are reconciled to God, being brought into a state of happy and peaceful relationship through the death of God’s Son, and in view of all God has made Him to be unto us—wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, in order that we might glory in the Lord.

I believe that what you say about the reconciliation of enemies being by the death of God’s Son has led to the seeking to find a meaning for it very much the same as propitiation. But is this not a mistake? The word will not admit of such a meaning. It would entirely change the doctrine of Scripture by taking away from the precision of its language. Reconciliation is neither atonement, propitiation, nor justification. It is an actual bringing back into friendly and peaceful relationship those who were formerly in an alienated condition (see Jew and Gentile, Eph. 2). But with regard to God and us the enmity and alienation were on our side, not on His. Hence we are said to be reconciled: He is not.

If you admit two proposals of reconciliation on two different grounds, all is plain. (1) God was in Christ reconciling; and, on account of man’s incorrigibleness, this reconciliation of the world through a living Christ came to nothing. It failed on man’s side as the law had done: but (2) The ministry of reconciliation from the place where Christ now is in glory as put in the apostles—the whole being in God’s hands and the basis the death of Christ, and the power to effect all being that of a glorified Christ in the ministry of the Holy Ghost, there is no failure; for all believers whose sins Christ expiated by His death are reconciled to God. All is made smooth with God through Christ’s death for our reconciliation, and this must be apprehended by faith before there can be a making of our boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation, i.e., this bringing back of us into a happy state of peaceful relationship with God as the One who loves us and has brought us to Himself through the death of His Son—redeemed, forgiven, justified, sanctified, and having the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father. Then neither has God been reconciled nor the world: only believers., And if the theologians say (altering the meaning of the word) that God reconciled the world to Himself, meaning by this that Christ bore its sins, and that God is not now imputing them, and will not condemn for them, then I would affirm, that there is not a line of Scripture for this that I can see.

This is indeed true, that the blood of the Mediator is now on the mercy-seat before God so that any sinner may come to God through that blood and Him who shed it and be pardoned and saved. The sin-question was fully gone into and settled forever between God and Christ when He shed. His blood on Calvary’s Cross, and that both according to God’s nature and the requirements of His throne, and the need of guilty sinners who are to be brought into the enjoyment of all the effects flowing from it. He is not only the propitiation for our sins, but also for the whole world, because this respects the great work of Christ God-ward, and the blood put upon the mercy-seat: but only such as believe are entitled to say Christ bore our sins. Propitiation is one thing, and substitution is another.

But I fear, when the doctors in the Lutheran Church say that Christ reconciled the world, they mean that Christ bore its sins. If so, then the whole world must be saved. But this will not do, for there is no reconciliation without faith in what God has wrought in Christ and in His death. But being dependent on faith and having no existence where faith is not reconciliation could not possibly have taken place when Christ died, any more than justification. Does not this dispose of this thought? The work wrought by grace in me by faith in the death of Christ is, though connected, not the same thing as the basis of God’s providing for His own sake, on which the reconciliation takes place. Propitiation and reconciliation are intended to convey different thoughts, and we dare not alter Scripture, but must abide by the divine intention.

I observe that you still write “was reconciling,” and of this I would say again, that it is unexampled in the New Testament, and probably in the Greek language to join was with reconciling, severed as they are not only so widely but especially by a phrase like in Christ, in which is the true complement of the verb (was). Is this not so? What you say is quite true that what God was doing when in Christ was—reconciling. That was the bearing or tendency of the Incarnation. But He was also the Lamb of God, and as such the taker away of the sin of the world: but that both things were not done is obvious; for the world’s sin is not taken away it is as full of it as ever—neither is it reconciled to God. The conclusive proof that the world was not reconciled to God by Christ’s death lies in the same passage: for what sense would there be in

sending out a fresh ministry of reconciliation if the world had been reconciled?

I refer to 2 Corinthians 5:19,20, “putting in us the word of the reconciliation.” Then verse 20 ends with “be ye reconciled to God” as the purport of their beseeching a very strange proceeding this if the world were reconciled. And it were surely an unworthy as well as unscholarly expedient to say that reconcile means one thing in 2 Corinthians 5:19 and another thing in verse 20th, that it means atonement in verse 19th and reconciliation in its literal and proper acceptation in verse 20th. It is quite obvious that verse 21St gives the divine basis in God’s work for sinners in Christ, on which the reconciliation takes place. And so also all the other passages which refer to the death of Christ contemplate it as the new divine basis of reconciliation; the reconciliation through a living Christ having been definitively refused, there was no other way left but through a dead Christ, and redemption accomplished in His death. Hence we find in 2 Corinthians 5:14,15, the death and resurrection of Christ presented as the only means to ensure living to Him under the power of His constraining love. And verse 16th states that we know Christ now no longer as an Incarnate Messiah displaying God in goodness on the earth, but we know Him as risen and become the Beginning and Head of the new creation; and “if any man be in Christ, there is new creation”—and “all things therein are of God, who hash reconciled us to Himself” [“by the death of His Son.” Romans 5:10.] “Old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new.” The place where reconciliation takes place is that of “new creation:” for no man not “in Christ Jesus”— “His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus”—will ever lay aside his enmity and alienation, and love God and recognize the happy, peaceful relation subsisting between God and His redeemed and emancipated people, and act upon it.

I note your words: “Therefore, the word must, as far as I can see, imply that God through the death of Christ took away the sin that drew on it the holy wrath of God, and so prepared the way for the sinner being in his heart reconciled to God.”

I have written enough to show these two things, 1, that no such meaning can be fixed on reconciling, and 2, that a something was accomplished through the death of Christ which, while it has not removed the holy wrath of God from the world, yet has so glorified God about sin and put the blood on the mercy-seat that it is now consistent with God’s righteousness to justify the believer in Jesus (Rom. 3:21-26). We are at one in the main, but not so in the way we reach our conclusions for instead of wrath removed by Christ’s death I hold with Romans 1 That it is “revealed from heaven” against all unbelievers (see this more fully explained in Romans 2:5-16), “And he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.” There is no Scripture that seems to favor the view that the world’s sin is taken away.

Do you mean that Adam’s sin is taken away by Christ’s death? If so, Christ is not said to have died to remove it: at least, I have not read this. “God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son.” The Son of man, must be lifted up that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish but have eternal life. God freely loved sinners and provided the sacrifice for sin in the Son of man lifted up, and He is now held forth as a propitiation (a propitiatory, Rom. 3:25) through faith in His blood to any sinner in all the world (1 John 2:2), that he, believing in Him, might be justified from all his sins. But no sin is taken away by the death of Christ in the case of an unbeliever. “If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.” I know of no such statement in the word of God as this: “that the guilt of original sin is taken away by the death of Christ.” I think we may with certainty affirm that there is no such thought in God’s word. God does, indeed, deal with our nature in Christ’s death; but it is to condemn it to exterminating judgment like Sodom and Gomorrah (Rom. 8:3.) “Sin in the flesh” is the nature: sins, the works of it (see Gal. 5:19-21). Romans 1 to verse 11 treats of sins and God’s provision for removing the guilt of them: Romans 5 to Romans 8 treats of sin or the nature, and God’s provision for dealing with it. The sins are expiated by the blood, and there is forgiveness and justification from them: but we die with Christ to sin. “Our old man is crucified together with him that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is justified from sin” (Rom. 6:6,7). He who is alive is “justified by his blood” from his sins: but “he that is dead is justified from sin.” Christ died for my sins, but I died with Him to sin (Rom. 6:10,11). I may get my sins forgiven; but there is no way of putting off a nature but by death as we read— “the putting off of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ” i.e., His death. I think this is true that, although it was when Christ was made a sacrifice for our sins that God condemned “sin in the flesh,” it was not atoned for so that we might have it forgiven; but, condemned, judged, annulled—that in view of Christ’s death to sin once we should reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin. It is to me, as a believer, not the nature in which I live, but one which to faith I have put off in Christ’s death, Christ being now my life: not Adam fallen, but Christ risen from the dead and glorified. I am in Christ, the new Head of believing and risen humanity: and the old man is gone in the death of Christ. “With Christ I have been crucified; live then no longer I but there liveth in me Christ” (Gal. 2:20).

I do not doubt that reconciliation has to do with the death of Christ: this is its holy basis (as has been repeatedly said), but every passage where it occurs spews that the persons are in presence who are to be sought to be reconciled, who are reconciled, or have been reconciled, and that only believers are so on being justified by God’s grace and Christ’s blood. And I think it most important and very material to hold this uniform teaching of Scripture on this subject; and that the translations of the New Testament Scriptures which teach another doctrine should be corrected. Luther’s version has it “for God was in Christ and reconciled the world with himself,” which is a statement that has no manner of warrant in the Greek, and it is contrary to the fact.1 If I quote the passage “that was the true light that lighteneth everyman that cometh into the world,” this is not the same as to affirm that He has done it: which would be contrary to the fact. The Apostle Paul’s ministry after that was “to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light” (Acts 26) and he says to the saints “ye were once darkness but now are ye light in the Lord.” “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness.” “I am the Light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life.” Now all but Christ’s followers abode in the native darkness of the world, notwithstanding that He the Light was there, having it as His mission to be the world’s light, and having in Himself all competency to give light to every soul in it. But the world was enveloped in densest darkness when Christ died, so great was the power of Satan in blinding men that it could only be symbolized by the darkness that fell upon the dread scene of the world’s deepest guilt.

This will help to throw light on our passage: “God was in Christ” [this is the historical fact] “reconciling the world to Himself” [this was the mission – the object, purpose, intention] but the world gave sad proof that it was incapable of being reconciled by God in goodness in a living Christ, and the proof culminated in the rejection and killing of the Reconciler; and so, instead of being reconciled, as Luther’s German New Testament says, it entirely fell through. It would have been nearer the truth to have said God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, and the world was so exasperated that they rose up against Him, and, as far as it was in their power, turned Him out by crucifying Christ. At first man sinned and God drove him out; but when God in Christ came into man’s world seeking, in goodness, to win back man’s confidence and affection, man rose up against Him and said, Away with Him—away with Him!

But God rose in love and grace above man’s enmity and wrought such a work of accomplished righteousness in the death of Christ that He could send forth the apostles to continue the embassage of reconciliation, founded on the death of Christ, which should not fail of its purpose: for “He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might become God’s righteousness in Him.”

That “the reconciliation” is of us—not of God—and that it is a present blessing God’s word uniformly affirms in such passages as Colossians 1:21,22, “yet now hath he reconciled” 2 Corinthians 5:18. “Who hath reconciled us to himself”: Romans 5:10 “when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son”: verse 11, “through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”1

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Meaning of 2 Corinthians 5:3?

Question: What means 2 Cor. 5:3?

Answer: A solemn warning that, though the deniers of the resurrection were all wrong, one may have a risen body, but he destitute of Christ, as all in fact will be who are not born of God. All must be clothed, all must rise; but then will be manifest that not to have Christ is to be found naked. The risen body of the wicked will not cover but reveal that unspeakable loss.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Great White Throne or Magnifying God's Grace?, The

Question: 2 Cor. 5:10. Has this to do with “the great white throne” or is it to magnify God’s grace? D. M.

Answer: It is general, and applies to both. Hence the word is “We all,” we, the whole of us, a larger term than “we all” in 2 Cor. 3:18, which is restricted to the Christian community. Next, it is “shall appear” or rather “be manifested,” so as to embrace every one, believing or not, though of course as we know from other scriptures not at the same time, any more than for the same end. Were it “judged,” it would apply only to unbelievers and only to the great white throne: no believer, as our Lord declares in John 5:24, comes into “judgment,” which is in contrast with the eternal life that the faithful have now in the Son of God. Here again the language employed is expressly general. It is equally erroneous to limit the manifestation to believers or to unbelievers. Both in their season are to be manifested before the judgment-seat or Bema of our Lord; and all the deeds done by the body as an instrument will come out in result before Him. In the believer’s case, how magnifying for God’s grace! in the unbeliever’s, how vindicating His judgment of evil! Even for the saints, what was worthless will bear its consequences, though by grace they are saved, as what was good will be rewarded. But hopeless at last will be seen the lot of the wicked when manifested there, all their works bad, and, above all, their rejection of Christ and the gospel.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, How Should 2 Corinthians 5:21 Be Taken?

Question: How is 2 Cor. 5:21 to be taken? W. E.

Answer: In 1 Cor. 1:30 saints are said to be of God in Christ Jesus, Who was made to us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption (for the body itself will be under the power of redemption at His coming). This is all of grace that no flesh may glory save in Him. But in the second Epistle the apostle goes farther and affirms that God made Christ Who knew no sin to be sin for us (i.e. dealt with as a sacrifice for it on our behalf) that we might be made or become His righteousness in Christ (i.e. blessed righteously according to His estimate of Christ’s work and its answer in glory).

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Saints Become the Righteousness of God in Christ in Glory?

Question: Does 2 Cor. 5:21 teach that the saints become in glory the righteousness of God in Christ?

X. Y. Z.

Answer: There is no room whatever for such a force in the language of the Spirit; imported into the words, it is a meaning which distracts from what the apostle lays down from God, and therefore it tends to destroy His aim. The full scope of what is conveyed is its true meaning, not an imaginary sense which the words taught of the Spirit will not bear. The object of the enemy is plain: now as ever anything new or old to enfeeble the blessed fruit of Christ’s work. Nobody doubts that righteousness was proved in setting the rejected Christ in glory (John 16) But here we are taught that, as God made Christ sin for us, so we become His righteousness in Christ. It is simply and solely our present standing in Christ. Nor does anybody question the future glorification of the saints; but this hope is wholly outside the passage, which refers exclusively, as its full scope, to what we Christians become (or were made) now in Christ—even God’s righteousness. This is what many saints fail to believe. And the objection to apply in an absolute way to the believer, in his mixed condition down here statements in scripture which refer to what he is in Christ, shows that it is pure unbelief, which is so blindly put forward as “advanced truth,” to ensnare, unsettle, and overthrow the unwary. For the truth, which is to deliver from the weakness, and doubts, and all other evil to which the mixed condition is naturally subject, must be received and applied absolutely if taught of God: the faith is made void, and what is worse and goes along with it, the work of Christ and the grace of God alike. If I am not to believe in the most absolute way what the Holy Ghost declares I, a Christian, am already made in Christ, not only is all claim of advanced truth vain, but the gospel in any full sense is systematically denied. And the more evidently is it of Satan, because those who adopt such destructive reveries flatter themselves that they are going on to higher things, instead of virtually, though unwittingly, abandoning that distinctive truth, even as to the foundations of the faith, which used to characterize those waiting for God’s Son from heaven. A sober and duly instructed Christian cannot doubt, unless under the strong bias of personal or party feeling, that the teaching is retrograde, false, and incompatible with the gospel.

Fragments Gathered Up, 2 Corinthians 5:14

To apply 2 Cor. 5:14 to death to sin, instead of death by it, is more wrong than I thought, because panton is absolute. “He died for all,” and of pantes applies necessarily to the same all.

Fragments Gathered Up, 2 Corinthians 5:9

Paul labored to please Christ, whatever might be the class in which he would be found at the coming of the Lord, whether among those who have fallen asleep before, or among those who will be still remaining, living on earth, when he comes.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Judgment Seat, The

Question: Could you please inform me if there is a scripture which tells us exactly when and where the judgment seat will be? (2 Cor. 5:10)

R.R.T.

Answer: The great importance of the Bema of Christ is that every one in his own time and place shall be manifested and give account of the things done in the body. But saint or sinner will make a difference of moment. It appears to me that for the heavenly saints it will be above, just before the Marriage-supper of the Lamb, long after we are translated to heaven in sovereign grace, and just before we are manifested with Christ in glory. What else can be meant by the bride making herself ready? See Rev. 19:7, 8. Thus is the place of each determined for the Lord’s appearing in His kingdom. Only in this passage is there such an apparent reference. And very beautiful and touching it is that it should only be then. For the wicked it will be before the great white throne in Rev. 20. This is judgment.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, 2 Corinthians 5:15

Question: 2 Cor. 5:15. The brevity of the remark on the late Bp. Lightfoot’s view of these verses, followed by the Revisers’, may account for my difficulty in apprehending the evidence and argument against it. May I ask for further clearing of the point? F.

Answer: Not having the Bp.’s book at hand, I quote the R.V. which conveys his mind! “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again.” Every reflecting believer, I think, must feel that the critical text sounds harsh and inconsequent for want of the (if) of the vulgar text. And every one used to various readings can see that the was peculiarly liable here to be dropt, because of the immediately preceding and the immediately following. But accepting the text preferred, wherein does the consequence lie that, because one died for all, therefore they all died, in the sense of dying with Him to sin, the marked privilege of all Christians? This very assumption misled Dean Alford unconsciously into misrepresenting the apostles, when he says that He died for all, that all should live to Him. But this is to change what the apostle wrote in contrasting “all dead” with “those that live.” “The all” are men universally; “they that live,” are only such as by faith have life in Christ. And this distinction is fundamental and everywhere sustained by the scriptures. The sense therefore is, for “all,” death through sin and their sins, for whom nevertheless Christ died as the witness of love toward them in their sad and sinful state. The judgment of love is not merely this but that He died for all, that they that live by faith in Him, which assuredly “all” do not, should no longer be as once when dead, but live to Him who for them died and was raised. For the Savior whom the Christian owns is not a mere Jewish Messiah ruling Israel and the nations in righteousness peace and happiness on the earth, but a dead and risen Lord with whom we are associated, rejected by the earth but glorified on high, and we in obedient devotedness sharing His sufferings here and waiting to join Him there.

Thus what we are taught is not that all men have the Christian privilege of having died with Christ to sin, but that their being all dead as sinners was the motive for Christ to die on behalf of all. Where sin brought them without exception, love sent and brought Him. Yet this, however glorifying God’s nature and proving Christ’s love, were vain to save them unless by faith in Christ they received life in Him to live to Him. Thanks be to God this is verified by His grace in “those that live” (as contradistinguished from “all dead),” whom Christ’s love constrains to live to Him who for them died and was raised. Accordingly the apostle shows that not only the evil but the old things at their best are passed away to Christian faith, and for any one in Christ (not surely for man unbelieving and outside Him) “a new creation, and all things of the God that reconciled us to Himself by Christ.”

The perversion to death in Christ to sin, which can apply to none but believers, dissolves the reasoning; for how could this prove the love of Christ dying for all mankind? Whereas no Christian but sees His love for all in dying for all. And what follows is decisive against such a meaning as the Bp. put on it, for it is a part and not “all,” but only “they that live” who enjoy the privilege, and accept the responsibility of Christians. As these learned men give the sentence, “We thus judge, that one died for all, therefore [illatively] all died,” it stands rather unintelligible, and is refuted by the context that follows. Text and translation, if right, lead to no such result.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, What Would Have Happened if Men Had Received the Christ of God?

Question: 2 Cor. 5:19. What would have happened if men had received the Christ of God? We see Him forgiving governmentally, as in Matt. 9 R.

Answer: The blessed Savior was “reconciling,” acting toward this gracious end, during His life. “God was in Christ,” &c. He was rejected. God knew that redemption by His blood was necessary to reconcile; so that in reality He was made sin in order to put the ministry of reconciliation in the apostles. And when it is said, “God was in Christ reconciling,” it is a question, not of the basis necessary for giving effect (which is the thing treated in the verse but one following, 21), but of the ways of God with regard to man by Christ during His life. If Christ had been received, the result would have proved that the evil was reparable. Now we know that the truth is quite otherwise. But God presented the thing to the responsibility of man before manifesting this moral impossibility. Though He called to it, He was calling them according to the knowledge He had Himself of that which He was going to-do. “What shall I do? I will send my beloved Son. It may be they will reverence him, when they see him.” There, is what was presented to man. The object of faith is the person of Christ. Believing in Him one enjoyed the efficacy of His death, during His life true to Him in ignorance, later on with intelligence.

There is a governmental pardon, which could not be save in virtue of expiation, it is true, but which is notwithstanding another thing. Besides, the pardon accorded in detail in view of the offering of Christ was according fully during His life here below in view of the ways of God in grace. The effect was shown, the case occurring, by a healing as proof. But grace at all times has its application in view of the work of Christ. (See Rom. 3:25, 26)

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Force of Christ Dying for All

Question: 2 Cor. 5:14, 15.—What is the force of Christ dying for all? and in what sense are all dead as proved by His death?

- P.

Answer: The meaning is that, if Christ died for all, it was because all had died: otherwise there would have been no such need for Him to die. You need not go down into a pit where one will perish, if he is not there perishing.

That it is not all died to sin is evident from the correspondency of “all” in the sentence; and further that “they which live” are taken as sonic out of the “all” in what follows. “He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live,” &c. , not . Hence he does not know even Christ after the flesh, as a living Jewish Messiah, whom as a Jew he would have known: “God was in Christ reconciling the world.” Nor does he know Christians as belonging to the old creation to which they had died, nor others, for they were all dead—their whole history. But if a man was in Christ, it was a new creation. He belonged to that in which all things were of God. The whole subject is the power of life in Christ as triumphant over death. Hence, when he applies it, he does not say merely “who died for them,” as when he speaks of all, but “rose again” also. It is the power and fullness of a new thing for those taken out of death through Christ’s going down into it. There was neither Jew, Gentile, sin, flesh, nor any other thing of the old Adam or legal estate, but a new creation.

Bible Treasury: Volume 12, Absent From the Body-Present With the Lord. 2 Corinthians 5:8.

Two things go together for us as saints; the certainty of the Lord's coming, and the uncertainty whether or not we shall fall asleep before He come. Known to God only is it whether I shall have put off the tabernacle of the body, or be found in occupation of it when Christ returns in the cloud: but in presence of the certainty of His coming, the uncertainty whether I shall then be in the body, or out of the body, however much it may interest, does not disturb, me. In either case a blessedness is assured to us richly surpassing our present blessing, and we can happily entrust to His sovereignty the disposal of our earthly house of tabernacle! It is good to be for Him here; it is “far better” to fall asleep and go to Him; but best of all to awake in His likeness if I have slept, or, if living when He comes, to see Him as He is! This, the superlative thing, and not the comparative, though that also be blessed, is what the Lord always puts before us as the object of our hope; nothing short of this is the “mark for the prize,” or the desired consummation when He and we are glorified together! The fact that in scripture the Holy Ghost uniformly connects our hearts' aspirations with the return of Christ should suffice to satisfy every saint of God that the superlative thing, that which is the subject of “that blessed hope,” is His coming, and that if we substitute anything else, it only indicates that we are out of the mind and current of the Spirit of God. But while that be incontestable, and cannot be too emphatically maintained, the fact that so many saints have fallen asleep since the assembly of God first acquired “that blessed hope,” and that one after another around us is over and anon retiring to rest, necessitates to our souls a very deep and ever renewed interest in the character of their blessing.

The thief in whom grace wrought on the cross, blessed as was the new-born desire of his heart, got help on three points, each of exceeding interest. He asked (1) to be remembered by the Lord, (2) at His coming, (3) in His kingdom. The Lord both corrected and surpassed each feature of his request, for He promised (1) that he should be with Him (2) that day (3) in paradise! This affords the fullest scripture teaching as to the blessedness of those who put off this tabernacle, and connecting it with Paul's testimony, that “absent from the body,” the saint is “present with the Lord;” that “to depart and to be with Christ is far better;” and that “to die is gain,” clearly establishes that the emancipated spirit enjoys (1) the blessedness of being with Christ, which is far better than any blessing enjoyed below, (2) that such blessedness is immediate, and (3) it is in the elysium of His own presence, a locality otherwise undefined.

But if this summarizes the direct instruction which the Holy Ghost has given us in the word, yet may we safely and soberly predicate a variety of aspects of the blessedness involved in that momentous change of condition into which the spirit is introduced when the earthly house of its tabernacle is vacated. Disencumbered of the body, it is at once relieved from the drag or resistance which a sinful body, however well adapted for the exercises of faith, and as an instrument for service to the Lord in a sinful world, must inevitably impose upon its freedom. With what new gladness shall we reflect that we can never grieve His blessed heart any more, nor ever again bring dishonor upon His peerless name; that sin and sorrow, toil and trouble, care and conflict, and all that tends to weaken our love and attachment to the Lord, or hinder its outflow, with every other thing that tells of the fall and the curse, are left behind forever I Whether it be the needs and weakness of humanity as created, or its sick and suffering condition as fallen, or as the vehicle in which my will would work, that abode in which the flesh dwells—all this I am freed from on leaving the body: no more can I know want or weariness; no more pain and anguish; no more workings of a perverse will, of a carnal mind, of a heart at enmity with God! By vacating the body I have broken every link with the flesh and its activities, with the

world and its elements; I have parted company, never to be resumed, with the first man and the Adamic creation, with man's world and the world's god. What a release from Satan's hostility and subtlety; what an escape from every snare of the fowler; from the world, too, Satan's usurped empire; no further exposure to its hydra-headed opposition to Christ and to those who are His; the wilderness past, with all its painful experiences of battlings and buffetings, and the haven reached where all evil is excluded, and all toil ceases in the eternal calm and sublimity of His presence!

It is a happy and a refreshing thought that my body, being a member of Christ, is assured of resurrection, because of His Spirit who dwelleth in me, and this secures the body for that day; while being “one spirit” with the Lord, one with Him in living, eternal union, whether in or out of the body, my spirit, in returning to God, finds that eternal haven in the presence of Christ which secures it for reunion with the body at His coming!

Save the Lord Himself, no one was ever more superior to circumstances than Paul, he who could say, “I am initiated both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer privation. I have strength for all things in him that gives me power;” yet he says, I have “a desire to depart.” No one had a more important service to detain him below, and no one was more singularly qualified, and more thoroughly devoted, as a servant. It is summed up—this remarkable identification of himself with Christ's interests on earth—in the words, “For me to live is Christ,” and yet he adds, “to die is gain!”

There are three aspects in which the departed saint may be regarded; as to what he escapes or resigns, as to what he retains, and as to what he acquires. What he escapes has been already sufficiently touched upon. What he resigns is equally apparent, though not, perhaps, sufficiently recognized, otherwise we should value and turn to account more than we do the present unique period of the soul's history! Each of us has doubtless looked back to the days of his youth, never to be recalled, and found occasion to mourn over days of evil that cannot now be corrected, and opportunities for good that can never return: as that spring-time of life has left its stamp on all after-years, so surely will the soul's spring-time bear its mark for eternity, for I learn now, and I gather here, that which, missing the present opportunity, I shall never learn or gather at all; in fact, this is the time of the soul's pupilage in the place where it takes its degree! All this we resign when we leave the body; surely, were saints sufficiently alive to the fact, we should not find so many droning away the precious spring-time, unmindful of the word, “Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee.” (Eph. 5:14.) But, further, I forego, if I leave the body, the outward and visible fellowship of saints, the table of the Lord, with its rich and endearing associations, the endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, the exercises of brotherly love, of prayer, of sympathy, of generosity and hospitality, of practical separation from evil, what James calls “Pure religion, and undefiled” —all these exercises, in fine all that is demonstrative in Its character, I have passed out of for the time being, while such principles as faith, patience, dependence, and obedience, if in exercise, are in exercise under such new conditions as constitute, or at least imply, a generic change!

In respect to the second point—that which we retain—I content myself with suggesting that I retain all that which divine grace has conferred upon me for eternity; I carry with me, and shall continue to enjoy, the eternal life, the new creation blessing, union with Christ, the peace which surpasseth understanding, the joy that is unspeakable and full of glory, and the relationships into which grace has introduced me, which can never be weakened or annulled!

Lastly, as to the “gain,” it is clear that I have finally entered into rest—a rest never to be disturbed, a full and deep repose, never to be broken! What a wonderful expansion will my spirit experience as it emerges from the density of an atmosphere so oppressive as this into that of His presence, and how sweet the conviction that steals over me, that I have passed into that blissful presence forever; that I am at length in that new region of unruffled peace characterized by the presence of my Savior and my Lord:

But though with Himself in the profound quietude of an eternal calm, and enjoying an unalloyed happiness with Him, I wait for His coming on that cloudless morning, when He shall bring forth from the grave, to the joy of His own heart, the bodies which, in all ages and in every clime, He had hushed to sleep! In the scene of His rejection I had once waited for Him, but sleep overtook my body, my heart was still wakeful, my spirit passed into His presence, and I waited on—my waiting became more like His, I kept vigil with Him It was not enough to be in His presence, I wanted to see Him as He is; it was not enough to be with Him, I wanted to be like Him, for this would give peculiar joy to His heart; for this I needed a glorified body, and I waited still! It was not enough that He should be crowned with glory and with honor upon the Father's throne, I longed for His manifested glories in heaven and on earth: I longed to see His brow bedecked with many crowns, and I longed to swell the harmony of the new song which should extol His worth; I longed to see Him in the Father's house, to be there at home with Himself; I longed to see Him express, as there only He fully can, the fervor of His faithful love to His bride, and to set forth in blessed array the untold joy and delight that will thrill His heart when He shall have things all His own way, and make everything around in the heaven of His own presence subserve the object of that heart from eternity!

All these blessed longings of spirit, which have Himself for their object, I can now unhinderedly and undistractedly indulge, and thus the superlative thing, the glory itself, is blissfully and powerfully anticipated. All that, if absent from the body, my heart will but the more ardently long for and watch for in the patience of Christ, and as to which cannot be fully satisfied short of its consummation; all to which my heart aspires now, and would aspire then, whether in these circumstances or in those, only His coming in the cloud can possibly supply an answer to!

Then shall we resume the functions of worship in the conditions alone compatible with it; then shall we sing as redeemed saints, and in the body, only are said to do! Then only will He see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied; then only will He present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy; then only will He make us to sit down to meat, and come forth and serve us; then only will He satisfy for us every desire which our knowledge of Himself has inspired in our hearts! Upon this, then, the superlative thing, His own heart is set, as well as that of the Spirit and the bride, saying, “Come;” and He who loves to be thus greeted, loves too to reply “Surely I come quickly,” adding His own “Amen;” and, if we, like the beloved disciple, have pillowed our heads upon His bosom, though in another way, we shall love to respond, whether in the body or out of the body, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” R.

Gospel Light: Volume 6 (1916), Be Ye Reconciled.

2 COR. 5:20. 2CO 5:20

I WAS struck yesterday, on entering the meeting-room at D— by the appearance of a man whom I did not remember to have seen there before. Throughout the service he listened most attentively, and when the people began to disperse I could not resist placing my hand upon his shoulder, with the inquiry, "Have you peace with God?”

“No," was the reply, “I cannot say that I have.”

“Well, my, fried" I said,” I am sorry for it; but I feel sure I am right in supposing that you would wish to have it.",

“I would, indeed," said he.

“Well,” I said," do you believe that you are by nature a lost sinner?”

“We are all that,” said he," and so, of course, I am one as much as anyone else.”

“Well, then,” I said," if according to your own confession you are a lost sinner, you assuredly require a Saviour; and does not the word of God tell you that One has been provided for you, and that, if you now believe on Him, you are eternally saved?”

“Oh, but,” he said," surely it's not so easy as all that. Have not I got something to do on my tart? Of course I believe, and always did believe, that Jesus died for me; but I must help.”

"Oh! '' I said," and now do tell me what could you, a poor sinner, consciously dead in trespasses and sins, DO to help?”

“I could pray,” said he.

“well, “I replied," prayer is very blessed in its proper place; but did you ever notice [opening my Bible] this passage in 2 Cor. 5:20, 2CO 5:20 in which God is praying you to be reconciled? Now, will you tell me what you are praying for?”

“Why, of course, for that very thing, to be reconciled,” he said.

“Oh! but, “I answered," this passage plainly states that God, on the ground of the accomplished work of Christ, is now entreating you, and sinners like you, to be reconciled to Him. Where, then, is the wisdom of your asking Him to he reconciled to you?”

“Oh, but, “he said," I don't believe that I could be reconciled to God without asking for it.”

“Then, “I said," I have only to assure you that you are sadly mistaken. God, as the twentieth and twenty-first verses so plainly state, has anticipated your petition by Himself sending to ask you to be reconciled; for (or because) He has made Christ to be sin; and now, instead of asking, you have simply to, believe that Christ has been made sin for you, and you are instantly reconciled to God,' made the righteousness of God in Him.' ''

“Well," he said, " I never saw it in that light before. That's quite new to me, and I'll think over it, and come and hear you again.'”

“If the Lord permit," I replied. And so we parted.

And now, my reader, this way of looking at the most important question in the world” may be quite new to you also; but it is nevertheless blessedly true that, as we read in Col. 1:20, COL 1:20 the Lord Jesus has “made peace by the blood of His cross "; and therefore God is now in a position, consistently with His own truth and holiness, to “come out and entreat '' (Luke 15:28) LUK 15:28 poor sinners to draw near to Him. This He did first by His Son; next by those who heard Him (Heb. 2:3), HEB 2:3 and now He is doing it by those whom the Holy Ghost has sent forth (Acts 13:4) ACT 13:4as "ambassadors” or heralds, to declare the glad tidings, that “He hath made Him to be sin for us Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

Does not the poor blind mendicant at your door cease his cry of want the moment he hears your welcome voice pressing a sixpence on his acceptance? It is what he wants. He receives it thankfully, and goes away rejoicing.

you,

D. T. G.

The New Creation, New Creation, The: Part 1

It would effectually deliver the mind from a thousand perplexities, could we only get a clear sense of what is meant by that one expression, " A new creation" It would, at once, serve to show us the utter fruitlessness of attempting to mend the world, or to mend the old Adam nature. No one who had really entered into the sublime and precious doctrine involved in a new creation, could ever speak of "making the best of both worlds." We might just as well speak of making the best of " an old garment" and " a new piece." The two things are wholly incompatible; and, hence, the "best" you can "make" of them is but to "make the rent worse." Man, in his religious wisdom, his pious philosophy, thinks he can combine the two; but Christ declares that to attempt to combine them, is to make the rent worse. Christ did not come to mend the old world, but to die and find a grave in it, that, by dying and rising again, He might take us clean out of the old world into the new. To make use of Christ and His gospel for the purpose of mending the old world or the old Adam nature, is one of Satan's most crafty and subtle devices. It is a fatal snare into which thousands are, at this moment, falling.

I would ask my reader to open his Bible, at the third chapter of Genesis, and ponder these words, " So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." (ver. 24.) Here we find the old Adam nature driven clean out of Paradise, and not only so, but " every way" of returning thither closed against him. Old Adam could never eat of the tree of life. Old Adam could not make the best of both worlds. He had lost one altogether, and he had neither title nor

capacity for another. By sin he was ruined as belonging to the old creation, and naught save death and resurrection could introduce him into the new. " If any man be in Christ he is a new creation" (2 Cor. 5) " In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation." (Gal. 6) True Christianity presents "a new man " moving in " a new creation." Spurious or false Christianity attempts to improve the old man and the old creation. In other words, it attempts to " put a new piece upon an old garment;" and, even though that "newpiece" be the profession of Christianity, yet do the words of Christ hold true, that " the rent is made worse." Indeed, it will ever be found that, the newer or better the " piece," the worse "the rent." The worst "rent" that has ever yet been made is the result of tacking the name of Christ upon the old Adam nature. Satan's masterpiece is to take up each " new piece " of divine revelation, and place it as a patch upon old Adam.

There is great power in the words, " turned every way." There is no way in which the old nature can get life. It must die out of the old creation, and be quickened into the new. " God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. 6:14.) "Every way" is sedulously closed against fallen humanity. It must die. So the word of God declares. But the father of lies has, from the very outset, been seeking to set this simple truth aside. He knows what a potent instrument it is, and has therefore ever sought to hinder its action, by all means in his power. He is never better pleased than when he sees men, and particularly Christian men, digging and delving, in order to open a way for old Adam to get back to the tree of life. He has no objection to morality, to philanthropy, to religion. In a word, he will allow the very name of Christ to be tacked on to the old nature, in order to quash the grand truth of a "new creation."

But it is all in vain. The hand of God placed a flaming sword to turn a every way;" and the Holy Ghost, by the apostle, has set the sharp edge of His sword, for the same purpose, when He declares that, " Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation." God's " rule" for the old creation, and all pertaining thereto is, ''death and resurrection." Wherefore, it follows, that no work can be more fruitless than seeking to mend the world, or to mend the old nature. It cannot be done. The cross of Christ was not designed to mend the world or the flesh, but to crucify both the one and the other. When the Lord Jesus Christ lay in the silent tomb, there was an end of the old creation; and when He rose, it was as " the beginning, the first-begotten from among the dead "-the Head of the new creation.

Now, when Christ died, all the redeemed died with Him; when He was buried, all the redeemed were buried with Him; when He rose, all the redeemed rose with Him. Thus it was in God's view. The Head and members are one, and can never be separated. They belong to the new creation, in which " all things are of God." There is not a single atom of the old Adam or his world, in the new creation, for if there were, it could not be said that " all things are of God." It is not possible, therefore, to make the best of both worlds, seeing that, in the new world, there is not so much as a jot or tittle belonging-to the old; nor is there aught in the old world belonging to the new. The only question is, Which shall we have? My reader is, at this moment, attached either to that world of which Satan is the god, or to that of which Christ is the Head. To make the best of the two is as impossible as to combine the sun's meridian splendor with midnight's gloom.

And, be it remembered, there is no middle ground. We cannot be half in the old creation, and half in the new. We must be wholly in the one or wholly in the other. If we are in the old creation, we have death and judgment before us. If we are in the new creation, we have death and judgment behind us. The old Adam must meet death and judgment. The flaming sword shuts him out from life, and shuts him up to death and judgment.

But my reader may feel disposed to ask, " How am I to pass out of the old creation into the new? " The answer is, by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. " Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24.) This is the way to pass into the new creation. It is done in a moment. Faith in God's word connects the soul with Christ, and being connected with Christ, we are part and parcel of the new creation. A tree planted in Eden was part of the old creation; a soul planted in Christ, by faith, is part of the new.

This is very simple; and it is as precious as it is simple. There is not a single spot or stain of sin in the new creation. There is no wrath or judgment in the new creation. Satan's arrows cannot reach us, nor his snares be laid, in the new creation. The grave is the boundary of Satan's power; but the new creation begins at the other side of the grave. All our blessings, all our joys, all our dignities, all our privileges are in the new creation, and, therefore, lie far beyond the range of the enemy's power. The Lord be praised for this blessed assurance! What full emancipation it gives from the things of earth and nature-from the old creation and all its belongings! Moreover, it gives such liberty and elevation, such holy fixedness and repose. To be able to say, " I belong to that new creation, wherein all things are of God," is to know one's entire deliverance from everything that could be against us. There is naught but absolute, divine, and eternal perfection in the new creation, and the very weakest believer is part and parcel thereof.

True it is, we are " Here in the body pent," and " we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." We bear about with us a body of sin and death, which is allied to the old creation, and must either crumble into dust, or be changed in a moment, at the coming of Christ; but this in no wise affects our position in the new creation. We may have to endure bodily pain, together with toil and conflict, in this wilderness world; but our standing is in the new creation. We are linked with One " who is the beginning" of all God's ways in that new sphere in which we are called to " live, and move, and have our being."

And, now, if it be asked, " What are the practical results of all this truth?" the apostle gives the answer; "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. 3:1-3.) Here, then, is the practical result. We are to " seek," and " set our affection upon things above." How much is involved in the expression, " things above!" It furnishes us with a very simple rule, by which to measure everything that may be presented to us. We have only to ask, " Does this thing range itself under the head of ' things above?" Does it belong to the new creation? If not, I shall not seek or set my affection upon it. The apostle does not say, " Seeing now, that ye are saved, endeavor to make the best of both worlds." Ah! no; Paul had no such idea as this. To him the cross of Christ was the boundary of the old creation, and a risen Christ the beginning of the new.

Thus it should be with each true believer. There is no exception. " Ye are dead." Here is the end of the old creation. " Your life is hid with Christ in God." Here is the beginning of the new. The rule is very simple where the heart is true to Christ; but, where the affection is set on '' things on the earth," a man will reason, and argue, and quote scripture in abundance, in defense of the most worldly practices and covetous designs. The Bible, alas I is often used to defend the practices of old Adam in the old world, and also to justify the Christian in his vain attempts to

mend the old nature and the old creation. But, I repeat it, where the eye is single, the rule of " the new creation" is as simple as possible.

But some will say, "Must we not attend to our various callings?" Unquestionably. We have our new creation duties as well as our new creation privileges. The remainder of the Epistle to the Colossians sets forth the relationships and responsibilities connected with our new creation standing. Husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants are all recognized and instructed. We can discharge the functions belonging to these several positions in the fullest harmony with our new standing in a risen Christ. We have ample guidance for every relationship in which, as Christians, we stand; nor should we be found in any position for which the Holy Ghost has not furnished us with instructions as to our conduct. The fact of His not having mentioned this or that position should be quite enough to show us that He never intended us to be found therein.

May the Lord lead us to understand this sublime and practical truth of " the new creation, and give us power, in the Spirit to walk as those who belong to that high and holy sphere of being.

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 5:1-8

In the fourth chapter the apostle has shown the character of trials which accompanied him in his path of service; and his willing acceptance of them; always, as he wrote, bearing about in his body the putting to death of Jesus—the world's rejection of his Master, even to death, being brought in these trials constantly before him as he trod in that Master's footsteps.

Then, if death should become the Christian's portion,—and of course it has with Paul and the great majority of believers; if our earthly tabernacle house should thus be destroyed, we know that we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The apostle writes here with an "if" because the Christian has no certainty of death. "We shall not all sleep" (1 Cor. 15:51), and "we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord," in 1 Thessalonians 4:15, tell of the Christian's hope of the Lord's soon coming; the moment of the resurrection we believe to be now very near.

The Christian's body as it now is, is compared to a tent or tabernacle, and so subject to decay; in its future state, it is a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, our dwelling place to be. As to this, we have the language of inspiration for faith's appropriation, "we know."

Verse 2. In this present tent-house we groan, earnestly desiring to have put on our house from heaven. The apostle expresses more than his own ardent wish; it is the longing of every right-minded Christian. We have, by God's favor, been formed into new creatures in Christ Jesus; formed for heaven; and what has been communicated to us in the Word of God (revealed to us by His Spirit), makes us feel the limitations of the present body; we desire the glorified body, that, no longer hindered, we may enjoy to the full all that has been secured to us.

Verse 3. "If indeed, being also clothed, we shall not be found naked" (JND). Nakedness was the condition of Adam when a sinner before God, for his fig-leaf apron brought him no acceptance with God (Gen. 3:7-10).

All must appear before the judgment seat of Christ (verse 10), and there will be only two classes there—the saved and the lost; the "clothed" and the "naked."

"For indeed we who are in the tabernacle groan, being burdened; while yet (or though meanwhile) we do not wish to be unclothed, but clothed, that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now He that has wrought us for this very thing is God, Who also has given to us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore, (we are) always confident, and know that while present in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight); we are confident I say, and pleased rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord" (verses 4-8, JND).

This is one of the few passages in God's Word that tell of the state of the saint who dies before the Lord comes. Luke 16:22 is the first New Testament scripture in which it is referred to, being the Lord's words for Jewish ears concerning the state after death,

"And it came to pass that the poor man died and that he was carried away by the angels into the bosom of Abraham. And the rich man also died and was buried. And in hades lifting up his eyes, being in torments, he sees Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."

The rich man's plea that Lazarus be sent to bring him the smallest measure of temporary relief from his suffering, Abraham answered with,

"Child, recollect that thou hast fully received thy good things in thy lifetime, and Lazarus evil things. But now he is comforted here, and thou art in suffering. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm is fixed, so that those who desire to pass hence to you cannot, nor do they who (desire to cross) from there, pass over unto us." (Luke 16:22-23,25-26, JND)

Luke 23:42,43 tells of that crucified thief who opened his mouth to speak in behalf of the holy sufferer on the central cross, and the answer he received: "And he said to Jesus, Remember me, (Lord) when Thou comest in Thy kingdom. And Jesus said to him, Verily, I say to thee, Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise." (JND)

Taking the passages in order, we come next to 1 Corinthians 15, where the believing dead are referred to as having fallen asleep, a term used by the Lord with reference to Lazarus of Bethany in John 11, and found again in 1 Thessalonians 4. It is evident that it is the believer's body that is referred to in these passages, for nowhere in the Bible is there a hint that the spirit or soul sleep.

2 Corinthians 5 (this chapter) is next. Verses 6 and 8 in the New Translation of J. N. Darby have been already quoted: "Therefore (we are) always confident, and know that while present in the body we are absent from the Lord." "We are confident, I say, and pleased rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord."

Philippians 1:21-23 follows:

"For for me to live is Christ, and to die gain; but if to live in flesh (is my lot) this is for me worth the while; and what I shall choose I cannot tell. But I am pressed by both, having the desire for departure and being with Christ, for it is very much better."

A few other scriptures might be cited, but these may suffice to show that God has not left His children to conjecture about what happens to a Christian when taken away in death, or the intermediate state in which he is while waiting for the Lord's coming for the living saints and to raise the bodies of those gone before.

"We shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Cor. 15:51-52, JND

The dead in Christ are in a far happier state than we who live. The trials that oft beset them in life are forever gone; sorrow is no more; the old nature which often troubled them is no longer with them, and they sin no more. For a little while they are absent from the body, but they are present with the Lord, enjoying His presence with nothing to hinder any more. Memory is theirs, we can see from Luke 16, and all the qualities of the new nature are of course in action.

Our chapter in 2 Corinthians assures us of the heavenly body we believers shall each have; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 tells us when we shall possess it. Meanwhile, if we should be called upon to pass through death, the body sleeps; we are then "unclothed," because all the heavenly saints are, together, in one moment, to receive the new body; that will be at the resurrection morning now fast approaching. None of the saints have the heavenly body yet. May we each live in the prospect of the Lord's coming.

Verse 5. He that has wrought us for this is God, and He has given us not only His infallible Word to tell us of what He will do for us, but also the Holy Spirit has been given as an "earnest" or advance payment. Yes, God the Holy Spirit is here, dwelling in every child of God who knows peace with Him; never to leave us, but to guard and guide us until the end of the way.

So, verse 6, the believer is entitled to say, "we are always confident." We walk by faith, not by sight. We can only say this in truth concerning ourselves as we are living on Christ, our heavenly food. A child of God can be very unlike one, if he feeds the old nature within, finding, or trying to find, happiness in worldly things; that is, walking by sight, not by faith.

O, let us find our true happiness in a walk with God, keeping His Word constantly in our heart and mind; the Word of God and prayer must be our daily, our constant resort if such a life is to be ours.

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

The apostle continues telling what underlay his service for Christ—the principles which indeed necessarily underlie true and intelligent service for the Heavenly One. He has said, in verse 11,

"Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord we persuade men," having in his soul a deep sense of the character of God's judgment of sin, though without fear for himself, for it was his habit to walk in the light. But now he names a more compelling motive in his life of service than the thought of impending and overwhelming judgment upon the lost—the love of Christ, that matchless love that led God's beloved and only Son from God's fullest glory, down to Calvary's depth of woe, there giving His life that sinners might live.

Verse 14: "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if One died for all, then were all dead."

One indeed has died for all; He gave Himself a ransom for all, as it is said in 1 Timothy 2:6. That could not have been unless all was over with man. There was no possibility of improving the human race or any of its members, for all were spiritually in a state of death.

Paul could say to the believers at Ephesus (Ephesians 2:1, etc.),

"You were dead in trespasses and sins. ... But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved)." One has said,

"I do not know anything on the world's side of Christ's grave, except this, that they are all dead in sins." And another,

"Thus the apostle sees death come in for all, and judgment awaiting men as such; and because this was the fact for all, Christ died for all. Promises avail not, nor the kingdom; so complete is man's ruin. Else a living Messiah would have sufficed. But no, only a Saviour that died could meet the case."

Verse 15: "And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again."

All were dead, and out of the number, some live by reason of Christ's death; they have not been left in the state in which they were by nature. Henceforth they are to live to Him who died for them and rose again.

The young Christian will notice that the Scriptures never say, as some mistakenly do, that Christ died for the sins of all; He did not. We may notice the language of Hebrews 9:28:

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." And in Romans 3:22,

"... righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe;" free to all for the taking, but only theirs who believe.

The value of the death of Christ is such that none need be lost; all may be saved by putting their trust in Him; but the solemn fact is that all do not come to Him; they do not want salvation since it can only be obtained in that way, God's way.

Verse 16. "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more."

A great change has taken place in the believer's life, though he may not realize its extent at first. Let us take note of this change as we see it in the apostle Paul. Writing to the Philippians (chapter 3) he speaks of having no confidence in the flesh—in the old self, though in himself by nature, and apart from the work of God in his soul, there had been much to boast of. But, he says,

"What things were gain to me those I counted loss for Christ."

Worldly honor, riches, all that the world esteems highly, now meant nothing, and less than nothing to him. To these Corinthians he has said (chapter 4, verse 5),

"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

"Christ after the flesh" (verse 16) refers to Himself as living on the earth. He might have taken the place that was His, of being Israel's Messiah, but He has passed through death; the world has never seen Him since He died on the cross. Another scene has claimed Him, and if Paul had ever known Him as in connection with the present scene, in Whom all the promises centered, henceforth in that way he knew Him no more. As now known, He was the One who died for him, and rose again.

Verses 17, 18. "So if any one be in Christ, there is a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new, and all things are of the God who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and given to us the ministry of that reconciliation" (JND).

We, believers, are in Christ, are part of a new creation; the world we have left behind us, is in a state of death in God's sight. For us, the old things to which we were attached have passed away; all things have become new and all of God, the God Who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ.

How wonderfully, and how completely, God has provided for His children, even for the feeblest and the least intelligent of them. And we see that all this is ours now, before we reach our heavenly home. May we know, and desire to know yet more, in a practical way the place we have been brought into through God's grace.

Verse 19. "How that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not reckoning to them their offenses; and putting in us the word of that reconciliation" (JND).

A ministry of reconciliation had been given to Paul to make known. God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, that world from its beginning had turned a deaf ear to His messengers, and at length, had taken His Son and crucified Him. What marvelous condescension, what unexampled favor to those that were rebels at heart and in action. Further, He was not reckoning to them their offenses. The proclamation was of mercy, where judgment was due.

Verses 20, 21. "We are ambassadors therefore for Christ, God as it were beseeching by us, we intreat for Christ, Be reconciled. Him who knew not sin He has made sin for us, that we might become God's righteousness in Him" (JND).

The apostle was then Christ's ambassador in the world, as the Lord had said of him at the time of his conversion (Acts 9:15):

"He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel; for I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake."

As no other man, Paul was the ambassador of his Master. God, as it were, beseeching by him, he intreated for Christ, Be reconciled.

But wonderful as God's grace has been seen to be in the verses we have been reading, a greater depth than this is revealed in verse 21:

"Him who knew not sin, He has made sin for us," laying for us His unsparing judgment of sin on Him. So we read in the prophetic statement of Isaiah 53:6,

"The Lord (Jehovah) hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." (Without this there is no salvation). And more, in the purposes of divine grace: "that we might become God's righteousness in Him."

It is only here in this passage that believers are said to become righteousness of God in Christ. This is seen first in Christ in virtue of His work risen, ascended, glorified; and now in us as associated with Him. Marvelous, God's grace is; who can measure it? Who tell its worth?

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 5:10-13

This knowledge of which we have been speaking, that everything we have done in the body, whether good or bad, is to pass under review at the judgment seat of Christ is meant by God to have a sobering and solemnizing effect in our souls. We can see from our chapter that it was a reality to the apostle, whose life was a constant savor of Christ.

The Christian has three enemies: the world, the flesh (the old nature) and the devil, and if allowed, they will ruin his testimony and all through his life, rob him of happiness. What makes young Christians and old Christians alike an easy prey for these enemies, is neglect of the Word of God, and prayer.

From God's Word we may learn much that is needed in taking our way through the present scene, and mind and heart and conscience, become exercised in increasing desire to be subject to Him in all things; through prayer we learn our dependence upon Him. It is "the word of His grace" that, joined with prayer, is able to build up the believer and to give him an inheritance among all those that are sanctified (Acts 20:32).

From the Word of God we learn that although before we were saved we were darkness, now we are light in the Lord, and should walk as children of light (Ephesians 5:8), and that "if we walk in the light as He (God) is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). From the same blessed Book we draw a word of warning against growing

careless, once we are saved,

“For the Word of God is quick (or living) and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened to the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do.” Hebrews 4:12-13.

Nothing now is hid from Him, though much may, with success, be veiled from our neighbors, or our brethren; and at the judgment seat of Christ He will “bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.” 1 Corinthians 4:5.

“Then,” as the last quoted verse concludes, “shall every man have praise of God”; He will praise what is worthy of praise in His children.

May thoughts of that approaching day lead us who are Christ’s to much more guardedness in our lives, that in them there may be that which will be found to His glory in the day of the giving of rewards! Must we not own with shame that we have attempted to excuse ourselves perhaps ten thousand times for things in which the old nature, instead of the new, was active? perhaps it was a hasty word that should never have been said, or an unworthy thought; or the choosing to stay at home on meeting night because of the weather or the distance, but really a measure of indifference to the claims of Christ. The list need not be enlarged; your own heart will tell you more.

No doubt all of us are familiar with the passage in Galatians 6:7-9,

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”

These then are days of sowing; there is reaping here too, but the Christian’s reaping will appear in full measure at the judgment seat of Christ.

“Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples.” John 15:8. These were the Lord’s words, uttered just before His cross. He was speaking of that which is deeper than work for Him, i.e., communion with Him, the source from which springs all that in us gives joy to His heart. May we each seek to know more of communion with the Father and the Son!

With wonder and a deepened sense of divine grace, we shall at the judgment seat of Christ, see our lives as we have never before. The ways of God will be known and understood in all their perfection, as another has said, by the application of the perfect light to the whole course of our life, and of His dealings with us, in which we shall thoroughly recognize that love - perfect, sovereign above all things—has reigned, with ineffable grace.

The majesty of God will have been maintained by His judgment at the same time that the perfection and tenderness of His dealings will be the eternal recollection of our souls. The same writer continues,

“How wonderful to be thus manifested! What love is that which in its perfect wisdom, in its marvelous ways overruling all evil, could bring such beings as we are to enjoy this unclouded light!”

There will be no dissatisfaction with the place we shall each hold in glory. We shall see others in higher stations than ourselves, because of greater devotion to the Lord, and we shall be happy in seeing them so rewarded, for the old nature and its fruit of sin, will be gone forever in the scene to which we are going. Praise and adoration to God because of His grace and mercy will fill every heart to the full.

Verse 11. “Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord we persuade men, but have been manifested to God, and I hope also that we have been (or are) manifested in your consciences.” (JND)

The Christian knows, from what he has learned of the holiness of God, how solemn it will be for a sinner to appear before Him. When we pass before that judgment seat we are already glorified, and like Christ; we shall be before Him in love; our sins and the old nature gone.

Now, the knowledge of the judgment, as it must fall upon the sinner, moves the Christian to seek to persuade those who are in danger of that judgment.

We have been manifested to God; we have no fear of the manifestation to come; it will reveal to us all of His ways in love and in grace and mercy, to us from beginning to end. These thoughts exercise our consciences. The apostle adds, in love to his dear Corinthians, that he hopes that he is manifested in their consciences; such was his desire, for he was Christ’s servant for them, seeking their blessing for Christ’s sake. The state of the Corinthians was, as we have seen, better than when Paul wrote his First Epistle, but their restoration to a right state before the Lord, was not complete.

Verse 12. The apostle will not again commend himself to them by appealing to their consciences, but instead gives the saints at Corinth occasion of boast in his behalf where some boasted in countenance and not in heart. For whether he was beside himself (as some were ready to say of Paul, because on occasion his spirit was enraptured with thoughts of God’s grace in Christ) it was not excitement or folly, but the result of occupation with a subject so glorious. If he were criticized as inconsistent because he passed from these occasions of rapture to speak and write soberly in instructing the Corinthians in ways pleasing to God, it was for their cause, for them (verse 13).

Young Christian: Volume 32, 1942, Love of Christ, The

2 Cor. 5:21

He took our position with all its consequence, that we might have His position with all its consequences.

He was treated as sin upon the cross; that we might be treated as righteousness in the presence of God.

He was cast out of God's presence because He had sin upon Him, by imputation; that we might be received into God's bosom because we have perfect righteousness upon us, by imputation.

He passed through three hours of darkness; that we might walk in everlasting light.

All that was due to us as ruined sinners was laid upon Him; that all that was due to Him as accomplisher of redemption might be ours.

There was everything against Him when He hung upon the accursed tree; that there might be nothing against us when we stand before God.

Young Christian: Volume 31, 1941, Judgment-Seat of Christ, The

“We must all appear (be manifested) before the judgment seat of Christ.” 2 Corinthians 5:10.

What is the effect upon Paul of the thought of the judgment seat? He says, “We persuade men.” He does not think of himself at all. He is full of confidence, and pleased to think of being present with the Lord (ver. 8). He has no time to think of self, but he persuades others.

How shall we appear at the judgment seat of Christ? Why, we shall be there in bodies of glory, like the Judge, Himself.

The One before Whom we are manifested, is the One Who has put away all our sin. He is our righteousness. How can we be afraid to come before Him!

He will show us how we have performed our duties. Duties flow from the place He gave us. Being a child of God, I must behave like a child of God. What did God do to me, when I was an enemy? Did He not forgive me? Then, I ought to go and forgive my enemies. At the judgment seat, I shall see just what I did, and why I did it.

“We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good, or bad.” 2 Corinthians 5:10.

The Remembrancer: 1891, How to Manifest the Life of Jesus in Our Body

CO 4:10 {" Then you come to the way the vessel is dealt with, in Paul, (a man with sin in him like ourselves). A thing with a will is not a vessel: a person is acting for himself if he has a will; he must not think or will anything for himself; and therefore it says, Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.' That is obedience of course. Christ was obedient unto death; that is not a man's will, and I am always to bear about in my body His dying: that is Christ's dying, or being put to death, as we have it in Peter, Forasmuch, then, as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind,' Christ did actually die, and Peter had just been speaking to them not to suffer for evil doing, but if it were God's will, for well doing; arm yourselves, therefore, with the same mind. This would be carrying about the dying Christ had died; and this dying of Christ I apply to myself, so that the body never stirs, and the will of the body never moves.

We have then these two things: first, Paul, as a faithful man, never allows the vessel to have, for one instant, a will or a thought of its own. Just as much as Christ died, and completely died, so Paul was carrying this about constantly, and says, 'Now you are as dead as Christ was,' and though Paul was very faithful in that, the Lord helped him by sending him through circumstances, so that he despaired of his life. It was not chastening, but he was having the sentence of death written in himself. He held himself practically for a dead man, and the Lord says, Well, now I must bring death right on to you, and so you will be a dead man.' In his case it was making it good by the trials he went through, and with this object, that nothing but the life of Christ should come out. The Lord says I must make this thorough that he may realize it in himself,' and then Paul sums it up by saying, so then death worketh in us, but life in you,' that is, Paul was so entirely a dead man, that nothing but the life of Christ wrought in him towards the Corinthians. Wonderful description! If the vessel thinks or acts, it is spoiled. There is the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ to come out, and if the vessel is anything, by so much the light is hindered: but if the vessel is kept dead, nothing but the life of Christ is there to come out. It ought to have been the same in them as in himself; but it was not; of them he says, life in you.' Death was working in him, and so nothing but Christ's life worked out in them. Death and life are both taken morally in this verse. Read verses 10 to 12. There would be no so then,' if it had been death in the Corinthians already. It is a wonderful thing to say for anybody, but it is said of Paul. The treasure was, as we have seen, the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It shined' into Paul's heart.

But the vessel is in danger of working, and so he applies Christ's death to the vessel and then there is nothing but Christ's life to come out. But it was death to him as a man."

Christian Friend: Volume 12, Gospel of the Glory of Christ, The

As to the difference between the gospel of the glory and the gospel of the humiliation, the latter is pure grace in God, manifested here in Christ. John’s writings show God revealing Himself in Christ to man in His life down here. In Paul’s writings what we have habitually is man manifested in righteousness before God. The gospel of humiliation is perfect grace; it is God coming down to man where he is, visiting him in his condition as such a one on earth. The gospel of the glory takes “this treasure” (v. 7) and unfolds it. In Philippians 2 we have the whole line, from the time when Christ was in “the form of God” till He was on the cross, when, being found in fashion as a Man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death. This is the manifestation of God down here amongst sinners. But in the gospel of the glory man is looked at as the old man totally set aside, yet man is in glory in virtue of the complete work that redeems us and justifies us, and gives us a place in the glory. The glory is the testimony to the efficacy of the work; the humiliation is the testimony to the greatness of the love. But it is all the same gospel.... The gospel of the humiliation is God in grace, whereas the gospel of the glory is Man in glory, of course as fruit of grace. In the gospel of the humiliation we have. God in Christ, and in the gospel of glory we have man in Christ. The latter is a glorious result of the other

no doubt, but it is a different aspect of the gospel.

J. N. D.

Words of Faith: Volume 3, Ministry of the Gospel, The Character of the: Notes of a Lecture on 2 Cor. 4:5

NOTES OF A. LECTURE ON 2 Cor. 4:5.

THE character of the ministry of the gospel, is, that the things are possessed for ourselves, before they can be ministered to others. In the Old Testament it was not for themselves, but for us, "did they minister the things." (See 1 Peter 1:10-12.) We stand between the suffering and the glory, with the Holy Ghost, come down from heaven, shining in our hearts, to give out the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. " When it pleased God," says Paul, " who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles." (Gal. 1:15,18.) Mark, Christ was revealed, not to, but -in, Paul. It is the light of the gospel of the glory of God, called the gospel of the glory-Christ is speaking from heaven. We have got the last things, the last revelations, connected with the glory of God in the Man Christ Jesus, now in heaven. "Therefore, having this ministry, we faint not," &c. (2 Cor. 4:1-6.) He is speaking of the contrast with Moses, who put a veil over his face.

There is no glory to be compared with that in the face of Christ. Man could not look at it, if it came with a legal claim on the heart of man. You never get the light of the glory of God shining into the heart of man, without the conscience being awakened, if under law. I cannot stand in the presence of God; it tells me what I ought to be, and if I am not that, I cannot look at the glory-He must hide Moses in the cleft. But when I see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, where do I see it? It is in heaven, in a Man, in the Man that hung on the cross for my sins. The meaning of the glory seen there, is, that sin, death, and Satan have all been put away together. He, being made sin, died, and went into the grave, was raised, and is gone into heaven, and the only part in it man had was sin, and hatred to Himself.

The glory of God is the witness that there is the complete cleansing away of all sin. That Person at God's right hand, who was made sin, went under death, went into the grave, and has passed it all, and is now in glory; and, in virtue of the work being accomplished, the testimony comes to me, the One who bore my sins is in glory, and all is done with. There we get the full testimony of the glory of Christ-the testimony of God's value of it. All this I get in the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ. Having been brought by Him to believe in God, I see the glory of God-I can look, and delight in it. The testimony of my salvation is the glory, and seeing it with an open face, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory.

I say, Let me see that my Sin-bearer is in the glory of God, and I have the certainty that all sin has been put away, and then the Holy Ghost comes down, and, because I am thus cleansed, I am sealed by Him. A Christian stands, and looks at the accomplished sufferings; looks back at the accomplishment of the work that has put away sin; looks up, and sees the One who did it all in glory, and that is the way the glory attains its full effect in the heart. It is the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It confounds one when first one sees it; but what am I waiting for, if He owns me as one with Himself? I am waiting for Him to come and take me there-to bring me into the thing He has made mine.

Power has come into this place of death; I do not want to die, but to be clothed upon-death swallowed up in life. I do not want to die, I want to be changed into-the body of glory, without dying at all. It is a present living power. We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed; the power of death is broken. If I go up to the judgment-seat, in what state shall I go? The Lord will come, and take me there. Christ, having such deight in me, comes for me; changes me; and takes me there glorified, and I shall have to give an account of myself there, and a very great blessing it will be to have all brought out in the light-how Christ kept me when. I fell; how He lifted me up. The fullness of redemption is manifested when we go up to the judgment-seat in glorified bodies. When He appears, we shall be like Him, and what can I fear in regard to judgment now? My Sin-bearer is at the right hand of God, having put away sin at His first coming, and He appears the second time, without sin, unto salvation, to take us to Himself, as made like Him.

The wise virgins were asleep, as well as the foolish.. What changed it? The midnight cry waked them-the testimony of the Lord's coming; they had oil (grace), and awakening at the cry, they were ready, and went in. When asleep they had given up expecting the Bridegroom, and when the cry came, they woke up. At first, they went out full of the thought of His coming, and then got into ease and comfort, and went to sleep, more or less, in the world.

If the Lord Jesus came to-night, would you all be found, with bright lamps, ready for Him? It is the state of your souls.. We are to expect, in the last days, perilous times, but great blessings, in the midst of it all, in the path of faith. We find the form of Christianity, but denying the power. In Timothy it is the scriptures I am directed to, because, if I say, " The church, teaches thin, or that," the question is, What is the church? But if I say, " The scripture says it," I know where I have learned it-." From a child thou halt known the scriptures," &c.

The word of God is "sharper than any two-edged sword," &c.; it deals with the conscience, not with the intellect. If I touch it, it deals with my conscience; it comes in with invisible power, and, like the woman of Samaria, I can. say, " Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did." Faith's root is in the conscience.

1 People talk of apostolic succession; there is no succession in. God's word. Just before Laodicea is spued out of Christ's mouth, the word to Philadelphia is, " Behold, I have set before thee an open door, which no man can shut." Not a great deal to say about Philadelphia, but it is characterized by what God delights in-the word of Christ has authority on their hearts and consciences, they hold to His name, and are looking for the promise, "Behold, I come quickly." He is waiting, sitting at the right hand of God, till His enemies become His footstool. His friends are perfected forever, and He is coming to rceeive them. He does not take a bit of the inheritance till He has gathered up the fellow-heirs; then all things in heaven and earth are to be gathered together in one, and all to be under Christ.

Our place is a peculiar one, like Eve's. She was not lord of the earth, she was, in all the creation of which man was lord, his helpmeet. The being associated with the Lord Jesus Christ is the one thing marking our peculiar place. He is given to be Head over all to the church,which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all, and we, the joint-heirs of Christ, we wait for Him-the Eternal lover of our souls!

The thing that characterizes Christianity, is, the knowledge of the unveiled glory of God in the face of Jesus ' Christ, and " if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." A veil may be on man's heart, but the fact of man being in the glory of God remains equally true, and when the veil is taken away, there is nothing to come but Christ coming in judgment to the world. Then the trials and afflictions of the present time are all connected with the earthen vessel-its weakness. If—an apostle, you can only be kept, day by day, by the power of God,

The vessel is one thing, the treasure is another. The vessel must be nothing, if the treasure there is to shine iput. The old man is judged, and crucified with Christ; I have to look at myself as a dead man. I may light up a lantern, but if the glass be not kept perfectly clean, the light will not shine out. I have a glorified Christ in my soul, and if my flesh rules me, that is not the treasure shining out; I must ever reckon myself dead before God.

A Christian stands a new man in God's sight. To reckon myself dead is a privilege for myself, and a necessity for my testimony, to put it simply. Suppose a mother heard her son was half-killed, would she stop on her way to him to look at the shops? So, if a Christian is, full of Christ, he will not be distracted by anything of the world. Where the earthen vessel is right, the light will shine out. There must be no rest for the flesh; nothing but sorrows and trials-always "delivered unto death," and bearing about in the body the dying," &c. The Lord put the apostle through all sorts of circumstances. If anything of the flesh sprang up, the red-hot iron must be put to it, to destroy the sprouts; death wrought in him, that nothing but the life of Christ might appear.

There is such a thing as a man being superior to all the circumstances he may be passed through; Paul gets the sentence of death welling through everything, yet "bold to preach," &e. We find the most complete superiority to circumstances in Stephen. Whilst the stones are flying about, he kneels down, and prays for his murderers; he is a copy of Christ, of life in the midst of death.-J. N. D.

Paul needed to know his entire dependence upon God, •so God suffered Satan to drive a thorn into his flesh. Paul prays three times to have it removed, but the reply comes, " My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Paul adds, " most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

Words of Faith: Volume 1, Answers to Correspondents: Always, Mortal Flesh, Break in Text in 2 Cor. 4?

20. Q.-I have noticed your answer to C. E. S.'s Question 6, in the April number of "Words of Faith," in which you speak of 2 Cor. 4:2 as connected with actual death and resurrection; but I have the following difficulties, which I would like to lay before you: If it be so, why does he say "always"? Could a person be delivered to actual death more than once; could there be a continuance of this? Again, as to the expression which is in question, "mortal flesh," how can you speak of mortal flesh in resurrection? I could understand the life of Jesus being manifested then in the body which is now mortal, but the text speaks of the life of Jesus being manifested in our mortal flesh. And thirdly, why break off the text from its evident connection with verse 12, which speaks of the present ("so then, death works in us," &c.), to connect it with verse 14?

Mr. Darby, in his Synopsis, says: "But besides this (that contained in verse 10), God made him realize these things by the circumstances through which he had to pass; for, as living in the world, he was always delivered unto death for Jesus sake, in order that the life of Jesus might be manifested in his mortal flesh. Thus death wrought in the apostle, what was merely of man, of nature and natural life, disappeared, in order that life in Christ, developing itself in him on the part of God and by His power, should work in the Corinthians by this means."In this way all is perfectly simple to my mind, and no violence is done to a single word of the passage.

In this light the expression "mortal flesh" is to my mind full of beauty. We all know, thank God, that we shall be, in glory, perfectly conformed to Christ's image; but to me the thought has been exceedingly precious, that even now, whilst we have bodies subject to the power of death, God should bring this very power to bear upon us, for the smashing of the earthen vessel in which He has deposited the treasure, that the life of Jesus only may be seen. J. R.

A.-We have no wish to press our interpretation of 2 Cor. 4:2, especially in the presence of the authority quoted against us, but it does seem to us that in using the words "mortal flesh," the apostle does not repeat himself, but had in his mind a further thought beyond that of the "body" as the vessel of the life of Jesus in his testimony to others, and that resurrection was before him for himself, as well as for those to whom he wrote. (See verses 13, 14.) The conjunction "and," omitted in our version, should properly come in before the "we." We would like to say in this connection, and it is our reason for inserting this letter that, while we seek, by the Lord's help, to comfort and teach others, we desire to be helped, corrected, and instructed ourselves—Rom. 1:11,12. C. W.

Bible Treasury: Volume N5, In Christ God and Man Thoroughly Manifested

How solemn, yet how blessed, the truth which the gospel reveals to faith, that both God and man are thoroughly manifested All is out on both sides: God in all His grace and truth; man in all his hatred and guilt. The cross of Christ makes the good and the evil perfectly plain to the uttermost. It is not merely that man, the chosen people, failed in every respect under the law of God (that is, in the duty to God and man which was justly required); but that when God in the person of Christ came in love and active unmerited goodness to ruined man, He was cast out with nothing but ignominy and scorn. Man would not have the true God of grace at any price, but crucified Him who is His image.

This necessarily and in principle closed all question of relationship with God for the people who had His law and boasted in that which could only condemn them. But the same death of the Cross, which proved the Jew's irretrievable ruin on the ground of law, opened the door of indiscriminate grace to all mankind as manifestly lost sinners, Jew and Gentile alike. It is in vain for the Jew to talk of the law, vainer still for the Gentile still more openly God's lawless enemy. The gospel goes out since Christ's death, resurrection and ascension, expressly on the ground that all sinned, and that none is righteous, no not one.

When man had thus manifestly, and after all patience and long-suffering, done his worst against God, no less is it manifest that God in the face of all did His best in giving His Son to be a sin-offering for such a wicked and rebellious world, that whosoever calls on His name should be saved. There is no ground of salvation in man. All turns on the Second man. Not only is He alone worthy, but He suffered for sins, Just for unjust, that the vilest who believes in his heart and confesses with his mouth might be saved. It is God's salvation complete, perfect, and everlasting; in contrast with Israel's temporal favors; and they too as a nation, when their heart turns to Him whom they despised and refused, shall enter into His mercy forever.

Why then parley with the enemy, or listen to the evil heart of unbelief, when God sends you the word of reconciliation? He assures you that the atoning work is done by His Son, the only work which could glorify Him as to sin, the only work which could cleanse you from your sins. Yea the Son of Man so glorified Him, not only as Father but as God, that He is now glorified as man in God Himself, before the kingdom comes in displayed power and glory. And thus the gospel is not only of God's grace, but of Christ's glory as now on the Father's throne, whence He is coming, we know not how soon, to take us there where He is now. This is incomparably more than to reign with Him over the earth, though we shall share in it also.

So complete thus is the manifestation of God in grace and truth, yea and in heavenly glory, to bless the lost sinner who casts himself as he is on Christ. And so completely does He prove that there is no good in us but evil beyond our fathoming, that there is no excuse for the least delay. All of badness on my part is out; all is out of sovereign grace on His part. Both of these are the strongest motives to come and find life eternal and everlasting redemption in Christ Jesus the Lord. “But if also our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in those that are perishing, in whom the god of this age blinded the thoughts of the unbelieving, so that the radiancy of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is God's image, should not shine forth.” What madness to hesitate or question! Who but God could so bless a lost sinner? and He only through Christ's cross, which makes it to be God's righteousness; and thus by faith we too become His righteousness in Christ.

What a joy it is, that when man was proved irretrievably lost, God in the gospel reveals His righteousness justifying the believer in the most glorious way! For it is not only in what the blood of Christ effects that his sins should be cleansed away atoningly, but that the believer himself should enter the new and heavenly place, yea in Christ as He is in glory before God. Thus if no one saw the heavenly vision as the apostle did, every Christian is entitled to say that he has the substance of the blessing which was made known to Saul and through him to all who believe His word. The grace of God gratuitously met him in his sins when he bowed to Christ; it has also made bite to become God's righteousness in Him, not as He was but as He is in heavenly glory.

No wonder then that the apostle could speak of the gospel of God's glory. For if love brought down the Son to us as the only but perfectly efficacious propitiation for our sins, He so glorified God about sin that God has glorified Him in Himself, and gives us to become His righteousness in that glory, whence the light of Christ in glory reached our dark hearts, and we are henceforth identified with Him there. The light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ was not for Saul of Tarsus only, but through his inspired testimony that the Corinthian saints of old and that we now who believe might know ourselves blessed after the same rich pattern. What wondrous grace to be a Christian in the simple, unadulterated, and full faith of Christ according to the gospel of His glory! How unutterably wretched to be anything less! Between the two there is no middle ground of standing sanctioned by God. Christendom is utterly short of the truth, and hastening full sail into the abyss of the apostasy.

Bible Treasury: Volume 9, Fragments: 2 Corinthians 4:12

2 Cor. 4:12. Death wrought in Paul in such a sort that the flesh did not stir. He was so truly dead that Christ only lived in him. That left the life of Jesus on Paul's part to act with regard to the Corinthians.

Bible Treasury: Volume 9, Fragments: Sufferings for Christ

2 Cor. 4:11. When Paul passed through sufferings destined to break down the flesh, he endured sufferings for Christ. In a sense it is perfection. With us alas! discipline often mixes with it.

Bible Treasury: Volume 6, Scripture Query and Answer: "dying"

Q. 2 Cor. 4:10. What is meant by (translated in the English Bible “dying”) here? Is it “deadness” or the state of death, or what else? W.

A. is stated to have a passive or rather neutral sense as well as active, it is not simply deadness. It is not the state of Heath, but, where not killing, the act of dying. So putting to death even is used in English: only agency is supposed there. I may say 'his putting to death' was inexcusable, i.e., his being put to death. In Rom. 4 it is not simply death, as if Sarah were dead, but the losing the power of life which had taken place. He did not think of Sarah's womb losing its vital powers. In 2 Cor. 4:10 it is not losing, as in Rom. 4, but he realized in the body the applying death to it, as death was Christ's portion. It is not, as to Christ, the Jews' act of crucifying and slaying, which is in mind. Hence killing does not snit, but the fact of the setting aside of life. No English word exactly answers. Dying is looked at as the fruit of something at work; but it is not the working of the instrument which is looked at, but the effect on the person. He held his body down as dead because, as regards Christ in this world, he knew Him as one Who had died to it, for whom putting to death was His portion and the source of all blessing. It is the cross applied to the flesh's life. is making a corpse of, depriving of life; this ended with his body because it had so been with Christ. So Peter says, Christ having 'Suffered in the flesh, we are to arm ourselves with the same mind.

Girdle of Truth: Volume 9, Walking by Faith

" For we walk by faith, not by sight." (Read 2 Cor. 4:6 -5:9.)

To a certain extent it is, doubtless, true, that every real Christian may be said to walk by faith, and not by sight. But the largest charity will not allow us to think that, all Christians at all times, in their course through this world, are, according to the force of the principle enunciated by the apostle, as gathered from the connection in which it stands, practically and characteristically, walking by faith, and not by sight. Nay, if we turn in upon our own consciousness, it may be asked which of us is found, day by day, and in all the varying circumstances of life, so giving to the things which are unseen and eternal their due and controlling power in the soul over the things which are seen and temporal, as to be habitually, and in the sense of the apostle, walking by faith, and not by sight?

To be saved by faith is one thing, to walk by faith is another. And Scripture does not present these things as so conjoined that where the one exists the other, without our care and concern, and without our watchfulness and warfare, will necessarily follow. " By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." This casts us upon God as the gracious and sole author of our salvation, thus endearing His character to our hearts while it gives them their sure and eternal ground of confidence in His favor. But Scripture also speaks to us thus: "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and please God, so ye would abound more and more." This throws the soul inward upon itself, to see how far its habits and principles, its conduct and feelings, or, as Scripture beautifully expresses it, " The issues of life," are in accordance with the will of God. " For (adds the apostle) ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus." " For this is the will of God, even your sanctification," &c.

The balance of Scripture is destroyed where the mind is occupied alone with privilege and grace, and is impatient of the aspect of duty and obligation. And it is to be feared on the part of those who profess to be separated from the general corruption of Christianity, but whose separation is a thing of naught if it be not a separation to God and holiness, that there may be springing up amongst them a new and subtle kind of Antinomianism, in constantly looking at the Church's abstract position and perfectness in Christ, as if the mere mental recognition of that secured to each individual a position and acceptance with God which could never be forfeited, and beyond which it was impossible he should be advanced. Every word of God is true; but it is true in application only so far as it is truly applied. Truth is not truth to me until it is reduced to living act. Every distinct proposition of the word of God asks for itself a definite reception by faith, " faith which works by love." The ends of a divine revelation are not accomplished in us except as it brings the soul and God together, in the harmony of truth communicated and truth obeyed. This, and not a light kind of second-band dealing with the terms in which truth is expressed either in Scripture or by men whose hearts have felt its power, is the obedience of faith.

" We walk by faith (says the apostle) not by sight." This is not equivalent to the thought that we are saved by faith, however true that may be. To walk is indicative not of a point but a progress. Neither can walking by faith be reduced to the vagueness of a general principle, leaving it to the individual mind to fill up the undefined outline of its application. Nothing, I think, can give more definiteness and force to this simple but comprehensive proposition, " For we walk by faith not by sight," than the way in which it is interjected by the apostle in the passage under consideration. It is presented in connection with the most wonderful unfolding of the character and consequences that mark the reception of the Gospel by the soul which are traced onward through all the vicissitudes of our earthly course, giving a victory over every trial and even over death itself; linking every sorrow and suffering, that is met in the power of faith, with eternal glory; pointing the soul, in the dissolution of all its present associations, to a " building of God, a house not made with hands;" and intermediately giving to death this simple character of being absent from the body and present with the Lord; in issue landing the soul in this simple purpose of life, " endeavoring, whether present or absent, to be well-pleasing to him."

In the first place he glances at the condition of the world, of men who are in estrangement from this gospel, and in a few emphatic words presents a melancholy picture to the mind. He says, " If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (Chapter 4:3,4.)

He connects a veiled or hidden gospel and lost souls and Satan's power, whatever men may think to the contrary or say. But while this should stir our pity and rouse our energies to make this gospel known, it comes in here in the way of enhancement of that work of God which it is his object to unfold. He says, " For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, bath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (Ver. 6.)

There is an overwhelming kind of feeling produced by the realization of this aspect of the gospel. It brings God so near to the soul. It shows Him who, in His sovereign power in creation said, " Let there be light, and there was light," bringing in by a power and agency, as direct and immediate, the light of that revelation by which He is made known in grace to the heart. " It is He who has shined in our hearts;" not to reveal something already existent there, but to make Himself known where all was darkness and estrangement from Himself before.

To dwell only upon the effects of the gospel in its saving power toward men, is to lose sight of the true and substantive character of the gospel itself. That which is hidden from men, to whom the gospel is hidden, and which leaves them in a lost condition, is the good tidings of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. And that which is revealed by the light shining in the heart, is to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the, face of Jesus Christ, whether this be in its apprehension in the soul, or for its outshining in testimony in the darkness of this world. And at this point, as throughout, how necessary it is to bear in mind the principle, " For we walk by faith, not by sight." Faith only will keep the soul in companionship, if I may so speak, with this wondrous disclosure of what God is, and how near He is to us, in this gospel which we all profess.

The next point which is presented is the effect of this revelation in us, and the purpose of God in the conditions of its display in the circumstances of this world. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." If the knowledge of God is introduced into the heart, it produces a permanent effect there. As the Lord Jesus says, " This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." It is the in-shining of God to the soul; but then we must remember that it is characteristic of the nature of God that He is light. Doubtless, He is love also; but it is said, " God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." And when the eternal life is manifested in this world in the person of Him of whom it is said, " He is the brightness of His glory and the express image of his person," it is declared, " In him was life, and the life was the light of men;" or, reciprocally, " the light of men was

the life." Again, the Apostle John, speaking of a new commandment which he was writing to them, says, " which thing is true in him and in you, because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." He refers to what is expressed by the Lord in John 13:34, " A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you (), that ye also love one another." This, as the apostle recognizes, necessitated a participation in the nature from which this love flows, which is the nature of God Himself. Hence, as already quoted, in repeating this new commandment, he says, " which thing is true in him and in you, because the darkness is past and the true light now shineth." It is the linking together the two statements of his gospel, " the light shineth in darkness," &c., and " In him was life, and the life was the light of men."

Thus far to rescue the expression, we have this treasure," &c., from any vagueness of meaning. If God shines in our hearts, it is to produce there, through the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ, a specific and eternal result. It is to produce His own image there, to impart His own nature. Doctrinally it is stated, " God bath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." " The true light now shineth." But if the rays of this light shine into the soul, it is not to leave there a mere photographic image, a fixed and dead shadow of the living object it represents. It first gives the life—" the life was the light of men"-and eventually it will change its objects into the glory, which is the proper home of the life. " We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (Chapter 3:18.) " When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." And farther, the Apostle John, " We shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is." This is the final transformative power.

I again repeat, " For we walk by faith, not by sight." And if it be not so, I ask, wherein does the common familiarity with the statements of Scripture, which is not lacking amongst us, differ from a cold and uninfluential dealing with the terminology of some obscure and obsolete record? " Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." " If we believe not, he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself."

" But we have this treasure in earthen vessels." And this not simply and of necessity from the condition of our nature here in this world, but in order to illustrate the divine power. This brings in the necessity of our knowledge of God's purpose concerning us in our daily walk as Christians in the world, and in our testimony for Christ; and also the concurrence of our souls in the conditions in which the divine power is to be displayed. Doubtless, the apostle made a great advance in his personal knowledge of this, when, in answer to his prayer concerning his " thorn in the flesh," he got this reply from the Lord Jesus, " My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." And the immediate concurrence of his soul in these conditions of the display of divine power in a human vessel, an " earthen vessel," is seen in his subjoined declaration " Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me," dm It was the personal, individual illustration of the truth before us, " Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." (Ver. 10.)

There is a proportion and correspondence between the manifestation of the life of Jesus, and our bearing about in the body His dying. If this be entered into in the energy of divine grace, and in enlarged and self-denying service for Christ, as in the case of the apostle, it displays, as from within, the power of this life. But it is not dissociated from the divine care, and watchful ordering of external circumstances for this issue by the Lord, as he says, " For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." (Ver. 11.) There is the purpose of heart which, by a voluntary consecration to the service of Christ, seeks to be made conformable to His death; a voluntary " bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." But there is also the weakness of nature, together with a lack of full spiritual apprehension, which, if unchecked, would induce in the most energetic servants of the Lord a not unfrequent turning away from the constant pressure of the cross; and, to that extent, would defeat the desire to manifest the life of Jesus. To counteract this, therefore, and that the desire for Christ's glory may be divinely accomplished in His servants, there is the ordering, variously by the Lord, of outward circumstances, so that, as the apostle says, there should be a delivering up unto death for Jesus' sake: the ordering of the Lord coming in, in aid of the weakness of the earthen vessel in which this divine treasure is deposited. Hence, especially, in the service of the gospel, the apostle had to say, " So then death worketh in us, but life in you."

But the secret of all this willingness to meet death-death not outwardly only, but in all the inward purposes and principles and objects of a man in the flesh-what is this? It is the conscious possession of a life that death cannot touch; a life whose triumphs are now seen in the mural death of all that nature, apart from God, must needs value and cherish; a life sustained by its alliance with God amidst " deaths oft" in its course through this world; and a life, finally, that resurrection will give its triumph to when even the earthen vessel that contained it is broken, and lying like a dishonored potsherd in the grave. It was this which urged the apostle onward in his fervid course, as he says, " We have the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you" (ver. 13, 14); and then adds, " For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." (Ver. 16.)

But here again how needful is it, if these things are not to be to us mere empty words-words of Scripture, it is true, but to us wholly uninfluential-to remember the declaration of the apostle, " For we walk by faith not by sight." How otherwise is it possible that the summing up of the apostle's estimate of his whole course of suffering and sorrow and affliction in this world should appear to us to be anything but a mere rhapsody, instead of the utterances of a man soberly weighing up the issues of time, with its passing and checkereda scenes, and of eternity with its impending glory? " For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (Ver. 17, 18.)

The eye that is steadily directed to the world that is unseen and eternal, will bring home to the soul a thousand intimations of coming glory and of attractive goodness, which are missed entirely by the Christian even that is unduly occupied by the things of this world and time. The spectacle of the starry heavens and all the glory of the celestial sphere may be alike the object of the contemplation of the astronomer in his observatory, and the midnight traveler as he lifts his transient glance ever and anon to the spangled canopy on high. But while the one gazes with wrapt wonder on the limitless fields of space, and has his senses bathed in all the glory of revolving suns and spheres, as through his telescope they are seen to thread their mazy way through never-ending galaxies of brightness; the other beholds little more than an outstretched pavilion of blue hung with its tiny lamps, which, twinkling with glowworm brightness, shed their feeble rays to guide him in the bewilderment of his steps. The objects of contemplation are the same to both, but how different are the emotions awakened by them in the mind of each! So is it with the Christian that steadily gazes with the eye of faith into the disclosures of that world which faith alone can apprehend, and the Christian that does not indeed disbelieve the record of those things which God has prepared for them that love Him, but

who, in a practical sense, could hardly-at least in the apostle's application of the phrase-be said to " Walk by faith and not by sight."

In infinite grace, we know that God so watches over the feeblest and faultiest of His children, in their course, as to make all things work together for their good. But this is far wide of the truth. which was before the apostle's mind in the passage now before us. Here the scope and purpose and entire bent of the soul, whether in active labor or in patient suffering, are directed to the things which are unseen and which are eternal, to the exclusion, as to any dominancy over the soul, of the things which are seen and temporal. Nor can it be said, I think, where Christ and His service, His cross and coming again are not the ruling objects of the heart, that the language of these verses can suitably be applied. Though if human estimation be regarded, it is granted that in this respect " the first may be last and the last first."

There is nothing more wonderful than the calm and confident way in which each point is explained and disposed of in the questions that are discussed in the verses on which we now enter, chapter v. 1-9. If we think of what death is, what conquests it has made, what is involved in the dissolution of the ties that bind us to the present scene of existence, what utter powerlessness there is in nature to meet the approach of death, what darkness and uncertainty mark 'all the reasonings of philosophy concerning what is hidden from us in the future by the veil of mortality, we cannot but see and wonder at the love that opens out such a vista of glory and triumph through the regions of death and discomfiture of all human power and hope. The body which we now possess, and which is subject to decay and dissolution, is but an earthly tent that death takes down, to be replaced by a " building of God," an eternal habitation, in those heavens where Jesus finds His home and where God's glory eternally reigns. There may be groaning now because of the weakness of nature, and because of our association with a creation that, through sin, is itself made to groan; but this only compels the more earnest out-look of the soul, and the more longing desire to be " clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." But where this is not the object of desire, and where the soul has not a title to this provision of God, what is there for it but the most terrible unpreparedness for a scene on which it is compelled to enter? For what pregnant sorrow is there in the expression, " If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked." This heavenly house must be ours, the soul must be clothed upon with this, or else we must " be found naked." But this is an interjected thought; and the apostle returns again to the " groaning" which characterizes our dwelling in this tabernacle, showing that the very burden we now feel through corrupted mortality, awakens, not simply a desire for the deliverance that death might bring, but for that which goes far beyond-" that mortality might be swallowed up of life." It is life, and not death, that Scripture always presents to the believer as the proper object of his hope. It is for life and glory that Christ has redeemed us, and not for death and corruption. And God has wrought us for the self-same thing; and the earnest of the Spirit, is the witness and earnest of the inheritance and of glory.

But, come life or death, there is always a ground for confidence. Death may come. Be it so. If we are at home in the body, there is so far a necessitated absence from the Lord. If we are absent from the body, it lands us with Him who is the object of our desire. " We are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." And the issue of all, where it can be truly said " We walk by faith not by sight," is summed up in the words " Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." (Ver. 9.) Amen.

Girdle of Truth: Volume 4, Death Worketh in Us

Two things are remarkable in this chapter. 1St, How entirely it is a new power by which we are enabled to glorify God-although we are so apt to mix up with it human energy and strength, and so bring in weakness. And 2ndly, The deep consciousness the apostle had of the value of the saints to the Lord. Therefore he could say, " All things are for your sakes;" and that is how he looks at himself. He offers himself a sacrifice -" ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." He could say, " Troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed: always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you." He gives up himself to them, and says, " I am content to be all this, and to suffer all this; yea, to lose my life for your sake. It is all right. I ought to be a sacrifice for you; it is God's object I should be for you." For He who was entitled to glory was content to leave the whole and to give up Himself-even His Messiahship and all. Christ gives. up Himself for us. And therefore he could say, " All things are for your sakes." It is encouraging and cheering of heart to know that all things are for our sakes -" that the abundant grace," &c. Then the vessels in which the Lord may choose His grace to work are counted as sheep for the slaughter; always bearing about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus. " Death works in us, but life in you." Just so far as death works in ourselves, life can work by us in blessing to others. And I would just say here, It is a remarkable way the apostle took Christ's place. Of course it was Christ's grace in him. By bearing about in the body the dying, not my dying, but the death of Christ, that had put an end to him, that another power might work by him. As far as my energy is concerned, it is death. " Always bearing about the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." Not Paul's life, but the life of Jesus. Knowing, He that " raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also." He is counting on the same power that raised up Jesus raising him. Just as Christ took the resurrection as the answer to natural death, so the apostle, " that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God."

Two things I would notice:-1St, it is a comfort to be able to say, everything is for our sakes. Secondly, how far can we say death worketh in us, so that the life of Christ should be made manifest in our mortal body? If to shine out of our hearts it must be as bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, and then, come what will, we can say, that the full portion of Christ is ours.

Things New and Old: Volume 18, Light Out of Darkness

It has been my privilege for some years past to pay a weekly visit to the bedside of a poor woman, blind and paralyzed, but who knows what it is, through grace, to rejoice in the Lord; who knows silo has eternal life and forgiveness of sins through faith in the One who has stood in her stead before a God who cannot look at sin, and who forsook the sin-bearer on the cross, that he might never forsake the poor sinner, who believes in Him. And it is indeed a privilege to stand by the bedside of such an one, and see what the knowledge of the grace of God, and of a Savior’s love, can do to lighten a path on which all earth’s light and joys have closed.

I had paid my visit one day, and had left the little room she lives in, when the sound of children's voices in the next one fell on my car as I passed the door, and, knocking, I entered. There, were in it two little children, and an old woman, their grandmother. She was employed in reading one of the cheap weekly periodicals which are published in such numbers in the present day, corrupting the minds of old and young; and when (seeing she must be about 70 years of age at least) I spoke to her about the nearness of eternity, she answered in a way which evidently showed she considered my visit an intrusion. I therefore withdrew, saddened at heart to see that one so near the grave had not yet found out the worthlessness of all that this poor world could give, and had not a thought nor a care about her immortal soul. Oh! those solemn words, "If our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world path blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4:3, 4.) Yes, dear unsaved reader, if such you be, that is the object of Satan now, to blind your mind; and are you willing he should do so, and prefer the wretched rubbish of this world to the "glorious gospel of Christ?" The glad tidings of God tell you of a risen and glorified Savior, who came from the highest place in heaven, to take the lowest place on earth, in death; and more than that, to drink the cup of judgment for sin, which you will have to drink in that place "where their worm dieth not, and their fire is nut quenched," if you "neglect so great salvation."

The next time I paid my visit I felt somehow I could not pass that door, discouraged though I had been. Something seemed to tell me to go in, so in I went. There she was again reading the same worthless publication, and seemingly quite satisfied with it. So it went on, week after week, and I hardly ever passed that door without going in and leaving a little message about the grace of God for poor lost sinners. But one day when I went in, I found a great change had taken place, and a remarkable one. She, was blind. But a few clays before she had been reading the rubbish she delighted in, and now God had dealt with her, and her poor sightless eyes could read no more. Poor creature, how unhappy she was! No more reading now. There she must sit, blind and helpless. But God had thoughts about that poor old woman, and now for the first time she was willing to listen.

Well, it was the old story she listened to; the grace of that God who looked down from His glory into this sin and sorrow-stricken world, and not only looked, but pitied; the love of that Savior who answered so willingly to that look; and, when the moment came, left that glory, and took up the cause of poor ruined lost sinners, and at such a terrible cost to Himself. For if He were to take up the cause of the lost sinner, He must take the punishment too, death and judgment; and drink to the very dregs, to the very list drop, exhausting it completely, the cup of the wrath of an offended God against sin—that cup which only He who was not only very God but very man, could chink, going down into the deepest depth of our need, and able to sustain the judgment and the wrath and the curse which we could not sustain. For this, dear reader, is the gospel; that while man has done nothing but hate God, and has proved it to the full at the cross of His Son, God has done nothing but love man, for God is love; and He has proved it by giving the best thing in heaven for the worst thing on earth, and that is His Son for a poor wretch like you and me.

Well, she listened to this, and as she listened the tears came into those poor sightless eyes, and she bowed her head, and owned herself a sinner, and a great one too. Before long she was able to understand, through the grace of God, that there was a Savior for the sinner, and that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." (Rom. 5:20.) "Yes," she said to me one day, "If God has taken away the light from my eyes, He has given light to my poor dark soul, and I bless Him for it; and if I wish for my eyesight back it is only that I might read my Bible, which I would not read when I could."

She is still living, resting simply on Christ, having got rid, as she says, of that terrible burden of the sins of nearly 70 years, so heavy to bear, but the punishment for which she now knows that Christ, her Savior, bore for her eighteen hundred years ago.

Dear reader, one word before I close. Have you still got all your sins upon you? and are you content so to live on with death and eternity before you? Are you happy? Are you saved? And if still unsaved, whose fault is it? yours or God's? "Come unto me," said, and still says, that loving Savior, " all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Have you taken Him at His word, and gone to Him? or are you one of those of whom those gracious lips are still obliged to say, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life."

The Evangelist: Volume 2 (1868), "All Things Are for Your Sakes."

2 Corinthians 4:15.

THIS is a wonderful proof of divine love. God has raised up the Lord Jesus, raised Him from the dead. He will raise us up by Jesus. All will he presented together in the day of glory; all the saints. But in the meantime, how about all these difficulties, perplexities, trials, sufferings? How about the scene around—the circumstances that seem to baffle, to mock all effort, to disappoint all hope? what is the answer to this? "All things are for your sakes," that the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God. If you take the highest point, God's object in creation and redemption, His glory and the glory of His Christ, — "All things were created by Him and for Him,"—i.e., the Son, you have a great thought, commencing in eternity past, if I may use the expression, and looking on to eternity future, the glory of God in Christ filling the scene. These are the things not seen—the things eternal. Faith has to do with them; they are real, they are sure; nothing can affect them. But this little time state, this little gap between eternity past and eternity future, is that arranged for too? Yes, "all things are for your sakes." The love, the wisdom that planned, the infinite tenderness that arranged the whole scene, watched the whole process, seeing the end from the beginning, regards all with an eye to the blessing of His saints. Jesus risen and exalted rules in the heavens; He is the God of grace; grace reigns through righteousness by Him. Grace abounds (1 Timothy 1:14), grace calls, justifies, sanctifies, begins, carries on, completes the work in each and all. It is all to the praise of the glory of God's grace. This may quiet the heart. "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him." "All things are for your sakes." How He has loved us!

Chicago Conference: 2002, 2 Corinthians 4:1-6

Reading

Your servants for Jesus, saved for God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the Excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. That the light also of Jesus might be made manifest in our bodies. For we would live, are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake, that the light also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. Then death worketh then off the light, and you we having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written. I believed, and therefore have I spoken. We also believe, and therefore speak. Knowing that He was raised up, the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with You. For all things are for Your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the Thanksgiving of many, rebound to the glory of God, For which 'cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is. Day by day. For our light affliction, which is bought for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Well, we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. This chapter begins with having. Seeing we have this ministry, what's it referring to? This ministry in the fourth, in the third chapter? He talks about verse 7 if the ministration of death, ministry of death, written and engraven in stones was glorious, and again he calls it. Verse 9 For the administration of condemnation be glory, and in between that he says in verse 8, how shall not the ministration or the ministry of the Spirit? Be rather glorious, and in the end of verse 9, much more doth administration of righteousness exceed in glory. The law held out a rule. Which, if man had kept it, it would have been his righteousness. But it turned out just the opposite. And you promised life this. And thou shalt live. That's the principle of the law. But no one did it. No one kept it. So it turned out to be, though it promised life for the obedient, it was death for the disobedient instead of an A righteousness which I gained for myself if I kept it, if I broke it, it was condemnation and judgment. So it's called the law, is called the ministry of death. And condemnation instead of blessing. It was a curse. Instead of liberty, it was *******. So at the end of chapter 3. Verse 17 says, now the Lord is that spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. The law is not liberty at all. Law is *******. And so he's contrasting the old and the new. The old covenant was *******. The new principle of the new was grace and liberty. And righteousness, and that which the Spirit produces. So it says, we all with open face unveil face, beholding as in a glass beholding, take out as in a glass beholding the glory of the Lord are changed, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, the Lord, the Spirit.

That's a that's a passage. You read it in the new translation. It reads even as by the Lord the Spirit. That is, the Spirit of God is Lord, Lord Jesus is Lord, God the Father is Lord. All deity in the Trinity. Then he says, therefore, seeing we have this ministry, what is it? The ministry of righteousness. It's an accomplished, subsisting righteousness before God, which we have in Christ. And it's freedom, it's liberty, and it's the ministry of the Spirit. This is what characterizes the present dispensation. The present day of grace is the Spirit of God. It's the day of the Holy Spirit, and it's his ministry. And he's here to glorify and exalt and magnify Christ. That's the ministry that we have, that which exalts Christ. The the first covenant, the principle of law. Would have glorified and exalted man had he kept it, but he didn't have. The ability to keep it. And nor the desire to. And so it's the ministry of condemnation and death. But now we have the ministry of the Spirit and the ministry of righteousness, not a righteousness which we work out for ourselves, but which is ours in Christ. He is now our righteousness before God, the risen, glorified man. And who is it that attests to this? It's the Spirit of God who came down from that glorified man in heaven. He sent him down in Acts 2 to begin an altogether new, new thing on earth, and that's this ministry of the Spirit, ministry of righteousness that we now have that's gone on for 2000 years. A tremendous, wonderful passage that we've read. Ministry of condemnation and death though was glorious, wasn't it? So much so it says in chapter 3 that Moses face was shining when he came down off the mountain. He asked to see God, his glories, he asked to see his glory. And the Lord says you can't see my face and live. It was too much, but he said I'll put you in a cleft of the rock and put my hand on you and pass by, and then I will take away. My hand and you will see my back parts. And it was so tremendously glorious just to see the back parts that when he came off that mountain, his face was shining, so much so that the people were afraid of him and he had to put a veil over his face. The brethren, in contrast, like a brother said, notice what it says in verse 9 of chapter 3, much more doth administration of righteousness. Exceed in glory what we have far, far surpasses what they knew in the administration of condemnation and death. Oh brethren, we have been brought to know God. What a tremendous thing in a world where the knowledge of God is not. God is not known like we have been brought to know Him in the Lord Jesus. Just think of the treasure and that's the way it's presented in this chapter 4 verse 7. It says we have this treasure in earthen vessel. What's that treasure? It's the knowledge of the true God that we have in the person of Jesus Christ. And the revelation now has been complete in the person of the Lord Jesus. You want to know God, look at Jesus. There you have the full revelation of who God is. Tremendous treasure the Lord grant us to treasure it in our souls, the knowledge of God. John 16 the Lord Jesus could say of the Spirit. He shall glorify me, for He shall take of mine, and show them unto you. And so one of the older brethren who has long passed away, used to say, If it glorifies man, it dishonors Christ. And so the Spirit of God honors and glorifies Christ. Never mind.

And as you were saying, Chuck, if man had kept the law with a glorified man, and the Lord says that man shall not glory in my presence. And the only man that ever did or ever will is the Lord Jesus. And through His work we shall be in that same boy. What a marvelous thing that is. You're talking about the knowledge of the true God. This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the Father, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. So the knowledge of the Father and the Son is given to us, made good to us by the Spirit in our own souls, the whole Trinity working. Towards that it was mentioned in prayer this morning. That. The Muslims. It was said that the God that the Muslims know. No, they don't know. Their doctrine is you cannot know the true God. One they worship, he's unknowable. That's their doctrine. So beyond man, so far away, so distant, that he's unknowable. When Paul was at Athens, he saw this inscription to the unknown God. They have an unknown God. We of all people on earth know the true God, and we have a relationship with that true God. They, they don't, they have no relationship to deity. The one they call deity. It's a terrible religion and. It's it's the most wonderful blessing that we have. We know. God, we know who He is, He's revealed Himself and the person of his beloved Son and the Spirit who is the truth, who reveals Him. And now we have the Spirit of truth dwelling in us to make it good in our own souls. Christ revealed him objectively. The Spirit reveals Him subjectively. And you can't have anything greater than this. This is the ministry that Pauls talking about. You contrast the old with the new. The old is law. The new is grace, The oldest man's righteousness, the newest God's righteousness. The old is a curse on breaking it, the newest blessing because of what Christ has done. Darkness and light. When the law was given, the God was in darkness. Now God is in light. I mean what a contrast. Thank you. And life another 2 Completely different. That's the ministry that we have that Paul is talking about. But how searching that is for us to profess? To know the true God and have this ministration because this administration is not something. For just a few that are sitting here, it's for every believer. You know the true God then it should be evident in your life and that's why we have verse two of our chapter. We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully. But by manifestation of the truth, commanding ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Necessarily, the light manifests everything we do. There is nothing that we can hide in the light. In fact, if a person tries to hide in the light, he only makes his defect that much more evident to all

around. And it is been surprising brother. And when I was we were still living in South America. One of the popular gospel preachers. Here in the United States, his program was televised and and beamed all across Latin America, translated into Spanish. And then he had a moral fall. And I've never seen such a devastating blow to the Gospel as when that happened in Bolivia. It happened just before the Pope came for the first time to Bolivia, and it was a hard.

Hard blow against the gospel, they said. That's the way those evangelicals are. Brethren, necessarily it reflects on what we're doing in our life. Every area is searched out by the light. We cannot have anything to do with the darkness. None of us are perfect, but the light searches us out. Brethren, may the Lord grant us to live in the sense. Of the fact that we walk in the light, like it or not. Turn your back on it or not. The light still manifests everything we are, and so we need to walk in the consciousness of the fact that light is shining in on us. And then it says at the end of that verse 2, commend by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And got such an important principle. That we need to commend ourselves to people's conscience. That's the way the truth of God gets into the soul. And it has impressed me. When the Lord Jesus was here in this world, when he was asked questions, often times he did not answer the questions, He answered the conscience. And you give the example of the time when they brought that poor woman. Into the temple where the Lord was, and they surrounded her, and they said Moses in the law said we should stone this woman for adultery. She was taken in the very act. And what do you say they said to the Lord, thinking to trap him, those hypocrites that didn't bring the other party in that act of adultery. But there she was, and the Lord Jesus didn't answer it first. He stooped down and wrote on the ground. And when he stood up and finally answered, he said, He that is without sin amongst you, let him cast the first stone at her. He did not answer their question, he answered their conscience. And they were convicted, and they all went out, from the oldest to the youngest. Oh, brethren, this is what we need to in seeking to reach souls, is to appeal to their conscience. I I have to confess. There are times in speaking the souls, I want to present it in a reasonable, attractively reasonable fashion. But it's not that so important, brethren, as to appeal to the conscience of man. That is what Scripture is teaching us here, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. That second and third and 4th, 1St all go together. Because if we do not walk according to the second verse, if we have not. Walked honestly then. Our gospel is hidden. And it hit to them that are lost in whom the God of this world, he blinded their minds. And the second verse is this, if you're walking according to the way of the Lord and you present the gospel and they reject it, that's a responsibility that now is not on you, it's on them. But the God of this world blinded their minds. But if we walk according to the way of this world. And present the gospel. Then we destroy what you've just said. And the second verse and the, excuse me, the third verse and the fourth verse really don't come into play. We've destroyed the testimony. We ourselves have destroyed the testimony. But if we walk right, then Satan comes in and destroys the testimony. It's like the seed that was sown by the wayside and it fell on Stony places and so on. But how important it is that we walk according to the word of God, according to. Takes from the word of God.

There was a man here that could say, Which of you convinces me of sin? The Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please Him. This is my beloved Son, in whom I have found my delight. And yet what did He do to him and nailed Him to a cross? Ligamony and shame I rejected Him. Who is the truth? So I'm just saying this because. Responsibility of man who hears the truth, regardless of how faulty I may be personally, the one that may present it to him, he's still responsible to receive the truth of God and about to it. It doesn't depend entirely on on us. In fact, it depends entirely on God working in the soul. We're not. We're far from perfect. And I know there are some that hesitate to talk to others because they they feel that well. We're sinners saved by grace. There's no perfection in us. It's only in Christ. What we have to present to the world is that one perfect, glorious, sinless man who died for them on the cross. They have to do with him. And that's that's more important than. Emphasizing how well I'm walking, although that's important. Too. For we've preached on ourselves Jesus Christ the Lord. I think that's an important verse that you can all take the heart where we preach, not ourselves. What you say, Chuck, is very true. They're responsible to God for what they've heard. And if they reject Christ that are responsible to God for it. But if we are a stumbling block. Be the story. There's an incredible, seems to me, sobering progressions that gets us to verse five that we don't want to miss as to the moral principles involved. The world in which we live is. Unspeakably. Decadent and unabashedly and unashamedly open about the wickedness and the corruption which has flooded. This land, but it says I'm going to read it from the new translation, Mr. Darby's translation in verse 2. We have rejected the hidden things of shame. That's where it starts trying to hide what is considered shame. But. The world little by little has less and less interest in hiding and it becomes more and more open. And so then you have the next step, not walking in deceit. And So what no longer is attempted to be hidden, people become more open with it. The tendency is to become more open, but to do it in a deceitful way to. Even though it's not being hidden anymore to try to cover it. Try to cover these actions in these ways, and to try to cover them and so in. Men's hearts and conscience what was at one time given because it was shame is. Allowed as possibly due to the kinds of philosophies and reasonings men have, it might be OK in some cases for certain people and we need to tolerate it and so it becomes a matter of of deceiving. But then it gets even worse. Not falsifying the word of God so that eventually men's hearts. Will take that which had been hidden. Because of the shame of it and that which they eventually seek to tolerate in deceitfulness. Then the final step is to twist the Word of God so that by twisting the word of God, they make these things as it were, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness. And so they even seek to somehow twist the word of God in. One of the things we hear is Christianity is love. And love tolerates and love accepts. Love doesn't condemn. And so this is a very sobering progression. But why I say it, brethren, is we need to be concerned about it because that spirit in the world in which we live can rub off, you might say, on us. And we may not willingly do it, but we can take up with the spirit of that thing and we can become hardened to that, which is a very shameful thing that ought to be hidden. We ought not to be even thinking or.

Those things. And then perhaps the conscience becomes a little more hardened and we seek to cover certain things or excuse them. And then the saddest thing for a believer is that he would somehow try to support that kind of thing by his reading of the Word of God. And the result is. That then the manifestation. Of the truth, there is no manifestation of the truth. And so I'm just saying this is something that we not only look at the world, but we need to be concerned that we do not become hardened in our spirits and ways to what is there so that in fact we can indeed by our lives and by our words preach Christ Jesus Lord. It reads in the new translation, not Christ Jesus the Lord, but Christ Jesus Lord. And ourselves, your servants, and so on. Well, that can't happen, brethren. As much as we want it to happen, beloved young people, it can't happen if we're not being careful that we not allow those things to hard maintain us as we walk through this world as believers. I like the the way one put it when I was a young man. He said our preaching should be so earnest. That is so sincere, with such zeal, as though the results of our preaching depended entirely on us, all the while knowing it doesn't depend on us at all, depends entirely on God. Our life should be lived before our fellow men in such a way that they can't find a flaw. Realizing there are many. And. They're responsible to the God that we're responsible to. You mentioned love, Doug. I I read a pamphlet recently on the Koran. That's the Bible of the Muslims. Doesn't have love in it. The God they worship is not a God of love. They don't know the true God. To call that a great religion. Said so we could think. It's false. Denies the only true God. So does Judaism. Three great religions all believe in one God. We're the only ones that believe that there are three persons

to that one God. The only ones we know, the true God the Father sent the Son and He sent the Holy Spirit, and we know who God is and we're in a relationship with Him. Very near relationship. But they don't. They don't know any of that, and it's so sad to commend even that kind of a thing. I was thinking, Brother Chuck, as you were speaking, I think again, it's in Mr. Darby's translation there, and I believe it's Philippians, that as irreproachable children of God, we shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation among whom he shine his light. And then it says holding forth the word of life. It's very striking that the thought of children of God, irreproachable children of God. God comes first, shining as lights comes first and then next comes the holding forth the word of life. And I just say to emphasize what our brother has been bringing out. I I don't say we shouldn't preach the gospel because Satan will ever be seeking to discourage us from doing that by our by our failures and our weakness. But brethren, let's remember that if I'm not shining in some measures and irreproachable child of God before a world. Crooked in reverse. What good are my words going to be when I hold forth the word of life? What power will they carry when there is no testimony in my life? First, as an irreproachable child of God. The comment has been made at times. I think it came from one of the early.

Church fathers, I'm not sure exactly, but the statement was preach Christ always, if necessary, use words. And that's really what Christianity is. It's just the radiation of the person of Christ, the God we have been brought to know. And that was the case with Moses. He came off that mountain, his face was shining. Do people see a difference in me? Then the general world lean around. It should be brethren, we have this treasure in earthen vessels that tells us in verse 7, verse three, it says if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. What a tragedy to have this treasure and not to let it shine. We're all guilty brethren of not letting. The gospel shine, perhaps in the right moment. But may the Lord help us remember the lepers on the outside of the city of Samaria said. This is a day of good tidings because they had gone into the Syrian Army and found it completely deserted, and they found tremendous spoils there. They said, This is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace. If we continue thus till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us. They had to go tell it, and there was tremendous blessing because of what those poor lepers had found. That, O brethren, may the Lord grant us to let the truth of the gospel shine. It is a real challenge in today's world and I I honestly believe that is as much as anything, this tragedy that has happened in our country is to awaken us brethren, to let the true knowledge of God shine out. What a tremendous blessing we have, and it seems it is. Brought before us what the Muslim religion is and that it is not a religion of love. Religion of hate and destruction. Do we have something better than that? Can we go to those people and say something of the true God that should be? Brethren? The case and I found, and I'm sure many have found, that people are open as never before since this, these things have taken place. The Lord help us to let the gospel light shine in our lives. To not show that truth, what are we going to say when we stand before the throne of God? It searched me one time. I was when we were living in Bolivia. A brother who wasn't that long saved said to me, came and said I want to go to where I came from. Down in Sucre area, in the mountain areas, you have to go in on foot. He says. I don't want it to happen in that day that when we stand before the throne of God. And those people say there's Brother Hustino and he is saved. Why didn't he come and tell me the gospel? And now I'm lost. And so he felt stirred to take the gospel into his area where he was born and raised. May the Lord stir us, brother. And we really have a responsibility. To let the light of the knowledge of the true God shine as never before. Lord Jesus could say, let your light and what is it just what you were Speaking of, so shine before men that they may behold your good works and soul glorify your Father which is in heaven. And the importance of that was that your light shines first and then God gets the glory if you do any good work, good work. But how important it is that the light of God? And that's what the fourth verse is. Lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ it should read, should shine unto them the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ. And that's what we carry about with us. That's the treasure. It's been mentioned. And rightfully so. And emphasized about letting our light shine. And that's one of those wonderful truths that sometimes are allowed to remain a generality. We might well ask ourselves in a practical way, how can I let my light shine? How do I do that?

And I would like to suggest something because of something I observed recently when Bev and I were on a trip to visit our dear brother out in the Northwest. And as we traveled, especially in the state of Washington, we'd stop for gas or stop here or there. There was something that was very evident. A lot of people were wearing jackets or T-shirts. With the name the Seattle Mariners on it and a lot of people were talking about. A professional athletic team called the Seattle Mariners. There was an immense amount of excitement. There were banners in windows. There was a tremendous excitement in men's hearts were filled with the potential hope of success for this professional baseball team called the Seattle Mariners. So people were wearing this shirt, these shirts, these jackets. You saw signs of it everywhere. But more than that, they were talking about it. They were. About it, well, I would just suggest, brethren, if we want our light to shine, how excited are we about the Lord Jesus? How much does he mean to me? How, how much does his love mean to me? That it makes me excited that if I'm a young person, when I'm with a group of young people, I want to talk about what excites my heart. When I'm at work, I want to talk with those that I work with about what is exciting to me. Do I really wear the testimony of what's important to my heart? And so I don't criticize or say that to be hypocritical or anything, but brethren, it seems to be in a very simple way. That's one of the ways we can let our light shine is just to it says out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth. Speaker A good man out of a good treasure of his heart brings something forth. What is the treasure of my heart? What's in the abundance of my heart? Is it something that. Belongs to a wonderful person, an infinitely precious one, who is the most beautiful object. The one who loved me and died for me. Does he really fill my heart? Does that excite me? And I don't mean that in a flippant way, but does that give me a joy that I just want to share with others? Because he is the object life suggests in our way. Beloved brethren, if we want the light to shine, maybe we could wear AT shirt and we could talk about something that excites us. But I don't think it would be a professional ball team. The 33rd chapter of Ezekiel speaks of the Watchmen on the Wall. And this man was responsible for the safety of the city if he saw the enemy coming and he sounded the alarm and there were people that were killed. He went free. He didn't. He was not condemned because he sounded the alarm. But if the enemy was coming, he saw the enemy and he didn't sound the alarm. And they were killed and his life also was forfeited. I know one brother in New Zealand was a very wealthy businessman and he had several 100 people working for him. And he was reading a brother in the Lord, He was reading in Ezekiel and he saw that and. So he says, well, now I am the watchman for at least the people that I. That worked for me. So he wrote up a track. A small track, but it's 63 pages long. The the reason why and. The last count I heard, over 20 million had been published and distributed. We are the Watchmen on the wall and. We know them that the enemy is. The danger is ahead. And if if we do not? Sound the alarm. There's a certain responsibility that we have. That we're going to lose. Lose rewards at least for not sounding the alarm and proclaiming the gospel of the grace of God to a world that's perishing. Right. Go back for a moment to Judges 7.

Been commented multiple times but I think. There's repeating that the first verses of this 4th chapter are illustrated by Gideon and Liz. Read several verses there and judges Chapter 7. And verse 16 And he divided the 300 men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pictures and lamps within the pictures. And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise. And behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow with the trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye with the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say. The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. Well, brother, and I think these are helpful

verses because they illustrate this chapter and maybe help us remember the message of it that God is put into everyone in this room's hand. A trumpet. And we ourselves are pitchers in whom there is light. And the Lord, the captain of the host, if you will, says to us, go and do likewise as he did. You can't have Sometimes we can be all trumpet and no light, or we can be all light and no trumpet. Both are given to us as our responsibility to Gideon, our Gideon. That we would. Sound the trumpet, the message from God for man at this present time, and also equally that what's in us would shine out. It's not what we know, but it's what's the the knowledge that's in the heart and it's that which shines out. And to me it's a nice thing because it here it says the sword. What is God's sword? For the world today, is that a physical sword? No. What's the Christian eras? If it were, what's the sword of the Spirit? It's the word of God in living power displayed to the world. And so it's really the sword of the Lord and Gideon that is to shine forth. But I also think there's a pretty difficult part to it because the vessels had to be broken. And the analogy to the breaking of the vessels is inverses 8:00 and 9:00 because he says. We are troubled, this perplexed, and we're persecuted. Many of us will go to great lengths to protect protect the vessel. It is. We don't want a broken vessel. We do whatever is within our power to avoid trouble, to avoid anything that's perplexing to us, to avoid any persecution. But in actual fact, it was the breaking of the vessel that allowed what was inside, which the Spirit of God had placed there to shine out to those that were about. There's a reference here. Excuse me, that go ahead. When Peter walked on the water, he gave witness to the power of God to sustain him and to do that. But we know he failed. He looked at he looked at the waves and began to think. But we don't, we don't recognize Peter as the one who failed, but we recognize him as the one who did walk on the water. And as long as we recognize our failure as it's a part of ourselves and not. The limit of God's power, then we keep things in the right perspective. And so we're always going to fail in our light and testimony brother and I think, but we don't get occupied with that. We we recognize that that it's a part of the breaking of the vessel and that it it gives witness rather to really God's real power. And it's, I might, might just reiterate, it's, it's the beholding of the Lord that gives that light and power. We we can't look within ourselves for power to give witness and light and testimony if.

When Moses looked on God's face on the mount, that's what caused his face to shine, and that's the only thing that will make our light shine too, is looking to him. Excuse me, Bob. In verse four we have the God notice of small G It's Satan. The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not. The person says he doesn't believe God, he's blinded. And you can put all the searchlights and most powerful lights on a person who's blind and he does not see anything. What he needs is something to penetrate that darkness and it seems like a hopeless situation. But notice what we have in verse 6 and I think this is a reference back to Genesis chapter 1 when darkness was upon the face of the deep. Darkness envelope the whole world. And then it says God said, let there be light, and light penetrated the darkness. It was a word from God that penetrated that darkness. So it says in verse 6. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And brethren, is letting the light shine that's important? It may be in a way that seems very negligible to us. Remember the story of. A preacher of the gospel that preached and somebody seemed to get saved afterwards, and he came up to the person that got saved and said, what was it that I said in the meeting that seemed to. Help you see the light. Oh, he said. It wasn't anything you said. It was that Lady I was helping down the steps afterwards that spoke to me, that got through to me. You know, sometimes it's not anything that we value that much, but it is simply the light shining out of a vessel that gets through. Brethren, let's let the light shine in any way possible. I was impressed, too, with the story of a young sister who was quite timid and found it rather hard to speak to people. But in her office where she worked, she was the way she carried herself. The way she did her work, was such a testimony that one of the other ladies in the office came up to her one day and said. What is it that you have? You have something that I don't have. What is it? And so she was able to tell her about the Lord, and it resulted in the salvation of that other lady. Brethren, it's the light that is in our lives, is in our vessels. We know the true God. We profess to know Him. And that light, we need to let it shine out. If we don't let it shine out God. And his faithfulness will allow these vessels of ours. To be broken and like our brother Don was saying, that's not a very pleasant situation to have our vessels broken. But if he's put that that light in your vessel, he has not put that light in your vessel to hide, it's to shine out and the Lord Jesus said. In the gospels that the light can be hid under a bushel or under a bed, and sometimes it's the business area of our life that we allow to become so so occupying that the light is hidden that's hiding it under a bushel or under the bed. It's just simple laziness. Brethren, we need to be stirred to get out and to let the light shine. And I like what Brother Dave said to that verse. He quoted, that they see our good works. You know, those workers, those relief workers over in Afghanistan that are in prison, There's two Americans over there. They were not really over there exactly as missionaries, but they were there as relief workers to help.

The poor, hungry people in that country, and now they're being tried for propagating Christianity. They must have spoken something about the Lord. And therefore, they're in trouble. What they see, brethren, is our good works. And good works is a way that people can see what we have inside. May the Lord help us, brother.

Chicago Conference: 2002, 2 Corinthians 4:15-5:11

Reading

2nd Corinthians chapter 4 and verse 15. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the Thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God. Which 'cause we faint nod. For though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God. And how is not made with hands eternal in the heavens? For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, if so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened not for that we would be on clothes, but clothed upon. That mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath brought us for the self, same thing as God, who else was given on to wash the earnest of the Spirit? Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. Before we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him, For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad. Verse 11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest under God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. Verse 13 in. But we having the same spirit of faith. According as it is written, I believed and therefore have I spoken. We also believe and therefore speak. And then in verse seven of our chapter 5, for we walk by faith, not by sight, and our verses close with the things which are not seen are

eternal, but they're only seen by faith and. That's the only way we're going to carry out our Christian life is on the principle of faith, because Christianity. Is not known by what it can see. It knows it's known by what it believes, and faith gives substance to what we believe. And that quote is from the 116th Psalm. And it says. 100 Psalm 116 and verse 3. The sorrows of death compass me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me. I found trouble and sorrow. Verse 8 For thou hast delivered my soul unto death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling, I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. I believe therefore have I spoken. Well, in the measure that we believe these wonderful things that have been brought before us in our readings, it's going to open our mouths to speak of those things to the lost. We've been delivered from death, but we only know that by faith. We we have life and resurrection, but we only know that by faith. But faith makes it so real to us that that becomes the sphere of our life. And that's what's on the apostles heart here when he closes this chapter. He's speaking about an eternal weight of glory and not getting turned aside by things that the natural eye can see.

Begins on the other side of death, the death of the Lord Jesus Christ and his resurrection, and that's where we're identified with him as well. One who has passed through death for us. And now lives in resurrection. But you can only enjoy that life by faith, because it what's beyond death cannot be seen to the natural life. If anyone could declare the things that are in these last three or four verses, it was the Apostle Paul. If we were to go to the 11Th chapter of the same book, we could read about 6 or 7 or 8 verses of the most horrible things that he went through. And so he could say for this our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. None of us. Maybe some in the past after the Apostle Paul, but none of us have ever gone through anything like he did. But we can all join in with the 17th verse, the little affection that we have here in this world. It's nothing really. It worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal way to glory, and I believe it's predicated on the fact that we. Follow the verses that went before. It's not just a casual statement that everyone of us, regardless of how we live, I don't believe that's true. The eternal weight of glory is for those that have passed through this life with Christ. It's not for everyone that is. It's not for the man of the world. It's not for those that are lost. It's only for the saved. It's only for those that believe. For our light affliction and so every time we go through. Difficulty in this world, does it ever make us think? If not, we should possibly do so. Think about that eternal weight of glory that's waiting for us. I don't mean if we go through something that we caused ourselves. You know, many of us do stupid things and we cause ourselves sore and difficulty, but that's not what this is talking about. This is speaking about those things that are caused because we walked for Christ. Because we honor him. Because we testify for him. And so he could say while he was here, take up your cross daily and follow me. That's and in Peter first Peter chapter 2, leaving us an example. I believe that's what this verse is all about. In the 11Th chapter of this epistle. 1St I'll start with verse 22. Are they Hebrews? No, he's talking about his enemies. Those that were discrediting him, speaking against him, he says, Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I? Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I? Are they ministers of Christ? But he says that, he says I speak as a fool. I'm more in labor's more abundant in stripes above measure in prisons, more frequent in deaths OFT. Of the Jews 5 times received I 40 stripes save one thrice was I beaten with rods once was I stoned and left for dead he was thrice I suffered shipwreck a night and a day I've been in the deep in journeyings often in perils of waters and perils of robbers in perils by my known countrymen in perils by the heathen in perils in the city in perils in the wilderness in perils in the sea and perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watching as often in hunger and thirst, in fastings, often in cold and nakedness, beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. He says about these that he's talking about in verse 13 of Chapter 11. Such are false apostles. Deceitful workers transforming themselves. Into the apostles of Christ, and so on. And yet here in our chapter 4, he says our light affliction.

Light affliction. If you and I would say that. I would say that you'd say, well, you haven't had much. That's true. But we've just read the catalogue of what he went through and he says our light affliction, which is but for a moment. But for a moment he says in the 15th chapter of the first epistle, he says I die daily. In the 1St chapter that we had before us earlier, he had the sentence of death in himself. He thought he was going to die. Let the Lord delivered him, and he didn't die, but he was facing it. None of us in this room expect the doors to be burst open and, and, and an army come in here and haul us off to prison to die. We don't expect that. He says he was in peril every day. We don't expect anything like that. Some of our brethren in other countries do. If they would meet like we do, they they'd be apprehended. But that gives a powerful force to this, our light affliction. He's comparing. Anything that one can go through down here with the glory, that's what he's comparing. And he says our light affliction, but for a moment, comparing it with eternity, this is just a moment in time, just a drop in the bucket as far as time goes. It seems wrong to us, but he says he's looking at it in in the spiritual sense. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment. Worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight in contrast with light affliction, but for a moment eternal in contrast with that of glory. Contrast with anything that we might have down here. Why we look not at the things which are seen? But at the things which are not seen. Or the things which are seen are temporal. Just for a time, but the things which are not seen are eternal. There's so much that we can look at. Down here, they're just temporal things. But what we have ahead? And what we have in Paul's ministry is to cause us to lift our highs above everything here to the glory seen above, where Steven saw the glory of God and a man there and he named him Jesus standing. And he says I'm coming back. It could be before this conference ends. It could be before this meeting ends. The shout will be given and I hope the room would be emptied. I hope no one would be left behind. Wouldn't it be terrible if you were the only one still sitting in your chair and every other chair emptied? Wouldn't that be horrible for you, for me, if that should happen? With no hope of being saved. No second chance. So these light afflictions, it depends on what we compare them to. If we compare them to glory, they're light affliction. But we what we noticed in the 1St chapter, he said he was pressed out of measure above strength when he compared the affliction to himself. It was beyond him owed any compared it to the glory light affliction and it's beautiful. So we should not shrink from suffering, Brethren, I am afraid that that's what we're trained to do in this country. Get out of it. Suffering don't suffer anymore. And you have to. And naturally speaking, that's the natural reaction of our bodies. But may the Lord help us to evaluate opportunities to do something for the Lord if it means. Affliction. Suffering. Don't base your decision on whether you're going to have to suffer or not. Be willing to suffer for him sometimes. Say that the American Dream is self pleasing. But the spirit of Christianity is totally the opposite. It is self sacrifice. What is the character of your life? Self pleasing. Or self sacrifice. Paul certainly was sacrificial. He says I've lost everything. None of us can say that, I don't think. But Paul had, and he didn't repent of it either, did he?

I was thinking of what Paul says in comparative way to in Romans chapter 8 and verse 18 while reading from verse 17. If children then errors, errors of God and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be glorified together. Or I reckon, and he did some reckoning here, some figuring, he says, I reckon that the sufferings of this present time. Are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed. In US, Oh brethren, it's the same conclusion that he comes to here in this chapter. Light affliction. Present for a moment. Eternal weight of glory just seems like when he talks about the glory, he runs out of adjectives a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Many words he uses to talk about that coming glory. Oh brethren, that's what we need to encourage us on through the world that we're passing. We're not going to be accepted. We shouldn't expect to be accepted, but there's glory ahead, brethren, eternal glory. Here we are

called unto His eternal glory, and we're getting bogged down in this present age with material things. Lord help us, brethren. The Lord in his mercy, sometimes gives us a shake so that we can stop. And reevaluate our lives. We really need to do that. Interesting, isn't it, that? The Apostle Paul had seen that glory. And he couldn't tell us about it because it was beyond our feeble mental comprehension. But he uses every possible way to express it to us, as you just said. But then he says, I know what it is, I know what it is, the next verse. But the things which are not seen are eternal. He saw it. He couldn't see it with his natural eye. Neither can you nor I, but. He saw it when he was caught up into that 3rd heaven. And it was so magnificent that he couldn't possibly express it if he could have. In our natural state, we couldn't have understood it anyway, and we won't understand it until the Lord comes and takes us there. But he lets us look a little bit into that by the expression he uses in these two verses. I enjoy thinking Brother Dave when he gets caught up to the 3rd heaven, he doesn't say anything about what he saw. It does say I will come to the visions and revelations of the Lord. So he must have seen something. But he does say something about the words he heard that they were unspeakable words. So we don't even know what he saw or what he heard, but he does say something about the words he heard. Isn't that interesting? The words that he heard I'd like to read in. I think it was referred to but in Hebrews Chapter 11, the first verse. Says now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. That helps to understand this last verse of our chapter. Faith is the evidence of things not seen, you know, in the world. They say show it and I'll believe you. Show me and I'll believe you. They said to the Lord Jesus, come down from the cross that we may see. And believe. And so in the world seeing is believing. But the Lord Jesus told Martha, if thou shouldst believe, thou should see the glory of God. And this is the way of faith. Believe to see. It's just totally the opposite. And that's what we have in our chapter while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. So.

It's almost an oxymoron what we call. That it's a contradiction. How do you see something that's not seen by faith? It becomes so real. Can you see him, brethren, we read, we had read this morning in Hebrews chapter 2 That the Lord Jesus as a man. Sits in highest glory at their God's right hand. Can you see Him? By faith, we can look right into heaven and see him right now. It becomes so real to the soul because God tells us. And faith is the evidence of things not seen that it says we're looking right into heaven right now. So our eyes here in our heads are made to see physical things. That's the way they're made. But through faith, we see beyond physical things. And as you look at physical things, these chairs, the nice wood floor, the gymnasium, the people around you. Everything you see is temporal. It's for a time. But faith looks beyond what's seen and apprehends what's eternal. And if it's seen, this is something physical that I can touch or say it's mine, I bought it. That is temporal. It is just for a few brief moments of time here. And what is our life? What is it, if we would live to even be 100 years old? Few people get up that high, but what is light? It is just a brief moment and then it's all gone forever. But, brethren, our eyes now by faith look beyond the physical and apprehend that which is eternal. And everything we have as believers, properly speaking now, is not seen by the physical eye of nature. It is seen and apprehended by the eye of faith. And that's what I find that sometimes young people have. Real hard time understanding that we don't have anything outwardly visible to track this down here and it's interesting that we like to have things attractive and nice that we appreciate in a material way and they're not wrong in themselves but I often it's interesting to see somebody new walk into the meeting room sometimes and. Look around. Perhaps they're not used to the way we meet together and they look around and they train to find out where in the world is the pulpit in here and who is in charge in here. You're there. We're trained in this world to look for outward, visible things. Who's in charge in this meeting? We say the Spirit of God is the one that directs and the Lord Jesus is present. But come on, where do you see Jesus? Where do you see the Spirit of God? No, there's nothing outwardly visible to lay your eyes on. The building. Is the building special in Christianity? The material building where we meet meeting room? No, you can meet underneath a tree outside. Would be all the same, but it's nice in the winter time to have a building we can meet in, not outside under a tree. And so, brethren, what characterizes Christianity is that it is unseen. It is eternal. It is something that will never, never pass away. That's why it's so important to your young people to get your sights set right from the beginning of your life. Don't set your sights on things that are material, because they will be for a moment, and then they're gone and you won't have anything left. If you set your sights on that which is eternal, not seen from the physical eye, you will have something that lasts forever. I believe that's why the apostle follows immediately into the next chapter, because the next chapter takes us out of this scene into a scene of glory. And so for we know that if our earthly house.

This Tabernacle or dissolved well the Lord. While he was here spoke about setting your affection on things above, and that was the apostle Paul. But the Lord says where your heart is, there shall your treasure be also. Well, here what we have this body of ours is just a house that we live in. That's not me, that's not you. The soul and the spirit are you, but it may be dissolved and we have a building. A. A building of God and house not made with hands eternal. It's interesting that he starts right out the next chapter with that eternal thing, which is what we are all looking for at this very moment. And praise the Lord, it might happen this afternoon. I don't mean death, I mean to be taken. This is death. To be taken out of this scene where then we get the new body, a new house. Would you mind if I corrected something you said? My body is part of me. I'm spirit, soul and body. And I live in this house. And that's part of me right now. And I'm going to have a new house which is eternal in the heavens. That's what he's talking about, isn't he? The resurrection body. The house which is from heaven. Dwelling Place. That is not complete. The disembodied state of the Saints who have departed, they don't have a body. There's only one man in the glory that has a body today, and that's the Lord Jesus. He's full man, spirit, soul and body, and we're going to be just like that. Says in verse 14 of the previous chapter, knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus. And shall present us with you Resurrection is has reached us as far as the soul and the spirit. We have resurrection life, but not yet as to the body and. And it could be today, and then we'll put on our house, which is from heaven. Eternal in the heavens. This body is is very temporary, isn't it? That's the burden of First Corinthians 15, isn't it, brother Chocolate? If there be no resurrection, then our faith is in vain if this body perishes. Goes into non existence. The death of Christ is in vain because man is a tripart being. And we're going to have this body and reservation. We have its redemption now, but not in reality. But we are waiting the redemption of our bodies. That's even true of the unsaved. Revelation 20 is it Great White Throne? The unsaved dead will be raised. You don't know the nature of the body they'll have, but they'll be complete spirit, soul and body and then set to the lake of fire. That is not complete without a body. That's why Christians believe in burial and not cremation. Because this body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. It's not evil. Some of in the past they used to think the body is evil, so we're to punish you and to afflict it and all that. And that's that's that's wrong. So even if the body is reduced to dust, it's redeemed dust, isn't it? And he will take that same dust, even if it's reduced to dust and death, and he will take that to form the new body and resurrection. In this we grow. How many of us know what that is? All knew it very well and all of us have grown at times, been sick, have a lot of pain, had an accident, whatever it might be, but not in that new body that that resurrection body we won't grow anymore. And groaning isn't wrong, is it? I often think of the difference between groaning and complaining. Complaining is wrong, but groaning is simply the recognition of the fact that things are not now what God wants them to be and has purpose to make them in the future. So we look around and we grow them. We feel things in the world that are wrong. And we groan, the Lord Jesus.

Groaned in spirit when he saw the terrible disorder. And if we don't grow, and when we look around in the world and see the misery that exists, there's something wrong. We should groan, brethren, We groan, it says. But that's not complaining. There's a difference. Doesn't Romans 8 say that the Spirit groans with us? The Lord Jesus groaned at the grave of Lazarus, seeing the result of the work of sin and the death that came in. And so if the apostle says he didn't want to be unclothed, he didn't want to just the desire was that the Lord would come and take him rather than to die. That's what I believe it means. If so be that being closed, we shall not be found naked, for when we die, we. Found naked but. In this room this afternoon, if the Lord should come, everyone that belongs to him will have a new body. The 3rd chapter of First. John says, we know not what we shall be, but we know that when He does appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as is. We shall be like Him. We are going to be just like Christ. What a marvelous prospect to be not absent from the body as we have here, but to be changed into that glorious body like His. 1St Corinthians 15. Christ is our righteousness. And that's, I think that's typified in Luke 15 by the best robe. Christ is our righteousness, and we stand before God in that. But when the unsaved, dead, lost the great white throne are raised, they'll receive a body, but they'll be naked. Naked before God, they have no righteousness of their own. When we're raised will not be found naked. We have Christ as our righteousness. But they don't. Solemn thing when the final act is done to a person, and that is to raise him to stand before the great white throne, to be judged for his sins and cast into the lake of fire. He stands there naked in all his sins. It's a contradiction of terms. How can he be clothed with a with a body and be naked at the same time? Well, they mean two different things. To the to the church in Laodicea. They'll know us not that thou art. What does he say? Naked, naked. As one of the terms he uses, let me read the verse. Because that thou sayest I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked. That's a description of a mere professor without any real life. He said I was naked and I did myself. And I was thinking too. Saul in the Old Testament when he prophesied, he was in an ecstasy and he passed off his clothes. He's naked. It seems consistent the way the word of God uses nakedness, referring to the unregenerate man, doesn't it? I think it's always consistent that way and it's never confused. I think it's good. I find it helpful. To observe that the word of God is consistent. When it uses figures and expressions, nakedness refers. Very consistently to the unmanned and the unregenerate state, we have the washing of water. The word, the word of God is referred to as water, and it's a consistent thing. I think it's it shows the care of God for us as his people, that the word of God is not an arbitrary or an abstract thing that we need a college degree to understand. We need to read the word of God and it is consistent and its explanation is consistent. And so it's not up to fanciful interpretation into our imagination. It's not up to me. It's up to the proper reading of the Word of God and. The Word of God will interpret itself for us, and the illustration pointing to Adam in the garden after he had sinned, he sought fig leaves. Together, he and his wife, they clothed themselves with that. I heard the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid themselves because he said I was naked. His clothing does not clothe him.

And then when the Lord clothed Adam and Eve later, it was coats of skins different entirely. That speaks of Christ. He's our only clothing. He's our only righteousness that can stand before God. When it speaks of the believer in verse four of our chapter doesn't use the word naked, he used the word unclothed. And that is when a person dies physically, they're unclothed. And so it says for we that are in this Tabernacle, that is in this body do groan being burdened, not for that we should be unclothed, that is to die. But clothed upon that, mortality might be swallowed up of life. And that's what will happen at the Lord's coming. We will have a body of incorruption, of immortality. We will be clothed upon that way. Here this afternoon we can say we do not wait to die. That is not the hope that is ever put before the believer. Our hope is to be clothed upon so that we may never see death at all, not even physical death. I remember the time I said to his sister, she asked me is it wrong to ask the Lord to Take Me Home and I didn't have the right I didn't have the right answer and I mentioned that to brother here and I didn't. I said no, it's not wrong of the apostle Paul says to depart and be with Christ is far better. But this brother said to me, why didn't you say ask the Lord to come? Ask the Lord to come, and you're not just asking something for yourself, but you're asking for the whole church. That was the right answer, Bob. Thank you. I accept that correction. No, I think you gave that to me. No, you gave it to me. Five, it takes us back to the purposes and heart of God to talk about these things. But who conceived it? Who purposed it for blessing? Who's interested in our eternal happiness? And having us with Himself? He says he that wrought us for this self, the self same thing is God, and so God has purposed it for us. This body like under the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Immortal, celestial, and heavenly in its character, and so on. It's God, and it's the one that when we lay these things, lay hold of us. It produces a phrase and a Thanksgiving in our hearts to the One that would purpose such blessing for us, that He would have us in this way and in order to guarantee it, if you will. To establish that it's his own, he says, I've given you the earnest of the Spirit. And so it's his claim, the Spirit that indwells you and I puts the stamp of God's claim upon us. This one is mine. I have purposed it, It belongs to me, and I'm going to have it with my Son and glory. For we are always confident for. Knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight home in this body. We haven't gotten there yet. Absent from the Lord. Christianity is a faith system. As Henry was saying before, we walk by faith, not by sight. The only two things you can see in Christianity is baptism in the Lord's Supper. Those are the only two externals. Everything else is a faith system, isn't it? Judaism. A Jew could say to a Gentile here, I'll show you my religion, come to Jerusalem and I'll show you the temple. I'll show you the priesthood, I'll show you the the offerings and the altar and and everything connected with it. I've been in a basement. I could say to someone, come on, I'll show you our meeting room. Not a very nice one. We don't have anything to show. Oh, I know Christendom. Christendom has all kinds of grand buildings. But that's not Christianity. That's not Christianity at all. That's Judaism. And we've gotten to think that's Christianity. It isn't. Studious example, don't we in the Doubting Thomas?

Because thou hast seen, thou believable. Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed. And so as you say, Christianity is a matter of faith. Not not blind faith either, as some say. It's facing one that is real, facing a person, a person of Christ. Faith is seeing him who is invisible. It gives substance to that which is. Believed. Faith is the substantiating of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. That's what says, yes, this is so. That's the only thing that's really, really, all the other things are going to perish, pass away, but this last, this abides, this is forever. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. I think it is helpful to see that faith is not just something, some mysterious thing that I have that is hard to define, but it is based on something as solid as the Word of God. Lord Jesus says heaven and earth will pass away, but my word will not pass away. So you are standing by faith, by believing God. You're standing on something that is sure than the world. We stand on the floor, we stand on in here. It's not that sure, but what we stand on by faith is far more solid. And I think it's really a challenge to us. It's because. In our country. And I think This is why people have been so terribly shaken by the events that have taken place is that this country has been looked like a solid government in solid country. It's not as solid as people like to think it is. There's only one thing that solid is the word of God. And you will only be solid if you stand on what God says. I think it is. A real challenge to us brethren, to rethink issues in our life. It says here we walk by faith, not by sight. And in the measure that we walk with the word of God regulating and controlling our thinking and our decisions, everything in our life, your life will be solid. What happens so often is that we look around. And we calculate things by what we see. And there's some very astute businessmen that know how to make good money. But brethren, they walk by sight, not by faith. They may be like the eagle, with tremendously perceptive vision, but that's not faith, that's sight. So there is a path which no fell N

the vultures eye hath not seen, nor the fierce lion passed by it. It's the path of faith. And I like to call attention to two figures in the Old Testament. Both were believers, Abraham and his nephew Lot. What characterized in general Abraham's life, not saying that he didn't have any problems, he did make some mistakes through his life, but was that he was a man of faith. He believed God, He acted on what God had told him. God gave him a son and said this is your only son. This is the son that I'm going to give you through whom you will be blessed. You will be a blessing to all nations. And he was 99 years old and he still hadn't seen a son. He chose to believe God, you and I in our lives down here, brethren. Are constantly. Have to come to the decision where whether we're going to believe the circumstances or whether we're going to believe God. Far better to believe God. But Abraham lived by faith a lot when it came time to separate himself from his uncle Abraham. Lifted up his eyes and saw all the plains of Jordan, and chose according to the sight of his eyes. How did Lot end up? It is tragic. It is awful. He lost everything. He's a saved soul. Because of what we have written in the New Testament, we know he was a righteous soul, but he lost everything he had in Sodom. He lost his wife, he lost his integrity, and his descendants have become some of the most bitter enemies.

Of God's earthly people today. What a commentary on walking by sight. Can you trust your own sight? You can't. Far better to trust God and what he has to say. There's any conflict of interest and what I think because of what I see and what God says. Always believe God. Base your life. Walk by faith. Based on what God says in His Word, you all live to regret it. As you were saying, Bob, faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God, and if we leave the word of God out, we have nothing. Too many have thought that, well, I get it by the Spirit telling me things, but if the Spirit of God were to tell me something, it would never contradict the Word of God. Never. It never has and never will. If we walk by the Word of God, we know, as you've already said, we've got the right path. Heaven and earth will pass away. But my Word, he said, will not pass away. That is eternal as He is. Love someone and you have a choice. What do you say? Do you want to be present with him? Or if you love them, do you want to be absent from them? Well, any natural art that really loves the person says, well, I'd rather be present with that person than absent from them. And he brings out here Paul himself when he thinks about this matter. He said, well, to be here on this earth and the way he speaks is to be absent from the Lord. We're not physically in his presence and with him. But one that has passed through death is said to be present with the Lord. And Paul says, well, I'd really rather that but and elsewhere he said, but it's needful for his brethren. And so he wasn't sure whether he was going to be or not present. But I think another thing that's important to us recognize and accept it says present with the Lord. Why you should say the Lord? He is the one who is in charge. We live under His authority. To choose everything for us. When we accept the Lord Jesus Christ, we accept Him as Savior and Lord. We have to recognize that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. We find often in dealing with people, young people. That they'll respond to some extent to the Lord Jesus as a Savior. But when the issue of his lordship comes up, it is often the point of resistance to really accepting him. And here, even in the matter of life or death, a man in this world, he'll give everything for his life if this is the only life he's got. But for us, the Lord would say I'm in charge of that too. It's for me to decide. Paul didn't have the right to decide the matter, and he was content. Even though he had his own feeling that would be better to be present with the Lord than absent. And yet when that matter came to a real point of issue, it's the Lord that has to say. We know that we have passed from death unto life. Because we love the brethren. It's delightful to sit here together with. So many of those who know and love and seek to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. When I see brethren who are indifferent to the meetings, it causes me to wonder where they are in their spiritual life. Because we know that we've passed on death into life. Because we love to be together. To be with one another. We love the brethren in their company. Since you mentioned that point, when we stay home, maybe it's to read the word, maybe it's to pray, but there's a meeting that night and but we're doing the Lord's things. We're at home. Maybe we're reading to our children, but we don't go to meeting.

But we're doing the Lord's things. Well. We're missing what you just said, The fellowship of our brethren. We're missing His presence in the midst of those who are gathered to His name. We can't have that alone at home. He says I'll never leave thee, nor forsake thee. But Matthew 1820 is is something beyond that. Where two or three are gathered together unto my name, there am I in the midst of them, and to stay home when one could be there. I'm not talking about as a legitimate reason for sickness or something like that. But. Just to stay home because one doesn't feel like it or whatever. Something's wrong. Something wrong with me? I do that right? You don't stay home from work because you don't feel like going, do you? Not unless it's real bad. Wherefore we labor the margin in my Bible says make it our aim. I think that's a little more emphatic. Wherefore we make it our aim that weather present, whether we are here in our body or absent, pass through the article of death, we may be acceptable of him. Well, once we've passed through the article of death, I don't think there's going to be any possibility of making any change in our life. And so. Wherefore we make it our aim. That we may be acceptable of him. I think that's what we're really talking about this afternoon. While we're here in this, in this body, in this life, this is where we can be acceptable unto him. Once we've passed out of this life, everything has changed. Everything is stopped. And so for each and every one of us, not just the young, but possibly primarily primarily the young, because they have. Quote maybe? Maybe. A life ahead of him. And what are they going to do with it? And so the apostle in one place that says the time that is left, and I think that's to each and everyone of us, make it our aim that we might be acceptable unto him. Isn't the force of this that our time of making ourselves acceptable is only now in this life where nothing is going to be changed once we cross into eternity to be with the Lord? Says the bride. The bride hath made herself ready, and she was adorned in that beautiful white garment, and so there's no changing, patching up the unfinished business. At the last, after we crossed the over into the Lords presence, we only have this time to get ready. And so we ought not to waste it, we ought to use it. The judgment seat of Christ is going to bring out the ready think the good things. I think though, there's a little bit of balance here that should be brought in on this point. And that is we had this morning about the idea of not being willing to sacrifice ones life as it were for others. And I think there's something in these verses that includes the thought I'll read this, that verse in the new translation, it says wherefore also we are zealous. Whether present or absent, to be agreeable to him. There's a certain sense, brethren, in which if it's agreeable to the Lord, to take our life and death. We should be quite willing. And the difficulty, sometimes we know so little about it, but maybe it's hard to even comprehend it. But if you were living in Afghanistan today and we're in a jail, what's your thought going to be? You're sitting in the jail cell in Afghanistan this afternoon, not here in this comfortable room. And this chapter is being read. How do you see the chapter? You might have to see it and say Lord. My life is in your hands, and if it's your choice to glorify yourself through my death, that's agreeable. That's the acceptable path to take. And yet there's something in us that so naturally clings to life, this life, that we may not follow the Lord if it puts us, can I say, at risk.

If the Lord were to choose. To remove light or we would do anything, if you will, if passing through a circumstance that where life is at risk. That we had anything to do about sickness, thought and is outside our control, as we would say. But there are things where we might have something to say about the matter or not. But here I think he's saying I'm Lord. I'm Lord of your souls, even your bodies. And if I choose, is it agreeable to you if Paul says I'm zealous, whether life or death would be agreeable to him?

Chicago Conference: 2002, 2 Corinthians 4:7-14

Reading

2nd Corinthians chapter 4, starting in verse 7. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the Excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed, Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus. Might be made manifest in our body, where we which live are always delivered unto death. For Jesus saved, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but light in you. We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believe. And therefore have I spoken, We also believe and therefore speak. Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the Thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God, For which 'cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Well, we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. But the things which are seen are temporal. But the things which are not seen are eternal. I guess we talked somewhat about verse 7 already, but I was thinking at the end of that, verse 7 is something that I think is very important. That the Excellency of the power might be of God and not of us. It's the work of God, brethren, that's important. And sometimes it does seem that we get in the way of God in His Word. We have become too big, and so the vessel has to be broken so that God can use it to let the light shine. And Gideon was referred to this morning to remember Gideon. Started out with the army of. Was it 32,000 men? And the Lord told them, he said that's too many, lest Israel should glory, that we have gotten the victory. And that's the natural tendency of our hearts is to glory. And we see God perhaps using us is the glory in ourselves, not realizing it's not the vessel, brethren, it's the treasure inside the vessel that's important. And so the Lord told them to tell all those that were afraid to go home. 22,000 went home. That's reducing your army pretty drastically. 10,000 were left. Surely that would be all right. The Lord said no, I can't use that many. And so often we hinder because we think we are something we change in the work of God. And so he did a further test on and brought him down to the water, and according as they drank the water he chose. And when the test was over. Only 300 remains. It seemed foolish to go against those myriads of the Midianites wiggles only 300 men. But this is the lesson we all have to learn sooner or later. Brethren, the Excellency of the power is of God and not of us. And there's 300 men that was night stood around that camp and at the signal as we read this morning, they broke the lamps, the the vessels, I should say, and the light shined out of those vessels and they blew the trumpets. And the Lord gave the victory. There is no way. That 300 men could take the glory for winning the battle against the Midianites. It was the Lord that did it. And oh brethren, if we could just get out of the way and let our God work, what great things He can do. But because of the natural confidence we have in ourselves, so often God has to do some pretty heavy breaking. And as was mentioned this morning, that's what we have in verses 8:00 and 9:00. We are troubled on every side.

Yet not distressed, we are perplexed, but not despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed. This is the way the breaking was done, and the apostles vessel. But the point is, rather than I think it's so important for us to seek to learn in the Lord's presence the Excellency of the power. Is God's not ours? Seems that the 891011 and 12, the first part of the expressions, always the breaking down of the vessel. The last part of the expression is the power that's within. And so you read, we are troubled on every side. Yet not distressed, troubled on every side, the breaking the vessel not to stress the power of God. And likewise and everyone even on all the way down to the 12Th verse. So then death worketh in us, but life in you. So the power of God comes in, in the destruction of that which is of the flesh. The power of God comes in and delivers. And it's true if we depend on Him. I think we have a first beautiful illustration of the radiancy of the glory it's spoken of. I'm looking at Acts Chapter 7. Case of Stephen. It says in verse 54 he goes over the history of Israel. Read from verse 51. He stiff necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears. He do always resist the Holy Ghost. As your Father's did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your father's persecuted? And they have slain them, which showed before of the coming of the just one of whom you have been now the betrayers and murderers, who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it. When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart. And they gnashed on him with their teeth, but he being full of the Holy Ghost. Looked up steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God. Here's the about to be the first martyr, the Christian dispensation, he looks up to heaven. He looked up steadfastly into heaven. And saw the glory of God. There was another object there that he saw, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, He saw the glory of God, and he saw a man in that glory standing. And they cried. And he said, Behold, I see the heavens opened. And the Son of man, standing on the right hand of God. And this was the final testimony of the Holy Spirit. But Stephen here exemplifies true Christianity. He looked up steadfastly into heaven #1 he wasn't looking here below, he wasn't looking at earthly things. He was looking up to heaven. And he saw the glory of God, the glory of God. And he saw a man in that glory, Jesus. The Son of Man standing, we know from other scriptures that as soon as he ascended, he sat down in token that the work was finished. But here now he rises and he's standing to see what the last answer would be of those at Jerusalem. And their answer was, we will not have this man to reign over us. And they stoned Steven. But it's Steven's position which really exemplifies what we have here in 2nd Corinthians 4. I'm going to read it in the. Translation in 2nd Corinthians 4, verse 6. But because it is the God who spoke that out of darkness light should shine, who has shone in our hearts for the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, there you have it, you have the glory of God.

The knowledge of that glory. And now He shined into our hearts. But that might shine forth to others. And it's the glory of God in the face of a man. Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels. Yes, these bodies are earthen vessels, but we have a treasure. The Spirit of God dwells in our bodies, and He directs our gaze to the man in the glory and to separate us from this world, to attach us to another world where Christ is. This world has cast him out. We should never. Forget that, never forget. This world does not want him, would not have him, and has cast him on his people, the Jews, Israel. They're still in unbelief. They don't want him. They haven't gone back in belief at all. They're in unbelief. They have to be brought to repentance and judgment of self. Their present state is terrible. It's it's, it's a state that that puts the approval on the rejection of their own Messiah. They're totally opposite to Stephen looking up to heaven. He sees the glory of God and Jesus standing there, and then he says he witnesses. There's a testimony that he gives. We have this. The verse I want. You have this treasure on earth and vessels that they're surpassing. This of the power may be of God and not of us. It's not the worst I wanted. Oh, I'm looking at the wrong chapter. I should be looking at Acts 7. Well, he sees the glory of God. I don't have to turn to it. And Jesus standing there, the Son of man, I see the Son of man standing at the right hand of God. That envelops Christianity. It's all together a new order of things. Totally. And the sad commentary we have to make in connection with this chapter is how far removed from the truth of it in this first Christian martyr is. It has Christendom. We're part of it. Become how far we moved. We have our gaze, and I think it's probably true about all of us. I'm not saying any of these things is so it's not true of me, true of all of us. We've we've looked, we look too much at earthly things. And haven't been occupied with him where he is. And that's where we are. That's our portion, but not of this world. And there's a there's a testimony that he would have

us to render as Steven rendered it. I see the glory of God in Jesus standing on the right hand of God. See the Son of man and he's about to come back to set up his Kingdom and reign here in the meantime. We're associated with Him in that glory seen above. It's been mentioned in the previous reading, the treasure is the knowledge of these things. We have the Holy Spirit indwelling us, tremendous treasure. That was never true. The Old Testament Saints. It won't be true of the millennial Saints. Spirit of God only indwells us in this present day of grace. And what a treasure that is. And what does He do? He directs our gaze heavenward. He directs our gaze to the glory and to the one who's in that glory. To be a a people that witness to this poor world, laden in sin of that man in the glory now who once they had on the cross. Treasure in the heart, not in the head. We can have truth and we should have truth, we have to understand it in our minds, but the true dwelling place of truth as God desires it for us, as in the heart, the persons that are referred to here, and the light does not shine in an unsafe person. You have to be born again, because by new birth we receive a new light, and it's in that soul of that new light. That the treasure dwells and so Israel in a coming day is going to have God's message engraving on their hearts. Not a Stony heart of unbelief, but hearts that are tender and in which God has worked. We it was read this morning and or referred to I guess.

In John 17 this is life eternal, that they might know the the only true God in Jesus Christ, who now is sin. To know God as God intends us to know him. He has given us a life and nature with the capacity to know his heart and to know his will and to have the holy as he is holy, not in the not in Adam, but in Christ. And so this treasure that's referred to here, I think it's important to recognize the old that we had this morning. The law was unto death. But what we have is unto light, and it's a life given to us by the Spirit, and it's in that new man, and in that heart of the new man, if you will, that God writes upon it his Son. And it is Christ in the new man that shines out to this world. And so again it's we give it out with words. But the true outshining is an outshining that comes from a heart on which Christ has been written. I'd love to add what you just said done in John 20 when you might ask the question, when did the new man begin in US in John 20? After his resurrection. Read from verse 19. And the same day, at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. Now this was their first public acquaintance or meeting with the risen Christ. And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you, as my Father hath sent me, Even so send are you. He has shined into our hearts for the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. So now he says, peace again. Now you proclaim that. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost, And that's the beginning of their association with him. In resurrection he breathes the risen man, the second man, the last Adam. In his resurrection life he he imparts that to them. So they can have a part with Him in resurrection and that's really the beginning of the new order. And this this is to individuals in Acts 2. It's the collective side. This puts them individually in Christ and in Acts 2, collectively in Christ, the coming of the Holy Spirit to unite together by His baptism. 11 body. But here we have the communication. From the risen Christ of his own resurrection life by the Spirit. Breathed into them by the risen Christ, the head of the new creation, this new resurrection life. And they had life before, but this is a new quality of life. This is something the Old Testament Saints did not have. They didn't know God as their Father. They were not in a place of. Of nearness, such as we are. They didn't know Christ as a. Man down here, he hadn't come yet, dead on a cross, hadn't died yet, risen, glorified. They didn't have the Spirit sent down to indwell them, nor did they have the Spirit in connection with this resurrection life of Christ. He wasn't resurrected yet in the Old Testament, so they were not in Christ yet. We are. We're in Christ individually by the Spirit. In association with the risen man who's now in the glory. And then in Acts 2, the Holy Spirit is sent down as a person, not, not characterizing the new life that we have in Christ, that's John 20, but as a person in dwelling us and uniting us into one body, that's union with the head in heaven. Wonderful truths. None of this was true before Christ came and died and rose and ascended to heaven and sent down the Holy Spirit. None of that was true. This is Christian truth we're talking.

About and only Christian truth. It won't be true. The millennial Saints there won't be in Christ like we are. We have absolutely the highest privilege. How much have we entered into these things and enjoyed them in our own souls? When Stephen was being persecuted there, he was responding in that new resurrection life and communion with his Savior and glory, even though it was, we believe, a real miracle that that occurred there. But another sense, it is the principle upon which God deals with us in this whole age and every one of us. By faith and look up and see that same man there in glory and as we go through life, give witness to him there in communion with him. And it seems to me like that is versus 8-9 and 10 in our chapter where we're feeling the persecution, distress and all these things and communion with him. But if we don't learn it in communion, then we learn it in the next verse, and it's kind of the hard way. But we can learn the same lesson. Is that not right? It's interesting that contrast verses 10 and 11 like you say, Doug, there is a difference there, although it does say largely the same thing. Verse 10 is always bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the light bulbs of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. In other words, this is what should be characteristic of the Christian life, is to bear about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, so that the life of Jesus would be made. Manifest in our bodies, the life that we have in Christ is life and resurrection. That you cannot see life and resurrection unless you know what death is. And so it's in the measure that we put into practice in our lives, bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus would be made manifest. But then like Doug was mentioning verse 11. Is not so much that we live that way, but we are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake. And there it says that the life of Jesus might be made manifest. Doesn't say in our body, but in our mortal flesh, because sometimes he touches these bodies of ours. It may be in sickness, it may be in death, like in the case of Stephen, that those stones when they were flying in hitting him with the glory that shined out of that. Man his face shown it says like an angel's face because he was bearing about the body the dying of the Lord Jesus he was he was delivered really to death for Jesus sake. But then the life of Jesus shown out no brother and what a treasure we have. May the Lord help us that we. Put into practice this of bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. What do we mean by that simply means that when Jesus died, he died to sin and to all that this world was. And if I go out and enjoy to the hilt this world and what it has to offer. Is that bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus? When he went to the cross and died for me and his position is completely outside of this world system. That is not bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, and therefore you're not going to see in me if I give myself to that kind of living. You're not going to see the life of Jesus in me, but it is in the measure that we bear about in our bodies, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus has made manifest in our mortal, in our bodies. And then like Doug says, sometimes we are delivered to death. And it's been such a interesting thing to me to see that sometimes people when they get into some real physical difficulties. The light shines out. Beautifully shines out some of those broken bodies and hospitals. The light of testimony that shines out of those broken lives. God can use broken vessels, and that's what He does use. The Lord help us, brethren, to understand this principle. It's this principle of life and resurrection. You cannot know what life and resurrection is until you know what death is.

Resurrection is after death. You mentioned life and resurrection and someone might say in verse 10 always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our resurrected body. That's not what it says. But notice verse

11. For we which live are all we delivered unto death for Jesus sake, that the life also of Jesus. Be made manifest in our mortal flesh. That's not the resurrection body. That absolutely eliminates that argument. And it's this body that is mortal, subject to death. And he's talking about we have resurrection life, but we don't have a resurrected body yet. And it's important to see how he guards that. I've often wondered why does it say in the one verse body and the other verse mortal flesh? Because I think to meet that argument. And to show that's wrong. It's this very body he's talking about. Well, when we get our resurrected body, there will be no opportunity. Then to demonstrate the life of Christ here on earth. So as you say, Chuck certainly is here now today. Where we Live Today is where this was demonstrated, not afterward. Risen with Christ. Weren't there some that taught? That the resurrection has taken place already. That refutes that. Some of these expressions are given of the Spirit to refute error. That existed even in that 1St century. I believe it's very interesting that in these 4 verses they are not all exactly alike, but I believe they all demonstrate the same thought. The treasure, the fact that the vessel must be broken, and when the vessel is broken, then the treasure, the substance of that treasure can shine out and it's already has been mentioned. What is the treasure? Well, it's Jesus Christ isn't it? The one who came and died and rose again. And is now seated at the right hand of that glory on high. And when we demonstrate that, that's demonstrating the treasure that is in this body, the treasure that we, we won't have the opportunity after we're dead. We won't have the opportunity after the Lord comes. It's right here and now. When the apostle Paul in Acts. Was on the way from Jerusalem to Damascus. And it was, it says it was at noonday and there was a light that's shown above the brightness of the noonday sun. And he heard a voice. And later in the Acts, Barnabas brings him to the Saints and says he has seen the Lord. Well, it doesn't tell us that in Acts 9 where he was smitten down. But evidently, according to Barnabas comment, he not only saw a light, but he saw the person of Christ. And he never, he never varied from that path, from that time on. He, he had an object that was real and sure. And he went from that woman on in that path, the Christ the object. And he never forgot what the Lord said. Why persecute or sell me? He saw there then that those on earth were part of that body. That body on earth was part of that head in heaven. And he never forgot it. And he presented that in his, in his. Throughout his ministry, what a marvelous thing he saw the Lord at that time. He probably saw him again when he was caught up into the 3rd heaven, but Barnabas says he has seen the Lord. In connection with what we had before us this morning and see if I can find the verse. In First Corinthians 4. He says, I read from the first verse, that a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. And with me, it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or a man's judgment. Yeah, I judge, not mine own self. Notice for I know nothing by or against myself.

Yet am I not hereby justified, but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God. Paul says here, I'm not conscious. He says in verse four, I know nothing by myself or against myself. He's not conscious of anything in his life. At this time as a Christian. That was wrong, but he says, yet I'm not hereby justified. The fact that I'm not conscious of it does not mean there isn't something there. So he says he that judges me as the Lord. Before he was converted, he says of himself, I verily fought with myself to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. The Lord says in John 16, The time cometh that he that killeth you will think that he do with God's service. They he thought Saul of Tarsus thought Jesus was an impostor. And he persecuted Christians. He was dead wrong, he says in another place. I have served God with a good conscience all my life. He, he didn't think he was doing wrong until he met the Lord. And so even though as a Christian he could say, I'm not conscious of anything in my life that's a stray that doesn't justify me. The Lord does he recognize the fact that he's not his own judge. He's not confident he he could. Be conscious of no evil, but that doesn't prove there wasn't something. And the final judges the Lord doesn't connection with. With I mean, when he says he wasn't conscious of anything, you know, we he could have been very proud. You know, I'm living a perfect Christian life now. He right away says, no, he the Lord is my judge. So this this is in connection with how we go on. He probably went on the closest to the Lord of anyone and yet he calls himself the chief of sinners, doesn't he? As he looks back at his former life. So. Let's judge in ourselves what needs to be judged and then go on and do not be occupied with it, be done with it and go on with Him. Not occupied with the evil that's in US, but with the glory that's in Christ. Verse 12 Then we have a verse that our principle that is quite well known in. Scripture as well. Death worketh in us, but life in you. This is a principle that is important if we're going to know what it means to bring blessing to others. In other words, Paul says that there be life in you, there's got to be death in US. And so it is. A farmer knows that to get a crop, he has to take a certain quantity of. Seed out into the field and put it down in the earth. What happens to that seed? Is attacked by the microorganisms in the soil. It swells, it rots, it dies. You might say that's an awful waste of seed to be put it into the ground like that, but that's the only way you get a new life. And much more fruit. And this is a principle that each one of us has to face. As long as we're going to preserve our own lives, we don't want to put ourselves at risk in any way. There's not going to be fruit in our lives, but it's in the measure that we give ourselves as we have in these verses. There about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that there's going to be fruit in our lives. The life of Jesus will be made manifest. Look at John chapter 12 which really has the same principle. John, Chapter 12. It's in this chapter where the Greeks seek Jesus. Verse 20. There were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast. Same came therefore to Philip, which was of the Seda of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew, and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

Jesus answered and said, entered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit, as long as that corn of wheat. Was alone. Well preserved. Don't let any microorganisms get to it. Don't let it die. As long as that was the case, it was alone. Back when that corn of wheat was put down into the ground and dies, only then does it give life to a new plant or by there can be much fruit. So the question is for you and me, do we want fruit in our lives for God and for that eternal day or are you interested in just preserving your life? And sometimes I think. That we in this country have been overly engrossed. Preserving ourselves. Our health, not that we don't want health, and I'm not speaking anything against that, brother, but we preserve ourselves. We don't want to put ourselves at risk. Do everything you can to preserve yourself. What's it going to do? It's going to rob you of having fruit in your life for God. When you put yourself at risk. Fall into the ground and die. There is where much fruit comes. And of course this verse 24, the Lord is speaking about Himself, and in atoning sufferings only. He is the one whose death brings life. But there's a principle here. Notice in verse 25 He goes on, and he says, he that loveth his life shall lose it. He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. I challenge you young people. I challenge each one of our hearts. I challenge my own heart. Do you love life? You want to live it up to the hilt all that this world has to offer. You want to love life. You're going to lose it. You're going to get down to the end of your life and you'll say I missed the whole point of life. That is so tragic to me is to go to an old folks home and to see people who have prospered. Tremendously in this life, maybe a great position of honor and authority or wealth. And there they sit in a wheelchair. Lost their reason? Have absolutely nothing in front of them. Loved life, they lost it. But here's the alternative, and to me it's pretty strong. Comes home to my own soul. He that hates his life in this world shall keep it until life eternal. That's pretty strong language and it's something that we need to really think about. You love your life. Are you living it up in this world? Remember, you will lose it. But the alternative is that if you hate your life in this world, say no to number one. This me, myself and I and live for Christ. You're going to

have to cross yourself out your desires. Your belonging desires. Cross it out and live for him. Then you will save your life. You'll keep your life until life eternal. Jim Elliott. That said, he is no fool that gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose. It's worth thinking about young people. And older runners too. We need to challenge our hearts. They tell you. I really believe that God has given us a shake in this country. We have been materially given. More than any other time in the history of the world, this culture that we live in. But this is not life to have abundance of things, is not it? It's not the answer, young people. The answer is something else. It's crossing out number one to put Christ forward.

That's the answer and that's what we have in this verse. So this is what it means. I really believe in verse 12 of our chapter. Death worketh in us, but life in you. Well, brother Doug run off of disappointed person. First ten of our chapter brings in possibly the thought of self judgment. This is always bearing about in the body of dying of the Lord Jesus. So that's the work that goes. Goes on in my soul as I walk daily, seeking to the old nature in the place of death. And then verse 11. We believe brother Doug touched on him a little bit and then brother Bob touched on it too. Brother Bob brought brought out the the work of God as as the Lord may lay aside some sick 1 and and bring about through that experience. That which brings forth fruit to God. I believe there's another thought in this verse too, and I'm wrong. I I bear correction, but there's sometimes when we don't bear in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus and we there's something of the flesh that's still living. And So what does God do? He allows circumstances in our lives that brings about. The judgment, the self judgment that we missed. And they may be uncomfortable circumstances, but he sees it necessary that the light may shine that this matter that hasn't been judged personally is judged. And so verse 11 brings out. For we which live are always delivered unto death. I believe. I believe another dog touched on this, that this is the faithfulness of God in our lives. That would bring about death when necessary. The flesh is active, but unseen or unrealized. We don't, we don't deliver ourselves under that. It's the work of God. I can't, can't help but relate a circumstance that happened recently that during a time in which there was a lot of happy fellowship one weekend. Came home and was very, very encouraged in the Lord. Work the next day and I got hit with a ton of bricks from my boss and I didn't, I didn't realize, I didn't know there was a need for something, but the Lord did. And so he brought me through a circumstance which helped to possibly deal with something that the Lord had seen and thus there could be more fruit. To shine forth while God is faithful. And he knows what needs to be done, even sometimes when when we don't. And so the process is brother Bob has been bringing forth so deaf worketh in US. Well, death worketh in US one way or another. It's either through self judgment or it's through the faithful work of God, our soul, that if that means correction, please feel free. Connect with our 12Th 1St day, the fact in the 1St chapter of Second Corinthians what Paul speaks about himself and you might read the three verses there and 2nd Corinthians 1 verses 8-9 and 10. Or we would not. Brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure above strength, and so much that we despaired even of life? But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and thus deliver in whom we trust that He will yet. Deliver us. So Paul went through a lot in his ministry for the Lord and he felt those things. He was delivered and pressed out of measure. And so that was, as he says, death working in him. He had to have the, he had the sentence of death in himself to go through those circumstances. Without complaining, but accepting it as a part of identifying with the rejected Christ. Who is in heaven? Because he saw him there. And so it wasn't hard for him to do that as long as he had that sentence of death in himself. But if Paul had chosen to have an easy life in this world, then he would not have had the sentence of death in himself, and it would have been hard, and he probably would have complained like we do a lot of times when we were put in the bad circumstances.

So all of this worked for the good of the Corinthians. They benefited by it, and it was life for them. And so, brethren, if we pass through difficulties, we do have the sentence of death then, and go through it and honor our Lord and give. Let the light shine, don't be light for others. Very real thing. None of us will, probably. Be faced with the life that Paul lived, but. It's a very real thing. You some crate for the young families. You want life in your children. It's going to be accomplished through death in yourselves. That is, the Christian life is a sacrificial life. It's a fruitful life. It's a denying of ourselves. And so you'll have to stretch yourself on your children or in the marriage relationships that we want something productive or fruitful in our marriage relationships. The answer to it is death to ourselves, all of our troubles in life. I mean bad troubles that we cause are caused because we allow ourselves. We try to save our lives, we make ourselves the object of our life, and that always works havoc in the relationships of life that we find ourselves in. And so the apostle had been given this ministry of an able minister of New covenant, a New covenant ministry, but in order for it to be fulfilled, it was going to require death to him. And he was willing to go into that for the sake of others. Here it's. Enough for reward. But it's that those to whom he preached the gospel might see that gospel shining out of his life. And so it was death to him, but life to the Corinthians. But the principle applies to the people you work with at work, your family, your wife, your children, or your husband. You want truthfulness for Christ. You want Christ in them. It can only be through death to yourself. The giving of yourself. That's Christianity. That's where the power of God comes into play, doesn't it? I think it's so important to see that it's only after death has taken place, then the power of God manifests itself in resurrection life. And I love to read the first part of the book of the Acts there where the apostles were so tremendous, their testimony, the power of their testimony. When they stood before the council, Think of those 70 elders of Israel, the Sanhedrin, the. Learned of the day and the understanding men that were sitting there and here's this poor supposedly ignorant fisherman standing there and in boldness, they had threatened to kill him. And you know that's the worst thing you can threaten a person with. We're going to kill you if you keep on. Talking about Jesus, it had absolutely no effect. Why? Because they had the sentence of death in themselves. Can you threaten a dead man? I'm going to kill you. It has no effect on a dead man. And in effect, that's where they were. They were carrying about in the body. The dying of the Lord Jesus and the life of Jesus manifested itself. It's not our own energy, our own strength. It's the power of God that works in that way. Something that we really need to meditate on more, brethren, but tremendous to think of that that the power of God can be made manifest. In these poor broken earthen vessels. That, I suppose, is in the three men before Nebuchadnezzar.

They had no hope other than God, did they? Do we have any hope other than God? None. God always comes in a different way than we think. They said God, our God, is able to deliver us out of thy hand, but he didn't deliver them from the furnace. They were delivered through the furnace. And through that experience God was glorified. The name of God and Nebuchadnezzar made a decree that that God should be honored. And whoever would speak about it, that against that God their house would be made a dunghill. By what glory was brought to the name of the Lord through their testimony weren't delivered from the fiery furnace, they were delivered through it. Disobeyed God. He tried to cover up his sin with fig leaves. And it didn't work. Death had to come in to cover him, following him, his sons Cain and Abel, when they went to offer something to God. Cain offered to God something that he had worked with and use of the ground and produced. And by his own efforts he presents it to God and it's rejected. Consequently, Abel, who can only bring something to God, he brings that which brings in death and God. It's a tremendous thing for us to recognize that man in his fallen condition can absolutely produce no fruit for God. It's impossible for a human being. You and I are born into this world as children of a fallen Adam, and by our natural lives we produce nothing. Nothing. That is

fruitful for God. And so God looks at it and he comes into the picture and he says that's it, that's the end. We're not going to have anything for me, for my glory from man in the flesh. And so man in the flesh, they that are in the flesh cannot please God. God says man is dead in trespasses and sins, and as a consequence, God isn't looking for anything in that. The Lord Jesus comes into the picture and in his death he honors God and does a tremendous work for us as well. Because now in his death, God looks at us and he says you're dead too. Colossians 33YE are dead. And your life? What about my life? Your life is hid with Christ and God. And so we have life. Yes we do. But we have a new life. We have a life which is capable of fruit for God, but it is life and resurrection, identified with Christ in his resurrection. And in that life there can be fruit for God. But where is that life now? It's in an earthen vessel. It is still in a vessel associated with this earth, an earth in which we originally had a vessel that could produce no fruit for God. But now having the life of Christ, a life and resurrection in this earthen vessel, still we can produce a fruit for God, but there's nothing for God if we go back and live the old life. It is so God says positionally you're dead. And your life is hid with Christ and God. In Romans 6 he says to us, Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead, indeed under sin, but alive under God. And here in this chapter I think we see the practical every day, as Phil was Speaking of it, carrying out of it. When I say, oh, I'm tempted to want to live that old life. What do we just say? I see Christ die there. That's the end of the attempt to produce anything for God in the flesh. It's useless. It's a waste. And so if I go back and seek to live that life. And that's the only life the world knows. People all around us who don't have that life and live in this world, everything is lived for the old life, the life that knows not God, the life that can only recognize gain, can only recognize fruit by its own effort. And so man, he doesn't know anything else. He only lives for this life.

Well, what do we live for? Do we live a life that identifies us with the Lord Jesus, which is for eternal fruit, for the glory of God? And where do where do I say about my my natural life and the body? I say, well, if, if I lose it, it's all right. Because I have the hope of the resurrection, my Lord, the one that is the object of my present life. He's in the glory, and I gaze upon Him in the glory. And if the reflection of that shining in my heart goes out to those about me, then I associate them with that life, you might say, which is eternal and which is to come, but to go on and live in the in the present, if I don't care about in my body, the dying. Jesus, if I don't put the stamp of death in a daily sense, when I get up in the morning and live my present activity, am I living it in the energy of the Newman, but in an earthen vessel, taking care of the necessary things that have to do with this world? But the fruit that comes for God is that shining out of that which is in my heart, which is of Christ, which attracts. Souls to heaven, where's your life now? What's this association? It's not. It's the glory. It's where Christ sits at the right hand of God, and it's the demonstration of his life in this world that God uses by the Spirit to draw souls to the Savior and then to the glory. When the Lord Jesus rose from the dead, he rose in the power of a life that death can no longer touch. And that's the life that you and I possess in Christ when we've accepted Him as Savior. But it is manifest, as you say, Don, in the measure that we bear about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus. So what a tremendous thing it is to know what it really means to live. And even if death, physical death, should touch these bodies of ours. It doesn't really necessarily mean this when it says. About in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, but supposing it does, he goes on in verse 14 to touch that point he says, knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus and shall present us with you. So even if death should touch these mortal bodies, why there is sure the resurrection that is ahead. Physical resurrection. Bodily resurrection.

Des Moines Conference: 2002, 2 Corinthians 4:8-13

Reading

Exalted Praise being given to the Lord Jesus through eternity. Revelation 5 and verse 9. And they sung a new song. Saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation. And they sung a new song which will never end. Lord Jesus, we look forward to the moment. We are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. We would live our own way, delivered unto death for Jesus sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then, death Burke is in us, but life in you. We having the same spirit of faith according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken. We also believe and therefore speak. Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things, or for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, and through the Thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which 'cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are returned, are eternal. Brother Ed, you must have had some thoughts to go back to the 8th, 1St. We don't want to lose them. Well, I was thinking of this thinking of this wonderful chapter. The sorrow of the world work at death. But what we possess as believers. I read a verse last night and I want to go back to that and justice read it again in the prayer meeting. That's the third, third chapter of the first Epistle. And it's in connection, I think, of what we have in Ephesians 1, where it says he's not only head of the church. But he's head over all things to it. Now that would include all the circumstances, whether we would consider them good or bad or that may be good or bad. But I was thinking of these two verses in the end of the third of First Corinthians. It says verse 21. Therefore let no man glory in men, for all things are yours. Whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or things present or things to come. All are yours and your Christ, and Christ is God's if we can just think of these verses in this way that God has put us into the various assemblies in which we find ourselves. Whatever is at work in those assemblies, whatever he's doing to the praise of his own glory, if I can put it this way, it's like a link and a chain. You start here and you just work up and it just goes right up to the top of the one who allows the whole thing to happen in this world. It gives us great comfort, brethren, when we can see the sovereignty of God in that way.

That these things are working for us, as we have in this chapter, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory Bread. And we've been through some momentous things the last little while. And I think it's a comforting thing to our hearts to realize that God is at work in those circumstances. Sometimes it may not seem like it, but we know that he is what I do, he says in John 13. Thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter what a comfort these verses are to us. In view of what we have there in verse eight, we are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. You know, brethren, sometimes we insist a lot on the on the our responsibility before God and we would not minimize that. That's important. But a bitter cup can never be really appropriated and realized until we realize that a sovereign God. Is at work for our good in this pathway, it helps us to meet those bitter cups. I

just want to turn with you 2 to the first chapter of this book because I want to point out something there too. It's very lovely. 2nd Corinthians chapter one. And verse 8. For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble, which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure above strength in so much that we despaired even of light. But we had the sentence of death written in ourselves, or the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raiseth the dead who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver in whom we trust will yet deliver us. These verses are such a comfort. We realize that in every vicissitude of our life we have a loving father who is at work and he is going to have his way. And in the end we're going to be we're just going to stand before that throne in wonder, love and praise. We see his perfect ways with us. So what we have in verse 8-9. Need not only be the breaking down of the vessel A it could also be the afflictions of the gospel, or it could be the combination of both in the Christian life. Has often been mentioned about Paul and Silas who were in Philippi and how they got their backs beaten and perhaps bleeding and. Then they were thrust into the inner prison. And we often think about them. Talk about them praying and singing praises to God. But let's remember, too, that they did feel what they what was done to them. And it was midnight when they finally got around to it. Brethren, I don't know if we would ever gotten around to it, but at least they did get around to it. At midnight they prayed and sang praises. There was the breaking of the vessel, but the light shone forth out of that dark prison, and that jailer came out of there a saved man. That's an illustration of it. It's very instructive for us. That it's the life also of Jesus that might be manifested in his mortal flesh. It says in first John two he saith the vitamin E that saith he abideth in him ought himself also walk, even as he walked. The life also of Jesus sets the Lord Jesus Christ before us as a man here below. And. In those circumstances. He is the pattern for us as children of God. Now there is a connection in Ephesians Chapter 4 that I believe sets this before us, what we have in our chapter here, both in the exaltation of Christ and our occupation with Him, there in glory and in the patterning of our life after himself as he walked in the scene. And that's Ephesians 4.

We will not read all the verse 17 and 18, but you will notice there that he describes the activity of the nations walking in the vanity of their mind, in verse 18, darkened in their understanding, estranged from the life of God. And then he says in. Verse 20 But ye have not so learned Christ. That's the Lord Jesus Christ at the right hand of God exalted that we had in our earlier verses of our chapter. And then it says, if you have heard him and been instructed according to the truth, as it is in Jesus, so we have him set before us, as that one who always did that which pleased his Father, the one of whom the Father said he is. Almighty like. And I've enjoyed putting it this way. When we pattern our life, when we look at that light of the Lord Jesus Christ and as he walked here below and pattern our life in that manner, we are looking at a man who. Shows us everything that man should be to God. But that's not all we see in him. All that God is to man. And so the truth, as it is in Jesus, is that walk of perfect obedience and submission to the will of another. In suffering, even to the point of death. And so it's wonderful that it's the life of Jesus that is manifested so that we can walk as he walked. I think it's also nice to see that verses 8:00 and 9:00 that we've looked at really have a connection with verse 7 and verse 7. There's a contrast between the Excellency of the power of God with us. That's the contrast in verse 7, the power of God at work. In contrast that it's not be us and our own power. And then there's four. Comparisons really in the 8th and 9th verses which reflect that fact. The first one is we are troubled. Well, that's really our side of it. But God acts in power so that we are not distressed. God has his power at work even in the weakness and the suffering that he allows in the vessel, that he maintain it to his own glory in the circumstances in which he places it for for the good. Of the vessel itself or the person that bears that vessel. So then it's we are perplexed. But what does God come in and do but not in despair? We're persecuted. Does that mean that we have to just give up? No, it says, but not forsaken. And so God himself comes in, and He's not going to forsake us in that situation, but he's going to go with it, through through it, with us. As the Lord Jesus said, I'll never leave you, I'll never forsake you. And so while God may allow these things to come in with the purpose of good, He's always in them himself. And then the 4th one is cast down. Well, we might say, well, I've got to give up. Like there's no hope for me. My circumstances are too terrible. No, the answer of God is but not destroyed. Who keeps it from being destroyed? It's it's God, our Father with His great power, who is working on our behalf. And so Peter tells us in his first epistle in verse five that we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. And so all the power of God is operative toward us to keep us from being destroyed, keep us from being discouraged, keep us from realizing that there is no resource so that we can walk with him through it, and arrive at that salvation that he has provided by his power. Kept by the power of God. It's very interesting too that that's true of the those of the Dispersion, as well as applying it in the words of faith to us. He writes that to the Dispersion. And here they were, as far as men are concerned, lost identity, but kept by the power of God. And there on the day of Pentecost to witness this wonderful new thing that God has begun. And so he His eye is upon all of us, and not one circumstance enters into our and our lives, except it's ordered of God, as we've been told before by others.

In perfect love and perfect wisdom. Would this be a correct thought then, that all the resources of the Godhead are going to be used to bring us home safely to glory? There's a beautiful thought. In Isaiah 63 verse nine, we'll need to turn to it necessarily, but it it's to me that I don't know that astounding is the right expression. In all their affliction He knew what they were going through, and all their affliction he was aware, doesn't say that in all their affliction He was afflicted to think of that statement. State clear statement of Scripture concerning his Old Testament Saints, that in all their affliction He was afflicted. And can we say it's any less today for us who are members of the body of Christ and the Angel of His presence saved them? In his love. And in his pity. He redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old. Whatsoever things are written aforetime were written for our learning that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope. That expression that you use with being afflicted indicates how far he went. In identification with his own, I was often consternated by that expression in the 60. Night Psalm verse 4 where it says my sins and my iniquities were not hid from thee. Well, the hymn writer has very well put it. He confessed our sins and bore them as his own. So, being afflicted with all their afflictions, we see his identification in them, songs with a remnant, and certainly with us. It's all on the way to Damascus was sad. Why persecutest thou me? The Lord was already in glory. But it shows how bound up we are in unity now without risen and glorified mind. We are bound up in unity with him in his present position. And now our lives down here, we have to realize our position too. Is dead and buried with Christ and risen again. And this is what we have in verses 10 and 11. Just like to say a little bit more about what it means to be to bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. What does that mean? If we go back to the Epistle of Romans, perhaps it helps us to understand it in Romans chapter 6, because if we don't understand our position. It is hard to know how to apply it practically. Romans chapter 6. And beginning with verse one, what shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Notice it says we are dead to sin. Does not say we should be dead to sin, says we are dead to sin. Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized unto? Into Jesus Christ we're baptized into or unto his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death. That like is Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father. Even so we also should walk in newness of light. So when Jesus died on the cross, he died for our sins. Like was said, He identified fully with them and took them. In his own body He bore them on the tree, and he died. Now we accept him. We accept his work for us. And God looks at us in that same position that He took for us. He died. He was buried. We died to sin as well. We are buried with Him. And in baptism we identify ourselves with him in that death. And also it includes the thought in verse four of resurrection.

We are identified with him in resurrection.

Now how is that supposed to be shown out in our lives when sin presents itself to a believer in the Lord Jesus? What is the response? If you have a dead man laying on the floor up here, maybe he was a drunkard in his life. Let's see if he will take a glass of beer now. Will he grab a hold of it? No, you say? Why not? He's dead. That's what you and I are before God. We're dead, and we need to apply that in the same 6th chapter of Romans and verse 11 it says likewise. Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead. Indeed unto sin but alive unto God thru Jesus Christ our Lord. So that when sin presents itself in any way that it does in this world, we take that position. I am dead. I remember how I struggled with that as a young person, a particular thing that may not have seemed that serious, but I felt it was grievous to the Lord, and I felt out of communion when I got into it and I confessed it to the Lord. And each time I got up with more determination not to do that again. And I just went ahead and did it again until the Lord showed me the simple truth. That all you're struggling is not going to get you the victory. What gets you the victory is simply believing what God has said in his word. You're dead. And when the temptation came up again, I remember I simply said I can't struggle against this. I just accept what God says, I'm dead. And a dead man does not respond to the temptation to sin. So this is what we need to apply practically in their lives and really believe this is what it's meant in our chapter. It says always bearing about in the body. The dying of the Lord Jesus we carry in our bodies. He died for me. How can I, if he died for those sins of mine? How can I, when it presents itself, participate in that thing? I cannot. I say no to that. Then the life of Jesus, that life and resurrection, can be manifested in my body. Well, I think that's very, very important and we have a lot of young folks here and. Years ago, going through this very chapter, the demonstration was made like this, which is absolutely wrong. It's like playing Cowboys and Indians and you know, you go, bang, you're dead. That's not what we have here at all. What we have here in the 11Th verse is you've already brought out is that God sees you as being dead. With Christ and God sees you there. You accept that. And that's what we have in Ephesians 2. It says that he were risen and seated in heavenly places in Christ. That's where God sees us. We're no longer here a Sinner. In fact, let me say this, that we're not saved sinners. That's not a right expression. We're sinners. We're, excuse me, we're not sinners saved, We're saved. From sin, you know you're not a Sinner. After you've been saved, you may sin, but you're not a Sinner. God says I see you as dead in Christ. And look at the sixth verse, knowing this, that the old man is crucified with him. If if we've been crucified with Christ, how then can anyone say, well, that's the old man. That's not a correct expression. In Corinthians 5, Second Corinthians 517, which is just ahead of us, it says ye are a new creation, a new creation. Behold, all things are passed away. Behold, all things renew. God sees us as being dead and buried with Christ, and that's where we start. And with that knowledge, we know that we're on the ground of salvation. We know that God sees us already in heaven, seated in Christ. And as Bob has already said, how can we go on with those things that are defiling and dishonorable to the Lord? God sees us as dead. Let's consider it that way. It's not that we pretend to be dead. We are dead.

Is that not what is typified in the in the crossing of the Jordan when the 12 Stones were put in the bottom of the river? When the children of Israel crossed over and 12 were put on the shore. When the waters came back over those stones. They couldn't see those stones anymore, but God saw them. And that's the picture of you and me. That's where God sees us. In the death of Christ. And so we those 12 Stones on the other side, we might say, typifies ourselves in resurrection. And it was also on Gilgal, where they were, where they had the cutting off of the flesh, where they circumcised. And they always had to come back to that point after a victory. Or and it's good for us to come back to that point over and over again, is it not? But to always remember that that God sees us, He he doesn't see us in the flesh anymore that's under the waters of death, but he sees us as typified in those stones on the on the the shore of Canaan. Do you remember who put the stones in the middle of Georgia? No, it was Joshua. Joshua put them there. That's the figure of the Lord Jesus. He's the one that did that work, brother. It was 12 men out of the 12 tribes that took a stone out of the Jordan and put it on the shore, which is typical of resurrection. And that's what's seen and that's what's our responsibility to show resurrection light. But it's not for you and I to. Count the, I should say. The flesh is not put in the place of death by us, brethren. It has been done by the Lord Jesus on the cross of Galveston. That is done. We are dead. That's the way God sees us, and it's for us to recognize it. And that's what that word. Reckon yourselves to be dead unto sin. That's what it means. Think that way. Now think that you're dead to sin. Recognize the fact that you are. Yes. Ephesians, 421-2223. The rendering there is not right. Let's look at it and let's remember it and correct it in your Bible if you haven't already done so. That's a wrong rendition. Verses 24/20/22. That he put off. Wrong, wrong. Entirely wrong. We cannot put off concerning the former conversation. The old man. The old man has been put off in verse 24 and that she put on wrong, wrong expression. It's having put off, and that was done at Calgary and having put on in verse 24 the new man that was done at Calvary, now the 25th verse. Wherefore putting away Lying. And so on. Be angry and sin not, et cetera. Now turn to Colossians 3. You get almost the same expression, but there again in plus and three verse nine, let not one be lie, not one to another, seeing that she have or having put off the old man and having put on the new man. And then in 12, verse 12 put on therefore as the elect. Now that's the responsibility to do that. But brethren, don't be mistaken about the fact that the old man was crucified with Christ, that the old man was put off at Calvary, the new man was put on at Calvary. You had nothing to do with it, nor will you ever have anything to do with it. It's been done. And starting with that as the foundation on the basis, then we can do the other thing, because God has already put us in a position of a new life. Two Corinthians 517. Ye are a new creation. God took the old ship and sunk it, and he built a brand new ship. Verse however, in the Nation chapter 5 and verse 25 that says this ye that are Christ have crucified the flesh with its affliction and lust. That at a point in history we accepted the Lord Jesus Christ. We accepted God's judgment against us. We agreed with God that we were what we were and have come to an end. Now these expressions that our brother correctly has called to our attention simply means to be in the state of having done this. We did it when we accepted Christ. Now continue in that state and by faith reckon to our account what God has done for us.

Things with what Bob said about the 12 Stones in Jordan, It's very profitable to see the the God side and the experimental side in. In numbers 32 and verse five there were two tribes that said well, for said they If we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession and bring us not over Jordan. And later it's 2 1/2 tries the two were first mentioned. My point is this God, as far as God was concerned and the action of Joshua, all 12 Stones were put into the Jordan and all 12 and 12 Stones were taken out. But there are dear Saints of God and there may be amongst us that experimentally they really don't want. They have chosen something of not going into the promised land. And all 12 tribes were eventually carried away captive. But these were the first to be carried away captive. And if we are not going to be in the good of death and resurrection with Christ, and we want to stay on the wilderness side of the Jordan, they were allowed to under certain circumstances, But God intended those 12 Stones in and 12 Stones out. But experimentally they didn't want it. And our hearts need to be careful that we are not in the same position. But they were told the extent of the land, but they had to put their feet on them. That's the point. The other thing is you can look this up sometime. I don't have the time, but I believe that the date for when Israel came up out of the Red Sea and when they came up out of the Jordan, the date is exactly the same. Trace that out Sometimes very. It's a very interesting study. The time of their coming up out of the Red Sea. In the time of their coming up out of Jordan, now we know it was separated by years, But as far as God is concerned, morally the time, it's exactly the same time. If you look at it now that I believe the point Spirit of God is making is this. That the

death of Christ has seen for us in the Red Sea has delivered us from the power of the enemy. But now in connection as we know with the Jordan, it's our our having died, you know, with him. But the dates I say are exactly the same. You can look it up sometime exactly the same thing. By faith they pass through the Red Sea, as by dry land, which the Egyptians are saying to do, were drowned. By faith, the walls of Jericho fell down. What you think there is that also the thought of responsibility. And you know, we've spoken a lot about our position, which is glorious and the foundation. But we are exhorted to walk in the spirit and we shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. I don't think it speaks of the flesh as being dead. We we have a struggle with the flesh perhaps every day. So there's the responsibility side that comes in there and I think we shouldn't forget it. Although our position, glorious position, is in Christ, and we are God looks upon us as having died with Him. We have the responsibility to keep that old nature in the place of death, and we have the power to do it because we have the Spirit of God to give us strength to overcome. But I don't think we can regard the flesh as dead. It is it will act at any moment in our lives and bring dishonor on the Lord. Says walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh, and we we have that responsibility to. Apply the sharp sword that we have brought before us there in that chapter, Joshua Five. It was to be applied to themselves at Gilgal before it was applied to the enemies in the land. Which brings before us just what we have in our chapter. Keeping the old nature in the place of death where God has put it practically. Not allowing it to to manifest itself in our pathway, is that right, brethren? Well, it is in one respect if we understand what we're talking about as to the flesh. The flesh, correctly has been stated, is not dead, it's condemned. What the law could not do Romans 8 three in that it was weak through the flesh, that is, it was addressed a natural man. Man who had that evil principle, rebellion and hatred against God, what the law could not do God in the sending of his Son.

In the likeness of sinful flesh, the identification of that blessed man with us. Has condemned sin and the flesh. Which means. It is there, varied and pushing to get out. And the only way it can give expression to itself is through these members. Beloved, yield your members unto God unto holiness. Or yield your members unto sin unto death, so it is there. Condemned, and we have a precious privilege by faith of agreeing to that. But it is the will of man that lets that evil principle work. Now there is a distinction in what we refer to as the flesh, and what the apostle says in the 6th of Romans as to the old man. The old man is our standing in Adam before God as condemned. That is forever done, Adams history, one brother has said. The cross is the end of Adam's history outside of paradise. There is no standing before God and Adam anymore if a man does not have. Affiliation does not have affinity with Christ and resurrection. He has nothing. God has nothing to say to him except judgment. But that old principle of rebellion and sin against God has been condemned, and we have taken sides with God against it. It's buried and always seeking to give expression to itself, and it has to be reckoned with. And we reckon correctly that it's dead. We take sides with God, We wrestle with it. We wrestle with it. We'll never win. But we believe God. Now there is an analogy. Here you take the gospel address to sinners, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. You saved to a converted center. Where are your sins? They're gone. Oh, how are they gone? They Christ died for my sins. I believe that I have peace. They're gone. Well, what about the flesh? It's condemned. But I held reckon with it, and I take sides with God, and in faith believe that God hasn't has been pointed up to us, revealed to us, that true character of having been condemned and set aside, then we have power over it by the Spirit of God as has been set. We walk in the Spirit and we never let him out. It is interesting that it never does really say that the flesh is dead. What is dead is we are brethren, we are dead and we are responsible to show that truth that we are dead, buried and risen again. That is what scripture says and I remember the story told of a man who professed to be a believer who was caught stealing in. When he was called to account by the judge, he says it was my flesh that did it. So the judge says, well, we'll send your flesh to prison and you'll go along to keep them company. And I think we have to realize that we are responsible in showing out that truth, that truth that Christ died for us and in accepting what Christ did for us then that is our position dead. Very risen again with Christ. Tremendous to get these things into our soul, to enjoy it in reality, in the soul. This is the truth, brother. This is the truth of my position. You look at me, you might see it sometimes. Other times you might not see it displayed very much. That is the question of my responsibility. And that's what you were talking about, John, I think. And that is different. And that's why I think it is. It says we. Are dead and dead with Christ, and buried and risen again. But it never says exactly that the flesh is dead. Himself and his flesh. He said that in me. There was a present statement at the moment he said it in me, that is, in my flesh dwelleth no good thing, and that's true of you and me and everybody else. And I trust that what I said didn't give license to someone to go out and sin. Our standing is secure. It's perfect. It's forever.

The Newman was put away at Calvary's Cross, and this I'll stand on the rock forever. The old man was the old man was put away at Calvary's cross. The new man was given to every Christian. We had nothing to do with it. That's scriptural and I'll stand on it. But the scriptures that follow say that we must. And let's read one of them in Ephesians 4 again. The 25th verse. Wherefore putting away now? This is responsibility. Putting away lying. Speak every man truth with his neighbor, or we are members one of another. Being angry and sin not, let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth and grieve not the Holy Spirit. These are all personal responsibilities. That does not it. I categorically say this. It does not change the truth of what was done at Calvary's cross. The old man was put away, crucified with Christ. Romans 6, verse 6. The Christ God put on the new man on everyone that received Christ as Savior. God took away the old man of everyone that received Christ the Savior. That's done. It'll never be done again, but we still have a responsibility to keep the flesh in its place. And those are the scriptures I just read. And so it's like 2 tracts of a railroad. We stand in perfect acceptance before God, but we have a responsibility as to our walk. Difficulty lies beloved. In what one brother has said. The flesh is condemned and the old man is dead, but I die hard when the Lord Jesus Christ pointed up. That in John chapter 6 concerning the flesh. That there is no good in it. How does that expression? How is it said there? And they went away and walked no more with him. The flesh profiteth nothing. Thank you, brother. The flesh profiteth nothing. Well, there are some who couldn't accept that and they went away. But it is difficult because we have living members to. Use in that way, if we choose to let them be used in that way, and so we die hard. But we have to simply, as was pointed up at the very beginning of this subject, we believe what God has said, and He makes it good in our soul, and it gives us power over it. When I just look at Luke 9 for a minute, there's another feature here I think that we should bring in because I believe it's important. It's in connection with what we're speaking up here. Luke Chapter 9. And. Yes, verse 23, he said unto the mall. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. You see, I left something out there. Daily. Let him take up his cross daily and follow me, for whosoever will save his life shall lose it. But whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. Well, I believe. It's important to believe that's a dimension that we can bring in here. By the way, if we don't take the cross up daily, we're not going to take it up at all. And so that's, that's a very important feature, brethren. And I believe as we get into his presence and we're in communion with him, we will learn what that cross is for, for the day. It's important that and we've heard these things about how the old man is gone the day Ed Wilson got saved, it's like God reached down and killed him. And then I was raised in newness of life with Christ. But that old flesh within Ed Wilson is not very nice. And so that's why it has to be dealt with on an ongoing thing. It's a it's a struggle continually. Let's not fool ourselves and say that it isn't because we walk outside these walls. We see things and right away we're enticed and and there's all kinds of temptations and all of these different things. The only way in which it's done is, is to pray, I believe without ceasing. It's it's to

apply those scriptures and that's why we need them every day. We need to apply them to our lives and walk in the good of them and then we're going to overcome evil with good. But I say that the daily thing.

Is really, I believe, the idea of a moment by moment thing. We're in a real struggle and we're not fooling ourselves that once we get saved, that's it. We have nothing more to do with it. Galatians makes that very clear now. The the, the deeds of the flesh are manifest. It says which are these? And it gives all that horrible list. But then it gives us the fruit of the spirit too, doesn't it? I don't say fruits, it's the fruit. Singular but seen in different aspects. And someone gave me a lovely list. It's really lovely. Various aspects that comes out there. Love in training, love suffering, love yielding all of these things is is such a lovely thing. I got a list here in my thing. I think Rube gave it to me one time and it's been such an encouragement to me to just dig that list out. Matter of fact we're coming over the border. The last time the guard fisted out and my bottle case and he looked at I don't know what he was expecting to find but anyway he fished it out and that's what was written on it and he quickly put it back in the case. I don't know he's a Christian or not but anyway that's that's the way it was. But. That's that's our that's our pathways believers, not only the the putting away. Of these things practically, but that the life of Christ might be seen in US. My mercy here, it says. So then death worketh in us, but life in you would that be that the Apostle Paul was so thoroughly a dead man that the life of Christ was manifested in him towards the Corinthians. Now this should have been true the Corinthians as well, but evidently it wasn't. By the 1St Epistle you can see that the life of Christ was not manifested in them. Which is a warning, I believe, to us all. I think it's something Eric Smith said 30 years ago. I was listening to it on a tape recently and I believe it serves as a warning to us all. The thrust of it basically was his brethren, don't familiarize yourself with the word of God unless you're prepared to walk in what it says. He said this. He said the truth enters by the conscience. He said just because a man is well read does not mean that he's well taught. Now, that's a powerful statement, but a very necessary one, and I believe one that's good for us in the present day in which we live. It's a dangerous thing to traffic in the truth of God. If we don't mean business with God because we're going to be tested on what we profess to have, may it be a wonderful reality within us that that truth has entered by the conscience into our heart. About 30 years ago there was a book put out by the I Forget what Environmental Agency Put It out. It was concerning the climbing of Mount Everest. The first American climb was done a certain face, and somebody went up and came up another face, but it was a little bit of a poem and I'd like to look it up and and copy it out. But basically it said, and it has spiritual overtones, we're not too interested in Mount Everest in our reading, but not interested at all. But what it said was because of the difficulty of the climb, the coldness, the pain. The everything is against you. If you don't really aren't really dedicated in in going through what it entails, you're not going to make it. And I believe that for us as believers, it's not that it's that terrible a thing, but if we have our eye on the Lord, then that's the strength. Not myself, not in yourself, but again, the difficulties and what we do, we Slough off. We Slough off as if it was climbing Mount Everest, but it's not. It's being walking with the Lord in grace. But we have to accept that there are difficulties and there are things that we deny ourselves. I don't want to be denied. I think it's pretty great to do this and do that and do the other. But if we set them aside, because it is step by step, isn't it? With the Lord, the Lord of glory set aside all his own rights so that we could be brought into blessing. Now, we who profess to be followers, are we going to glory in our rights and defend our rights, or are we willing to lay down our rights even to the point of death, that there would be blessing for others? And I think that's where this verse 12 Comes in. It is death worketh in us. But life in you and every farmer knows, to get a crop, you put seed in the ground. And that seed, what happens to it? It dies. It's gone.

It seems like a waste. How many bushels of corn are they farmers of Iowa putting into the ground? Just. Rot and die, but it is in that death it gives life to another plant and there is much fruit. That's a principle of the word of God, the same principle that applied in the case of the Lord Jesus. Now the Lord turns to us and says he that loves his life. Shall lose it. And he that hates his life, that's a pretty strong word in this light. We'll keep it until life eternal. #254. 254. Death and judgment.

Des Moines Conference: 2002, 2 Corinthians 4:1-8

Reading

From we will find an obvious favor, Our Spirits Present Home number 56. My father's house. Of God make it the rest of the Lord's day. Corinthians 4-5 and six. In the parenthesis of which chapters 345 and six are apart? That we have ministry of the person of Christ, brought out in such a beautiful way that it prepares us for the exercise of conscience or subjective ministry. That we find in the 6th chapter, that it seems to me to be a moral principle of Scripture that we first find. Are standing in Christ and fullness of his Person, and then we find that which is for exercise the 6th chapter. Yes. Therefore, seeing we have this ministry as we have received mercy, we faint not. But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not. Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves your servants, for Jesus sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, have shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the Excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed but not in despair. Persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live our old way, delivered unto death, for Jesus sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you. We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken, We also believe, and therefore speak, knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, and shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the Thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which 'cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish. Yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. It's. A ministry of the gospel of the glorious of Christ. And he had contrasted it with that ministry of Moses, which was introduced in glory but passed away. But this is something that wasn't and will not pass away, and it involved the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ and of God Himself. But it was committed to. A man, particularly here, the apostle, and he has this. Ministry in an earthen vessel that he is seeking to carry out fulfilling this ministry that have been given to him. But it's an administration that he has contrasted with what Moses had been given and as a or as the scripture says that. What Moses gave was

introduced. In glory with angels, but it's passed away. But he has this ministry that's not going to pass away. Chapter 3 and verse seven. It speaks of the ministration of death. In verse nine, it speaks of the ministration of condemnation that was the law that was delivered to Moses, like you said. And it's in contrast with what we have in verse 8 of chapter 3, the ministration of the Spirit. And at the end of verse 9 Administration of Righteousness and he shows like you mentioned. Brother Henry, that if the ministration of death and condemnation in the law was introduced with such glory, so that Moses when he came down from that mountain his face was shining. How much more now the ministration of the Spirit and the administration of righteousness that we have in the Lord Jesus, because in the Lord Jesus we have.

The complete revelation of the glory of God in our chapter. In verse four it says in whom the God of this world has blinded the minds of them. Which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ. Or it could be read the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God should shine unto them. And verse 6 God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness that shine in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. So it is our privilege. And the Apostle Paul like you said brother Henry was. Especially given that ministry. But do we not know God ourselves, brethren? If we have been brought to know God is not, then this responsibility of this ministry weigh upon our shoulders as well, to show out the glorious gospel of Christ in the midst of a dying world. That is the ministry that is spoken of here, and so it comes to bear on each one of us. Forth by the person of Christ we'll never see, as we have in First Timothy chapter six, that there's a glory which we will never behold. But the person of Christ displayed that glory, and he could say to Philip, Hast thou been so long time with me, Philip? And dost thou not know me? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. And so everything that we know of God, everything we'll ever know of God, is demonstrated through the person of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ. As the image of God we cannot but remember Ephesians, excuse me, Hebrews chapter one and verse three. It says he is the express image of his person and so it's been referred. He that has seen me has seen the Father. The Lord Jesus Christ was the perfect expression. Of the heart and mind of God, so that he could say that the Father. And I are one, but not only was he the expressed image of his person. He was the effulgence of his glory, that is, the outshining, the demonstration of the glory of God in a man. And so when the Lord Jesus Christ was challenged as to whom he was, and he said, I am altogether that which I have said unto you, He was the honest representation of what he said, and he proved it by the work that he did. That verse you quoted in John I have an interlinear that wasn't translated by anyone in in gathered and he has a footnote that he said this is the most troublesome verse in the whole New Testament. Well, the problem is that they must have used the wrong manuscripts because as you quoted, it is what Darby quotes it and it's absolutely exquisite. It doesn't need to be misunderstood at all, does it? And as you have said, I just add Amen. Very important. Verse. We see in the verse here, seeing we have. We see in the verse here seeing we have this ministry as we have received mercy. It's all received, isn't it? What we have, we have by way of revelation. We're not smarter than anybody else. We're not more worthy than anybody else, but we have it by revelation. That's the thing. That's the key thing. What hast thou that thou hast not received? And who made thee to differ from another? That's the grand thing about all of this. What we have, our God has been pleased to reveal to us, undeserving as we are.

Notice the first verse of our chapters therefore, and it reflects back. To what we had in the third chapter, I'd just like to draw attention to the last verse of chapter 3. It shows that this ministry in a certain measure is given to every one of us brethren. It says we all with open or unveiled face. Beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory. Even as by the spirit of the Lord, when Moses came off the mountain. His face was shining so much that he had to put a veil on it so that he could talk to the children of Israel. But now the contrast is that we have the privilege, brethren, to look with unveiled face right into the face of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is our privilege to do that. And in the measure that you and I do that notice it says we all this is not just some special group. Amongst God's people, it is the privilege of every true believer. We are with unveiled face, Beholding as in a glass. The glory of the Lord are changed into the same image, and the power of Christianity is in looking to that object, to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. And in the measure that you look to him and are occupied with him, there will be a transformation that takes place rather than we all have false. And we need to have help with our faults sometimes. But what transforms really transforms is to be directed to the person of our Lord Jesus Christ in all his glory. In the measure that you look there and I look there, there will be an unconscious transformation in our lives to His glory. And so this is the. Ministry that really is ours as well in this measure, brethren. Paul had it in a very special way, but it does come on us to the responsibility of letting the light shine. I suppose that was very graphically demonstrated when the Lord rode in Jerusalem on a wild ***** colt. We're just like that. And if we allow the Lord to control our lives, we'll be just like that too, won't we? But it's very important to notice that as Moses came down, the veil hid that glory that was reflected in his face. And in verse 17 it's, excuse me, 14, it says until this day. Remain at the same veil, untaken away. When they read the Old Testament, he's referring to those Jews who could not see the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Is not this Joseph Son? Is not this the Carpenter and these kind of things? They saw nothing except a natural individual in this world in the Lord Jesus Christ. But we beheld His glory, the glory of an only begotten of the Father to faith. That glory is manifested. It is open for view, but for the unbelieving heart it is still. Veiled and that glory is not seen because. There is a very active enemy to prevent the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ from being seen. And that enemy, of course, is now the God of this world, controlling its religion and its politics and its activities. So as to hide the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. But how delightful it is. That the very God who spoke that light should shine out of darkness, he said, Let there be light. And there was light has shined into these hearts and given faith to see that wonderful glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, the glory of God in the face of a glorified man at his right hand, and so as we are occupied with him. As we set our mind on things above as we admonish in Colossians 3/1. And are concerned and feed the new man. These glories are by his matchless grace reflected.

In these mortal bodies. But we have to suppress the desires, because the apostle says, I bruise under my body in order that the life of the Lord Jesus Christ might be manifested in this mortal body. So it is our responsibility, as has been laid on us, to reflect that glory. But it's our special privilege to deny the normal thoughts of South and order that the life of the Lord Jesus might be seen in US. But marvelous grace, that sixth verse is. How dark was the darkness at that scene when it says he caused the light to shine out of darkness? Well, probably darkness that we never, never will see. And that's the way our hearts are when we are in a lost state. That's the state of everyone that's without Christ. Total, absolute, abject darkness. And think of the grace as shined in our hearts. To give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, if God could shine out of the darkness that existed in that first part of Genesis. He does that for you and me when we accept Christ as Savior. It is so important, beloved brethren, and I say this particularly to the young people. That we understand that the God who did this has done. In our hearts, and it is He that we know as our Father. God who made this universe, we address as our Father and in first John chapter 2 when the Apostle writes to the babes in Christ little children, because you know the Father, and because you know your sins are forgiven, there we have the very basis of basic elements of Christian blessing to know God is our Father, our sins forgiven, and we so fall so far short. To entering into the preciousness of who it is that is our Father. And so we hear too often our Heavenly Father, we hear a clergyman pray, Oh my God, Almighty God, the Creator of Heaven. He is all those things. But He is our Father, and we do Him an injustice, and we do not serve Him well unless we address Him in the intimacy of our Father. Bob, if you mentioned about the we all give us, if you have

liberty to do it, give us a a little help in connection with is this those that have a particular gift? Is it these that have a particular advancement in in knowledge of scripture? Is it for the full range of first John 2, the fathers, the young men and the children? It doesn't qualify here, does it, brother? Seeing we have received this Ministry, we have received mercy. We faint. Not all of us isn't. Isn't it important, regardless of age, of obviously age of responsibility on up, that there be this personal exercise to think of the Lord indeed as savior, as master, the one that died for us, but to think of one that we can indeed not just at a conference have some brother talk about it, but that day by day, you know, to wake up in the morning and whatever the the problems of the day. To talk with him. I'm not saying he shouldn't get down and pray, but before he ever got up bed you can talk to him. Just think of it of of having a an appreciation for a relationship that we can talk to him and know that he wants us to unburden our hearts or just to thank him, you know, because I think the first issuance of praise will be to thank him for having died for us. But we can do it before we get there. Can't wait. Can do it every day. The very first chapter of the Bible, God divided the light from the darkness. He. First commanded like you said brother, that out of the darkness the light should shine. But then he separated the light from the darkness, and there is that separation all through the word of God, right from the first chapter on. And in this second verse we have how the importance of that practically affecting our lives. Like you say brother Stan, not only.

When we're here together in meetings, but every aspect of our life, we should. Have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully. But by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, In other words, the light dispels the darkness. You cannot mix light and darkness. There has to be a distinction, and one of the enemies most obvious distinction, and one of the enemy's most. Greatest desires is to try. To get those who profess to know God to get into the darkness of this world. Well, I lived in Bolivia. Of course, in South America the Catholic Church is predominant and at the time when the Pope came for the first time to Bolivian territory just before it happened, one of the preachers of the Gospel over TV that was well known. And quite well respected, even amongst Catholics. Had a moral fall, and I never saw such a violent backlash against the gospel in Bolivia as that one. It's because, brethren, if we take the position of having known God, then necessarily there has to be the practical reflection of that in your life and mind, not only when we're preaching the gospel. Not only when we're here in meetings, but when you're at work, when you're at school, wherever you are. The light shines into every facet of our lives, and so we need brethren to be exercised, not to have anything that relates to the darkness in our lives. The Lord help us because we all fail in a certain measure, but we need to keep. An exercise of heart. That our lives be what becomes the gospel of Christ, and as it says in the end of this this verse 2 by manifestation of the truth. Commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, still remember. Some of you will remember dear brother Maguire, who lived in Michigan. And he was. A brother that didn't take a public position of preeminence, but I still remember him coming to the conference in Wheaton, IL. It was a privilege to know that brother, but the story was told of him. He's along with the Lord now that he worked in a hardware store. And in the hardware store he had a testimony of being a Christian and. One day the fellow employees in the hardware store got around him and said we're going to make you listen to one of our dirty stories. And he looked at them in the face, and he said, Men, I live in the presence of God. That's as far as it went. They dispersed. The light dispels the darkness. The Lord help us, brethren. The enemy wants to being discredit on the testimony of the Lord Jesus by attacking those who profess to be those who know God as we have been brought to know Him in the Lord Jesus. Add a little bit to your story bump. It says here, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. When Mr. Maguire passed away and at his funeral in Lansing, MI, it was the largest funeral that had ever been up to that moment. He was a testimony to not just where he worked, but to the whole community. Lansing, MI is a relatively large city and the procession going to the funeral and to the burial site was so long they had to have a number of police.

At the intersection. Largest funeral that ever been held up to that moment. That would fall into line with the first verse that is required of a steward that a man be found faithful. And it's a wonderful thing to see the truth of God faithfully translated from what we might call doctrinal truth and to the practical expression of daily life. And it does happen, as has been reported by of one brother, and it has happened many times over. But to be diligent and maintain communion, so that the consciences of men in this before God. Are affected by the lie, and this is really the whole impetus of the second Epistle of the. Of. Corinthians is the ability to translate. The truth that is brought before us in the book of Romans. We know that in the First Corinthians there is a lot of things that had to be corrected. But in a moral sense we progress from Romans where we established in righteousness before God. Into Second Corinthians, where we translate that into living experience. And we do that by reckoning ourselves dead, he said. We did not have our confidence in ourselves, but we had any confidence of the God who raises the dead. We are living a resurrection life. The life that is seen in US should be the life of the Lord Jesus Christ given us by faith and resurrection. The new creation is in the resurrection and we are in it. As we get in the 5th chapter, we anticipate if the Lord hasn't come, new creatures and so we have the requirement of faithfully carrying out. The truth of what God has made good to us by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I think there's something very helpful in this verse too as well. When we present the Gospel Brethren, it is to appeal commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. I know we live in a culture where people. Glory in their power to reason things through, but it doesn't say commending ourselves to every man's mind. In the sight of God, it's their conscience, and it is interesting in the life of the Lord Jesus to see. How he did that? You remember when they brought the woman taken in adultery and said to the Lord Jesus, This woman was taken in the very act and Moses and the law said we should stone her. What do you say? And the Lord didn't answer immediately. Sometimes, you know, we like to answer immediately. The Lord stooped down and wrote on the ground and they kept asking him, And he finally stood up and he said. He that is without sin amongst you, let him cast the cast first, the stone at her. It was not an answer to their question, it was an answer to their conscience. And they, being reproved by their own consciences, went out from the eldest to the youngest until there was no one else but the woman. And the Lord left there. And I think that is something that we need to keep in mind as we. Seek to let the light of the. Glorious gospel of Christ. Shine in a Dark World, brethren. Appeal to man's consciences. The conscience is that part of men that he got when he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And we could say in a simple way that conscience is basically that it is the knowledge of good and evil, and every human being has that within their breast, even those heathen in the darkest part of the jungle. Of New Guinea or South America or other places that have no testimony. From the word of God that we have know that there are things that are wrong. Why their conscience tells them, according to the testimony. Of creation Something of light gets to them, and so man's conscience. When you present, the gospel is always on your side, his conscience will tell you. Will tell him that this person is telling the truth. It's the knowledge.

Of good and evil. So it's something to keep in mind. Aim for the conscience. When speaking to souls. Just an interesting thought about those who went out. From the eldest to the youngest, one brother wrote. Had the most to hide when out first. Is it not true? That all through ministry will do just that, it will reach the conscience. Certainly in the Gospel, and I believe it will also reach the consciences too, of all those that sit under even the sound of the word of God. I'm sure that. We've seen that. We've seen that happen many times. I don't like it when people come up and say my it was a wonderful message, a certain sense. I'd like them to come up and say to me, what did you mean by that? You

know that the conscience has been reached and stirred a little bit, and that's good. Brother Tom. Called our attention to the connection of this epistle with Romans and. In verse nine of chapter 3, the apostle says if the ministration of condemnation be glory much more even the ministration of righteousness and then the last verse of chapter 5. Epistle, it says, For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. So the apostle says, if this is true, and it is true of every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, the effect of this in our lives is that we renounce the hidden things of darkness, everything that. Is not in keeping with God's righteousness, is renounced in our life. And that is what addresses the conscience of the unbeliever. We do have this wonderful message to bring, and it remains the truth regardless of our state of soul. But when the state of soul has answered to the truth that has brought this righteousness of God to us. And when our practical life is a life of renouncing the hidden things of darkness. That that bothers the conscience of those to whom we are bringing this message of the gospel of the glory of Christ. If we haven't renounced the hidden things of darkness, then their conscience isn't troubled and they excuse themselves and they say, yeah. Look at what he does. He's supposed to be a preacher. Look what he does. And so that's this. Renouncing is what? Bothers the conscience of those to whom we bring the gospel, because. They can't find that in our lives to find fault with. And so the Lord Himself is that wonderful example of which of you convinced of me of sin because they couldn't. There was nothing in the Lords life. And so the apostle says here, unlike Moses, if there is a veiling, it's a veiling on the part of those who are hearing our word because we have not veiled it. By sin in our lives the light has shown in and shown out in the same purity that is shown Into Darkness. They came out, and if there is a veil, it's upon the hearts of those who will not receive it. Satan has blinded the minds of those, lest they should believe the light of the glorious gospel of Christ and and it's wonderful when the only hindrance to the. Preaching and reception of the Gospel. Is on Satan's side. It isn't on ours. We haven't obscured this wonderful light that has shown into our dark hearts, and it comes out in that same glorious way it came in.

All the state in second sympathy, that in speaking to Timothy Badah has fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, and so on. So Paul's Paul's life, his manner of life, fully went along and measured up to the gospel that he preached. He could say to the Corinthians that it didn't matter to him whether what man, how man, judged him, because it was the Lord to judge, and he was not aware. Of anywhere where he had was not walking according to the truth that he was, that God had given him. And so in speaking to Timothy too, he he told him in in chapter 2 That he was approached himself from every vessel to dishonor. But then he used to follow those that called in the name of the Lord out of a pure heart. And he was also told that he was to flee from youthful lusts, and follow righteousness and faith and so forth. So there may be the going out, or shall we say there may be the proclamation of the truth. But if our manner of life does not follow along, we don't believe those things that would war against our souls, then it's going, it's going to deter from the gospel. It's not going to to glorify the gospel. In that second verse if our comportment or manner of life. Is in keeping with that second verse. Then we come to the third verse. And if the gospel that is preached by those that walk according to the word of God is not accepted, what do we have? But if our gospel be hid, it's hid to them that are lost. And I'd like to connect that with Second Thessalonians chapter 2, verse 10. They believed not the love of the truth, and if you reject God's love, there's nothing left except judgment. And so that's where these second the third verse falls, they. They're lost. Because they did not believe God's love. So it's not always that we may be walking around that people aren't safe. That's not always the case. However, there is a. Exhortation in that second verse. I don't deny that at all. To see Mr. Darby translates that veil. If our gospel be veiled, that is something has obscured it. Like Moses veiled his face and obscured the glory that would have come forth from his face face. But Paul didn't. And we aren't to veil that gospel, are we? It's to come out the way it came in and that's. A moral thing? Lights would turn back for a moment to Judges Chapter 7 and read a few verses there. It's often been remarked that this chapter is a Old Testament example of the truth that we are studying this morning in the life of Gideon. Just want to notice a couple of points here that sort of bring out in picture form what we have been considering. And judges Chapter 7 and. Verse 16 it says. And he divided the 300 men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand. With empty pictures, and lamps within the pictures. And he said unto them, Look unto me, and do likewise. And behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow with the trumpet I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also, on every side of all the camp, and say, the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. So Gideon and the hundred men that were with him came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the Middle Watch. And they that had but newly set the watch and they blew the trumpets. And break the pictures that were in their hands. And the three companies blew the trumpets and break the pictures and held the lamps in their left hands. And the trumpets in their right hands to blow with all. And they cried the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. And they stood every man in his place round about the camp. And all the hosts ran and cried and fled. This is a picture of this chapter in which the earthen vessel.

We, our bodies being our earth and vessels, are likened to these pitchers here and I was quite struck in reading this again where it says empty. Pitchers so easily. Our lives and our, you might say our mortal bodies are full of everything but Christ sometimes, and everything that you put in yourself that you take in, that is not of the Lord Jesus Christ. Everything that I take in takes away from the capacity of the pitcher. It's not empty anymore, but in our chapter they had. Well, here they had two things. They had a sword and they had a pitcher with a lamp in it. And we each have the sword, if you will, of the word of God. But if you use that sword without the light shining, it does not have the moral result that God is intends from it. And so the only way the light could shine was from inside out. And what affects our outward lives is what's inside. And so here. In order for what was inside to shine out to them, it was necessary for the pitcher to be broken. And God often takes the circumstances of our lives to breakdown the picture. So that what's inside that's of himself will have an opportunity to manifest or display itself as light to those about us. So he puts within us the light of the glory of God, the glorious message. But then, in order that it might be useful to himself, he may turn around and break the vessel and allow it to shine out. And we ought to thank God for the breaking of our own vessel. That those things which hinder. God's display of himself that he has put in us, as we have later on in the chapter, the new creation or in the next chapter, that's what's placed in us. He doesn't take an old vessel. He actually starts all over in one sense with an empty picture. And when we accept the Lord Jesus Christ, everything that was there before in the vessel is not of use to God. So he empties the vessel, puts the light in it, breaks the vessel, causes it to shine out and. Puts a sword in our hand that when might be the sword of the Lord. But also he uses people. And so it's the end of Gideon. Well, it's AI think a nice chapter. I don't want to try to say any more on it, but to meditate on because it really does give us a sense of what we have in our chapter. And I think particularly again of the empty vessel later down in the chapter it says always bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus. That's what keeps the vessel empty, so that the light that's there as a place to shine. You've just been saying honestly? 5th 1St isn't it? For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. An earthen vessel doesn't have much. It's worthless, really. How much does an earthen vessel cost? It's very, very little. And that's you and me. And So what? What can we present to God or to those around the bottom from an earthen vessel if it's not of Christ? It's not much. Is it worthless? And so we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. It's not the earthen vessel, it's the treasure in it. That's important, isn't it? And that's what I like to think of in verse seven. We have this treasure in earthen vessels. It's not the vessel that's so important, it's the treasure in it. What is that treasure you really believe? It's what we have in verse 6, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus

Christ. Oh, brethren, how wonderful that we can say we have been brought to know. God, what a wonderful thing. You know, we've had our attention drawn to the Muslim religion since. Last September. And what it is, how do those people almost a billion, I suppose it's around a billion people. In this world, who profess that religion? How do they know their God? Is there any love there? No, There's only vengeance, killing, destruction. See, if you can destroy enough and kill enough people, you might have a chance of paradise. That's their knowledge of God. What a lie. What a tragedy. And brethren, we know the true God. Yes, we have been brought to know the true God in the face of Jesus Christ.

What a treasure, brother. It's not so much the vessel, this human vessel. It's the treasure that's in it. And sometimes we live our lives like it's been mentioned, so full of other things, material things, that the light doesn't shine out very much. No wonder God has to allow unpleasant circumstances to be brought in to break that vessel. So that the light will shine out. Oh, brethren, it's because the Excellency is of God and not of us. And taking that illustration that Don read about, remember when Gideon blew the trumpet to have Israel come together to fight the Midianites? 32,000 men came after him, and the Lord said too many. I can't give Israel the victory because they would glory in themselves. Brethren, that's the tendency. I see it in my own heart. There's a meeting that people seem to get blessing. What is the immediate reaction of my own heart is to take glory for myself. That is not getting the point, brethren. It's not the vessel. It's the treasure in the vessel. And that's the thing we need to learn. And so the Lord told Gideon. Tell all those that are afraid to go home. 22,000 went home. That's reducing your army pretty drastically. Still, 10,000 too many, the Lord says, bring them down to the water and I'll prove them, and only 300 were left. 300 against the millions or the multitudes of the Midianites. That seemed like folly. But, brethren, this is the point. We need to learn the Excellency of the power. Is of God and not of us. And maybe we look around sometimes those who are younger. Get discouraged that the fewness of numbers. Yeah, we are few in numbers, brother. We have to recognize it. But let's not look at ourselves, brethren. We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves, your servants, for Jesus sake. So the focus is not on what we are, it's what our God is, the revelation of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. I think it is a tremendous treasure ready that we can say that we have been brought to know God in the fullest sense possible. Think of the almost a billion of the Hindus in India. Thank God they're not all Hindus, but the majority of them are. What are the Hindus believe about God? I think I forget if it's 300,000 or 300 million. Different gods that they have. In that country, what knowledge of God do they have? Seriously lacking in the true knowledge of God, we have been brought to know God. What a treasure, brethren. And if God has put that treasure into your heart, it's not to hide it, brethren, it's to let it shine forth. The Lord help us that in our lives it truly might shine forth. Verses that I would call to our attention that show the absolute work of God in our salvation. John 1 and 13 where it speaks of those children which were born. Not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, not of will of man, but of God. The sovereign work of God begets life and the soul to start them on the way to glory. In the next chapter we will read If the Lord leaves us here and we make it to the end of that chapter. If anyone be in Christ as a new creation, all things are passed away. All things are made new, and all things are of God in the new creation. We are brought into circumstances with God, where He is everything now in our chapter that the Excellency might be of him, of God and not of us. If he is everything in our salvation, He is everything and anything that represents him properly to others in our life.

It is the work of God that we. Have no glory in ourselves. But he has used these things here in verse 789. This difficulties in the life, troubled on every side, persecuted. This is the eroding of that body of clay, in order that the Excellency might be of him and not of US1 Brother has used this expression, and I've enjoyed it, my own soul. And it's been helpful too, he said. Suppose that God is pleased to use my brethren to tear down the flesh in me. I should rejoice that my flesh is torn down, so God uses these things. He uses us one another to take off the rough edges, if you please, in order that the work may be evidently help God and not of us. Oh, it's necessary. It's necessary to. To judge ourselves. I think that's the thought in the 10th verse here that those hindrances which come into our lives, we are called upon to judge the flesh and all its workings which we are aware of, and to keep the the old nature in the place of death, that the life of Christ might be manifest in our mortal flesh. Alas, we don't always do that. So God brings circumstances into our lives where we are forced to judge the flesh. But he would have us to exercise that self judgment that we. Might be maintained in communion. Day by day. To to all we spare about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, to apply the death of Christ practically in our lives, day by day. We never get rid of the old nature, brethren. It's it's it'll never improve or never change, but we are to keep it in the place where God has put it, place of death. Everything that relates to sin in our lives. Think of what how it related to the Lord Jesus. What did he do about those sins? What did it cost him? He bore our sins in his own body on the tree and he died. Now that is our position is dead to sin because we have accepted Jesus as our Savior. Now am I going to give free reign and continue to sin? Let my flesh enjoy itself. That is not understanding our position and what you say, brother John. Is right. That is the practical working out of it in our lives, always varying about in our body. The dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body, But I like to draw attention to the difference, although slight, in verse 10 and 11. Notice verse 10. Perhaps we can say is what we should do, brethren, Always, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. But sometimes we don't, brethren. Sometimes we don't do that. What is verse 11 Say? We which live are always delivered unto death. This is something. Perhaps circumstances that are out of our control were delivered to it. And so often this happens in our lives. Difficult situations, problems that seem unsolvable. Why does God allow that He is delivering us unto death? He is putting us into situations, circumstances of life where we realize that He is delivering us to that so that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest. And notice here it says in our mortal flesh so that sometimes he has to even touch our bodies. In infirmity, in sickness, that happens. Why does God allow sickness? It's not always for something bad we've done, brethren. It may be so that the light will shine out of our lives. Maybe we haven't been real faithful in letting that light shine out to a Dark World around. And so God puts us into that set of circumstances that is so hard, that is so difficult to understand.

But his purpose is that the light would shine out of this mortal flesh. And there's this to encourage those of us, when we are in dire circumstances in all of these incidents, were not left alone. We may be afflicted, but we are not constricted. We still have liberty to flee into the presence of God. When difficult portions come, we may be persecuted. We're not left alone. If they hate you. The Lord Jesus said they've hated me first. So in all of the difficulties that God brings into our life, in order that the life of the Lord Jesus Christ might be seen a little more perfectly in us, he is the origin and the controller. And will sustain his own and all of those circumstances. Comments at the end of that level. First, what an amazing thing that really is. When you stop and consider that the Apostle Paul said in me that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing, but notice what it says in me. Motivated by me, but here it's motivated by Christ. What a marvelous statement. Might be made manifest, Christ Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So walking through this scene as an individual, as a human being, we can glorify God in our flesh. Not motivate by ourselves because they're in me, in my flesh, Well, it's no good thing. But motivated by the person of Christ, there's a demonstration of His love and His grace that can be shown. The words of the Philippians was to let his mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. And then they're given those seven, those steps downwards that the Lord Jesus took all the way from the glory right down, and then back up again to the glory. And where God is highly exalted him, and so he that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he exalted himself shall be abased. So we are told to let this mind be in us, the same mind that was in Christ. And the one who was who had the

the, the authority, shall we say, to exalt himself above every man in this world, and to to do everything that he wanted with his creation. But he chose to come down into this world and humble himself, and take that place right down to the death of the cross. And so who are you and I to to exalt ourselves before our brethren, and and try and find some place before our brother that we might be? We might have something for the flesh to glory in, but so if there's a problem there, let's look at Christ and see how he did. He humbled himself, and he went all the way down to the very desk, and then God highly exalted him. In both verses 10 and 11 dying, the death of Jesus comes before the life of Jesus, and the reason is, brethren, that the life of Jesus that we now possess is in resurrection. I think that is really wonderful to get ahold of the light you and I possess now in the Lord Jesus will never die. Death may touch this body of mind. But the life I have in Jesus will never die. It's because it's life and resurrection. But since we live in a carnal world, that life is not manifested unless. I carry about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus in the measure that I do that then that light of Jesus is manifest in my body or in my mortal flesh. So it's important, brethren, we understand it. And I just like to say to those who are younger and to those of us who are older too. Sometimes the tendency is and we live in a country, in a culture that glories in. Self pleasing, pleasing ourselves and it's not all bad stuff.

There's a lot of good things you can please yourself in but in the measure that self. Is the object of our lives. We are not going to prove the reality of what life in Christ is. The joy of it, the thrill of it, brethren, to live. This life of Jesus, oh, this is our privilege right here and now. We don't have to wait until we get home to heaven. To live this life. It's for now, but it's in the measure. That I bought there in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus. Also, is made manifest because it's life in resurrection and that necessarily. Includes the thought that death comes first. Let me just make this comment before we have to go as to what dying are bearing about in my body. The dying of the Lord Jesus Christ is it is the appropriation of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ by faith. I can say as to my sins his death is my death. As to his resurrection, his resurrection is my resurrection, and faith lays hold of the old man has been crucified, and this gives me power to refuse the overtures and solicitations of the evil one. So the bearing about of the dying of the Lord Jesus Christ is the appropriation by faith that he died for me as well as he died for my sins, and I have a new beginning in him. And this is applying the death of the Lord Jesus Christ in a practical way by faith in my life. So I should walk in newness of life? I would like to ask this question. In verse 7 when it says we have this treasure in earthen vessels. Is earthen vessels the equivalent of the old man, or simply a reference to the body that we have now, the mortal body in contrast to that? This mortal body is saved in hope we don't. 25 It says that if this Tabernacle house be dissolved, we have a building, and I think it basically refers to the body in which. This treasure is. I think that's true. And there's something significant in the Christian profession today that alerts believers and. The apostle is saying we have this treasure in a body that is waiting. It hasn't been redeemed yet. And if. We have, John says. It does not yet appear what we shall be, but if we had our glorified bodies today. There would be no need of this breaking down, but we don't have that glorified body. But the movement in the Christian profession today, and it's a strong one, and it's alluring. I'll illustrate it. I have a friend that I walk with and he told me of the strong weight lifters. Of world class, he called them. They were coming to our little town park and they were going to demonstrate their mighty works of strength, and then they were going to preach the gospel. Then they have an organization that I'm aware of of Christian athletes. And they promote the glorification of these men who do a wonderful feats in men's eyes in the athletic world. And they say this gives a real. Power and allurement to the gospel of Jesus Christ. It's just in contrast to what we're having before us in our verses. Our body is not what communicates. The glorious treasure that we have in this earthen vessel. Just the contrast. You can't look at a believer and see the effects of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The body, the vessel needs to be broken down. For this light to shine out. And so we do have this treasure in an earthen vessel. And as it's broken down, the light shines out more gloriously. How is it you go into a nursing home? Here's a soul that has nothing, a sick body. Their face is aglow.

They're rejoicing in what they have in that earthen vessel and it's just contrast with natural man. When his earthen vessel is broken down, all of his hopes, all of his glory goes with it. So I think, wouldn't you say the primary thought is here, the body, not the moral or immoral flesh that we need to judge? Brother, I thought you were going to say in case with those weight lifters, that they couldn't have it because they got the flu. Another what I'm really saying is, are they still subject to flus and so on? They could get the flu and they could be so weak they couldn't lift their own body. How foolish man is. #24 in the appendix Nothing but Christ as on we tread the gift on Christ, God's living bread, #24 in the back. Everything. Was ordered. Americans are from wherever. We go. He's always good.

Montreal Conference: 1982, 2 Corinthians 4:15-5:5

Reading

Three in the back. 3. I have his love and I stress gift Lord with joy and this consent this left the courage and I possess all. Lamb of God is the my precious name. It is my prayer. And see I am the God brought here or Father's love. I fear Orlando God is thee. #3 in the appendix from the third Fanta.

Doctor. The same first work 15 years. 2nd Corinthians chapter 4, verse 15. 2nd Corinthians 4 and verse 15. For all things are for your sake that the abundant priest might, through the Thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God. For which 'cause we faint, thoughts mark though our outward man carries, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment workers for us, are far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but. At the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal. But the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that of our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God and house not made with hands eternal in the heaven. For in this we grow earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. If so be the being clothed, we shall not be found naked, for we that are in this Tabernacle to grow being murdered. Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon that mortality might be swallowed up of light. Now he that has brought us for the self, same thing is God, who also has given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body. We are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, and knock by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted. Might be well because. There are no doubt many who were not here on the first day that we took up these passages. These two chapters. To mention the background of the third chapter. In the third chapter we have brought before us a contrast between. The ministry of the Old Testament and that of the New. Mainly that which had to do with the law. We noticed that the law was instituted in connection with glory. It doesn't say it was glorious, but it was brought in in glory. The elders of Israel were there. Marriages of angels, God himself on a pavilion of Sapphire Stone. Glory. But the Apostle Paul was given a revelation of a glory that was far greater. So much so that the first glory disappears entirely. And this glory has to do with the Spirit and with righteousness. The law could not bring

righteousness. It was a ministry of condemnation because of the objects and we're not able for it. Man was not able to meet the requirements of it, but with the new order that the apostle is Speaking of here when he says this ministry.

He's Speaking of that. Where there was a man who was able for it, the Lord Jesus, and he's the one who brought in the new order. And so the whole testimony of the Apostle Paul has to do with the man, the man Christ Jesus. The one who fulfills all the counsels of God is man who brings glory to God, who brings children into the Father's house. Never there before provides himself with the bride, and now through the apostle Paul. He opens up the deep things of God. That verse is found in First Corinthians 2, the deep things of God. Now I just mentioned at that point that the deep things of God are those which have to do with His nature of love and the Holy Spirit. But the manifestation of it is in connection with the assembly, the mystery Christ in the Church. Now those are the deep things of God, and that's what the apostles is bringing us into in His ministry. Introducing it in Corinthians. Of course he mentions that in Romans in the 8th chapter in the last chapter. Only to connect Romans with the rest of his epistles. But what we really have now is that which has to do with righteousness. God's own righteousness, the provision is made, and also the Spirit. But it's Christ who set before us, and in this. Chapter Now that we have. The Apostle Paul is the minister of it. He is the one who is used as a vessel. Emptied indeed. A special vessel. But also in connection with this vessel. Hiding himself, but still in his life. Manifesting the truth that he preaches, showing us the character of Christianity. And that which would? Characterize every believer who carries this marvelous truth that our walk, our manner of life, our conversation, be such that it will darn the doctrine of God our Savior. Well, this calls for suffering. And so we find here that there is suffering on the apostles part. In order that he might bring to the Saints of God these marvelous truths. That the Spirit of God is given by revelation to the Apostle. And as he opens these truths to us, he passes through these trials. But he reminds us that even though he's driven to the extremity, you might say almost, of death, still God stands between and He guards him so that the trial will only reach a certain point because of the necessity of it. And then there's relief. And that's true with each one of us. So the subject here is not chastening. Exactly, although chastening is always accompanied with trial. But the point here is the testimony and those. Things that the servant and were all servants, everyone here. Passes through Indiana Connection with the testimony. A varied line of things by which we're tested. Now he says as to his own testings, why these trials, all these things? Are going to redound to the glory of God. And. It as it says in this verse we started reading. All things are for your sakes, That's the blessing for the Saints. That the abundant grace might through the Thanksgivings of many. That many enclose every St. from Pentecost on today.

Think of the tremendous Thanksgivings that are going up to God as a result of these truths that have been placed in our hands now. To enjoy. The Thanksgivings that are going up to God. Daily. Regularly. And redounding to the glory of God. The principal features of that ministry, as you mentioned, and that's brought out in Chapter 3, Righteousness and then of the Spirit and then glory, isn't it? That's really the three elements that are brought out prominently in chapter 3. And I was thinking here the Apostle in these last few verses of chapter 4. Takes up the. The latter 2 That is the spirit and glory. When I say spirit, I mean by that that he brings before us the fact that. As those who have received this ministry that we have to do with that which is spiritual, you know, in First Corinthians 2 we read there of the natural man that he receives not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them. There's no capacity. And their foolishness unto him. But it says he that is spiritual. Now sometimes we are inclined to feel that that expression he that is spiritual would refer to some individual who is living a life of great devotedness, or something of the sort. But I believe there it really speaks of the normal condition of the believer as having the spirit he has that which enables him to enter into. Spiritual realities. The natural man cannot enter into them. It's a realm that's entirely closed to him. He has no capacity, He has no desire for it. Their foolishness to him. But as those who have received the Spirit and the this ministry would involve the fact that we have received the Spirit of God, it's administration of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, and we have received the Spirit so that now. There he can speak of an inner man. An inner man that enters into spiritual realities. And while there is the outward man, and I was thinking too, that the old covenant had more to do with the outward man, so to speak, it really addressed itself to man in the flesh. But the new covenant ministry is, is not addressed to man in the flesh, and it's connected with the spiritual side of things. And every believer as having received the Spirit we have received the Holy Spirit of God then we are. We are. In that sense, spiritual. Now of course it's possible, as it was with the Corinthians, that they are not in, you might say, in accord with the Spirit, and they were walking as men in the flesh, and Paul had to say, he couldn't speak unto them as under spiritual but as unto carnal. So it's possible for those of us who have the Spirit to not be practically in the good of the Spirit of God, and walking according to the flesh. Then we're carnal, but the the normal condition of he of the believer is the one who has the spirit so that he is a spiritual person. That is, he is able to enter in and to appreciate and enjoy and have to do with spiritual realities. And there are spiritual realities. There is a that which is outside the the realm of man's false human faults, as we have in First Corinthians 2. Again, it's not entered into the the eye of man is not seen or his ear heard, and is not entered into his heart. The things that God has prepared for him, that love him now it's by the Spirit that we enter into those things. So the inner man is renewed day by day. As he as he enters into that which we have been, that have received a capacity for the things that are spiritual, the outward man. Well, as we've had so much before us in our prayer meetings, how that the outward man does perish, and this refers of course to our bodies. But the inner man is renewed day by day, so he has the spiritual side before him here, and also he has the glory.

The glory that is that really belongs to us now. We're not in it. The Lord Jesus is in the glory that He's entered there as our forerunner, and it belongs to us. And it seems that Paul here at the end of this chapter takes up those two aspects of that new covenant, ministry of the Spirit and that which is connected with the inner man and the glory that is before us. Now, while you're Speaking of the Spirit, it might be well to notice the way in which. The Spirit of God. Is set before us in the scriptures. In second In First Corinthians no. In 2nd Corinthians 2. 2nd Corinthians 1 and. 2nd Corinthians 1 and 21. Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who have also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. We have the three ways mentioned here in which the Spirit. Is seen, I believe, in our chapter. It's particularly the anointing and the earnest. We have the ceiling mentioned, particularly in Ephesians one. All three of course mentioned there. At least referred to, but there's a special way in which each one is seen in connection with operation. Now the believer is sealed, having believed, and that's for possession. The the Apostle here was entirely dependent upon the anointing of the Spirit. Now the anointing of the Spirit, and I think we should weigh these things very much because they have to do with the truth of our chapter. In a very deep and special way. The anointing of the Spirit is the presence of the Spirit with us. But also the energy of the spirit. Those two things were needed by the apostle. We need it ourselves, the presence of the Spirit with the apostle, so that as he is given as a a vessel in all weakness, to set forth these high and lofty and precious truths, that there be no mistaking even in the words and the expressions and the manner in which they're said. He needed the presence of the Spirit continually with him. In a special way. But because of weakness he needed the energy of the spirit. Now these thoughts, brethren, are tremendous, because the energy of the Spirit. Is that very same energy in which God has always moved. There is no other energy. And that's the energy by which each believer carries out that little portion that God has given to us in service, or whatever it may be down here. For God, we have that resource that's endless. The only thing that limits it is our faith. And I'll Oftentimes we hesitate to act because we look at ourselves and we don't realize that we are dead as we have in our chapter, and we need the

presence and the energy of the Spirit in order to carry out what has been committed to us. But now what about the earnest of the Spirit? The earnest of the Spirit, as many have said, is what we might say is the first payment. We're going to have our bodies the glory, but we've already been given the earnest of the Spirit. But that's only the beginning of the thought. Precious as that is, we soon will have bodies of glory and. How precious that will be when we we have no limitations, because the sphere in which God is causing us to enter into, in this passages of the minister, the Apostle, is a sphere of liberty where there are no bounds.

Now the Earnest of the Spirit, then, has to do with what we have in our chapter. From the eighth verse on you have the Earnest of the Spirit. I should have said the Earnest of the Spirit from the eighth verse on, and is mentioned in the next chapter in the. 5th verse. Now this this has to do. With the groanings. You get that on the 8th of Romans. It's the effect in the heart. That's what it said. The earnest of the spirit in your hearts. That's why the earnest of the spirit has to do with all the joys of the believer, but here it has to do with the groanings. All of the believer passes through. He can be well assured whatever the child, no matter how deep, no matter how discouraging, he has the earnest of the Spirit. And that's what Paul is bringing before us in connection with those four things. In the 8th and 9th verses because even though he was tried to the utmost, there was a relief because of the fact of the Spirit was there. And so we have the earnest of the Spirit, and it isn't just for certain persons. It isn't just for certain ones of certain spirituality is for every believer. The Spirit indwells every believer in these three ways. And this truth is so important because it's what gives us liberty in our souls. It has to do now with the inner man and. What we have come to in the 16th 1St, for which 'cause we faint, not, the apostle says. Why doesn't he faint? All because that tremendous energy that God has given him. Enables him to carry on, even though the body itself doesn't seem to be able to stand it still. God is there, and he carried. He's given to carry it on for two things, for the blessing of the Saints, and for the that it might be down to the glory of God. So in this. This cost we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed. That's verse 18 of the previous chapter. But we all with open face beholding. Leave out that next expression. The glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. So we have the inward man now, and if you're not saved, you don't have an inward man, because you don't have a capacity for divine things, but that man in the 7th of Romans. He finally comes to the place where he's through with self. The first part of that exercise of his it was 30 times he mentioned I, I, I. But when he closes he says I thank God through Jesus Christ. What does he mean? Why He realizes that the old eye is gone and he's in Christ. That's deliverance in the 7th of Romans. It's just that simple, brethren. That's deliverance in the 7th of Romans. If you don't see anything else, see that the old one is gone. Now there's the new one, but it's connected with the Spirit in these three ways. And so we have in the inward man, renewed day by day. This is an operation that's going on unnoticed by you. But still the work that's going on, and God is preparing each one right now, in the midst of all these circumstances, not only for testimony here, but for that eternal day of glory. The Spirit is being prepared. That why he stands in our 15th verse. All things are yours. Does that include, I thought of the going over to the fifth chapter and the 17th verse? Therefore, if any man be in Christ.

He is a new creation. Old things are passed away. Behold, all bases are become new. And all things are for your sake, very blessed truth, isn't it? Indeed, it's not the it's not the outward things. It is that which is the inward thing. All those things are ours because they're new. I think we need a little further explanation about this expression. New covenant ministry. What I mean by that is. Essentially, the New Covenant has to do with Israel, does it not? It's the spirit of the New Covenant. Yes, that Second Corinthians 36, isn't it? When Paul says who also has made us able ministers of the New Covenant should be not of the letter. But of the spirit, for the latter killeth, the spirit giveth life. Well, how do you think of it? My thought is in the using the expression new covenant ministry that it is. A ministry that is a. Associated with the. Way in which God. Makes himself known in connection with the New Covenant, which is all of grace. The Old Covenant was on the ground of terms given to man to meet. There was God's part and there was man's part, but in the new covenant, which of course literally is made with the House of Israel and Judah. But the character of that new covenant, the terms of it, is entirely what God will do their sins and iniquities. I will remember no more, and I will write in their hearts and minds as laws and so forth. It's the the terms are, and we know, a covenant, of course. Always had terms of covenant. Well, the terms of the first covenant had something for man to do and that's why it broke down, of course. But the new covenant is entirely on God's side. It's what God will do. And the character of Christianity is in accord with the the principles and character of the new covenant as we actually hear. He says he's enabled. He's an able minister of the of the. New Covenant, that is the principles of the New Covenant. Are ministered now in Christianity. Might be helpful to also recognize New Covenant is not an extension or a modification of the Old Covenant. We get that in Jeremiah 31 and verse 32. It plainly says not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt. That's important because we could have a covenant in a circumstance of life and we could modify that covenant and call it a new one. This is not so. This is a completely new basis. As you mentioned, Brother Johnson, if we're, if we're looking at Jeremiah 31 and we look at verse 33, we see what you were alluding to. But this shall be the covenant that I will make for the House of Israel. After those days, said the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people, all of God's purpose. But I draw attention to the fact that it is entirely new public, not after the old covenant, not on the principle of the old covenant, which was of course conditional. And we need to sense that in our souls, that now we're talking about completely new principle, all of grace, and therefore all from God in the glory of his purpose. But it's not made yet. No covenant won't be made until all 12 tribes are back in their land. But you see, we come under the blessings of it now. We don't come under the covenant. There's no covenant in heaven. We're a heavenly people. But the covenant will be made with Israel when they're back in their land, all 12 tribes. And then they will come under the blessings and the covenant itself. And it will be written in their hearts, not like formally.

That is similar to a new birth, isn't it? It's not an extension of the old one that Nicodemus thought trying to start all over again, but it's a brand new thing. It's used. The term is used, misused much today and it's born again. But it it really has a deep meaning, a meaning of a new life, completing the life from God. Spiritual life born again there's not really give the thought that translators. I think in the margin of what Born Anew, which is really the right thought, It's a new thing. As you say, it isn't simply again, which could repeat the old, but it's something entirely new and that's what we're having in our chapter as well. New new birth is capacity, but for what? For these tremendous truths that God now is revealing through the Apostle Paul? And if there's one here this morning who has never? Put their trust in the precious blood of the Lord Jesus if they have not seen themselves as guilty sinners before God, if they have not seen the Lord Jesus seated now in God's right hand and having finished the work for them. They don't know anything about what we're Speaking of this morning. They may know the letter of it, but in the heart they don't understand the fact that there's something entirely new, not depending upon man or a covenant anymore, but depending on that Newman Christ Jesus and the finished work that our souls can entirely rest upon. The expression is given in John 36, born of the spirit. That's the thought, isn't it? That which is born of the flesh and flesh, that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit. I believe it is new, but it's from apartment to God through the Spirit of God. Working in the soul gives the light that life is of God. So the expression is born of the Spirit. Better use, I believe, today than born again, because born again is a view. When it's a view we have to do too much explaining when

we use it Lord of the Spirit. That really wasn't like this we have, isn't it? Verse 17 brings in a very practical side of things. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment. Work us for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Well, I believe many of the Saints are experiencing some affliction of some kind of talking to a young sister and her husband, and they are experiencing some things in relation to their children. I'm seeking to keep them separate from the world and in connection with the school system. Well, let's see. It's really a light affliction, but it's a very real thing and. And they really need help, we might say, and encouragement because the wages are so great. That's like Pharaoh's daughter said to Moses and mother. Take this child and raise him for me, and I will give thee thy wages. Well, since this incident has appeared, why don't we return to the 11Th of March for a moment? To to perhaps see how we might, might handle those little ones. It is a light affliction in in a sense. But to the parents, it isn't a light affliction. It's a it's a hard thing. But. In the 11Th of March. It says that the Lord stands in the verse of one. He stands for two of his disciples, and said, Go unto them or settle to them. Go your way into the village over against you, and as soon as you be entered into it, you shall find a quote tied where on never man 7. And bring him to me. Now man is likened to a wild acid cold, So we could turn to that in Joel. That I think we all know it. And in a sense they haven't come into the good of this yet. And what are we going to do with them? Well, notice it says he was tying there, but notice where it was tied Now verse four and they went their way and found a coat.

By the door where two made away men. Now the door brings before us the thought of the gospel, doesn't it? And. Then there are two ways there at that door and we're well aware of what those two ways are. We find it in Jeremiah, I've stepped before you, the way of life and the way of death. Now. The parents have a privilege, we might say, of tying their children at that door. Here are the two ways before them. And what do you tie the children with? Well, you tie them with two quarts, perhaps with authority and affection. It takes both. You can't have just authority. You can't have just affection. You have to have both. And then it's it's if parents could realize this and. And all this. I hope I don't embarrass the lady that talked to me, but. The Lord takes care of our children in the school system from 9:00 in the morning to three in the afternoon, but if we're going to put them out further, we are letting them loose, as it were. But to keep them tied in this place, as it were, until the Lord stands a servant to fetch them. What a wonderful day when the parents are sought to bring up their children. With the word and. There, they know something of authority. They know something of affection. While the day comes where the Lord descends for them, he sends a servant up to them. Maybe a brother comes to them your assembly, and he preaches the gospel. And what are your children received? Well, he might claim him for a convert, but. We can be sure that the mother and the father and many other brethren perhaps have done the most through the work. Like a man told me once that I was giving out some cracks in the hospital, He said I'd like to see people do this. He said I'm an old evangelist, but he said it's the layman that sold the seed and do the work. They imagine this comes along and reap the harvest well. What I'm trying to say is the day will come. Where the Lord will send somebody and they bring him to me. And it's a wonderful thing if the Lord takes possession first before Satan. Now in many cases Satan has taken possession first and maybe the person has returned, but there are scars on it. But if we could just realize the value of letting the Lord take possession first. And then to think of the wonderful privilege here, they brought the call to Jesus. Verse 7 And he sat upon him. Wouldn't it be wonderful to carry the Lord Jesus through this world? So there still is it's. It may seem a hard affliction, but it's going to be multiplied. If we lose out here, we have to admit, I often say to young folks. Those 1St 20 years are you bringing up your children, their heart. But if they go into the world, the next 20 are 10 times as hard. So let's have just the opposite. Let's let's take this as a light affliction. Enough. Get bogged down under it and then be able to enjoy, we might say what that verse ends up. It even said, but for a moment work up for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Now the reason I'm saying is because it sounds easy. We say, Oh yes, you just it's it's easy and it'll it'll be a real reward in the end. But we need understanding as to how to meet these things.

And again I say the Paris have a privilege to tie that boy or that girl at the door were two ways to meet and then. And then desire of the Lord that he might send, should we say? An instrument to bring him to Jesus. Thank you brother. We need the practical side along with what we're having very much. Word of God in the morning and reading and prayer at the fall with our children and then be able to commit them to the Lord for that day in school and trust the Lord for them. That's what you're saying, isn't it, brother? Yeah, well, I say that I believe so. And I sometimes said I'd rather have my children saved than have 1000 saved. Because it's Those are the only ones you can take to heaven with your own children and belongs to God. For some reason, Saints are losing their children. You know, it's a solemn thing and I just like to read the verse in Ezekiel just to give us to realize God's value and not only that is that he owns the children is each of 16. And verse 20. I. Moreover, thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me. And these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Verse 21. That thou hast slain my children, have delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire for them. And that Song Feral wanted the children, He wanted to cast them into the river of Egypt. Who saved the children in? That day. Well, let me just say this. There were songs there, and sons of Jacob are mentioned. That's positional truth. And thank God for it. We have it. We need it. But what saved the children? It was the female element. It was the practical side of the truth. First it was the midwives they intercepted. And kept those children from being cast into Egypt. Then it was Moses sister. Wonderful how Brother Rama mentioned God can use instruments unexpectedly to help those children. And then the next thing he used a joker blast. While it's all the female element, as it were. Now I'm not saying mothers, but I say in the practical fight of the truth is what saves the children. And there's another thing. While we're talking, the parents need to sanctify their brethren in the eyes of their children. You know, even if you don't respect everyone, do us still remember one day there was a brother speaking at his supper table, and there were three children around that, and he didn't care what he was saying. Both of the assembly of those things. Well, afterward my own brother went to it and he said, brother, you're going to lose your children. Talking like that, he said. I want my children to know every hypocrite you need. Well, he doesn't have any of his children. He himself is gone. So you can't be enlightened with these things if we can just get ahold of them and realize that that there is a way. Not to get away from our chapter, but I just wondered whether Clawson that there isn't a verse in the Lamentations too and verse 19, which to me has been a very very precious and exercising words. Lamentations chapter 2, verse 19 arrived cry out in the night in the beginning of the watches bore out thine heart like water. Before the faith of the Lord, He lifts up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children that they think.

For hunger in the top of every street. I believe this to me my soul has been a very exceedingly precious verse that would exercise each one of us concerning our children and our grandchildren. Yes, true. And we need to be more than exercise, don't we? We need to really help and not to destroy the great day for destroying, but we need to help one another. And again, I would say that it's really a brother. London mentioned the importance of adorning the doctrine of God. We can Garrison them before they go, but we have no control once they leave the house. And thank God for the Lord and the power he has and the love he has for the children. But we should give them the truth to come from the parents of the whole. Don't rely on the assembly. Thank God for the assembly. It has to come from the parents and the whole. And we do not look to the system of this world in the camp where the truth of our children. I would be fine. How would you ask the Lord to keep them and then send them there? I think we have a real responsibility here. I remember my mother the thing occasionally that if we hide our children till

we can no longer hide them, we can make the Lord responsible for them. And you might say, you know, we have no more control over them. But in a sense, the teaching has a control. Now what saved my life? I wasn't a good boy, but what saved my life was the fear of the Lord. I was afraid to go into a picture show prepared. The ceiling would come in well. How? How come? I had that feeling. Somehow that was instilled in me. It's just like the children that came into to eat the Passover lamb. Well, they sensed there was something wrong. It might have only been two years old, but they sense it was a very solemn night. And it's wonderful for the children to have sensed that we're going to a very strong time now. I want to add this to I've raised cattle all my life and. I don't know how a mother does that, but she'll just just. Say something to her calf and away they go. They she senses danger, but she immediately turns to a little one. She doesn't run away from it, but anyway, she and her little one, they run together. So it's really the parents that sense the danger. And sometimes we wouldn't beg our mother and father to do something, go to some doings in the evening someplace. And I could see really the grief on my mother's face, but I thought I was doing the most suffering. But she told me later on she said she suffered 10 times more than I did when she had to say no. By morning I'd forgotten everything, but her heart was still heavy that she's had to say no, but it's paid off. I wouldn't be sitting here now if I hadn't had some someone to to. To tell you and help. You've used the children in the problem of children as an affliction here in our birth. 17 Brother. I think it's proper. Raising children today is the environment we have is certainly an affliction for the parents, and it's a light affliction only because we have glory in view for our children when we realize that, and we can commit them unto the Lord. I've often said more to myself than everybody else. I wouldn't want to raise children without Christ, especially today. But we have Christ. We have a war. It really should encourage us, not right. It isn't a place, and it's a problem every day for the parents. It's a concern, but I hope it's a a neat concern. I hope it puts them down where they should be. And they committed to the Lord. But we have a responsibility here in. I'm glad you brought it up and think of the reward connected with it, isn't it? Don't you get the reward there, exceeding eternal weight of glory? Remember, my daughter-in-law and I were writing in the field protecting the cattle and we came across a dead cow. She was a young cow and my daughter-in-law says Dad, how much of a loss is that? Well, just viewing it while we said maybe $250 or so, but I said can you measure the loss? I said she was a young cow. She would have 10 calves.

Five would be males, 5 females, so there would be 5. Females that would have and so the the the loss could never be measured and. And the same thing when we lose our children. The loss can't be measured. Will a man rob God? Well, God is being robbed. Those children are mine, he said. I'm not picking on anybody, but if possible, there might be an exercise to shield those little ones, and it is an affliction. But it's so rewarding. But if it goes the other way, oh, it's exceeding weight. Not a glory, but of sorrow. There is a verse in Hebrews Chapter 11. It's very interesting, isn't it, as to the parents and the? Connection with Moses. Verse 23 of Hebrews 11 which is. Direction, I believe, for us as parents. By faith Moses when he was born. Was here three months of his parents because they saw he was a proper child and they were not afraid of the King's commandment. It's very much instruction there, isn't there for us as parents that we can hide our children in that sense from those things that are going to harm them. Because the enemy is out to harm them, and Satan is our enemy. We have a promise from the Lord, that is to the Philippian sailor. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house. So we have that promise. But with every promise there is responsibility, so the responsibility. As a result of this promise is that we should train up our children in the way that they should go. We should guide them and direct them and protect them well, I believe this was really. An effort on the part of the presence of Moses, but there was a beautiful. Work in the heart of Moses later on, as we have had before us already, but just this verse for us by faith Moses when he was born. Was hid three months of his parents. Could we read a verse in Proverbs 31? I think they're Now that we're on this subject, I think it's very practical and helpful. There is a verse there that is agreed, I believe, practical instruction for us. Connection with the virtuous woman. And verse 21 Proverbs 3121. She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with Scarlets. Well, the snow, I suppose would speak, would would speak of the adverse elements that are found in this world. And we know, of course, that our children are faced with these adverse elements. But she wasn't afraid of the snow, because she had cold with her children with scarlet, scarlet. I take it, as in Scripture a type of the glory of man, and the true glory of man is, is subjection to God. The true glory of man is being subject to God. When the Lord Jesus came into this world and becoming a man, he took that place of being subject to God. And I believe that this is one of the most important things that our children facing the adverse elements, morally I'm speaking about the adverse moral elements in this world. They need to be clothed with scarlet in the home, that is that the home itself is in subjection to God.

And to God's will, and that they are impressed with the fact that they are to be subject to God. We might be able to teach our children good manners and good behavior, but it seems to me that it should be connected with a father being subject to God, so that, as you said, Brother Clausen, that it was the fear of God before you. In other words, the the things that are taught should be connected with with the Lord and with God. And subjection to him. And we clothed our children with with scarlet. Then we would not, we would not fear these adverse elements. We know that they have something to protect them from the the adverse moral elements because the the fear of God is there and they've they've seen it in the home. And I feel that one of the ways in which most of us have failed, and one of the ways in which it affects children in a great way, is when the children do not see that subjection to the Lord in the parents. That is, the parents are going about doing their own will. But to see the parents subject to the will of God, you might say the parents are clothed with scarlet and the children are clothed with scarlet. So that the this subjection to God into his will is paramount. There's a verse in Jeremiah that we might read. Also. This connection we know that without faith it's impossible to please God. I don't think there would be anybody in this room, but Bud would have to admit, in some little measure, at least, our failure in connection with our children. I'm sure that it's true with most of us that we have to confess failure with our children. But now, what about it? Is there something else that can be done if the day? And if the damage has been done, what's the next step? I believe we have it here. And Jeremiah 31. 15. Thus saith the Lord, a voice was heard, and Rama, or Rhema lamentations and bitter weeping. Well, that has its place. It's sad when there is a parent who doesn't weep over their children. Rail weeping for her children. Refused to be comforted for her children because they were not. Thus saith the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping. And thine eyes from tears. For thy work shall be rewarded. Said the Lord. And they shall come again from the land of the enemy, and there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border. See, God says thou in my house. Now that is only for faith. But where faith embraces it and weeps for their children. What I mean is where it really reaches the soul, and the soul is cast upon God. He will come in for those children. It may be a lifetime that you'll have to wait, but where there's real dependence upon God, you can claim what God says thou in thy house. And sometimes God allows us to feel these things with our children because he wants to bring us closer to himself. And there's a bit of pride lurking in our hearts sometimes. We'd like to have our families as complete order. We'd like to have everything just right, you know. That's pride. What we want is God's glory as it's been expressed, the glory of God comes first. Not our desires, but. He says I'll never leave you nor forsake you. And the one who puts his trust in him will never be ashamed. I believe that we can count on God for our children, but we can't go on.

In a careless way, that's why in Hebrews it says for those of us who are older to make straight paths for our feet, unless that which is lame be turned out of the way, and many of us will have to confess that we are the responsible ones for turning our children. Out of the way because we did not make straight paths for our feet. Oh how important this is. This verse that we've been considering. What a contrast, a light affliction, and a surpassing eternal weight of glory. Adjectives cannot describe what we have before us here, because in the realm of the spirit there are no limitations. New creation is not a question of time or place. But kind we have to think, not in terms of what we are used to here, because this is a new order. When you're thinking of these things, forget time and place. Are you a part of the new creation? What characterizes it? Spirit. Righteousness. Glory. Not just a word about the glory? You know color is connected with glory. When you think of glory, oftentimes you'll see a display of things that are put up that have color to them. Well, in the Book of Revelation there are 12 Stones. I know I've mentioned this before, but I believe it's important to see this truth. One of those stones are a different color. And the question arises. How do those colors? Come to those stones, we find they're all sapphire. 54 All thy foundation shall be sapphires. Now in the sapphire stone, which has been mined perhaps 5 or 6 tons in one piece, there's absolutely no color. But we're down through the ages. They've been broken. And crushed in the earth and the tremendous pressure upon those stones according to the pressure and the heat. Each stone may receive a different color, and those who work with stones can tell you the details. But. The pressure and the heat bring a color in the stone. You see what I'm trying to arrive at? We have suffering here in our chapter. The glory in that coming day is going to be comprised partly. That is the medium of that glory being transmitted to the whole creation through the Saints. Will be through these 12 Stones of Revelation, each one having a different color. That's glory. But the glory is God's glory. The stone is only the color that transmits that glory, the light of that glory through it in the coming days. And so all this is connected then with our chapter here. It's the administration of the spirit. It's administration of righteousness, because that's God's character, but it's administration of his glory. And each individual St. is being prepared now through suffering trial difficulty, not only in chastening as we speak of it. But as the Apostle Paul passing through these trials in connection with the testimony, there's being formed of color. That's the way the Spirit of God describes it. A color so that in that coming day, according to the last verse of Ephesians 3, where we have the highest of these truths. We find that the light of the glory of God will be. Transmitted through these various mediums of color. Formed in each St. down here through suffering and trial. So next time you're called upon for suffering, remember the colors being formed for eternity. And that's what's connected with our verse here. The. The far more exceeding or surpassing.

Eternal weight. Glory. It's all connected, brethren, with each. Child of God, in this room this afternoon, you're passing through a trial. Some of the trials you know that no one knows about. It's between your soul and God. But remember, there's a color form to that pressure that heat that way, and it's going to be for eternity, because God is forming in your spirit now that which will be for eternity. Oh, what a consolation this is in suffering. In trials we pass through this world. The result of the trials that my brother has been Speaking of, surely, is the glory of God, supported and vindicated in every way. There's an element to the trial that we ought to be mindful of, not only as younger ones, but older alike. There are three verses in Daniel, two that might just make it very plain. We know that Daniel is a man of faith at a trial that trial was not. Cast as meant the trial was as a result of his faithfulness. We saw that problem was set before him but in verse 17 of Daniel 2. Says Then Daniel went to his house and made the thing known to Hananiah, Michelle and Azariah, his companions. Is it not lovely, brethren, in the trial of faith, as we would seek to be in the good of this ministry and of the new position which is ours from Christ, trials of faith? Command. Is it not excellent to be found in the companionship of our beloved Bradley, and there's an element of fellowship here. Went to his home, and he discussed the problem with his beloved brethren. And what did he discuss about it? That they should desire of God an answer. Now there is another element, not only a fellowship and speaking possibly to one another, of the trial of faith, praying about it together, but what ought to characterize us is what characterized him. When he had an answer from the Lord, the first reflection of his heart was praise to the glory of God. That's verse 19. That was the secret revealed on to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel flashed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said Blessed be the name of God forever and ever. Wisdom and might are kids in the trials of faith and the Lord delivering and providing for His people How marvelous it is, individually and collectively, to have a thankful spirit. And to reflect in praise to the Lord for all that he has done. But what about the collective scope of all that he allows for his dear people in a collective manner? What will be the result of that? The support of his glory? Just as it was at the end of this chapter, we read verse 47. Daniel 2 The King. Answered unto Daniel, and said of a truth it is, that your God is a God of God, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets. How thankful. Then to realize that there could be in the trial of faith the ultimate result, the support and vindication of the glory of God. There's one other element in that trial of faith, which surely is encompassed in what the Apostle Paul had before him and what we had earlier, that we have this treasure in an earth investment. Same sense that was in Daniel's soul. That's why we have verse 30, perhaps Daniel 2. For Daniel had to admit, But As for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living. But for their sakes it shall make known the interpretation of the king, and so on. The sense of weakness and dependence and pure waiting upon the Lord in the sense of our nothingness ought to characterize us through the trial of faith, the result, praise and honor to God, and the vindication of His glory in an ultimate sense.

God's presence in the trial is far better than exemption from trial, we notice in the third chapter of Daniel. Verse 25. He answered and said, oh, I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire. They have no hurt the form of the forest like the Son of God. Isn't it wonderful to have the presence of God through the trials, ensure that at the end of the road we look back in the we recount the trials that we go through. How wonderful it is to have experienced the president of the Lord. Throughout those trials. We learn far more going through a trial with the Lord than to be totally accepted from the pride. And I'm sure if they had not reviewed the King's meat and the wine which he drank, they could never have gone through this trial. So there is a forerunner and their brother Middle mentioned to grandpas, and I'm one and so is he. It says in in Hebrews 11. Again, needn't turn to it, I just read it. By faith Abraham when he was called. I know that's nothing but verse 9. By faith he Abraham journey sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob the heir with him of the same promise. Think of Abraham, an old man now. Old enough to move to town and have a nice house. But he still dwelled with Abraham and Jacob. I mean Isaac and Jacob. And if we know our history here a little bit, why, Jacob was 15 years old when Abraham died. So Jacob had the privilege of 15 years with his grandfather and. Jacob had a quite a rugged life, yet he had one of the most happy deathbeds in scripture. He was leaning on the top of his staff and worshiping, and he blessed both the sons of Joseph. So it's a word for grandpas to. Like to just pick out two verses? We seem to have digressed, but it's been a beautiful digression along this line on 144 Mount 144. It says in verse 11. Brittany, deliver me from the hand of the children of strangers, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is the right hand of falsehood, that our sons may be as plants grow up in their youth, that our daughters may be as cornerstone. Volleys after the civility of the ballot that our garners may be full. There's a wonderful principle here that we should keep in heart. We're in the world, but not of it. A little different than the position you mentioned just now, Brother Clawson. We're in the world, yet we're not up. And we're heavenly people. And we can pray that our children will be delivered from the hands of strange children or children of strangers. And the purpose is, well, I say, how do we do that? Well, this is a good basis right here. Having them here with the children of the Saints and as much as possible having them with the children of the

state, That's what they need. But the what? The result is so beautiful. And I remember brother Eric Smith on this verse 12, he changed that last part and I believe he has the Lord's mind of it. I'll I'll say the verse as he had it. That our sons may be his plants grown up in their youth. That our daughter may be as corners, gold sculptured after the fashion of a palace. You know there's dignity with the daughters of the children of Saints in this world. It's a beautiful dignity they have of sobriety and godliness. I believe that's the dignity we have in our assembly because of the sisters. It's like the fashion of a palace.

And what when the young, the youth, our son, we want them to be productive like plants that are in the water. I just use one verse for that because this has been on my heart too. Sound the first sound just one verse, and then I'll leave it. But for our sons we would expect this, that we have a right to expect this. In verse three he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water. That springeth forth his fruit in his season at least, also shall not wither, and whatsoever he's doing shall prosper. What if this is a kind of sons we raise, and this kind of daughters that are the results of our assemblies? And going on as Catholic faith I will be able to praise the Lord, and that's the heritage we should be leaving for them, that we should see in them this. I speak of a Father who's made all the mistakes, so I can speak now, but we can still commend it to the Lord. And still seek this from our children. Not just our children personally, but we're all part of the same body. Your children are important to me as you are as members of the body of Christ. And so how wonderful it is we can have this result of daughters with dignity and of sons who are prosperous spiritually producers as plants underwater. Above the original crop before us. 715 Let's see our brother roosting brought before us Jay bears to be the beginning of this meeting and he's a little picture of a mother that bear him with Saul and wanted him to be for the Lord. 307 was given out, I believe. Is that right? Yes, 311 foreign people. Holy See, Savior, we belong to thee.

Chicago Conference: 2005, 2 Corinthians 4:1-18

Reading

172. Will teach us more of thy blessed ways thou holy. Of God 172. Oh, Gee, oh. Praise God. Could we also sing the last two verses of number two, 25225 versus 4 and five? What air thou deniest? Oh, give us thy grace.

Read a few verses. In verse and Jeremiah. Jeremiah chapter 45. Verse 5. And seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not. In the book of Psalms. Psalm 34. And verse 3. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name. Together I sought the Lord, and he heard me and delivered me from all my fears. And invert and Chapter 27, Psalm 27. Verse 4. One thing if I desire to the Lord, that will I seek out. That I may dwell in the House of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord is too quiet in this temple. Prayer Meeting two different portions out of Second Corinthians, Chapter 4. Were read in. One we have. God having a message for us and Satan opposing it. To keep us from entering into that which God has for us. And in the end we of that same chapter we have a contrast between temporal things or present things and eternal things. And I would suggest that perhaps would be the mind of the Lord for us to consider that chapter. That's very good, brother Dawn. I had exactly the same thought. You took the words practically out of my mouth, so. I would just add an Amen to that. Chops together. 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 beginning at verse one. Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not, but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commanding ourselves to every man's conscience. In the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost in whom the God of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves. But Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves your servants, for Jesus sake, for God who commanded the light to shine our darkness. Hath shine in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, but we have this treasure in earthen vessels. That the Excellency of the Power may be of God and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair.

Persecuted but not forsaken. Cast down but not destroyed, always the bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body, for we which live are always delivered unto death, for Jesus sake. That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal plush. So then. Death worketh in US, but life in you. We have the same spirit of faith according as it is written, I believe, and therefore have I spoken. We also believe, and therefore speak, knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up also us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you for all things. Are for your sakes. That the abundant grace might through the Thanksgiving of many redone to the glory of God, for which us we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day, for our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us. Are far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not for the things which are for the things which are seen, but are the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. What's being brought before us in this chapter begins in the previous chapter, and I just like to make a connection for us back in chapter 3. We won't dwell on it, but. In verse 14 of chapter three, we have some words that are spoken about the Jewish people. The children of Abraham and it says in verse 14 but their minds were blinded. For until this day remain at the same veil, untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which veil is done away in Christ. Even unto this day when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, but we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord. Are changed unto the same image from glory to glory. Even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Verse 14 where we started it says their minds were blinded. In the chapter we just read, we have the same thought expressed in verse 4, the God of this world that blinded the minds. And I just want to emphasize that point as we begin and that is. It is very possible probable that there are people sitting in this room who are blind. And if you are, you are blind, because you have not yet seen in your heart the Lord Jesus and who he is and what God has provided for you through him. The Jewish person who read the Old Testament scriptures, it says his mind was blinded because he didn't see Christ, God's son, in those words, those scriptures and when the Lord Jesus came.

The only way the blindness or the veil over the eyes could be removed. Was when it said the veil is done away in Christ, as it were. God opened the veil. God opened the curtains, so that in seeing the Lord Jesus Christ the blindness might be turned to sight and they might see. And in our chapter Satan is working. He would work with every soul in this room to blind your eyes and mine. To seeing God's beloved Son. And God, on the other hand, is working in this room to open the eyes of our hearts, if they aren't already. To see the Lord Jesus Christ and who he is and what he means to God and what God means him, wants him to mean to us. And we trust that by the power of the Spirit of God this morning, whether we're young or old. God would enable us to look upon the glory of the person of the Lord Jesus, and if we do as it says in the

last verse of the previous chapter, God will work in us to change us. To actually change what we are, that we might enter into the fellowship with God and all that God desires for our good. Christian ministry is to look up into heaven and see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. That's our position here on earth. We look up into heaven and that's where we get our ministry from. All blessing comes from that that source. There's a comparison here. In this, in this chapter with the previous chapter of the Way, Moses went up and saw the glory of God. When he at the time he received the 10 commandments, and when Moses had been up there 40 days, when he came down the second time, his face shone. His face shone because he'd been with God. It shone so bright. He had to put a veil over his face because the people couldn't contemplate it. It was a glory that could not be beheld. At that point of time. But now the glory can come out in the openness and fullness in the Christian ministry. And so Paul was one who was caught up, saw the Lord in heaven, and he commenced to us that ministry. And so it is what gives us power to be the function is to. Get into God's presence to behold the glory of the Lord. And then from that position we are able to go out and minister, that's the Christian ministry. It's quite interesting. Here we see we are reminded about the mind. In this case, these people of all the minds were blinded. And then we see here in the first verse of our chapter we see the word we faint not. I like to connect that with the verse we know very well in Hebrews chapter 12. He's turned to Hebrews chapter 12. This will read movement. Chapter 12 What I'm going to do is I'm going to read the latter part of verse three, and then I'm going to read verse two and three together, the latter part of Hebrews 12, verse three, he says. Lest ye be we read and faint in your minds. It's kind of interesting how scripture here talk about fainting in our minds. We know that when once, from the physical sense of painting, we know when someone is weary, we can see it on the faces. We know when someone is so weary that they're ready to faint, we need to help them. In fact, often in a case when when when we are weary and ready to fade, we find that we not at our own strength.

To deliver ourselves, we know one of this illusion often is to get food and water to help ones who's weary. And if you ever been weary, you'll find that you don't feel like eating, which is what you need the most. But here it says that lest he be weary and things in your mind. How many here perhaps we can see that are weary. Physical weariness we can see. But whatever the weariness in our mind, I share that with a brother one time and he look at me and he said, you're talking about me. I said no, I was just sharing this portion. He said for years. And I was weary, but nobody knows that. And then not just weary, but stained, or how we need to be careful and help. 11 Another there, perhaps some here who are weary. Why do you think we have problems in our lives? Why do you think that? There seems to be no way out of our difficulties. We become weary and faint. Now let's go back to the beginning of these two verses and see perhaps the solution is already there. Let's read verses verses two and three together with a portion that we just read verse two, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher. Our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endure such contradiction of sinners against himself. Lest he be weary. And fade in your minds. Our brother just finished expressing that the help we have is from above what we need help. We look up to where our help is here, I believe. Please express it even a little bit better than we can with our words. Look unto Jesus, oh why are we fainting? Why are we weary? Is it not because often we forget to look up from where our true resource is? Have we forgotten to look here, Look unto Jesus, Oh the author and finisher of our faith are your faith. Are you really and doubting in your faith? Here's one who is the author and finisher. We have the previous chapter in Hebrew here, Hebrews here that talked about all these faithful men of all and the example of it all. It's not our topic here to go into it this this morning, but here, the one who would give the little measure of faith. That we have. We know faith, Thomas, by hearing, hearing by the word of God. Here's the one who is the Word himself. He is the author and finisher of that. And what did he do? We have to look and be remembered by the joy that he had before him, that he paid the great price to redeem us, to draw us, to bring us into the family of God. And when we consider him, brethren, we are to consider him, and when we do, the contrary happen, lest he be weary and think in your mind. Well, the word. Here in 2nd Corinthians 4, we get the same word, and anyone can look this up if you have a mind to. But it's the same word in the original, at both the beginning and the end of the chapter, and it has the thought of becoming discouraged or losing heart. And the apostle recognized the tendency to that. And as our brother Dawn has brought out, it's mentioned twice in the chapter because there are reasons why we can faint and why we shouldn't faint, And that's why I believe this chapter is particularly important for us today.

There are different ways of looking at Corinthians, but I would suggest something that I have enjoyed and that is in the first epistle the apostle has to address many different problems, and one by one he goes through those difficulties in Corinth and exercises their hearts, in some cases having to tell them the remedy for it. But finally at the end of the chapter he uses one final. Piece of bad teaching. To bring out, I believe, what was really on his heart, and that is a risen Christ in glory, the resurrection of Christ, and all of the wonderful results of that going right on into the eternal state. But then when he writes the 2nd Epistle, I would suggest this thought, not the only thought, but a way of looking at it, That in the second Epistle of Corinthians you have all the power of a risen Christ in glory brought to bear on the circumstances and difficulties of life down here. The problems haven't gone away. Just because we are looking to a risen Christ in glory doesn't mean that the pathway is necessarily smooth. And so he has to start in the second epistle by talking about sorrow. He has to address the question of the one that had to be put away from the Lord's table. And now they needed to restore him. Later on in this epistle he has to talk about those that evidently had not repented of serious sin in the past, and there was an ongoing hindrance in their lives on that account. But that doesn't alter the fact that the epistle generally brings before us all the power of a risen Christ in glory, brought to bear on the difficulties of life down here. Well, I suggest this chapter brings that before us. And the one thing that is so necessary here that we have already mentioned is that. There be the looking up by faith and seeing the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The appreciation that his spirit is here to change us, as we have in the last verse of the third chapter, from glory to glory, and that everything down here that God allows in your life and mind is ultimately directed toward that end. The way Moses and Israel handled the inability of God to come out in fullness was they put a veil over Moses face so the glory couldn't be totally seen. But the way it's handled in the New Testament is there's no the veil's taken away, but the change goes on in US brethren. We're the ones that got to change, and the way is open for change. And to make us in such a way that we can behold the glory of the Lord the New. This is New Testament doctrine. We can we can be brought into the presence of God. In in all God's holiness is still shines bright. But there there is a need for change practically in US and then when that change takes place. Why our lives become a demonstration or a light that shines out as it describes a little later in our chapter. IS300 men.

To defeat an enemy that was over 1,000,000 people. They had lights in a picture and I believe that's what we have in the seventh verse. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels. That the Excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. And I'm afraid that too many of us feel that the Excellency of the powers in us, but that earthen vessel had to be broken before that light could shine out. And I believe that's true right today, as it was in that day. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, and what this means is that we don't have any power in ourselves, that that earthen vessel has to be broken, that the Excellency of the power may be of God. You've been talking about the power that's given to us in the second epistle, and that's true. However, it's all of God and not of us. The moment we think we've got any power in ourselves is when we're going to fail. And when we're going to deny? The glory that's in Christ. The thing is, the earthen vessels must be

broken. And the Lord Jesus was tempted on earth. One of the temptations that he faced was Satan presented to him all the glories of this world. And said, these can be yours, I'll give them to you if you will bow down to me. And it's that same temptation in a perhaps. Is faced every young person and every adult here in this room that satans effort is to present the glories of this world to the heart and said, do you want it? I'm here to give it to you. And so from the time we go to school, we have all that this world has to offer us, presented to us as as that which is the natural thing for us to see for our happiness in this life here on earth. And it's presented to us for me. It's for me my happiness. My joy, my pleasure, is the focus of that which is presented, because there is in us that natural desire to have for ourselves. And what's the result? We're blind or blind? If we follow it. In contrast to that. God steps in and he presents himself to us and his glory in the person of the Son, the Lord Jesus. I'll just make a comment that helped me many years ago. Glory is not a word that we use too often, but glory means the display of excellence. God displays himself in all the Excellency of what he is, man. In the same way, if he has a Kingdom, if he has something that's wonderful, he wants us to see and enjoy and appreciate something. He has the Excellency maybe of his automobile or his house or something else that he has. God presents to us the Excellency of the Lord Jesus. And it's such an important thing because it shifts the focus of our lives from ourselves and our own glory. To being occupied with someone who is outside of us and his glory. And until that, you might say, our eyes are opened to see and be occupied with, not ourselves, not something for our own glory. Which keeps us blinded in Satans. Play pin if you will, but it opens it out that we have. We're changed because we no longer have to live a self-centered life, The scope of our interest being only this world, but we have opened to us by God to enjoy, to focus on, to follow after.

A person that satisfies God and God says if you occupy yourself with him. You'll find the happiness your soul deserves desires for now and forever. And your life will no longer be for yourself, but it'll be a life lived for me, for God, for my son, and for his pleasure. Because it can't be seen with the natural eye, there's a constant pressure. In us that causes us to faint. If we're not sustained by the mercy of God. There's a constant pull in us in all of our lives to go back to the things which can be seen with the natural eye and not continue to focus on the eternal things that God is opened up to the eyes of our hearts. In that connection, Don could, and I don't mean to single you out, but maybe we could have something on the practical side of this, the last verse of the third chapter says. But we all will open face beholding. And those words, as in a glass, really shouldn't be there. It could simply read we all with open face beholding the glory of the Lord. And then in our chapter it says in verse 6 the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. You mentioned that it couldn't be seen with the natural eye. What does this mean practically to us? Not that just the young people need it, we all need it. But seeing there is a large proportion of young people here, what do those expressions mean in a practical way in our lives? How do we behold the glory of the Lord? In the Old Testament, the glory of the Lord was not revealed. It could not be seen. It was hidden. There were types and pictures and shadows as we see in the New Testament, and now we can because the veil is lifted from us. We can go back to the Old Testament and see the glory of the Lord there, but it could not be seen. Until Christ came. But God has revealed himself to man in all the Excellency that he is. And the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and when we read the word of God. And occupy our hearts with that person as presented to us in the word of God. We see a display of glory, a display of excellence. That. Can totally, completely captivate our hearts. I just want to say it. I've said it many times. Because not to make a point about television. I remember a brother when I was a teenager and I went to a conference one time, and at the conference this brother said something that has been the most helpful and profound for my own soul, at least statement about it that I've ever heard, he said. Brethren, in my room where I'm staying, there's a television set. I have. When I go home to that room tonight, I have absolutely no desire to turn it on. As a teenager, that caught my attention, he said. I have in the word of God and in my occupation with the Lord Jesus Christ something that has so. Satisfied my heart. That I have no interest in.

What that machine, if you will, has to offer to me? I simply presented as there is. There can be in our practical lives. And enjoyment and an appreciation of the Lord Jesus Christ that so captivates, so takes hold of the heart that all the things that may attract the natural eye in this world. Don't compare. Do not compare, but if our eyes are blinded, if we only see the natural, then the Lord Jesus might seem dull, uninteresting. OK, to get out, not go to hell and someday go to heaven and so on. But if God's delight is to practically occupy the heart which governs our practical lives, whatever's got your heart is what's controlling your life in an everyday sense. It's a practical thing. Sometimes we say I got problems with the day, you know, tell me something how to get through today if the Lord Jesus. Is the enjoyment of the heart. When you get up in the morning, it's going to control the practical activities of that day. And now God says, I took my son from the earth, and I brought him into the heavens, and I've given him the place of honor at my right hand. And my plans are that his honor, his glory, is going to. Eventually be that which rules the world, and it will rule heaven. And he's God is at where? Says Let me show him to you. And I say, Bill, it's practical. You know, it's practical. It's that enjoyment of the Lord Jesus in the heart that is the most practical thing that controls my daily life. Two, it's the occupation with him that changes my life. I cannot change my life by myself. I need a person, I need a power to change me. And God says look at my son, the occupied with him, and I will change you. This world in the world we lived in, Satan used many tools to distract us from the enjoyment of Christ. We were just enjoying our brother telling us how we need to enjoy Christ and be filled with it. But on the other hand, especially for many of us who are younger here, you'll find a Satan's tool is to keep you occupied. The best way for Satan to keep you occupied is. Keep you busy. And if we are not consciously praying and asking the Lord for help, you will find that we will get occupied more and more repairs of this world. You may say I'm only going to school well to find out when you're going to school. That the school work can keep you occupied. You have to study in the morning before you go. You go to school. You spend a day at school. Then you come back, you have to study some more and do some more homework, and by the time that's done is laid and you're tired. So another day go on, another cycle comes on and we forget that we have to spend time with the Lord. Then you may say, well, I only have four years left of college. When I get through with this college education, then it will be better. When I start to work. And then you'll find when you go to work the world demands more and more of your time and you'll find a cycle repeats again And some might say, well, wait till I have a family and then you'll find a Satan. Use that you with a family that there's time demanded more and more and we're often so tired that we're weary physically and we forget.

To set the time aside to be with the Lord. Oh, young people, look at your schedule. Is there any room you know? Sometimes in the gospel we sing that Emma room for business, room for pleasure than we sing Have you any room for Jesus? Or we know how how important it is when it comes to the gospel of his grace. Now your Christian walk. Your Christian life. Look in your your calendar schedule, How much time out of that 24 hours of a day have we set aside so that the Lord would have time with you to reveal more of His word, His love, and the beauty of our Lord Jesus Christ? We need to be conscious of this and enjoy Him while we can otherwise. Who would become weary, as we talked about here, from his word? The folks that I heard in a tape from I think 1958 from our late Brother AG Hayhoe, and it may be similar to the comment that Brother Don mentioned. On the cake, our brother HEA Ho was visiting in a large city and someone asked him, have you seen the picture show that was there last night? Have you seen the picture show? And he replied, if you could see the pictures show that was before my soul, you wouldn't ask me that question. Or perhaps few of us feel like we can really enter into that. But he had something, an object before his soul.

And I was thinking of two verses book. In the book of Proverbs it says keep thy heart without all diligence, for out of it there are the issues of life. And in the book of Matthew it's the light of the body is the eye. If therefore thine eye be singled, thy whole body shall be full of light. And these are two areas where we can easily fail. We need to guard our hearts more than anything that is guarded, to keep our hearts with all diligence. And we need to have a single eye. And if we fail to have a single eye, we'll fail. The light of the body is the eye. If, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. So the Lord would desire to open our eyes, to remove the blindness and to occupy ourselves. With the person of his beloved Son. How do we occupy ourselves with the portion of Christ? In Romans chapter 12 and the second verse that tells us about the renewing of your mind and the way you renew your mind is by reading the word of God, no other way. You may have all kinds of thoughts, and being what we are, we do have, But to put those thoughts in the right order and in the right category, you must read the word of God. Do you want to learn about the person of Christ? Read about him in the Gospels. All the way through the character, the kindness, the honesty, all of those attributes that are godly attributes that are God are there. You want to renew your mind. You want to get your occupation with Christ and read about him. Don't do it just by thinking. Read about him. Get the truth as it is in the word of God. It's a good example. If we were to take a very brief outline of the book of Philippians, it would tell us that in the very first chapter, the apostle outlined to us that the Lord Jesus Christ is our life. We have to have that before us, that he is our life. The second chapter of the book of Philippians tell us that he is our example of our pattern, so we follow after that perfect one. In the third chapter of the book of Philippians.

He made it that the Lord Jesus Christ is our object, or when we have the object we often follow that. So we follow after Christ Jesus as our object. And then in the 4th chapter, as many of us already know, that he speaks of the Lord Jesus as our strength. So when we know that and realize that we have no strength of our own we depended on His, then it would be a lot easier to follow Him. I believe our brother read before the meeting the verse in Psalms chapter 27. David of oh, the psalmist of all would say he said one thing have I desire of the Lord. Do we want to occupy our hearts with him, learn that one thing? And what was that one thing that he desire of he desired to dwell in the house? Of the Lord, He would like to inquire in His temple. Can we say that for our hearts? You know, we we mentioned here about Moses, there's something interesting we find Moses, as we mentioned when they came down his face, shone. Well, I believe too, when we occupy our hearts, our thoughts, when we spend our time with our blessed Savior. The evidence would be there, just like Moses did, that the light of his face shone. So we know that the fruit that we are to exhibit, the characteristics of our blessed Savior, will shine as we spend more time with them so others can be encouraged by. Could we suggest to in a practical way that there are two sides to that? On the one hand. Every true believer has new life in Christ, a life that wants to enjoy the things of Christ, a life that delights to learn more about him. Every true believer has the Spirit of God indwelling him today, that Spirit which as the Lord Jesus himself said, is here to testify of him to teach us more of himself. He shall not speak of himself. No, but he occupies our hearts with Christ, and so in that sense it is not a matter of exerting effort in order. To be changed from glory to glory. As we get here, it's simply a matter of removing the hindrances. Our brethren brought that out once, he said. I do not have to exert effort on an apple tree in order to get it to produce its fruit. All it needs is reasonable soil in which to grow and a reasonable amount of rainfall, a reasonable amount of sunlight and good weather, and there they are. But he said I can hinder that tree in various ways and so there are hindrances that we need to remove. On the other hand, and this is going back to my late father-in-law, Albert Hayhoe. He once remarked, and I remember well as a young brother really taking it to heart, I trust he said, Remember that it takes effort on your part to learn more of Christ and to know him better, because the Lord knows that we value something much more if we have had to put a bit of effort into it than if it's always handed to us. Without any effort. Every parent here knows that we know very well that our children value things if they have worked a little for them, and the Lord knows that too. And so I can remember, and this indeed goes back a long way, reading about how late Brother JB Dunlop of Canada many years ago in the 1860s was exercised and he said the verse that exercised him as a young man was. The soul of the diligent shall be made fact. And he said, I determined that if I were I would be diligent in the things of God in order to learn more, and his life bore fruit. To that, as we know well, I suggest there are those two things. On the one hand, everything of Christ that you and I know and enjoy and walk in is of the power of the Spirit of God.

Energizing that new life in US. To learn more of him and walk in the good of it. But there is effort on our part that God encourages and likes to see. So it takes effort, as their brother Dave Imbo was saying, To read the word of God to get up a little earlier in the morning. To spend time in prayer, To set my mind, as it says in Colossians chapter 3 on him and on all that he is. Rather than allowing it just to wander onto anything in this world. And I believe both of those things have a practical application in our lives, don't they? Add little to that. Of diligence. And put another word in here, Opportunity. I was thinking of Zacchaeus, the story of Zacchaeus. He wanted to see Jesus, and he was diligent about it. He made a little effort. He went and climbed a tree. But before he did that, he was looking for the opportunity. And if God, if we have a heart to seek the Lord, God will give the opportunities. And so the Lord provided the opportunity. Jesus was coming that way and Zacchaeus made the effort. He took advantage of the opportunity and climbed a tree. What was the result? The Lord had far more interest in Zacchaeus than Zacchaeus had in him. And the Lord said to Zacchaeus, today I'm going to abide to your house. Now we've talked about taking time. Are trying to find time to spend with the Lord. If we look for opportunities and make the effort, he will help us find the time. Zacchaeus spent time with the Lord that day in his house because he looked for the opportunity and made the effort. God is not only interested in spending time with us. He's interested in spending eternity with us. The other day we were looking at Romans. It's really striking. At the end of Romans 11, there's a great doxology where Lord Paul says, who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor, or who has first given to him? And it should be recognized unto him again. For of him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen. And that's of course the end. That's the conclusion of the whole first half, so to speak, of the book of Romans. For everything is on God's sight. He does everything. The only thing we do is sin and mess things up. But then right after that, after Paul makes it clear everything is on God's side, then he goes on. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, and present your bodies. We would think there's only the one side. If God's already done everything, we don't need to do anything. But right after that Paul says we need to present and and looking through the the whole last two chapters of Romans is very striking. Everything's imperative. Do this, do this. You know. It has a bunch of different things he's describing. Don't don't think we highly themselves. And you ought to think. Love one another. So many imperatives. Things we're supposed to do. So if you really have to be balanced on the one side, we recognize everything is of God, it's all his responsibility. But on the other hand, that doesn't mean we don't have a responsibility. But if we're going to gain price, if we're going to enjoy him, it really depends on our labor, our diligence, our exercise to pursue him in an aggressive way. Question regarding a little bit of what we've been talking about. We've kind of thrown around a cliche. To be occupied with Christ. And when I think about that word, or when I hear that cliche, I I think about sitting down and contemplatively meditating on this person on who he is. And I was wondering, you know, when I'm at work and I'm doing the shipping at ET, if I'm sitting around and just meditating on who he is and I'm not going to get too much work done?

And I was wondering. What does it really mean to be occupied with Christ? Is it something that we can do throughout the day, not just when we have the Bible open before us? Well, I think that's a very good question. And I have thought of that same thing of course for some years

and I think on the one hand. Yes. When we are concentrating on our work, perhaps at that very time our concentration cannot immediately be on something to do with the word of God. But I would suggest that the great thing is to have nothing between my soul and the Lord, and that is to have. No one judged thought, no unjudged word, no unjudged action that comes between me and the Lord. Then if my mind for the moment has to be on whatever piece of work has been in my line, I can concentrate on that and if somebody, and I'll use an example, perhaps that would have to do with myself if I were doing surgery. My concentration had to be 100% on that surgery and if somebody started to ask me a question, which they didn't. Excuse me? They didn't usually, but if someone asks me a question. About something on Scripture in the middle of a complicated operation, I would have to say I'm sorry I can't do two things at the same time. That is very true, and I believe the Lord recognizes that. But the great thing is, when my mind is free, where does it go? Where do I allow it to go? And what fills my heart? There are times when I am away from home and my concentration of necessity has to be on something that I'm involved in. The work of the Lord, but when my mind is suddenly free after a meeting. Where does my heart go? You know where it goes. If my wife isn't with me, it goes back home to where she is. It doesn't take an effort. It doesn't. I don't have to say, oh, Bill, don't look at this or don't look at that, because my heart is there. And I suggest the great thing is not to allow that which comes between US and the Lord, so that immediately when our hearts and minds can be free from what is necessary in this world. There is no hindrance, no difficulty with the Spirit of God immediately giving me the enjoyment of Christ. You've been on the road longer than some of us, Brother Dave. Would you agree with that? I do indeed. A scripture speaks about a manner of life, a conversation. Let your conversation be thus and thus. Conversation really means manner of life. What is our manner of life if our manner of life is occupied with what Christ is? That's what I believe is the thought. And it isn't that our thoughts can be wrapped up entirely at all times as. Bill has just said, but what happens when it is free? What happens when your mind is free? You know, the early, early brethren says being let go, They were prisoners. Being let go, they went to their own company. And if you take a cork and put it in a bottle and push it to the bottom of a bottle of water and you'd let it go, it pops to the top. Well, that's a Christian's manner of life.

This world around us. None of us, I don't believe, are ignorant as to the character of this world. At our work, at our school, or wherever it is, we're constantly being bombarded with it. You know, the Apostle Paul said that if you had to get away from all these things, then ye needs must be out of this world. So we are amongst the wickedness of this world, but our minds don't need to be occupied with it, Old Brother Hayhoe used to say, you know, the birds can fly over your head, but they don't need to build a nest in your hair. And so that's the character. If your occupation is with Christ. Your minds are going to be renewed. That's Romans chapter 12. Let's get back to our chapter we're about through with this morning. But you know that second verse. That second verse, I believe, is very important. The Apostle Paul said he had a ministry and he did, and everyone that picks up the word of God and wants to help his brethren has a ministry. But the second verse is important that the character in which we have our manner of life is in comportment with that second verse. Just read it and think about it. Everyone that has anything to do with helping your brother, it's very important. When Satan offered to the Lord in the temptation of the Kingdom of the world and the glory of them, he was using dishonesty, craftiness, and so forth. And presenting that to the Lord, the Lord could not and would not accept it on those terms. And so Christianity doesn't need to use those things. That's the way of the world. But our ministry? Is in holiness and in in righteousness. And we were speaking about, well, how do you show forth the glories of the Lord in your daily work? And so on. How do you you have to have your mind on on the Lord? I believe that when Moses came down from the mount the second time. I don't know that he was. I think his mind was probably occupied with the problems he saw around them because it was a bad situation in Israel when he came down. But he had been on the mount, and they had seen the Lord and the glory, and his face shone. His face didn't shine because he was actively thinking necessarily about the Lord, but he'd been there, and it had its effect on him and how he behaved. And so it shown out by how he be reacted to the situations he came into contact with when he was with Israel. And so in our daily life, if we've been with the Lord, it will show out in our job and how we do it. Even though we're not actively thinking necessarily about the Lord we have, we must think about our daily duties of life. But if our hearts have been filled with Christ, it will shine out in how we do our job. And we will do our job for the purpose of glorifying the Lord. And people will see it. That way we can join the two thoughts, occupation with Christ and living. For Christ. And if my heart is occupied with him, then you might say in the practical responsibilities of daily life, it's an opportunity to live that which I've been occupied with we see in the Lord Jesus. In his personal life he could say, I do always those things which please the Father, and consequently every detail of his daily life was lived in such a way that it was in fellowship with the heart and will of God.

And if we're occupied with the Lord Jesus, we can go through the daily occupation of life. In fellowship with him, even if it's not in our minds consciously thinking of him at that moment. Nonetheless there's a sense in our souls that we're what we're doing is for him, heartily is unto him according to his will. And if a need arises like it did when? Nehemiah, I guess it was came before the king and and the king asked him a question and immediately he prays and answers the king. Pretty short prayer I'm sure. But his occupation, his fellowship with God was such that in a moment of need if Bill's operating on somebody and suddenly he doesn't know what to do, he can say, Lord help me. And keep on going with that which is occupied, these occupied with, and consequently there is the practical sense in which even when it comes, you might say to the end of the day, there can be a shared enjoyment that this day was spent. According to his will, that which was done was done as unto himself. And you might say, one can put one's head down on the pillow and go to rest. But if the day has been lived for self, and then it comes to put one's head on the pillow, oftentimes the rest is not there. And I don't know if I have it exactly right, but it's been a practical help and I'll just share it. And I believe it goes like this. There was a farmer that was out in his field and he was concerned about his service for the Lord as he was working in his field and he was before the Lord about it. And he looked up and he saw in the clouds the shape of APC. In the clouds. And he felt for sure that God was telling him preach Christ. And so he went and shared that with someone that he felt that God was telling him. Preach Christ, his brother said to him. Well, maybe he was telling you plow corn. So it is that we can go through our day-to-day life with whatever responsibilities God has laid out before us, still in the enjoyment of the Lord and in His service. Time is gone, but just one more little comment too, and that is that it brings before us further down in the chapter, always bearing about in the body. What the dying of the Lord Jesus? If I am going to enjoy Christ and all that he is, my affections must be engaged. And if my affections are engaged, then I will want to know more of Him, God's purposes in Him, and everything that concerns him. And that is, I believe, what Paul is bringing before us here. 246.

Detroit Conference: 1962, 2 Corinthians 4:7-18

Reading

General Meetings, Detroit, 1962 Reading meeting Saturday, PM November 24. On the 2nd Corinthians 4. I think there's still much forest there. Not the seventh verse.

4th chapter, verse 7. What we have is treasure in earthen vessels. The Excellency of the power. Maybe it's all and not about. You're troubled on every side, but not destroyed. We have replaced but not understand, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed, always daring about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus at the light bulbs of Jesus might be made manifest in our body, for we would lose are always delivered of the death for Jesus sake. That the life House of Jesus might be made in manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death working enough with light in you. We having the same spirit of faith according as is written, I believe, and therefore have I spoken. We also believe in their foresee. Knowing the sea which raised up the Lord Jesus to raise up us also by Jesus, and represented with you. For all things are for your sake, that the abundant grace might, through the Thanksgiving of many, get down to the glory of God. For which 'cause we think, but there are awkward man perish, Yet the inward man is renewed day by day. Or our light affliction, which is not for a moment work, is for us of all our more experience and eternal rate of glory. We look not the things which are seen, but are the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. There are different ways in which the fascicle here is seen as being broken down. There's a way in which it might be seen as completely crushed, and so that the light might come out. But our brother Willis is to tell us of a. A little vessel that was made in China. That had to be. Worked on continually until it was made perfect and every time the vessel was worked on. This after it's been cast out of play. A very transparent kind of material. That there was sandpapering going on continually until. As the light was placed inside of the vessel, there could be seen that evenness of light all the way around it. Until there are various ways in which the vessel here is seen as being broken down, and it might be just that the constant wearing of the vessel away so that the light might shine out, because the expression here is. We have this treasure in earthen vessels. The Excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. And that's in the breaking down of the vessel. Human efforts. Do not produce this excellence. It is a God. The vessel has to be broken, so there could be no human effort or fleshly efforts. Then the Excellency is a fraud. So we see Joe being broken down the way he was in Satan Pan for a while. Then God undertook to work himself. And in the end there was that I couldn't say perfect work, but Job was still in this world. But still he was more and more who God's will or desire for him. To know himself a little bit. I believe that's the principle that's seen all the way through in this.

That's the subject. Wasn't God's intention to attract attention to the vessel, but to the treasure that's in it? You buy an inferior piece of jewelry, it'll probably be in a beautiful box. You look at the box and you're distracted from the inferior quality of the jewelry. But God has put a wonderful treasure in an earthen vessel that the Excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. I believe again that this was Paul's answer to what they said about him. That his bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible, Well, he said, be it still, God isn't trying to attract attention to the vessel. He is seeking to cause that the light would be seen, and all that we have to pass through is but God's way of distracting from that which is of nature in the world. They make a great deal of good appearance and personality, and all that would give us a place in the world. Where God makes everything of that which would that which would attract attention to Christ. And the ones whom he uses may be fishermen, or maybe one who had an infirmity. But the important point is that we preach not ourselves of Christ Jesus the Lord. I just wanted to make it clear to all here come in. This afternoon or? Meeting yesterday or this morning? Hitting his little van, the 300 that went down to the army of of the Midianites. And. They were. They were commanded to take pictures. With light inside of the pictures. And then that general signals. Gideon told them to watch him, and to blow the comet, and to break the pictures. See, the light was hidden within those pictures. But when the picture was broken, then the light shone out, and it threw the whole army, an immense army of the Midianites, into wrought and confusion, so that there was a marvelous. And complete victory over these enemies that had robbed them and had caused so much trouble. Well, it's a lovely picture of our nation going through this scene, the enemy so busy trying to rob us of our blessings. God has a way of defeating. Satan and all his hope and the light that shines into the earthen vessels. See, the earthen vessel is just a picture of the body of the believer. That becomes the vessel for Christ, like from the glory above is shown into us, but before there is the outstanding of the glory of Christ, all that it's being below by others, That vessel has to be broken, just as pictures have to be broken. Gideon's army so that the light could shine out. That light, that testimony of Christ, is something Satan cannot stand before. That your. Wonderful light of His glory. Peyton, as we saw, was trying to keep that glory from shining into the hearts and sinners. But when that light shines out, by Satan's work is defeated. It would seem not. The light comes in through the eye. I suppose when a Sinner fixes his eye of faith on the Lord Jesus Christ, that's when the light comes in. I gather it from Luke's Gospel, the 11Th chapter. It's actually verse 34.

The light of the body is the eye. Therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body all through is full of light. But when thine eye is evil, my body also is full of darkness. Well, when the eye of faith is fixed upon the Lord Jesus Christ, that light comes in. But then after the light once it's come in. There has to be a continual fixing of the eye on the Lord Jesus Christ that there might be a continual shining out. Now we know how we are, we're apartment to turn our eyes away from the Lord. And we may not have the single eye and then we're not shining. So right, something comes in to give the light. Well, how important it is to keep our eyes fixed on the Lord. And that's what we have in the 18th verse of chapter three of Second Corinthians, gazing on the Lord in glory. And that's how there's a change. And certainly that's that's the only way that there will be any outshine of that light. I wondered from the Lord we began to sing. And our walk will be. It's very sad if we keep don't keep our eye on the Lord. You say then, that beginning with verse eight through verse 9 and 10, we have the breaking of the urban vessels. We're troubled on every side. Although God sends five or something tribulation or persecution into your life. So that God has a purpose. For his own glory and for your eternal blessing in the line, those trials. The comments of your life. Now when we think of such devoted servants of Christ as the Apostle Paul, we might think that a man who surely made Christ is obvious from the time that he met Christ on the road to the Mass that he could walk consistently. As he had been actually seen Christ in glory. But no, even a man as devoted as the apostle Paul had passed through all kinds of trials. As he described here, troubles on every side. Passed down and so on, all those persecutions and so on. Well, that was just as necessary for the apostles Paul. So that the light might shine out and his life as it is in any other child of God's younger old days. So if you find you young people at school that you're persecuted for your testimony, remember God is allowing that and it defends trouble into the lives of any of his people. The loss of a job is. Our health is broken down. We're allowed to be in an accident. Plenty of God's children have been. Well, that is all part of the breaking of the earthen vessel. And when you think that God can use just the daily trials and sorrows and disappointments we have in this being to let some of that glory of Christ dying out. It's it's the marvelous thing. Any. Or that are saved by grace down here could become a vessel. To display a bit of the glory of Christ, there is no greater higher honor that could possibly be the soul upon a creature in this world. Some of our trials, of course, come in the path of loyalty to Christ. Some of them may come in his governmental ways. It's all with the same end in view, but there won't be the same, there won't be the same joy in the trials unless we are seeking to go on. So when Paul was in prison, he could sing in prison. But if I stole something and got in prison for that, I couldn't sing. And so God works out His purposes. But I believe we have in the 8th and 9th and 10th those things that come in the path of loyalty to Christ.

In which case we see in them occasions for the glory, the life of Jesus to be shining out. When we come to the 11Th verse, we which labor always delivered unto death for Jesus sake. Those are the things that come in God's governmental ways with us. The result may be the same, but there won't be the same joy in it at once, and it may mean something that will cripple us for life. And I believe that's why the 10th verse ends with might be manifest in our body. The 11Th verse might be manifest in our mortal flesh. That is, take Jacob for an an example of this. Jacob worshipped leaning on the top of his staff. But why did he become lame? Well, he was scheming and planning to get things in his own way. And the Angel wrestled with him and finally broken down Jacob, why he received the blessings. And in the end of his life, a lame man he was worshiping. So brethren, the Lord doesn't want to break the vessel down. He passes us through things in the path of faithfulness to Him and would seek that the light would shine. But always a faithful God. And if we don't learn in the past in this way, then He may have to pass us through other kinds of trials. But it's His blessed purpose. And he says that it's accomplished, that the life of Jesus should be seen. When the Lord came into this sea. He walked, here's a man and a voice came out of heaven saying, this is my beloved son, and whom is all my delight. Well, it was God the Father testifying to his Son, to his delight in his Son, and it was in him as a man down here, Jesus. And I believe it's very important to see that it's the life of Jesus. God was interested, very much interested, interested only in that light of Jesus down here. And there was a light shining down in this world, the lack of which had never shone here before, and it had never shone like that since. But now the Lord Jesus and our brother Hayhoe reminded us, have gone back to glory. Men didn't want that light. And that light isn't here, but we're here, and we are responsible to shine his light here. And God is interested still in that one thing of seeing that light of Jesus, the life of Jesus shining out down here. All we need to keep that before us. It's as important today to God as it was then when His own Son was here. The important thing is that that light shines in this dark place. 11Th verse might be representative, might have not preventative discipline ever branch in me to bear through the purchase. Biscuit may bring forth more fruit. Well, what do you mean by discipline, brother? Well. We are here in this scene why we are subject to the discipline of the father, and it's often been spoken of that there are three kinds of disciplines. There is. Well, what we've been Speaking of presented and the Apostle Paul. Last, that when he was said, he was given a thorn in the place that lest he be exalted, it was preventative. It wasn't something he had done Well. Then there is corrective discipline, that is discipline in connection with. Is our failures is corrected. Well then there's that in the 15th of John is burning his is that it might bring forth more fruit. You didn't correct you or didn't prevent it, but that might bring forth more proof.

Well, Kennedy would be corrected. That's why I spoke of His governmental ways. It may not all be always be for something that we have done, but it is always because we have the old nature within us. The Lord Jesus was persecuted. The Lord Jesus passed through every kind of suffering that a righteous man could pass through, and all that he passed through but brought out the loveliness of who he was. The crushing of the vessel in every circumstance only brought out his the loveliness of his persons. But of course, with us there's an old nature within. And whether it's a preventative character or whether it's because of something that we have done, it's because we have an old nature within us, and that must be either in a preventative way or in a punitive way or otherwise. Put in the place of death. It's the hindrance, isn't it? Yes, and what we have here shows that the Lord couldn't trust the flight in an apostle. But what about the rest of it? One may pass through trial though, and not have very much exercise about it, but in Hebrews, which is go down a different subject, we do have that expression that. Leave it as exercise. And. I suppose, though, in this chapter it has more to do, does it not, with the question of service, the apostle and the particular thing that he was called to, and that was the the Gospels of glory. And so there's a particular line of things in this missile that has to do with that testimony. And the apostle went through things that practically others never would be called upon. For that very reason. I will show him what great things he must suffer for my sake. And it was in connection with the dispensation of the gospel which had been committed to him. And he was the one also in Timothy, who himself would be a pattern, or really a delineation, I believe. Of this very thing for those who afterwards should believe as we turn alive we get that off, so do we not in the end of. First chapter Colossians where that the 21St verse. Will now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my place, Roy's body space, which is a church. He was a special pattern of suffering. So in connection then with the subject of the testimony. There is, there is that side of it, of these trials and testing. I suppose they grow here, don't they? They start with trouble. Distress, the flex, then persecution and so on. It seems to be increasing. And they're particularly connected here with one who is has one purpose before him, and that that Christ might be manifested in his mortal bodies. And so all all these other things are true. There was a sense in which the apostle was delivered to these things. God. And God said, well, you've taken this path willingly. I'm going to deliver you to it, to think of what he suffered and yet at that very hour when he was. Going through these sufferings, not only the care of all the churches, but also these particular. Things that we have in the second epistle, where there were false apostles rising up, questioning his authority. Right in the midst of it all, we find him writing these lovely epistles, a man who is completely taken over by the Spirit of God. To that work that God had given him as a result, and the body itself of going into decades. So that the apostle has. Experience the pricelessness of the gifts that he possessed in that earth investment so that he could say we are troubled on every side. That's the urban vessel passing through the trials along the way. But immediately it says, but not distressed. So you bring in the the traitors, what we have in Christ. It sustains the soul, no matter how great the trouble may be. And he goes on.

Black. But not in despair. Everything might just seem to be overwhelmed. Let's build the treasure comes in. You see what he has in Christ. Christ becomes more precious to him so he doesn't give up, and so he might be surrounded by hosts of enemies. And he goes on. Persecuted but not forsaken, the Lord comes in just like that last night after Paul had. Been tried there before the Sanhedrin. And the Lord stood by him last night. And said, Fair enough, Paul, as thou hast borne with us for me in Jerusalem, thou shalt, O fool, that was very precious. And Paul had made a mistake on that occasion too, because he took advantage of the company, being Sadducees and Pharisees, to throw a bone of contention among them, and seven, wrangling among themselves, who get their attention also his trials. And that was when the night came and he fought over all that had taken place the day before. He must have been very much downcast to think that he could have resorted to such carnal means of of defending himself. But isn't it lovely though? He had made a mistake and he apologized, mentions it afterwards, except as I just before the Council. Try to cover it up. They were the right way to cover up our failures. He doesn't cover it up. Even though he was a great apostle and had such a high standing among the people of God. Yet a man of all positions, he didn't think he has position as an apostle was so high that he couldn't acknowledge when he made a mistake and was wrong. But the point I was getting to is this. That very night when Pablo, he would be just overwhelmed because of his mistakes. How gracious though the Lord. The Lord stood by him that night. Boy, they thought so sweet. The Lord could buy him and encourage him. So it is persecuted but not forsaken. Perhaps being thought from giving them more in connection with bearing about. The dying of the Lord Jesus, but for with the discipline of the Lord. But still we do find how the Lord sustains. Those that are passing through trial and connection. Where there that's him only for him in this scene that would make us think that brother Barry of the second chapter in the 14th verse. Now thanks be unto God, which always I suppose it should be, leaders leadeth us. In triumph in Christ, make us manifest the Savior of His knowledge by us in every place. I suppose the apostle on this occasion probably didn't measure up fully to what the Lord might have expected him to, but still. The apostle has so given over himself completely to

the work. Even if his heart was moved by affection for Timothy or for his people or for anyone else, I believe in that sense he was walking blameless. And he had that continual confidence in the Lord because his whole object was to serve Christ. Now there is such a thing, I believe. We know there's no perfection down here, but I believe, brethren, there is such a thing. Walking in that path to have the Lord's generous before us. And in that sense he will keep his people blameless, not perfect. There's no such thing as perfect down here. But he he, he looks at the heart. And the Apostles personal attachment to Christ was the chief thing. Not that he was an apostle Maryland, but it was that personal attachment to Christ the person, the object for his heart that preserved him.

Not just the fact that he was appointed in apostles. All there to be an example of what has been spoken of in the 11Th of Matthew. Not that there ever was any need with the Lord, be that of course for the breaking down of anything, but it seems to me lovely to find in that chapter. The person of the Lord Jesus doubted in the opening part of the chapter by his servant John, and his testimony reviewed his verses. 16 and 17 and his miracles to rejected from the 20th verse on. And then it says at that time These have answered, that I thank thee, old Father. And then it ends with Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me. Well, perhaps it would suggest that if anyone of us would wish to have that joy in our souls, and would wish also to hear in any happy yoke with the Lord Jesus, we too might expect that which the Lord even passed through His measures. That, though there should have a secret. Just what you're saying. Samson had a secret with God. As long as he maintained that secret, he had power in his testimony. But the moment he gave up that secret, he had his eyes put out and he grounded in the prison house. And he was. He lost his testimony because he lost that secret with God. In the chapter we were reading yesterday and 1St Corinthians chapter 3, the apostle said to the Corinthians that they were walking as men. Well, Samson said, if you do such and such to me, I'll become weak like any other man. And so when his hair was shaved off, he did become weak like any other man. He was just like an ordinary man. And that's what had happened to the Corinthians. They've been shorn of their power. They've been shorn of that which would give them power. They were. Looking at men. They didn't have their eyes fixed on the Lord Jesus Christ. Their power was gone and they walked as men. And what we need is to have our eyes fixed on Christ, not on things around us or on other people, but on the Lord himself, and walk in separation with the Lord. And then we'll not be like ordinary men. God doesn't want us like ordinary men. He doesn't want us walking as men down here. He wants us to be walking. According to him. And to walk us, Christ walked in this seat. One thing, Brother Albert, that you referred to in regards to John the Baptist was very precious and that is that John the Baptist instead of him that he did know America. I believe that's sold in the Gospel of John. What was the power of his life after demonstration? No, we could see it when he says of the Lord. He must increase, I must decrease, and that's the same principle. Even though John the Baptist hadn't been taught yet what we have here, he had the spirit of it. He was in communion. At that time though, in that passage in the 11Th of Matthew, the same incident brought before us in the Gospel of Luke where the Lord Jesus is presented as the Man of sorrows. It's the only instance where it says at that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit. Why was it that he rejoiced in spirit? Well, for the very thing that we've been talking about because the law rejected by the nation. What was going to be the result? The result was going to be that blessing was going to go out beyond the limits of Israel. Blessing was going to reach out to even to the Gentile and all how lovely it is that if there's an adverse circumstance comes in our lives, what will be the result if we take it from the Lord. Further blessing, more blessing than if the circumstance had never arisen. And we see that as we have called our attention most perfectly in the life of the Lord Jesus, and I believe we see it in the life here of the apostle Paul. For how would we have known the lovely Spirit that control his life and service at the Corinthians and never spoken against them. The very thing that showed that the more abundantly.

He loved them the less he was loved, and yet he continued in it. What was it? Brought it out. Father was the way they acted. Know how lovely it is brethren, there can't be any circumstance arise in your life and mine. It ought to be a fresh occasion to manifest the life of Jesus and to bring further glory to God. Joy in our own souls if we take it from the Lord and if we don't take it from the Lord. The Lord has his own way of humbling us and bringing us down and perhaps after, like Jacob with some. Some trial it has come from breaking down of some way or other the life of Jesus will be seen. May take time, but how lovely it is to see it in the end of Jacob's life. He worship like to ask the question in connection. What was said about a secret? Perhaps to the sake of some of the Youngs we have a secret do we not? Maybe we just have a few words along that line. Respect for many that are young and don't know what Samson's secret was. Well, we're a heavenly people. Samson and his horse walked this Padre, we might say, to the course of Israel. He was one who was chosen out for entirely new distinct paths as a judge to deliver thoughts people in an evil day. And it's a picture to us, I believe, of the secret that we have. As a heavenly people. Not unless we maintain the blue on the border of the garden. That's what the children of Israel were told to do, you know. Numbers, they were to have a ribbon of blue always from the borders of their garments. That was their secret. There are heavenly people. Now. If we keep that in mind, we won't attach ourselves down here. We'll have our high 6th on Christ. That's Colossians, the third chapter. You have the two things there. You have ye are dead, but you also have the fact that we're now the center of mind on things above. That's the secret. It's having crisis, the object conscious that we do not belong to this world. Fall from above and heavenly men by birth, who once were about the citizens of earth, now maintaining that in our soul be conscious of the truth that we have here. What a blessing they'll be. If these things were practical with it wouldn't be a secret aspirin. Who we just thought we've been occupied with all day. And that is the fact that he had long hair showed that he gave up the dignity that belongs to a man. He wore long hair. He gave up the dignity longed for our purpose. A vessel was thrown. And the long hair too, would be known that he was a public man, a man living in the church and the dependent land. So I think when the question is raised as to what is the secret, Brother Bob, the secret is for you and me to give up the dignity that belongs to us as men in the world, be subject to the Lord Jesus in our walking ways. And I think when we're living, and that's the secret of God. Then we have power and the light shines up. There's one thing about Samson when his hair was shorn, he didn't realize that his power was gone, and he went out to do as he'd done it the other time, and he was overcast. So a child of God in connection with failure. Why if he attempts to go on and do what he's done other time could be no power there. Is there any reason why it says Jesus instead of Lord Jesus here on Christ Jesus? I think. Is bringing the life of that blessed ones before Jesus as the personal name of our Savior. So it's looking at his life down here and he's showing us how that which we see in the life of our blessed Lord when he lived and the man here among men may be manifested and the life of his people as they go through the same world with the same problems and difficulties and persecutions.

That we may be called upon to pass through in our pathways through this scene. Pathway of humility too, wasn't it, Brother Barry? I was thinking of this tenth verse. Reading always bearing about his body the dying of Jesus, isn't it? This is this humility that is he walked in such a way here, and I was thinking of that verse. That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our bodies. Thinking of that in first John, a little first there that. Speak to our hearts in connection with that. Down first, the football. And the second chapter of the second words. Jesus said he abideth in him off himself also closely walked, even as he walks. There's victory in that walk. Brother Eric, I'd like to hear you explain what that means. Always bearing about in the body. The the time I'll be that's the way it is. The other translation, the dying of Jesus. Is it always there about the body? Dying, dying, Jesus. Well, I believe that would mean that. The considered simply as growing into death. There's been no life of the old man manifest I think. Seems to me here the secret delivered under stats for Jesus state it that the natural strength and

energy has no place in that pathway. So that's what I would get from. Bearing about the bodies of dying of people. Not taking anything here but. To follow him in that pathway. That's not Speaking of physical death here. This is what you would call moral death, isn't it? Yeah. It's not the thought we have in Romans 611. Likewise, reckon ye yourselves also dead to be. Death indeed understand, but alive under God, through Jesus Christ, our letter. I think that's quite right. Only here you notice. And always daring about the body. Now the six Romans show the destiny that we have died with Christ. That's the answer to the activation. Shall we continue in spin, that great may abound? The answer to the apostle gives is, How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? And he explained what he means, that we have died with Christ. Not only this blessed Lord died for my sins on the cross, but that was the end of the man who committed those sins. God saw me there at the cross. So that I can be completely done with every thought that there's anything worthwhile in the old man. We're looking at a man in the place that man met his end of the course of Christ. Now fills the apostle in the verse you quoted, brother. Always bearing. So I mean, we reckon yourself that indeed understand now that's the that's the act of faith. Because our experience seems to contradict it. Instead of finding ourselves dead to sin, we find ourselves very, very much alive, ready at anytime to say or do something that breaks.

Would suggest. Oh our our experience seems to contradict. What the truth of the word prevents to us, and that's why we're called upon. Selecting ourselves dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God, We don't. We mustn't stop just the negative side of the truth. Just they reckon ourselves dead indeed on the sins the bears, the others pride the positive side, but alive on the dog. Brother Brown gave a very helpful illustration. My name may have heard it, but it's worth well worth repeating. He said as a young man, before he was saved, he he used to go to the theater and I was quite taken up with the articles. Although he said he was paid before the movies came along, he didn't get caught in that snare. But Philly said what he had seen in the theater Airwolf was an appeal to the old nation. And in fasting, the moving pictures show will be display outside of what it seems acted inside. He felt appeal to something inside of him. I would say I want to go in and see what's inside there. Well, what is the remedy for meeting the suggestions of the old makers? Just to tell himself what? I have died to that kind of thing. That man doesn't go to a movie picture show. Well, that's the end of the of the effort of the enemy. To get us to go on in the place to just reckon ourselves dead indeed on suspense. But I believe that the thought and the the first before always bearing about in the body. The time of Jesus, that is. A continuous thing. Can't say. Well, like Brother Brown, I reckon myself dead. Yesterday when I went back went by the moving picture show. So I'm quite immune from ever being misled or aligned myself to be. Go into such a place, but the next time I will have to meet the same temptation. Maybe again. It's the constant thing as we go on our way because. As we all find in our pilgrimage down here. The time and experience doesn't change or improve the desires of the old nature. It still loves the things of the world and the things of nature that are contrary to God and even the suggestions of faith. And so we have to remember that daily. We need constantly that to have that before. The sign of Jesus You think we got a little picture of that brother Mary and the. And either from this there nor wash the clothes all the time that David was away and rejected. Until he returned in peace. That's very nice. Connection with what you said to Brother Hamilton about the secret of Samson and our brother Barry mentioned not only the negative side, but the positive side. It's true in the negative side that he wore the long hair. He gave up his rights as a man. But we find that when there was the Nazarite strength, he was feeding on the honey that came out of the slain lion, wasn't he? That would be the positive thing. Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong one sweetness. And so Satan. The picture to us in that way, He's the one who seemed to accomplish his own designs and put to death the Lord Jesus. But through that death sweetness has come to us, and we see them up there in glory. Well, stamps, and stop feeding on that honey, that sweetness that came out of the slain wine, out of the heater, came forth meat and out of the strong unsweetness. And the next thing was to give up the outward thing. And brother, we'll give up the outward thing too, if we're not feeding upon Christ.

We cannot retain Nazareth separation, we cannot go on with the outward Marks and separations, unless we're in the inward joy of feeding upon himself. So I believe we have the same order here. And they head into the third chapter gazing upon Him in glory. Now he finds the negative side of it here, bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. I used to be puzzled as to whether it was really right when we were invited to attend something and we felt as a Christian, we ought not to go. Someone had just spoken in that direction. Was it really right to say, no thanks, I don't want to go? Don't know whether I'm the only one that's been invited to attend something and said I don't want to go. And then something inside said you hypocrite, you know you do want to go. Well, it really puzzled me for quite a while. Am I right? Am I telling the truth to say no thanks, I don't want to go? But I do believe that in the 7th of Romans we hear the beloved apostle identifying the eye with the new man, so that it's perfectly all right for us dear believers to say, I don't want to, even though there is an old nature within them to be kept in the place of death. That might adapt to us that we still do want to. We're entitled to identify the eye with the new nature which would find no delight in those things. And we linked Bert Peter score first Peter 4. And the first, first of first Peter four. And we linked that verse up with the second, the chapter of Hebrews and the last verse. That was embarrassing about first Peter and four the first third. Of Hebrews and the 18th. A chapter in Hebrews chapter 2 who seeks their believe their Hebrews 2 and 18 that he himself himself is being tempted. That is 13 years, four and the. Right have suffered for us in the back and then it says in the last part of the verbs where we have that has suffered in the flesh has seeds from the tail like to hear from word on that. Don't you think, brother, that meaning of that first verse of the 4th, the first Peter? Laura Much then, as Christ has suffered for us in the slaves. So we can be. We can be done with the place, we don't have to go on and live the rest of our days. Our rest of the time and the place for the lust of men. Get in the second verse. But here is the remedy. It's. For he that hath suffered in the flesh has faith through sin. That is, let the old nature suffers before someone says something very provoking and and unkind to me, and the old nature immediately comes up to hand back something just as severe as. Other said to me, well, instead of the line, the old nature to have its way, which it was surely delightful. Allowed to have his weight while just take it, he suffers. Well, I the old nature has suffered, but I speak through sin. So it's a view that in many ways. And the old nature would like to go on with something that is pleasing with the Lord. Well, let the old nature suffer the best thing in the world. And that's the old nature. We've all got it. It'll suffer, but in letting the old nature suffer.

Will faith through sin? The Lord flesh was the holy flesh, and ours is sinful flesh. The Lord suffered in the path of obedience, but never because He had any inclination to do what's wrong. Or, as with us, we suffer not only in the path of obedience sometimes. But because we have an inclination to do what's wrong, the flesh is not the sinful flesh. In the Lord Jesus that was holy and Allah, so he, he sympathizes with us in the sufferings that come upon us in a physical way in our pathway here. But there's no sympathy with us in connection with the old nature. It should be in the place of death. Well could that first verse in the 40 Peter they looked at the Christ has suffered for us in the flesh. Well we know he suffered on the death. Death came in. Well now then, if we have something in the place, if we have became dead forward. Where, see, we seek from Sam. So if it is considered in that way that we have really taken that place, why then we see some sense because the old man is gone. Then you add another first, the second of Hebrews in the 18th, 1St we're in that he himself has suffered being tempted. He is able to suffer them that are tempted. Well, in that path, it's the Lord's suffering down here. To enable him as our great High Priest who enter into our trials and suffer. We pass through. The Lord has already been through the files of His people. He knows what it is to be diverted, to be

despised and taken. Lord knows all about that. He's been in the home of those that are bereaved. He has left there and company with the soaring ones. So now as we go through this scene, the very fact the Lord has suffered being tempted. Get another hair on that the Lord was never attempted with the old nature like we are. Oh, in the fourth chapter, where this same subject is taken up, the apostle says sin apart, he was tempted in all points, black as we are, yet without Sinner Sinner park. Fossil carefully. Travel to that point is spin apart. Well, now the Lord, though having entered into the trials of his people, He can sympathize with us, but He never can sympathize with us. When our when is the truth of failure. When the failure come in, while then we have the Lord not as as a High priest, but as an advocate to restore our souls and bring us back into communion. In the book of Exodus. Chapter 15. We're having the children of Israel coming to Mara. They called it narrow because the waters that they found there to drink off were bitter water. Verse 23. When they came tomorrow, they could not drink of the waters of Mara, for they were bitter. Well, I suppose that speaks of the trials of the waves, trials of the wilderness, and there are the bitter things that we encounter. The Apostle Paul is Speaking of that in our chapter, the trials, the bitter things that he encounters in his wilderness journey. And then in verse 25. After Moses, after the people, And what shall we drink? Moses cries unto the Lord, and it says the Lord showed him a tree, which when he passed into the water, the waters were made sweet. Well, when you read that, you can't help but thinking about the cross, and that's what we have brought before us in that tenth verse in our chapter. The dying of the Lord Jesus is being put to death, the crucifixion.

And all how good it is for us to meditate upon that when any trial comes. There are two sides to trial. We see that very plainly in this chapter in the fourth of Second Corinthians. Two sides to it, perhaps we might say there's our side and the large side. Well, when we look at it from our side, it's bitter. It is a trial. But when we look at it from his side and connected with him, then the sweetness comes in. Well, one can speak from personal experience from very recent trials, and I mentioned it because I'm sure others have perhaps had the same experience. When you think of losing a loved one, you think of the empty place there. Are you going to miss that one? Well, that's our side. But then we think of the Lord side up, connected with the Lord. Well, that loved one is with the law. And why? Because he went to Calvary's prompt and died there. There couldn't have been such a thing. There couldn't have been that side unless he'd gone to the cross and died. And as it's been brought out, we reckon ourselves dead. Well, to everything around us, then to sin that which is within dead to that which is without the word. And. What a help it gives us. It brings sweetness in. If it is true that large. To not be with us. And I sympathize with our failures. I was thinking of the children of Israel that says of them. All their afflictions. He was afflicted. And why did they have a second? Was it not because they failed? And yet it says in all their afflictions he was afflicted with someone. Explain that to me. Well, the Lord never sympathizes with us in our in our sin, or in any way in which we display the old nature. But if in the display of the old nature, we get into a circumstance that we might have to reach the rest of our lives. The Lord, if we turn to Him and repentance will surely be with us in that. Or when He was here upon earth, fly with sickness here. Why, with all the misery in which He found Himself here, was all here because of sin, But He came here and sympathized with them, not in their sins, but in the circumstances where their sins have placed them. Yet I'm glad you brought it up. I thought of that when the remark was made. Brother, the Lord never sympathizes with us in our sins. I should never say, well, he simplifies with me and losing my patience because it was a very provoking thing. No, but if I lost my patience and lost my job over it, then the Lord will sympathize with me if I turn to him. And on it He'll sympathize with me in being without a job, even though it's part of his government. That's what a gracious high priestly house, that's the third star. But in that song, David is running from his own son, Absalom. And they those that are with him says, there's no help for you and God. But the very first word in the Psalm is, Oh Lord. But remember in that Psalm he says, when I went unto thy holy hill, my brother has mentioned that it's after there has been the acknowledgement of our failure, then we can enjoy the sympathies of Christ, even though we're under his government. The government of God, I should say, the Father. Proverbs says He the covers and sin shall not prosper, and he. Constructed and protected them to find mercy. That's what we need. Is that all the way along? Yes, there's not only the confession, but there's also the forsaking.

Well, there's no place in connection with these troubles or persecutions. But what there's a way out, as is mentioned here, not in despair. Not destroyed. And so on. But there's a deliverance in every case. And there's not no necessity for discouragement, because discouragement really is not of the Lord, is it? There's a wrong doctrine. All the evil ovens where the apostle says I'm crucified with Christ. As all the old nation was slowly dying every. Soul is dying every day. Well that is not a a truth of all. The fact is that when the apostle says I'm crucified with Christ, he is looking at what took place when Christ was dying on the cross. That's the thing that has already taken place. That's why we reckon ourselves dead indeed on suspense. Be done with it to get God's viewpoint over here. He is done with it and we can be done with the hills. Our younger. Horses here. It says in the 11Th course where we would live are always delivered on the death for Jesus faith. The fact that we have died with Christ. Oh no. And we're called upon to bear in our bodies the dying of Jesus. Every day we need to to remember that we have died with Christ. Well now God in his grace put his own through circumstances that bring about that bearing in our bodies dying of these. So the 11Th, the 10th verse is is the doctrine, so to speak. The 11Th verse. Is the practical way that God sees to it. That is carried out, of course, this, he said. So they run the impossible himself. Persecutions and trials that he went through himself. But the principle is true for every one of God's children. God sees to us that we do carry out the truth that we have died with Christ. And in Paul's case, if you look at the first chapter of the Capitol. Look at the. 6th Bird, or whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same suffering which we also suffer. Whether we be comforted is to your consolation and salvation. And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing that as he are partakers of the suffering, so he he also of the constellation. For we would not present have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of major above strength in so much that we had even of life, but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not sustain ourselves. But in God, which raises the dead, well, that gives a little description of. These, what the apostle is thinking of by always we would live, are always delivered under death. It wasn't a day that Paul rose in the morning, but what he could say. I may be martyred before the day is over. Well, that's the way it lives, the Lord. Dealt with his. Faithful servants and weapons in order to bring out your testimony of Christ, and so that Jesus was manifested in his mortal place. So what severity was necessary to bring it out?

Even in the light of an apostle. Like the beloved Paul himself, would you not say, brother, that in the 10th verse? It's when we do this in communion with the Lord and in the 11Th verse is when He has to do it in His ways with us. For instance, the Lord said to Peter, before the **** crawled twice, thou shalt deny me twice. Well, Peter didn't realize how weak the flesh was, so he went on in the self-confidence of nature and he had to learn through a fall. But he did learn and thank God he did, but it was through a fall. If he had said, Oh Lord, if you don't keep me, I will dishonor you, then he would have cast himself upon the Lord, realizing that he couldn't trust himself. And he would have been preserved, and instead of denying the Lord, he would have displayed the life of Jesus when he was put to the test. So with us, there are two ways in which we can learn the wretchedness of the old man. We can either believe what God says about it and because we believe it, put it in the place of death. Or God may have to pass us through very humbling things in our lives to teach us what the old man is. So in the 10th

verse he says always bearing a boat in the body, that's when we do it in communion with the Lord in the 11Th to 20 has to deliver us to death for Jesus sakes. His ways with us, well, he's faithful. But as one is often said, to put it very simply, there's two ways for the child to learn that the stove is hot, to touch it and burn his fingers, or to believe that it's hot because mother said so. While God doesn't want us to burn burn our fingers rather than to find out what the flesh is, He's shown us what it is at the cross when his own son died under sin and. May God grant that we may lay hold of this truth, and reckon ourselves to be dead indeed under sin. And here is a continual thing always. It's the faithfulness of God, isn't it? In this matter, the death of Christ is a full perfect thing, but our apprehension of it is imperfect. And in the measure that our apprehension of the death, crucifixion of Christ is imperfect, in that measure, we'll get what we have in the 11Th verse where we can thank God for that. If he allows anything. To come into our lives, to deliver us to death, to death, to give us a better apprehension of what Christ really went through on Calvary cross. I believe what you said, Brother Halo, about those two verses is very good practical application for our soul. But it seems to me there still is that reserve of the general thought of this particular chapter that we. Lots of just apply it to that particular thing only that the Apostle Paul was under any particular discipline. Because the apostle had a particular dispensation committed to him. And you know you and I don't. Don't ask the Lord to put us into trouble. Do it. But the Lord did deliver him to this. He was carrying out a particular thing as our brother. Ericsson has called our attention to it isn't always that we're being punished or that we're under discipline. There is a a reason that the apostle was placed in this position. Because God is carrying out a special work in his particular case. But what you said is very true as to the application of these two versions for ourselves in a practical way. In a practical way, we all have to learn it experimentally, more or less. But God would have it to be left. That is, he doesn't want to have to deal with it. But in a practical way, there's not one of us can lift up our heads and say, well, I've learned all the truth and communion. The Lord never had to deal with me. We all have to hang our heads and face often had to deliver me to death for Jesus sake, but he doesn't want to do it brethren, he wants to teach us in communion and if we lay hold of these precious things in the meeting will go away happy manifesting the life of Jesus. He doesn't want to have to teach us the other way. In verse 11 The apostle says we and ours. Would that indicate that he includes us in it with himself.

I thought Brother Anderson. Something like we say the editorial we and I I doubt if he is taking in and specifically all the children of God, the castle himself. Perhaps Timothy and others associated with him and he has persecutions that we read about in the first chapter and it seems to me that. 11 First, as far as the apostle is concerned, it's not so much a matter of failure with him and God having to seek him through failure. The. Wants of place he is. But. It was in connection with his ministry. We that live are always delivered on death to solve that in the first taxes that the life also Jesus I don't see him the apostles piece that it is connected so much to failure as with God. Ways with the apostles going on in his service so that. That. The life also Jesus might be manifested now I started, Hailer says is perfectly true. That if we are not willing to learn what the place is in communion, why then God does have to teach us by allowing us. To exhibit the place or interact in the place like feeder. Then when of course we learn in a very solemn way what the place is. Love the very you referred to Galatians 220 but I'm crucified with Christ. Is it not? Really not in that verse have the. My representing. Our being in different aspects. I'd be glad to have you explain it, Brother Jasmine. Well, I believe I am 35 with Christ refers to the old man. I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live. Well, that's the new man I live. And yet not I, well, I'm not left here in my own strength. Christ live within me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, well, that's I'm responsible. I realize, I must realize I still have that old man, and there's a new man, but I am responsible nevertheless. I live, though I have that old nature still with me. Why the life I now live in the place? I live by the faith, the Son of God who loved me and gave himself to me. Well, I like to look at it in that way. That's very helpful. Sometimes it's a new man, sometimes the old man, and it's the responsible man. Now there's heard the story told about a man one time was brought into court and he told the judge that was the old man that did that. Well, the judge says we'll send the old man to jail. You can go along with him, keep him comfortable. I have a case where a brother was invited. It might be helpful with some of the young brother was invited to a party and he had a conscience against going there. So he answered the people that invited him. He said it would be impossible for me to come. He didn't say why, but I think that was the reason. Our brother Albert remarked the talk before about sometimes we have to admit that we'd like to go and I think the brother would have liked to go on the party. They're going to have a good time, but it was for the old man that they were having a good time. I think what you say, Brother Eric, is important. There is the the old nature and there is the new nature we both have. Two preventers, but there is a responsible eye that. Allows either the new nature or the old nature to act.

Need to remember that which nature am I aligned to have its way. Just at the end of the last really meeting brother and I'd like to hear something about the last part of this 11Th verse. Seems to me it's we got something very wonderful here and especially for the young people among us. Is it possible, brother Barry, that. It is possible that the life of Jesus. And the brazen minor stuff in our marketplace. Personally is possible, wouldn't have told us though. No, grandeur are more wonderful. Families in this whole life to watch your speech. Manifest the life of Jesus. In this poor world, and he gives us the means that makes it possible. To write to such nice. The Justice card put my sentence away. And the cost of cars would be alive. We often say, Brother Taylor, that the that the cross of Christ is. What separates me from the world? The blood of Christ is what? Puts my sins away, and the death of Christ is what puts me away, and it's the cross of Christ. There's more of the same side of the death or exaggerated. So that's what really separates from the world. Almost into the future. #316 We are by Christ 2 deeds. Nothing better goals esteemed by good connection. We're the best. We're our own with all very score. And thou, Lord Jesus, we're on home. He's still poor. Our urgent vessels great the world of South Carolina world. Christ. And mold he'll give these bodies while fashion like his own. You'll get the whole creation smile and Usher is growing 360. 3.

Detroit Conference: 1962, 2 Corinthians 4:1-6

Reading

Detroit 1962 Reading meeting Saturday, November 24 AM. How pleasant is the sound of praise. It well becomes a face of God. Should we refuse our souls to raise. The stones like the 317. Yeah. Seems to me that the 4th chapter of Second Corinthians. Somewhat follow up, obviously left off. As to the effect of the judgment seat of Christ. On our lives down here. Before we stand before the judgment seat of Christ. And all our words are their manifested. The presence of the glory of Christ. Now if anyone feels there is something else. More suitable or imparted on oppressing this, but that came before me is falling up the subject.

Thank you very much. You use the whole chapter? I thought so, brother. First Corinthians, chapter 4. 2nd Corinthians. 2nd Corinthians, chapter 4. Therefore, here we have this ministry as we have received mercy. We think not. Photo renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness. It's not handling the Word of God to speak solutions, but by manifestation of the truth, commanding ourselves for

every man's conscience. In the sight of God. Some of our gospel be his. It is give to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world has blinded the mind of them which believe not less than life of the glorious daughter of Christ, where the image of God should shine under them. Before we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. And I filled your servants for Jesus. For God, who commanded the light to shine her darkness, have shined in our hearts to give the luck of the knowledge of the glory and love in the face of Jesus Christ. What we have this treasure in earth investments at the Excellency of power may be of God, but not about. Fear troubled on every side, yet not destroyed. We are perplexed but not in despair. Persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. And the rifle through Jesus might be made manifest in our bodies, For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus state. That the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal place. And death working enough the light in you we having to say it's fair to say according to written, I believe and therefore am I supposed we we also believe and therefore we. Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also, my Jesus, and shall present us with you. All things danger for your sake at the abundant faith might, through the Thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God. For with God we think not that there are outward man's heads, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. Poor light afflictions, which is but for a moment work for us, are far more exciting in the eternal weight of glory. Or we look not the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen. Things that are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. I suppose the two ministries are counteracted in the previous chapter, are they not? Are you referring to brother? Well, there was administration that had to do with death because the man was not able to meet the loss. But there's a new administration or ministry now which is of life because it depends on another, the Lord Jesus Himself putting assembly for our souls. It all depends on Christ now until the apostle has that blessed ministry.

And he was the one, you know, who was so bitter against this precious truth, because I believe in Corinthians we have at least from the 10th chapter on of the first more and more subjects of the body is about and that was the ultimate purpose of God, to bring the children of God together. And it's the it's the marvelous privilege today. Expressing that truth here in this world, great, the truth of the body and all that's connected, I believe with this new administration that has to do with the Christ. Christ is ahead and that is members down here, Bill still that moment when we all talked up together to be with him. This marvelous news demonstration of life is all contrasted with what has gone before. Not that the law wasn't good, but there was no means in the hands of man to to meet the requirements of it. Now he's been brought into blessing on the grounds of sovereign grace. God has said the soul that Jew ascend shall live in them, but they didn't do them, they didn't do the law, so it brought in death condemnation. But Christ has brought in life, brought in a new order of things, and in fact we have before. This is the goal. The 6th parts of the previous chapter contrast those two ministries, does it not? Who also has made us able ministers of the New Testament for not of the letter, but of the spirit. For the letter kill us, but Spirit give us life. Well then you connect that with the 17th word or the 7th to the 16th versus parenthesis. Now the Lord is that spirit. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all was an open face, beholding is in a glass, and the glory of the Lord. Our change is the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. If Christ, that's before because. The Spirit of all the types, the shadows and the Old Testament is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and He is the one we have before us now. That's the importance of that 18th person is just read to us. It's it's just the contrast of the law in the law. Has been quoted. You do these things, you live in them. Now that wasn't eternal life. That was just the life down here in this world, we continued. If these commandments were kept. The Prince of Beloved, I suppose, will be in the millennial day. But here we have. The beholding occupation with Christ market. Well, it's occupation with Christ that makes the change here. It isn't the efforts of the flag. And there's the one here in this room. You would say that what could qualify for this? And that's what the young man was really asking the Lord when he said, what shall I do that I may inherit the eternal life? And the Lord gave him the commandments. Would be perhaps a little puzzling if that were the answer to inherit eternal life as we now understand it was an eternal life here on earth that he was really thinking about. I think Brother Hale, that. What the young man was looking for was just to live on and enjoy his wealth and position down here, the eternal life. Isn't revealed in the Old Testament. We do have mentioned I believe twice on some dangling 12 and months and 133rd farm, but it's more connected with the Kingdom. So here was the young man that had every advantage. He was at money and his position and honor and respect. Well, he'd just like to live on and enjoy those advantages and his wealth down here. So he wants to know what he can do.

To inherit what he looked upon as eternal life. But now to get back to our subject here, my brother. London has been speaking about in the 18th 1St we all now you notice it says open here but it should read as Brother Ericsson read it with unveiled faith. If you look back in the chapter. It says in the 13th verse, not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is the Bali we're taking. To the second giving of the Law. The first time Moses came down with the two tables of toll, his face wasn't shiny. Because he was greatly distressed about the making of the golden castle, he broke the tables and stone at foot of the mountain. But the second occasion, when he went up on the mountain and received again the French commandment. He came down with his face shined, because God had revealed himself to him there as merciful and gracious. That is, God was not going to take the people through the wilderness on the ground of the law, that he was going to take the people through the wilderness on the ground of mercy. Although law was still the requirements. But till mercy came in and spared them, when they failed to teach the law well, That was why Moses faced with China. But all that the children of Israel could see in the dining face of Moses. Was the glory of the law and that condemned or Moses put a veil over his face so they couldn't see that glory. Now they apart from draws the contrast. In this 18th verse we all will unveil faith beholding the glory of the Lord, that is the Lord Jesus now glorified on high. Requires no glory to conceal. That radiancy that times in his blessed face, there's nothing in his in his glorified face that condemns the Sinner, because the very one who is now glorified on high is the one that took all our sins upon himself on the cross and satisfied with the. The demands of the Holy God. Putting those fins away and rising triumphant beyond the power of death and all the judgment of God, taking his feet fair at the right hand of God. Now God made Christ responsible for every sin that I am that is against me. God heal Christ responsible for those sins. Before my sins could be brought against me, all would have to deal with that man in the glory because he's responsible and he has settled the the the justice and the holiness of God about them. So instead of the mural of his glorified faith filling me with fear and dismay. Why? It just fills the heart with unspeakable delights because we not only see the face of the ones who put those sins away. But we see all the glory and perfection that in the heart of God. Displayed in the radiant space of that one who was there glorified now on high and the further Lundeen says that the occupation with that glorified man settling every question of our sins for all eternities, so that the conscience.

Is it red also fills our hearts with that object that God has to occupy our goals so that as we gaze upon Him, there is that transforming affect in our lives. We become more and more like that blessed one. So that you can see the contrast between what there's a law required. The law says this too. For now, to live well, we couldn't come up to God's requirements at all. But instead of being under law, the rule of life, occupation will that glorified man. The very things that the righteousness which the law requires of man is fulfilled as Romans. 8000 are fulfilled in them who walk not after the flakes, but after the spirits. So there is a light that fulfills the righteousness of God without our being in

any way in ******* too. They demands of the law now in connection with the testimony. The first verse here speaks of ministry. Or has to do with testimony? In the high priest breastplate there were 12 Stones. I believe the first one was a Ruby, at least it was of that character was not clear. It wasn't transparent. It did radiate light, however. And it's a little picture to us of how that which was manifested in connection with the law, it was the glory of God. All right. But it wasn't the full revealed glory of God as we have, for instance, in Revelation 21 where we have the foundation. Don't mention, turn to it just for a moment. We'll see the difference. 21St of Revelations and. The 18 first and the building of the wall of it was of Jasper and the city was pure gold like under clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was Jasper, the second Sapphire. Now notice in the 11Th verse of the same chapter. In connection with this city in Jerusalem. Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. And their light was like under a stone, most precious even like the Jasper stone, clear as crystal. Have a testimony. But how different from that which was on the High Street breastplate? Transmitting the light of the full display of the glory of God now as a result of this new ministry that has been brought in through the Lord Jesus. How would you say Brother Harris? Is this ministry to make it? I know it's been mentioned but to make it simple for all, I don't know what this ministry is so we can go on with our subjects. Well, it's not this memory. Christ and Church. Our portion was in. And wouldn't you say to that it's the the ministry of the Spirit of God? Revealing to us. The the glories of Christ. That one who is now stated that God's right hand. You see, it's definitely spoken of in the third chapter. In this way. In the.

The the eighth verse while reading before that, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the faith of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away, how shall not the administration of the Spirit? The rather glorious. So we have what is most wonderful, most precious for us to consider, that we have the ministry of the Holy Spirit of God come down from a glorified Christ, telling us of His finished work, telling us of all His glory that he has won. Through his sacrifice and death and all that's connected with that. And so as you were saying, Brother Aaron, that brings in the fall of the church too, because it by the Spirit that believers are united together and form the body of Christ. So as we gaze into that glory to see that blessed one, we see the head of the church's body. Now their seat is on high, and every believer below is a member of that body. So I'm sure that this ministry is picking up the Arizona takes in quite a range of truth, doesn't it? Gives us the whole range of our, our, our Christian faith. That right? Yes, I'm sure does in John's Gospel, chapter 16. So in the beginning with verse 12. We read, I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. How do you? When He the Spirit of Truth has come? He will guide you into all truth, for He shall not speak of Himself. Whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you. Well, it's Christ that's brought before us by the Holy Spirit, and it speaks of, of his things there. And I suppose when we are Speaking of the Church, that's something that's connected with Him. And anything, all that is connected with the Lord Jesus Christ is now ministered to us by the Holy Spirit. When we go back to the second chapter of our epistle, brethren, the. 18th verse. But as God is true, our word towards you was not yay and nay, or the Son of God, Jesus Christ to us, preached among you by us, even by Sylvanus and Timotheus, was not yay and nay. But in him it was yay for all the promises of God. In Him are yay, and in him Amen, under the glory of God by us. Well, we know that when the law was given there was a year and there was a nay. And when the children of Israel entered the promised land, they stood on one mountain and pronounced blessings for obedience, and another they stood in the mounts curses for disobedience. And so we know that's been remarked that they didn't learn the blessings. Instead they earned the curses because of their disobedience. Now he says it's not that way in Christianity. The work of Christ upon the cross has opened up the way of blessing and made it sure. And so in him everything is yay, the purposes of God embrace are going to be accomplished. And this is the ministry that has been committed to us. I think it's nice to notice here, brethren, then that the I should have said the first chapter where I read in the second chapter we see the trouble that had come into the assembly. Or what is it that will encourage us when trouble comes into the assembly? All the knowledge that through the work of Christ all of God has purpose He is going to accomplish. He is going to see us through these difficulties and He is going to bring each one of His own safely home to glory.

And then in the end of the second chapter, we see the ministry of the gospel. Well, perhaps it's rejected. Well, it's the Savior of life unto life, or a Savior of death unto death. But God is glorified in that the message of his grace is proclaimed in a world where he had, where his Son has been crucified and cast out. And I believe the reason it's introduced in this epistle is that the brethren were speaking against Paul. They were saying his bodily presence is weak and his speech is contemptible. Where these things tend to discourage us, do we? Do we see trouble in the assembly? Do we see little blessing in the gospel? Has something unkind and said about us? Occupation with Christ and glory, and what He has accomplished, and the sureness of all He has accomplished. Bringing about the purposes of God will give us faith and courage to go on, so we won't think. And I believe perhaps, brethren, that's why it's introduced in the beginning of this chapter. How lovely it is where it says as we have received mercy. We think not. That is, we go on. And I'm sure that if we're looking at Christ and glory, no matter how many difficulties you set the path. Be the courage to go on, and then the next verse comes in and shows the moral effect in the life of one who is occupied with Christ and is enjoying what you are thinking of. All the promises being gay in our men to the glory of God. If God is going to bring about His purposes, it has a definite effect. We see especially in these verses opening this first, this 4th chapter, the effective cast on the light and on the ministry of the Apostle Paul for that he says in that second verse, but have renounced. The hidden things are dishonesty or exchange, not walking in craftiness that's deceased, but. Not handling, not handling the word of God distinctly, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. It's lovely to see that. The ministry of the Apostle himself. What he is presenting to others. Had a moral effect on his own life. I was just observing not long ago in the 15th chapter of First Corinthians. Where they are, the apostle is speaking about. The resurrection of Christ. And whoever and that he was seen of people. So about 500 brethren at once. Then in the eighth verse 2000. Last of all, he was seen as me also as the one born out of due time. That is, Paul saw Christ in the glory. Well, now the very fight of Christ and glory, the remembrance of having seen him there. And the practical effects on his life and ways. And what is the effect? Well, just read on, he says the ninth verse. For I am the least of the of the apostles. That are not meant to be called an apostle because I persecuted the Church of God, but by the grace of God I am what I am. As soon as Paul springs before the glorious resurrection of Christ and Helen that he has seen and glory. Why he just kept down to the lowest place who fell on the lease of all their problems, not me to be called the apostle. Well, the entering into the truth of God in the power of the Spirit of God is always to bring us to a look. Place. That is low, far from South, fitting, as the little hymn says, Proclaimers of His grace. And so here in this 4th test, here in this second verse.

You see the effects this ministry has on the life of the Apollo. For those who speak to go on and serve the Lord, there should be the spectacles. Power of the truth and their own souls that they're giving out to others. Otherwise, if it's not that way, it does the content and. Leads one into a path that may be very disastrous for themselves and for others. The very solemn thing, isn't it, to hear truth and not act on it. Seek faith to walk in the truth that we hear. In connection with our chapter, the Apostle Paul. The first thing that was mentioned to Ananias by the Lord. Was. I will show him what great things he must suffer for my faith. Now in our chapter we have just a very contrast of what was given in the Old Testament regards to those who served in Sebastian with the Law. There it was the outward display. There it was the

ceremonial line of things that had to do with the people in relationship with God on the earth. But with the Apostle Paul he sets before us. Here in this chapter, the complete breaking down of the vessel that was necessary if the light was to shine out. What a contrast there is here then with the law now tripping them today is pursuing much in the lines of the old system of things, and we need these truths today especially because these things are vital in connection with. Testimonial Service. In the subject of breaking down the vessel, we noticed in Romans that the expectation is there to reckon yourself dead. Now that's because in Romans, especially in the 7th chapter, the man has seen struggling. There hasn't been the the complete understanding in the soul of what it means to be dead with Christ. I won't speak to these things, but the consciousness of how little one has entered into them oneself. Still in Romans, I believe we have the man struggling, and so it's the expectations. I reckon yourself to be dead indeed out of sin. In clauses, there's a plain statement. There the man has seen is written head on high and so the plain statement she are dead. That's a fact. That's the fact that we're to recognize. But then we have also here the apostle is seen as dying daily. That is, he's applying this truth. Practically in his life, because it's a question of the testimony. There's no testimony in the flag and it's the, the taking over the the vessel being allowed, allowing Christ to take over completely. If there's going to be any testimony, I believe we have the picture of it in the Old Testament. You know, Gideon's vessel there. There must be the breaking of the vessel because the light was inside. The treasure in the earthen vessel. The vessel had to be broken. Then we have one added saw here too that is delivered under death. As though God was saying to the apostles, well you want to follow this path, then we'll go all the way. It's still the Apostle Paul was the word delivered unto it, because he had a particular testimony to manifest, and we see those most blessed epistles written in the inner prison. He was, he went through all these things that are mentioned. In Corinthians and the reducing of of the body. Reducing everything that would hinder the going out of this marvelous life, this new testimony that had to do with Christ in glory and his members down here being formed into one body. The mystery that which has been hidden from before the foundation of the world is now being revealed through the apostle.

Not merely in words, but it was the administration of the Spirit, and it had to do with his whole being, the demonstration of it down here. What do you think Brother Harold is meant by not handling the word of God is faithful, but by manifestation of the truth? Go on. Well, I believe the Apostle Paul is answering the charges that were made against him. I believe the new translation speaks about making the trade out of the word of God and the pardon. Excuse me, but that's the that's where it comes in the 17th, 1St and the 2nd country, doesn't it? Driving line hardly for interrupting you, but I just want to call attention to what you're talking about. Notice there in the 17th verse where we are not as many which corrupted really make a trade for the word of God. So go on part of it. Well, I was thinking of the things that they said about him and he is seeking to answer that by showing that the the ministry that precious ministry was so real to his soul that he would go on. I was thinking in connection with Elijah. Elijah went with him. Elijah's ministry was to call the people back to the law. But Elijah's ministry, we know he has seen Elijah go up, and so his ministry is in the spirit of grace. Well, when he crossed the Jordan and came back and went into the land again, why they said the spirit of Elijah does rest upon Elijah. Now he may be charged with things that are not true. The only way that we can answer it is by going on and loving and serving our brethren. There's no use trying to vindicate ourselves. We usually find we get into more trouble. But if we commit things to the Lord and our brethren see that we love them and serve them, our ministry will commend itself to their consciences. And so we don't have to twist the word of God. We don't have to try and make a peace certain things. If we see Christ in the Scripture, that all fits in so beautifully, and we go on happily ministering that which occupies the heart with himself, our brother read to us in John about the He shall glorify me. Well, if the truth of God is given out in the power of the Spirit, souls will be attracted to Christ. Christ will be exalted and. So I was thinking of that in connection what it says here. Have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness nor handling the Word of God deceitfully. All false teaching and all that which would draw away disciples after ourselves as we were seeking out yesterday results in a twisting of the Word of God. But there's always a personal gain that's to the object of it. True ministry doesn't twist the words. It turns the heart to Christ, occupies with him, and commends itself to the consciences of both saved and unsaved. Very fine. There is a principle in the world. The end justifies the means. Well, that would be having the word of God to speak to, covering up and passing over certain things because they think that in the end, why it will be the glory of the Lord. And in Galatians chapter 5. Verse 16. It says walk in the spirit and we shall not fulfill the loss of the plague. Walking in the Spirit, what is it? Well, I believe it's this allowing the Spirit of God to occupy it with the Lord Jesus Christ. Not allowing anything else to come in to hinder that, it means that there will be things that will have to be judged. Because if we're not judging these things, the Spirit of God is grieved. And you can't occupy us with Christ, but you'll have to occupy us with those sins, those things unjudged.

So walking in the Spirit goes along with self judgment. But if we're walking in the Spirit, we'll be occupied with Christ because the Holy Spirit loves to occupy us with Him. And when our eyes are fixed upon the Lord Jesus Christ and our hearts filled with Him will not be fulfilling the loss of the black. I believe this is a very important expression about commanding ourselves. Every man's conscience and the sight of God, we see that so perfectly exemplified in the life of the Lord Jesus. Even though they rejected Him and despised Him, yet conscience always bore witness to who he was, because the loveliness of his person and the blessedness of his walk always spoke to the hearts and conscience of his tears. And I believe it's an important principle for us too. So much of our difficulty comes by trying to vindicate ourselves. But all if we were just have our eye upon Christ and go on with him before us, others would look on like they did at Elisha. Elijah didn't say I'm going to take Elijah place. No, he came back and when they saw him they said the spirit of Elijah. Elijah death, rest upon Elijah, and if you and I are looking at the Lord, it will be like Moses. He didn't say my face is shining. The people who looked at him said it was shining. And so many God grants that we will have our eyes upon that one. Not so occupied with trying to make our brethren think right about us, but occupied with him, and leaving the rest with him. He'll see that the truth of God acts in the hearts and consciences of the hearers. So Paul, that what we have in the second Timothy. 2 verses 24. That's what we have in Second Timothy. To verses 24 and 25 instructing Timothy. The servant of the Lord, the front drive of the temple under all at the speed space neatness is starting over the moment. Will give them respect to the acknowledging of the truth. Yes, I'm sure that's true, because if I have enough persuasive power, I might be able to persuade a person to think my way. But unless God works in His heart, there'll be nothing abiding accomplished. But if the truth is presented in love and in patience, I'm sure that it will commend itself to the conscience, and God can work repentance in the person's heart and cause them to acknowledge the truth. You should say that Paul walked in the fear of God. And. In the suspense or looking on what we were. Talking about yesterday, the time when everything will be manifested, the judgment seated Christ. That is, Paul looked on, not to the way things look down here or how he might be criticized or condemned in this world, but what was the Lord say about it in that day when everything in his whole pathway would be brought under the searching light of the glory of Christ? How it how will it look there? And it's the most important principle for us to bear in mind. That as we go on to adjust, look at things in this way, well, how will that look? At the judgment seat of Christ, don't be too much concerned about the way it will react or what will be the result down here. Of course, we don't want to deliberately cause friction or a gift unnecessary offense. Among our brethren, or even in the world. Want to be careful and walk circumspectly as we go through this thing, but there are two of the outcome of all that engages us down here. We want to look on to that day where everything is going to be looked at in the light of the glory of

Christ and everything that will not stand.

The light of that glory will be just what we were saying yesterday. Wood hands double. Just so much material for the bonfire. It'll be burned up. Alex. Blessedly true that all will be manifested, but I suppose here too the apostle Paul was thinking of the present effects of it. For notice he says in the third verse, If our gospel behead. And then in the fourth verse, the glorious gospel Christ, and the fifth verse, we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. And that's the thing, as our brother Lundeen has remarked, what he is bringing out is that. The body is just the earthen vessel, but what God is seeking to bring out is the treasure that he has put in the vessel. And it doesn't matter so much what brethren think about us as long as they see Christ in us. That's the point. And so he says our gospel, and he says here, the glorious gospel of Christ we preach, not ourselves. He says, suppose you do run us down? Well, he said, we're not preaching ourselves anyway. We want you to see Christ, and saw his whole desire was that this would be seen in his, in his ministry, that he was seeking to set Christ before Saul's. Perhaps some of us have heard the little incident in the life of Mr. Darby which condemned us. He was in a certain place, and some unkind remarks were being made, and untrue also, and. He never replied at all. And a brother was standing by and listening and said, Brother Darby, why don't you defend yourself? He has what he has said is not true. All he said he hasn't seen anything. He hasn't said anything against my Savior yet. Well, I believe that's the spirit that the apostle is showing here and one has been helped by this. Props. If someone says something about me that's unkind and untrue. Supposing I just say like this, well, it could have been true and it would have been true but for the grace of God. Well, why should I be annoyed? If I get annoyed, I'm as good as saying, oh, I wouldn't do that but bread, and I would do that if the Lord didn't keep me. Let us just think that God's purpose in all our ways is that the light that he has put in the vessel might be seen. And I think it's such a lovely manner in which the beloved apostle replies to the remarks of the Corinthians. I don't think there's any epistle, let's call the flows, where the love for the Saints as the ones replied to the people that were speaking against them. Eric on the third first it was called will be hit. It is hit to them that are lost. You think anyone else could have could say that but the apology? Our gospel is it really can be veiled. It is veiled to them that are lost. Well, no, I don't believe anyone else could. Why do you say that brother here? Well. He was a special vessel called out by the Lord, and he seemed to always have the judgment fee of Christ before it. He was walking. Walking and living with that thought of everything was going to be manifested there. So he would be deeply concerned then that that in his life was. So to speak the gospel, it wouldn't be borne out his life. So you and I couldn't say well after I preached in a certain place. That those who refuse the dark for the thought of this world is planted their their minds in the way the apostles say it could be. No, we could. There might be some self there that would bind their minds. That is, it would obscure the message was given. I've been thinking in connection of what we have been thinking of here. There's a verse in the first chapter of First Timothy.

The fifth verse seems to me is very appropriate. This and six words. Now the end of the commandment or what is enjoying is love out of a pure heart, a good conscience and a faith on faith which some having squirrels turned aside on the vain James. Well, there's love out of the pure heart. Heart not double purpose. A good conscience? Well, a good conscience doesn't need vindication. No, it says something about the about the Gentiles and the section of Romans. There's their conscience is bearing witness in the meanwhile, either accusing or excusing one another. Well, if there is that going on in one in one's conscience of a certain matter that just keeps before them, they can't think of anything else and the. Either accusing or excusing themselves. Well, that's not a good conscience. It's time to call a halt. Well then of faith on faith. Well that's that's quite searching face on pain. The Lord was the only one who could say that all together that which I send you that I am. Well, it seems to me those St. things are very important. And here Timothy was left at Ephesus, and this is written only a year or two later than the Epistles of the Ephesians. So the end of all is gone Before, so to speak, is these three things. Would always suppose that everything is based on the word of God, wouldn't it? Because faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Yes, yes. And that we weren't trying to make out we had more than we really have. Love out of a pure heart is also mentioned in first Peter one, and I wonder if that just a little word of caution to us, lest we might seek to be. Occupied with love and gentleness and meekness and patience and. Perhaps fail the love out of your heart. That is, perhaps there are times when, although love might be felt very, very deeply, there might be times when it would not be the mind of the Lord for us to show love in the way in which people would expect it of us. You might be misunderstood for that, but I believe love out of a pure heart would cause us to love our brethren at all times and to love them unfeignedly, but to show that Bob in a way in which they might look for it and expect it to be governed with it, not by its expression. Lava of a pure heart, the Lord's glory first, Is that true? You're referring now to First Corinthians and then Second Corinthians where there was a sample of discipline. One case the love could not be shown, but in the second epistle show your life to it because there's been repentance. Is that the thought? Yes, the same thing in first John 5. By this we know that we love the children of God when we. Love God and keep His commandments. I don't believe we're showing true love if we disobey the wisdom of the Word of God in showing love where it ought not to be shown, although it ought to be felt. Do you think Joseph Joseph couldn't show his love to his brother? And 1St after the repentance came, we are verily guilty. The Bradman said he could let his heart close. Yes, he had to reframe himself and go into his chamber and weep there. Well, we have that spirit. If we find it so hard to refrain that we have to weep about it, then the Lord will grant us, I believe, the joy of being able to show the love later on.

Notice brother getting out of that into the first work of repentance in the brothers of yoga. So therefore he'd spoken roughly through them and put them in prison and then they he heard them say we are very guilty concerning our brother. But I believe that was something like what Brother Wilson was bringing before us. And in connection with the 19th capture of numbers, there was a third day and there was a 7th day. The third day you see the the man that had. At the cut the bone, or some way to pile himself where he has purified with the water of separation the axes of the red pepper. Brought out in the remembrance. Of the death of Christ that has put that sin away. But that wasn't sufficient. There was a seven days and again the water of purification is applied and then there's a man is fully cleansed and restored. Well, that work had begun right then and there. Joseph in his wizard, in his faithfulness has been used of God to begin a work of repentance and his brother. But when they come back the second time, you know, and Joseph has the story puts the cup in the cracks and then they absorb. In Benjamin's background. Better than all returns stand before Joel. Well, you remember when Judas takes the lead, he he says to Joseph. God has found out the iniquity of thy first. Now it's not merely a matter of being disturbed in the country because of the sin against their brothers, but of the sinners having to do. Where the Queens and the holiness of God. And then another matter comes out after that. Because. When due to speak to Jordan. He he, he tells about his poor old father, how that they would bring down the Gray hairs of thy servant, our fathers, with power to the grace that Benjamin didn't return. Well, that was getting down farther into their sins, and to say we're very guilty concerning our brother, that was one thing. But here was another matter there sorrow they brought up from their father, in which they had so callously. Despise. And go on arms for those many years and disregard and their father is broken hearted sorrow over those sons that matter is just. But I believe while spring was a full restoration, they might say the 7th day of the 19th of Revelation when they really get into the presence of God about their sins. Well then when they have when Judas has spoken in that way. Well then, the doors that have come near unto me. He puts his arms around him and tests them, and he never once accuses them or scolds them or condemn them for the way they

treated him. He chose nothing but love. The work of restoration was fully wrought out in their goals. There has to be the recognition of Joseph before there can be a Benjamin, doesn't there? That was the whole point. It was the one who went down into death. That had to be recognized before the son of my right hand. Had to recognize the one who who took up the case of Israel and all their guilt. The one who took it for them, they had to recognize. Joseph and in that day Israel will. When he says you're my people, they'll say Jehovah is our God. Then they'll come in the son of my right hand, the one who takes over in in the rule of authority.

They have to recognize that Jesus. Who bore all the guilt to the nation? That's the true repentance of that nation. I'd like to hear Brother Harrison give us something on why this hospital says and whom the God of this world is blind in the mind of them that believe not. Why is it the God of this world, brother? Well, it's not a Satanist. Looked at as the in two ways, as the Prince of this world and as a God. Well, it is not. They have rejected Christ and so Satan has become their gods. Reaffirm. The plastic Why is it that the 13th, 13th. Comes in there as a Princess. I guess you heard it, said Brother Taylor. That's the 12Th chapter. First Corinthians is like the machine. The 14th chapter, First Corinthians is like the machine and operation on the 13th step through the oil that makes the king run smoothly. I think that was what we got from Brother Potter when he was with us. And it's a very. It's a very nice illustration. Satan's work is always to blind the eyes of the natural man, because if he once saw the glory that shone out in the face of Jesus Christ, not only is glory and light and holiness, but also the love that has been displayed at the cross, he couldn't help but accept Christ. So Satan blinds into that. And I suppose too, there's body camps lying to true believer. He can bring in things that make us short sighted, as we have in Peter's epistle. He that lack of these things is blind. It says, but the the word and the thought there is he cannot see a far off. He's short sighted, so the devil can't. Their eyes completely because God has opened them. We have seen beauty in the Lord Jesus. We know him as our Savior, but I'm sure he can bring in things that make us short sighted keep get us occupied with other things instead of with himself. So we need to have the veil that were taken away and look up and see has a little him puts it nicely. Its clouds have dimmed my sight when past eternal lover toward me as air. Thou art right, He hasn't changed. As Lily should read the Gospel of the glory of Christ. That was especially what Paul called my gospel. There's two ways that the gospel is looked at as the gospel of the grace of God. And the gospel of the glory of God, the gospel of the grace of God, teaches us that there's a man come down from heaven. Covered and died in this world. Public pretensions work on the cross, but the Gospel of the Glory teaches us that that one who accomplished that work has gone up and is seated on high, exalted and glorified and vindicated before. Angels and principalities there. And that was the special line of things or ministry that was given to the apostle Paul. See, the other apostles had seen the Lord in his pathway down here. They saw him as far as the clouds Paul went, was carried up beyond the cloud and saw him in the glory. So his ministry. Takes us to that glory, occupies us with that glorified man that shows us the worst. Completed and accomplished, and God glorified about it. Satan as the Prince of this world in Ephesians, but here he's the God of this world, and I suppose there are two ways in which he can hinder us from occupation. With Christ as the Prince of this world, I suppose it would be occupying us with all kinds of worldly and earthly things, but perhaps as the God of this world.

How often it has happened that it is not something of the world, but it is something perhaps that has got the eye of Christ among our brethren that has caused us to lose sight of Him and we might look and see someone that's being carried away in the world. And feel grieved about that. And well, He might. But rather, things that come up even in our assembly life that cause us to have our eyes off the Lord. Oh, May God grant that we may perceive that it tells us we're not ignorant of His devices we may perceive as working. Surely loyalty to Christ is important. Faithfulness from the apostle wrote the first epistle with many tears. But he he didn't want and he didn't want his brethren in it all to lose sight of the glorified one of God's right hand that's pretty facing his head of the world system as God of this world. He wants to give us anything to displace the Lord Jesus Christ, to give us another God besides the Lord Jesus Christ. He's the Prince of this world. Politically or head of the world system? And he wants to bring the world into our hearts and take us out into the world. But as the God of this world, he wants to give us another God besides the Lord Jesus Christ, displacing him. Rather solid than to think that the devil himself is the head of the of all the religion of this world. Who will follow them to consider that and why the Father scared is that part faking makes his faithful attack upon is the truth of a glorified Christ. If Satan can get people to believe that the life of Christ is all they need, but he cut out the light of that glorified man. The prison can bring souls to believe that their good works will save them. Well then there's no need of the finished work of Christ. So again, he set out the light of the glory of Christ, so you can trace every false doctrine in the whole world, and it all shuts out the light of that glory. Glorified man at God's right hand. Well, he's he's thinking in every way to keep that light from shining and the souls of men. When you see again how? The apostle, as it were, hit himself, so he would in no way hinder that glory reaching thee. The souls of others, or we preach not ourselves, but praise Jesus the Lord and ourselves your servant for Jesus faith. That is the only place the apostle desired to occupy. Well, just a servant, just a farm slave of Jesus Christ. In these two verses. In the 5th and 6th verses, don't we have the two things that Gideon men had in their hands? They had the trumpet and they had the picture with a light in it. Well, the trumpets, we preached not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. They blew the trumpet, cried the sword of the Lord and the Gideon. They didn't speak about themselves. And then the picture in which the light had been placed was broken so that the light could shine. Well, that's all we've got in our hands if we're really serving as we should. It just has the two things the trumpet control claim. Not themselves, but the fact that God had one whom He was going to use for a mighty victory over the enemy. And then all they were doing was holding up the light. All that we have also in Philippians. Where it says, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, well, that's the light shining. And then it says, holding forth the word of light at the spoken testimony. Well, that's our whole testimony before the world, brethren.

Is our the testimony we live and the testimony we speak a God granted will be of Christ. They learn to know they were to watch Gideon. He says what I do you do and then they were to cry the Lord of the Lord and of Gideon. Well the sword of the Lord might have been her down but Gideon type of Christ the Savior. Well that brings peace. And light to the soul. So there is the two things that are used of God's. In connection with his work was sold. And the mother thought I recently enjoyed from that in the 7th chapter of Judges, in the 17th verse. That's what our brother quoted. That is 7 verse 17. And he said unto them, He, Gideon said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise. And behold, when I come to this is the part I just noticed recently. When I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that as I do, both shall he do the 19th verse. So Gideon and the hundred men that were with him came unto. The outside of the camp. The 21St verse. And they stood, every man in his place round about the camp. Lovely place to stand the stand there with our trumpets and with our battle outside the camp with Gideon. I don't suppose Gideon would be referred to as a priest, but I believe that in the law. And if the priest was that, now he was to blow the trumpet or the son of the priest. And that is the consciousness of our relationship and position too. Each one who takes the place is all. Every child of God, of course, is in that position of serving in any way. That is the consciousness. Being a priest with supervision as part of the new position is about. Doesn't require a great army to fulfill his purposes. Excuse me? I would not require the Army to fulfill his purposes. Doesn't it requires empty vessels with lights in them, not 300? Reference has been made to. Gideon saying what I do you do every not the example of that in the 4th chapter of Matthew where the Lord is captured by patience that are in our position now. We certainly his brother knew the Lord

is indeed our patroness. Brother Anderson brought out. And where to? Peter tells us the following his death to mark out the way for us he's given us. The way to meet every attack of the enemy because he has met the enemy. By the author of the world. So if we keep the Lord in his pathway for us, what we have. That needed instruction to meet the the dangers and the temptations that are pathway. I believe that in my fifth verse we preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ Jesus. Word is left out. Christ Jesus Lord. That's important both for Saint or sinners. Because it's when the Sinner owns Jesus as Lord. As the apostle says, we are faith and for the time of God filled with owning his Lord in his authority. And that's what the apostle thought the exercise. Every soul that he had, he had to do without to the rights and authority of this glorified man over his soul.

Whole thought isn't this in Corinthians of his lordship even over the dead to He's in Florida both dead and living. New predictions. Thinking of those glories, the gospel of the glory, I believe we had it brought out most beautifully in the 9th of Luke, just to refer to it. That is, those who are called to follow him in his rejection. And the 9th of Luke and the disciples were learning a new position. It's a turning point. It looks gospel, and as a result of those who take up their cross daily and follow him in rejection, now he sets before them three glories. And it's peculiar, I believe, to look gospel. They're all three heavenly glory. They're his own glory. That is the glory that he wanted, the Son of Man and the Fathers. It's the Father's glory. That is the Father, the glory the Father gave him, but also. If the glory in regard to the angels that is man now as the Lord Jesus passes through the heavens, he takes the place of supreme authority over the whole creation, and he associates his people with him. Luke sorry, those who take him up the path of rejection with him to be in founders associated with him now. As a result, it answers all our rejections to be associated with it in these glory. Of course, it's only the glory that. Thing in this man we will be associated with him, but we will behold His glory, will we not as well? If you say Brother Anderson, the sixth verse takes us to the first chapter of Genesis, and the second verse I believe it is. I believe. We have something very significant there in Genesis chapter one. We find a pattern of things. Genesis is a deep squad who put it through the Bible. And there we have darkness. The second verse of chapter one of Genesis. And. Then we get the light brought in verse three. God said let there be light and there was light. Well, it's only God that can bring in the light. That's what we have here in our chapter. Only God can bring in the light. And he brings it in right out of darkness, doesn't he? That wasn't sunshine, was it brother? No, it was light. We don't see the the vessel of light until later on. You say that's like the 4000 years between. Adam's creator man, the coming of Christ. Yeah, they had light in the Old Testament times. But the one in whom is all light didn't come until then. He didn't come in, and he wasn't made manifest until he came down here as a man. What a lovely thing. To have the light manifested in that way, Now we see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It has been mentioned that in the Old Testament they had light, the patriarchs. But when it comes to the New Testament, why we also needed warmth. So it's the only begotten Son who was in the bosom of the Father. He has declared Him we get light and warm. The Lord hasn't yet charmed forth as the Sun of Righteousness, so that's in a future day. So it says the world knows us not because it knew Him not. So the light that was called to shine out of darkness was something that we don't know anything about. It was. It was something that we can't explain, although it is now. The world knoweth us not because it knew Him not. And that which enables us to shine in the midst of the darkness will not be understood by the world.

But how wonderful it is that there was a life that shone in that darkness. The Lord Jesus was here, unknown, and now we have the treasure in us too. He was the light of the world when He was here, but they wouldn't have him now. He says here are the light of the world, the day when the sun will shine forth as yet future. But we shine in the darkness now, brethren, with a light that's heavenly, just as it was back there when God said, let there be light. Someone who suggested that that third verse of Genesis would tell us that Christ was the first thought of God in connection with His purpose is down here. That is, as a man. It's going to be the wonderful building. Everything #275. Our God is light, and though we go across the practice wild, our Jesus whatsoever shall pass for every child. 275.

Vestal Conference: 1997, 2 Corinthians 4:1-18

Reading

Nsnoise. 2nd Corinthians chapter 3 in the last verse, verse 18. What we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even by even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Chapter 4. Therefore, seeing we have this ministry. As we have received mercy, we faint not, but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God in uh, deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not.

Bless the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your service for Jesus sake. For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light. Of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. What we have this treasure in earthen vessels. That the Excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us, We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken. Cast down, but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our bodies. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in US, but life in you, we having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written. I believe, and therefore have I spoken. We believe, we also believe, and therefore speak, knowing that he which raised up the Lord. Shall raise up, raise up us also by Jesus. And shall present us with you, for all things are for your sake, that the abundant grace might, through the Thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God. For which 'cause we faint none, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. Our line affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, For the things which are seen are temporal. But the things which are not seen are eternal. Mr. Darby S translation of this last verse is that we always unveiled face. The holding the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image. It's really the whole secret of Christian growth that he's brought before us there, isn't it? There's no avail between now the Lord Jesus we can look up. There's no veil as it was in the Old Testament. But we can with unveiled face, look at him, and as we look through him and see him there, there's a change takes place in US. It's really the way Christian growth takes place. As we're occupied with him, looking at him, then the Spirit of God produces in us the desire and the power to be like him. If there's someone we admire very much and we watch them, first thing you know, unconsciously we begin to be like them. Because we admire them very much. And so if we really are occupied with the Lord Jesus and see what a wonderful portion we have in him, the gloriousness of His person, the place that He has brought us into unconsciously, if I can speak in that way, there's a change takes place in us. And we often look at someone and say, well, I

know it's a change in that person. Well, it's because he has Christ as his object. And we begin to see the likeness of Christ produced in him. I still notice that nowhere in Scripture does that describe what the Lord Jesus Christ is linked, whether he was tall or short or. Being fat and there you have black beard or black hair or. If he did, it was in there. Wouldn't there be a lot of people trying to imitate his appearance down here? I can't find. They like the walk that he is, trying to give enough here to follow his footsteps. Because every single one of us is different physically. God giving us this wonderful problem, His brother little son. The second we're saved, it's like touching the altar we're holding. We're absolutely fit for the presence of God. We don't feel it. We don't feel holy. We still have the old man, and God has given this wonderful privilege of laying hold on this by faith. Angels are watching us and we have this privilege of manifesting Jesus through this frail.

Barry it's which bar is the Barry of sun, but now it's that the sin and alive unto God. We have this wonderful presence. Every one of us is different for this one respect the whole Bible gives us the character of the Lord Jesus and cover to cover is the character of Jesus and that's what he wants to say in US not not anything physical. It's the character of Jesus by Christ. It's a contrast, isn't it, in the chapter between law and grace, that is, under the law. The law was thundered out at Mount Sinai. The people stood trembling. Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake. There was no desire or power in the hearts of those who heard those 10 commandments to fulfill the desires of God in connection with his requirements. But how different now. God has given to every believer a new life, the very life of Christ. We have the Holy Spirit of God, and so when God makes known his desires for us, the new man and the believer responds. The Spirit is the power, and so it comes about as it says here. We are changed into the same image from glory to glory. The life of Christ begins to be produced in us. I remember one time I was in a Barber shop and. Had a little opportunity to speak to the Barber and he said, well, you preachers have a hard time trying to change human nature, don't you? And I said, we don't try to change human nature. We tell people they need to be born again. When they're born again, then they have a new life. They have a new power, a new desire, and that's the whole thing. This is what is being brought out here. Much of Christianity Today is an attempt to change human nature. Get people to make promises and commitments and pledges, but occupation with Christ in the light of His Word and allowing the Spirit of God His place in our lives, the change will take place naturally. Without effort, if we might put it in that way, because we have such a wonderful object before our souls, the one who's going to fill our souls for all eternity and make us perfectly happy. We can make us happy down here. In the measure in which we allow the Spirit His way in our lives and we become changed into the same image from glory to glory. That is, it doesn't all take place at once. It's a gradual thing. And little Samuel was brought up, his mother made him a new coat every year, didn't expect him to wear a full size coat just because he was up there in the temple the first year. But every year she made a little larger coat, there was growth. And so I think that's what this suggests in this verse, from glory to glory. It brings in Christian growth. And it's lovely to see this in the children of God. As we see them growing, as Peter said, grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It's a lot lighting the outward character of a man, and yet it didn't change his heart really, did it. So they might have had a border of blue on their garment, but it didn't make them heavenly men in their heart. Or the scripture says that they weren't around the corners of their beard that that is that they may have. It didn't really change the character of what they said and what was in their heart. It just changed the way they appeared. And so these were all things that umm. That you saw in the Old Testament that spoke of inward things were shadows of inward things, but it didn't produce those. So a man could go on perfectly in an outward way as Saul did, and yet not have as have heart and enmity with God. That's what it means in Galatians when it says the law was our schoolmaster until Christ came. The conduct of the children will probably be quite a bit better in the classroom when the teacher is there. Not because the children want to do what's right, but they're controlled because the teacher is there and the law is in that way a schoolmaster. It put a restraint on man, but it didn't change his heart at all. His heart was still a Stony heart, but what God does, he begins from the inside.

He gives us a new life, new power by the Spirit, and then the change takes place in occupation with Him. And as we read His word, we learn His mind and will. That's why Paul goes on in the next chapter. Therefore, as seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not as though he were saying I were trying to change human nature. I'd get discouraged, but when I'm ministering this wonderful truth. Occupying with souls, with Christ, praying before them, their portion in Him and their standing in Him. I don't get discouraged because it's a wonderful ministry and it produces wonderful results when it's received. In the previous chapter in verse 6, Paul referred to himself, and I suppose his fellow workers, as able ministers of the New Testament or New Covenant. Now we as believers are not under a covenant with the Lord that seems to have been specifically for the House of Judah and the House of Israel. How do how do we understand that that expression an able minister, the ministry of the new covenant New Testament verse 6. Well in Israel are brought into the blessing of the new covenant. If you notice in the 8th chapter I think it is of Hebrews, I'll read the eight verse. Her finding fault with that first covenant, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah, not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day when I. Took him by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not. But this is the covenant that I will make with them after those with the House of Israel after those days, saith the Lord. I will put my laws in their mind and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people, and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brothers. Say no, the Lord. For all shall know me from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. So that while we were never under the covenants and promises that were made to Israel, we receive a new life. And that's why I think we were mentioning before at the Lord's Supper, it was the blood of the covenant, of the new covenant because. When Israel are finally brought into blessing, he says, their sins and equities will I remember no more. He'll put his laws into their hearts and in their minds. Will he write them? That is, they'll possess a new life, they'll have the power then to please God. And in that sense, we are partakers of the blessings of the new covenant, although we are not under the covenant or have part in it in that way. And he was contrasting law and grace in Second Corinthians chapter 4, and he's showing what the old covenant did. It asked man to do something. He had neither desire or power. But in the new covenant. He is going to have the desire and he's going to have the power. And so he just applies it in that way, I believe and in that way we are ministers of the new covenant that we're not trying to improve human nature or change human nature. We're preaching that what man needs is to be born again, get the new life has the Holy Spirit of God. It is true that the covenants have to do with Israel, but we come into the blessing of the covenant. Perhaps there's one other verse in Hebrews I think that helps to understand this too in the. 10th chapter in the 15th verse. Where of the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us? For after that he had said before. 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. We remember that the Epistle to the Hebrews is a letter to the Hebrew believers. But he says the Holy Ghost is a witness to us, and so he's bringing in the thought that they're brought into the blessing of the new covenant, even though the covenant has to do with Israel.

We are the partakers of the blessings of that as a result of the work of Christ. What is the thought in the 20th verse of Hebrews 13? Forget the expression there. Verse 20. Hebrews 13. Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the

sheep. Through the blood of the everlasting Covenant. Just wondered what the thought was on that. Well, perhaps it could be that, uh, before the law ever came in at all, God said, in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And we know that even Adam and Eve were clothed through the death of a substitute. So God had shown long before the giving of the law, the blessing to man was not going to be on the ground of his works. It was going to be through another. And so in that sense it was. The everlasting covenant, that is, God had that in his eternal purposes to reveal as soon as sin entered, promised to Abraham when he was promised blessing. Then people asked for the law, the nation asked for the law. They entered into a covenant to keep things. They failed in that. But God, shall I say, reverts to His original desire and purpose and plan, and that was to bless man altogether apart from anything that he could do. But founded upon the glorious work, the Lord Jesus was accomplished through the blood. So Adam went out from the garden, clothed with the animals, through the blood of another, through the skin of the animal. Because this occurs in the book of Hebrews and as you cited those other verses too, These Hebrew believers, now they had their their, what their blessing is as a result of that which is everlasting in the heart of God. I think it's beautiful to think of that in that way. The same as you mentioned. He mentions the everlasting gospel in all that God always had good news for man, didn't he always? And I suppose we can say that is A1 sided cabinet. Normally a cabinet it's an agreement. If you do this then I will do that. But God says you cannot keep your bargain. So it's all on my part. There's a little story in the Life of the Family VP Cecil that I think is helps him not perfectly. To illustrate what you were saying, that a person can be the beneficiary of a covenant without being the subject of it. Umm, what? I think most know that he came from one of the wealthiest families in England and one of his ancestors, umm. Was rejected and so he went away to live in a little town and he took a bride of the Millers of a local Miller's daughter and and they always sensed that he was different that he came from a more noble background. But one day word came to him that he had inherited his vast estate, I think one of the most fastest states in England. So he took his wife in the carriage and he took her by this great estate and she said I, I wonder who this belongs to and she said he said, turn to her and he said to you. Now, she wasn't the subject of the will or the covenant at all. He was, but she was the beneficiary of it. She shared in all of that. And so while we're not the the subjects of the New Covenant of blood, we're the beneficiaries of it. Could you say that that put it in that way? Just go back to Galatians. It's interesting that this is taken up. Perhaps you could go to the 15th verse rather than I speak out the third chapter of Galatians in the 15th verse, rather than I speak after the manner of man. Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed no man is an alleth or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed, where the promises made saith, not unto seeds as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was. 430 years after cannot disannul that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of law, then it is no more a promise, but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore them serveth the law. It was added because of transgressions, until the seed should come to whom the promise was made, and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. This was the verse particularly Now a mediator is not a mediator of one.

But God is one. So God made the promises, but He made them in Christ. When there is a disagreement, why there is a mediator and he has to deal with two different parties. But the Co, the promise that God made, it was made between God and Christ and saw God and Christ are one. How could it fail? That's what he is saying. So that there while there are two parties, if one could speak reverently, it saw the Father and God the Son. The Father purposed all this. The Son is the one who carries it all out. So it's got to be sure because God is one. I think it's good to be clear about some of these things because there's a lot of so-called covenant theology today and people are going back really to the law, not understanding what the new covenant really is and the blessing that is coming in. So they're making pledges and promises, promise keepers and so on. It's all this idea that two people, there's God and man, and there's a covenant made between them. But isn't this beautiful? It says. A mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. The promise was between God and Christ, and they're 1. So it's sure to be fulfilled. And all of God had purposed to assure to come to pass. Because it doesn't depend on one ourselves one bit. It depends all about whether God is true and whether Christ, his beloved Son, accomplished his will in that glorious work that he finished at Calvary. Well, we don't have to twist the truth of God at all when we give it out according to the way God has revealed it in His Word. That's why he says in the second verse. But everything else, the hidden things of dishonesty, are not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. You don't have to do any twisting or anything like that in connection with the Word of God. We just present presented as God has given it to us in His Word. It commends itself to man's conscience, brings him into the presence of God, and reveals how God can bless him apart from anything in himself at all. But Satan is busy not only leading man into sin, that is moral sin, but he also is busy trying to keep him from knowing what's in the heart of God and. So if our gospel be hid is hid to them that are lost in whom? The God of this world and that Satan. Satan is the God of this world religiously, the Prince of this world politically. So he blinds people's minds as to the truth of God and he also leads them on in the service of sin and Satan in their evil ways. And so Satan is busy a lot of people he dilutes through religion, some he deludes by leading them into the wicked things of this world. But he's busy. He's a crafty foe, isn't he? I'm just looking at a few verses over in Jeremiah, the 23rd chapter of Jeremiah in connection with that. Uh, how uh. The the Lord has frowned upon this kind of thing. Umm, there's a number of verses here, but I just read a couple of verses to get the point. Verse 20 The anger of the Lord shall not return till he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart. In the latter days you shall consider it perfectly. I have not sent these profits yet they ran. I have not spoken to them yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in my com counsel and had caused my people to bear hear my words, then they should have turned. Them from their evil way and from the evil of their doings. I have God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off. And then he hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him. So there's much of this craftiness going on today, isn't there? And God isn't, is not ignorant of all this. He's well aware of it all. And so we have to be very careful too, thinking of that in John's epistle. Try the spirits, whether they be a God.

So how do we try them by the word of God? We test them by the word of God. And so Paul here is just mentioned that not handling the word of God. Are there there are those in in the in the world today in Christmas. They're handling the word of God deceitfully. You know it and I know it as well. They're handling the word of God deceitfully. They're deceiving people with their with these with these words. Where do they get it out of getting it out of the Bible. That's possessed to the Ephesians. He speaks that are fulfilling the desires of the flesh and oftentimes we think of immorality in those things, but it doesn't stop there. It says there fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. Unless directed by the clear written word of God, our minds become nothing but the placing of Satan. You notice that Satan always works through the mind, the Spirit of God works through the conscience and the heart, and this is brought out here, the end of the second verse, commanding ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Six verse. The God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in our hearts. I've often said you'll never find one of these who carry the false religion coming to you. And speaking first to your conscience and saying, do you know you're a Sinner and you need to be cleansed in the blood of Christ and that Christ is willing to save you? You don't find that approach, but they'll come to you and they'll appeal to your mind. You think God would cast anybody into hell and all kinds of things. They'll appeal to your mind. But the truth of God always speaks to the conscience and to the heart. And we need to, shall I say, in telling out the gospel, that's what we need to bear in mind. Man's conscience must be reached, but also his heart too. He needs to see that he's a Sinner,

but he also needs to learn two things, that God is a Sinner, that God is a Savior, and that he is a Sinner. That is, his conscience has to be reached that he's a Sinner, and his heart has to be reached that God has done something about it. Has taken up the question of sin and settled it for his own glory. And and that's really very important in the telling forth of the gospel. Actually, the word repentance in itself, the word means a change of mind. That's the meaning of the word repentance. And I often say man has wrong thoughts about two things. He has wrong thoughts about himself and he has wrong thoughts about God. He doesn't really see his own true condition, and the gospel brings what his real condition out into the light shows him, as Job learned in the presence of God that he was vile, said I repent and abhor myself in dust and ashes. But he must also learn that God is a God of love, that he has provided a full and free salvation, not by any works of his own or merit of his own. And so repentance really is a change of mind. He gets those thoughts corrected by the word of God. He says what God says about me is true. I am nothing but a lost Sinner. But when God says about His Son, and what He has done is true also, and He has provided a way, guilty as I am, to bring me into fullest blessing, suited to His own presence, where I can be in the glory and be perfectly fit for it. So the thought on this third verse is. If our Gospel be veiled, it is veiled to them that are lost. Me, that the apostle Paul still walked before the Lord, and he imparted the truth just as purely as he had received it, so that if any were lost, it wasn't any fault of the apostles. He he conveyed the truth as it was committed to him. Because they were blinded by the God of this world. But. Idolatry really is man making a God according to his own imagination and so even in these pictures that our brother referred to, if you've ever had the unfortunate. Opportunity of seeing them even of the Lord they follow the religious fads of man of what they think it's a creation of what they think the Lord should be like and umm, it's really idolatry at the root of it. And so instead of finding from the word the character of the Lord that men create a picture of the Lord depending on what their particular habits or thoughts are. And in heathen countries, if they feel as you were saying that God was not a loving God, then their gods are fierce and in this land if there's.

There is a thought that God is loving, but that he is not light. Then they create a picture like that and and go on with that. But its idolatry at the root of it. I believe there's the meaning of that expression. The glorious gospel or the gospel of the glory. That's really what Paul preached, wasn't it? The gospel of the glory. There's a glorified man at the right hand of God who has accomplished redemption. In our place of association with Him, we belong to that glory too. We're going to be there. When he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see Him as he is, so He has found a way that we can be in that glory also. And and so it's the gospel of the glory telling of a glorified Christ that God's rehem. Somebody has said that we got the the heavenly side of the gospel in that verse, don't we? That's the heavenly side of it because directs our thoughts to the man that God's right hand, the glorified through Christ who is glorified at God's right hand, directs us up there. So it's the heavenly sign of the gospel that we can present. It's not just an adjective describing the Gospel in a positive way. I think sometimes where the translation is glorious gospel, it's like a glorious sunset or a glorious day, and that misses the point. As as you both have described, it's the good news that Christ has been glorified in response to glorifying God down here and glorified God on the earth. So God rewarded him with glory, glorified him on high. One of the writers expressed it that the gospel of the. Glo Of the glory of the How was it put? Now the the glory of the Christ? It's the glory of the Christ that is. That is really the point of the gospel, isn't it? So beautiful? And Paul stood true to that which was committed to him, didn't he? Isn't that a good word for us or a good exhortation for us? It's been, you know, we're pipes, aren't we? As somebody has said, the the truth of God flows in. And one of the writers, one of the old writers, spoke about it as that which flows in is absolutely perfect. It comes from God. But as it flows out. It's checkered weather doesn't come out the same way that it flew it in, flowed in. And so it's beautiful to think how Paul sought to do to be that very way where he says not to not walking and crafting it the word deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. So it was brings God in and the conscience in the sight of God all that he did. So it's good to see. The quality of that gospel preaching of Paul's, it was a quality to it that we don't see today. And I have to confess I don't have that quality myself. But however, it's a beautiful thing to see that the gospel is of the glory of the Christ. One brother said before he was saved, he wanted to be a great man in the world. After he was saved, he wanted to be a great man in the Church of God. And he had to learn that both were wrong. That's what has brought out so much in this. 5th and 6th verse. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus sake. For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Lovely. This is everything exalting the Lord Jesus Christ and giving no glory to man and seeks honors for himself, but God delights to honor his beloved Son. Spoken of as being children of the light and, uh, we've been brought into the light. But here it goes much deeper than that. Just thinking of that verse again. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined upon us. No, no, no, shined in our hearts. The basis, the truth.

The seat of affection, the gospel, has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. So the light is more and just shining upon us. It is shining in our hearts. Well, I think he refers in what's followed to something like Gideon's men when they went out against the Gideon Gideon. Gideon Gideonites tells us that they were to put a lamp in a pitcher and then the pitcher was to be broken at the appointed time so the light could shine. I think he's referring to this. The vessel wasn't important at all. The important part was the light would shine out when the vessel was broken. And so he says, we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the Excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. Perhaps one of Gideon's men might have had a very nice vessel, and he'd say, I hate to see this vessel broken, but Gideon says that it's got to be broken so the light can shine out. And so, you know, that's what God passes us through. Paul was given a thorn in the flesh, and he often gives us reminders that we are nothing in ourselves. So that Christ might be seen. And where is Christ so often and brightly seen? As in a soul that's going through deep affliction and is honoring and glorifying Christ, Speaking of Him and exalting him, His face shining. It's not because of the earthen vessel, but it's because of the treasure that's in that vessel. And as the vessel is being broken, the light is shining. That's what he is bringing out here, I believe in a practical way. Well, Paul's bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible. Men wouldn't choose that kind of a person to deliver an important message. They say, well, we want to have people that really show something of the importance by their personality. But here God chose a man whose bodily presence was weak and the speech contemptible to give out the most wonderful and glorious truth that's contained in all the whole Bible, the truth of the church and. The honor and glory of Christ, His exaltation as the center of new creation, Head of the body, the Church who is chosen man that was just a a weak vessel. Martin's not why we must have been broken in contrite spirit, be useful to the Lord. That the daughter. I was weak. I didn't really appear when he was going on in Judaism, didn't it? But in Christianity, it all sort of came out. And we often think that, uh, it's when we're on top of things as the world would say that that's when the Lord is going to use us. But it seems that it's the opposite way around. And Paul warned Timothy of that, who preached the gain is godliness from such turn away that there's a thought that, you know, that there's a great almost doctrine of winning, you know, so to speak. And yet it's often in the trials and circumstances of life, as you say that, whether at work or at home or whatever that Christ is really seeing. In in that sense, as it says there in verse 7, verse seven. But we have this treasure in urban vessels. Life, the vessels is going to break down, That's true, but we have a treasure in it and uh, if, umm, if we didn't realize that it was of God, we might do a little boasting. We might be a little bit proud because we're pretty good gospel preacher or. That we have a nice way of presenting the truth, but God guards that truth. He guards it here in this verse. That is the apostle. We have this treasure in earthen vessels

that the Excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. No, we, we may visit someone as I've done, and find them turn to the Lord in the very last moments. Was it my visit? No, it was the work of God in their souls that really turned them from darkness to light and from the power of faith to God. We may present the truth, we have a treasure and we can give them or seek to present that treasure to them, but we can't boast and say, well, because we knew it more, knew more about it. But the, the, the vessel, as it says here, it's that the Excellency of the power may be of God, not of us. I think it's good to remember that. Is that my brother, though sometimes the Lord keeps us from knowing about the results of the work we're doing. I think if Hudson Taylor as I said that he did not realize the effect of what he had done at the end of his life and after he he passed away to the home of the Lord. There are 1,000,000 that come to the Lord in China and said part of that is true to the work and how to tailor it done in his life.

I'll have to quote Gordon's father again. You know, we spend some time with him and I still remember the things he brought before us. And one thing was he said never count your converts this side of heaven. Leave that to God. Good point. Leave it to him. He he will do the work. He will bring them to the to himself. But we don't need to take any credit for it. He's 10th and 11Th versus they end about the same, but there is a difference in the first part of the verse. Perhaps I could read them. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. That the life also of Jesus might be manif, made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake. That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. I believe it's when it's done in communion with the Lord. When we recognize that the old man came to its end in the death of Christ. Self is not set forward, because here it's not the thought of bearing our sins so much as the thought that our old man was crucified with him in his death. We as children of Adam, so to speak, we cease, and now we're new creatures in Christ Jesus. And if I always bear that in mind, then I will acknowledge that in me that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. I will put the flesh flesh in the place of death. And what is the result? The life of Jesus will be seen. If not, God may allow circumstances in my life, as He often has to do, to humble us and bring us down so we're delivered unto death for Jesus sake. But it's always the same result, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. What does God want to see in every one of us, brethren? He wants to see the life of Jesus manifested, and if we're trying to set ourselves forward, then he may allow something to humble us. So that we realized that the flash profit of nothing, that is his purpose to bring us down, but not self would be seen, but that the life of Jesus would be seen. If I could illustrate it something like this. When Gideon's man went out and there's one of his men that has a very, very lovely vessel that he has put the light in. And when the moment comes when Gideon says the vessel has to be broken so the light will shine and 300 torches were going to shine in the midnight. One man, he holds back a little bit. He doesn't like to destroy his vessel, and Gideon test slashes it down so the light would be seen. He should have done it himself, that's what he was told to do. But he might. Gideon might have to do it so the light would shine. And isn't that true, brethren, that very often the Lord has to deliver us to death and it has to bring us down so that we realize what poor, failing things we are. And it hurts our pride maybe a little, but it's necessary because God doesn't want self to be seen. He wants the life of Jesus to be manifested in our bodies. So there's the time when we do it in communion with the Lord, when there's a there is a time when he has to do it. In his governmental ways with us. In our ways, we pro, uh, with our, in the way of practice, we fail. But then God come here. And I was just thinking again of those two verses, Gordon always bearing about in the body, the dying of Jesus. Uh, I think, I don't think it's Lord Jesus that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body, but not always true. We, we don't we it, it, it doesn't fall through, follow through, does it? We fail in this because we're not always in that state, but then. Notice the verse 11 Says For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake. Who does that? God? God does that for us. If we don't do it ourselves, He's going to bring us into that state of thing there in that condition. That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh, and that's his desire for us and his garden has already said. But we see the the the efforts of man there and also. We see God's work in completing that. Following the measure in which that's true, then as it says so, then death worketh in US, but life in you. A man is exalting himself. If Paul had come along, exalting himself, they might have been attracted to Paul. Some other man would come along with a nicer personality. It would be attracted to them. But if death worked in him, and all he was doing was not trying to set himself forward, but Christ forward.

Then the result would be blessing. And that's a very searching thing for us, because in Christmas we often find the exaltation of man. You seldom pick up a book, even perhaps a book that has somewhat good ministry in it. But the first part of it's all telling you what a wonderful man this was that wrote this book, that agrees that he has what he's done and so on. Before he even starts the book, you get occupied with the man. It's rather relieving to take a book and and hardly know who wrote it. You maybe look over the end and you see a couple of initials, but that's about all because the man is not trying to set himself forward. Death is working in him. But he wants life to work in the hearers as he tells about his glorious Savior and what he has done and how God has exalted his beloved Son. And he wants us to be like Him, so that death worketh in us, but life in you. More, it's all in Colossians 3 and verse 5. Mortify therefore your members, which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, and so on, and numbers them here, Keep them in the place of death. And Paul actually practiced that himself because he said we're we're always delivered unto death for Jesus sake. I appreciated that Claude in connection with umm, with Gideon, because if we. Remember the story of Gideon? They weren't occupied with the breaking of the vessel. They weren't occupied with the trumpets. They weren't occupied with the light. They didn't know what they were going to do. They were just told to look on Gideon and they're told to keep their eyes fixed on Gideon. And I see what to do. They were to do. God makes the truth good in our own souls too. Does be the 13th verse we having the same spirit of faith according as it is written. I believed and therefore have I spoken. We also believe and therefore speak. And I think all of us, we know that. What first makes the truth good in our own souls, and when we have it's been made good in our own soul, then we can speak with power. Paul could tell what the grace of God had done for him, says he was a blasphemer. He was everything that was wrong before. And when he came to the end of himself and realized this, then he spoke out. Is that what she had experienced in his own life? I believed and therefore have I spoken. And it's so important God makes the truth that we talk about good in our own souls. I think every one of us have perhaps experienced, we have maybe said something in the meeting. Maybe it was a little bit beyond our own faith. But we made a remark, we saw it in the passage, but it was really beyond us. And the next day the Lord says, I'm going to put you to a test about that. Do you really believe that? Do you really believe that all things work together for good? And you get into a bad situation the next day and you begin to murmur and complain, but you told the people the night before that all things work together for good. So God makes the truth good in our own souls, so that it's ministered as that which we have believed, which we have proved. And then we can minister does that which has been made good in a practical way. In our own lives. I think that's why in Romans 12, uh, it's to me been an interesting point in verse six of Romans 12 where it says having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us. And then it lists some, and the first one listed as prophecy. It says whether prophecy let us prophecy according to the proportion of faith. You would think because the subject is gifts, that it might say whether prophecy let us prophecy according to the gift. But it doesn't refer to the gift, it refers to what has really been formed morally in my life. It says to the proportion of faith, and that's to be the limit of my, uh, speaking forth, whether an exhortation or really comfort in general is what I've made good in my own life. That's my limitation, prophesying according to the proportion of faith what I've had.

What I've been able to lay, hold on practically and enjoy in my own soul. Interesting where that's quoted from in the 116th Psalm, but it just really illustrates what you are saying. 116th Psalm, the ninth verse I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. I believe therefore I have I spoken. I was greatly afflicted. Then it comes to, there was a test there. He said, I hadn't said my hate, all men were liars. Seems to be a contradiction to what he said in the ninth verse. But then faith seems to take over. Then in the uh, UH-12 First he says, what shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation. I will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows into the Lord now in the presence of all his people. There were two great lessons in the wilderness, weren't there? And to prove thee, and to show thee what was in thine heart. And then to show too that God was sufficient for every circumstance. If they needed bread, He could supply that. If they needed water, He could supply that. Their clothes didn't wear out, their shoes didn't wear out. He undertook for them in all their needs, but they had to be humbled. And so that's the two things we learn or should learn in our pathway, our own nothingness and God's all sufficiency. To humbly and to prove Thee we learn our own nothingness, that the all sufficiency of God that he was able to meet every need that they had in that whole 40 years of travel. He was sufficient for the need. I rather enjoyed the thought too in this 14th verse, knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up also by Jesus. And shall present us with you, who had had to write very faithfully this Corinthian assembly ring before them, things that exercised him even in connection with discipline that needed to be taken, uh, to take place among them. And they might have felt and perhaps did, that he was against them and being so severe upon them. But I think it's lovely too, what he says here shall raise us up also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. His whole desire was for their good and blessing. He identifies himself with them. He doesn't say I'm here and you're there. He shall present us with you. I think this is a lovely thing. And when we ever try to correct any person, we should always think of this, that, uh, in seeking to maybe speak to them in a way that's for their good and blessing. We should think of the time when together we're going to be there around the Lord. Could it be in this 15th verse that he refers to the gift that the brethren sent up for the needs of the Saints in Jerusalem? That is, there was a famine in Jerusalem. There might have been, and there probably was some feeling between Jews and Gentiles. There was a natural barrier that existed between them, and God allowed a famine to come among these Jews. They might have said, well, we're the top ones. We're the ones that have sent the help down to you and we sent the messengers down to you and everything. But God allowed a family to come in, uh, Jerusalem among the Jews in Judea. And so the health cold flow the other way. Now the help was coming from the Gentiles and going back to them. And God was in this way knitting their hearts together in love. The Jews could never say, well, we don't need these Gentiles. We sent the gospel to them, but. We're the ones that are on top, but now He puts them in a position. They must be the receivers. And it's good for us to remember that sometimes the Lord loves situations where we might think we're on top, but we have to be the receivers, don't we? All things are for your sakes. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the cold according to his purpose. I was just looking into that in First Corinthians 3 garden you're mentioning after verse 21. Therefore let no man glory in man, for all things are yours. Whether Paul or Polis or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things to come, all are yours and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God. So here we found that little expression for all things are for your sakes. So it's good to remember that, isn't it? God's not a cheap giver, you know He's not. When he gives, he gives abundantly.

OK. And even though this present in which we live is only for a moment, it's only temporal. It does have eternal results. That's good for us to remember. Our short lives here, brethren, are going to have eternal results. The grace that has saved us, anything that has been done to please the Lord in accordance with His Word, everything is going to be manifested and rewarded, our light affliction, which is but for a moment, it's only that way in comparison with eternity. What is this little period of time compared to eternity? But the results of what we did today is still a short day of time. Is going to have eternal results. If it was done for the glory of God, it will be rewarded. If not, it'll be lost. It's how we behave here now and our life is going to determine the size of our company eternity. We should we should consider that everything that we say and do is going to be assessed at the judgment seat of Christ. Sometimes you hear it said that rewards are only for the millennial period, for the thousand year reign, but this verse seems to say otherwise, that they go well, it says eternal weight of glory. Very precious too, to see here he speaks of our light affliction and. And then he begins he adds to that by saying which is which is but for a moment, our light affliction, which is but for a moment as com as in contrast to the eternal ages that are before us. So I always think of that. I just refer to a verse. You don't need to turn to it over in the 41St Psalm where he says that the Lord will preserve him in two and keep him alive and he shall be blessed upon the earth. Of course we know the sound again speak of the earthly blessing. Of the people in the coming day, that thou wilt uh, Thou wilt uh, but thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord shall strengthen him upon the bed of languishing. Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness. Beautiful little verse to think that in your whatever your trial is, whatever the difficulty is the light affliction, but God is going to make your bed in the affliction in your fingers. It's beautiful to think of that God will never overlook one of his own. He will always be there to comfort and to sustain. And then you have the person on the call write that verse. You might wonder how serious it takes him, but we all know how Paul went through a great deal of flexion, physically, emotionally, uh, for a member of yours right from the time he is saved. OK, let me press this last verse as well, and for us to bear in mind, as we call, we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. Or the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. This life and how we live it is very important. This is all brought out in this chapter. But every act should be looked at in light of eternity. Shouldn't that have how it's going to appear when all is manifested in the coming day? The center may just live for time, say I'm having a good time, but what about eternity? The way he lives in time, if he goes on rejecting Christ is going to have eternal consequences. And so the way we live as believers, we may say, well, it's just time. It's just today. Well, are we living in view of eternity while we look not at the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen or the things which are seen are temporal. The things which are not seen are eternal. May the Lord grant that we live our lives in view. Of the manifestation, because every act in our lives is going to have eternal consequences as well as present ones. It was showing #36 in the back of the.

Nsnoise. Umm, from the fall. I'm saying. Village on South Carolina. Grey. Nsnoise. Uh-huh. No, no, no. I'm not sure if you can do anything to buy all the products, but I don't know. Things well.

Still Waters Family Camp: 2018, 2 Corinthians 4:7-18

Reading

I love you, God and our gracious Father. We thank you for the enormous privilege that is before us now to open Thy Word together, consider its contents, and trust to be built up on our most holy faith. Encourage help. And we just look to the and pray for help for those who speak and

minister the word, that they might have thy mind and what is brought forward. And we would just pray that the Spirit of God might have liberty in each of our hearts to make Thy word good to us. We feel that we are completely dependent upon Thee if there's to be any benefit from this time. And we thank the count upon me that Thou just looked down with the light. On those who would speak to one another of things concerning our beloved Son. And so with confidence and joy, we ask these things in Jesus worthy name. Bless the Godfather, we thank you for singing. I don't need begotten Son into this world to go to Calvary's cross to back for a sentence. Thank you through thy son's blood that's been made. Much blessing through this and we thank you for this time we should draw aside from the business of life. You know the sound as I word, but you take advantage of this. You have open ears to hear what others say to us. Pray for that. We would be speak by the leading. Listen to. Thank you for the kindness Steven and others that are taking part in this to host this camp. Pray for each one that's working to during the camp less than thank you that was provided this time. Pray to you that each one of us would take that time and quiet with me each morning, evening and during the day most necessary. Now we ask for help. That we would during the day, seek each other out, take your time, ask, tell each other's doing, share something of the. That would be an encouragement. Now we pray for those that might still be coming for safe journey mercies. Pray for those that couldn't come that does give an abortion. Think of those that. Let me sorry because lost of a loved one or sickness, pray for them. Let us know. Pray for the young people here that ought to encourage them. You know there's many attacks of the enemy these days. Thinking of going to college? Pray that they would have thy will first and foremost. First and foremost before there are. And thank you that doubt they are in their hands and. Allow them to go ahead or close the door and let us know. Now we ask for safety during the Buddy Day today and this time of encouragement too. Like that we do it again to the privilege to pray and thank you for all this, my precious name, Lord Jesus name, Amen. We're reading in Second Corinthians in the 4th chapter. We'll read a few verses into chapter 5 also, but we'll start at chapter 4 and verse eight. Second Corinthians 4, verse eight. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you, we having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written. I believed, and therefore have I spoken. We also believe and therefore speak, knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise us up also by Jesus. And shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might do the Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God, For which 'cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day For our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.

For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Chapter 5. For we know that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, and house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, if so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened. Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath brought us for the self, same thing as God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we're at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, For we walk by faith, not by sight. So many new people that are here, I thought it might be nice if somebody could give us a brief outline of what we've covered. Well, for those who aren't here, we've made some comments on this chapter at length about how the chapter in its context really brings before us the outflow of Christ in the life of us as Christians. And various comments have been made regarding how that is done and how that is not done, what might hinder that outflow. And we noticed a few things in. The earlier part of this chapter, which I won't backtrack and and summarize necessarily, I'll leave it for your personal study, but the Apostle Paul touches on various things that that could hinder that, that outflow and, and quench it, you might say. And so, you know, as we move about in this life as servants of Christ, it is our responsibility to be a living epistle before this world. They read Christ in you and me, or at least they should. And if we allow things into our life that. Will, you know, hinder that? Then the world is not going to see a manifestation of Christ. And it's quite solemn as I consider this, because the only Bible that this world reads, brethren, is in you and me as believers, we pick up this book, we hear the Word of God, we read the Word of God, we enjoy it, we take it in, we have the capacity to understand it. And assimilated to our own good by the power of the Spirit of God indwelling us. But this world doesn't have that. But you can't expect a dead man to pick up the word of God and read it. They have no interest in it. So how, how else are they going to see Christ? Well, it's through you and me. And this chapter again brings that out and, and hopefully that's a good enough summary. If I can read it, it's kind of applicable to what we're reading right now. I came across this old poem I remember from my youth. I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day. I'd rather one should walk with me than merely tell. The way the eye is a better pupil and more willing than the ear. Fine counsel is confusing, but example always clear. And the best of all preachers are the men who live their creeds. For to see good put in action is what everybody needs. I soon can learn to do it if you'll let me see it done. I can watch your hands in action, but your tongue too fast may run in a lecture you deliver may be very wise and true, but I'd rather get my lessons observing what you do for my I might misunderstand you and I advice you give, but there's no misunderstanding how you act and how you live. Be thou an example of believers in Word and conversation and charity and spirit and faith and purity. First Timothy.

12:00 So we can see that what we say is good, but what we do, that's what people are watching. It was pointed out, I believe by our brother Mark in verses 8:00 and 9:00 that these two verses touch on various things that God may bring into our life or allow us to experience or subject us to so that the light of Christ would shine brighter in in US and through us. And so sometimes we are subjected to some pretty trying circumstances and we can take comfort in the fact that we know that God. Doesn't make any mistakes and what he's doing is that he is seeking to form more of Christ in our life and at times. Pardon me, but at times, brethren. These things are pretty tough. You know, each one of us come from various circumstances and walks of life and there are people here right now that are experiencing some very, very tough trials. But you know. God is seeking to form more of Christ in us. So that we become less and he becomes more, as John the Baptist could say. I must decrease, but he must increase. And what a testimony it is to the glory of God when you see, as a brother, Tim had brought before us an example of a man the other day who totally subjected himself. In obedience and. And acceptance of the trial that God had brought through his life, and it has affected the lives of all those around him for the good and Christ has not only been manifested, but glorified. And exalted in the hearts and souls of not only that man, but also in those who are witnessing what he is going through. I think in this tenth verse. I think it's very instructive where it says we are to always bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. And this is what we're talking about. I noticed in the new translation that. It's it's, it's the dying of Jesus. And this is very instructive. Doesn't Mr. Darby took out the Lord Jesus? And that is is, as I say, very instructive, because when you have just Jesus presented to you, it brings before us his manhood. What do you experience down here as a man? And this is not his atoning sufferings. You and I could not participate in that one bit, not one bit. So here is not his atoning sufferings that is being spoken of, but his martyrdom sufferings. And that's what Mark brought before us the other night in his address, the sufferings of our Lord Jesus at the hands of men. It was his martyrdom

suffering. And the point behind this here is that his, it is his obedience, his submission to the trials and circumstances that God. And sought to put him through and he totally gave himself over it, over to it. And that's something that you and I can participate in. That we can submit to those things as verses 8:00 and 9:00 bring before us. We can submit to the circumstances of life that God brings us through for our good and our blessing, but also for the blessings of a blessing of others. Because it says that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body, not to exalt or glorify us, but to glorify Him and His life becomes manifested.

For the good of others. This is very practical what you're saying. And in verse 7, where we end it yesterday we talked about the treasure, which is the knowledge. Of God and the earth and vessel, which is our body and that's what we all receive when we belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. But once we are in that condition, you might say in a very practical way, God goes to work right away and what does he do? He allows things in our life. I guess Joss was telling us that break start to break down that earthen vessel. And so, you know, for a lot of young people here. God wants on a daily basis to work with you. And he has the plan in your life that you might become more like the Lord Jesus Christ. And Paul writes this here after he had been in the surface for quite a number of years and he had experienced those things, the Lord. And maybe with him it wasn't a special case because he was a special vessel, but the Lord had allowed all these things, outward things, the inward things that he dealt with too, to come in his life to break down the earth and vessel. And you might say the more he went on in his life, the less you saw Paul and the more you saw of Christ. And that's that earthen vessel being broken down. But it's interesting. And the whole time here, he always speaks about we. This was not specific to Paul, or it wasn't even specific to Paul and the ones that traveled with him. It's normal Christianity, you might say, the Lord is not going in his goodness. He's not going to leave us alone. And allow us to have this quiet life without trouble because if we did, none of Christ would shine out. And so that's what these verses speak about. It's God at work in our lives to break down the earth and vessel so that the treasure would be able to shine out more. So when the Lord allows things in your life, just realize that God is allowing these things because He wants me to be more like His Son. He never does it because He wants to bring trouble in our lives, if you want to call it that. But he wants us to be broken down when it comes to ourselves. So there might be more of Christ and more of Christ to shine out. And maybe I'm going a little bit further now, but in verse 12 it says death work within us. And that's just a breaking down. But life in you there was a blessing to others because of what Paul submitted to in the circumstances that the Lord allowed in his life. I was thinking on. The bears on Hebrews Chapter 11 and verse 24 were says by faith most Moses. When he was come to years refuses to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Chosen rather to suffer affliction with the people of God. Chosen to suffer affliction, nobody here chosen to be afflicted. Not me. That he chose to suffer affliction with the people of God. The Lord says just like the people hate me, they will hate you. In this life, if you want to live righteously, you will suffer persecution, you will suffer persecution, but it's better to suffer persecution and to shine that light. The brothers yesterday was talking about shine the light. No. Of yourself, but the light of the Lord Jesus Christ through you. And to do that he needs to broken you. He needs to broken us. Brother was talking about brother Mike and being in his wheelchair and not even able to imagine this. Sometimes you have a itching in your nose. You just do this, you scratch your nose. He cannot even do that. He cannot even move. But he says I don't change my place when anybody because the blessing and the the joy to the Lord is being communion with him. Now let me ask you something. Do you chase? Do you change places with him? Do you want to be in his shoes?

I can probably save myself, no? But we need to be able to say Lord. Break this bustle so you can shine the light. Through me of the Lord Jesus Christ. Yesterday we talked about. The New Translations rendering of this verse and it talks about God shining into our hearts for the purpose that we would then shine forth the glory of God. And there is very few things in this world that shine forth the glory of God. As powerful as child when someone is going to trial. We talked about Michael Bryant. He is a powerful testimony. And we have a brother, Alejandra, stand up here. With difficulty with his eyes, and he says, blessed be the name of the Lord. It's. Hour enough and I would just like to read a couple of verses that have to do with what we're talking about. First one is in first Peter chapter one. First Peter chapter one and verse seven that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth they'll be tried with fire might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, and you know. If we go back to John Chapter 11, there's an example there of a couple of ladies that we know well, Mary and Martha, and. They had a brother that they loved very much named Lazarus, and Lazarus died. And we can see as we read through John Chapter 11 That that was purpose of God. But that wasn't an accident. He didn't just arbitrarily die, but God allowed Lazarus to go into death and He tells us why. You turn to John Chapter 11 and it says in verse 4. Well, so this is. I'm going to start with verse 3. Umm. I'll just start with verse one. Now a certain man was sick named Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Merrier, sister Martha. And it was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair. His brother Lazarus was sick. Therefore his sister said unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. And Jesus heard that he said, the sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister, and none of this happened because the Lord had forsaken them. He purposed this for the glory of God and. He stays they they said Lazarus is sick and purposely waits until Lazarus passes into death and then he goes because he was fulfilling what we're talking about right now. He was working in Mary and Martha. That they would be an outflow of the glory of God through them in this trial. And so the Lord Jesus comes in first. Martha meets him and says, Lord of thou has been here. My brother had not died. And the Lord, the Lord says to her. And Mary says the same thing by the way, and the Lord goes through the process of raising Lazarus from the dead. But the verse that I was thinking of, especially in verse 40 of John Chapter 11. And Jesus said unto her, said I not unto thee, that if thou was believed, thou should see the glory of God. What happens? John chapter 12 follows. And if we turn there, it says then Jesus six days before the Passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. And there they made him a supper, and Martha served that Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the odor appointment. A little difference there was between the Martha that we see from the past that complained about the fact that it says that she was covered with much service and now it doesn't. We don't see any complaint though we see the glory of God manifested through her now.

Well, why was that? It was because of what she had passed through and John Chapter 11, what the Lord had allowed to happen in her life for the purpose of her being able to bear forth the glory of God in her body while she was here. So, you know, there's a there's a gospel that's preached in this world today called the prosperity gospel and it speaks of the Christian as having a, a blessed place and material wealth and things on this in this world. Humans, that robs us of the eternal weight of fluid. And I'll be completely honest and completely frank with you that the path of faith of real Christianity is not easy. As Josh was just mentioning, it is hard. The Lord passes us through deep trials, but it's for the purpose of bearing forth the glory of Christ in our life. And we wouldn't have it any other way. Go talk to Michael Bryan and he would say like we've been talking. He wouldn't trade it for anything. You think that he would rather have a mansion on a hilltop and be involved in these things that the prosperity gospel would bring before us, that we would have wealth in this world that robs us of the real blessing that Christ would have in US. And that's what we have at the end of this chapter. I don't mean to to jump ahead, but it has to do with it. It says in verse.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. But we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. But the things which are seen are temporal. But the things which are not seen are eternal. But then that's what God vows is this eternal way to flow. And it's at the cost of Him breaking down our earthen vessels for the purpose of His glory shining forth from us in this, in this scene. We only have the opportunity to do that while we're here. Christ is glorified in a future day by us and what we have done and what we have passed through in this in this life, but the only opportunity to provide for that is here in the same. Go down a little further and. Or where it says, John 1224. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it brings forth much fruit. Michael Bryant. It's pretty far down that path. What about us? How much are we willing to give up for the board? So that his life can shine forth through us. We have some conjunctions in verse 8:00 and 9:00 that I think it'd be good for us to spend a little time on this. Those conjunctions are yet not and but not. And but not happens three times. And I don't want to take in any way away from what we've just been talking about. But I would like to focus on these conjunctions. The first one is we are troubled on every side. Yet not. Yet not distressed, or, as in the new translation, it could be rendered. We are afflicted in every way. Afflicted, yet not straightened or limited. These conjunctions are really, really important for us to get a hold of. If we're going to walk as we have just been discussing or describing in this path of faith and we're going to have trouble, there is a resource for us in that trouble. Why? Why is it that we read here? The apostle said he's not distressed. Or not straightened. What is the message there for us? The message is there's a resource in the trouble, in the trial, in the affliction. So we've just been talking about Michael, Bryan and. We don't want to make too much of our brother, but we know for a fact that the Lord, and if you sit down and talk to him, he will tell you very plainly that the Lord has been with him. And I can tell you, young people and children in my life, in the times that we have gone through trial and trouble, that's when we experience the presence of the Lord in the most dear and real way.

There was a time that our Lord speaks of His being straightened. Here to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul he in another part of this. Of his epistles to the Corinthians, he tells them not to be straightened, because he and those with him were not straightened toward them, limited in their affections toward them. The Corinthians were under influences that would cause them in their affections toward the apostle and laborers, to be limited to be straightened. I was thinking about verse. The Lord saying I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straightened till it be accomplished? And that word limited that you bring up brothers is is a real help there. His heart was to flow out freely in blessing to His people. But he had to lay the groundwork first, and that was the cross, the baptism that he had to be baptized with. You know, there were times even in his earthly ministry. When he came into his own hometown and the people there who were familiar with him. They said it's not this the carpenter's son, and it says he could there do no miracle. He was straightened not by not by any lack of course of power on his part, but by moral considerations on their part. And So what does he do? He's not straightened in the sense that. Service still goes forth. He sends out his disciples that they might minister, and he still receives those that would come to him and heals them, and so on. He is not straightened. His affections towards his people are unchanged. And his care for souls is unchanged. His love will not be deterred by either moral considerations on the sides of others or the work that lie before him. The apostle here is Speaking of. The sufferings that I believe primarily that he went through in his in his laborers to bring the word of God to the people of God and bring the gospel to the lost. And all he got in return was persecution and hatred and suffering. He was stoned to death. And the Lord raised him up. But he was not going to be deterred. None of these things he could say later on on his way to Jerusalem. None of these things moved me. Believe perhaps that helps us understand here it is not straightened, Persecuted, but not straightened. I was reading those very verses in John 15 that I believe you're somewhat referring to there, Steve. John chapter 15, remembering that the example in all of this to us is the Lord Jesus. Verse 17 These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hate you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. If you're of the world, the world would love his own. But because you're not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hated you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake. Because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sinned. But now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hateth me, hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sinned. But now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law. They hated me without a cause.

But when the comforter has come. For you and I, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me, and He also shall bear witness. That's referring again to the verses that we read in John 17 yesterday, because you have been with me from the beginning. There's four sentences that we have in these two verses, Theta 9, and you might say the second part of each sentence is kind of surprising. It's not what you expect. If maybe somebody else would have written that that doesn't belong to the Lord. He said we've troubled in every sight and very distressed, but what is it every time? The first part of that sentence, that's the earthen vessel being broken down. What's the second part? Why was he not straight? Why was he not in despair? Well, that's the second-half of verse 7. Is the Excellency of the power maybe of God? And so we go through these things and we feel our. Or other lack of strength. We can do it when these trials come upon us, and yet we can be overcomers. But we know it's not ourselves. It's not the strength of the earthen vessel because there's no strength in it. But what is it? It's the Excellency of the power of God. And I, you know, in chapter one of this epistle. Verse nine of chapter one, Paul says this. We had the sentence of death in ourselves. That we should not trust in ourselves, but in God. That raises the debt. Hold it alive that every day pretty much He didn't know if he was going to make it till the end. And he had learned and had to learn that he learned that he could not trust in himself. The earthen vessel was very fragile. There was no strength in there, but there was that Excellency of the power of God that made it so. He went through everything and there was more and more of Christ shining out. And so if you look at these two verses and we read it like that every time, the first part. That's the earth and vessel being broken down, persecution, distress, trouble being cast down. But then the second part, that's the power of God coming in and you know when. Some of us are much further along, but as we go through life and these things come up, be it in our family lives, being at work, whatever it is that troubles arise in the assembly. God makes us feel the weakness of the earthen vessel. But at the same time, if we take these things from him. He will reveal to us more and more the Excellency of the power that there isn't that resource that Steve was talking about. And so when again, when trials come, we don't like him. And Alejandra mentioned that. But take him from the Lord and there's going to be nothing but blessing there, even though it will be hard when you go through it. But keep in mind the second part of all these sentences. Not distressed or or straight, not in despair, not forsaken, not destroyed. And that's something that this world doesn't have. Trials come upon them, and they only have the earth investment because the earth investment is not just a Christian. Everybody has an earthen vessel. And you can just see the breakdown, the distress of the sprayer. There's no hope. But we don't have that. If we take our trials, the things that are allowed of God, from him, we have that surpassing power, the Excellency of the power of God. So a young person, or even those of us who are older might ask ourselves, well, why would we want to do this? Why would we be willing to do this? Verse 13, it says we have the same spirit of faith. Verse 14

Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you, and that's glorification. In Matthew 16, verse 24, Jesus said unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross. And follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his. Will lose his life for my sake. Shall find it. The the path of discipleship is costly. It will cost us everything to follow Christ. And why would we be willing to do that? There's no mistake that the portions of Scripture in the order that they are the next chapter in Matthew 17, it says in six days after Jesus taketh Peter and James and John his brother and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart and was transfigured before them. They got to see the glory of God. They got to see the Lord Jesus Christ glorified glowing.

Dear brethren, the path of faith is worth it. As our brother Alejandro said earlier, Moses looked at these things and he said, you know, this looks nice. Whatever he had in Egypt, but it's not going to last. What we have is going to last forever. We have the best portion because we have him in the world. You can have all these things, you can have money, you can have houses, you can have all this stuff and there's nothing wrong with any of that. But if people, if that's all they have, when they lose it, they have nothing left. If we have Christ and we have those things, that's wonderful. If we lose them, we still have Christ. And he's everything to us. He can be everything to us. And as our brother shared last night, that we would be willing to trust the Lord. And at the end of the portion, he talks about the things that we we're going to do if we're going to be kept. And we'll get to those. Let me finish to to read to you or read a little bit again. Hebrews 201124. Finished the the verses by faith Moses when he was come to years refuses to be called the son of Perus daughter chosen rather to suffer a fiction with the people of God that to enjoy the pleasure of sins for a season. Steaming the reproach of Christ. Greater riches than the treasures on Egypt, for he has respect unto the recompense of the reward. In this world everything is passed, everything will be destroyed. But we have a reward in heaven. It's not compared the little sufferings we pass in right now that the glory is coming with the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven, just seeing his face and telling him. Lord, it was worth it. It was worth it because now I'm here seeing you face to face, my Savior, my Lord, the one who walked with me every single day, even through bad circumstances in this world. You was with me every single day, Lord. And now I'm here seeing you and forever be with him. Never, ever to have this world again. It's worth the brothers and sisters. It's worth the young people. In this world, maybe you never want to be popular, but it's better. Put your eyes on Christ. Put your eyes on heaven. Like a brother, Guillermo Guerra. Used to say stick your head in heaven and look of the glories and all in this world we don't have any value. Yes, put your eyes in heaven, in Him who is worth it. So you might say in verse 13. And I say this primarily to myself, but it's as though the apostle is saying I'm all in, I'm all in. It's a question that I think I know I have to ask myself. I know the hesitancy at times of my own heart. And failure in these things. But when it comes to our Christianity, brethren, are we all in? Or are we holding back a little? Or holding back a lot. And to your point, brother, it's all worth it, isn't it? And. He in verse 14, he says, knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus or with Jesus could be translated and shall present us with you. He was looking on to that day when God would reward the believer and raise him up with Christ and that is the day that we ought to be living for that eternal day.

Not now. Not trying to get established necessarily down here. And making this world our primary focus. But it's living not for self, but for Him and for that eternal day. Matthew, I think in the back over there. Giving up all things and we see that with the Apostle Paul in Philippians, don't we? Where? He said. Chapter 3. For me to live as Christ and to die as gain. And in chap sorry, that was chapter one and chapter 3 again he says, yeah, doubtless I count all things but loss. Or seven, what things were gained to me, those I counted lost for Christ? I think it's important and it bears reminding in this chapter that we're speaking that he suffered these things so that he might preach the gospel. Not just our daily lives, not everything that we encompass in our life. He suffered these persecutions particularly. For Christ, namesake for the gospel. A little bit more. You bring that up there in Philippians chapter 3 for the young people, particularly for the young men. I don't know where you are, but I can tell you that we may come from one end of the spectrum. And how did Paul get from one end of the spectrum all the way to the other end of the spectrum? You see this in here in Philippians chapter 3 where it says in verse, as we see here in verse four. Though I might also have confidence in the flesh, if any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh. I more circumcise the 8th day of the stock of Israel of the tribe of Benjamin and Hebrew of the Hebrews as touching the law a Pharisee. You know today we may not necessarily we shouldn't be into the law, but we can be into the fact that perhaps we come from a family that is that has been in the assembly. If you could say, but on the sound of the word and there is some merit of or some. Thought of of laying so-called, riding your dad's coattails. I can say that for myself because I was raised in such a manner and I know many others were here as well. And Paul is saying that he had all this concerning zeal. Verse 6 persecuting the church, touching the righteousness which is the law, blameless. He was at the top of his game in Judaism. No one else could surpass him. He could say verse 7 but what things were gained to me, those I counted for loss. And that's one end of the spectrum. And then the other end of the spectrum that he ends up going to is in the end of our book, Second Corinthians here. If we turn over to here, this is where he finds himself. I think this is interesting to see his travels here because in 2nd Corinthians 11 it says. Verse. 16 I say again, Let no man think me a fool, if otherwise yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little. That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly the confidence of boasting, Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also if you suffer fools gladly, seeing you yourselves are wise. If you suffer a man bringing the ******* of a man devour you. If a man take you, if a man exalt you, if a man smite you on the face, I speak as concern reproach. As though we had been weak, albeit I work whatsoever and miss bold I speak foolishly, I'm bold also. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I are they the seed of Abraham? So am I are they ministers of Christ? They speak as a fool. I am more now this is where he gets into into what he's been through. And labor's more abundant in stripes above measure in prisons more frequent in deaths off of the Jews five times received I-40 strikes. Say 1. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stone, thrice I suffered shipwreck a night in a day. I have been in the deep, in journeys often in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by my own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness.

And watching often in hunger and thirst, In what? In fastings, often in cold. And nakedness besides, those things are without all they which cometh among me daily the care of all the churches. So he's come from one end of the spectrum of being the most beautiful Jew that a Jew could produce, touching the law, blameless, zealous, all the way down to the other side of the spectrum here where he had a resume here of persecutions. And it's tremendous to see this and is, and I was just mentioned, it was all for the purpose. Of preaching Christ and look at the very last phrase of this long list. I just read into verse 28, the care of all the churches. And you can see their false brethren is up there. It's one thing to receive stripes to be bent over a Roman barrel and and receive 39 stripes across the back. And it's another thing here to have up above here false brethren. But he did it all verse 28 into verse 28, the care of the churches. That connects. Somewhat to the verses that we read the yesterday in First Corinthians Chapter 9. Speaking of the gospel in verse 17, he goes on to say in verse 18, What is my reward then? Verily, that when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge. That I abuse not my power in the gospel. I was thinking from these verses on For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all. That I might gain the more. And under the

Jews I became as a Jew, and I might gain the Jews. To them that are under the law, as under the law. That I might gain them that are under the law, to them that are without law, as without law, being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ. That I might gain them that are without law to the weak became I as weak That I might gain the weak. I made all things to all men, that I might buy all means save some. And this I do for the gospel sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you. This I do for the gospel sake. We've got a lot of this. Hour about tribulations and sufferings and rightly so. That's what it's occupied with and we've talked extensively about what God's purposes in that. But it's so nice to see these last verses of the chapter that God gives us these encouragements, these things that will sustain us in this inner path of service. So God doesn't set before us just a bunch of trials and tribulations, and now you go along with it and he gives us encouragements along the path. When I think there's four main ones and maybe just mention them and we can expand on them a little bit. And the first one was already mentioned. Verse 12/13/14 We have a God of resurrection, we have a God of resurrection, we have that resurrection life that we can look forward to. What a wonderful thing that is. But then he goes on and in verse 16, he speaks of the inward man being renewed day by day. It's through the outward man. Our bodies are broken down, but the inward man is renewed day by day. That's our soul and spirit. And that can be refreshed and strengthened day by day by communion with the Lord and so. You might say the proper pathway for a Christian is that the outward man, the body. Is on a downward course, but the inward man is on an upward course and gets stronger and stronger. And then the third thing is, and it's amazing that Paul was the one that rode this verse in verse 17, he speaks of light affliction. But for a moment, and I think that pulse path of surface was a little over 30 years and you just read the list that fits in very perfectly. We wouldn't call that light affliction, but Paul seeing things in their proper perspective and what was about to come. He calls that light affliction, but for a moment that should be a help as we go through tribulation and we know people have gone through tribulations for many years and yet in the light of eternity it's but for a moment. And then the last thing is that he had his eyes fixed on unseen things. If we have our eyes fixed on things around us. Last night Jonathan spoke about Law looking down and seeing the well watered plains and where that led him. If we have our eyes fixed on unseen things.

That will sustain us too in the pathway down here. And so yes, we've been talking about tribulations and they're very real and God has a purpose with it. But here's 4 huge encouragements, things that will sustain us in the path of service. If I may, I would like to add one more thing to that that I believe I see in this this. Chapter as a motivation that the apostle Paul had in addition to those four that you mentioned in verse 15. He is motivated because he knows that what he's doing and what he's suffering is for the benefit of the elect. It is love to the people of God that also motivated that drove him he and when he suffered that persecution when when he was hindered. His heart was on. What the what the Lord's heart is on his people, his suffering people in this world who needed help? One of the biggest keys as we face trials and challenges are in this list that you mentioned. Mark and I have down verse 16's daily communion. Verse 17 is a shield of faith and verse 18's the vision of glory. As we go through these trials that one of the most important things for us to remember is that God is for us and in Ephesians 6 he mentions our weapons. Our armor. Pardon me. And in verse 16, it says, above all, taking the shield of faith. Well, I had an older sister in my assembly and she said the shield of faith is the confidence that God is for me. And it says with that you're going to be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked because there's a battle that goes on in our mind when we have trials. In our mind, our flesh is questioning what's going on, and the enemy of our souls is shooting darts at us. Saying God's forgotten you, God doesn't love you. You're worthless. All these things come at us and we can hold that shield up and say no, I know that God is for me. This challenge is not wasted. In verse 15, it says all things are for your sakes. When Mary and Martha had their brother died, if he would have come and healed him, they would have known the Lord Jesus as a healer because the Lord Jesus didn't come. They came to know Him as the resurrection and the life. And he'll pass us through things our brother mentioned earlier. It's so painful, so painful. Hold up that shield. The Lord is for you. He loves you. He gave everything for you. He's not going to go back. The second thing our brother Matt mentioned earlier, and that is thankfulness and in chapter. Ephesians 5. Verse 20 it says giving thanks for all things. Unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And some people say that's crazy. How can you give thanks? We can give thanks because we know that God knows what he's doing. And we can say, Lord, I thank you for this trial. I don't understand, it doesn't make any sense to me, but I trust you and I thank you for it and let the Lord work in our lives and quit trying to get out of the trial and just let yourself relax and try and learn the lesson. So often I've seen people and then it is horrendous trial and then it's over. Just like that. As soon as they learn their lesson, whatever the Lord had in it for them, the trial is over. That's what he's trying to teach us, and he does it with love and with patience and with compassion. Because he loves us. We're his children. I remember an old saying that joy or happiness is not a state, a set of circumstances, or is not dependent on our circumstances, but it is a state of soul. And I would like to read a verse in first John really quick first John chapter one. And verse three, that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that He also may have fellowship with us. And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. How can He have joy in all the things that he went through? And in the verses that we are reading, we are troubled on every side, yet not stressed, and so on.

How is he sustained in that? But he knew. Go out his Father and Christ, he had a daily fellowship with him. He was walking and communion with God and so whatever we face in our lives doesn't matter what God brings us through. We can have joy in that path. I also would like to point out I don't know if it's been pointed out yet, but in verse seven it speaks of. Earthen vessels and, and we have been commenting a bit on vessels and, and maybe it's been pointed out, but I'll briefly just point these out. There's a number of different types of vessels in this chapter. First one we have a willing vessel and in verse two we have a clean vessel. And that's having renounced the hidden things of dishonesty. And in verse five, we have an empty vessel or selfless vessel we preach, not ourselves. And in verse 8A, broken vessel. And. In verse 13, there may be more to verse 13. We have an open vessel. He's he's received it and there he's speaking it. It's open. It's taking those things in and putting them out. In verse 16 we have a renewed vessel and in. Verse 18, we have a devoted or a focused vessel. So a lot of things that we can get in this chapter, it's been just a joy to meditate on it. That's nice, Luke. I was thinking of that joy that you spoke of and Brother Tim started to read these verses in first Peter chapter one earlier. And in connection with the end of the chapter here, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. And those verses in first Peter chapter one go on to say in verse 8, Whom having not seen ye love, and whom, though now you see him not yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And so. Joy and full of glory and says that we faint not in verse 16 and we're renewed day by day. Our light affliction. Worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. And I know we read it yesterday, but it bears repeating in Romans chapter 8. The end of verse 17. If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in US. And we see over in verse 24 of Romans 8 we are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope. For what a man seeth, why does he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we, with patience, wait for it? And I thought of that verse in Isaiah 40 that we all know well, and he speaks of renewing our strength, and Isaiah 40 and verse 31 But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint. So we're just about out of time, but I just

wanted to these last couple verses in the chapter here give us a a different perspective. And young people and children, I want to encourage you. To have a different perspective, the apostle here in the new translation, it says for our momentary light affliction. And then he goes on to speak about things that. Are looking on things that are not seen and sometimes we have a difficulty understanding that. So when I ask the kids here, is there anything that you know of that is occurring in this room right now that you cannot see? So I saw a couple heads shaking. Yes. What? So there's, there's something holding this down in our chairs, Michael said. Gravity, We've never seen gravity. I don't know that I've ever seen gravity in in force. And I'm speaking right now and, and there's something something happening that we cannot see. There's sound waves that are going through the air that are taking what I'm saying and, and conveying it to you and we can't see it. I've never seen a sound wave. I've seen the effects of it.

There's electricity flowing through these cables here that help us out as well, and I've never seen electricity as well. I've seen the effects of it. So sometimes there are things that that we cannot see, but we know that they're there. The apostle was talking about things that are not seen are things that are seen are temporary or for a time, but the things that are not seen are eternal, and that's another. That's another word that is very difficult for us to understand. Because everything that we feel and see and experience in this world is associated with time. We all have watches on our wrists and we look up on the clock on the wall. And we are bound by time, but God is not bound by time. And so the perspective that we're talking about here is one that is not bound by time, that's eternal. How can we? Do the things that we just read about. The only way that we can really effectively do that. Is having an eternal perspective. And I'm not sure how I can help you guys understand that. But it's really, really practical. The day-to-day choices that we make, are we making them in light of eternity? The apostle was saying. It's worth it. Because of what is coming ahead and we cannot see it. Just like the electricity, the sound, other things of gravity, we cannot see it with our eyes, but we can apprehend it by faith and say that it's true and that it's real. And in fact, it's more real than the things that we see. Science would actually tell us that this these chairs that were sitting on are primarily made-up of empty space. And there's coming a day when these chairs will have no effect on us. We will walk right through them. Because we will not be hindered by the things that we see right now. The things that are eternal, dear ones, are more real than the things that we see right now. And that's the perspective that the apostle wanted to help us understand in this chapter. And it provides the motivation and it provides the strength and the attitude that is necessary for us to be the beneficiaries of what we've been reading about and talking about. We need to have an eternal perspective. If we have a perspective that is just based on time, we're going to go back and we're going to say it's not worth it. And the apostle even said that if there's no such thing as the resurrection, then we're above, we're counted as as the most miserable of all men. But then he went on to say it's it's not even worth comparing. You can't even begin to compare what is coming, what is eternal. What we can't see is so far better than what we can see. And that's what motivates our brother Mike, as we were talking about. And that's what should be motivating us in our lives. And it should be really, really practical. It should change our very lives and the decisions that we make. And if not, then we have the wrong perspective. If I could just add Brother Steve, I know we're done. But what you say is so good that the eternal things that we've had before us is there. They are more real than what we are looking at. Look around you. This is all going to burnout one day.

It's all going to burn. That which is eternal is going to last. And brethren, what are we living for? May it be that we're living for that eternal day, for the glory of Christ. That is what's going to last. Father, we're so thankful for practical ministry. We just pray that. My tunor hearts and. What the Lord would be? Made manifest. Might be much glorified and what's been spoken. We just pray this in Jesus worthy and precious name, Amen.

Still Waters Family Camp: 2018, 2 Corinthians 4:6-7

Reading

Let's pray. Our gracious, loving God and our Father, we just turn to Thee this morning and we ask that Thou wouldst lead by the Holy Spirit and give us a portion this morning as we open Thy precious word. We thank Thee for the resource it is to us to give us Thy mind and Thy will, as we were reminded last night, and so we just ask for Thy help. As we open Thy precious words. We pray that Thou wouldst make it good to each heart and soul in this room. We pray that Thou is leading guide us and help us this hour. We ask this in the worthy and precious name of Thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus, Amen. So we started in Second Corinthians chapter 4, and we'll start at verse 6. Read the chapter. Second, successful to Corinthians. 4th chapter. Verse 6. We're gone. We commanded the light to shine out of darkness. Shine in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the Excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake. That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in US. Life in you we having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written. I believe, and therefore have I spoken. We also believe, and therefore speak, knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might be the Thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which 'cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day For our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For those of us that were not clear on Saturday morning, could. Well, I tried to do my best here, but the chapter that we have before us, we mentioned that it's really in its context, Christ flowing out through our lives to this world. And there's a number of verses I guess we can look at within this chapter to that bear that out we we had in verse 2. The manifestation of the truth. And commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. So that is certainly something that is outward and towards others.

We also had in, you know, verses 3 and 4, the glorious gospel of Christ shining unto others. And we have in verse 5 preaching the Lord Jesus. You, you know, we have in verse 10, I'm just moving ahead here a little bit. It's bearing about in the body, the dying of Jesus that his life might be manifest in our body. So the context is really Christ flowing out. And you know, each one of us as Christians have that responsibility that the Lord Jesus is manifested in our life and the chapter. Touches on various things that might hinder that within our lives and what we can do to make sure that. This testimony, this this outflow of Christ to others isn't hindered. And so we made a few comments on on you know, verse one, for example, we, you know, we we need to have courage to go ahead but. We also need to, you know, we need to be willing to go forward in our testimony and in our service. Without, you know, letting the things around us discourage us from doing so. And then, you know,

there's in verses two and three or, or, you know, there's things that may manifest themselves in our lives. Be it a, you know, hidden things or more open things that could. Could hinder that outflow as well. So you know, we commented on the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness or handling the word of God in a in a wrong way. If we do that, then you know, the truth is not going to be manifested and we're not going to commend ourselves to anybody's conscience and and this outflow of Christ will be hindered in that respect. And you know, verse 5:00, we, we touched on the fact that, you know, our service ought not to be so not to be focused on ourselves and, and and self absorbed. You know, we could use the platform of our ministry. As Christians to promote ourselves and and put ourselves forward and that taints this glorious gospel that we've been given to share and the testimony of Christ in our life. So the apostle said you we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves your servants for Jesus sake. So that brings us up to verse 6 where we where we started today. So again it's. The the context of the chapter, just to repeat it is, is the outflow of Christ and it's those things that we that we ought to not allow within our lives that that would would hinder that outflow. Before we jump into verse six, I would just like to touch back on verse five that talks a little bit more about it. In verse seven it says for we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves your servants for Jesus sake. And then at the end of verse seven it says that the Excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. You know, this is the exact opposite of what the world looks for and what the world does. And I was thinking about an example that we have in scripture of one who bore this out and. John the Baptist wore this out in his life. Everything that he did was purpose for shining the light on Christ. In John chapter one. He over and over says that people came to him. He had the opportunity to exalt himself. He could have made much of himself. But he always deflected that to the Lord, and that was his, that was his ministry. And they asked him, are you the Christ? And said, I'm not and so. Everything that he did focused on the Lord Jesus and he's given a tremendous commendation. I couldn't find the verse this morning but it says John did no miracle. But everything that he spent of this man was true. That's a remarkable commendation. There was nothing about John you didn't do any miracles. He didn't draw attention to himself, but his testimony for Christ was found to be true and that is a wonderful accommodation and if you turn to Matthew chapter chapter 5. I'm going to share something that those that.

Are in the West Richland Assembly. You've already heard me say because I mentioned this before, but. I I my whole life have always wondered what it meant when. Let me let me just read a couple of verses here and Matthew chapter 5 and then I'll I'll continue. Matthew chapter 5 and verse 13. Here are the salt of the earth. But if the salt of lost his Savior, wherewith shall it be salted? Is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and be trodden under the foot of men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid, neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a Candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father, which is in heaven. So I don't know if there are any of you young people have struggled with this as as you thought of this, but my whole life I've always wondered what's it mean to be ye are the salt of the earth? You know, salt is a preservative. There's, there's a lot of different aspects. It's a cleansing agent. There's, there's probably multiple applications that can be made on this. But a little while ago I was meditating on this. The Lord gave me this, these verses and I from my own heart, it really answered a question to me, what's it mean? You're the fault of the earth and it has to do with what we're talking about right now. In verse five and the end of verse 7 where? We have a ministry that is to reflect Christ and deflect that which has to do with ourselves. And So what it speaks of here in Matthew chapter 5 is you're the salt of the earth. And then a little bit farther down it says, let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. So I mean, I give an example and I'll just use the same example again when you're eating corn on the cob. Where I am from, you butter the corn on the cob and then you salt the corn on the cob. And if you eat the corn. It's delicious and you might make the comment, Man, this corn is delicious. But you don't say this salt is delicious. The salt adds savor or flavor to the corn. It enhances the flavor of the corn, But the salt in and of itself has no real part. You see what I'm saying? And so the focus for us as Christians, as we walk in this world and by our good works, the Father is glorified. But the tendency, and especially in this world, is to take the focus and put it on our stuff. And that extracts or detracts from. The value of the testimony because God is not glorified.

Somebody help us with verse six maybe? I've noticed that a new translation it it says that. The God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shine in our hearts and says for the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. So I think that. Again, there's a there's a shining forth of this wonderful knowledge, but it's an interesting verse and perhaps somebody can elaborate on that. The very first chapter of the scriptures in Genesis chapter one find the creation account laid out for us. We find out in verse three it says God said let me light there was light. And we know it would be the creation account. But the sun itself wasn't created says until verse 14. Let there be lights in the front of the heaven to divide the day from the 9th. So there's three days that went by before we see the lights in the heavens. And so we have here, no doubt, a picture of. With God in his light shining forth on the creation before the physical sun that we see out there even was in existence. And so it is in a future day we're going to see the glory of Christ shine forth on a new creation. So here though in our in our verse, this is a new creation, new life is being imparted upon man. That's nice to think about that the physical light of the glory of Christ to see him light up the creation in Genesis one. And then we can also turn to the last chapters of Revelation to see that the Lamb is the light thereof beautiful. Consider that for a moment. That the sun itself that we see out there in the sky right now is not going to be in a common position. In a future day. But Apostle Paul on that road to Damascus was struck down by light, and that's a phenomenal thing to consider is to see a man gets struck down by light. You struck down by light, and he saw things that could not be uttered, but it's beautiful to see. That meant life was imparted. Paul was struck down and turned around. And it could be said that every one of us has to have that light shining in our hearts. At some point. You have to see the light shine into your heart. If it's younger, the gospel is clearly given last night. If you're younger and the light hasn't shined into your heart. It's time to let the light shine in and we will find I enjoy what we said last night. There's good news, but we start with the bad news 1St and we find out that we are dark. We have dark parts and the light has to shine in. So consider the fact that the Christ is light. Consider the fact that He shined on this creation before the sun was created in Genesis 1. Consider the fact that He will be the glory of of a shining upon new heaven and new earth. But consider the fact that you can shine in your heart, and Paul got to experience that. And I think it'd be the prayer of everyone here that every person in this room would have the light of Christ shining earth. That's good, Mark. What what we speak up here is a relationship with our Creator and our Redeemer. It's not some creed. We don't have a bunch. You know, you walk in there and there's all these rules and everything for camp. We don't have a set of dos and don'ts. Do do this and do this and do this and don't do this and don't do this and don't do this. It's a transformation. It's a new life that we've been given. We were complete darkness. There is nothing good in US. And it says here He commanded the light to shine out of darkness. He has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And the very life of Christ lives inside our bodies. And as our dear brother spoke earlier.

Our our objective, our job is to make less of ourselves and to make more of Christ, to make more and more and more of Him shine through our lives. Like to connect this with the 1St chapter of the Gospel of John? Let's just turn over there real briefly. Because in our verse, if you

read it in the new translation, it says because it is the God who spoke. That out of darkness, light should shine. Who has shown in our hearts for the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God? Just want to read these verses in the first chapter of the Gospel of John. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. God spoke. And our brother Mark was just mentioning that in the beginning. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men, and the light shined shineth in darkness, and the darkness and the darkness comprehended it not. We were reminded on Saturday. Of new birth. And that that is a work, a sovereign work of, of God. There was nothing in us that would receive that light. We did not comprehend it when God shown the light of the Lord Jesus Christ into this world. This world did not receive that. But God and His sovereignty has. You might say opened up our hearts to receive that. It's his work and he is the one that has shined into our hearts with the gospel, the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. It's so beautiful. In verse nine it says that was the true light which lighted every man that cometh into the world. So not only is the Lord Jesus the life and the light, that He's the true light. That's the interesting thing about light. Light is from science. We know that it's energy. And light dispels darkness. She turned a light switch on, and all of a sudden, instantaneously to our eyes, the darkness flees. It has to flee, it goes away. Darkness is the absence of light. And so that's our natural condition, Your heart and my heart, apart from the Lord Jesus is darkness, is utter darkness. But God, you might say to use the illustration very poorly and this is a poor illustration, but he's the one that that has turned on the light so that we can see the beauty and the glory of the Lord Jesus. And we need to see that. It's so absolutely important that we see that. So that's what God did in sovereignty. Then in the context of the chapter, in the second-half of the verses, the goal for that is that that very light would shine forth unhindered through the servant so that the world utters might come into the knowledge, a glorious knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so I, I heard that when you started this chapter referred to the last verses of the previous chapter. And the only way for that light to shine forth through us is that we are occupied. Looking at the Lord Jesus Christ and Moses is a beautiful example of that in the Old Testament after, yes, spent time in the presence of the Lord and he came down, his face showed. And so the more we are occupied with the Lord, the less there will be of self and the more that light will shine through us out to this Dark World. And I think that's the whole kind of purpose of these first verses in this chapter that Paul wanted to impress, that he saw to seek his life in a way that there was nothing of himself.

That would hinder the message that he had to flow forth through the world and so he can say if our gospel be here, it is hid to death, but our long he's saying is nothing that we did or said or the way that we behave hindered that life to flow forth. If it didn't didn't find entrance into the hearts of others is because Satan had darkened their hearts. And so for us, each one of us should be a testimony to the world. And our desire should be too, is that there's less and less of us visible, so more and more of the light can shine out or flow through us. And I think in the next verses we have that our earthen vessels, through the things that the Lord allows us to pass through, are slowly broken down and the cracks become bigger and bigger, and the light shows out more and more. So it's for the shining 4th of that light. It's through the Lord shone in our hearts and we're so thankful for it. That's a sovereign act. But the more we are broken now, the less there is of us. The more the world will see of that light. And so we are. You know, in Ephesians 4 it speaks of joints of supply. It's a little bit different thought there. It's the same way the light shouldn't stop if there's a lot of us S, If we're occupied with S, we hinder the light from flowing forward. The less of self, the more delight will be able to flow out and the more purely the light will be able to flow forth. Well, we could speak a lot about the light, couldn't we? But as our brothers just brought out, it's the responsibility that we've been given. And we have that at the end of Mark when he tells us to go out into the world and preach the gospel. So he's taken us in first Peter chapter 2 out of darkness and brought us into his marvelous light. And as Steven pointed out in John chapter one, that he is the true light and the light of the world. And if we look further in John. I think chapter 8. John chapter 8 he says in verse 12 That I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. He tells us a little bit further over in. John, Chapter 12. Verse 35 When Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while as the light with you, walk, while you have the light, less darkness come upon you. For he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth while you have light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. And so that's our responsibility, isn't it? I think it's in Second Peter. Somebody mentioned this just in comment, but I think the verse is worth reading to a second Peter chapter one and verse 19. Part way and it says, whereunto he do well, that you take heed is unto a light that shineth in a dark place, and so we might have that true light within us. But I believe we're to reflect that true light. It's his light. We're to reflect that to the world around us as his disciples. And so Paul, as Mark mentioned that light that there's so many marks. I'm sorry. As Mark mentioned, Paul. And how that light came upon him there, and how he was transformed, we might say. He had a real desire in these first couple of verses to go out and to preach the gospel. And I think it was in the previous chapter, sorry. Now it's First Corinthians chapter 10. And I don't want to belabor the thought, but it's important to point this out. In verse 16 he says, For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory. Nothing to glory, Her necessity is laid upon me, Yeah, woe is unto me if I preach not the God. And so he wanted to reflect that light to all. And he goes on to say, For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward. But if against my will a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me, what is my reward then verily, that when I preach the gospel I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I have used not my power in the gospel. For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all that I might gain the more.

Wasn't that the Lord Jesus desire that we would go out and gain, the more that that light would shine out of us so clearly, so bright, that all those in the world might see something and that they might have a desire to have it? Spoke about this a little bit on Saturday and. Again, not to belabor the point, but we each have a responsibility as Christians to be ambassadors for Christ. They have that in the next chapter in chapter 5 at the end, and it says in verse 20. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech you for you isn't even in there in the in the original. Now we are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech by us. We pray in Christ's dead be reconciled to God. And you know, again, we may not feel like they have the gift of evangelism, but we have the responsibility to do the work of an evangelist. Knowing thou, therefore, the terror of the Lord would persuade men and. And think of it this way. What if what if you were given from the President of the United States a a, a mission to travel on a railroad? And you're going to ride on this railroad and the president of the United States is going to meet you in Denver, Co. And you're starting in the East Coast, and you're headed West. And the president of the United States tells you, aren't you, to get off at the depot in Denver. I'm going to meet you there, but make sure you get off. And I want you to tell the people on the train to get off at Denver as well. Because just West of Denver, there's a huge trestle that's gone. And the trains going off the track and to the bottom of the Canyon. What if you got on that train and you headed West and you never said a word? Anyone else on that train? But Denver came around and you stepped off the train and the train loaded back up and headed West and drove off into that trestle. That's pretty sewn. And as we walk through this world, we have a treasure that tells us here in our earthen vessels, this world is a world full of hopelessness. I am not kidding you. I come into contact with people every day and my work that have gone to the extremes of hopelessness and they are desperate for somebody to give them something that they can actually find hope in. And we have that treasure and I have that treasure. We have the opportunity to tell others that the word you described and the light that he would impart for each one of us. And I know it's difficult. I'm not any different than anybody else here. Struggle I have I I told the story in Kirkland of a of a co-worker that

needed the gospel badly and I was intimidated by him because he was not a nice man and. And I never gave. I never stepped up because I lacked courage. I never stepped up and told him. The gospel and I'm 40 years old on 4th of July came back from the fire and died of a heart attack. Fire station. Really smoke my heart. I had opportunity to tell him, I have no doubt. And I had an opportunity to tell them the doc never did. And that bears heavily upon. And just want to emphasize the importance that each one of us out, you know, maybe we don't, maybe we don't have the courage to necessarily preach the gospel in an elephant way like Alejandro did last night. And you know what, just beside him, John 316 to somebody, everybody here from the youngest kid to the oldest knows John 316. And there's power in that verse. Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. And. A lot of it goes back to what Mark was just mentioning, too. If I'm on that train, maybe I tell everybody about the fact that the trust was out, but I do it in a really disparaging way, and I'm fighting with people on the train and I'm doing things that diminish my testimony. Nobody's going to believe me. Nobody's going to get off the train because of my actions. And so it's important. Maybe we don't have the courage to necessarily go out and physically preach the gospel, but they can walk in a way.

To reflect the light of religion of Christ in my life. And that's a good start. We have so many kids here and one thing I like about the camp is that we sometimes. And I think this is important. Who here has flashlights here? Any flashlights here at the camp? All right, I don't see something. The half, half crowd. What's the rest of the folks doing without flashlights? Well, we have flashlights here. And last night, you know, Steve and I were walking around the camp here and Uncle Steve told me he's got a brighter flashlight than mine. Well, he said his has got a lot of candle power and he was bright enough stuff. What? We're talking about lights here. So why do we need a flashlight? So we can see where we're going. We were actually peering off in the bushes last night. What kind of batteries do you have in your flashlights? You tell me. Someone tell me what battery they have in the flashlight. What do you have? AAA's there we go. Anybody else have another battery in their flashlight? AAA's I, I think I have some C's. Anybody else have any other candidate? Rechargeables maybe? The point of it is, is there's different batteries in these flashlights. Now let's get back to Uncle Steve's flashlight. If, how can my flashlight I thought was pretty powerful, but his was even more brighter. How can I, how can he, what could he do to his flashlight to make mine a brighter flashlight than his? In other words, his would be dimmer. How could, how could we get Uncle Steve's flashlight? It's so bright. To shine less than mine. Yeah. There's a way to get a flashlight to shine not as bright, yeah. Did, yeah. OK. So yeah, you could have batteries that are going dead, right. You could get a less less light. Yep, that would be I didn't think of that too. That's a good one. Your batteries are starting to dim. Yes. Cover it with something that's good. Now you're on the right. You're on the same track. What do you have? What if he dropped it in a mud puddle, right? And, and, and it dries, right? The mud is on the glass and he shines his out and I shine mine out and I've got a lesser flashlight, but it's brighter because he's got mud on his screen, right? And so it is you and I, we can have batteries, we can have the light shine for things. This is what Mark was saying earlier is the light shines out. But sometimes we can have mud spots on our flashlight and it takes away from the brightness. And so it's a responsibility. We get this in Apostle Paul on his first letter to the Corinthians. We never really read it and break your bread, but you can read it for yourself and 1St kisses 11 There is a process, and John brings it up in his first epistle, is there's a process of cleaning our lenses before the Lord, right? So the light shines forth. Maybe that, you know, elaborate a little bit what you're saying. Mark I That's how I took it. I think it's a beautiful thing. There's the light that shines into us, and then there's a light that shines out from us. I was thinking of conversation I had. Our brother and I can't pronounce his name right now because I'm trying to our Mexican brother that had gospel last night and we were Speaking of this young girl that spoke to her grandparent. And she said, you know, probably just like some of you children here, that she was afraid that her Grammy would go and die and not go to heaven. And so she wanted to know if she was saved. And it didn't take anything special. No special particular words for that little girl to do that. And we often are afraid to do these things as older ones. We're afraid to speak to ones. And I was thinking of these verses in First Corinthians chapter 2, and it speaks of the power here. Paul says in verse one. And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with Excellency of speech or wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God, but I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ. There's the gospel and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your face should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

And I know how difficult it is. To not only stand before your peers in a room like this and speak the gospel, but to try to pass a gospel tractor, speak the ones on the street, and you consider what it might be for a light to shine forth. And maybe you and I don't necessarily think we see it, but I'll mention John Kemp for a moment, and many of you may know him. I know Josh and I know him quite well. And I can remember in the little town of Truro that I live in, I don't know how many, what the population is there. I'll say 50,000. But there's a drugstore downtown. And one day I get out of my car and I was walking around the corner and, and I could hear this man. I couldn't see him, but I could hear this man say, oh, dear ones, take one of these. The Lord loves you. Take one of these. He wants to save you today. And I could hear this voice. And that's a light shining for it. That's a light shining for me. And I walked around the corner and I had no idea that Mister Kemp was going to be in Truro, NS. Here he was standing at the door of this pharmacy passing out tracks and talking about the Lord Jesus Christ, that one that he knew of and that one that he wanted to pass the message on. And I just think that we might be in fear and trembling and might not have the words, but we can pass out that little paper. And you know, he encourages us because there was a person there that very day as I stood and watched Mr. Kent, I didn't really participate on the shame to say this lady took one and she said, oh. I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. And you know, so he encourages us while we're in the midst of our trembling in fear, someone comes along and they encourage us to go a little bit further and to pass out another 50 or so or five or six. And, and so, you know, I don't want to keep talking about these things, but one day my wife and daughter and I went into the mall and we had these little calendars and. And I was quite shy to pass these out, but we came to a counter to pay for some merchandise. And I told the lady I was so thankful for her help. And I gave her a calendar. And that was the very thing she said, oh, I know this story. And it's so encouraging, dear ones. And, and to think that the Lord gives us that power and that strength and that courage from others that believe in the Lord so that we might shine forth and others might be saved. Sometimes I think we're reticent because we don't think we have something to share. We don't think our story is as cool as John Kemps or or Jim Highlands or Mother Teresa or somebody. It says we have this treasure in earthen vessels. Each one of us has the spirit of Christ inside of us at the Excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. And there's a couple things here. One of the things is that we need to be willing to share. We don't want to defile people if you know, if there's like really negative events, negative details, but we need to be willing to share what's happened to us to let to let God's power be revealed in our weakness. His strength is made perfect in our weakness. And our brother last night was a beautiful example of that to just share. This is what the Lord is doing in my life. And to be willing to be honest and not have a facade, because when we aren't honest, it's a turn off to people. It's it's fake. But when we're willing to let. To be honest and say this is what I've struggled with, this is what the Lord's brought me through, this is where I am, there's another thing here. We went to a conference earlier this year and there was a gentleman there who was a believer and he was talking about he's a comedian, believe it or not, And he was talking about every single one of us has trials in our lives that are setbacks. Every single one of us in this room. Maybe, maybe the little kids, the young kids don't feel like that, but as you get older, every single one of us has setbacks. That's something that's common to every single human being. And he was telling

how a joke is you, you make a setup, you you tell a story and then you change directions and that's the punchline. And dear beloved brothers and sisters are setbacks are our setup, the trials and the challenges that we pass through. That's what the Lord is going to use to show his glory.

You don't have to be Brother Kemp. You don't have to be Mother Teresa. All you have to do is be you. And just be honest, this is what I struggled with, This is where I am, this is what the Lord has done for me. And there isn't a person in here that can't share that. And I know the trepidation that people are talking about, but when we just share what the Lord has done for us. When we share what the Lord's done for us, it's so good. And then lastly, we have this treasure in earthen vessels. Those trials in our lives, they can either make us better or they can make us bitter. And in Hebrews 12 it talks about. Let's just read it in Hebrews 12. I think it's in verse 5. It says this, my son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou are rebuked of him. And we, we can go through a trial and it can make us stronger. You see people and they go through trials and you just be like, man, I can't even believe I would never want that. And Tim was sharing with me this morning about Brother Mike O'Brien and he wouldn't trade where he is today for where he was. Can you imagine? This is a man in a wheelchair. He can't even get up. He can't even stand up. And he wouldn't trade that. Do you see the power of Christ pouring through his frail body? We watched a video about this man. He was injured just like days before. He was going to be a millionaire and he was going to get to play in the NFL. He longed to play in the NFL his whole life, and he gets in this accident and his arm is completely useless. And he said, Lord, couldn't you have waited, like until I got into the NFL and people asked him, his name's Inky. Inky, don't you wish this wouldn't have happened to you? And he said, no, I'm so glad this happened. He was. He's not fainting under that trial. He's letting the light of the glory of Christ shine through his frailty. And every single one of us has that opportunity. It's not about us, it's about him. I'd like to. Read some verses in the Old Testament. We have the word treasure here and I've been enjoying the thought of treasure the last. Month or so. And so I'd like to turn just to expound a little bit on what Matt said, want to turn back to Isaiah. Chapter 54 and we're going to we're going to talk a little bit about treasure. I have a question for the kids. Thanks, Mark for the reminder to take it down to the kids level. Have any of you kids ever seen? Real treasure. Let's treasure. Somebody give me a definition for treasure. Danny, let's treasure. What rubies Very good, very, very good. So treasure is generally defined, especially in the word of God, as something that is very precious. And most of us are probably acquainted with at least one type of precious stone, maybe more than one type of precious stone. So I know my wife has a. Diamond on her finger and I probably I can guess that most of the most of the ladies that are married in this room probably have a precious stone. That means a whole lot to them and I want to read some verses that are really kind of interesting. In Isaiah chapter 54, I'm going to read from verse 11. Oh, thou afflicted. Tossed with The Tempest and not comforted. That's pretty tough. Oh, thou afflicted and tossed with The Tempest, and not comforted. Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors. Who's this I? This is God speaking. This is the Lord Jesus. He says that he is going to lay thy stones with fair colors, and I will lay thy foundations with sapphires. I will make thy windows of agates and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. These are all precious stones. I want to read another verse over in Malachi Malachi chapter 3.

We know this verse pretty well. In fact, we have a children's hymn that is written. About this verse. I'm going to read it in in the King James, and then I want to read it in. The New Translation, Verse 16. Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another. And the Lord hearkened and heard it in a book of remembrance was written before him For them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. I really appreciate the way this is rendered in the New Translation. And they shall be unto me a peculiar treasure. A special treasure. Saith the Jehovah posts in the day that I prepare, and I will spare them, as a man's spirit, his own Son that serveth him. This treasure, if I understand it right in our chapter and we could turn over to Matthew chapter 13, and we find there that the Kingdom of heaven is likened into a treasure that is hid in a field. And a man when he found it, I found it, he hide it, and for the joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. It's interesting this treasure is speaking about your life in my life as hidden Christ. And back in Isaiah, it says that he is going to. I'm going to read that again. It says, Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors. He's the one that is creating that color. And interestingly enough, color is what makes a precious stone precious. And that color comes from the trials that are in our lives Uncle Matt was just talking about. Trials in our lives. I believe that. There are beauties, there are glories that are are being formed in your life and mine as we go through trials. It's the pressure, it's the heat of the trial that creates the color in the stones and they all these stones, it's very interesting all this precious stones that are that we read of in the word of God. Are transparent stones. The light shines through the stone. And like Uncle Tim was mentioning, just to connect these thoughts together, it's like that salt that that adds to the flavor of something that that it's applied to. And what the Lord wants in our lives, in your life and my life as we pass through these trials is he wants there to be glory for himself. That's what he is working in your life and my life. The power is of God. We don't have to worry about that. To go back to Mark's illustration of the flashlight, he's the source of the power. The power is infinite. But we can have a dirty lens and we if there's if there's things in our lives that are not right and we've read about them at the beginning of this chapter that hinders the light from shining through us so that others can see the glory of God. Dear young person, dear child, God wants to shine through you. And reveal himself to others. And so that's why I read these verses in Malachi. It says that they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord was listening. The Lord was listening and he values it. He calls it his peculiar treasure, His most valued treasure. That's amazing. That you and I can be valued by God because we speak to each other. About his blessed son. We have that opportunity. It doesn't matter how old we are.

Well, you can be five years old. And speak to each other about the glories of Christ, about the love of the Lord Jesus. And the Lord values that so much, he said he wrote it down in a book. And He's going to make us His treasure. There's a coming day. And we could, we won't take the time, but we could turn over to Revelation and we could find that these precious stones make up the foundation of a coming city. And they're going to shine. We're going to shine for the glory of God. Blessing of others. He wants to use your life and he wants to use my life. And it can be something very, very small. We were talking about it earlier on Friday. That ministry is simply service. Whether it be one of the young kids that was walking around with a cart this morning picking up trays, take him over and put him in the window. That's a service for the Lord and he values it, but he values it even more. When we open our mouths and we speak about the Lord Jesus to each other, I want to encourage you to do that. It's a peculiar treasure. It's a special treasure to the Lord. I always enjoy that person. I'm not sure what time the meeting goes still but. 1030 Enjoy the verse in Proverbs 17 and eight that speaks of the precious stone. But a gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it, and whithersoever attorney that prospereth. And so those in line with brother Steve is saying, and he's made us precious stone, that whatever way we turn, we should shine forth that glory for him, shouldn't we? And I think in John 17, it speaks really clearly of that glory and and what we're to do with it. Maybe if we just read that verse 2 verses there in John 17 verse 22 and the glory which thou gave us me I have given them that you and I. That they may be one, even as we are one, I and them and thou and me. That they may be made perfect in one. Now here's our responsibility, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me. I've read those verses so many times. And leftover that responsibility. I didn't realize that that's what that that little line means in that verse. And that the world may know that thou hast sent me,

how is the world going to know? The only way the world can know is that you and I are shining forth that glory to all those around. And it is difficult, as our brother has pointed out. It's tough. The next few verses in our chapter, which we didn't get very far, but says we are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed, and so on. And it just reminds me of the verse that I love so much in Romans chapter 8. I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy. Be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in. And so to be that peculiar treasure, as their brother has pointed out, reminds me of the verse in First Peter Two that says that we're a peculiar people. The margin says purchased, purchase people purchase treasure redeemed by the blood of Christ, that we might shine forth that glory while we're here. When people have something that is valuable, a treasure, they usually put it in a very safe place and. In a safe box, or if a museum has a piece of art that's very valuable, it will put it on display, but they might put bullet through grass around it. We have this treasure, the knowledge of the glory of God. What did God do? He put it in earth and fastest. That's us. We are the earth in the past. The treasure is the knowledge of. Isn't it like God to do that? That he would use us to shine forth that treasure into this world? You know, an earthen vessel is not worth very much. It's fragile, it can break easily. And in this case that's a good thing. That's a good thing. Why did he put that treasure, the knowledge of the glory of God in an earth investment. So the attention would not be on the vest, but the attention would be on the tread. And so these next verses, as a brother referred to, what is the whole point of the Lord allowing us to go to these things is that our earthen vessels might break.

We are allowed to go by the perfect wisdom of God. Through circumstances in our life, and it will be different for each one of us, but each circumstance has, Matt said if it makes us better, if we take it from the Lord, we will realize, we will feel our own weakness, we will feel that we are earthen vessels. And will break us down. They're a perfect servant of the Lord. The light would go in and it would shine forth without any filter. The same strength as it comes in, it would shine forth. Lord Jesus was that John the Baptist could say that he had to become glass. The Lord had to become more. And that's the whole point. If we want to be servants of the Lord here, we need to realize our own weakness, our own frailty. But we need to realize too that the Lord has entrusted us with this treasure. And if the world is going to see anything of the light of God, it's going to come through these earthen vessels. That the more they're broken down, the less we rely on ourselves, and as the younger we are, the harder that is because we are strong. We don't wake up with aches and pains. We haven't gone through all those things yet that have humbled us. You know, we have bodies of humiliation, and so here at the beginning of this, we have a treasure, but it's in an earthen vest. Let's not make more of that earthen vessel than what it is. It's made to be broken so that the light can shine through. Matt mentioned it already, but on that same subject again. Michael Brian would be very upset if I made a lot of Michael Bryan, but I will just say that I have never seen a vessel of such power as to these things that Michael Bryan, He is a vessel that as far as the earthen structure is concerned, it is completely gone, is relegated to a wheelchair where he has. The capacity to maybe move his head a little bit. But if you go and talk to him, you take the time to go talk to him, to encourage him, He will spend so much time talking to you about how good God is. Yeah, that his face will glow and he can't even breathe because he's struggling so hard to get enough air. And to tell you more about it. Right. That's what we're talking about. Exactly where the earthen vessel is. Not even. Not even an aspect involved in it anymore. But it's all Christ. And I'm telling you what, there is power in that testimony. If somebody from off the street came in and saw that man speak of Christ, I don't know how they could even not take it. Just like a tremendous amount of weight because there's nothing of Viking. It's all crazy. It's incredible. He's got his forecast to make us to bring us to that point. In our lives, he do things in our lives so we can get to that point. I was telling brother Matt yesterday that Job needed to come to the point where he says even if God kills me, even his his lightning, I will trust him. Even if he takes my life, I will trust him and. He's working in our lives to bring us to to that point. Brother Joshua wasn't saying that we should don't use ever our gifts to bring attention to ourselves. And Paul says what you have that is not given unto you. And if he's given unto you, why you boast about it? You are nothing. What we have is giving to us. The ability to walk, to breathe, to work, to speak is given to us. And every day when we wake up, we should say thank you Lord, for a new day, that you letting me wake up and speak to you. So it's striking to see how our bodies are spoken of in this chapter into the 5th chapter, and we've been speaking about how frail we are. In these natural bodies and really have nothing to boast in or of save our Lord Jesus Christ and. You know, to think that we might put ourselves in a place or position that. Would receive any glory is unthinkable really, when you think about what has been done in us by God and his sovereign mercy and grace. You know when we think about that.

It it, it ought to humble us to the dust and you think here in this chapter, I appreciate it how it has been brought out by others, but I highlighted them in this chapter. About how attention is given to the glory of God in Christ and to the frailty of man. And you notice in verse seven, we've already touched on it. Bodies are spoken of as earthen vessels. And verse 10 it's it's spoken of as a body. Verse 11, it's mortal flesh. Verse 16, it's the outward man. And into chapter 5, verse one, we have an earthly house and a Tabernacle. All various ways to reference our body, but what is in those phrases that gives any thought that there is anything of strength or glory or power in us, in our natural condition, in this natural body of ours? Nothing. It all suggests nothingness and frailty. And so it's good that we've appreciated the comments that my brethren have been, have, have, have made already. To to demonstrate, to to explain to us that brother we're nothing and he is everything. Unfortunately, our time is up. Father, we're thankful that we have the scriptures to turn to. We're thankful that weekend. In a little bit more of the Lord. You see that we have a role. But it's to the glory of the Lord. So we just pray that this might be manifest in our life, each in our capacity. Thanks again that we have opportunity to sit down over the scriptures and liberty to enjoy what we trust. Father that you have for us here today. We give thanks in Jesus worthy and precious name, Amen.

Still Waters Family Camp: 2018, 2 Corinthians 4:1-5

Reading

Let's pray a gracious, loving God and her Father. We ask for Thy help this morning as we open Thy precious word. We pray that Thou is leading. Guide us to just the right portion. We pray that Thou would lead by Thy Holy Spirit that there would be blessing and encouragement for each one that is here. We pray that Thou wouldst lead and guide and give us something for our hearts. Lord, we just pray for this. We ask this in Thy worthy precious name, Amen. I wonder if we can make consider second printing support and if the Lord allows it going to chapter 5. Unless somebody else has something before them, but I guess my exercise behind. These chapters, as I feel there's a lot of practical instruction that we can get as believers. And then the 4th chapter of Second Corinthians. The Apostle Paul is of various. Exercises that he had which are good for us as Christians. There's a lot of practical things that we can get out of this. The thrust behind the chapter really is to have Christ flowing out of our lives. And in an example to the world, and then he touches on those various things that might hinder that and how to

maybe get rid of them out of our lives. And then in Chapter 5. You know, it touches on the coming scene of glory, speaks about the judgment seat of Christ, touches on the love of Christ. So if it's the mind of the brethren, I wonder if maybe this would be a profitable portion for us to take out. Therefore, seeing we have this Mr. Not as we have received mercy, we paint not renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, nor handling the word of God as easily, but by manners. Manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our golf will be hit, it is said to them that are lost in whom the God of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not unless the light of the stories. Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God. Society of the world. Preached not ourselves, but these by Christ. Use the Lord and ourselves your servants, for you to say for God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness. I signed in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the Excellency of the power may be of God is out of us. We dare it. We are a couple of every side. Yet not distressed. We are precise, but not in despair. Persecuted and offers shaken, passed down to now destroyed, always worrying about in the body of the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body when we which live are not always delivered. I do that for Jesus sake, for the light also Jesus might be manifest in our pleasure. So then death worketh in us to life and. We have in the same spirit of faith, according it as it is written. I believe and therefore have I spoken. We also believe in therefore to be knowing that he was raised up. The Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with years for all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might do the Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving I've been with me now unto the glory of God, For which Cosby faint not, but through our hours, man parish at the end is renewed day by day.

Which he thought for a moment, worketh for us a bar more clean and internal way of Lord, while we let not have the things which are seen, but the things that are which are not seen, or the things which are temporal, those things that that are not seem very terrible. I. Well, as I mentioned, having this chapter number of moral exercises that are brought forward that would. Be good for us to. Pay attention to and employ in our own lives so that. Of each one of us. Representation of Christ in this world. And is very. The testimony of these rules about those things are not hindered and. First verse. It's interesting that he mentions this word painting. You might say a problem today has always been an issue with just throwing our hands up and giving in. Talking to brother recently about this. And just anytime that there's a work of God going on. We can always take it to the bank that the enemy is going to sow his full weight at that work, try to disrupt it, be it a collective work or an individual work. And at the end of the day, trying to stumble us as believers. And if we give in to that tendency is just to again throw our hands up, throw in the towel and and and be wearied by it. And it's interesting here, the Apostle Paul no doubt was a man of like passions like ourselves. And no doubt he felt the weight of of of the persecutions he endured and, and the work of the enemy to try to stop his ministry. And but he says, you know, we, his exercise was not to faint. And I think that's something that, you know, we need courage today, don't we? That's good. I have a. That the Lord wants willing servants, seeing we. Ministry. The Lord's given every single one of us, even the youngest kid in this room, a service, a job that we can do for him. And it is so easy to be discouraged by the attacks at the end, by our own failures, he says. As we have received mercy, we faint not. And so I think it's important for all of us to understand that. It's been put this way, God doesn't fall. Qualified. Qualified. Are we willing to follow in the world? They look for humility and being smart and, and being hungry. That's that's what they talk about. You know, if you're looking for a good employee, that's what you're looking for hunger. They want that drive. They're humble, they're not full pride and they're smart. But all the Lord wants is willingness. But we will, and the Lord says, I want to use you. I've also heard he says that he doesn't need our doesn't want our abilities, he wants our availability. I think it's. A concern to it, I know. Thank you. Not everyone mentioned over 24 verse 12. Fell around each other, wax cold, and I know a little bit about what depression is and becoming under the influence that plays around.

Mr. Harvey says because lawlessness shall prevail, the love of most shall relax. Hold. That's definitely an issue that we have to deal with in the world where so much is going awry. It seems like the lesson maybe things are out of control, but they're not out of control. God's allowing all these things to come to pass and. That's the status of things in this world and it affects our hearts as well. And and there's so much wrong. So what's the news? I can't fight against this. I'm about to be overwhelmed and overcome by this, and that's an actual tendency, so that's why we have. So we can be together and encourage one another to press on that in his birthday. And even though things are in bad shape all around us and even in Christian testimony, we don't have to throw our hands in Twitter. Not the second epistle of. Any of the officials in the testimony written from the perspective of the testimony. And so this is talking for Indians. In the 1St fiscal 2. The. Perspective was the defense of the of the official list view the Church of God rather than the Lord, and 2nd of course. Things are out of life. Whether it's just been mentioned, we we know from. Technically it says that in the last day of perilous times. So I was talking about just the general aspect of things in the last days. We have that aspect, but then we also have. The discouragement of the ruling of the testimony of God going on around. So what's that do so naturally make this discouraged, It makes us. Not on a put forth energy towards the work of the work. The expectation is that this is the time that's the most important to be faithful in things services for the Lord ministry and and you know we we do the revelation two and two we get the churches there you see. The first three churches of the latest speaks of. But there's a message to the entire church. But then in the last one, In the last four. Particularly the older. And so because it's why it's at it, because the collective testimony was such that there was. It's not much good to say tonight, says the majority of the collective testimony. And so the thrust of it is to the to the individual and the overcomer. And so in these last days, when we walk through these difficult times, there may even be failure around us. We may even have to deal with the. Problems within our own local assemblies. We may have a lot of things that that mark failure both in the world at large and also in the Christian testimony, but as it says. If we go to Hebrews chapter 12, it's a little different. Little different context here, but I I like what it says. In verse 12. Hebrews 12 and verse 12 Wherefore lift up the hands of chaining down on the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet. Let's thought which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed. And so, though there is a great deal of. Of. Stuff around us that can be discouraging. There's also a great deal to take encouragement from. And if we go back a couple of verses into chapter 3 here, it says now the Lord. The Lord is there is liberty. But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. So even in this day of ruin, even in this time of much discouragement, we have the resource of focusing our attention on Christ. And what the outflow from that should be, is the characteristics of Christ should be displayed in our life. And I want to talk more about it as we get a little further into the chapter, but I.

It's hard to say what your favorite verse and. Is but there's don't know me. I often quote verse six. I love 2nd Corinthians 4 and verse 6 and it says for God had commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in our hearts to give the light and knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And then the next verse says that we have this treasure in earthen vessels. It was a distinct decision by God to shine. That knowledge into our hearts, it wasn't something that we sought after. He came to us to give us the knowledge of the glory of God. In the face of Jesus Christ, isn't that beautiful? Have a lot to take encouragement from and a lot of incentive and motivation to to be conformed into the image of Christ. One thing that really helped us what we do whatever trials or experience or whatever the way is down by giving the Lord thanks support it says in first lesson is growing his thanks on the Lord for all things and James says count it all joy my friend when you call in a

diverse trials, but that's what will give us victory, but then our eyes will get off the circumstances off our brother and our. Situation and on the Lord and when we give thanks to the Lord for something that's difficult there's. He's just like he's ready to embrace us and fill us with his victory that he wants to give us. So just. This encouragement, you know, sometimes. All somewhere else in this book, he said. In First Corinthians he talked about all the things he went through, like persecutions and imprisonments and afflictions, and he said somewhere in that list he says in necessities. So sometimes the difficulties in life, they're actually for our blessing if we can give thanks for them and. The Lord and like it says in Philippians, casting all your care upon him and rejoice evermore. So if we give thanks, the Lord can put a joy in our heart even in the most difficult situation and then we'll that will help us to not faint. Just a little word to help us know how not to faint. Of this and and I was really glad Tim that you connected it to chapter 3 and verse 18 because we have a special word here at the beginning of chapter 4 it says therefore and that is a is a link to the chapter before So what we have in this chapter is directly related to what we have in verse 17 and 18 and we already read that but turn back into the Old Testament for. A couple verses here. The first verse I want to to look at is in Exodus chapter 24. And I. I want to set this in context. So in Exodus chapter 24, we have a really interesting portion that I've been thinking about recently for a little while, and this was at the giving of the law, and I just want to read just a couple verses. Verse 9 then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and abide you and 70 of the elders of Israel. They went up into the mouth, and they saw the God of Israel, and there was under his feet, as it were, a paved work of a sapphire stone, as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. This is amazing. This is an incredible picture here of glory, of the glory of God in giving the law. And it says that they saw the God of Israel and under his feet were this pavement of sapphire. That's a precious stone and it and it would have been just incredibly glorious. Not only was it sapphire stone, but it was clear the light shone through this stone.

And it would have been incredibly glorious to have been on the mount at the giving of the law hair and to have seen this. But it's interesting, the effect. So let's turn over to Chapter 33. And we won't go into a whole lot of detail, but in these intervening chapters we know that the children of Israel sin very grievously. Before the Lord. Very, very grievously before the Lord, Moses was up in the mount, and the Lord had given him the table of stone on which the Lord had written the law. And as Moses came down out of the mount, he he threw the stone, the tables of stone. On the ground and they were broken to pieces. Because of the sin of of the children of Israel. But at the end of that. That Moses asks a special request of God and I want to just read a few verses here in Exodus chapter 33 verse 18, he says, and he said, Moses said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And he God said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and will show mercy. On whom I will show mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock, and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by. I will put thee in the cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by, and I will take my hand. Take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts. And my face shall not be seen. And so this happened. And what was the effect? Well, we'll turn over just to Chapter 34, to the end of Chapter 34. And we're going to read just a few verses here, verse 31. Sorry, Verse 30. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come nigh unto him. And Moses called unto them. And Moses and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him. And Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh, and he gave them the commandment. All that the Lord had spoken with him in the Mount Sinai tell Moses had done speaking. With him he put a veil on his face. But when Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him. He took the veil off until he came out, and he came out and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. And all the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses face shone. And Moses put a veil on his face again until he went in to speak with him. And this is just a a little illustration that we have in the Old Testament that I think it's a beautiful illustration. Of what we have in verse 18, we all so each one of us have this opportunity. We all with an open face, beholding as in a glass of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by Mr. That's what happened to Moses. Moses beheld the glory of the Lord and he was changed. He was physically changed. It says that his face shone and it says it over and over again several times. We read that his face shown the brethren, we have the opportunity by faith. To look at the glory of the Lord and as we do that, there's going to be a change in us. Now we see as it were, through a glass darkly. That means that it's kind of like we're we're looking through a window that that is maybe frosted and and we can't really see as clearly as we would like to see. But we can see the glory of the Lord shining through that window.

And that's what it says here. We have this opportunity and if we take that opportunity, it's going to change us so that we faint not. Therefore, seeing we have this ministry as we have received mercy, we faint not as we take time to look at the glory of the Lord. The effect is going to be that we're not going to faint. When we deal with these adversities that Josh was talking about, a lot of it has to do with our perspective. If we look at it from the standpoint of. Just being overcome by these things that are around us. We're we're going to get discouraged and we're going to get down. But like Josh said. Anytime there is an effort made for the purpose of. Bringing glory to God, the enemy of our souls is going to have his entire heart invested in trying to cause something to disrupt that effort and. So. What's the perspective, how we are we looking at these things that happen that are discouraging from the standpoint of just a happen chance, there's nothing that happens but happened chance. Everything is ordered of God. Oh, and the enemy of our souls steps in. Why doesn't the Lord step in and stop it? Because He's trying our faith. He wants to know, are we going to trust Him in spite of these adversities? Are we going to just throw in the towel like Josh was saying? Or are we going to see his hand in this and are we going to wait on His power? You know, there's that verse. First Corinthians, I think it's chapter 2. It says that your faith stand not on the wisdom. Men, but in the power of God, are we going to trust in Him to come in and over overcome these things? You know, I'm trying to find it. I can't put my finger on it, but in the axe the disciples were being persecuted for preaching the gospel and they were commanded to stop preaching the gospel and they didn't. They kept going and it says that they, I can't remember the exact terminology, but they counted it all joy that they were found worthy to suffer for the name of Christ. Why, how could they say that? Well, because they could see beyond the immediate adversity as to the glory that it brought God and I, there's another aspect of it and something that I was sharing with with Josh earlier about is that those of us that have been involved in this camp have come to expect in the, in the weeks leading up to the camp, various things by the enemy of our soul to come in and cause discouragement. I'll just share a couple from Taiwan. Monday my irrigation pump went out, you know, and normally I would probably pound my head on the table and just be extremely frustrated, but it was par for the course. I expected. It was like, OK, this is what's next. You know, the Lord worked through that. We handled that. And yesterday morning my, my well pump went out and same thing. You know, normally I would probably be pretty upset by that, but again, it's par for the course and so. To me. Now, having been exposed to this over a number of years now, it's an affirmation as to the benefit that this work has for the people of God and for God himself. And so when the enemy of our souls starts sticking his hands into our lives and messing things up like that, what's the perspective? Are we going to get discouraged by that, or are we going to recognize that he's doing that because he's trying to disrupt the work that's of real value? And we're going to see the hand of the Lord behind it, testing our faith, and we're going to trust Him to work through it. Has he ever failed it? He never has.

So it's a matter of perspective in large part. 1012 on this first version, but I have a question the kids and that is it says therefore, seeing we have this ministry. Number one, what is the word ministry mean? Somebody tell me what the word ministry means. We don't often often use this word in our day-to-day lives. Somebody give me a definition for ministry. Michael. Nope. That's what we that's what we normally associate with it, but it's actually not the definition of ministry. Jed. No guess, Cody. What? Nope. Something that we each have here. I'll give you guys a hint everybody. Signed up for this. Before we got here. Does that give a a good enough hint, Kevin? Starts with an S. Service service. So ministry is just a different word for service. We have a service. It's kind of interesting. So my next question is who's this week? Is that talking about Uncle Tim, Uncle Josh and Uncle Matt and Walt? Is that who he's talking about? The people that are doing most of the talking here. Who's this we? I'll put it this way, I want you to raise your hand if you're part of this week. Everybody that's in this room that's above 5 years old should have their hand up, right? Because we can take dishes and put them in that in that window, and that's a service for the Lord. OK, so I'm going to make this really, really personal. Each one of us are part of this week. So we should sit up and take notice and and listen, right? Because we're, we're part of this. We have this ministry as we have received mercy. What's mercy? Trevor, have you received mercy? What's mercy? Toby, can you help him out? Yeah, not getting what we deserve in the way of punishment. So we haven't. This is kind of interesting to connect these two together. So we've escaped some punishment, we've received mercy, and as a result we have a ministry. So each one of us that are saved that have. Escape the punishment that is due to our sins. We have a service to others. And it's something that we should be willing to do and not think. So there were some of us that climbed the hill this morning. And you know, I'll have to be honest with you, I had to stop a couple times on the way up the hill and suck a little bit extra air. Because I'm not as in as good shape as I should, but. The faint is to give up, and I think we've been talking about that. So I just want to make this really, really practical for each one of us. Each one of us have the ability, like we were talking about, to see the glory of the Lord and to be changed. But as a result of that, we have a ministry, we have a service, Each one of us have a service, and you all have signed up for part of that service. It's not just those of us that are a little older that might be.

Have some responsibility associated. We all have this service. The Lord said that the Son of man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister. And in John chapter 13 verse 12 it says so after he that is the Lord Jesus had washed their feet and had taken his garments and was sat down again. He said unto them, Know you what I have done to you? You call me master and Lord, and you say, well for our so I am. If I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet. He also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. So if the Lord Jesus can humble himself to the point of ministering to his disciples, you and I very much so have a responsibility to be in service for the Lord's people, and ultimately that's a service for the Lord himself. Allow me to quote Mr. CHM. May we be instant in season, out of season, and in no wise discouraged by the condition of things around us, but rather find in that very condition and urgent reason for more intense devotedness. So, related thought to what you just said, Dad, has the glory of the Lord changed? What do you young boys think? No, the glory is not changed, not a little bit. We may not be able to see it very clearly right now because we're looking through a glass darkly, but the glory of the Lord has changed, has not changed. And in fact, earlier in chapter 3, we find out that the glory. Well, maybe I should read it. So verse 9, for if the administration of condemnation be glory, that's what we read about in the Old Testament in Exodus, much more doth administration of righteousness exceed in glory. So the glory has not changed, the objective has not changed, Christ has not changed, He's still as glorious and we're going to behold that. With. Out anything in between really, really soon. But we have the opportunity right now by faith to look at that glory. So then we get to verse two and it says that. We should not handle the Word of God deceitfully, but by the manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. So there's those in this world that would, as it says in the beginning of that verse, we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness. So there are those that are. Walking in craftiness and and handling the word of God deceitfully or dishonestly. But we have the opportunity to handle the Word of God in truth. How do we do that? Well, when we were up on the mountain this morning praying, one of the things that was mentioned is that we would let the word of God speak to us. And receive it for what it says, instead of taking our words and our thoughts and applying to them to the Word of God. I don't know if I can make this very clear, but when we bring our thoughts to the Word of God, that's when we end up, as it were, here.

Handling the Word of God deceitfully. And and not having the ministry or the manifestation of truth. So we have to be careful that when we open the word of God that we, as David said, search me and try me, that we allow it to have its effect on our lives and our hearts. And that is going to help us to hold the truth and be able to give it to other people so that there's blessing. And that's what we desire here at camp. And that's one of the reasons why we named it Still Waters is because. The picture is of sheep, and sheep cannot drink if there is turbulent water. Sheep need to have still water. They actually will look at at the water and if they can see their own reflection in the water, then they'll drink of it. And so the the picture there is of a situation that we can readily receive the word of God and have that refreshment and that benefit that is so necessary in our lives. My brother once said in the Sunday school in that revelation, that is God giving a revelation of his thoughts to us. Revelation is God telling us what we couldn't figure out by ourselves. I thought that was a good explanation. My brother decided one time that God spoke to him just like he spoke to the apostles said I pray and God talks to me every morning. Well, you know, it's a funny thing. It didn't go too long before he started believing things that were contrary to this book. Because we can't trust our own hearts, God has given us what we need in this book. We don't need to go any further than this book because if we do, we a lot of times get ourselves into trouble. So I remember it being said of Mr. Kelly that he bowed to this book like an old fool. May we be that foolish? I have a couple notes. Three conditions of a vessel, and I don't remember who mentioned this, but you think of a vessel as something that carries. You think of this afternoon, we're going to be out playing outside and and we're all going to want something. We're out in the hot sun. What are we going to want? We're going to want a drink of water. Well water just doesn't hang out in the air. You can't just go grab water like in outer space. You have to carry it in something. And that's what a vessel is, like a water bottle. But the thing that makes the bottle valuable is what it carries. If somebody had an empty water bottle and they said here you can have an empty water bottle. Gee, thanks for thinking of me. So there's a clean vessel in this verse 2. There's an empty vessel in verse five and a broken vessel or a crackpot in verse 7. But these things, if the Lord's going to use us in this ministry has been so beautifully brought out, we have to be clean inside. If if I if you're out in the field. You need. Drink of water, you're really super thirsty. And I go and I find a mud puddle. And I take my water bottle, I dump out all the clean water and I fill it full of muddy water and kind of let some of that out and then go put clean water. And then are you going to drink it? Is it going to be a help to anybody? No, because it's not clean. It's all dirty. It's nasty. So we have renounce, but we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty. And Steve was just talking about how we need to let the word speak to us. It says it's A2 sided, a double sided sword. There's one side for somebody else and one side for us. And it says in Matthew 7 it says, Judge not lest ye be judged, For with the same measure that ye measure, it will be measured unto you. So we ought to be fair. We got to be a clean vessel before the Lord that we're honest with ourselves.

Before the Lord and He'll show us stuff that isn't right in our lives, and it hurts. And we have to say, if we're going to grow, we have to say, Lord, you're right. Like if we lose our temper, the Lord will show us you lost your temper and we can't disable. They made me mad. That's not the point, Lord, I own it. I lost my temper. Help me and he does. It's beautiful. And then we can be used. Then we can fulfill that ministry. What is it that we carry in this vessel? They're talking about. It's spoken of here as a treasure. What is specifically spoken of? In our chapter here, that is that which we carry in our vessel. I'm going to suggest that it's what we have at the end of verse six, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God and the face of Jesus Christ. I believe that's what it's Speaking of and it's talking about the treasure that we carry in our vessels. I don't know about anybody else, but that's pretty exercising. Is our vessel fit for that treasure? Are we corrupting our vessel with things that would dishonor the treasure that we carried? In the best. You know, we, we spoke about service earlier and. You know, I, I think if we exercise our service in a proper way, it's going to. Manifest Christ, of course, and it's going to be for the good of others. And. The danger is that we can almost take up with this ministry that we've all been given, as it's already been mentioned. And use that to exalt ourselves. And that would not be the mind of the Lord, would it? Because ultimately that is taking away from the glory of Christ that might be seen in our life to exalt Him. And it would be putting that on myself. And so we have in verse 5, just back up for a minute that it says, for we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves your servants. For Jesus sake. So when the Lord Jesus walked through this world, did he ever do one thing to please himself? He did nothing to please himself. Scriptures say that Christ pleased not himself. And I have to hang my head because I don't think I can say that. Too often I do things to please myself. And so it's important that as Christians. Not only as we've been commenting already to kind of get rid of those things that. Are dubious and wrong in our lives be a hidden things as we noticed or things that we're carrying on in walking in craftiness or deceit or. Using the word of God in a wrong way.

But we need to keep before us that. We're not out to please ourselves. And if we're going to try to and do that, it's going to take away from this ministry that we've been given, It's going to taint it, it's going to mar it, and it's not going to shine. And you notice too. He says that we preach not ourselves by Christ Jesus the Lord and I think. The impact of our ministry, again, it's just not the guys up here. Talking. You know, our ministry is wide and it's very from, as Uncle Steve said, putting the dishes away or whatever the Lord has put into our hands to do. The impact should be to glorify Christ and and and affect others in a positive way and move them closer to the Lord. I believe all true ministry will exalt Christ and whatever shape or form it it takes, it will ultimately move others and ourselves closer to the Lord, will it not? So verse 3. Is a lot like a children's him we sing. What? What him am I thinking about? Guys know. Starts with the word this. Anybody get it? This little light of mine. So this verse says, if our gospel be hid. It's hid to them that are lost. So we can, we can hide our gospel, and shamefully. I think probably each one of us have to hang our heads and say that we've. Hidden. The gospel that has been entrusted to us to share with others, this is part of that ministry or that service that we're talking about earlier. We can hide it. Song says put it under a bushel, no. Or under a basket, no. We gotta let it shine. I want to challenge each one of us to let it shine. Here we can hide it, but it has an impact on those that need it the most. That's these, the ones that are lost. Sadly we have in verse four, in whom the God of this world hath blinded. The minds of them that believe not so there is a active work of Satan to hinder the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. From shining forth. And Satan would like to hinder it in our lives. He would like us to hide it. And the apostle is saying here, let's not faint. Let's in light of the glory of God that we have before us, let's let it shine. It says of Moses in the Old Testament that we read, it says that he put a veil on his face. And I think that that's the reference that is being made here, that we can put a veil on her face and hide that glorious gospel. I think it's so beautiful. Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ. Who is the image of God should shine unto them? We have the opportunity to let the glorious, the light of the glorious gospel of Christ shine out in our lives, and he wants us to do that. That's part of this ministry there, this service that we have such a privilege to be involved in. And letting our light shine for him. And what is our light? It's not our light, it's his light. I think it's so beautiful that we're literally just a mirror. You guys, You kids know what a mirror is.

You guys know what a mirror is? You look at it probably at least once a day maybe. So if you take a flashlight and you shine it into the mirror, what's going to happen? What's the mirror do? It reflects the light. What if that mirror is really dirty? What if we took a? We have some T-shirt paint. Over in one of those boxes over there, we took some T-shirt paint and sprayed it on the mirror and then took a light and shined it into the mirror. What's going to happen? Is that mirror going to reflect the light from that flashlight? Not very well. And so that is going back to our lives being clean so that we can reflect the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. So we talked about service and like Steve said, this is something that each one of us needs to be exercised about, is something that's been very much on my heart of late. And some of you young people have already heard me talk about this, but I would say that. One of the greatest services, One of the most important services of a Christian is to carry the gospel message. In chapter 5 there's a verse that says now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by. We pray you in Christ that be reconciled to God. So what that's saying is that because. Christ is no longer physically in this world presenting the gospel. He's chosen us. He's made us to be ambassadors for him to go about that service of speaking to others of the hope that's in us so that they might be brought to Christ and if we don't fulfill that service. It's dark there. There's no presenting of the hope that God has offered to this world. We're the ones that that bring that message. If we don't do it, then who's going to? Nobody and so. I, you know, I, I would. I've said this before, I don't count myself to have the gift of an evangelist. But I love preaching the gospel, and Timothy was told to do the work of an evangelist. Timothy maybe wasn't an evangelist from the standpoint of a spiritual gift. Sounds to me like he was kind of a timid guy. But he was exhorted by the apostle Paul to do the work of an evangelist. So. Even though you and I may not be evangelists spiritually, as far as our gift goes, we still have the responsibility of being ambassadors for Christ and doing the work of an evangelist. There's no other way that this world to get that message. As we carry that message, as our brother mentioned, we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. Out in the ball field, we take a big old 5 gallon container of water. Well, what would it be if it was all clean inside, but we took empty milk jugs and they're all clean and we put the empty milk jugs in the five gallon container and then all that would be left would just be a little bit of water. How effective would that be? It wouldn't be very effective and that's what happens when we go to minister and we're and it's about us. It's not very effective, it's not very helpful. There's a horrendous amount of work. Think how many loads you'd have to take out to the ball field. To give everybody a drink of water if most of your bucket is full of air. And we don't preach ourselves, and the test is what are we trying to accomplish. And as our brother mentioned, all good ministry is a glorification to Christ. It's all about Him, it's not about us. And if we're trying to look good, I've heard it explained this way. You can either have the blessing or you can have the glory. The glory belongs to God, and if we try and get it, we're stealing from Him.

And when we steal from him, we lose the blessing. And it would be like being at a wedding and you see the bride and the groom and they're up there. And if I'm at the wedding and I'm going around and I bump into everybody, hey, don't I look nice? Look at this tide. Doesn't this look good? Oh, look at me, look at my new shoes. Double S look good. You just feel like whatever, it's not about you. This is, you know, this is about this couple that are getting married. Well, that's what happens in our lives when we try and look good. We go around and bump into everybody. Don't I look at look at these new shoes. Doesn't that look good? Oh, look at my new shirt. Isn't that nice? Really. And what

happens is we lose the blessing. God wants to bless us. That's His heart's desire. You see that through the Old Testament, over and over and over and over and over. But if we steal that glory, then we lose the blessing. We want to be empty vessels. We want to be able to carry that gospel, that light to other people. And we get a blessing when we do that job. It's not. The Lord knows what He's doing, and it's the right thing. So maybe we can start or 6. Next time. Our God and Father, who just thank thee for shining. The light of the knowledge of Thy glory into our hearts in the face of Jesus Christ. We thank You for this treasure. I just pray that Thou will help us to carry it in vessels that are meat. And fit to be carrying such a treasure. And we just pray that that will help us to not hide the treasure, but be willing to share it with others that they might come into the same blessing. We just thank you for this portion that we've had before us. We pray that all hope make it good to each of our hearts. Thank you for the practicality of it on our day. And we just commit the rest of the day to thee for thy honor and glory. And I just pray that it would be. For blessing for each one here we think of many that are still traveling and we pray for that kind of keeping for them. We just commit this today. And the name of our Lord Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Lorneville Conference: 2012, 2 Corinthians 4:15

Reading

2005 Two 7. And. 3/5. Michigan products are ordered. Today you're all right, yes. So I don't know why I'm talking to you. 2nd Corinthians 5. At least for this meeting.

It would be suitable with the brethren I was thinking of. The latter part of the 2nd Corinthians 4 in addition. Starting from verse, uh. About verse umm. UH-15 and going on into the 5th chapter that uh. In the mind of the brethren. Some brother would read from, uh, say verse 15 of the 4th chapter. 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 reading from verse 15. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the Thanksgiving of many redounds to the glory of God. For which 'cause we faint not. But though our inward men perish, yet the inward I'm sorry, but though our outward men perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. Or the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Or we know that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved. We have a building of God and house. Not made with hands eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, if so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath brought us for the self, same thing as God, who also has given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in His body according to that which He has done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. But we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf. That ye may have somewhat to answer them with glory and appearance, and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us. Because we thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead, and that he died for all. That they which lived should not henceforth live under themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh? Ye know we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, or a new creation. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new, and all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ.

And hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to which that God was in the world. I'm sorry. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. And hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ. As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ. Had be reconciled to God, for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God. Well, the Apostle Paul. Wrote this. The epistle, umm, had various, uh, purposes in mind. Uh, we see this in the, uh, earlier part of the epistle that uh. There was, umm, you might say, misunderstanding, uh, among the Corinthians, uh, about, uh, Paul's purpose. He didn't come to Corinth, as he had, uh, intimated in his first epistle. And, uh, there seemed to be a lot of, uh, opposition to the apostle. There were those that were seeking to, uh, undermine his ministry in Florence and, uh. Impute wrong motives to him and so on. So the apostle takes up a lot in this, uh, epistle about ministry, the, the characteristics of a true minister of the Lord. He deals with that whole subject in great detail from, you might say, chapter 2 right through to Chapter 7. Uh, so sort of a parenthesis in the epistle. But, uh, it's beautiful to see the way he unfolds the. The characteristics of a true minister of the Lord, which no doubt he he manifested in his own pathway that's taken up in the third chapter, in the 4th chapter and so on. But umm, he does, umm, defend himself, if we might say I shouldn't probably use that term, defend himself, but, uh, the ministry that he had given up been given of the Lord to show that, uh, he was, umm, manifesting the true, uh, characteristics of, uh, a servant of the Lord in his sacrifice. He was a willing vessel. He was a broken vessel. He was a clean vessel. And those that were, uh, working with him. And so, uh, coming down to our passage here, uh, there is rock before us. Certain motives that really, uh, inspired the apostle to continue on in the ministry. So, starting in our passage here, all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the Thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God. So he says in the first epistle in the first chapter, that the persecutions that he went through, which he gives in detail there in the first chapter, were really for their sakes. Because the same comfort that he experienced in all those trials and tribulations were really for the blessing of the Lord's people, so that he could comfort others in their times of affliction and. Colossians. Capital One. She's here. The suffering of the apostles fall. And I don't think anybody suffered as much as the Apostle Paul next to the Lord Jesus Christ himself. As you read through what he experienced here, he speaks of it in uh. Verse 23. Are they ministers of Christ? I speak as a fool. I am more labor is more abundant in stripes of measure, in prisons, more frequent in death. Or of the Jews. Five times received by 40 strikes, save 1. Thrice was I eaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck a night in a day. I've been in the deep and journeying so often in perils of waters and perils of robbers. In peril by my own countrymen. In perils by the heathen. Imperils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, and the list goes on. In weariness and painfulness, in watching so often, In hunger and thirst and fastings often, and called in nakedness besides those things that are without that which cometh upon me daily. Just what I was thinking about. Saints of God. And it wasn't something that was off and on with him, you know, one week, uh, concerned about the church, the next week not so it says here daily. He had the care of all

the church, not just one assembly or two, but he was thinking about all the assemblies. So what an example your Pastor Paul is for each of us. You know any little thing that we do for the people of God seems quite miniscule compared to what the great apostle suffered was willing to suffer and love for Christ and for his people. But we see in this chapter that we started with how that.

It's amazing that the apostle could speak of these things as a light affliction. It would seem as a very heavy trial and affliction for the apostle to suffer as he did, but he speaks of a light affliction. Because it's in view of the coming glory. This is where he's talking about weight. Your parcel includes you and I with Himself. It works with for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Lord. How important it is to keep our eye on the future and think about where we're going. And really those things that are so difficult for us here in this world. We need to recognize. That these things are making the weight of glory that much more. So rather than shining the suffering and affliction. It's easy to speak about the resurrection and the power that's manifested there and the fact that we're going to experience this power because it tells us this in verse. Where we started, I should say before we started. And in any measure that we seek to follow the Lord and. Serve him and his people. There's going to be difficulties. They'll be suffering. But it's, it's a reward, isn't it? Well, what a great savior, not on he's the Savior, but the body was the soul of the spirit and the verse two in chapter one verse, uh, second Corinthians grace, BDU and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God, even the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercy and the God of all comfort comforts us in all of our contributions that we make be able to comfort them which are in any trouble. By the comfort, where would we ourselves our comfort of God?

That last person, Dave Dickey, often quoted that verse to me. Verse. And the glory. That should follow. You know, as the sufferings of Christ in connection with redemption. We have no cards with that. But as to the suffering in his life, the rejection, the pain? Sorrows and he went through as he dealt with men around him in unbelievable. Annual feelings towards himself. This we have. We have. Telegraph inter sufferings of Christ. And we can consider that whatever bidder cup is set before us. When we relate that to what it was for the Lord. In similar, yet so much greater circumstances. Ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. And then he gives an illustration. A woman when she is in travail, has sorrow because her hour has come, but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembers no more the anguish or joy that a man. Yes, there is suffering, yes there is sorrow, but there's the exceeding joy and there's the weight of it forever. And the future that we have is absolutely tremendous. And He, he gives us. As we wait on him, uh, the, the word given to the Apostle Paul as he passed through the difficulties that he had down here. My grace is sufficient for me. Not, maybe not will be, but my grace is sufficient. So for down here it's sufficient.

At his right hand, there are pleasures for everyone. Well, there's a tendency to become discouraged. Uh, and. Becoming weaker and we feel the infirmities of age as we get older. The outward man is is perishing. Umm, that's the, uh, the Tabernacle that we are in the tent, so to speak. It's temporary, but uh, the inward man, that is the soul and the spirit, they can be renewed day by day, something that, uh, we need to be exercised about on a daily basis. Uh. Would be strengthened by the Word of God and renewed. On a daily basis. And verse 28. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the call according to His purpose. So we have a calling. And God has a purpose in that calling. And uh, in verse 32 it says he that spare not his own son, but delivered him up for us all. How shall he not with them also? Really give us all things. My brother Philip Herman, he pointed out to me. Mr. Darby has a footnote. For Psalm 23, verse 6. And. I I looked it up and it was beautiful. For surely goodness and mercy. He's got only goodness and loving kindness. That's all. Shall follow me all the days of my life. So you read this first here Romans 828 We know that all things work together for good for them that love God. Well, what a great comfort this is to realize that God has only our good at heart every step of our pathway here. There's never a time when he's trying to hurt us, harm us. We have difficulties, no question about it, but they're all designed in love. They're an expression of His love to do it good in one way or another. So what a great comfort this is. And I was thinking too, in connection with Thanksgiving here in our chapter, verse 15. Thanksgiving. Is so blessed you know God appreciates.

But you know, it's wonderful how that when we take things to the Lord in prayer, He comes in. And he undertakes for us, he gives us deliverance in one way or another. That those traveling to this conference would be kept in safety on the road. There's a lot of dangers out there on the highway. But you know, the Lord has brought us to this place, and now we can thank Him for His goodness in bringing us to your safety. And there were those who gave thanks for this very thing. But this Thanksgiving redound to the glory of God, just as it tells us here, because it was God. Whose power and goodness brought us here in safety. That's the only reason we're here. And we can thank Him. It's a testimony to the world about us and to the greatness and the goodness of our God. How important Thanksgiving is. And I believe a thankful soul is a happy soul. You know, sometimes we get the impression like. We deserve this and that and the other thing because of what we've done. The truth of the matter is we don't deserve anything but God, in his goodness, he still blesses. And that's what Grace is all about. It's getting a favor we don't deserve. We ought to be just thanking the Lord. 24/7. For his goodness. Reality and truth of resurrection. That we have in these previous book. Also, First Corinthians 15 was something that was definitely under attack in Corinthians. But the truth of resurrection, all of this world goes into deep sorrow. We have it in the news all the time, great names to pass away, and that's the end of it. No, it's not the end of it. We know the Lord is risen from the dead and we are all going to be raised from the dead if we pass away. And if we don't pass away, when the Lord comes, you're all going to be changed. This has been. Operated for us, merited for us by the Lord himself on the cross. It's something that's so. Complete. And it's gonna be just the manifestation of something that's true right now. And it gives us, as we consider the scene where there's the valley of death and the shadows there and the sorrow and the pain and the suffering momentarily, it's all gonna be over and we're going to see all these wonderful things presented to us now in the scriptures. For our enjoyment, we haven't. I think it's first Timothy chapter one. It says manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light to the Gospel? It's through the gospel now, it's by faith that we, we have these things, but we have them. They're ours. That has been announced by the Lord Jesus. And it's now life and immortality that is what is before us. And it's only in the light of this truth that we can look at the president's fiction as being like, if our outward man perishes, oh, I'm getting old, I'm getting sick, I'm losing my means. Well, temporary.

We think of the apostles, laborers, I suppose you might say 30 years of Labor that our brother Wally referred to there in the. Further on in the epistle we would hardly consider it to be a a moment or light, but uh, in view of eternity, it really is. Umm. Very short time. And although perhaps it's not the reward that is prominent here, I think rather is the spiritual capacity that we are developing in our lives now. Umm. That's going to go on into eternity. Rewards we know are going to be given according to our measure of faithfulness. They are more connected with the Kingdom. But the eternal weight of glory is our spiritual capacity that we are forming down here. Every cup will be filled, as it has often been said, but the joy of each one will be full. But the the capacities will be different. So we are developing or forming that capacity now by our walk and our enjoyment of Christ. In our souls, that will be a a weight of glory that will go on, uh. An enjoyment that will go on into the

eternal state even beyond the the Kingdom period, which we know is the Millennium. But how, uh, often the things that are seen motivate us and drag us down. How often we. Are are, uh, controlled, we might say, by these earthly things instead of, uh, having our view on eternity? And the the weight of glory and. The things which are not seen and take spiritual energy. To grasp those things and to to enter into what God has. Traumas to us and what He has given to us even now to enjoy it takes spiritual energy. There are, as mentioned, so many things to hinder us from, uh, apprehending those eternal things, that portion that we have in Christ that, uh, is really, uh, our possession now. The things that are seen. Seoul also is the resurrection of. So we have the stars and the perfect glory, one from another. That's what we have the weight of glory in our portion there, the resurrection, the resurrection bodies and glory.

This morning encapsulates the whole crux of the matter in one verse. I believe that verse can be found in chapter 4, verse 11. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus sakes, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. That's what is our witness in our testimony, is it not how the Lord Jesus shines through you and me as channels of His grace and His blessing? I think when we just read that last verse of verse 18, sometimes we look at the channels and we judge the channels, not the message that comes through them because we look at what is seen. Often times the Lord and saving us doesn't change us physically. But he changes spiritually. So often times we judge the things that we and even the the tone of voice and those things that we naturally absorb. We tend to judge not seeing the totality of God's perfect work in the channel that he chooses as he chooses that Channel and works it. And this is one of the things I believe Paul was was struggling with. Paul had, uh, some abnormalities I believe, as he mentions in other uh. Books where he speaks of how he wasn't really welcome in certain situations because of whatever his situation was, whether it was a deformity or whatever. I don't believe you're quite sure on that, but, and he was often judged because of that. He was often judged by his manner of speaking and what he spoke about, but yet the message of God came through clear and we had the evidence of that in the word. Now that we speak about it and are able to encourage one another and enrich one another with, but I just thought it was interesting how he, uh, says in that one verse. The life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh for you and I the same thing as it not. That's the whole crux of God working in us, that the life of Christ may be made manifest in our flesh, in our flesh, in our normal natural that we are. This is the body he's given us. These are the the voices he's given us, the eyes with which to see the hands which wish to work. But yet the life of Christ is what is now in US. And because of that, Paul suffered persecution. Not because he was Paul, but because he was Christ. Christ suffered persecution because he was Christ. And you and I will continue to suffer persecution to the measure that Christ is shown through us by his grace. Perhaps wasn't all that much to attract. India Pastor Paul from a human standpoint of. But you know the apartheid Paul. He was chosen vessels for Christ. And he spoke the truth. And he unfolded the, I believe, highest truth of Christianity concerning the church, the body of Christ. You and I united with Christ as our head. And what a wonderful revelation to the apostle. And you could say it's not by my, it's not by my nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord. And I believe the Saints of God recognize in the apostle. That he had this revelation and they appreciated his ministry when they were spiritual. But you know, it's possible to become carnal and rather than being governed by the Spirit, we're governed by our own fleshly.

Lust. And we can adopt A humanistic, uh, viewpoint that doesn't appreciate divine things, but, uh, would rather glory in the flesh. The old man, so to speak, but you know the apostle. He rejoiced in his ministry and there's nobody who rejoiced as much as he did in the Lord, I believe in spite of his, uh, bodily appearance, his speech. And he, he speaks in Galatians about how that, uh, they appreciated him so much that they would have even plucked out their own eye to give to him because perhaps he did have a, an eyesight problem. Well, we can see that there was that, uh, appreciation. Of the ministry of the apostle by those that were spiritual. But when carnality come in, we find they turn against it. So it's something we need to be aware of. But The thing is to look. Not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. How can we look at something that's not seen? It seems a contradiction. Well, this is fake. That's what we're talking about faith and I I just read recently concerning Steven in Acts Chapter 7 and how he gives his testimony concerning God's ways with Israel. And he spoke the truth. And of course, this. Aggravated the Jews, and they began to gnash upon. Him with their teeth. It tells us this is Acts Chapter 7 but notice in verse 55. It says but he that is even being full of the Holy Ghost. Looked up steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God. And Jesus standing on the right hand of God. Well, with Steven not looking upon that which is not seen, you know his persecutors, those that were picking up the stones to hurl at him. Yeah, no appreciation for what he saw, but. It's wonderful. What Steven saw, and was it not by faith? He saw the Son of man at the right hand of God. He saw the glory of God. As if the Lord Jesus was right here on earth. But it's a matter of faith, and that's how, as Christians, we walk. We walk not by, say, the sight, but by faith. And we need to exercise that faith. Because if we don't, we're gonna get tripped up. And we see how Steven went out of this world. It was marvelous to realize the attitude of Steven toward his persecutors. As they stoned Stephen, it tells us he called upon his God and he said Lord Jesus receive my spirit. And verse 60 says he kneeled down, cried with a loud voice. Lord, lay not this into their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. You know, I asked myself. Would I? Perform or behave in the same way as Steven. Found in these circumstances. Well, I believe it's a matter of faith that enables us to be overcomers. Nothing for Stevens.

And we haven't bought in the launch and I've got 2. X. That's that's regarding the lesson you might suffer and then I can do for most people Sir Shunmi and insult me from Disney and then. Mateo Architect parish was the using active management without the men, which states that it used to show with Lincoln in real world and the millions of neglected of the body not in many honor to the satisfying question. To have a report, to be looked at as martyrs and faithful wonder. Ones who are really concentrating the Lord and so on. So you shouldn't be ashamed that a board has to be discussed to us at the same event or something that we see and reverses which belong reasonably impossible. And those who were certainly at that time and in a message from each one of us. True, but we should just be having arrived in the Lord in whatever circumstances of our life here, but we should manifest in the character as even this in your circumstances involved in the history of sanctions and. Warren sisters as well as brothers, and we need to exercise that. That service for the Lord in dependence upon him, and there will be a reward. Even a cup of cold water given in the name of his disciple will not lose its reward. Mag Mag Wonderful. The grace of God is what I was thinking in our verse here at the toward the end of the tractor here the world looks on and they think this is pure nonsense. How can you be? Affected by what you don't see. Well, that's because they, they don't have any object to be for them, but their horizons are limited by this world. They can't see beyond that. But we, uh, by faith is our brother Wally has brought out, we can look on into eternity. We can, we know that, uh, we're going to have that eternal weight of glory, but are we really living in the power of those things now? You know, the children of Israel have to cross the Jordan and, uh. They to, they want, they have to, there was conflict there in the land of Canaan to, uh, enjoy what really was there's. But, uh, there was self judgment at Gilgal and there was conflict before they could enjoy what was really theirs. It was their possession, but they had to encounter difficulty to, to, uh, to enjoy it, to possess it. So, uh, looking at those things which are not seen take spiritual energy because every. Everything in this world is calculated to occupy us with the things that are seen, Mr. Hale used to say. Every ad advertisement that you have that you see is to make you dissatisfied with what you have. But.

Christianity gives us godliness with contentment is great gain gives us an object outside of this world entirely. So I. Servants said unto him, Alas, my master, how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not. For they that be with us are more than they that be with them and all. Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man as he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and Chariots of fire around about Elijah. There that only the spiritual eyes to discern, and I wanted to tie a quick thought to this in connection with what Molly said earlier about Thanksgiving. Reminded me of a story. Of, umm, the hiding Place. You probably read that book, many of you. And. The girl was in the nasty concentration camp and they were living in awful conditions and this one spot they had a terrible problem with. I think it was light, it might have been fleas, I can't remember. And the fleas were just horrible. And, umm, the sister had a Bible and she was able to conduct Bible studies daily with a whole group of the prisoners in that concentration camp. And the prison guards never once went near that Bible study, never once sought to shut it down. And they hated the fleas in that place and after. This has gone on for a while. They finally realized that the reason that this Bible study was never stopped was precisely because the prison guards couldn't stand the fleas, didn't wanna go anywhere near them, and therefore the Word of God is able to be read in that horrible, horrible place. And they were thankful for the police. They praised God that God had sent the fleas to that place. And I believe there's two things in that, that you can be thankful in the worst of conditions, but you can also realize that in the worst of conditions. Your spiritual eyes may be able to see things that God is doing. That other people couldn't possibly begin to imagine. And I think that's what sets us apart from the world. And that's what the faith really is. Well, you see the various motivations of the apostle in this passage. One was the resurrection of Christ. He knew that if he should lose his life in, uh, in the rigors of persecution that he was enduring, he, uh, he would have a, uh, a temple, uh, a building of God in a house not made with hands. He knew that, uh, he would, uh, be in the presence of the Lord.

Was a motivation for him to, to devote his energy, uh, in the Lord's service. This, this comes on into, uh, chapter UH-5 where he deals with the subject of uh. Our resurrection body, building of God and house not made with hands. So there were various things that motivated the apostle, uh, in his, uh, service and all the sacrifice that he endured. Uh, as we have read in the epistle. And, umm. He didn't faint. He had the glory before him, and he drew upon those wonderfully resources of God's grace. I think of that verse in the, I think it's in the 8th chapter of our epistle or the 9th chapter. I've often enjoyed it and I think the apostle experienced it. Verse eight of the ninth chapter. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye always having all sufficiency in all things. They are bound to every good work. That was what what the apostle was experiencing that. Wondrous resource and supply of grace so that he didn't faint and he pressed on in view of eternity and the judgment seat of Christ and the the. Glorified body that he would have with the Lord forever the. This hope motivated him in his ministry and his service for the Lord. Rumble, you know the Lord Jesus, He groaned. He saw the effects of sin. I believe come in. They're in the household of Mary and Martin. The brother died since he grown spirit. Well, we can look about and we feel burdened because of, you know, the effects of sin in this world. But we never read about the Lord Jesus complaining at all. He never grumbled, and that's a word for it, my own heart, because it's a tendency, isn't it, to. Complain, but the Lord Jesus had a beautiful attitude about everything. Even so, father, for so it seemed good in thy style, He just took everything from his father's hand, recognizing that it was. Good. And there's no grumbling. Please save 162. Nsnoise. We thank you for this time together.

Carolina Conference: 2011, 2 Corinthians 4:6-10

Reading

2nd Corinthians chapter 4 beginning at verse 5. Before we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants, for Jesus sake. For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the Excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken. Cast down, but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you, we having the same spirit of faith according as it is written. I believed, and therefore have I spoken. We also believe and therefore speak, knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sake. That the abundant grace might, through the Thanksgiving of many, redowned to the glory of God. For which 'cause we faint not but through, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day For our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Verse five shows that it's not about us, brethren, it's about Him. Are we in the picture? Yes, but it's about Him. And ourselves your servants, for Jesus sake. That's where we fit into the picture. So it's really about him, not so much about us. The radiancy of the glad tidings of the glory of the Christ, who is the image of God. That's a lot better subject than ourselves, isn't it? When you make a comparison like that. What a much better subject we have. But the wonder of it is that God does use servants, doesn't he? And you're one of his servants, and I'm one of your servants of his servants. And we often think of the preaching of the gospel in connection with those who have a special ABI ability or calling. Tonight a brother is going to stand up and preach the gospel here from the platform. But every one of us have the privilege of in one way or another, making known the glorious gospel, making known Christ. Now Paul again, as we said this morning, was a special instrument raised up at the beginning. And what a preacher he was. And what a gift he he had. But even Paul said to the Corinthians in the first epistle that it wasn't with enticing words that he presented the gospel to to them. It certainly wasn't with the wisdom of this world. His exercise and his responsibility before God as a preacher of the gospel was to preach Christ, and Christ crucified his whole. The whole exercise of Paul's life was to present Christ to the lost for salvation. And Christ to the Saints for their blessing and edification. And you'd say, well, it's never been given to me to preach the gospel. Well, maybe not in the way that we think of it so often, but every one of us are here to reflect something of Christ, both by what we say, what we do by our lives as we had this morning, by by what we say too. You know, what we say is important too, brother. It must correspond with our life. But what we say is important too. And in the Acts, I've been impressed in going through the Acts, how often you have preaching, mentioned preaching, preaching, preaching. It's, it's, it's important. And we're here. To preach Christ. And when we open our mouth, is it Christ that we're presenting, or is it drawing attention to ourselves? The exaltation of Christ is the greatest and truest gain. The exaltation of self is the truest loss. I think of the, uh, ministry of John the Baptist and you know, here's a man that had opportunity, I believe, to exalt himself. And when they went to him as to whether or not he was the Christ, he said, I am not the Christ. And then he went on to speak how he that comes after me is preferred before me, because he was before me. And so I believe he was pointing to

Christ. It ought to be the object of all true ministry, I believe, to attach souls not to oneself, but to Christ.

And of course. I read about how the John the Baptist. You could say, behold the Lamb of God. He was so taken up with the person of the Lord Jesus Christ that tells us there were two of his disciples who were listening to what he had to say. And they stopped following John. They start following the Lord Jesus. Was John disappointed? No, I believe he was thankful. Well, I think. Impossible was at the same persuasion. His desire was to exalt Lord Jesus and draw souls to him. But that's not the way of the world. And I know in our area there's elections coming up in Canada. Of course, you're already talking about elections in the United States. Next year, so on. And what is it that people are doing? They're Tooting their own horn. That's what they're doing, trying to get. People to promote them because of what they have to offer. My fault wasn't that way. Now he says here we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. With the Apostle Paul that said not either price. I think I'm John the Baptist, too, he said. I he must increase, I must decrease. But the Lord gave his approval of John's ministry. The Lord said of those born among women, there is not risen or greater than John the Baptist. John was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, just a voice. You know, you can hear a voice, but you can't see it. And John said, I'm just a voice. I'm just here to speak for Christ and to pave the way for Christ. But the Lord gave his approval and it's not what we really want, brethren, the Lord's approval. And if you seek to go on and present Christ and make nothing of yourself and just be that voice, maybe you do feel like you're crying in the wilderness sometimes. You know, you get out in the wilderness and you start talking. Seems like you're, it's useless. You say I'm not reaching anybody out here. Nobody's listening. John might have felt that way, but he was just a voice. And if you and I seek to be just a voice, to represent to, to present Christ and leave it for his approval, then they'll be true blessing in our ministry. This was in distinct contrast to others occurrence that we read about in the 11Th chapter. Just a few verses like first 13 for example, contrast with what we had back in verse 2, not to go backwards, but for such a false apocalypse to people, workers transforming themselves into the apostle of Christ is a little further in that chapter, verse 19. You suffer fools gladly seeing yourselves alive. Do you suffer if a man bring unto you? Will you suffer if a man bring you into *******? If a man devalue by the way, that would suffer, I believe means permit. It doesn't mean to suffer in a physical sense. And so there are those that current that were exalting themselves and the apostle Paul here in this chapter, uh, in this chapter in verse five, he says in ourselves, you're servants for Jesus sake. We've spoken about the minister and that how the ministry and, and the word minister is related to the word serve. But here he doesn't use that same word. He uses the word slave. So he says that they were your slaves for Jesus sake. He would go even lower in contrast to those at current that would exult and make merchandise of them. Of the Lord Jesus. At the image of God. We think of him as the son of man who was here on the earth and in the world already. And at that time. All who lived there, they could see him. They actually saw his image, his face, his person. But he was the image of God also, and he still is, he could say. That God is his Father, but was his Father, and when people see him, they see God. John the Baptist could say that he was before him. He knew him by heart alre already before he was even shown to him in this world. God had already shown him him through his heart.

And he pointed him out. Who he was, he saw his person as a man, as a son of man. Now here I understood that we are and the buildings here we see quite a few of images that's supposed to be the images of Christ, but the only pictures, when I look at them, they don't do anything to me. But when I picture the Lord Jesus as who he really is and what He has done for me. Then I have the real picture of him within me. He speaks to my heart. And then the longer I think of him and I pray to Him, the more real He gets to me. This is the actual image that we get today. That's what we read in Hebrews 1. Where he is declared who who he is. In verse six of our chapter, we seem to have a reference to Genesis 1. In the creation it mentions there that the earth was. Uh, darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. God said, let there be light, and there was light. It's interesting. Light and darkness are in the first verses of the Bible. Here we see it not in connection with physical light and darkness, but with spiritual darkness that enshrouds people's souls. And it's interesting how it puts it in verse six. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Wonderful. When God gives the command for the light to penetrate the penetrate the darkness, there's nothing that can withstand it. You can't mix light and darkness. They're separate things, and so it seems so impossible sometimes when you're speaking to souls that are in darkness. But brethren, it's not a work of ours, it's a work of God. And when He gives the command for the light to penetrate the darkness, then it will penetrate. And I think the important thing for us is to make sure that the light is shining. Because the moment will come when there will be a change. Seems like if we were writing this, we said go to caused the light to shine into the darkness. I hear it's shining out of the darkness that's, uh, seems to our minds sort of an impossibility. But. There was never a darker hour in this world than Calvary's cross, and darkness covered the land for three hours. Darkness, darkness. It could be felt, and it was from there that the light shined out from Calvary. Uh, you were mentioning the 1St chapter Genesis of Bob and I was thinking that. God created the light on on day one. But we don't see the display of that light until day 4. Before that light was displayed in all its brilliance, we have day three, which tells us of the cross when the gas waters were gathered together into one place and, uh, then the dry land appeared. Through that work machine. It was all buzz that the light was on display, the sun, the moon and the stars. So as you say, our salvation, the under our understanding, being enlightened and being brought to the Savior had nothing to do with us. It was all a work of God. The work was done by the Lord Jesus. The plan was in the heart of God from a past eternity. The moment came when the Spirit of God worked in our souls. The Word of God was presented to us in some way, and the Spirit of God worked in our souls to give us that light and that knowledge.

And I think we need to keep that before our souls, brethren, in dealing with other souls. Sometimes we think it's going to depend on our explanation of the Word of God or what scriptures we present or how we do it. Well, it is true, we need to be exercised. It says of some they so spake that a great multitude believed. And it's an exercise to present the truth of God's Word in a way that the Spirit of God can take and use it in enlightening dark hearts. But in the final analysis, aren't you and I thankful? That blessing doesn't depend on our ability to present the word of God. A brother again is gonna stand up and preach the gospel this evening. And I'm sure that brother is gonna be very, very thankful at the end of the hour. That blessing doesn't depend on his ability to present the Word of God. Because if it depended on our ability to present the word of God, that's a burden we couldn't carry around because whether it's speaking to souls individually or presenting the the gospel in a public forum or setting. There's all we always feel our inadequacy. At least we ought to always feel our inadequacy. But thank God that blessing depends. Well, it doesn't depend on us. It does depend on the word in all its living power. It depends on the work of the Spirit of God. It depends on the heart of God and his desire to bless another. Nothing can change those things, brethren. That's what that's why it shined into our hearts. And if God uses us as instruments and as we said. He delights to use us as instruments to present the word in one way or another. But if he delights to use us in in as instruments, then let's remember though, in the final analysis, the work is all his. If he doesn't shine into dark hearts, if he doesn't penetrate dark hearts, there's no blessing at all, but his desire is to do it. That's why I think, Jim, that often God uses least expected. Instruments and letting the light shine. Sometimes the sister in her place, just living out the reality of her life in Christ. Is a powerful testimony and it gets through. And then say the light doesn't make much noise. It doesn't say much, but by its presence

you see everything clearly. That's what it takes. It's letting the light shine. Sometimes I think sometimes we try to do too much explaining and we hinder the work of the Lord. Not that that's not necessary. Like you say, preaching is necessary. For a man down in Bolivia that had contact with and. Mechanic shop and. I gave the gospel to him one time and let me know that he thought he was all right. Anyhow, I gave him a New Testament and sometime later he says to me, that book you gave me, I don't understand anything. Why don't you come over my house and explain it to me? We set a time and it went over and we started in John's Gospel first verses. We got down to John 1/4 and him was life, and the life was the light of men. I looked at him and I said what is light? Just look for me at me for the longest time. Didn't say anything, I don't think. It's just as if the light was penetrating his heart, that moment. I don't know that it was, but it was. Sometime after that I was in the shop again and he says, you know that book you gave me, I understand it now. I understand it now. Something that happened. The light had penetrated. You know, it's not a matter of convincing people. It's a matter of letting the light shine. Your sisters can let the light shine just as much as the brothers. So it's important in our testimony to let the light shine. The next verse of our chapter says we have this treasure in earthen vessels. And sometimes the illustration has been given from this of Gideon when he went out to defeat the Midianites and. ENS 300 men, remember that when he blew the trumpet, uh, 32,000 men followed him. Lord said I can't give the victory to Israel. This many people, they're gonna say that they gained the victory. So tell all those that are fearful to go home.

Well, reduced his army dramatically. Anywhere left the next time I was at 10,000 or left I forget right off hand but anyhow it's too many still. So after the last Test was given it was only 300 men. Brother, we got to learn, as it says in the end of verse 7, the Excellency of the power is of God, not of us. The important thing is the light. And so as they went out, those 300 men, they stood around the camp of the Midianites. They had two things. One was a trumpet one hand, and another was a earthen vessel with a torch inside. And at a given signal, they all broke the vessel. And as they broke the vessel, the light showing down, that's the important thing. Sometimes God has to break these vessels, these earthen vessels. What's his purpose in breaking us? The lights shine out. And as the light shined out, then they blew the trumpets, the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, and the Lord did the victory. So that's the two types of the testimony like you're mentioning, Jim, It's the life, that's the light, and it's the spoken word, that's the trumpet. So those two things God uses to let the light shine into darkened souls. Before we go on, I'd just like to go back to the end of verse six there. To me, it's exceedingly precious, brethren, God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts. To give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God and notice where it shines in the face of Jesus Christ. In that face that was Sormard more than any man's, is where the full display of the glory of God. Next. Steven is stoned. Saw the young man taking care of Coats. Stephen's face had shown. Because of the presence he was realizing. Later Chapter 9 of X and so is on the road to Damascus. You suddenly, verse three there shine round about him a light from heaven. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecute us. It is hard for thee to kick against the ******. The trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. But we know the story well. But. Three days later when Ananias came to him. He then received the Holy Ghost and became a member of the Church by being baptized by the Holy Ghost and the. The fact is that he had seen Christ in glory. The object formed him, and in chapter 22. Where he reiterates this. He and others with him saw the light, but he was the one that heard the voice. 910 verse 11 And when I could not see, for the glory of that light, that light had. Taken all other attention away from him. And he could not see for three days. And the result of that. Uh. He is baptized. Verse 16, and wash away thy sins. He had shared in the guilt of Israel in trying to put out all testimony about Jesus but the risen head in heaven. Responded. As the body hurt on earth. In the risen head in heaven today. Seeing the earth of our brethren in so many countries.

Chapter 26. 1St. Well, I've mentioned how often souls are in darkness under religion. Verse 12. Whereupon I went to Damascus with authority and Commission from the chief priests. At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven above, the brightness of the sun shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. Here we get it reiterated again. There's 15 And he said, I said to art thou Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecute us. But rice, stand upon thy feet provide appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make the administer and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things which. I will appear unto thee, delivering the from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them, which are sanctified by faith. That is in need. There's still a great need today. That souls be turned from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God. These happenings in Japan, a land of about 1% Christian. What I've read, the average church is about 13 people. In the area where the tsunami hit, there were many churches. Perhaps there were those who were simply washed out to sea. Those laboring there now, in a land that's prevalent with heat and darkness. We still have by the great grace of God. That wondrous message of the gospel, that Solid Tarsus met that person that day. It's an amazing, brethren, that we can have as he such a treasure in our heart that we may share. Set forth the knowledge of that treasure in part. Through the Spirit of God working that treasure to someone else and not have less treasure ourselves. It's not like handing out money, is it? He is the object. That's the object that forms us. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It's Paul's ministry that gives us. The gospel of the glory, isn't it Christ in glory and the the earthen vessel is expendable. Our natural. Defense is self-defense. The very interesting aspect is you and I do not have to live. We have brethren in other countries that are literally laying down their life for the name of Jesus. They may not have the light so brightly as you and I. And then I have the richness of ministry that you and I have the privilege of listening to. That they've got the right object. And it's the object that forms us. This is Christ himself. But the vessel is expendable, the treasure is not. It seems like adversity and persecution are two things which the Lord has used down through the ages, hasn't he, with his people so that the light might shine forth like Bob related to us, Gideon, and so with many believers, with all of us today. Isn't that the Lord's desire? And they're not welcomed in our life. We sometimes see them as unwelcome guests and. We wish things could be just right. We could plan our day. And things go accordingly. But of course the Lord knows what we need, but adversity and persecution when I think of the apostle Paul. And, uh, especially in writing to 2nd in Second Timothy. It's a language of warfare, isn't it? It's a language of warfare, and so again, adversity, persecution. Steven was mentioned his his face shone.

And as you mentioned too, and it's been on my heart to pray for the persecuted church. As we speak right now, there are truly believers. Who are being, who are under tremendous persecution. You did have the reports that I heard of those in China who have decided to take the message without any support. But simply with the conviction that the Lord wants them to carry the message on into those Muslim countries that are so close, so difficult, they go out. Without any hope, many of them have ever returning to their families. Any of the movies killed. I don't know that there's that kind of mentality in our country, brother, amongst those called Christians. Was it true that perhaps in our land and in Western Europe and Canada that Satan presents himself as a as a servant beguiling, whereas in these other countries he's as a roaring lion? I mean, there's, there's different types of persecution and umm, you know, for us it's perhaps just being blasted by the media or going for those of us that are still working, going into the workroom floor and rubbing elbows with non believers and wanting to be a witness for

Christ, not so much in Word, maybe on the working floor, but through example. And I know personally that, uh, my state of soul is not always what it should be. But there is, there is exercise and that's good. But again, I think of, you know, the fact that, umm, in this land, it's, it's there, there are different things that can draw away the Saints heart, but certainly in these other lands, it's, it's, uh, it's touching to, to, uh, to read and to hear about these believers who are being persecuted, but also in, uh, in, in thinking about the scriptures have. Have any of us or any in this room ever heard of the book when Iron Gates yield? Uh, there was two books and maybe I got them confused, but the first one he never, he did not have a Bible. He did not have a testament for I don't know how long. And that whole book is written on his recollection of verses. This missionary back in the early 50s of, uh, verses that he had, uh, you know, read the Spirit of God brought it back. And that was his comfort and stay through I don't know how many years in this Chinese prison. Umm, but he had nothing except well, he had the Lord and that was the key and the spirit of God bringing back these verses and he goes through, he recounts the life of Abraham. And these are all his musings as he spent his time in jail in this prison. And the book as a result of these musings. It's, it's an excellent book and it makes us makes me anyway realize again. Do I, do I take for granted, you know, I, I sometimes think I do what I have. So the treasure, brethren, is. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Tell me, is it really a treasure within your bosom? We've been brought into the full knowledge of all that God is and the person of the Lord Jesus. Say, brethren, when you look around in the world and see so many in darkness, poor Muslim people don't have that light. Think they're serving God. And you and I have that light. Is there anything we're doing about it? The light is made to shine and I really put wonder if the Lord is allowing the trials, the physical trials and infirmities. That that light will shine. Sometimes our thought, our only thought, is to get well again. And naturally speaking, I understand that that's very normal. But let's remember that God permits these things, like happened in Japan. He has a purpose in it. He has a purpose in the terrible tragedies in this country, too, tornadoes that tore through the country. That doesn't do those things without a purpose. But is that treasure that's within us? Is that shining out? That's what God wants. He has to break the vessel. Lemoyne says the vessel isn't that important. What's important is the treasure, the light. I've been amazed, brethren, at certain ones here in the States. You know who I'm talking about, too. I won't mention names, but the Lord laid upon them. Terminal counselor.

And they're with the Lord now. Terrible things they have to go through to leave family behind. But the testimony that was left behind, what a tremendous blessing. It was the Treasury. It was the light that was shining out of a broken vessel. So what he wants is the glories of Christ to shine in your life and mind. And I think we ought not to pass over the, uh, expression. I know we've had some things about it, but the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, because as you say, Bob, God has been completely revealed in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. It says of the Lord Jesus as the Son of God, that he was the express image of his person and, uh, that we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father, great, full of grace and truth. We get that in John's Gospel chapter one. And so the Lord Jesus, in walking in this pathway, he fully showed out the glories of God, because to be glorified is to have every attribute and quality that makes up a person's being brought into full display. And the Lord Jesus at the end of his pathway could say, I have glorified thee on the earth. Every glory, every act, every attribute, every quality of God was brought into full display. He was the express image or the mirror image of his person. No other son, you could say, was the express image of his Father. We look at a son and we say, well, no trouble to see whose son that is, but they're not the express image of their father. But here was one who fully showed forth who God was. The light shone in this world, and yet the moral darkness was so deep when the Lord Jesus was here that it says the light shone in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not I I marvel at a statement like that. Cecil was talking about the light earlier and darkness and so on. You know, no matter how dark a room is, you take a candle or a flashlight, it's gonna penetrate it to some degree. So deep was the moral darkness when the Lord was here that the light shone and the darkness comprehended it not Thank God it did shine into some dark hearts. And thank God it has shined into our dark hearts and is shining into dark hearts this very day. But that's how deep the darkness was. But it's interesting you meant someone mentioned Steven. And when Steven looked up, he, he said two things. I see the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. How did he see the glory of God? It was in this person that was standing there, the one who had on earth glorified the Lord Jesus, the one who had been the light here. Now he was at the right hand of God and Steven saw him there. And that's what gave Steven courage to be a witness to the very end and to lay down his life. Talking about people who laid down their lives, you'd say how could they do it? They have Christ in the glories of Christ, the glories of God in the face of Jesus Christ. That's what gives them the courage to lay down their lives. You know, Moses went on those years in the wilderness because he esteemed the glories of Christ greater than the treasures in Egypt. He endured us seeing Him who is invisible. And so if we have that before us, brethren, there cannot help to be our reflection in our lives of Christ. The light is gonna shine out. It shined into our hearts. But then there's to be a shining out that others. May seedy, but like and do you realize that the only light this world is going to see really is what is reflected in your life and mind? And especially brethren, in a day when they've closed the pages of this book, they've rejected the light of God's word. Don't read it in the schools or in public occasions. They've set that aside. What light is this world going to see? It's what is reflected in your life and mind and the Lord Jesus when he was here with the light of the world, but he is not the light of the world today. He said to his own before he left them. He said, Ye are the light of the world. We are here to reflect Christ, the glories of Christ, that the light might shine into other dark hearts. To be glorified is really to have every quality and attribute that makes up a person's being brought into full display. And that's why the Lord could say I have glorified beyond the earth. He brought every quality, every attribute of the very person and essence of God into full display. Yeah, this is really. The first Peter chapter 2, verse nine. You might read those two verses here. Peter 29 about showing forth.

But, uh, our chosen generation, a Royal Free food, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that you should show for the praises of him who has called you out of darkness, and end to his marvellous light, which are in time fast, not a people, but now, but are now the people of God, which have obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. And then goes on to strangers and pilgrims in verse 12, having your conversation, or you're a matter of life honest among the Gentiles, that whereof they speak against you as evildoers, that they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. And then to submit to all the ordinances in our verse 15. For sober is the will of God, that ye with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, as free, not as used in your liberty as a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. I love the margin there too. It says that Ye and verse nine should show forth the praises for the excellencies of him. Called it of darkness the excellence. We have the privilege of showing the excellencies of the Lord Jesus Christ of God as shown in the person of Christ. There's a few words in a verse in Exodus 24 we have spoken a little of. Moses, face shining. And. I just enjoyed in meditating a little on verse 12. Oh, we might apply this to ourselves. The Lord said unto Moses. Come up to me. Into the mount and be there. Now the opportunity for communion between. My heart and the Lord, your heart and the Lord come to me. It's a good place to be. And then it says. And I will give thee. I'm gonna skip the next few words. And. The end of the verse says that thou mayst teach. There's one to be occupied with, one to receive from. Something to give from having been there and. That we all need, don't we, brother? We need to be occupied with this blessed occupy. The object that forms us. These scriptures are helpful because in the context of our chapter here, this was very, very difficult for these Corinthians to understand. Naturally speaking. The Corinthians were people that naturally speaking look to outward ability and gift and

that kind of thing. They were men who naturally speaking wouldn't have put somebody in a public place unless they were like Saul in the Old Testament, head and shoulders above the crowd, had some natural ability, were able to speak eloquently, and. Were intellectuals and that kind of thing schooled in the wisdom of the world? And so on. And it was very difficult for them to understand this concept, and yet it was very necessary. And that's why I think it was so difficult for them to accept the apostle Paul as an apostle, one with authority, because Paul did have authority and he wasn't apostle and he had seen Christ in glory. And yet they couldn't understand it. His bodily speech was, his bodily presence was weak and his speech was contemptible. And uh, I don't think Paul was. Quite the way we sometimes picture him. And, uh, Paul, Paul has, uh, perhaps a little reticent too. And he just didn't seem to have the qualifications, naturally speaking, that the Corinthians would have looked for in a person who had this kind of authority. And so he had to bring before them that if a person was going to be used of God and the light was going to shine forth, it didn't depend necessarily on the vessel itself, the natural vessel. I'm not saying that God doesn't use our natural abilities. He does. He links natural ability with spiritual gift and so on. We often see that, but let's use and let's go to an Old Testament example for a moment. You know, when Moses came out of the palace of Egypt, schooled in the ways of the world. It says he was a man mighty in words and deeds, but that wasn't the kind of material God could use to lead his people out of Egypt and through the wilderness for 40 years. And so he spent the next 40 years of his life in the backside of the desert. And when he came out of that, he said, oh, Lord, I can't go in and talk to Pharaoh. I stutter and stammer, and I'm not eloquent of speech. That's not the most that she read about that came out of the palace. But that was the kind of material God could send back into the palace to meet Pharaoh because there was a man now that the vessel was broken.

And he could go in and Cle complete dependence on on the Lord. And we know that he did. He, he went in and he was used in a mighty way. But the vessel had to be broken. And if God is going to use any one of us, whether it was the apostle Paul or whether it's you and me today, or whether it was the Corinthian Saints, if the light is going to shine out for the glory of God and the blessing of others, the vessel must be broken. We must realize. And the Lord has to cause circumstances often in our lives to make us realize, brethren, that we are. Nothing. Yes, he gives us abilities, but we in ourselves are nothing. And when we learn that are in the measure in which we learn that, then the light can shine out as it did in Gideon's day. We don't have the actual breaking of the vessel here in these verses, do we? But we have the effects, umm, in these next versus verse 8910, which would have the effect of producing a broken vessel. And we see the results of these things is the, umm, that the life of Jesus Christ might be manifest in our bodies. We don't necessarily have the thought of a broken vessel, but we have, we have, uh, troubled on every side. Uh, we have distressed, we have persecuted, cast down. These things aren't very pleasant. And we as natural men would run from the experiences that Paul is speaking about. But Paul had learned that, umm, his, his, his very life was not important. His, he had learned to value above his life the, the glorious display. Of the Lord Jesus Christ and he was willing to put his put his life on the altar that the Excellency of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus might shine forth and so when it came to being troubled you know, sometimes umm, I, I really enjoyed a, a story that was given to us by one of the laboring brothers that came through our assembly recently and I'm not very good at telling stories so if you'll bear with me but there was a a Chinese brother who. Uh, had come over to the United States after having been subjected to extreme persecution in his own country. And, uh, there's a book, uh, that has been written, uh, about this brother. And, and some of the, the, the persecutions that he went through are pretty phenomenal. But he came over to the United States and, and, uh, he was going about and seeking to encourage the Saints here and in the process of him serving the Lord in this country. He umm, he was, he, he was falsely accused. He was, he was accused of being a, a farce. And you know, with, with present day, umm, media and, and Internet and everything the, this, this rumor traveled around and, and hindered his service for the Lord. And one comment that he made was that. The greatest one of the greatest pains and the greatest suffering that he endured in his life was not what he endured in China, but it was what he endured when he came to the United States and suffered from the hands of his brethren. And. So, you know, there, there may be times when we're called to go through something. Uh, we've talked about the persecution and, and what our, what our brethren have gone through. And serving the Lord and, and certainly that's all part of breaking the breaking of the vessel. Because if you, if you read his autobiography or the, the story that was written about him, you find that he, he, he learned many lessons there as he went through the fire of persecution in China. But he said the the most difficult persecution that he went through was when he was suffering at the hands of his own brethren. And I know that, that sometimes we are called to. Feel that ourselves. And. Sometimes we don't like that very much and we want to just maybe react or we want to just just give up the service of the Lord, but.

The the purpose of it and why God allows it is so the Excellency of the glory of the Lord Jesus might shine forth from us and so if we are troubled. On every side. We can see that God has a purpose in it and we cannot be cast down. If we're uh, if we're or we're not, uh, yet not distressed If we're perplexed. We can't understand things. There are things God allow in our life that are impossible for us to understand. He hasn't allowed them so that we would understand them. He has allowed them so that. We would, we, we would, we would not despair. He has a he has allowed them so that we can just accept what he is allowed in our life, so we can learn submission, so that we can learn to lean on him more and trust him more. And so the process of the breaking of the vessel can be very, very painful. But there's a real, real. Good purpose in it. And I know that our brethren, you know, we, we aren't called to have to face the lions, but that doesn't mean that the believers, believers in the United States don't suffer pain. Don't go through the process of being broken, the vessel being broken, because they do. If you're gonna serve the Lord, if you're gonna seek to. Allow the glory of the Lord Jesus to shine through you. There is gonna be a an absolutely necessary process and that is that the vessel will be broken. Who are these verses speaking about when it says we? I just looked over it a little bit. In verse 12 it says. So then, death worketh in US, but life in you. Paul was writing. To the Corinthians and with Timothy, first Timothy, I just checked it out Paul and Silas and Timothy wrote First Corinthians and now we're at Second Corinthians and I I looked and it didn't say that stylist what might not have been there anymore might have gone on, but. Paul is saying in our verses, We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not inexperienced. We are persecuted, but not forsaken. We are cast down, but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. Why? That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we are which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. This treasure that we've been talking about. Every single one of us that have received the Lord Jesus as Savior, we have this treasure. We can keep giving it out and there's always more to give. It's a fountain of life that goes on and can be passed on to others and others. Umm, but we, we might read a little bit. Would anyone like to volunteer to open the floodgates to let some of that life out? So that others can have it. Are there any children here that would like to share the treasure that you have? Any young people would like to to share it? Paul and Timothy were talking about it here in verse in chapter 4. If you would like to, there's verses written for you and Corinthians in chapter 6. And it tells all the opportunities where you can SHO show out. It tells you in these circumstances and by these ways. And this is the effect it will have. We're just gonna read those in Second Corinthians chapter 6 and verse 4. But in all, all things approving ourselves as the Ministers now that we we read that.

I'd rather explain that means as giving service. Would you like to serve the Lord? You can improve yourselves in what the ministers of God in much patience. There's an opportunity. In afflictions, there's an opportunity to let the treasure out. In necessities. In distresses, every time you you get into a distress, that's another opportunity. To prove yourselves and to share these treasures. In stripes, in imprisonments in tumult and laborers, in Washington, in fasting. These are. Not just only Paul and Timothy, but for us. Now we can have this. And how do you do it? By pureness. Is it Are you your words pure? The thoughts pure? Find knowledge? Find long-suffering. By kindness. You know there are people in this room. They need it. There's some people going through dark times right here in our assemblies. In our neighborhoods, Even in our own homes. React in the flesh or you can stop. Approved yourself, umm, a servant of God by kindness. By the Holy Ghost. By love unveiled by the word of truth. By the power of God, it's not ours. Like Bob was saying, obedience. Doesn't. Depend on the power that's in us, but obedience to God's Word obeys no matter what we see the results are. That's vague. And the power of God, by the armor of righteousness, that's doing what's right, no matter how it's going to affect us on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true, as unknown, yet well known as dying. And behold, we live as chastened and not killed, as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. You know, we can even rejoice when we're suffering. It's joy on the inside. That's what happens. You go to to the happiest place on Earth. At least it says that in California, Washington, when you walk into Disneyland and be the most miserable person on the inside. As poor, yet making many rich. That's the treasure we've been talking about. As having nothing. And yet possessing all things, Oh, you Corinthians. O ye brethren, our mouth is opened unto you, our heart is enlarged. Paul wanted them to experience it. He wants the Lord wants us to experience. I just mentioned that in these vessels that we've had in. In our chapter we have trouble in every side and not distressed and so on. It really is outward, isn't it? It's really talking about this body that we have. It's not spiritual and that's important to see because we do. As brother has been mentioned, we do have natural problems, don't we? It says in the. The sixteen of our chapter, but our outward man parish that's the man that's in contact with this well the scene that we're in. It says the inward man is renewed day by day and so we have trouble in every site that's output and how do we react inwardly not to stress. We are perplexed that's outward. So how do we react inwardly not in despair and so and also verse 10 always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life also Jesus might be made manifest in our bodies in our body doesn't say the death of the Lord Jesus. He talks about his dying which we speak of the sufferings that he went through his physical sufferings and so on. So as I just to reiterate it really is talking about this. The things that we suffer in this world, the outward things that we suffer bodily, we don't need to spiritualize those. So Paul had a thorn in the flesh that he also brings before the Corinthian brethren. It was some physical thing that was given to him by God so that he would feel his dependence on the Lord as he ministered to the Saints and preached the gospel. We're not. We may have little hints of what it is here and there, and it's not for us to speculate, but it was something physical that was given to him. And so we find here in our chapter that perhaps there's two reasons why God allows these physical things, whether it's something that's passing.

Something we we suffer or feel in passing or like Paul, something that he had to put up with and deal with the rest of his life for two reasons. One is that the Excellency of the power of God might be seen so that we realize that the power is not in US. Brethren, if God has given us any little ministry to do for him, he it's not our in our own strength. The power is of God and he allows these things to make us realize that we are just earthen vessels and that. It's it's not going to be a natural strength. There are in our own strength. And so that's one thing. And then that's a life of Jesus might be manifested in our day-to-day practical walk here. And if those things that he allows, if there, whether it's persecutions or something physical that he allows us to pass through or to bear permanently in our body the rest of our life. He it's so it's not because he wants to necessarily chastise us brethren, It's because he wants us to walk independence. U utilizing the power that we have in Him and so that Christ might be seen in our lives. I did a study recently. I mentioned to Jim earlier about the times that the Apostle Paul uses the name Jesus without Lord or Christ in his epistles and and also I I looked in Acts as well and the name Jesus has used alone occurs most often in Acts and then Hebrews and for Philly obvious reasons if you think about it for a little bit. And thirdly, I believe at 2 Corinthians and here we see the name Jesus being used appropriately without Lord. And so in verse 10 it should just say always bearing about the body the dying of Jesus. But the life also of Jesus may be manifest in our body. For we live always delivered unto death on account of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifest in our mortal flesh. And I would suggest that the reason why his name is used here because it speaks as the man that walked through this world who suffered physically, who did not have a place to lay his head. And so. As I said, this is a correct use of his precious name, Jesus. It's interesting in both versus 10 and 11 That it speaks of the dying before it speaks of the light. Because brethren, the life we have in Christ now is a life and resurrection. You cannot talk about resurrection unless there's been death verse. And so there is a practical application to our lives. I I often think bread in the the self pleasing lifestyle that we have been taught in these countries is not the life that we are talking about here in these verses. It's a life that is beyond death. And we need to learn to truly. Live the Christian life that we have and that's why God allows these things to happen because it's so real that even though there is very. Very. Uh, abnormal and disagreeable things that happen to us. It doesn't affect that life that we have in Christ. Often think of the apostles in the book of the Acts. They threatened to kill him, and I suppose that's the maximum threat you can put to a person that kill you. Can you threaten the dead man? And that's already died. That threat AB absolutely has no effect on the apostles. They were living in the power of resurrection life. And I think this comes in here, brethren. And I think it's beautiful because versus 10 and 11, if you notice them, they're very they're very similar, but there is a difference, verse 10. It's always varying about in the body of the dying. Of the Lord Jesus. That's the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. That's what we ought to always do, brother. Do we always do it? I don't think so, but notice the difference in verse 11. We which live are always delivered unto death. Now here's a something you're delivered to. This is not what you would have wished would have happened, but you're delivered to something or delivered to death. Why does this happen? That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest? And notice at the end of verse 11.

It's not in our body, it's in our mortal flesh. Because sometimes it is a matter of touching these bodies, infirmity, and perhaps even death itself. It's not necessarily physical death, but it might be were delivered to it. The point is, is that God wants the treasure to shine out, and so he's going to allow it, rather than if we do not live this way as we ought to, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. What does that mean? Jesus died. He died to sin. That means that we don't allow sin to have a place in our lives. And it's in that measure that we do that that the life of Jesus is manifest in our bodies. Sometimes we don't do that as we ought to, and so God allows circumstances and he delivers us. So that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. And then that verse 12 That our brother read before. So then death worketh in us, but life in you. We got succeedingly precious. He's talking to the Corinthians. Death works in us, but life in you, and it's the same principle that we have, if you want to look at it, back in John chapter 12. Lord Jesus speaking. Uh, John Chapter 12 and. Philip comes in verse 21 to tell him that there were Greeks that were seeking for him. And the Lord Jesus says in verse 23, Jesus answered and said, answered them, saying, The hour has come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I send to you SEPTA. Corn of wheat fall into the ground and die. It divideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it. He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it into life eternal. And ye man serve, may let him follow me. Where I am there shall also my servant thee and the man serve

me him while my father honor. It's the same principle. It's that corn of wheat, so that there would be fruit, had to die. That's not pleasant to think of dying. Didn't God make us to live? But this is the principle to give yourself. To bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, so that that light, that new life can be manifest. And so Paul says, so that there might be fruit for you, there might be life for you. Corinthians death works in US. Principle of death and resurrection. Rather, that's where we stand in Christianity. So we might ask a question, Why are we doing all these things? Why do we want to bring the gospel to others? Why do we want? To Co tell us about the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. And we have brought out that it's not for us to glorify us, is it to glorify the Lord Jesus. And I just like to read a verse in Ephesians 118. Is pretty well known. The eyes of our understanding that could also reach the eyes of our heart. But Darby says, the eyes of our heart being enlightened, that he may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints. So we get some of the answer here. Why we are doing this? Because of the richness of his inheritance and the richest of his inheritance are the Saints.

They are the ones that He for, for whom he died, all the Saints he brings to God the Father. That's why he came into this world. To have eventually to have an in an inheritance, and that inheritance is in the Saints, all those who get saved and we are. Privileged to partake. In this work. To bring about that the lower Jesus has an inheritance and we are part of it. What we have here in these verses about dying was the exercise of pulse on a continual basis, because if we were to go back to the 15th chapter of the first epistle, where he speaks of why stand we in jeopardy every hour and so on, they're in the midst of what we call the resurrection chapter. He then says, I die daily. That was quite an exercise. It wasn't something he took up just once in a while or when he went out on a special missionary tour or something like that. No, every day Paul experienced this in a very, very real way. And brethren, when we think of what Paul could have been a solid tarsus and what he was headed for as far as the glory of this world, it really gives import, doesn't it, to realize what he suffered then, for the, uh, sake of Christ and for the blessing of the people of God. I remember when my grandfather was nearing the end of his life and different ones of us were taking turns sitting with him. My mother went in to sit with him. One afternoon and he said to her, Amy, he said that dying is a slow, painful process. It's not interesting and you know it it. We feel it, don't we? If we're going to live in the practical expression of what we have had before us in this meeting this afternoon, it's not easy. It's going to be painful. Did Paul feel the things that he suffered? Did he feel what he had given up? Yes, he did. He felt it now he gained something far better. And so he could leave those things behind and he could suffer the things he did physically and so on because he had the glory before him, the glory of Christ and and the end of the journey and all those things and so on. But it wasn't that he, as we said this morning, that he was callous or indifferent to it. Dying is a slow, painful process. And if you and I are going to have. The glories of Christ shine out in our lives, and we're going to have the power, the Excellency of the power of God in our pathway and in our ministry. And if we're going to manifest in our bodies the life of Christ, it is going to be painful. Is it worth it? Yes, Paul. Did Paul regret what he gave up at the end of his life? No, it was worth it and more. But it wasn't easy. And so I say that because we just don't want to give the impression. That these things are gonna be easy and that you're just gonna roll along and it's you're not gonna feel it. You will, but it isn't worth it. Yes, again, Moses. He gave up the glory of Egypt and never realized till I visited there what Moses gave up. It was a glorious nation in the days of Moses. But he endured us seeing him who is invisible. Yes, he did endure. Yes, he felt those things. His spirit was provoked. He could get just as discouraged and thirsty and hungry as the rest. But what kept him going on those years in the wilderness? He had the glory before. He had glory before him. It's interesting, isn't it, that he has seen the reproaches of Christ. Now that was a little flash of something beyond what was the normal revelation of the day. But God gave him that to encourage him through the wilderness. And if we're gonna be encouraged through this wilderness world, and if the light is gonna shine out and if the vessel is gonna be broken, brethren, we have to have the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ before our souls. So are you saying, uh, Jim, that when the apostle Paul. Said I die daily. Meant that he was willing to put his physical life on the line. Day by day. Yes, absolutely, because Paul never knew from one day to the next, did he? No, we sit here this afternoon. We're not afraid of somebody busting down the doors and breaking in here and shooting us because or carrying us off to prison because we're having Bible meetings. But you know, there's some brethren that they, they feel that in a very real way when they when they open the word of God, they do it very circumspectly and shutters closed and very quietly. And if they do it in this room today, they'll do it in another room in another part of the city tomorrow and they.

They they fear for their lives because of their testimony. And Paul had that, didn't he? He never knew when he got up in the morning if he was going to see another, another sunset or when he lay down at night if he was going to see another sunrise. He lived in jeopardy every hour. But why did he do it? Because there was glory before his soul. There was something better before before his soul. And the things that he once counted deer here, those things were nothing compared to what was ahead and even the physical things that he suffered. While he was waiting to be taken to be with the Lord, those things he could endure because he knew there was something far better. You know, you can get through a difficult situation. You can suffer pain and get through it. Even the natural man can. If there's hope that things will be diff better tomorrow, you take a little medication, you're gonna heal. You're gonna get that. And so Paul, with the glory before him, he knew. He knew that things were gonna get better. He knew what was ahead. And so all those physical things and putting his life on the line from day-to-day. He was gladly, gladly willing to do for Christ and for the blessing of the people of God. I think a lot of our brethren that are persecuted in other parts of the world for that reason appreciate these trees more than we do, but it's something that is true for us all. Brethren, if you want to, uh, enjoy the life that is really ours now, remember it's life and resurrection, but you cannot see that life and resurrection unless. Death has been put into practical effect first. Another place where we have that principle is I am crucified with Christ. Person that's crucified, is that painful? Yes, it surely is. But he says nevertheless I live. What sense are you living yet? Not I, but Christ liveth in me and the life that I now live in the flesh. I live by the faith of the Son of Man. It's the faith it has for its object, the Son of Man. Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. So it's life and resurrection. That's why I say, brethren, it it's been impressive to me that I believe that in many of these Western lines we've been deceived into thinking that life is living for the enjoyment of ourselves here. Naturally, that is not Christian life. Christian life is that which is beyond death. It's putting into effect the dying of the Lord Jesus now so that the life of Jesus might be made manifest. In our bodies, Lord Jesus could say to his disciples, if any man come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. And I believe that the apostle Paul, you heard those words loud and clear and he was willing to deny himself in this world. Somebody has said the apostle Paul, he fasted on the outside, but he feasted on the inside and. Audio parcel. It tells us in chapter one something of what he experienced, I believe is referring to the riot that broke out at Ephesus. When, uh, was it that Goldsmith, he saw that his business was in jeopardy. Apparently he's making these images for Diana and he incites the people to oppose Paul. And you know Paul, he says in the first chapter of this epistle that we're reading from. Per SE, but we would not rather have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure above strength in so much that we despaired even of life. I believe you, Pastor Paul thought he was going to die right there at Ephesus. They had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raises the dead. Now this is a great encouragement for each of us, I believe, verse 10 who delivered us from so great a death, and thus delivered in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us. You see, we're covered past, present, and future.

Reading

Like to suggest that we read Second Corinthians chapter 4 brethren. I'm not sure how far we'll get. Uh, we have 3 readings in these conferences and we'll get into chapter 5. That would be good too, but. That is suitable unless there's something other. Corinthians, chapter 4. Therefore seen, we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not, but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants, for Jesus sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the Excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live always, are alway delivered unto the death. Unto death for Jesus sake. That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in You, we having the same spirit of faith, according as it as it is written. I believed, and therefore have I spoken. We also believe, and therefore speak, knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with You. For all things are for your sake, that the abundant grace might through the Thanksgiving of many. Redound to the glory of God, for which 'cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal. But the things which are not seen are eternal. I was thinking of that last verse of this chapter when it was mentioned. Uh, earlier as to how some in this country have lost everything. And. Brethren, I really believe God is speaking to us. In view of the fact that we live perhaps in the most affluent culture. Maybe that has ever been in the history of the world. And he's reminding us that what we have that is real. Is not visible to the human eye, but sometimes he has to take away things so that we realize where true values really lie. It speaks in verse seven of a treasure. That we have. In earthen vessels. What is that treasure? And it's a treasure, brethren, that can never be lost once we have it. But it's something that we're going to have to. Come to grips with that. We do not. Uh, perceive or see physically? Like it says in verse 18. All there, he says, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. How do you look at things that are not seen? This is the. Life of faith, Brethren.

To apprehend things that are greater than the material things that our culture has been so founded on. May the Lord help us in meditating our portion and the tremendous place we've been brought into because of our faith in the Lord Jesus. To apprehend this treasure. The Lord allows us to lose everything materially. We will still have that which really counts. And so. This chapter is on my heart brother, and I trust this is of the Lord. Would like to say before we start in the first verses of the chapter that it helps when we start in verse one where it speaks about this ministry. Go back to chapter 3 to see what he's referring to. Seeing therefore seen we have this ministry as we have received mercy, we think not. Go back to chapter 3. Paul has been contrasting. The ministry under the old covenant, the law with what is that which we we have in Christianity. And notice the way he contrasted in chapter 3. In verse 7, the law is called the ministration of death. And. Versus, uh. Verse nine. It is also called the ministration of condemnation. And that which we have now is called in the end of verse 9, the administration of righteousness. Umm, there's another verse that huh, Verse eight, yes, the administration of the Spirit. There's the two administrations that it's speaking about. And he's showing that under the law, Moses, when he went up to receive the tables of the law the second time, when he came back down, he had seen the glory of the Lord. And that administration of death and condemnation was so tremendously great that his face was shining. He wasn't aware of the fact that it was shining, but everybody was afraid of him, and he had to take a veil and cover his face so that they would approach him. Well, that's what's characteristic of the administration of condemnation and death. Is that the veil is on the face. But look at the last verse, last two verses of chapter 3. Now the Lord is that spirit and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty and then verse 18 but we all this is not just something for a few brethren. No, brethren, this is. Something that is what is for us all. With open or unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. So in Christianity, brethren, the veil has come off, and with unveiled faces we can go in. And behold the glory of the Lord. That's what's characteristic. And the more you and I are occupied with that glory, brother, and it's going to transform us. You're not going to be aware of the transformation taking place in your life, but you will be occupied with Him. It will transform you. This is the ministry that he's talking about as he starts into Chapter 4. So I just thought that might be helpful. And so he says with this ministry, we think not.

And just to make it very practical, brethren, if we lose sight of the Lord Jesus at the right hand of God, we're not occupied with himself. Not only will there not be a transformation or a Christ likeness in your life and mind, but we're going to paint too. And that's really what we need in the days in which we live. If we were, we won't take time, but if we were to turn over to first Peter, we would find there that in that first chapter, Peter speaks of the trials that the Saints there were going through. Those Jewish believers that had been persecuted, scattered from their homes, they were going through what Peter refers to as fiery trials, Things that I've never been called on to pass through in the path of faith and service. But what does he say amidst it all? Whom not having seen ye love, Though now ye see him not yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And so again, as Brother Bob said. We don't see the Lord Jesus with the physical eye like His own did when He was here in this world. But is He any less real to the eye of faith? You and I have a wonderful privilege this morning of my faith looking up and being occupied with the Lord Jesus, not as the lowly man of grace walking here in this world. Wonderful privileges John and others had when the Lord was here. They handled her the word of life. But we have perhaps even a far greater privilege linked to our head by the Spirit of God. We can look up by faith and be occupied with with him where he is now. And that is what is going to encourage us not to faint. The apostle Paul, he went through trials too. In fact, to the Corinthian brethren, he lists them great trials, just one thing after another, day after day, year after year. Why didn't Paul faint? He had Christ, a glorified man. He had one before his soul. He speaks of running the a a race in with to the Corinthians as well in another portion and so on. And brethren, maybe we've come to these meetings. We feel a little faint. Maybe we just can't go on, gotta go back and face those situations at home in the world and work and the assembly. But brethren will pre preserve from fainting. And encouraged to press on, not with the removal of the affliction, but through the afflictions. If we have this ministry before our souls, that Paul presents Christ as a glorified man to so occupy our souls, and as we used to sing when we were young people, turn your eyes

upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful faith, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace. You speak, Jim, about? Those sufferings that Paul went through, and they were tremendous sufferings, why does Paul speak of them in verse 17 as light affliction? Why? Well, it wasn't that he was callous or indifferent to them, but he compares them with what is ahead. And when he compared them with what was ahead, they were a light affliction and. If I can just say this too, Paul knew more than any of us what was ahead. You know when he says in Philippians that he was in a bet, he was betwixt too to depart and be with Christ which is far better, or stay for the blessing of the Saints. That was more of a dilemma than perhaps you and I will ever pass through. Why? Because he speaks to these very Corinthian Saints of that time when he was caught up to the 3rd heaven. He had temporarily been there in the in Paradise, in the very dwelling place of God. No wonder his afflictions were light afflictions. No wonder he was in a straight betwixt 2 whether to be here or to be there. He knew what was ahead. But brethren, if we could just get a glimpse, a taste in our souls by faith of what is ahead, we'd be in that dilemma too. And we would count in the measure in which glory is before our souls. We would count our afflictions light. But I want to say this, Bob, and I think it's a good point. We never want to give the impression when we speak about our afflictions and trials that we ever get to the point where we grit our teeth or become callous or indifferent. To what the Lord is passing us through. If we do that, then we fail to learn the lessons that He has for us in his schooling and in the allowance of what He passes us through. And so we feel it. But as Paul again said on ANO in Corinthians, sorrowful, but yet always rejoicing. He could rejoice even in the trials, but it wasn't that he didn't feel it. He shed tears, and I have no doubt plenty of tears.

He felt the cold and the nakedness and the hunger and the thirst, but he had something more glorious before his soul. Paul was caught up to the 3rd heaven and he saw that which, uh, he said it was not lawful for him. For him to utter. I mean, there was not truly words in the English language to adequately describe the wonder of the awesomeness of that experience. But he saw, I believe, Christ in glory, did he not, on the road to Damascus, and that was some time before, and I just enjoyed what he has to say before King Agrippa in Acts chapter 26. And I believe this vision of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, it changed Saul. Forever. And it tells us here in chapter 26, the book of Acts, and verse 13. Says to Agrippa at midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven above, the brightness of the sun shining round about me, and damned which journey with me. How can we imagine what this must have been like to the saw we go out today? And we see the sun, but we cannot look at the sun. It's too bright, but here is a life, he tells us, above the brightness of the sun. Who is it that Saul saw? Was it not the brightness of the eternal glory? It was Jesus, and then he hears the voice. Verse 14. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice. Speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul saw why persecuted style me. It is hard for thee to kick against the ******. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecuted. When he was speaking earlier concerning this event in his life to the Jews. It says. That Jesus told him he was Jesus of Nazareth. You know, Nazareth was a place that was rather despised. And scorned Nazareth, one could say, and there any good thing come out of Nazareth. But here we find that Jesus of Nazareth, the one who was despised and rejected of men, he's now exalted. And there he is in the glory. And that's why I believe that in this chapter. Paul. Delight to speak to us. About the glorious gospel of Christ, which I believe is the gospel of the glory of Christ. This is what he's bringing before us, and this is not the treasure that you and I we have in an earthen vessel. Treasure that's inexhaustible. We can look up and know that. We're gonna share that glory with this Exalted 1. But it affected his ministry, didn't it? From then on changed his person while he was converted. He was introduced to the Lord Jesus. And. Now he has a totally new outlook. How can we practically put this into effect? What it doesn't really mean to behold the Lord. And boy is that just the same thing as communion. I mean, we often here be occupied with Christ. Could you just give us a practical thing? I think all of us would like to have this.

Verse effective in our life. Uh, I think you could do that, Brother Byrne, please. Go ahead and do that for us. Well, I, I think that's what it is. You know, I mean, one that we love, we like to just sit next to and just be in their presence. And this verse seems to say that if I spend that time in his presence, I'm going to be like him, change like him. When I'm driving down the road in a car, I can be in his presence. It's a New Testament, and particularly the epistles that present to us Christ in glory, isn't it? And while we need the whole word of God, need to read it each day, yet I believe there's nothing like going to the epistles. Because they occupy us with the man in the glory. When you see pictures of the Queen of Elizabeth in the press or in magazines, she is usually depicted in some royal setting. Maybe it's in the throne room of Buckingham Palace. Maybe it's performing some official function with one of her diadems on her head. And you look at those pictures and then when someone says the name of Queen Elizabeth the Second of England. Or you think about her, what do you think of, you think of what has been brought before you in those pictures. You think of her sitting on the throne, carrying out the, uh, administrations of the Kingdom. And brethren, the word of God brings that before us. It brings before us Christ where he is now, the ascended Lord. And the more we read those, uh, the, the scriptures, then the more our thoughts are going to be turned not only to Christ, but where he is now. Yes, we need the gospels. Christ in his life as the example, the work that he took up of atonement and so on. But then we need to be occupied with him where he is now because that's really what Christianity sets before us. It sets us in relationship with Christ, the man in the glory. I would like to say this before we get off the subject. And that is in connection with Paul's sufferings that Bob mentioned because in the end of First Corinthians 11. He brings before us that list that we alluded to. Maybe we should just take a minute. I, I wanna read us a portion there near the end of that list because we think of the things that Paul suffers physically. And as we said, they're tremendous things and it's good to go and read that list. But Second Corinthians, I'm sorry, 2nd Corinthians 11. Thank you. Yes, our, our epistle, we're in 2nd Corinthians 11. And he speaks of the different things here, but I wanna notice what he says in verse 28. Besides those things that are without, now the things that are without were the beatings and the shipwrecks and the hunger and the thirst and the things that are are he, uh, mentioned in the previous verses. But now he's going to talk about something else, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. No, we don't always think about that when we think about the afflictions or the trials and exercises of the apostle Paul. You know, at the end of this list of things he suffered physically from without. To me it's almost as if he says there's a greater affliction, there's a greater care, there's a greater burden, and that is the care of the assembly. And you know, the apostle Paul, in his day, he saw much deterioration and weakness come in amongst the people of God. And at the end of his life he had to write the 2nd epistle to Timothy about the last days in perilous times and what had come in to the great house and professing Christendom and those in Asia that had forsaken him and so on. And what a burden, what an affliction, what a care that was. How could Paul go on? You know, some of us in our short lifetimes, we, we've seen a lot of change. We've seen things come in that indicate amongst the people of God that were in the last days. What's going to keep us from fainting brethren? What's going to keep us from giving up is to have Christ before us. If we get our eyes on our brethren and thank God for our precious dear brethren. Thank God for those who desire to go on in the truth. But if we get our eyes on them. If we get occupied with the circumstances and the deterioration and the weakness we've seen come in, in our lifetime, we're gonna faint. We're gonna get discouraged. But brother, we don't need to faint. We need to be exercised like Paul. We need to be burdened and concerned like Paul, but we don't need to faint. We can go on to the end. And this was read to us in June, the end of June, where you have again, appalling days of giving up an apostasy and turning away an indifference to the truth.

Oh, he speaks of not even stumbling there in the past. Why, if Christ is before our souls, if we have a glorified Christ, we're going to go on with the ministry that Paul was given and the enjoyment of it that we might not think rather than we don't need to paint or stumble in the past, even in these days we live in. I have two questions and I hope they're done digress from what is being said, but before we move on too far, could someone comment on verse six because I believe it's. Misunderstood. Who also have made us able ministers of the New Testament or New Covenant? Because I believe that the way that's taken up today is exactly the opposite of what we've been talking about. And unrelated to that. Why, Jim, do you keep saying Christ and not Jesus? Again, we live in a day where men will talk of Jesus, the little of Christ. Well, I'll answer your second question 1St and then let somebody else answer the other one. The Lord Jesus is who He was walking as a man through this world, as the rejected one. And certainly we need to have that. As I say, He's left us an example. That we should follow in his footsteps. But Christ is our head. Christ is the Anointed 1. Christ Jesus is the one who's risen and glorified at the right hand of God. And brethren, that's what we need before our souls to encourage us to go on to the end of the pathway. When you have Jesus Christ, it's his pathway here. And we need that to encourage us. And as I say, the example, but we also need to have the end of the journey. We need to have him, not all, not just as Jesus Christ. But as Christ Jesus the one, the man, the lowly man that God has taken and exalted and placed at his right hand as the perfect example for you and for me, The whole title is Lord Jesus Christ, and Lord is sovereignty. Jesus is Jehovah's Savior, and Christ is God's anointed One in whom he trusts to set the whole show in order according to his purposes. And councils. And just make a comment about the thought of the word ministry that we have before us, and it's often thought of in Christendom as a titled position. And uh, uh. Wally made the comment, our ministry, and we have that not as a title position, but as a service and the word ministry or minister means servant. If you go back to Matthew chapter 20, there was a dispute about, uh, who would be the greatest? And so the Lord clears it up in verse 26. It shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister. Servant, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Then he gives himself as the example, even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. We have this ministry, our chapter verse one. We have this service. And it's not just for those who attain a certain age, you know. The young folks here might be in grade school or secondary school or the university and might think, well, I haven't arrived to a certain position for to qualify for a certain service. But this service, this ministry has a place for each one of us where we are as members of the body of Christ, a service to each other.

Uh, service to those who are classmates and service to those with whom we work in the workforce, our neighbor, the service is so wide that when christened and reduces it to a titled position, it gets so limited. But it's an occupation. It's the life. It's, it's what gives purpose and occupation and, and our whole being here. We have this ministry or this service, and we have received mercy, so we faint not. And that goes back to verse 18 of the last chapter, which gives us the intimacy. And how could there be service without communion? But we all with open face, beholding the glory of the Lord, and we're at home there. Imagine that, beloved brethren, we're at home in the presence of the Lord. Beholding us glory. I never relished the thought as a cadet going before the Admiral of the base and having to answer for a demerit that was terrorizing. We come before the Lord of glory as our advocate. As our high priest, as our friend. We have this ministry, we receive mercy, we faint not, because we all with open face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by. And here is the power of all the Spirit of the Lord. So the apostle Paul was a special minister, but it really like you say, brother Steve, is it applies to us all and I. Wish I could communicate to our younger brother that they feel this importance of what they've been brought into in Christianity. I heard some time ago of some of our some of the believers in China that we don't know too much about, but. That the persecution is such in certain areas that some of them are taken away when they start sharing what they have learned of the Lord of the scriptures of of salvation. And so those that are left maybe two or three weeks. Old in the Lord, they are left to carry on. If you were left to carry on right now, you have tremendous amount. You've been sitting in meetings like this. You have heard of Christ in the glory. What would you do if you had to carry on right now instead of some older brothers in your meeting? This belongs to us all, and it's important that we are faithful in this ministry. It's a wonderful thing that we've been brought into in Christianity, like it's been said, it's Christ in glory. You have an example of what it is, what is characteristic of it in Acts Chapter 7, and the person of Stephen, the first martyr, a man full of the Holy Ghost. And he stands there accused, falsely accused before the council, the Sanhedrin, and he doesn't bother with answering the accusations, but he gives testimony to that man in the glory of God. And they get so furious that they're going to stone him. And he looks up into heaven and he says, behold, I see heavens open and. The Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. Brilliant testimony, brilliant light, they put it out. But brethren, you and I have that same treasure in these earthen vessels. And so the ministry belongs to each one of us. What are we doing about it? Are we consciously enjoying the glory of the Lord? He was down here in this world like you mentioned, Jim, and that's what we have in the book of. In the four gospels we have is pathway through this world. And of course he was always the Son of God, and sometimes those glories shone through the human veil, but there was a glory that could never be.

Uh, veiled. It was his moral glory. And you look through the Gospels and see how completely perfect he was in every circumstance. I've had time when I was had some legal difficulties, and I've learned to fear lawyers because they have a real way of taking what you say and twisting around to mean something that you never meant to say. And the lawyers got around the Lord Jesus and they tried to trip him up. They always went away completely confused. Completely confounded because there was a man who was completely perfect. Isn't it wonderful to be able to meditate on those things? It's gonna have an effect on you and I if, if we do. But what is characteristic in Christianity, like you brought out Brother Jim, is it's Christ in glory. There he is as our advocate, as our great high priest, as the head of the church. And to be occupied with Him there, in all the difficulties we're called to pass through here. The Lord takes away every material thing that we have. We have everything in Christ, brethren. It's easy to say, but maybe the Lord will test us as to the reality of what we profess. It is true, and it really is true. If I could just, umm, comment a little bit on the basis, uh, on which we, we enter into these things, into the appreciation of the Lord Jesus. Uh, sometimes we, we have such a desire for others to enter into the glories of the Lord Jesus and, and, and have it make an effect in their life that we forget maybe that they need a basis on which, uh, to be able to enter into these things. Each one of us here, each one of you young people that have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as your savior, You've been given a new life. And that life has all the capabilities within it to enter into the enjoyment of divine things. Christ is a divine person, and because God has imparted his life in you, you have the capacity to enjoy the Lord Jesus, to meditate on him. But you also have something else. You have the Spirit of God, it was given to you upon believing, and it is the Spirit of God which is the power which makes these things, these things of God, real to us. And God has given you the gift of faith. Faith is able to take spiritual things and make them real, and so as we. Express our desire that you enter into spiritual things and you enjoy them. We wouldn't want to make you think that you have to do it on your own. You have been given everything that pertains to life and godliness. You have been given everything and it's as we enter into what we've been given and we learn to use it, that things are made precious to us. And so young people, it's a. It's, it's, it's a, uh, it's, it's a, a line upon line, precept upon precept. The importance of allowing the spirit of God liberty in your life so that he can take the word of God and make it precious if we. Do not allow the Spirit if, if we if we go on in a way that which grieves the Spirit of God, there won't be growth, there won't be development. There won't be enjoyment of the Lord, and so

we need to be careful that the Spirit of God has liberty. Brother Nick, you had something on your heart in chapter 3, verse six. I'm not sure we kind of skipped over that. Uh, why don't you express what you had there? Well, I'd rather hope that someone else to express it, but let me clarify what I was saying, why I was saying that if I am able to.

Paul describes himself here as an able minister of the new Cus of the New Covenant. And there are those today that believe that we are under the new covenant and. And I think that that thought brings us right back here to this scene. The new covenant we read in Hebrews 8. I'll just read it. It's very explicit. It says I'll make a new covenant with the House of Israel, with the House of Judah and so. Israel's hopes and aspirations were centered in this scene, and God will make a new covenant with Israel and Judah. It never says in Scripture that He has made a covenant with the Church. And soon as our thoughts turn to a covenant being made with us that bring our, brings our thoughts right back here into the scene. So this, uh, one verse in 2nd Corinthians 3 is perhaps one that is difficult for some to understand since Paul describes himself as an able minister of the new covenant. So if someone would like to explain that in a clear way, it would be helpful. I'm glad we came back to that because it is helpful and we need to stress, do we not? The covenants are connected with man and the earth and the church is a heavenly entity and God has never, as Brother Nick said, made a covenant with the church. Now we do come under the good of the new covenant, although the new covenant is not for us. The new covenant, as was pointed out, is for Israel, but we do come under the blessing of it. In fact, tomorrow morning when we have a cup on the table, it's it speaks in First Corinthians 11. Of the cup of the New Testament or new covenant. And maybe I just point out when it's Testament, it's most often properly translated covenant. So in our sixth verse, and we've quoted it ministers of the New Testament in the King James. But if you notice Mr. Darby's translation, its new covenant, it really gives the the thought a little better same thing, but really conveys the thought a little a little better. And so we come under the good of it and the difference between the old covenant and the new covenant too is. That in the under the old covenant, under the law, if man carried out his responsibility, then there was blessing. But man proved in the Old Testament under a number of covenants really, because there were covenants made with other individuals before God made a covenant with Israel collectively, there was Abraham and David and and others as well. But what the Old Testament history proved is that man couldn't hold up his end of the bargain. That he could not be blessed on that ground. And the new covenant for Israel is on the grounds of pure sovereign grace. Israel is going to be blessed in the coming day when Zion is addressed and Zion is the undeserved favor of God and God is going to come in on their behalf, not because they can hold up their end of the bargain. You know, you think of a covenant. We do it in business. We make covenants and there's Co all kinds of covenants made and the. Covenant being carried out to its fruition is dependent on both parties holding up their end of the bargain. If you sign a lease or a covenant to take an apartment, if you don't hold up your end of the bargain, you're going to eventually get evicted. You're going to get an eviction notice. In business, we when I was in business, we had contracts or covenants, but there was always a clause that said if either end of the party didn't hold up their. Part of the bargain of the covenant, then the contract became null and void and the other party was able to get out from under the legal obligations of it. And so I just say that to show what a covenant really is. And so Israel is going to come to the realization in a coming day through the circumstances they will yet go through that they can only be blessed on the grounds of grace. And of course, it's on the ground of the blood, the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. But let's be very clear, we're not spiritual Israel. We're not an extension of Israel. We are not under a new covenant or any other covenant. God has brought us in to blessing on the grounds of the work of Calvary, where the Church of God, the bride of Christ, and we are going to enjoy eternity in that perspective. But there is a covenant that He has made and that He will fulfill for the blessing of Israel, but it will be on the earth.

We have that in, uh, Jeremiah 3131. I believe this comes before us clearly as to this new covenant, and that it's in respect to Israel's House of Judah. It says Jeremiah 3131 Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judas, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which my covenant they pray. This refers to the law. They broke the law. Although I wasn't husband unto them, saith the Lord, but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those days, saith the Lord. I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people, and they shall teach no more. Every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, No, the Lord, for they shall all know me. From the least of them onto the greatest of them, saith the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. What a bright future we have recorded here with respect to Judah and Israel. You know God is gonna bless his earthly people and I think. Always. That the blessing of the Jew. Is in connection with her. Which is not so with the Christian. You know, the blessing of the Christian is always in connection with heaven, not with earth. And that's why it was hard for Jewish believers to get a grip on what Paul was bringing out with respect to the gospel of the glory of Christ. And that this is where our life truly is. He's trying to separate them from that earthly hope. And occupy their minds with the heavenly 1. But I think it's important to see that the covenant is with respect to the two in connection with earth. Covenant is not made with the church, but as you say, the covenant with the Jew. The new covenant is based on the work of Christ, this precious blood, which can never fail. So it depends entirely on what God has done and is going to work. How wonderful that you and I, we have a hope outside of this world. Uh, blesses of our blessing is that same precious blood that was shed, doesn't it? No, it's not a different basis, but it is a different sphere of blessing. And, uh, Jew today who get saved, he's really not, uh, looked at as on Jewish ground any longer as he's on the ground of the church. Uh, going back to our chapter, it'd be nice to get on a little bit in this chapter. We've been talking about verse one. But now going on to verse two, he says in connection with this ministry. We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully. But by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. However, other than how important since we are in the measure that we have been brought into this position, we are ministers, uh, we have been brought into this ministry that there is the renouncing of the hidden things of dishonesty so often in Christian circles, so much that is dishonest.

Has been brought forward and what? Terrible. Uh, impediments. It presents to the gospel. I must say, rather than recently over in Europe and in. Spain especially. There is a real spirit of apostasy. Say, some say that in Spain 50% are atheists. To mention the name of God just creates repulsion in people. And I think it's because of those who have stood outwardly in the place of God and they've been involved in homosexuality and abuse of children. People have nothing. They don't want anything to do with anything related to God. It's terrible. I've said sometimes, brethren, we need to all be exercised on our practical level. If you do not show the gospel practically, how are you going to speak it? It's what's called an Ephesians 6, the preparation of the gospel of peace. The shot with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. How is your walk? Talks about fees. It's our watch and we need to be. Shot with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. If there's something in my life that is not according to the Light, and the light is that which manifests everything in our lives, brethren, is there some detail? Is there some hidden corner of your life where you've got things hidden that you know are not right? Right. How in the world are you going to speak the gospel? Lord help us, brethren, it it searches my own heart. I often have said in Sometimes people ask me what kind of work you do. And I used to say I'm a missionary or a preacher. You know what? When I say that, I could just see, generally speaking, people just reach off and turn off the

switch. They're not listening any longer. Yeah, I can still talk to them, but they're not listening to anything I'm saying. Why? Because of the poor testimony of those who say they're preachers. So I'd rather say, umm, something else. An account. Or export bibles or something like that. But if I say that, then maybe they'll give me a hearing. But I say to the brethren down in Bolivia sometimes if you're a bricklayer and you do your work thoroughly as to the Lord. Time comes to say a word for the Lord because of how good a work you're doing. People are going to listen to you, so it's important. Your personal testimony is tremendously important, and that's why it says we've renounced the hidden things of dishonesty. Not walking in craftiness nor handling the Word of God deceitfully. How often the Word of God is used to twist in one way or another for personal advantage. How sad that is. It's very common in Christian so-called Christian circles today, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Remember Mr. Lundin mentioning how the truth of God goes into the soul? It's heard through the ear, and when it goes in the ear, it passes through the conscience on the way to the soul. And it has to go through the conscience. It's going to be received properly. There are people that are able to absorb things in the head, but it never gets into their conscience. The way it gets home to the car, to the soul, is through the conscience. So appeal to the conscience, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Conscience is that which man got when he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And that's what conscience is, the knowledge of good and evil.

In every single human being that lives on the face of the earth has conscience. They may deny the existence of God in their head, but their conscience tells them that there's a God. So the conscience is on your side, and if you speak the truth of God to them, their conscience is going to tell you. Tell them he's talking the truth and that's important in our ministry is to appeal to the conscience. Member Brother telling me that he had occasion to speak to some scientists who were trying to deny, uh, the truth of creation, and they were trying to establish evolution, and they were presenting him with some complicated arguments. And he said. At the end of all they're talking, he said. OK, but what about your sins? I didn't know what to say. Their conscience. And so the Lord Jesus and his life down here appealed to the conscience. I often think of when they brought that woman taken in adultery in the very act it says, and they sat here in the midst that poor woman, and they said to the Lord Jesus, Moses and the law said, we should stone that woman. What do you say? The Lord didn't answer their question. He on the ground he wrote, doesn't say what he wrote. But after they asked for quite a while, he got up and he says he that is without sin among you, let him first cast the first stone at her. That wasn't an answer to their question, that was an answer to their conscience. And it says the oldest to the youngest. Got up and walked out because of the conscience. Brethren, it's important when we're asked questions, sometimes there's curious questions that are asked. Let's not be so occupied in answering curious questions as in answering the conscience. Commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. What we say will never commend itself to another's conscience if our lives and actions aren't in accordance with what we say. And Paul was a special minister raised up at the beginning of the dispensation to present this ministry to us. And it's interesting how careful Paul was to live a life that commended. The ministry. We have a number of examples of it in the first epistle. Twice he says be followers of me even as I am of Christ. Now none of us would dare to say that, but Paul said it by divine inspiration because he was a special minister. I'd just like to notice a couple of scriptures in this connection. Go to 1St Corinthians 9 for a moment. First Corinthians, Chapter 9. And the last verse of the chapter verse 27, but I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. Previously he's been talking about running the race. And again Paul was get was a special instrument raised up as an example at the beginning given this special ministry. But what he's really saying in simplicity at the end of this chapter is. When I have run the race and when I have preached, when I presented my ministry, I don't want to do anything that would bring reproach on it. I want to live in a way, bring my body into subjection and live in a way. That commends my ministry. Now let's go back to the second epistle and go to the 6th chapter where he speaks of this again in connection with his ministry. Chapter 6 and verse 3, giving no offense in anything that the ministry be not blamed, but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience and afflictions and necessities and so on, He gives another. Little list of some of the things he had suffered as a minister of Christ. But again, we see very clearly, don't we. Paul's exercise was that what he spoke. His ministry would be commended by his life and back in our verse in our chapter. I just make this gentle suggestion that when he says but by manifestation of the truth. You know if you look up that word manifest or manifestation in Webster's dictionary.

This is the meaning it gives to clearly show, in other words, to my own soul. It's just as if Paul says. Not only by by what we say do we want to present our ministry, but we want to clearly show it by our lives and polls like did clearly show and give weight, moral weight to the ministry that he was given by the Spirit from the Lord, by the Spirit of God. And then he says, then he says, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. You say I tried to. Present some aspect of truth to somebody, maybe to another young person or somebody just didn't seem to reach the conscience. Well, it has to be a work of the Spirit of God, of course. But I sometimes, at least in my own case, brethren, had to look at my own soul and say maybe, maybe what I said didn't commend itself to the others conscience because of my life. You know, when Lot spoke in Sodom, what he said was the truth. It was the truth. Judgment was coming. Sodom was about to be destroyed, but it commended itself to no one's conscience because his life was in such a moral shambles. And so I think what has been said is very good, wonderful to be able to know these things, to be able to articulate them and put them out and present them to others. But the moral weight behind it that's going to commend it to another's conscience is the life that we live. I noticed that in one of Bruce Anstey's. Of booklets, he repeats more than once. A little palm and it comes to mind, Uh. Or something like this. The gospel is written a chapter a day by the deeds that you do, by the words that you say. Men read what is written, whether faithless or true. Say, What is the gospel according to you? Spoke to my own heart. And conscious too. As we go through these chapters. It's just good to keep in mind the simple outline. In the third chapter we have the true ministry and its results. In the 4th chapter, we especially have the characteristics of the true minister of God. As we have just been Speaking of the 5th chapter, we have that which motivates the minister of God. And as our brother Steve said, we each have or should have opportunity to serve the Lord, and that would administer and serve are the same. And these are the things that should characterize us. I I know a young girl. Who? Someone asked her, So what do you do Friday night? And she said, oh, I normally hang out with my friends. And the person jokingly said, oh, I would have thought you would have said you go to Bible study. And she said no, that's Thursday night. And the person was completely taken aback and became rather serious and started to speak on, well, what do you say I have to do to get to heaven on the subject? The the conversation went from there. But it was rather remarkable that that individual who knew nothing about that girl's life, would jokingly say to her, oh, I thought you would have said, you go to Bible study. Just noticing in that. Book 24 when the Lord Jesus walked with those two on the way to Emmaus and they begin to describe what had taken place and they described, uh, the Lord in verse, uh. 19. And Jesus said unto them, What things? And they said unto him concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty indeed, and word before God, and will all the people. Sometimes we find it more easy to say in Word indeed, but I notice here it's deed that comes first. And of course, over in Acts chapter one, we also have something there along the same line in the very first first Acts one and one the former treatise have I made all theophilus of all that Jesus began both to do, and peace there again. Eat 1St and end the word.

Kaufmann said. You know, people, perhaps they don't hear so much what we say. They look at what we do. It might be good to read verse 5, for we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord. Now as we speak of that which is reflected from our lives, they want nothing reflected from our lives. It's not Christ. When the world sees us, we want them to see Christ. As that girl, uh, spoke of worsh what she did with her, her Thursday evenings, it was. It was somewhat a reflection, wasn't it, of an appreciation what she did with her Eve evenings, Wasn't it to spend time in appreciation of the Word of God and of the Lord Jesus? And what reflected from her life was Christ. So the apostle Paul, didn't she? He didn't speak of himself. His whole sole purpose was to set Christ before man. And that is that's the purpose of our life. God is creating us into the image of His dear Son, and that should be the result, the fruit that is born from us. If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. What a tragedy we have, this tremendous revelation of the glory of Christ, glory of God, in a world that is dying. And wrestling under the power of wickedness that we would not let the gospel be seen. The Gospel be hidden, the Lord says in the Gospels, do not let our lamps be put under a bushel or under a bed bushel. Perhaps Speaking of business data of of uh, relaxation and leisure. So often, brethren, we allow the light to be hidden. What a tragedy. I have to confess I'm as guilty as anyone on this, but it's something that should really exercise us. We have the answer, brethren, we do. Do you believe it or not? Brother Steve, do you believe that we have the answer? The context I suppose here too, is that Paul is saying there's nothing in my life that causes the gospel to be good. That's right. Because it's because if it's hit, it's hit to those that are lost in whom and this is goes on. Now the God of this world. Of course, that's small G Satan is the God of this world religiously. Has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ to the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. Oh, wonderful, rather than that we've been brought to know God in the person of the Lord Jesus. Wonderful, wonderful truth. I think they say that there is over 1 billion Muslims in the world today and the Muslim religion says that God is unknown and unknowable. And you and I know, God, what a tremendous treasure that is. Do we look at it that way, brother? We have been brought into the true knowledge of God and the Person of the Lord Jesus. He has been brought into through the Lord Jesus. The full revelation of God has been given in the Old Testament. God was known in partial ways. He's known in creation. He was known in a certain way if the giving of the law in Mount Sinai. But it is not until the Lord Jesus came that we have the full revelation of God and the person of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And now you and I can say we know God.

I sound presumptuous to say we have the answer, but let's not forget that God has spoken. There are three facts of life. God is. God has spoken and we are responsible, but to say that we have the answer? Is because God has spoken. And here we hold in our frail little pink hand absolute truth. I say frail little pink hand committed to mere man, like you and like me, who always stand before our wives, and our wives before the husbands, and we stand before the children. And they see things perhaps that ought not to be sane. They hear things that perhaps ought not to be heard. You know, we all have our frailties and our weaknesses. And I wanna make a word to the young people growing up because it's a day in which, uh, parents are judged and we're not perfect. You cannot judge the truth by those that hold it. We're frail. We want to do our best, we want to please the Lord, but you'll see failure. And you don't have to look at your parents to see it. An honest person will look at themselves. And no, the propensity of their own heart. God is the God of grace. He's also the God of truth. And so we can go on. I think that's why, Steve, when we speak of the truth, we need to be clear. I think it's third John speaks of the truth in you. He says to gas that's subjective and that may be so like you say in in part, but if you look at me to closely, brethren, you're gonna see that which does not relate to truth. So when we speak about the truth, we need to be clear that in its absoluteness, it's in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who said I am the way, the truth and the life He is absolute truth or the precious word of God, because it says. Thy word is true. There you have it in its absoluteness, you know, Look at me. Hopefully you'll see something that may relate to it, but there's something that may not relate to it as well. So don't look at me. Don't look at your brother, look at Christ. Look at his precious word. And so Paul said, we preach. We don't preach ourselves. We preach not ourselves. He was a special instrument, as we say, raised up at the beginning, but he wasn't presenting himself. He was presenting Christ in the glories of Christ. We preach Christ in Christ crucified. The crucifixion is the basis of the gospel, and Christ in glory is the one who is the Savior. Christ Jesus came into the world. To save sinners. So Paul wasn't presenting himself, he was just the instrument to present the glories of Christ. But Bob, you made a comment which I think is helpful about Satan being the God of this world religiously. And what does Satan use more to keep people blinded and insensitive to the gospel of the glories of Christ more than religion and that and not just heathen religion or false religion as far as. Islam or Hinduism or Buddhism or all those things, but come right over to the Western world. What is Satan using to keep man insensitive to his ruin? He has is using, I tremble to say it, brethren, but he is using those who handle the word of God deceitfully and who are not presenting the gospel as it is in Jesus who are not. A presenting Christ. As the glorified man is the Savior of sinners, not presenting the fact that man is lost and ruined and that there's nothing he can do. And that it's on the basis of the work of Calvary and the blood of Christ and the resurrection and the ascension and the work of God in in the soul and and so on and repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And Satan is using false religion even taken from this very book.

To keep man insensitive to his ruin. It's a very, very solemn thing. And it's sometimes easier to speak to people who are steeped in heathendom, who have no knowledge of this book. It's often easier to speak to them about the true gospel than it is to speak to those who have had false teaching from the Word of God. It seems that. Very simple, right from the Garden of Eden that Satan's desire was to for man to make much of himself. Listen to me, he said Satan, and you'll be as gods, you'll be exalted. And uh, we tend to make much of self and that sure hinders the, the truth. Uh, my son Benji, which many of you know, phoned yesterday evening. Said dad make much a price. I thought that's good advice. Satan desires the world to worship him. That's why he's referred to as the God of this world. And we know in the Lord Jesus was tempted by Satan. You said to the Lord, look at all these kingdoms up on a high mountain. I'll give all of these to you if you fall down. Worship me. That's his desire, and he knows that. If. So. It's given to see the glory of Christ, like Paul did Saul at the time, on the way to Damascus. He's gonna lose the worshipper because we know what happened to Saul. At one point. It was on fire for the enemy, really for Satan. Didn't realize it, perhaps, but. Now he's on fire for God and for the Lord Jesus. And he's also referred to as the Prince of this world. I mean, he desires to rule the world. And of course, in the coming day we find in Jerusalem the Temple will be rebuilt, and there in that temple will sit one who exalts himself above all that is called God. This is the Antichrist. He's looking for the worship of the world, and he's gonna have this image of the beast, I believe. Made and he's gonna call upon the world to worship the beast, but it's all part of a Trinity of evil. It's Satan looking for worship, and that's why he's seeking. Love is power to keep souls blinded. The gospel would be hid from them. It's interesting while they verse four says what's blinded are the minds and uh, man by wisdom does not know God. It comes through the light of the gospel and it comes through applying the light to the conscience. And I think that is such a important thing to remember in gospel work. Appeal to the conscience because that way it will get through. But I was talking to a friend of mine a number of years ago who was in medical school in a certain university, and he said of all the different schools in this particular university, the incidence of atheism is highest among medical students. I said, wow, that's incredible where you were studying such an intricate thing as the human body to be able to. Deny the existence of God in studying that. It's because the mind is blinded and you can take light and shine it in the face of a blind man. How much does he see? Nothing. When a person says he doesn't believe God, he's blinded.

(2 Corinthians 4:15 — 5:12.)

To be of any profit this article nest be read in connection with a Bible, opened at the above passage.

PAUL'S ministry and service are still in view in verse 15, and the "all things" of that verse refer to the treasure with which he had been entrusted, the mercy that carried him in triumph through the persecution and discipline, the resurrection world which lay at the end. All these things were not matters purely personal to Paul, but through him were for the sake of the whole church of God. Consequently the Corinthians had an interest and a share in it all, and could add their thanksgivings to Paul's to the greater glory of God. We too may join in the thanksgiving though nearly nineteen centuries have passed; for what great blessing has reached us through his inspired epistles which sprang out of these experiences, written for our sakes as well as for the Corinthians. We too shall be presented with Paul and the Corinthians in the resurrection world.

There is nothing like having the resurrection full in view as an antidote against fainting. That glorious hope sustained the Apostle and it will sustain us. In the last verse of 1 Corinthians 15, we see how it inspires to active labor in the work of the Lord. Here, we discover how it sustains and encourages under the severest trials which threaten the perishing of the outward man: that is, the dissolution of the body in death.

And not only is there resurrection in the future but also a work of renewal in the present. "Our outward man" is the material body with which we are clothed. "The inward man" is not material but spiritual— that spiritual entity that we each possess, and which (since we are believers) has become the subject of God's new creation work. The current usage of this phrase in the world is a total misapplication of it. A man speaks of paying attention to "the demands of the inner man" when he means having a good meal to satisfy his stomach; and thus even the inner man is turned into a part of the anatomy of the outward man. This of course is symptomatic of the fact that the spiritual does not come within the range of the natural man.

The outward man is subject to all kinds of buffetings and wear and tear, yet it may in the mercy of God receive a certain amount of renewal, which may stave off for a time that ultimate perishing which we call death. The inward man IS not renewed day by day. This renewal is doubtless produced by the gracious ministry of the Spirit of God, who indwells us.

What an extraordinary and inspiring picture is presented to our mental vision by this passage. Here is the Apostle; he has years of strenuous and dangerous labors behind him. He is continually being troubled and persecuted and battered by men, and again and again "delivered unto death" in the providential dealings of God. Yet he is pressing forward with undaunted courage, with the light of the future glory of resurrection before his eyes; and though he is worn as to his body, and signs of day are appearing, he is being renewed daily in his spirit so that he goes forward with unabated or even increased spiritual vigor. He felt all the trouble that came upon him, yet he dismisses it as "our light affliction."

The affliction is not only light but also only "for a moment." In Paul's case it lasted from the days shortly after his conversion, when the Jews of Damascus took counsel to kill him, to the day when he suffered martyrdom: a period covering thirty years or more. This period is only a moment to him because his mind is set on an eternity of glory. What tremendous contrasts we have here! The coming glory is weighty and not light: for eternity and not merely for a moment: and it is this in a "far more exceeding" way. It might have seemed enough to say it was exceeding. To say it is "more exceeding" seems almost superfluous. But, "far more exceeding!" Paul piles on the words. It is something excessively surpassing! He knew it, for fourteen years before he had been caught up into the third heaven and had glimpses of it. He wishes us to know it too.

The secret of the Apostle's wonderful career is found in the last verse of the chapter. The "look" of which he speaks is, of course, the look of faith. He was passing through the scenes and circumstances of earth, which were very visible, yet he was not looking at them. He was looking at the eternal things, which are not visible to mortal eyes. Here doubtless is discovered to us where much of our weakness lies. Our faith is weak like Peter's was when he essayed to walk on the waters to go to Jesus. He looked at the raging waves which were so very visible, and he began to sink. If, like Paul, we had our eyes upon Christ, upon resurrection, upon glory, we should be upheld by divine power and inwardly be renewed day by day.

There is no real break between chapters 4 and 5, for he passes on to show that if our outward man does perish, and so our earthly tabernacle house be dissolved, we are to have a house of another order which shall be eternal. The thought of what is eternal links these verses together. Eternal things are brought within the sight of our faith. An eternal weight of glory awaits us. And we shall need a resurrection body, which shall be eternal, in order to sustain that eternal weight of glory without being crushed by it. It is absolutely certain that such a resurrection body shall be ours. "We know," he says. He had established that fact in the fifteenth chapter of his first epistle; so that they knew it as well as he.

Our bodies are spoken of as houses in which we dwell, and very appropriately so. Our present bodies are only "tabernacle" or "tent," houses, comparatively flimsy structures and easily taken down. Our future bodies in the resurrection world will be of a different order, as 1 Corinthians 15, has shown us. Here we learn that they will be "not made with hands;" that is, spiritual, and not of an earthly or human order. They will be eternal, for in them we shall enter into eternal scenes. Also they will be heavenly. Our present bodies are natural and earthly and abide but for a time.

In these opening verses of chapter 5 we read of being "clothed," and being "unclothed;" of being "clothed upon," and of being "naked." We dwell at present in an earthly tent, clothed in bodies of humiliation. Presently we shall be clothed in glorified bodies of a spiritual, eternal and heavenly order. All the dead will be raised; even the wicked will appear before their Judge clothed in bodies. But though clothed they will be found spiritually naked before that great white throne. If we are true Christians we shall never be found naked thus, though we may be unclothed, for that word denotes the state of those saints who are "absent from the body" (verse 5) in the presence of the Lord. Paul himself and myriads more beside, are unclothed at the present moment, but that unclothed state, blessed though it is, is not the great object of our desire. What we do long for, while we groan in our present weakness, is this clothing upon with our house from heaven.

All those who are raised will be “clothed,” but only the saints will be “clothed upon,” for the reference here is to that which will take place at the coming of the Lord. The term is perhaps particularly appropriate as regards those who are alive and remain to the coming of the Lord. Such will all be changed, and so enter the resurrection state. They will in the twinkling of an eye be invested with their glorified bodies, and so clothed upon with their house from heaven. Thus in a moment mortality — which is attached to our present bodies — will be swallowed up of life.

Let us not read the two expressions, “in the heavens,” and “from heaven,” in a materialistic sense, as some have done. We must not conceive of our future glorified bodies as though they were a new and improved suit of clothes, already existing somewhere in heaven, and coming to us straight out of heaven. So thinking, we should find ourselves in collision with 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, where a certain identity is preserved between the body of humiliation which is put down into the ground and the body of glory that is raised up. Those expressions indicate character rather than place. Heaven is our destiny, and we shall enter there in bodies which are heavenly in their origin and character.

We have the happy assurance of these things, and can say, “we know,” because God has spoken and revealed them to us. But not only so, He has acted in keeping with what He has revealed. He has already “wrought us” for this very thing. This alludes to that spiritual work wrought in us and with us by the Holy Ghost. God by His Spirit has been the Potter, and we have been the clay. This clothing upon, of which we have just been speaking, is described in Romans 8. as the quickening of our mortal bodies. Our mortal bodies shall be quickened, but already God has wrought a quickening work as regards our souls, and this present work is in anticipation of the work that is yet to be done as regards our bodies. Moreover He has already given us His Spirit, as the Earnest of what is to come.

What God has wrought by His Spirit must be distinguished from the Spirit Himself, given to those who are subjects of His work. The order in this fifth verse is first, the work of the Spirit: second, the indwelling of the Spirit as the Earnest; the one preparatory to the other.

Hence the Apostle can say, “we are always confident.” How could it be otherwise? We have the plain revelation of God as to it. We have the work of God in keeping with it. We have the gift of God — even His Holy Spirit — as the pledge and foretaste of it. Could anything be more certain and secure? Difficulties may throng around us, as they did around Paul. We too may groan, as burdened in our mortal bodies. But that which lies before us in resurrection is perfectly clear and sure. We too may be always confident: as confident when our sky is filled with black thunder clouds as when it is for the moment wholly blue.

For the moment we are at home in the body and absent from the Lord, left here to walk not by sight but by faith. Paul’s confidence was such that he was willing — even more than willing, pleased — to be absent from the body and present with the Lord. This is his portion today, and the portion of all those who have died in the faith of Christ. They are absent from their bodies which have been laid in the grave, waiting the moment when they shall be clothed in bodies of glory. But even now they are present with the Lord, and in all the conscious blessedness of His presence, as the opening verses of chapters 12 bear witness.

There are those who assert that assurance and confidence: as to one’s future is bound to have a disastrous effect on one’s behavior. That idea however is definitely negatived by verse 9. Were it a true idea we should read, “We are confident, I say... wherefore we”— take our ease and are indifferent and careless. The exact opposite is what it does say — “wherefore we labor...” The word here is not the usual one for “work.” It has the sense of “being zealous,” or even “ambitious.” The very confidence we have stirs us to an earnest zeal; and this is our ambition that come what may, whether life or death, we may be “accepted of Him,” or, “agreeable to Him.” We are “accepted in the Beloved” as Ephesians 1 tells us. Now we want to be agreeable, or well-pleasing, to Him.

This desire to please the Lord is surely an instinctive one in every heart that loves Him; yet all too often it does not burn as it should. So the Apostle now brings in another fact that is calculated to stir it to greater vehemence. When He comes Christ will set up His judgment seat. It will not be like a criminal court: that is reserved for the occasion when the great white throne is established, as we see in Revelation 20. It will be more like a naval prize court, when the judges sit to adjudicate as to captures during naval warfare, and the actions of officers and men come up for review, and prize money is awarded in many cases.

Before that judgment seat we must all appear; that is, we must all be manifested. Everything must come into the light in the presence of our Lord. Would we wish it to be otherwise? If there were left episodes of our lives, some of them marked by failure and shame, as to which the Lord had never had anything to say to us, would there not be a sense of reserve? Would not our otherwise bright eternity be clouded over in part by the feeling that some day they might be dragged into the light? Solemn though that judgment seat must be, it is yet a matter for rejoicing that it is to stand at the very threshold of the eternity of glory that awaits us. Before it we ourselves are to be manifested, and consequently all that we have been and done will come under the scrutiny of our Lord. That will mean seeing everything as through His eyes, and getting His verdict. It will mean the unravelling of every mysterious episode that has marked our way; the discovery of the why and wherefore of innumerable trying experiences; together with a full understanding of the amazing grace of our God, and the efficacy of the Priesthood and Advocacy of Christ.

It will also mean reward or loss, according to what has been done “in the body;” that is, in the whole of our lives of responsibility here. This is what we see also in 1 Corinthians 3:14, 15; only there it is distinctly a question of the character of our work as servants of the Lord. Here it is more general and comprehensive, being a question of all our actions and ways.

The thought of that judgment seat evidently carried the mind of the Apostle on to the fact that before the Lord Jesus ultimately all men will stand, whether saved or unsaved. And as he thought of these latter, and recognized what the terror of it would be for them, he was moved to warn and persuade them. He was moved also in another direction more personal to himself and the Corinthians: moved to live in such a way as to be manifested to God, and also in the consciences of his fellow-Christians.

The word for “manifest” really occurs three times in these two verses, but at the beginning of verse 10 it is translated, “appear.” Substitute “be manifested” there, and the connection becomes plain. If we live our lives in the remembrance of the certainty of being manifested before the judgment seat, we shall be careful to maintain open, honest, manifested dealings with God now. When we sin we shall at once humble ourselves in confession before Him, and attempt to conceal or palliate nothing. Further we shall, like Paul, not attempt to appear other than we are in the eyes of our fellow-believers. We shall be open and transparent in all our dealings with them, and not desire or seek a cheap reputation for a devotedness or sanctity which we do not possess. There were some in Paul’s day who were doing this, as verse 12 bears witness.

Are we living in the light of the judgment seat? A great question this! Let each answer it in his own conscience before God. Depend upon it, if we are we shall be characterized by lives of devotedness, unworldliness and zeal. We shall be transparent before both God and man. And we shall be keen to persuade men as Paul was. We shall earnestly seek the salvation of souls to the glory of God.

F. B. Hole.

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(2 Corinthians 4:1-14).

To be of any profit this article must be read in connection with a Bible, opened at the above passage.

THE New Covenant ministry entrusted to the Apostle Paul is unfolded to us in chapter 3. As we open chapter 4, our thoughts are directed to the things that characterized him as the minister of it. And first of all he was marked by good courage. Since God had entrusted him with the ministry, He gave with it suitable mercy. So, whatever the opposition or difficulty he did not faint. The same thing holds good for us. The Lord never calls us to ministry of any kind without the needed mercy being available. “Ministry” of course is just “Service;” the kind of thing that any of us might render, though it is a word of wide meaning and covers things that many of us might not be called to do.

The second verse emphasizes the honesty and transparency that marked Paul in his service. He descended to none of the tricks that so commonly disfigure the-world’s propaganda. Many a zealot, religious as well as political, will stoop to a great deal of craft and falsification in order to gain his end. The end justifies the means, to his way of thinking. Paul was very conscious that he was proclaiming the “Word of God,” and this must not be falsified, but rather made manifest in all its truth. His transparent honesty in handling the truth was thus made manifest to every upright conscience.

And another thing also was gained. Things were brought to an issue in the case of those who did not receive his message. The word, “hid” which occurs twice in verse 3, is really, “veiled;” the same word (in a slightly different form) as occurs seral times in the latter part of chapter 2 “If also our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in those that are lost.” (N. Tr.). There was no veil on the Gospel, for Paul declared it in its purity and its clarity: but there was a veil upon the hearts and minds of the perishing who did not believe; a veil that had been dropped in their minds by the god of this world. Had Paul preached the word only partially, or in deceitful fashion, the issue would not have been so clear.

What a word is this for those of us who preach the, Gospel! Are we rightly affected by the awful solemnity of preaching the Word of God? Have we renounced every “hidden thing.” whether of dishonesty, craft, deceit, or anything else unworthy? Do we make manifest the truth, and only the truth? These are tremendous questions. If we do not, the unbelief of our hearers may not be attributable to their blindness, but to our unfaithfulness.

However, even when the Gospel is preached as it should be preached there are found those who do not believe and the explanation is that the devil has blinded their eyes. The sun in the heavens has not been eclipsed, but a very dark blind has been dropped over the window of their little room. The light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ shines, but it does not shine into them. The god of this age will use anything, no matter what, so long as it blots out the Gospel: not usually material things, but rather speculative notions and teachings of men. During the past three-quarters of a century he has very effectually blinded multitudes by the revival of a favorite speculation of the pagan world before Christ — evolution. The light of the gospel of the glory of Christ does not penetrate where the evolutionary blind has been surely dropped. The blinded soul may entertain miserable notions of man as the image of a monkey — or some other elementary creature — or of a monkey as the image of man. He cannot in the nature of things know Christ as “the Image of God,” though he may talk about a Christ of his own imagination. There are many imaginary Christs: Christ as men wish He had been. There is only one real Christ, the image of God; Christ as He was and is, the Christ of the Bible.

Christ Jesus was the great theme of the Apostle’s preaching, and he emphasized His position as Lord. He kept himself out of sight as a mere bondman of others. Preaching Him as Lord, he of course presented Him in His present glory at the right hand of God; and so he could speak of his message as, “the glad tidings of the glory of the Christ” (verse 4. N. Tr.). Elsewhere He speaks of preaching, “the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24). There are not two gospels, of course. The one Gospel of God has both the grace of God and the glory of Christ amongst its outstanding features, and so either may be presented as characterizing it. Here the glory of Christ is the prominent feature as befits the context, for he had been speaking of the passing glory of the Old Covenant which once shone in the face of Moses. We can declare that the glory of God now shines, and will Forever shine, in the face of Jesus Christ.

Verse 6 is very striking, for it clearly alludes first to God’s act in creation, then to His act in Paul’s own conversion, and lastly to the ministry to which he was called. Of old God said, “Let there be light,” and light shone out of the darkness. That was in the material creation. But now there is a work of new creation proceeding and something analogous takes place. Divine light — the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus — shines into dark hearts as it did in such a pre-eminent fashion into Paul’s on the road to Damascus producing marvelous effects. It shines in that it may shine out. It is “for the shining forth of the knowledge” (N. Tr.). In that way the believer becomes luminous himself. He begins to shine, just as the moon shines in the light of the sun, save of course that the moon is a dead body merely reflecting light from its surface without being affected itself.

The fact we are dwelling on accounts for the wonderful character of Paul’s ministry. He was not a mere preacher — a mere professional evangelist — throwing off so many sermons a week. He preached more than others indeed, but his preaching was the shining out of the light that was shining within, the telling forth of things that were thus wrought into every fiber of his being. No one knew better than he that every Divine excellence shines forth in Jesus and that He dwells in light above the brightness of the sun, for he had seen it on the road to Damascus. That which he knew was as a precious treasure, deposited with him.

We have not seen Christ in His glory as Paul did, yet by faith we do see him there; so that we too can speak of having a treasure. As with Paul so with us. “we have this treasure in earthen vessels.” The allusion here is to our present mortal bodies, for as to his body “the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground” (Gen. 2:7). As originally formed, man’s body was perfect, and perfectly suited to his environment and

his place in the scheme of creation. As fallen his body becomes marred, and so the earthen vessels in which the treasure is found are poor and feeble. But then that only makes more manifest the fact that the power at work is of God and not of man.

In the passage before us, extending to the early verses of chapter 5, we have many allusions to the body, and it is spoken of in various ways. In verse 10 it is clearly mentioned apart from figurative language as, “our body.” In verse 11 it is, “our mortal flesh.” In verse 16, “our outward man.” And in the next chapter, verse 1 and 4, “our earthly house of this tabernacle,” and “this tabernacle.” The whole passage instructs us as to the dealings of God with Paul as regards his body, and it throws great light on many an event in our own histories.

All God’s dealings with us, as regards the earthen vessel of the body, have as their object the better and more adequate shining forth of the treasure which He has placed within. There is an “excellency,” or “surpassingness” of power about this treasure, which was very manifest in the case of Paul. By virtue of it not only was he sustained under unparalleled afflictions, but life worked in those to whom he ministered, as verse 12 shows. Now, as we know, there is truly a surpassingness about the power of natural life which is inexplicable by us. Seeds get buried under heavy flagstones, and lo, in the days to come tender green shoots, filled with life, manifest surprising energy sufficient to lift the stone and push it aside. Life of a spiritual sort manifests even more surprising powers.

Now this power was operating very energetically in a frail mortal man like Paul. Had he been sent into the world to serve, clothed in a splendid body of glory, he would have been viewed as a kind of superman, and the power largely attributed to him. As it was, the surpassing power that wrought in him and through him was obviously of God.

The trouble with us so often is that we rather want to wield power as though it were connected with ourselves. We are not content to be like an earthen vessel containing a power manifestly not its own. Hence very little power, or perhaps even complete absence of power, is what marks us. This indeed is the inveterate tendency of our poor human hearts.

And it was also the tendency of Paul’s heart, for he was a man of like passions to ourselves. Verses 8 to 11 clearly show this. He was continually faced with seas of trouble and difficulty. On the other hand, he was continually maintained and carried through, and made a blessing to others by the power of God.

If we examine these verses carefully we see that what he had to face came upon him in a threefold way. First, there were adverse circumstances. These are mentioned in verses 8 and 9. Trouble, perplexity, persecution, castings down, all these came upon him. Verily he was “a man,” as he told the Jews, (Acts 22:3) and hence not beyond these things. He knew what it was to be perplexed and cast down like the rest of us.

Second, there was the spiritual exercise and experience expressed in the words. “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.” The dying of the Lord Jesus was abidingly impressed upon the mind of the Apostle so that he bore it about with him continually. But these words seem to convey more than this, for as a consequence the dying of Jesus laid its finger, so to speak, upon every faculty and every member of his body, controlling, all his ways. It laid its finger for instance, upon his tongue repressing many an utterance that would have been unworthy. The thing was not perfect with him as we know. Yet it was characteristic with him, marking him normally in spite of occasional deviations and failures.

Third, there was God’s disciplinary action which he describes as being “alway delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake.” God permitted many a thing to come upon him, such as that episode at Ephesus, which he described in chapter 1. as “so great a death,” by which he was delivered to death in his experiences amongst opposing men. In this way the inward and spiritual experience of which he speaks in verse 10, was supplemented by outward experiences, sent of God to further help him in his service. By these things he lived and his light the more brightly shone.

We have only noticed so far one side of the matter. The other side is concerned with the wonderful results, with the way in which the surpassing excellence of the Power of God was displayed in and by means of these things. Though circumstances were continually against him yet he was not distressed not in despair, not forsaken not destroyed. Obviously a sustaining power was working in him which counteracted all that was working against him. He was rather like one of those self-righting lifeboats, pounded by the stormy seas and even overturned, which nevertheless come-up, the right side up when the thundering billows have passed. It was indeed the power of the divine life in Paul that accomplished this.

Again, whether the action of faith and love in his own experience, leading him to bear about in his body the dying of Jesus, be in question, or whether God’s disciplinary actions in keeping with that experience be in question, the same end was achieved, and a wonderful end it was. The life of Jesus was made manifest in his body, his mortal flesh. In verse 2, referring to his service, he had spoken of the manifestation of the truth. Again in verse 6, still referring to his service, he had spoken of the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Now we have something additional to this, for the manifestation of the life of Jesus is not just service. It is character. In his unconverted days Saul of Tarsus manifested himself, as a man of imperious energy and self-will, in his mortal flesh. Now all was changed. The dying of Jesus was so applied to him that the Saul character was effectually stilled in death, and the life of Jesus manifested.

Nothing less than this is true and proper Christian testimony. Behind preaching and service lies the life. Christ in His glory should be clearly manifested in the preaching, but that manifestation will only reach to its maximum of power and effect as Christ is manifested in the life. And this is as true in regard to ourselves today as it was for the Apostle Paul. Without a doubt here lies one of the main reasons for the ineffectiveness of so much modern preaching, even though the preaching itself is correct and sound.

Verses 10 and 11, then show us that, as the result of death working in Paul, life wrought in him, and the life of Jesus was lived by him. Verse 12 shows that there was a further result — life wrought also in those to whom he ministered, and notably the Corinthians. Some years before life had worked to their conversion. Now he was rejoicing to see further evidence of life in their genuine repentance as regards their wrong-doing and their affection for himself in spite of his rebukes. And lastly he looked forward to the resurrection world where they together with him would be presented in due season. Verse 14 mentions this.

The words, “I believed, and therefore have I spoken,” are quoted from Psalms 116:10. If that Psalm be studied it will be seen that the circumstances of the Psalmist when he wrote were very similar to those of Paul. He had been confronted by death and tears and falling, but had been delivered; and now he had the confidence that he would “walk before the Lord in the land of the living:” that is he had the

resurrection world in view. Believing that, he was able to open his mouth in testimony. Now Paul was just like that. He had “the same spirit of faith.” The resurrection world was full in view for him.

Is it fully in view for us? It should be. Life and incorruptibility have come to light by the Gospel: and that which was known partially to the Psalmist may be known in full measure by us. It is only as we live in the light of resurrection that we can be content to bear about in our bodies the dying of Jesus; and only as we do that is the life of Jesus manifested in our bodies, and does life work in others whom we may serve.

F. B. Hole.

The clearest and most important exposition of the revelation of God in the inspired Book is the revelation of God in the renewed man. Every Christian will discover, in proportion to his advances in divine knowledge, that the very things which arc written in these hallowed pages are written in his own experience. We never fully understand divine truth until we have experienced it; the diamond of divine promise never glistens so brightly as when it is placed in the setting of personal trial and experience.

C.H.S.

Chicago Conference: 2022, 2 Corinthians 4:6-18

Reading

It's interesting in this earth. If we bring a light to a dark room, we shine light into the room. God can command light to come out of darkness. And in observing souls that I've had the privilege to talk with. One of the things that I've noticed in early as the Lord is working, there's a consciousness of sin that seems to come in. There's like an enlightenment, like God has put light, where they see things they never saw before. I mean, before there's a confession of salvation, there's this consciousness of sin. It seems to come in. And I don't know if that has to do with what John says about lighting every man that cometh into the world. But there's some kind of light that God causes to come in that brings illumination. It's early in the process that he works in a phone. And that is true. It's very true that the light that Shawn in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ illuminated more than previously. If he were willing to admit it. The awful condition of man. I would just suggest, and we don't need to dwell on it because we did discuss this verse a bit yesterday, but here what we get. Perhaps goes even beyond that. Yes, we need to be reminded that we are sinners and it's the light of God's Word and the Lord Jesus Christ here in this world that brought that out, but here it's the glory of God. In the face of Jesus Christ. That is a light in one sense that did not shine in the Old Testament. It's a light, as we had brought before us, that is the glory of God. Because of his love and because of redemption, the full character of God revealed not merely in life that was revealed in the Old Testament, but God in his love. That's why I suggested just to read verse 6, because in verse 7. He speaks of this treasure. We have this treasure in earthen vessels. What's the treasure? I think it's that, isn't it? The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Bill Prost, Do you know the Eternal God? I do. Isn't that incredible? It is. That's a treasure, but it's in Earth Investments. When we read this chapter yesterday, 2 phrases. Struck me. And I don't recall. Maybe I was too sleepy yesterday. But the first verse says this ministry. And verse 7 says this treasure. What is the link between the two? I think we mentioned it in yesterday in Chapter 3. It contrasts the administration of. Condemnation and in the law, administration of death and administration of condemnation, in contrast with the administration of the spirit and administration of righteousness. And I think that's what he refers to in verse one. We have this ministry. So in Christianity you have a. Display of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ than you ever had under the Law. The law was glorious in that it made Moses face shine that we have something far superior, far superior. And so when we get to know the Lord Jesus, that's the treasure. I find that just incredible to think about. Is puny human beings. To know the eternal God. And the person of the Lord Jesus wowing incredibly wonderful. What strikes me about verse 6? Is that it's not a general out shining of the glory of God like like if the sun comes up.

In a in a part of the earth, everything gets lit. That's more what we read in John chapter one. The true light lighteth every man. The true light is coming to the world even though men did not comprehend it or apprehended. But here it's as you say, Bob. It's the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. I'm sorry, previous phrase has shined in our hearts. So, so this is God working in the heart. So that upon repentance, as Sam was saying, that's really what you're speaking about. Sam's repentance, the Spirit of God works repentance. When there is faith. Then we behold, we have the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. That's something that is shown in the heart of the believer. Not just so. If the world is going to see it, where are they going to see it shining out from, not from heaven. Where Christ is but from your wife as an earth investment. Agree with your if your all, the fact that these earthen vessels have such have something so glorious, in lack of a word to use, shown into us, that is, that God will see to it that it shines out to others. Earthen vessels A container made of turf. Not very fancy, no. And they're breakable. The illustrations often been given of Gideon and his 300 Men with the. They were to break the vessel, and in breaking the vessel the light shone. So that's what God does in our lives and in what the verses that follow. Show how the vessel is to be broken. Sometimes in ways that are not pleasant to ourselves, but and necessary thing. In our lives the breaking of the vessels so that the light can shine, wowing. That's the wonderful thing about this is the glorious side. So we see the treasure, we understand the treasure, but it's hidden in something so fragile. And then we find the following Birthday, in a sense, tells us well how How does this vessel get broken so that the light can be a testimony to this world? That we see all there are problems now we can see the wisdom of God, why tribulations and distressed and so on are allowed into our lives. Because not to break us in the sense of breaking us down to nothing, but the vessel may be broken, so the light, as you mentioned, as Gideon's Lantern can shine for the show not about us, but the glory of God. And at the end of verse 7, is that the power Excellency of the power maybe have gotten out of us? Remember that when Gideon blew his trumpet, there followed him 32,000 men. Of Israel. God says I can't give you the victory too many. You're going to boast that you got it yourself. Ready to tell all those go home? There's 20,000 who went home. That's reducing your army. Pretty good bet. But he still had 12,000, still too many in the Lord says bring them down to the waters to test them. And then there was 300 left, 300 against the hordes of the Midianites. Rather than this is a lesson we've got to learn. The Excellency of the power is not of us, it's of God. And God is as insignificant, despicable things. And his work? And that's why I. Excuse me, that's why I mentioned at the beginning of this, when we were taking up this chapter, that. I have looked at 2nd Corinthians as if it is bringing all the power of a risen Christ in glory to bear on the problems and difficulties in life down here, and as we've been saying, to use those same earthen vessels for God's glory, but with his power. And so these things are real. We are troubled on every side. Verse 8.

We are perplexed, we are persecuted. Verse nine, we are cast down. We do always bear a boat in the bud in the dying of the Lord Jesus, and these problems are very real. And sometimes what the Lord allows in our lives seem to be very difficult, very hard to bear. Sometimes we as Christians look on what the Lord is doing in the lives of other believers, and sometimes even in our own lives, and we say, I don't understand. I don't. I don't know why the Lord is allowing this. But then we read. If that is the earthen vessel that we've been talking about. Then there's the treasure. Not distress, that's the treasure. Not in despair, the treasure not forsaken, not destroyed. That the light also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. That treasure is like Gideon's life as we've been bringing out, and sometimes that earthen vessel gets in the way. It can do a very effective job of keeping the light from shining out, and this was particularly the case in court. They were a well educated people. They were a proud people. They had a lot of gift in spiritual things and they were taken up with it and they felt that somehow all of this could be used for God's glory. And Paul has to say to them, no. I was educated too. I had the best education. I had everything going for me. But it didn't do me anything when I came to know the Lord. Oh, I'm sure, as we said earlier, that Paul's knowing several languages and having his education, he could use it for the Lord. But to rely on it as if somehow it was a necessary thing, and that that made him a better speaker, a better evangelist, a better teacher? No, no, it all had to be by the power of God, and Paul himself knew. What it was to see the earthen vessel broken. And we know at the end of this epistle he tells about the thorn it should read for the flesh, not in the flesh, but for the flesh. And he was so upset with it and so concerned about it The three times he goes to the Lord, the great apostle Paul, he says, Lord, please take this away. He felt, and we can see why, that he could serve the Lord better, if the Lord would only take that thorn away. And three times the Lord says all know. But I'm going to give you the grace that you need. And more than that, what is his eventual reaction? We glory, he gloried in his infirmities. That's quite a step, isn't it? The glory and something that breaks the earth and vessel. That's not easy. But he knew that the Lord was allowing it in order that the treasure might be more visible. It's interesting these chapters. Two other phrases that stand out. Build this crew of attention to the one we are. But there's also. Verse one we have. This ministry. Verse seven we have this treasure just turn up to chapter. Seven verse, verse, having therefore these promises, dearly beloved. This world is divided into two classes of people. According to sociologists, they have the haves and the have nots and brother where the haves. We're eternally the Haves. Value that we have. We have to understand that then it helps us understand why there are circumstances happen to Christians and to acknowledge that it is from the Lord for our good. Is to build up our faith, so we had before us praying for ones who are in need, and I believe it's rightly so, to pray for brethren who are in need or or in special circumstances.

But yet, on the other hand, then we have to also acknowledge that to the Lord His will be done. So we we had in our reading. Long ago, the book of Acts where Peter was released from prison and someone made a comment. Isn't it nice to see that the prayer was answered and it was they pray that Peter would be released? And then I made a comment. I said, well then what about James who was killed? Thanks for that. Or do we cast that part and say, oh, the Lord didn't answer that prayer? We can't say that, can't we? That either way we know it is the Lord well and we need to seek what the Lords mind is, whether it be unto death. All right, I have a question about verse. The part about the face of Jesus Christ. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Do I understand this correctly? Is that just saying that Jesus put a face on God, He's the He's God in the flesh and so we Or what's? What's the idea of saying that? To give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. I think, Tim, it may be a contrast to the face of Moses in the previous chapter. Verse 13 Not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, The children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished. But now we have the glory of God in an unveiled face. Of Jesus Christ. Verse 18 Chapter 3. Yes, following up wonderful verse 18 of chapter 3 as well. Brothers used to tell us when we were young. If there's a verse that is a key to growing as a Christian, it's Second Corinthians 318, we all, with opener unveiled face beholding the glory of the Lord. Are changed. That's grown. To the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord. So we have an object that is a person glorified in heaven. That we hold. The liberty of the Holy Spirit and by faith. And lo and behold, we're changed. It's. From glory to glory, it's not. It happened last Saturday. It's gradual performance to Christ by being occupied with himself in glory. It's been said that the wonderful grace of God. Hasn't come to us directly from the cross, but it's come from heaven, from the glorified man. The foundation was on Calvary's cross, but God has raised him up and positioned him in a place where now the full liberty of his love. It's graceful. It's up to you. Remember in the Old Testament when Moses was on the Mount? And God said to Moses, Thou cats not see my face, thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen. But isn't it wonderful that God? And you mentioned that God has become a man in Christ and now by faith we can see in his face all the glory of God reflected the whole true character of God? Yes, it's by faith we don't see his actual face with our eyes. We will when the Lord comes and takes us home. But. In that face we are able to see without avail all the glory of God. Revelation One. His face shone as the sun, and I like to think of that face too. Was more marred than any man's just to think of it, Brandon.

On that cross in those three hours of darkness was the greatest display there has ever been. That God is light and God is love, never a greater display of those two things. Wonderful. Like to connect a few scriptures I don't know how to refer to just one seek to bring a thought out with respect to the treasure. That's in verse 7. Go back to Romans chapter 8. Romans chapter 8 and verse 2. Is bringing out. The truth. Summing up, really the truth of the 1St 7 chapters of Romans. And I could try to summarize the 1St 7 chapters of Romans, but just get the one verse and connect it with our chapter. The law verse 2. The law of the spirit of life. In Christ Jesus. That's that made me free from the law of sin, of death. Principle of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Now our chapter. Verse. 11. For we which live. Who's that as those who, if you will, gone through the 1St 7 chapters of Romans and arrived at the 8th chapter. They're the ones that live. And so he says here we which live are always delivered unto death. For Jesus sake, that what? The life also of Jesus. Might be manifest in our mortal flesh. How is the life of Jesus manifest in our mortal flesh? Because as we have brought out in Romans 8. The Lord Jesus Christ. In resurrection life. The Spirit of God, the Lord Jesus is given to us as our life. It's an eternal life. It's the life that's given to us and it's sealed in US and it's operative in US. By the Holy Spirit, it's the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. And now to connect it with the glory. In chapter 3. We see that the glory of God had not has already been said multiple times, was not fully revealed by the law. It was not revealed even when the Lord Jesus was here as a man, to our understanding and eyes, he was what he was from eternity. But the glory of God displayed in Jesus Christ is displayed in resurrection. And how is it made good in us, the light of the knowledge of God? In the face of Jesus Christ is made good in US, is made a treasure in US. By the life of Christ himself being in US. And then we have the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. Individually, personally made known to our souls. By the person of Christ who is our life being in US. And Mr. Darby sums it down to say, the treasures Christ. That is we. Are brought into this living relationship. We were born with a body. A natural physical body and we have a life in that body. But what do we have now?

That body has a new life in it. It has the life of Christ. It's called our life. The Apostle Paul. The life which I now live. I live by the faith of the Son of God. His life now lived was the out. And So what is to be seen in you and I as a vessel in this physical body in which I have that was born? Under the power of sin, what is God expecting to be seen? He's expecting the treasure he put there to be seen, which is Christ. And it's the outshining of himself. That is enjoyed practically in the heart that becomes the testimony of the believer. To everyone about him and that

testimony is carried on, as it says here in a week physical vessel. But that only displays the greatness. Of the work of God. Because we would never imagine. The cod would put in us, his son, to be our life beyond our imagination, that God would do that. But it's a treasure to God. If you have a treasure, where are you going to put it? Typically in a pretty safe place, right? But where is God put his treasure? Put it in you. And now he says, in spite of all the challenge connected with it. I want the glory, my glory and the full out shining of it that was never seen before is to be seen in you and in your life. And consequently one more verse, verse 18 of chapter 3. We all with open face, beholding, as in glass, the glory of the Lord. The Apostle Paul again had one object before his soul, and for me to live as Christ. He said, because Christ was the fullness of the object of his soul, and consequently he could by faith enjoy looking at that glory shining out. This has already been explained in the face of Christ. And then we realized the truth of first John. Where? He says. He that hath this hope in him, what is that whole? That I will be like Christ without the limitations of this body. And I when I don't have the limitation of the body. I have the life, the eternal life in it. But when I come to see Christ as He is and what it, how will I see Him as He is? I will see him in his resurrected state and life. And when I see him as he is, I'll be with him. The limitations of this body will be gone, and then I will be like him fully forever. That's why in verses 10 and 11 That there's both those verses, there's something that is similar. In that it mentions the dying of the Lord Jesus. Before it mentions the life of Jesus verse 10. And verse 11 Also we which liver always delivered unto death. For Jesus sake, that the life also Jesus, might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. Death comes first and then life. That's resurrection light. That's that life we possess by faith in the Lord Jesus. And so it's manifested in the measure that we bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. It says in verse 10 always bearing about this is the norm of Christian life. Why in my life give place to my own desires and my own likes? Will you see the life of Christ in me? No, you will not. But it is in the measure that I bear about in my body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus will be manifest in our body.

And it seems that that is presented in verse 10 as the norm always bearing about the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus. But in verse 11, it's a little different in that it's we which live are always delivered into debt. Now this is something that is outside of our control. Somebody gets cancer. And it seems like there's no remedy. We're delivered to it. We did not seek for this. Why are we delivered to it? That the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. There, it says. Because it may involve true physical death, not necessarily. But it's that principle of death. We've died with Christ, and in the nature that I carry that carry out that principle in my life, then the life of Jesus is manifest. I think that's beautiful to see it. I think there's additional aspect to it that's seen in the 10th and 11Th verse as well. If you think about the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus in one sense was born to die. He became a man. That he might take our place. And in becoming a man, his whole life was focused on what it was going to be to die. And consequently he had He was the one perfect. Mortal flesh, if you will, that there has ever been. And when we now have his life. But we still have that. Mortal flesh in. There is an aspect in these verses, I believe in addition to what Bob has said, because you can have more than one thought and they can be consistent. Correct that we are going to follow a path that as to that old life, the only place for it is the place of death, practically speaking, not only doctrinally speaking, but there is no place for it in us who are to live. A spirit of life in Christ Jesus that is, the new life that we have is the life we're to live. And the old life is to be recognized not only doctrinally in baptism as dying with him, but it is to be on a daily basis going down the path that is the same path that he went down in his life here until his death and his resurrection. So for our sake. For the application, for our sake. Came to die. Put aside all the natural things that he was a Nazarite from birth. In our case, we have the privilege for his sake, for Jesus sake, as we have in verse 11 of Going down the Same Time. And the result of that was in verse 12. Death worketh in us, but life in you, that is out of all of that. That the Apostle could speak about concerning himself and concerning those who worked with him. The result of all that was that life of Christ, that treasure exhibited, and blessing in others. And what a privilege that is. Perhaps it wouldn't hurt to make an illustration of that, and I read it some time ago. Probably some here are familiar with a book written by Alexander Solzhenitsyn entitled The Gulag Archipelago, in which he was Russian and he was one who dared to speak out concerning the atrocities and imprisonment of innocent people and ultimate deaths of innocent people that took place in Russia under Lenin and later under Stalin, and perhaps even later still under other administrations.

And he points out in his book that there were those who were arrested wrongly and those that were treated badly and who resisted it very strongly. They did everything they could to prove their innocent innocence. They reached out to people that they thought could help them. They were even, of course, in many cases told lies, and they signed papers admitting guilt that they had never. Been guilty of admitted, Admitted to things, hoping that they would somehow get out of prison. It never worked. All they did was get into bigger and bigger trouble. But he said the people that did the best. Under those circumstances were those who, when they were arrested, said, well, this is it. My life down here in this earth is over. I'll probably never see my family again. They probably confiscated my property. But I am not going to sacrifice my moral values and my moral principles. And they said, we don't care what you do. You put us in prison, you do anything you want. But we are not going to sign something admitting. Wrongdoing that we are not guilty of. We are not going to go back on the things that we said. We are not going to acknowledge the rightfulness of what is wrong, they said. The interrogators were afraid of those people. They didn't know what to do with them because they couldn't. They couldn't break them. Now some of them were true believers, some of them were simply morally upright, and many of them in some cases were simply allowed to go free, they said. We no use having these guys in prison. They just don't do no good having them at all. And so the believer in this world. That always bears a boat and I like the twofold aspect that was brought out. If we accept that in this world, then we are not going to get all upset. About what the Lord is allowing in our lives. We're going to say, Lord, this is your will, and this is for your glory. And we are here for your glory, not for mine, not for ours. We are here for your honor and glory and for your interests. And if what happens to us is going to result in death working in us but life and others, and so be it. Now that's quite a step to take, but once it's taken. It makes everything much easier, doesn't it? I remember reading about three people called Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego illustrated. They said to the king, well, more or less than paraphrasing, you're going to do what you're going to do. The Lord's going to deliver us out of your hand, one way or the other. But they had to be willing to face death, and then God intervened. And that's resurrection life, isn't it? It came out on the other side. The world will never see it. Unless there's faith. Men and women who act in hate. The truth that they have, that's when the world sees it. It's another reality that they only know this 1A lost man, a lost woman. They only know what's the natural world around us. How in the world are they going to see it? When Private Desmond Doss stood on Hacksaw Ridge. As a believer. Being more everyone being ordered to come down and get out. And all those great battleships off the shore began to lob those shells up there. He cried out to the Lord. What should I do? He walks into the Hellfire of it when he hears someone cry for help. An act of faith? The reality of that night when he walked in there and saved all of those men up on that mountain, was a kind of bravery. Men act brave. They're lost. Men who act brave. Their soldiers who act brave but not like this.

Nobody had ever seen anything like it, and it was a man. Who trusted in the God that had saved him, acting in faith. And the world saw another reality. And were amazed. How else they gonna see it? When we realize that we have died. Then you don't have to fear death anymore, do you know? And we have risen with him. That life is a light that death cannot touch. Absolutely impossible that death can touch. That's the life that we have. I think it's. Perhaps that is the force of versus 13 and 14. That verse 13 of course is quoted from. From the Psalms

but. I would suggest the force of it here is that. To speak the way Paul was speaking. He says we have faith, I have believed, and therefore we are able to speak this way. And if we really believe. In the truth of verse 14, as you say, Bob. Then there is resurrection before US, one way or another. It may be that the Lord will leave us here, and the precious truth of the power of resurrection will be realized that the Lord's coming when we are changed, but it may be realized when all that are in the graves. All true believers. Even so in Christ shall all be made alive. And that power of resurrection. Is something the man can't understand. I remember reading about a missionary who was in a heathen country. This was many years ago, perhaps 150 years ago, and he was preaching the gospel to them. And he talked about resurrection. And they looked at one another in wonder. They said resurrection, really. Well, all those who have died really be raised, and he was assured they would be. The chief said. Well, all those who I've killed in battle, will they rise again? Oh my, what about those that have been killed and in some cases eaten by wild beasts? He shook his head. He couldn't believe. Will they be brought back again? He was assured that God could do that. Well, I believe some got saved in that particular locality. They believe that the missionary who gave them the truth. How could he speak like that? Because he had faith in that precious truth of resurrection. So in verse 14 it says knowing. What a beautiful word knowing. Which raised up the Lord Jesus, That truth Paul had already brought out in great depth in the 15th chapter of First Corinthians. The precious truth of resurrection, the absolute necessity of the necessity of Christ's resurrection, and the necessity of our resurrection if it's true that he is risen. And if that truth has a grip on our souls? What a difference it makes your outlook down here if you were saying. Sam, the world's horizon is this world, and I have seen those, and you have two who have spent all their time and energy making sure that they had everything under control as they thought in this world. I remember the neighbor across the road from me, his family. Were heirs to a big chunk of property surrounding his home and so on, and we were chatting once and he said, Bill, we got it all. All sewed up, legally, everything is the old people pass away and this and that happens. It's all going to belong to us. No problem at all. Well, I said to him. What about what about what comes in eternity? Well, I haven't thought much about that, but he never got that property. The Lord allowed death to come in and take him, and I have no assurance that he was ever saved. He never, he never saw that property long before it ever came up, As we say, up for grabs. He was gone.

So it is with this world, but with you and me, everything that is really ours is ours in resurrections. And it's a resurrection life that we possess right now in the measure that we carry about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus. And I think that's the challenge, brother, and it's to apply that principle of death to the flesh. And to realize we are dead with him, it's not that we have to put the flesh to death. It's that we are dead with him. And risen again with him. So the life that I possess is not that natural life. That we may still have, but it's the life of resurrection in Christ that we possess even now. That life doesn't have to be regulated. It doesn't have to be ordered to obey rules. It needs to be turned loose. It is the life of Christ. He knows how to best live it. How about we let him live it through us and in US? That idea that he knows best how to live that life and if we get out of the way. That's one of the problems we have is we keep getting in the way. Brother Bernie Brack back home. I've mentioned him here recently. Dear lady in his town had to go for chemotherapy in the hospital in Cedar Rapids and he found out that no one was going to be there with her. Family wasn't in town and so he decided to go up. And he met the doctor, her oncologist, while he was there. And he spoke with him, and he began to witness to him. And here is a Hindu or has a Hindu background. And he told Bernie after talking with him. While it says you're one of the real ones, I can tell is what do you mean you're you're a real Christian. And he told how that one of his nurses is a Christian. Has been talking to it since. I've been watching. Well, how did they going to see it unless something happens where you can do that and this lady, he said. And he told Bernie that customers. Of his His patients, customers who were believers, were different and how they face death. And how when he was dealing with them in their cancer treatments, they were not like others. Well, that's a life that's different and they see it. So we've been praying for this man in our prayer meeting now that he might get saved because he said he's he can tell that there's something real there and he can see the evidence for it. So maybe he's an inch away from being saved. I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live. Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live, I live by the faith. The Son of God who loved me. And gave himself for me all of that truth. Bob, you just talked tied up in that bird. The yet not I. I remember as a young man reading that one time and saying what? There's another I. The practical realization of these truths that you're talking about and understanding this, that there's an eye who died. It's not I that do it, but it's in the dwelleth in me. What? When brother Don was talking about. All the summation of Romans one through 7 through 8.

That's all tied up in that verse, Galatians 220. Well, in the end of the chapter here. Nice to spend a few minutes on the rest here. We mentioned it earlier. There are two reasons given in this chapter. For not fainting. And as we mentioned yesterday, that word faint has the thought of losing heart. For losing courage. And we had that word faint, not in verse one, referring to the ministry that we have. And what has been brought before us in the third chapter, we've already talked about that that perhaps is more a personal thing. We all. Unveiled or open face, beholding the glory of the Lord. Are changed into the same image from glory to glory and for that reason we don't faith. But then in verse 15 it says for all things are for your sakes. That the abundant grace might, through the Thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God. For which 'cause we faint not. Paul had on his heart, not only his own, if we could use the term. Personal well-being as a believer. But he valued the well-being of his brethren. And of course, he had done a unique work. Preaching to people who were in the depths of Paganism and who were saved right out of Paganism. To acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, and to acknowledge to all the precious truth of the assembly, all the counsel of God that was brought before us yesterday. How very important. And Paul cared about all of that. And for that reason I don't want to say this the wrong way, but. Paul couldn't afford to faint. He had. A great deal of responsibility on his shoulders at the end of 2nd Corinthians 11, he could say. After detailing some of the sufferings he had been through for Christ, he could say, and that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. There was a constant care, and I am sure that there was much that Paul wrote that we do not have available to us in the inspired word seeking to be an encouragement. There was much that he said that we do not have recorded. Much that he prayed about. That, of course, is not recorded. He had all that before him and he says for which. Comes, we faint. Not all things are. For your sakes, Paul, as it were says. I am not concerned with what happens to me, but I am concerned about you. I'm concerned about which way you are headed. And of course, in court he had some good reasons to be concerned that at the end of this epistle he has to speak pretty firmly to them about some that had not. Repented of past sins, and that if he came there would have to be some serious dealing with that whole situation. But he cared about the well-being of the Saints and what a privilege that is. To be able to be of concern and to be able to be a help to others. A brother back in the 1800s made this remark. I thought it was an excellent one. He said Christianity is characterized not by what it finds but by what it brings, and Paul, I believe, felt that right to the core. Sometimes today we can get discouraged because, shall I say it, the condition of things in a local assembly may not be what we would like to see. And I can remember a sister telling me she wasn't gathered, but she said I'd like to be able to. Find a nice assembly where there was a good gospel outreach and a nice selection of gift and good ministry and a varied number of people from young to old. I I'd like to find an assembly like that where I could fit in.

I said, well, it's not always going to be that way. In these last days, we can thank God for all of those things. But I said, how about starting with yourself? How about starting with yourself? You and your husband are both saved, I said. If you make a start, then maybe God will allow all those things. Not always, but he may. No, she wanted to have the whole pie presented to her on a platter. And then she could just join in and enjoy the benefits. But Christianity is characterized by what it brings, and I believe that's. What we have in these last few verses should be looked upon in that light, although it is personal as well, of course. Personal, but in verse 15 I think we have a principle that shows how grace working in one individual spreads itself to others, so then it becomes collective. The Apostle Paul was in very conscious that he was a vessel. The grace of God. He could look at his own life naturally. And recognize. The sinful character of his own life. And then he appreciated the abundance of the grace of God that had worked in him. But that grace that then worked in him, God was using him to share with others, and they were recipients through the grace made to him and the way God used it for their blessing. And then that resulted in further blessing and Thanksgiving to God. And God is glorified, and so is as it says, through the Thanksgiving of many rebound to the glory of God. And so God is glorified in his excellent way, in which he uses grace to be multiplied first in one soul, and through that soul to others, and from them to others also, And it continues to spread. Another remark, and I don't want to keep on others have thoughts on this but. Brother in our written ministry and some will recognize the source of this quotation said. A humble believer is never discouraged. When I read that, it sort of took me aback. I read it many years ago. It took me. I was taken aback for a little bit, I thought. But the more I have thought about it, and the more I go on, the more I see the truth of it. A humble believer is never discouraged. Because if I am discouraged, I am looking for something and expecting something. Sometimes from others. Sadly, sometimes even from the Lord and it doesn't happen. And when that occurs, I can get discouraged. But when we read this chapter, we see that whatever God allows. It is for blessing, even if it is, shall I say it, seeing discouragement in others. Then there's an opportunity. There's an opportunity, yes. I can't always go out and turn someone else's life around, but I can seek to be an encouragement, and that is what I believe we are given in this chapter and the last few verses of this chapter. May I suggest bring that out. Our outward man may perish. The inward man is renewed. Day by day We may have affliction, Paul says. It's late affliction, It's only temporary. But it's working for us, not against us. We're looking not so much of what we see, but with the eye of faith at what we do not see. And what a what a difference that makes when we see it that way. Does that fit with your Jim Elliott quote, verse 17? It does. I wasn't the one that said that, someone else quoted him.

Somebody did in here. Say you, Bob. Yep. Well then, does that fit verse 17? I think so. Wonderful thing to experience day by day. The renewal. That God works in our hearts. Physically, I don't think physiologists even understand how it is. At times, we all know what it's like to be extremely tired or even exhausted. And sometimes it's like it's almost makes you chuckles like that the body is capable of being so weary. How does it work that you lay down? And in a few hours. Be renewed. I don't think physiologists even understand how that works. It doesn't make physical sense. You just stop something. It doesn't work with a truck or a back or a crane. And it's renewed and spiritually how much? What a necessity it is to be renewed day by day. End of Second Corinthians 3/5 with Christ glorify were changed from glory to glory. Gradual process. Don't just get up. Of the spiritual energy. It has to be renewed day by day. All rights to the Romans. Exhorts them to be transformed by the renewing of their mind. It falls upon us to be. To be, you know, in Psalm 16. The Psalmist says I have said the Lord always before me. You say, well, when I'm discouraged, what do I do? The discouraged person just stops reading and stops praying. It just showed the the the balloon just just goes out of air. I notice when I start to feel a little bit that way, when I lack that kind of humility, I think of Psalm 16. I have said the Lord always before me. No matter how I feel, I can do that. Read and pray and lo and behold, the Spirit of God takes those things and renews me, and I have fresh spiritual energy. It's certainly the Apostle Paul and weariness who who served like him other than the Savior himself. In this inner man, day by day, the contrast we've read in these in this chapter, outwardly troubled, inwardly not distressed, outwardly persecuted, inwardly not passed down. And he's summarizing it, it seems to me, in verse 16, renewed day by day, And then he takes it to another place in verse 17 and calls it a light and temporary affliction, but for a moment. When you look at. The Chapter 11 where you enumerate enumerates. Trials he's went through that was light affliction. But brethren, it's because he compared it with the eternal weight of glory, and there is no way to compare that. So it's beautiful. Verse 16, like you mentioned, the outward man, the inward man. Still remember visiting the brother Jackson? Down in. Tampa, FL years ago when I was young and. Never forget, he was at the end of his life and he sitting in a easy chair, he couldn't. He needed help to get around it all. And we went to visit him and he starts talking about the Lord's coming and I mean he got excited and he started waving his arms and he started sitting forward and he's talking and all of a sudden flop, his body goes back and. In the chair, his spirit was too young for his body. And that's what it means, isn't it? The outward man perishes. The inward man is renewed day by day. Isn't that beautiful? It's what is eternal. It's a life that doesn't grow old. It's impossible. It's renewed day by day. I think it's it's wonderful, but it's while we look, This is the key to it. 18 Isn't it? Well, we look not at the things which are seen, and it's so much of A tendency, especially in this country, to look at material things rather than their distractions. Yes, we have to attend to the food we eat and the house where we live to a certain extent. But, brethren, I often think of what Brother Clarence Linden used to say. The characteristic of Pilgrim life is simplicity.

Lord, help us to be simple in our living habits. Just to digress aside comment, when you mentioned the older one, I I know some of us younger are afraid to visit older ones. Part of the problem is we don't know what we're going to talk to them about. We don't know what to say and sometimes we look at them, they don't even know us anymore. It's discouraging. But what I have learned that I've been encouraged by older ones. That is, you don't need to say much. Read scriptures. Or sing hymns with them and I have witnessed that many times that they may look like they're out of it, but when scriptures are being read, our hymns are being sung with them, is interesting to see the reaction that I'd rather mentioned that all those thoughts coming back. So just a word of a courage. Will be late, so we're not too nasty of a rush if there's one or two last comments to make or. Perhaps the? Physical man is hired to. Make a comment about the perfect example for us. Was the Lord Jesus ever discouraged? Was the Lord Jesus ever fearful? Could the Lord Jesus? Always experience peace. I think we all know the answer to those questions. But God has put a treasure in us, the life of that man. And now by the power of the same Spirit that animated him, the Holy Spirit. Is in US to make good in US, those same things. And it's good for us, that's why we gaze upon him, that we may learn, he says to us, when connection with it come unto me. We're talking about pride and things like that, or when things are going good, he says. Come unto me, all you that labor are heavy laden. And I will give you rest. We learn of him. By occupation with himself and his life. That we too may more enter in and experience the same. You wake it up my ear warning by mirror warning to hear is the learn the Lord Jesus is a man had fresh renewal every morning in his life. And he had fellowship with his father each, I'm going to say with confidence every morning. And there was that renewing. Out the enjoyment and the lifting up of the spirit for the day that was ahead and when there was no opportunity for that because. Of. Circumstances. He always went off alone. That he might have that time alone with the Father in prayer. And so it's well for us to see the perfect example. And in that constant is, he says, we believe. We have in Chapter 11 of Hebrews all these examples of people that live by faith. But you don't get to the end of it till you get to chapter 12. And then you see the perfect example. Who for the joy that why is it there? Because it's to put the Lord Jesus as the perfect life of faith, to see who for the joy that was set before him, what endured. It's not

atonement there, but it's rather his life of faith. And so it's given again as a model to us to be occupied with himself and learn.

From him to practice those truths that what we say is too hard for me. God would say no. I gave you His life, so you have what's needed all. I don't have the power. Is my Holy Spirit dwelling in you not sufficient power for it? Yes, it is. And so we're encouraged to live out in practice, not in theory, but to live in practice, that which is the grace of God. The glory of God that it's been shining into our face. The end of. 18th verse of chapter 3. Has looked at more recently. Sometimes we use a mirror and we talk about. The law revealing it's like a mirror that we can look at it, see you're dirty, but it won't clean you up. But quite in contrast with that. You get Moses in the presence of the Lord and that glory shown in him, and now in the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ. We get this glory of the Lord, the unveiled face. It's almost like looking at a mirror, but this is a mirror that will transform you while you look at it. It's a person. I was thinking 2 of. Faith is very personal. And it's a person that has to be personal to us. It's not a group thing. And yet what Paul's doing here? We we look at all the difficulties in the assembly at Corinth. And verse 14 of chapter 4. We mentioned more on that, but. The last part says. The Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. Wasn't that quite a bit to say? That was a difficult. Assembly to work with. He's going to present us with you. That death working in him might be life in them. Absolutely marvelous. At transforming power. Lord Jesus, whoever dwelt in the bosom of the Father, you always see that. Glorious evenness of character and the light that's shown in him. Cost people around him some of them to hate him. Sometimes when we take up the 5th chapter of Second Corinthians, you hear in summary. Different reasons why we should and do. For the Lord. The beginning of chapter 5 it's. It's the shortness of the time and. And so on looking forward into that change condition, we read then about the judgment seat of Christ which should exercise, and then we read about the love of Christ constrained us, which is that attractive power that leads us along, but at the end of our chapter. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment working for us, a far more exceeding and eternal. It seems to make people uncomfortable when it's mentioned that that which we gain or don't gain spiritually here in this life. Will have an eternal effect. I think it's very exercising. Sometimes we look at the afflictions among the Saints. And we. I think. Brother Noah falls.

Children from Florida, 14 years old. Four children. What an affliction. But we. Forget that God is forming all the souls about. Person going through the afflictions. And he's forming them. For his glory. And sometimes it's. Quite hard to observe. But the Lord so for all you may see, raise up a soul that observes that. And has a tenderness to it as it works with other souls, because it observed this soul tribe sometimes we see. Couple children that are raised with an afflicted parent. And they grow up to be. Marvelous Shepherds. You know, just say God is forming souls to look at all this. I was thinking 2 of years ago. I was in Eureka, CA and we went to the nursing home. One little instance. That day we went to a home or a room where there were three women. The one near the door was tied down in her bed. She was. She had Alzheimer's and was. Baffling. Incoherent. We were able to talk to the other two ladies and. I walked up to her bed and I just. Said. I'm going to sing you a song. And I just began to sing. Cheap went quiet. I think. I think no one ever cared for me like Jesus anyway. At the end, I said, Do you know the Lord Jesus? Then she said I took care of that matter many years ago. With a smile on her face and just like that, she went back to bed. The treasure was inside.

Chicago Conference: 2022, 2 Corinthians 4:1-5

Reading

Perhaps I could mention a few thoughts. That I had concerning this chapter, and then others will of course be able to expand on them, but. In the first Epistle to the Corinthians, we know that there were a good many problems in the Corinthian assembly that Paul had to address. And he goes through them one by one, correcting their wrong thoughts and most of all their wrong attitude. But then. At the end of the epistle he uses one more error, the denial of the resurrection, to bring out, I believe, what was really on his heart, and that is the precious results of the work of Christ and the resurrection of Christ. And he does not merely establish the absolute necessity of. Christ's resurrection and our resurrection. But He takes us right on to the eternal state and to all the full results of the work of Christ. But if I could put it this way and this is the way it comes through to me. It's wonderful to see all that and to see a glimpse into coming glory. And you get that in the previous chapter to this one, Chapter 3. Where the last verse reads verse 18 of chapter 3. And I'm going to leave out the words as in a glass. They're not there in a better translation. But we all with open or unveiled face. Beholding the glory of the Lord. Are changed into the same image from glory to glory. Even is by the Lord the Spirit. But it seems that in Second Corinthians. After we have been taken right up into all of the wonderful results of God's purposes. We come down to earth, if I could say it this way again with a thump. Realizing that all the problems and difficulties of life are still here. And I don't like to talk about myself, but I can remember some time ago after I had had a meeting. A sister from an assembly from that assembly came up and she said to me, Bill, thank you for being real, she said. You didn't gloss over the problems of life with a lot of high sounding platitudes that didn't give us any help. Well, I was thankful for that remark, because sometimes a little feedback is good, and if it's negative, sometimes that's good too. But the point is, Paul doesn't gloss over the problems of life in Second Corinthians. He's real about them. But he brings all the power of a risen Christ in glory. And all that he is and all his glory to bear on the problems and difficulties of life down here. And I've really enjoyed that, especially in the last 2 1/2 years when we've had COVID on top of us. More recently, disruptions in the world from other causes the war in the Ukraine and economic difficulties, supply chain problems and many other things. And people are now even wondering where it's going to end. Is Russia going to lob a few small nuclear weapons into the Ukraine to turn the tide of the war? Where are things going? I believe this chapter would give us real encouragement and real help, and not only in major problems in the world, but in things that be set us as individuals and families and perhaps local assemblies too. I find it helpful to see and go back to Chapter 3. The Apostle Paul is contrasting. The Old Administration or Old Covenant? In verse seven of chapter 3, it says it's the ministration of death. Verse nine, it says it's the administration of condemnation. And it was glorious in the measure that when Moses went up the second time into the mount.

While he came down and his face was shining because he had seen something of the glory of God. But the ministration that we have now in this present time is called in verse. Eight Chapter 3. The Administration of the Spirit and at the end of verse 9. Administration of righteousness. And that's a ministry that exceeds in glory. So this is where the Apostle Paul starts in verse one of chapter 4. Seeing we have this ministry as we have received mercy, we faint not. And so it helps to get that focus. Oh, brethren, we have no idea of the glory. That we're going to step into at any moment. I just marvel, I I sometimes think rather than when we step across into the presence of the Lord, we're going to look back and we say. Why was I so occupied with those toys down there? Why wasn't I more enraptured with this? This is what we were called to. First, Peter chapter 5 says we are called to eternal glory. Is there something else that compares with that down here to take our attention? So it's a real challenge, isn't it? As we take up these things in verse two, it speaks of some pretty negative things, but over

evidence, remember what we've been called to. We get the word faint twice in this chapter, once in the first verse. And once in the 16th verse. And I am no Greek scholar. Anyone can look this up, but the word has the sense of losing heart. Becoming discouraged, deciding that the pathway is too rough. And it is easy to get that way. We have been used to things being pretty, pretty nice for us here in North America ever since the Second World War. There has been an unprecedented error of peace. Prosperity and relatively good times. Oh yes, there have been the odd ups and downs, but in the main. Things have been pretty good. But God is starting to allow the whole world to feel the effect of His hand on it. And then to sometimes even in the Christian pathway there are things that can be sent us and as you say, Brother Bob, if we get our eyes on those things and get taken up with them. It is easy to faint, isn't it? Easy to think of giving up? It's it's it's not worth it. But all directs our eyes to the glory, as you say, that is ours. And I love the way you put that that what a difference it makes. One moment we can be dealing with everything that concerns life down here and one moment later. We could be in the presence of the Lord and. See that glory, you know, even fuller way than we see it now by faith. We have this morning's address. Repeated in this chapter. Really a lot of left Bruce comment on it, but just to make the comment, this chapter begins with the gospel. In the context of our present circumstances, but nonetheless, if our gospel behead the majority of the chapters, the practical effect of having to live in the Kingdom of God in its present state. And the end of the chapter we have some of the eternal purposes and councils of God.

Not all of them, but we have some of what's ahead of us when more of it's fulfilled to us. And so I make that suggestion as we go through the chapter that we can see another. Expression of the same. Line of thought and help that was given to us this morning. And all that Bruce elaborate if he chooses. I don't know about the elaboration, but I will make this comment on verse one. That Paul. As specially fitted and gifted as he was, and with such a stewardship. He seems to have never lost track of the fact that he received mercy. When he writes to Timothy in the first in his first epistle, he says the same thing. We find that. Verse 12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord. Who hath enabled me? With that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, who was before a blasphemy and a persecutor and injurious, but I obtained mercy. And so on. So. That I will say this, that nowadays. When the subject of election comes up amongst believers. The Saints seem to get uncomfortable. That doctrine seems to make people uncomfortable. She puzzles me because in my personal experience, the brethren took me under their wing a couple weeks after I was saved, one of the first things they taught me. I know you felt they said that you did it and that you and God looks upon you as having accepted Christ about the knee. But they taught me that I was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. And my response was. Why me? And it makes us worshippers when we lay hold of that. Paul wrote in his perhaps first epistle to the Thessalonians. He said, knowing brethren. Beloved, your election of God. So he taught it to them in the first couple weeks. It's foundational. And it's good for us not to lose sight of that, even such a as we would say, a great one is the Apostle Paul. What a servant of the Lord. I obtained mercy. I was a glass fever, curious, an insolent and overbearing man. But I obtained mercy. And didn't lose sight of that in his soul's experience, and it motivated him as having been put into the Ministry to not faint. And as individuals, I'm sure you would agree, Bruce, we need that mercy throughout our Christian lives, don't we? It's an individual thing and that's why epistles written to individuals. Generally include mercy and pulse salutation. Or the you might say Paul includes it in his salutation, But he writes to assemblies. He says grace and peace. Why? Because assembly stand before God in that particular relationship with Christ. And in that sense, he doesn't mention mercy toward an assembly, but toward individuals. We need mercy throughout our lives, don't we? It's the mercy of the Lord that we're not. Consumed. It's the mercy of the Lord in our everyday lives with the mercies we received. I remember a brother in the Toronto Assembly in whose home I was many times. And he believed in giving thanks for the food in a very brief way. He never elaborated. And every time it was Father. For these mercies we give thee thanks. Amen. But he called the Mercies the good food we enjoy, the good things that God gives us in our everyday lives, the way we're dealt with as individuals before Him. What a blessing thing it is, and we need the mercy of God all through our Christian pathway. I'd like to reread the last verse. Of the first time we sang this morning. And it's an Amen to what's just been said.

Unchangeable, thy gracious love, our earthly path has ceaseless views. Air New our beating heart to move thy tender mercies still pursued. Here with us, may they abide, and close us in on every side. Well, there was a danger in Corinth. We don't need to dwell on it. But it was a danger which Paul brings out in verse two of dishonesty and handling the word of God in a wrong way. Using deceit in order to gain influence and position and authority. And sadly, without going into a lot of detail, it seems that there were those in court who wanted to. As it were, shoved the Apostle Paul out of the way so that they could take over and have an influence over the Saints there and. Paul addresses that. That in more than one place in the Epistles to corn. But he mentions it here and how that on his part they as it says in the last half of verse 2. By manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, and how necessary that is. We do not need to use human energy. We don't need to use. Human means. We don't need to use. Anything other than the Word of God. And if I may be permitted, I will say this there are a number of young people here. I remember what it was like to be in university and face opposition to the truth of God. And we know from Scripture that there is a place according to Proverbs. I think it's Proverbs 26 to answer a fool according to his folly. There is occasionally a place for what is called Christian apologetics and to point out to those who oppose why their objections will not. Bear scrutiny or stand up even to SOLID logic. But. While that may exercise someone's mind, and maybe rightly so. It doesn't save anyone what saves the word of God. And we know that when Paul came to Corinth, he could say, I determined not to know anything among you, but Christ did him crucified. Now some have taken that the wrong way, that Paul never went beyond that. That's not the point. The point is that he preached A rejected Christ without worldly wisdom, without trying to use high-powered words. In human education. Or any other means because he knew that it was the word of God used by the power of the Spirit of God that imparted new life. And that's what your older brethren were teaching you, weren't they, Bruce, when you learned that you had been? An object of God's choosing before the foundation of the world, and when the time came, it was a work of God in each one of our souls. The Word applied by the Spirit of God. To a part of your life now. Then there was our acceptance of Christ. A subsequent indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the realization that we were truly safe. But God began the work, and so Paul realized all that, and he didn't seek to meet the Corinthians on the ground of their education, and they were educated people. On the ground of their wealth, they were a wealthy people. On the ground of their human pride, they were a proud people. Put all that aside, Yes, if he had to be stacked up against them, he was educated too. If it came to a matter of ability to be a good orator, he could speak several languages. He could probably hold his own. But you didn't use any of that. He preached the word of God without any craftiness, without any deceit, without anything else except the power of God. And what happened? God had much people in that city, as you mentioned, Brother Bruce.

It's commanding ourselves to every man's conscience, isn't it? I think that's a real key when we're speaking the word. Sometimes there's a tendency to want to appeal to the mind and reasoning. And I don't think reasoning is wrong because Paul reasoned in the synagogues, the scriptures, but it's appeal to the conscience, and I think that's important. Conscience is that which man got when he ate of that forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and that's what conscience really is. Take a sale, CON off the conscience and you've got science that's left. It's with knowledge. And so a person, whether they admit God in their life or don't they have that inside them, The conscience that

bears testimony to the truth. Like you say, when the truth is presented then there's something in there that. They responds to that, and I think that's important to see that we appeal to man's conscience in the sight of God. Often think of the Lord Jesus when he was brought, that woman that was taken in adultery and they said, Moses said to stone this women woman, what do you say? Well it was pretty evident their hypocrisy. For adultery, there had to be a man in the picture, and they didn't bring the man. So what was he going to say? Well, he finally stood up and said, he that is without sin among you, cast the first stone at her. That wasn't an answer to their question. That was an answer to their conscience. And they all got effed one by one, from the the oldest to the youngest. And they walked out. Their conscience could not stand before the light that was being presented to them. So that's a real lesson, isn't it, to appeal to man's conscience. Man was brought into a hospital. His body had been crushed and the physician examined him, said, well, we're going to have to work on you and get some help for you and the man said to him. I want to know the truth. And So what is the situation? I know the Lord Jesus Christ is my savior and I'm going to be OK. So the physician said you only have a few hours to live. The man that said to him. I have a request. Would you go to the lodging, send somebody to the lodging and he gave the address where I live and ask the landlady to? Have you bring the book? And. Physicians told a nurse, an orderly, OK, go ahead and do it. So he went on his rounds and he came back a couple of hours later. And he said to the nurse. While he could see when he went in the room, the man had died. And so he asked the nurse if the book. Had been brought. What book was it? And she said it's under his pillow. So he reached under the pillow that the dead man was lying on. He pulled out the book. He opened it up, and he knew immediately. It was the Bible that his mother had given to him when he had gone into medical school. When he wanted some money for some liquor, he'd sold it and hadn't seen it since. But it's an example that the man's. Not acknowledged the gospel than what he said to the physician, but more than that the testimony of his own.

Peace in the face of death was a message to the conscience and then God. Use that message as the man saw as the Bible. Very quickly the Lord worked in his soul and he was saved. And became a preacher of the gospel. And so it's extremely important that when we present the message of the gospel to another person, they should see the reality of that message displayed in our own life. And that's what speaks to their conscience. Just as an interesting note for those that are interested, the Doctor involved was William Mackay, who wrote #34 in Our Little Flock in book. If you want the full track, that's in the hallway. Well, we know that Satan is going to oppose all of that, isn't he? And according to verse four, he's the God of this world. It's interesting that the spirit of God in Scripture does not call Satan either the God or the Prince of this world until this world rejected Christ. No. Doubtless Satan was very active ever since. The fall of man, and before the fall too. He caused the fall of that in that sense, but. God's word doesn't call him either the God or Prince of this world. World rejected Christ, and here he's called the God of this world, no doubt religiously. And he's the Prince of this world, if we could say it, perhaps politically. But he blinds the minds, and maybe I should let Bruce expand on this. But what does he blind them to? Does he blind them? Does it say blind to the minds of them which believe not, lest they should realize that they're lost, guilty sinners? And need a savior. That's not what it says. He blinds them. To And it perhaps could read more accurately to the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ. And that's what our brother was bringing before us this morning. Yes, it is the gospel of the grace of God, unquestionably. And we need that. But a more blessed truth in one sense, and a higher truth, is that it is the gospel of the glory of Christ. And that went back into a past eternity when God determined to honor and glorify his beloved Son. And to give him the highest place. Apart from Revelation. The mind of a man becomes the plaything of the devil. Often being said that way by older brethren, where I come from. The brighter the mind, the more twisted it can become. Just look around at some of the things that. Intelligent people. Believe as fact in the western world. And all you can do is shake your head. So the mind becomes twisted, reducing everything down and down and down of the great. Testimony of creation, the testimony of conscience, let alone the Word of God. Reduce it down and down and down to that little mind can take it in, and then it puffs out its chest and walks around in its ignorance. The story of of our Western world. But God in verse 6 shines in the heart and bypasses it, so it's wonderful. Friend of mine I grew up with. Very prestigious college degree he had from an Ivy League college. Heard the gospel from Woodsman chicken farmers.

Man with no teeth. He wrestled. I went off to work. He wrestled with it and wrestled with it. I got home. I could see on his face something happened. He got insane. I said what happened? He had been trained in a master's degree in biology or something and was all twisted up with evolution and all of this stuff. Like the Lord spoke to me, he said. John, what you need is faith in me. He got down on his knees in my kitchen and accepted Christ as a savior. He bypassed that brilliantly educated mind and worked in his heart to give the radiancy. Of the glory of Christ. In his heart. So the mind can be blinded, but the conscience never. I sometimes say the mind could become atheist, but the conscience is never atheist. Some time ago, there was that. Debate between a Christian and one of the I forget the name of the famous atheist. And they asked him what is the full title of Darwin's? Species What is the called the origin of the species? Origin of the Species? And he said yes. Oh my God, I forgot. You mentioned God in his answer. Richard talk. OK, that was the guy. So the conscience never becomes atheist. And so the thing that is important is to let the light shine. And I I think this is what's so interesting in this How do you make a blind person see this is where God comes into the picture in his sovereignty and makes the light penetrate the darkness. And that's what we have in verse 6, isn't it? It's a quote from Genesis chapter. One when there was darkness over the face of the deep, God said. Let there be light and there was light. Whatever changed in your friend that that all of a sudden he got so uncomfortable. It was not alike from the presence of God that penetrated the darkness. I I seen that happen a number of times rather than Timmy has saw. Amazingly wonderful when you see a person that has struggled against the light. And all of a sudden. They can't do it any longer. It's wonderful to see it. Wonderful the witness. So the important thing is to let the light shine, isn't it? To speak the word I said, I say When you're preaching the gospel, it's not your explanation that's gonna make it get through to people. It's the living word of God. So read it. Slowly and clearly. Your explanation might help, or it might not help. But it's not your explanation. It's the word of God that penetrates. It's living in an operative, penetrating, wonderful, wonderful. What power we have? In having that privilege to preach the gospel and know that by the Spirit of God it can Pierce through whatever things put in the way, it can come right through and dramatically. Transform lives. We have that triplet. What a wonderful privilege it is to be able to do that, whether it's one-on-one or before a group. We know what's going on out there is a work by the Spirit of God piercing through not only to preach it, but to live it. Somebody has said. Lights here in this room are not making any noise. They're not saying anything. But because of their being here, you can see everything clearly. And that's what the word of God is. Living in Opera? In the Word of God. Seeing and faith go together. And blindness and unbelief go together. The reason a person cannot see spiritual things? They may be the brightest intellectual person in the world.

It's less the light, as it says, blinded the minds of them, which believe not. Unbelief is what makes a person blind. In moral and spiritual and matters. So what gives light that they see? Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. And so it's the Word of God working by the Spirit of God, that overcomes unbelief. And when there's then faith. Given through the word of God, the person sees. And that's not true only of what we call unbelievers. The principle is equally true in the life of everyone of us here, if there's an area of our life in which we are not believing God. If there's unbelief in us, there'll be blindness in that matter as well. Light and darkness and not the opposite of each other. God

is light. We have light in this room. If someone would have great darkness into this room, it's not going to affect this room at all. However, if there's a dark room and we bring a little bit of light, the room is going to be illuminated. That's the big contrast, isn't it? I was thinking of Bruce mentioned earlier with the Sorcerer in the book of Acts. He he was the evidence and action of Satan. Things and it was me blind. He saw darkness. That was really his natural condition because man love darkness, so he would just put back into his condition. There what we have is light, and in fact. We spoke about light. Light and light goes together too, isn't it? That's what we have light, then it leads to light and we are given eternal life because that light was upon us. Thinking of Gideon when he went out with his 300 men against the Midianites, he had two things. His men had two things. One was a. Picture an earthen vessel with a lighted torch inside. The other one was a trumpet. It's figurative of the two means of testimony. What is heard and what is seen? And that's what we have in the verse 2. There's things that are not connected with the Christian testimony, things of dishonesty, craftiness, handling the word of God deceitfully. When there's anything of that, it tends to. Negate the truth of What's your? What's that obscure exactly. Exactly. Go ahead. Well that bit in in verse 2, dishonesty, hidden things of dishonouring not walking and craftiness handling the word of God deceitfully. We are plagued by that in amongst Evangelicals in the Word of Faith movement. The say it claimant movement, the the prosperity gospel movement and all that, That's what they do. They play these games. They've put on a show. They use techniques that magicians use and so forth and claim to be men of God, and then people who are affected by that. We run into them from time to time. They may be many of them are real believers, and boy do they get messed up by this stuff. They don't have peace. They're troubled by the things that they're told that we have these kind of people that are all over the place. Several of them recently have told on TV and their congregations that God has told them they need new jets and. Millions and millions of dollars worth of money. And this kind of nonsense that they go on, they they put on a great show. One of the ones that's got to be very famous as a man by the name of Benny Hinn. And I was in a Bible study with a group of people in Florida number of years ago and a couple went to this meeting and they described it to me. There are 4 hours of music and show before he came on stage to work them up. What do you need to do that for? Why if if these people are really.

Men of God who have signed gifts and can do what they claim. Why do you need to play these games? These and handle the word of God deceitfully, so these guys could make a fortune making pretzels the way they twist the word of God. It's it's all around us and we we run into people all the time that are damaged and affected by this and thankfully we have something we can do to help them. Verse 6. The light shines where. As it says in our hearts. Lodging place at truth. Is the heart and the greatest danger for the hearts of I speak to us as believers in this room. Is that the allowance of unbelief? And what's in the heart of God? That's our greatest danger. Unbelief in the goodness that's in the heart of God. And when we go through this chapter and the circumstances through which people we pass. That are difficult to go through and accept and so on. There's a natural tendency in us to say, well, I could be happy if you Lord, if you change my circumstances. And do something that I think would make me happier by doing this or that in my present need. That's not the truth of God. Happiness is not the consequence of favorable circumstances, but it's living in the enjoyment of the fellowship that we can have with God our Father and the Lord Jesus in their heart. They want to bring us into the common daily enjoyment of the fellowship that they enjoy together. They want us to enjoy that fellowship with them as well, and if we have that without unbelief, then we can go through the difficulties of life in everyday life with peace and calmness that the Lord Jesus, who never doubted his Father's heart, experienced in his life as a man. Just wanted to comment on verse three. Our gospel be hid. It is hid to them that are lost. What a tragedy. Important to let the light shine. Remember what those leprous men on the outside of Samaria said when they found the camp of the Assyrians abandoned. They said this is a day of good tidings and we hold our peace. Oh, how important it is to let the light shine. And so it's not only like we were saying what we say, it's the way we live. And so it's so important that there be conformity in our lives to the truth of God that we speak. If that's the case, it will get through. Still remember our sister? In the Lord who is quite timid in her personality and. And she worked in a office. It was after some time one of the other secretaries in the office approached her and said, what is it you have you have something that I wish I had? Will you just tell me what it is? And then she was able to open. Her heart and tell her the gospel and that person got saved. That other secretary got saved. It wasn't what she said that attracted her, was what she was. That's the light, isn't it? It shows, it manifests. Does a good verse to be reminded of, especially. When we're younger, because sometimes you're concerned about what do we preach, how do we preach, what do we say so that people can be convicted. Those are burdening question, isn't it? But yet here I believe it tells us not to worry. So let's go back to verse five. I'm going to read it from the New translation. For we do not preach ourselves. Well, that's rule #1.

Isn't it? It's not about you and I. We don't preach about ourselves, but Christ Jesus Lord. That's what the preaching is. So the Word of God can say. Now, another place he says do the work of an evangelist. So you and I may say, I'm not an evangelist. I can't preach because that's due to work. Are you an evangelist? Does it matter? No, you do the work. I mean evangelist. In this case, you preach Christ being. Lord. And then it echoed and ourselves. What about ourselves? Is that? But? And ourselves your servant for Christ, For Jesus we are just an instrument for him. All we have to do is preach Christ. And I love what it says at the end of verse. Christ Who is. The image of God. Incredible to think about what is image? It's the visible representation of what is invisible. How can you know God if God is invisible? The Lord Jesus is the image of the invisible God. You look at the Lord Jesus and the Gospels. There you can see first hand of who God is in that glorious person and it's kind of repeated in the end of verse 6 to give the light. Of the knowledge. Of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Not wonderful that we can know the eternal God. In the person of the Lord Jesus. That just blows my mind, brother. That you and IA, God who is eternal, who never began to exist, He always was. That just blows my mind. And I know that God, yes I can, because he became a man. And as such. Walked amongst humankind and now we can know God in the most wonderful way possible. The person of his Son, the Lord Jesus. Can you go on a little bit, Bob, to explain something to us? We know from First Timothy chapter 6. That there is a light in which God dwells, and the Lord Jesus Christ, which no man hath seen nor can see, no man can approach unto. So what? What is this glory that is now seen in the face of Jesus Christ? What can we go any further in saying what glory that is? I'm asking a question. Now answer your question. I'm glad to ask a question. You were enlarging on it. I have a thought and I'll say it and then maybe others can comment. And I don't mean to spend a lot of time on it, but I'll read that verse in First Timothy 6 just so we know what we're. Talking about It's particularly talking about the Lord Jesus. And it reminds us of who he is as God. And it says there. Verse 14 The last part of the verse. The appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Which it should read, which in its times, that is the times of the appearing it shall show Who is the blessed, and only potentate the king of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who only have immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach, unto whom no man hath seen, nor can see, to whom be honor and power ever last.

And yet here in the face of Jesus Christ. We see the glory of God. I don't want to limit it, but to me the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Perhaps is in contrast to the glory that was seen in the Old Testament. Was there a glory seen there? Yes, there was. And you brought it out, Bob, That look. When Moses came down from the mount, his face shone, because there was a glory even in the giving of that love. A glory of God and all that he was, as a God of holiness, a God of judgment. But it required of man that which he could never live up to. And man failed,

and God knew he would fail. But now what do you and I see in the face of Jesus Christ? Again, I don't limit it to this, but what I have enjoyed is we see the glory of God in redemption. We see the whole character of God displayed not merely as light but as love. And we see grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ. All of that, I like to think, is now seen in the glory that shines in the face of Jesus Christ. Would brethren agree with that, or is there more to it than that? Yes, I agree with that. I say there is that which we can know. But I think that verse in First Timothy 6 shows that there are things that are unapproachable that we will never know. Because God is God, and I'm only a creature. I will never be a God. I'm a child of God called into fellowship with God. But I was thinking of that verse in Matthew 11 where the Lord Jesus. Speaks here Matthew 11 verse 25. Says at that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in my sight. Now notice verse 27. All things are delivered to me of my Father. And no man knoweth the sun. But the Father? Neither knows any man, the Father. Save the son, and he to whomsoever the son will reveal you. So the mystery of the Lord Jesus being God and man at the same time as a mystery that just goes beyond our ability to comprehend and I think we need to realize that. We need to. Tread with unshot feet carefully. But there are things that we know wonderful, wonderful wonder. Things that we do not know, they're unapproachable. If you know the sun reveals the father. Perhaps the people illustration. Thinking of this part there on Wednesday. Two days from now, our brother Sagar build or well in India will be coming to visit Toronto area and I'll be picking them up. Staying with us for a few days. I have never met him. I don't know what he looks like. I have not seen pictures of him or maybe I have. Don't remember. Yet I know it's not David, so in many ways I feel like I already know him. So perhaps it's that's a people way to illustrate that. When you know the sun, you know that I'm anticipating the mannerism, perhaps the similarity and appearance and things. No man hath seen God at any time. We read in John chapter one the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father He hath declared him. I love that passage in First Timothy 6 that you mentioned, Bill, because it's just so majestic and exalted to point to the inaccessible light that God dwells in this God, and yet he was pleased to come out from that.

Habitation. That eternal habitation. Person in the sun and reveal him to you within me. And the wonder of it too. As we read Colossians. In him dwell of all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. If you wanted to communicate everything in your heart. And you were a sculptor. You could spend your entire life and you wouldn't be able to communicate just in a human heart. In one piece of art or a letter to communicate your innermost and complete, you would not be able to. You might say God has been able to put all the fullness of the Godhead bodily in that man, Christ Jesus, to present him to us. Nothing left out, It's all there. Little wonder that they could say. We have the knowledge of this. I think sometimes we're a little bit shy because of what we know about the first man and about how Satan can play with the mind. But. Knowledge is not a bad thing. Spiritual things. It's it's wonderful. It's the way God communicates across space and time, with, with, with knowledge, with information. It's all packed in your son. And so it is that, as we were saying this morning, our moral condition effects our ability to take in that ongoing and increasing knowledge of itself. Acknowledge the knowledge of the Sun, its eternal life, this. Wonderful. God is inhabits eternity. Ever existing. Has no beginning, has no end. In contrast. Exists outside of time. Exists outside of space. By contrast, there's you and. We are finite. We can't even think. We can talk about it, but we really can't think outside of time or space. We can talk about eternity, but our capacity to really? Understand it is very, very limited in the truth of it. And. God is God, and we as finite creatures, what God is is beyond. US. It's infinite. And it will never be different than that, because God will always be God. And we will always be creatures. And so God in the greatness of his own being and heart. Has chosen to make himself known to us. And the person. Of his son. And so he has come. In unity with his deity. I am as he could say he has become a man and remains a man, and in doing so he has revealed. God to us. And in the most wonderful way is this. I believe the greatest. Aspect of the glory of God that has been made known to us. Is his heart. Glory is the display of excellence. And the greatest excellence of God is not his infinite power. As great as that is and it beyond us that is. But when we see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and we go, as Bill said some while ago, to the matter of redemption. It's the greatest display of the Excellency of God is at the cross. Because it is the fullness to the capacity of our hearts to see his heart.

There's no greater display of the heart of God than what we see He will did through his Son displaying his heart at the cross. There's all kinds of wonderful blessings for us connected with that. But the Lord could and did. Display the glory of God in the magnificent, wonderful way we view it when we see the Lord Jesus, who was willing to pay the price of redemption to satisfy the heart of God. And the glory of God maintained in it, And as a consequence for us God says now I'm going to give to you to see for all eternity that my son who lowered himself in the sense of becoming an obedient man, I'm giving him as man. He already had the rights as creator and so on. But as man, as Redeemer, God has invested and shown in him all the displayable glory of God. In terms of heaven and earth. And we have the joy of being with him and as man like him. Again, going back to the heart, God says the greatest glory has to do with my heart. So I'm going to give you the life of my son so that you can share that same heart and enjoy my glory through it.

Faithful Words for Old and Young: Volume 15, Beholding the Glory.

“BEHOLDING” — this does not mean a single act, but a lifelong engagement. Then the illuminated become illuminators — to “give out.” (2 Cor. 4:6.)

M.

Young Christian: Volume 37, 1947, What Did Paul Call "Light Affliction"?

“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:17-18.

Some modern prophets exhort us to look at “the bright side of things,” so that we may be able to pass comfortably and happily over life’s journey. But if they mean things visible, we may lawfully inquire, “Which is the bright side?” And if they mean things invisible, it is all bright there. In the one case, there is nothing but darkness; in the other, there is no darkness at all. If anyone imagines that he can look at the bright side of things that are seen, he is simply under a miserable delusion. There is not so much as a single ray of true light throughout the wide range of this present evil world, of which Satan is the god and prince. How could there be light in a scene from which the Son of God has been

cast out? Impossible. To talk of the bright side of things in a region of sin and death, where Satan reigns, and Christ is rejected, is to offer a flat contradiction to the plainest teaching of Holy Scripture.

But we hardly think it needful to press this point just now. Thank God, those who are taught by His Spirit are not in much danger of being drawn aside by any popular delusion as to human progress, or the improvement of the world. With all who have learned to make the cross of Christ the one standard by which to measure men and things—self and the world, this question is definitively, because divinely, settled.

It is very evident that the blessed Apostle knew nothing about the bright side of things. He does not say, “While we look not at the dark side of things.” Nothing of the kind. He did not look at them at all. He kept his eye steadily fixed on the unseen things. He lived amid those eternal realities of which the living God is the Source, Christ the Center, and simple faith the power of realization. And herein lay the grand secret of what he tells us in the profound and exquisite passage which stands at the head of this paper. It was this that enabled him to regard a long life of unparalleled toil and suffering as “light affliction” and “but for a moment.” Nor this only; it enabled him to see and own that the light and temporary affliction worked for him “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” How striking the contrast between the light and momentary affliction and the weight of glory!

If the reader would form some idea of what the Apostle calls “light affliction,” let him turn for a moment to 2 Corinthians 11, where, to speak after the manner of men, he is reluctantly obliged to allude to his labors and sufferings in order to bring the poor foolish Corinthians to a right sense of things. “Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.” And this was “light affliction”! “Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep.” And all this was “light affliction”! “In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren.” And all this was “light affliction”! “In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.” And all this was “light affliction”!

Truly, such a record as this may well make us blush to think, much less to speak, of our little trials and difficulties and sorrows and sufferings. And yet the Apostle could not only count them all light, but momentary. But how was this? Was he a stoic? Was he insensible or indifferent? No; he felt it all—could not but feel it. It is the most egregious folly for anyone to say we ought not to feel things. They might just as well tell us we ought not to have a head on our shoulders, a heart in our bosom, or a system of nerves. We may rest assured our Apostle was not one of the visionary school who talk in this way. He was alive to everything, but above it. He felt all, but felt it with God. He was perfectly conscious of the circumstances, but thoroughly superior to them.

But we repeat the question, How was this? What made all that long life of unexampled suffering, toil and conflict to be regarded as light and momentary! Here is the soul-stirring reply: “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.”

Thus it was with Paul, and thus it must be with us. It is this which alone can preserve the balance of the soul while passing through the trials and difficulties, sorrows and conflicts of this present time. If it were not for this, we could never get on. Were we to look at the things which are seen, we should be crushed in spirit and paralyzed in action. To be insensible is impossible; to be indifferent is contemptible; to be superior is the precious privilege of every Christian. As an old pilgrim, who had reached the advanced age of 103, said in reply to a friend, who had made some allusion to all the trials and difficulties of such a very long life, “Yes, yes, there have been trials and difficulties, but I never meddled with them!”

Thus it was with Stephen in that splendid scene at the close of Acts 7. He looked not at the things which were seen. He looked steadfastly up into heaven, and what he saw there rendered him superior to his surroundings; and not only superior to them, but a reflector of Christ in them. Thus it must ever be. It is not a miserable selfishness occupied with trials and trying to escape them, but faith occupied with the Man in the glory, and reflecting the beams of His moral glory upon the scene around.

C. H. M.

Fragments Gathered Up, Sufferings for Christ

2 Cor. 4:11. When Paul passed through sufferings destined to break down the flesh, he endured sufferings for Christ. In a sense it is perfection. With us alas! discipline often mixes with it.

Fragments Gathered Up, 2 Corinthians 4:12

2 Cor. 4:12. Death wrought in Paul in such a sort that the flesh did not stir. He was so truly dead that Christ only lived in him. That left the life of Jesus on Paul’s part to act with regard to the Corinthians.

A Few Plain Words on Eternal Life: What It Is and Who Has It, Eternal Life: What It Is and Who Has It, A Few Plain Words on: No. 1

Eternal life: what do these words mean, as used in the holy scriptures? For the real meaning of the word " eternal" we will turn to 2 Cor. 4:18, " While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal [that is, for a time]; but the things which are not seen are eternal." We do not need to criticize the word " eternal," for this is certain, it is in direct contrast with that which is for a time. It is duration without a limit. When we then read those words of Jesus, " These shall go away into everlasting [or eternal] punishment; but the righteous into life eternal," He clearly taught that the punishment would not be for a time, but forever and ever. And in like manner the felicity of the righteous would not be for a · time, but for endless é duration. Such is the plain teaching of the Son of God.

Thousands would fully admit this, that eternal does not mean for a time or temporal; but, as we have said, unlimited duration. What a question for the reader; yea, for every one, Shall I spend an unending eternity in unending woe, or in the enjoyment of unending eternal life? Eternal life is thus used in scripture as endless duration in the future; but let us now inquire what is eternal life now, and what has it been from all eternity?

We shall find in scripture that eternal life is not a principle, or an abstraction, but eternal life is a Person. Eternal life is the Person of the Son of God. This fact is fully brought out both in the gospel and in the first epistle of John. " That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life." (1 John 1:1.) These words could not be spoken of a principle, or an idea; try them. A Person had been with them from the beginning. They had seen Him, heard Him, looked upon Him, handled Him: and more, " For the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." (Ver. 2.)

The eternal life which was with the Father—yes, eternally,, was with the Father: was not this the Son of God? Ever " was," but manifested unto us. " And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." (1 John 5:20.) Thus we learn with "absolute certainty that eternal life is the Person of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

How strange also that we should have overlooked the remarkable witness to this fact in verses 6-13 of this chapter. Is it not the Person of the Son of God, the eternal life? " This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ not by water only, but by water and blood." Yes, He the Eternal One must die. There could be no cleansing but by death. It was water from the dead side; and there could be no atonement for sins but by His blood. Cleansed by the washing of water by the word; that word that tells of His death for us, and boldness to enter by His blood.

And who bears witness: " It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." The Holy Ghost come down from heaven here on this earth is the witness. " And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." But what is the thing witnessed? " If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified [or witnessed] of his Son." Yes, it is a something that God has witnessed of His Son. See how strongly this is pressed upon us, " He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the witness that God gave of his Son." Perhaps nothing in scripture is so solemnly pressed as this. Now we get the thing witnessed by God: and not to believe it is to make Him a liar.

" And this is the record [witness], that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." In giving His Son, God hath given to us eternal life. He is the Eternal Life. This is what God bears witness to. " He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." And mark, it was the desire of John; yea, the desire of the Holy Ghost, that all, babes, young men, and fathers, might know that they had this eternal life. a These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life." God our Father would not have us entertain such a thought, that the life He gives is only for a time. It is His own Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

Let us now turn to the gospel of John, and consider Him, the Eternal Life. Here we look back to the far past eternity, " In the beginning," before He created the heavens and the earth. He created the heavens and the earth in a beginning truly, but in that beginning He, the Son, was not created, but " was." We could not say of any created being, angel, archangel, principality, or power, " he was." No, all creatures had a beginning; but, " In the beginning was the Word." Yes, the Son of God, the Eternal Life, "was;" "and the Word was with God." This blessed One, the Eternal Life, was a distinct Person, was with God. Distinct in Person, yet truly God; " And the Word was God." And this blessed Person ever subsisted, the true God and Eternal Life; and ever the distinct Word. " The same was in the beginning with God." Think of that eternity before anything was made or existed. " All things were made by him: and without him was not anything made that was made." Yes, He was in eternity, the Eternal Life, before anything was made.

" IN HIM WAS LIFE."

Oh, what grace it is; that poor, dying, guilty sinners should be made partakers of such life; and should become one with Him who is the true God and the Eternal Life. What a fountain of eternal life, the Son of God I " And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." Thus the Eternal Life became Man, was seen, heard, and handled—the Eternal Life. Yet this poor world knew Him not. Do you know Him, the true God and Eternal Life? Do you thus behold Him in all His lowly walk here below?

In John 3 we learn from His very lips, that God had no thought less than that we might have this eternal life. But in order that this might be an accomplished fact, this glorious Eternal One must be lifted up, as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness. He must be nailed to a cross, made sin for us. Sin must be judged; sins must be borne. He must die that we might live. He must bear the wrath and condemnation, that we might be justified from all things, become the righteousness of God in Him, and have eternal life, brought into favor in Him the beloved.

Yes, God sent His Son, " That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Thus we have the heart of God revealed to us. " For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." He did not so love us that we might have life for a time, and lose it, and it cease to be. No, God did not give His Son for that. The source of the glad tidings is this infinite love of God. He gave His Son. Do you receive His gift? " He that hath the Son hath life." Yes, He is the true God and Eternal Life. Look back beyond this parenthesis, we call time •—time in its utmost bound—and beyond it all " In him was life:" self-existent, the Eternal Life, " with God, and he was God."

When He, the Eternal Word, was made flesh, then they, whose eyes were open, could see, could look upon, could handle Him, the Eternal Life. He was ever the Eternal Life, but now revealed to us. The Eternal Life incarnate could say, " I am the bread of life." " I am the living bread which came down from heaven." Yes, He, in His own eternal Person, is the Eternal Life. He is not for a time. Look forward beyond the utmost bound of time's parenthesis, and in the boundless eternity beyond, He is the true God and Eternal Life; the eternal " I AM."

Now since He, in His own eternal Person, cannot be for a time, it follows that that which He is, Eternal Life, and that which He communicates cannot be for a time, or temporal. No, He says to the Father the opposite of this. He does not say the life He gives is for a time; He says, " And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3.) If we suppose that God has only given us life for a time, we do not know God, or Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

If we keep, nay, if the Holy Spirit keeps this vast truth before our souls, that eternal life is the eternal Person of the Son of God, it will then become more clear who they are who have it, and how unspeakable the privilege of those who possess eternal life. Before we go further, may we ask each reader, Are you sure you have eternal life in the Son of God?

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 4:1-14

The ministry of the glorified Christ, committed to Paul as to no other of the apostles, filled his heart and formed his life. In this once wicked man, persecutor of Christians to death (Acts 22:4), we now see the “chosen vessel” of Acts 9:15, 16; the chief of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15) has become the pattern servant. Thus in verse 1 he speaks of mercy received or shown him, the mercy of God; and in a deep sense of that mercy, he applied himself to the service of his Master.

“We are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ,” Paul wrote in chapter 2 (17); and continuing to pen words which the Holy Spirit supplied, he in the second verse of our chapter tells more of the character of his ministry,

“But (we) have renounced (or, as more accurately expressed in the New Translation, have rejected) the hidden things of shame (see the margin of your Bible); not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.”

Thus the Word of God, exactly as it was communicated to the apostle Paul, has been delivered to us by him in the writing of his epistles. How thankful we should be, and surely we are, to God for this!

Now this manifestation of the truth which had been given to Paul, commended him to every one’s conscience in the sight of God. Deep down in every human breast there is a little monitor that, notwithstanding the passing of fifty-nine centuries and an increasing tide of evil, still persists. It was at the fall of Adam that man received a conscience (Gen. 3). It tells the wrongdoer of his guilt, though its voice may in many be very faint; but it requires the all-powerful Word of God to bring the sinner to a true sense of his sins to see his profound need of a Savior. So the small, still voice of the conscience may be at work, telling the possessor of it that there is reality in the preacher’s message, in the message borne by a tract; that there is a God, and some day he must meet Him in regard to his sins.

“But,” continues the apostle, “if our gospel be hid (literally, veiled), it is hid (veiled) in them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light (radiance) of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (verses 3, 4).

This is most solemn. Here is the gospel of the glory of Christ Jesus, the Savior of sinners, revealed in the world; it is exactly what everyone should wholeheartedly and without reservation accept and believe to the saving of his soul; yet many, as it surely appears, are unmoved by the thought of it; they continue as though God had not spoken, had provided no way of salvation from impending, eternal judgment; as though the cross of Christ and the promised day of doom for the lost were but idle tales.

The explanation is at hand: If the gospel be hid, it is hid to those who are lost, in whom the god of this world -Satan, man’s ancient and relentless enemy has blinded the thoughts of the unbelieving so that the radiancy of the glad tidings should not shine forth for them.

How is it with you, dear reader, as your eyes fall upon these pages? Is the gospel anything personal to you? Not all who call themselves Christians are true. Have your eyes been opened to see the truth of the word in Rom. 3, that all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God? And has your heart been opened to receive Christ as your personal Savior, like Lydia, the seller of purple, in Acts 16:14? If your answer be an unqualified Yes, then you are not in the dangerous darkness and blinding of Satan of which verses 3 and 4 speak.

Verse 5. Christ was the apostle’s theme; he did not preach to exalt himself, but the person and work of his Savior and Lord. Paul and his companions were servants for Jesus’ sake of those who owned Him as their Savior. One cannot read much in the Epistles without being impressed by the various titles given God’s beloved Son; they are indeed many, and by prayerfully noting in what connection a title or name is used, we may learn with profit to our souls.

“Jesus,” is of course His name as Man: “... and thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins,” was the angel’s word to Joseph, Mary’s husband, in Matt. 1:21. It is only in this chapter that the Second Epistle to the Corinthians gives that name; see verses 5, 10, 11 and 14. Does it not, in each case, bring before us Himself as the God-Man who trod this earth in lowliest grace? The apostle desired to be like Him in his own path of service.

“Because it is the God who spoke that out of darkness light should shine, Who has shone in our hearts for the shining forth (or radiancy) of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” (Verse 6, N. T.)

By the example of the divine act from the first of the six days in Gen. 1, here referred to, we are shown what a work of God’s power is the causing of the light of His truth to shine into darkened human hearts. The apostle, we may suppose, was thinking too, of that unforgettable meeting on the road to Damascus of which he told King Agrippa in Acts 26:12-18. It was then that God had shone in Paul’s heart to give forth the light of the knowledge of His own glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

Salvation is indeed a work of divine power in the soul. It is not attained by human effort, but by the word of God being received. “Being born again”, as says the apostle Peter in his First Epistle, chapter 1:23,

“Not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever.”

The light of God shines into the soul as into a vessel, a lamp, that it may shine out, and this treasure, this light of the knowledge of the glory in the face of Jesus Christ, is, as we are reminded in the seventh verse, in earthen vessels, that the excellency, or surpassingness, of the power may be of God, and not from us. The vessel is as nothing, compared with the light it has, to be shining out for others that are lost to see.

In a marked degree the light shone out from Paul, the earthen vessel, and to keep him in a true sense of his dependence upon God, he must be in uncommon measure a sufferer for Christ. As another has said,

“The vessel is made nothing of, but it is sustained by another power, which is neither the treasure, nor the vessel, and so the man is dependent.”

“Everyway afflicted, but not straitened; seeing no apparent issue, but our way not entirely shut up; persecuted, but not abandoned; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying, or putting to death, of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body; for we who live are always delivered unto death on account of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh; so that death works in us, but life in you. And having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, I have believed, therefore have I spoken, we also believe, therefore also we speak; knowing that He who has raised the Lord Jesus, shall raise us also with Jesus, and shall present us with you” (Verses 8-14, N.T.).

These verses tell something of the life of the apostle Paul; no easy path was his as he toiled for his Master in the glad tidings of salvation for perishing sinners. Seeking to make Him known, he went into the darkened lands of paganism, and met there the reproach that only the name of Christ could bring upon him.

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 4:8-18

Verses 8 to 14, with which we concluded last month, may well engage our attention further. “Every way afflicted, but not straitened,” tells much in few words.

In the 10th chapter, verses 4 to 10, we learn something of Paul’s afflictions, and more in the 11Th chapter, verses 23 to 28; in verse 16 of our chapter the apostle gives us a yet deeper insight into his path when he refers to the possibility of the outward man being consumed—so near to death was he, often. Yet he could say, “but not straitened,”—not deprived in the least of his unfailing resource in God; not limited in his path of service for the Lord by the circumstances through which he was passing.

“Seeing no apparent issue, but our way not entirely shut up.” An instance of this kind was at Corinth itself, when Paul first went there (Acts 18:4-6), but no doubt there were many of them in the apostle’s life of devotion to the Lord.

Verse 9. “Persecuted but not abandoned; cast down but not destroyed.” We have an example of this in chapter l, verses 8-10, of this Epistle, where Paul was in Roman Asia (probably Ephesus), and pressed by bitter persecutors “out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life; but we had (he says) the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead, Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver.”

Verse 10. “Always bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body.”

This pattern servant did not, and would not forget what the world had done to his divine Master; he chose to be identified before it with that Master, taking His path of rejection as his own, in order that what should be seen, should be the life, not of even a devoted follower, but of Jesus. Thus the light (verse 6) that had shone in Paul’s heart was shining forth—the radiancy of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; the treasure (verse 7) being in an earthen vessel, that the surpassingness of the power might be of God, and not from the vessel.

Verse 11. “For we who live are always delivered unto death on account of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh.”

It was God’s appointment for the apostle; far removed indeed from the assumed position of many who have claimed, and are today claiming apostolic succession and worldly grandeur.

Verse 12. “So that death works in us, but life in you.”

Toiling for the One who loved him brought the apostle into the world’s scorn and rejection; into suffering and sorrow, into danger even of death; and this was in the very purposes of God for the spiritual blessing of His servant in order that through the manifestation of the life of Jesus in him, the saints should be strengthened and advance in the Christian life.

In verse 13 the reference is to Psalm 116:10. “I believe, therefore have I spoken.” The same spirit of faith filled the apostle as was in the writer of the psalm. “We also believe; therefore also we speak; knowing that He who has raised the Lord Jesus, shall raise us also with Jesus, and shall present us with you” (verse 14, JND). What a secure, what a happy portion and prospect is ours by faith! We know on the authority of God’s infallible Word that consequent upon the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, will be our raising, as it is said, with (not simply by) Jesus. Indeed here it is looked upon as one act of divine power taking in both Jesus and ourselves who believe.

Paul might well have written, “shall present you with us,” considering the low spiritual state of the Corinthians to whom he wrote, but grace led to the other form, “us with you.”

Verse 15. “For all things are for your sakes, that the grace abounding through the many may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God” (JND). All that he has been speaking of, the trials and dangers of his path, connected as we have seen with the light of the knowledge of

God’s glory in the face of His Son caused to shine into Paul’s heart that it might shine out for blessing to many,—all were for their sakes. It was not only that the apostle was delivered from death from day to day, but that God’s grace reaching out to many through his ministry should cause thanksgiving to abound.

Verses 16-18. “Wherefore we faint not; but if indeed our outward man is consumed, yet the inward is renewed day by day. For our momentary and light (literally, the momentary lightness of our) affliction works for us in surpassing measure an eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are for a time, but those that are not seen eternal” (JND).

The apostle has viewed the path of devotedness to Christ in which he was found, and in the light of the coming glory he belittles the difficulties and dangers, the loss of earthly ease and comfort, of honor that he might have gained in this passing scene; he will press on toward the goal.

Christ filled his heart; may He fill yours, dear young Christian, in equal measure!

Whither Bound?, Asleep in the Boat

Years ago at Niagara Falls, a young man, was employed as a guide. Having nothing to do one day, he moored his boat well above the falls and lay down in it to rest. Rocked on the ever-moving waters, he fell asleep. He thought he had tied the boat securely, but with its constant swaying it was finally loosened, and with its unconscious occupant, began to drift with the current. Spectators on the shore, seeing his grave danger, shouted loudly to awaken him, that he might save himself while as yet the current was not rapid, but with no effect. At one point in the boat’s progress, it was grounded upon a rock that protruded in mid-stream. Seeing the pause, the bystanders redoubled their efforts to arouse the sleeping man, crying loudly to him, “Get on the rock! Get on the rock!” But he slumbered on, oblivious to his extreme peril. With the movement of the waters, the boat was soon cleared from the rock and again heading for the Falls. The poor man was aroused from his sleep only amidst the thundering roar of the great waterfall, over which he plunged to his death. How appalling! Asleep in the boat! Calmly and unconsciously drifting into the very jaws of death!

One trembles to think of it. Yet how aptly this illustrates the indifference of souls today! — many unconcerned as to their fatal course, fast asleep in their sins, perhaps lulled on the tide by earthly pleasures; soothed into false confidence by their dependence on a blameless life or religious profession. ALL ASLEEP IN THE BOAT!

“The god of this world (Satan) hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” (2 Corinthians 4:4).

“Awake thou that sleepest.” (Ephesians 5:14). “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31).

Christian Treasury: Volume 4, Treasure in Earthen Vessels

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.
2 Cor. 4:6, 7.

In these verses we find ourselves introduced into a position where the glory of God fills our vision. In connection with that position, we find ourselves gazing upon an Object that exercises a transforming power upon us. But in the meantime we are beset with difficulties; the rich treasure we have is in an earthen vessel. We pass through a scene where there is much bitterness, disappointment, suffering, and sorrow. I suppose in a measure, everyone feels the burden of the ruined creation through which we travel.

At the same time, the Spirit of God calls our attention to the fact that all that burdens us down here has only a momentary character, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." 2 Cor. 4:17. It will soon be gone, and the very conforming power that is working in our lives now to make us more like Christ is going to have this grand and sudden climax when He appears: Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him...for we shall see Him as He is. 1 John 3:2.

Although we are traveling through a scene where we prove every day that we have this treasure in earthen vessels, and although those vessels are broken again and again that the treasure within may be discovered, yet the Spirit of God assures us that the end of the journey means perfect and full conformity to Christ.

God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts. to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. 4:6.

How rich is our endowment! He has put in our hearts the grandest and most wonderful revelation that has ever been committed to man, or ever will be for all the ages of ages.

God is speaking and He is telling us of the glorious truth that has been revealed to these poor hearts of ours. We are only poor earthen vessels—just dust, but in these vessels we have the most precious knowledge man ever possessed. We have the knowledge of the glory of God, and it is in the face of Jesus Christ.

What are we doing along the way? We are beholding the glory of the Lord. And the result is that we are being conformed into the image of that One upon whom we gaze—even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

What is the Spirit of God trying to do with us? He is changing us and conforming us to be like Christ in glory, and He is doing that in your life and mine. He knows how to order the circumstances of our lives. He knows about the treasure being in an earthen vessel; those sorrows and troubles and disappointments are all part of His plan to conform us to the image of Christ. "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." 2 Cor. 4:18. What are they? They are the things that at eternal. Everything we are losing is for time, and everything we are gaining is for eternity.

God has left you and me in this scene for one grand purpose—to manifest Christ in our lives. One of these days the wilderness will be past. All the lessons will have been learned, and suddenly we will hear the shout and find ourselves enjoying the glory about which we have been talking all these years. What a future!

We cannot get enthusiastic about things down here if we are living in that hope. We do not care about the new age, or the prosperity that is just around the corner. We have seen the glory of the Lord, and it is Christ for whom we wait. That is what gives character to our lives. Christ in glory is the transforming power that is working in your life and mine. We do not know what we are going to be, but we do know that when He appears we are going to be like Him (1 John 3:2). Can you measure that? Yet, that is our destiny, poor failing creatures that we are. I am just a poor earthen vessel, but I am going to be like Christ. I may be perfectly, wholly conformed to His image before the sun goes down tonight. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

C.H. Brown

Young Christian: Volume 31, 1941, Secret of Christian Strength, The: 2 Corinthians 4:17-18

For the ones who know the Lord, the secret of a life worthy of Him, is to have their spiritual eyes fixed upon Him. It was so in Paul’s case, and it ought to be in ours also. This alone can keep our souls steady, when we have to pass through the trials and difficulties, pains and conflicts of this present time. If we had not that, we could not continue in the path to His glory. If we would look at the things that are seen only, we would be crushed and paralyzed to act.

To be hardened is impossible, and indifference is contemptible, but to be above it all, is the precious privilege of every true Christian. It is not for weak souls, occupied with their trials, and fretting under them, that faith comes out triumphant, but it is only in looking at Christ in glory, and thus reflect some rays of His moral beauty on the scene that surrounds them, that will keep them calm, and unmoved, will renew their spiritual strength to still greater victories.

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.” Ephesians 6:10.

Young Christian: Volume 11, 1921, Things Which Are Not Seen Are Eternal, The

2 Corinthians 4:18.

“So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” Psalm 90: 12.

Christian Friend: Volume 7, Ministry of New Covenant, The

2 Cor 3:6Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. (2 Corinthians 3:6))That God has not put us under covenant need scarcely be affirmed, yet that in some way or other we get new covenant blessing will scarcely be denied. Speaking generally, any terms by which God sets man in relations of a definite character with Himself may be called a covenant. But Scripture speaks especially of three. The “everlasting,” that of the bruising of the woman’s seed, and the final overthrow of the power of evil; the “old,” which was a covenant of works, and thus conditional, which had, however, grace mingled with it, and which was ordered at Sinai; and the “new,” which is purely of grace, and thus unconditional. This last is, in Heb. 8:8, distinctly seen to be one that has to be made “with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people, and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.” But when we turn to chap. 10, we find this quotation from Jer. 31 summarized in these words: “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;” and this is distinctly constituted a part of the blessing of Christian believers. So that while it is not made with us, but with the two houses of Israel, we are participants in the blessings of this new covenant, though evidently neither put, in a forensic sense, under this nor any other.

Now, the Lord spoke of the new covenant as in His blood, and the apostle, in Heb. 13, speaks of “the blood of the everlasting covenant,” which it is clear was, as much as the other, the precious blood of Christ. The basis, and the only basis, of all unconditional blessing is thus exhibited in connection with these two covenants. God’s original promise of blessing to man through the bruised Seed of the woman, and which embraces in its scope all the blessing, of whatever kind, that has or shall come to man in all ages, and the specific blessing which shall by-and-by be enjoyed by Israel and Judah, and by that re-united nation only, are alike unconditional, and could be unconditional because alike founded on the infinite virtue and eternal efficacy of that blood concerning which the Lord said, “This is my blood of the new covenant which

is shed for many." Thus, whenever we partake of the cup, having the remission of our sins, having the sense of their forgiveness so that there is no remembrance of them any more between God and us, having His law in our inward parts, and God a known God, that cup is the pledge of these new covenant blessings, and the blood which it symbolizes is the blood of that new covenant, that blood which is the basis of God's righteousness in grace now, and in glory hereafter.

It is consequently not a little important, inasmuch as to most minds covenant and conditions go along together, and conditions imply competency to fulfill conditions, that we should clearly see that, as believers in Christ, we are not judicially set under any kind of covenant, or under conditions of a covenant character. On the other hand, it is happy for us to observe that we have the blessings which the new covenant, when established, will bring to Israel, every one of them already ours, received from Christ in glory! The apostle could fittingly speak of himself as an able or competent minister of the new covenant; for while it is not yet established, because the veil is upon Israel's heart, it is by anticipation (for all things are ours) ministered to the Church of God. And this is really the character which the gospel takes in the 4th chapter; viz., Paul's ministration of the unconditional blessing of the new covenant to the Gentiles, and which glad tidings, if hid, were hid where Satan had cast a veil of moral blindness over his votaries; but where received, was because God, who spake light out of darkness, had shone into hearts for the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Referring to chapter 3, he speaks of those to whom he wrote as Christ's epistle ministered by the apostle, the writing of the Spirit of the living God, not, as of old, upon stone tables and ordained by angels, but on the fleshy tablets of their hearts. And the apostle had confidence before God about this; for, disclaiming personal competency for such service, he avows his competency to be of God, who had made him a competent minister of the new covenant, not of letter, but of spirit. Then rising higher, with one inspired touch he marks the contrast between the two things; the letter condemns, but the Spirit giveth life-thus bringing forward the Spirit of God objectively, to whom he returns in the 17th verse, after the digression of verses 7-16, which form a parenthesis, and at which we will now look for a little.

We have here what constitutes the ministry of the new covenant as contrasted with the old. The latter, it is admitted, "began with glory" (see new translation), for it began when Moses' face shone so brightly that the children of Israel could not bear to look upon it. But this was after he had smashed the first tables in holy (may we not say judicial?) indignation, and formed the second in his character as mediator, receiving these written upon with the finger of God on the ground of redemption foreseen. Thus, when he came down this time among the people, he carried the law in his arms and the grace in his face. (Compare 2 Cor. 4:6) But the latter was a flash of glory they were unprepared for, for men in the flesh are more at ease under law than under grace. But the veil was not only necessary on their part, seeing they could not bear the glory of the mediator, but on God's part, so that they "should not fix their eyes on the end of that" which in Christ is annulled. (See verses 13, 14) The apostle then is speaking in contrast. He does not here say that the old covenant was glorious, but that the glory it was introduced with was merely temporary; and even that was too much for Israel; moreover the flash of glory it began with did not alter the fact that it was a ministry of death. The ministry of the new was that of a life-giving Spirit, and it subsists in glory, having a glory that shall never be done away. Another contrast is between the ministry of condemnation, which had a measure of glory, as we have seen, and the ministry of righteousness which abounds in glory. Thus the former covenant ministered condemnation and death, but God glorified it in grace (on account of mediatorship, and in connection with the person of the mediator) with a measure of temporary glory accompanied with a veil. But for us the new covenant is a ministration of the Spirit (His person, His gifts, His operations) and of righteousness; is crowned with immeasurable or surpassing glory; and is without a veil either upon our hearts or upon the face of the Christ who is our Mediator, and the true Moses gone into the presence of the Lord. For, be it remarked, when Moses "went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he took the veil off until he came out." (Ex. 34:34) Typical there of Christ surely, but also of our own blessed place and portion now in Him; for there is no veil upon our hearts (alas! there is upon Israel's), and there is no veil upon our faces either, any more than there is upon Christ's, when we go in before the Lord. So, also, when Israel shall turn to the Lord, there will be no longer any veil-they will find it is taken away.

There the parenthesis ends, and two things follow connected with verse 6, and which form a corollary to our subject; viz., the liberty of the Spirit which His presence, unless He be grieved and restrained, will certainly secure-a thing totally foreign to the law, which only wrought bondage; and secondly, transformation, equally unknown under that covenant. There could be no transformation in the absence of a transforming object. That object could only be a glorified Christ; the Spirit of God could present no other. Beholding whom (having the face upturned like a burnished mirror to Him upon whose face is no veil, but the glory of God, shining) His image is produced in us, such transformation from glory to glory being by the Lord the Spirit.

This, then, constitutes Paul's ministry of the new covenant, its present ministration to the Church before it is yet made; viz., that of the Holy Spirit and of divine righteousness in immeasurable and unending glory from a glorified Christ on high; liberty in the presence of the Holy Spirit, and no veil either on our hearts or on the face of Christ, beholding whom we are transformed by that same Spirit practically into His image from glory to glory! In the higher character it has to us it evidently reaches to the reproduction of a glorified Christ in His saints on the earth; that is to say, not our standing before God in glory, but the direct effect of the glory upon our state here.

May the fruit of this wonderful ministry be more and more seen in us, to His present and eternal praise.

W.R. D.

Christian Friend: Volume 2, Transforming Power of the Glory, The

What is the practical effect of "looking on the glory of the Lord with unveiled face"? (2 Cor. 3:18) Paul is here contrasting the ministration of death with the ministration of righteousness. Though the glory in the former consumed, because it only appeared with a claim on man who was unable to meet it (for righteousness was not fully established), yet Moses bore in his face marks of its transforming power. Because of man's condition, it was fearful in its bearing on him; yet, as we see in Moses, no one could be in it without partaking of its excellency. Moses' face therefore bore distinct traces of it. Israel refused even to gaze on the effects of it on Moses' face. Man, when seeking to maintain his own righteousness before God, shrinks from admiration of the transforming power of God; Israel therefore, in asking Moses to place a veil on his face, only declared the moral distance of their own hearts from God. Hence the veil is transferred to their hearts.

But now, says Paul, there is a wonderful contrast. It is now the ministration of righteousness, and that from the same glory. So was it announced (in Luke 2) when the glory of the Lord shone round about the shepherds. The Son of God was come to establish righteousness from the same glory from which had come the claim of righteousness. And therefore, if the glory had the power to produce such effects on the face of Moses, when man in his then condition could not look at it, how much more now, when it is a ministration of righteousness! Hence the “apostle declares that we, use much boldness, and, looking on the Lord with unveiled face,” are transformed according to the same image from glory to glory. It effects a moral transformation into its own likeness. Humbling though it be to admit it, any association with that which is morally superior to us must have this effect on us. If we decline to inferior associations, we deprave our better tendencies; but if we are occupied with moral superiority, we always adopt rather than improve. We adopt a new habit of action instead of only improving any existing one, and as the glory of God is unique and morally supreme, if we are conversant with it, we naturally, and almost unconsciously, adopt its characteristics and qualities, so that we are really in the process of transformation, and not merely of improvement.

I turn now to the traces of these effects, and how we may notice them. It is remarkable how differently we view the same things at different times. This may be even when we feel them most, but then we are in the spirit of our mind most above them. The same painful question occupied the mind of the Psalmist when outside the sanctuary and when inside; but it is evident that he was a totally different man as to feeling, when in one and when in the other. The light of the glory had so transformed Stephen, that he was practically superior to the violence leveled against him; but he was all the more affected for those who perpetrated it; so that I should say that the chief traces of the moral effect of the glory are a greater sensitiveness to the evil afflicting me, but a marked and sensible elevation above it.

Again, how can I distinguish “looking on the glory of the Lord” from any other spiritual exercise? If this be difficult, it is so simply because the soul is so slow to enter into the counsel of God in His grace to us, or to realize that counsel as a manifestation of His own heart, in the person of His only begotten Son, from the very center of the glory. The grace which has reached us has its origin in the glory; it belongs to it, so to speak; and it is not answered, according to its native interest, until it connects us with the glory. If I understand the origin of this grace, and how I am bound up with it, I must understand its associations. Its origin is the center of the glory; its association is the Person of the glory; and when I find myself in this association, through the grace of God manifested to me, I am “looking on the glory of the Lord.” If the light made Paul blind (as a man1), he never lost the remembrance of it in his soul; therefore, he called it “the mark.”

Girdle of Truth: Volume 1, Believers the Epistle of Christ

2 Corinthians 3:2

It is good for our souls to dwell on what it is to be an epistle of Christ, though I am sure none of us can express the greatness of the calling. Any gathering of the saints is the epistle of Christ, "to be read of men." They are His letter of recommendation to the world. The world needs to ascertain what Christ is from the lives of the saints; although they might learn it, it is true, from the word. And the great importance of this place of witness is brought out by the tacit contrast with the law, "written in tables of stone." Just as the ten commandments were the declaration of the mind of God, under the dispensation of' the law, so now the Church is the engraving of Christ, " written, not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart," to show forth the virtues of Him "who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light."

I would refer to one great thing in the life of Christ, namely, that He never, in one simple act, word, or movement of His heart, did a single thing to please Himself. " Christ pleased not himself;" and so " we ought not to please ourselves;" for " none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." Jesus said, " that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do." This was obedience flowing out of love, and manifesting love. Nothing ever moved Him from that. The temptation to move from obedience to a commandment might come in a very subtle form, with all the ardor of affection; as when. Peter said, in answer to the Lord's word about His sufferings and death, " This be far from thee, Lord." This was affectionate in Peter; but the Lord would not own. it, for that would have been to turn from the Father's commandment. And what does He answer? " Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offense unto me, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

Another thing I would remark. Not only was Jesus heavenly in His nature, but, as Son of man, He lived in heaven—as He said, " the Son of man which is in. heaven." The whole spirit of His mind, the tone of all His feelings and thoughts, was heavenly. So if there is any motive in my heart which I could not have if I were in heaven, I am not like Christ.

Again, all the grace that was in Him was brought out to meet man's sorrow and misery, and to bear on every earthly circumstance. In this we often find our failure. Even when the motive is right, the manner is wanting in graciousness. But it was never so with Christ. He was always seeking to promote the glory of God; but never did He, in manner, on any occasion, depart from the spirit of grace. We often are not close enough in our communion with God to have confidence in Him. We become impatient, and resort to means that are not of God, as Jacob did, who had not confidence enough in God to say, " He will secure the blessing." Would not God have made Isaac give the right answer? Surely He would. So we often fail by not waiting upon God, who will bring the thing to pass, most surely, though we know not how. So it was in the sorrowful case of Saul. He would not wait; yet Samuel came at the end of seven days, and Saul lost the kingdom. And those who really are the children of God always sustain loss when they depart from confidence in Him. Christ was always trusting in God, and always waiting upon Him; and so He was ever ready for every sorrow and misery; ever ready to bring out the resources of God to meet every necessity. It is touching to read the 5th chapter of Matthew. Every beatitude is a lively portrait of Christ. Who so poor in spirit as Christ? who mourned as Christ? who so meek? so hungering and thirsting after righteousness? His whole life was hungering and thirsting after righteousness. " The life was the light of men."

But, further, Jesus was the victorious man over all opposition, even though it were death itself. There is a great difference between good desires and power. The quickened soul may say, "O wretched man that I am;" but we cannot be the full epistle of Christ, unless we exhibit power over all obstacles—even over death. Death is given us. The believer, living in the power of Christ's life, has entire power over death.

Again, the Lord Jesus, amidst all His zeal, never failed in love. Strictly speaking, there is no motive in love, though there may be joy in its exercise; and this is our triumph. If I look for a motive, it is not love. Therefore love enables a man to meet all trials. Should one spit in his face, this makes no difference, for love abides; because it never draws its strength from circumstances, but rides above all circumstances.

Nothing can be presented to a saint which can separate him from the love of God. The love which he enjoys triumphs over all circumstances. If we do not show this heavenly-mindedness of the love which is of God, doing nothing from any motive but obedience, we are not a true epistle of Christ. I might be walking lowlily, but if I did not show out Christ, I should be nothing. So Christ. He gave no answer when God gave no word. And we, in passing through the world, should stand still and wait if we cannot see how we may so walk as to please God.

In the latter part of the chapter, the apostle tells us how we may be acting as the epistles of Christ-ministers, not of the letter, but of the spirit. The letter refers to the requirements of God from man, which necessarily was a ministration of death. But the gospel is the manifestation of God, not from Sinai, requiring righteousness; but from His own throne revealing the accomplishment of His own righteousness, and sending a message concerning it to draw our hearts to Himself. To those who submit themselves to this righteousness, the Holy Ghost is given on the foundation of the righteousness, and He is in them a Spirit of power. So now we can use great plainness of speech, because we are speaking of grace. We can tell men that they are wicked, wretched, and helpless. We can speak all things plainly, because we are not expecting anything from them, but telling them of God's grace to just such as they are. We can speak plainly of God, for it is of the God of all grace. Israel could not look at the reflection of the glory in the face of Moses, poor though it was; but now man can look plainly—wonderful to say—at the full glory of God, because it is now in the face of Jesus. It is this very glory that tells me of the putting away of my sin. I see the glory of God, not dimly, but as of one who put Himself in my place as a sinner, and who could not be in that glory if He had not put away all my sin; for my sin is enough to dim any glory. What a glorious thing, not only to see God visiting my soul in grace, but that, so to speak, the glory has taken the place of my sin! The transition from the cross has left nothing between them! Thus we get righteousness in our Head, and the Spirit goes with the message, so that there is power, for " where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

The soul that submits to the righteousness of God becomes the epistle of Christ, because he is looking at Christ in the glory. This cannot be while only looking at Him down here; but when the eye is fixed on the Lord Jesus in glory, we get changed into the same image. The heart living in the glory counts all things else but dross and dung in comparison. This is the real victory—when all of this world surrounds me, to say, I do count them but dross and dung. This is being like Christ. We soon learn the weakness of the flesh in this, but the faith that thus looks to Christ is the true victory. The apostle said, " I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." We sometimes say this too lightly, for we have not proved it. We may say a believer can do all things, but he could say, I can do all things through Christ, for he had proved it by deep experience and arduous conflict.

The Lord give us so to recognize the power there is in Christ, as that we may heartily walk in the strength of it—though it humble us in the dust.

Vestal Conference: 1997, 2 Corinthians 3:6-17

Reading

Nsnoise. Nsnoise. 2nd Corinthians chapter 3 and verse 6. Who also have made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit. For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death written an engraven in stones was glorious. So that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look or behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away. How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? Or if administration of condemnation be glory, much more doth administration of righteousness exceed in glory. Or even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. Or if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech, and not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished. But their hands were blinded. But excuse me, but their minds were blinded. For until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which Vale is done away in Christ.

But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory. Even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Perhaps we should mention that in Mr. Darby's translation there is a parenthesis which begins at the seventh verse and ends at the end of the 16th verse, so that you read the sixth verse. Who also has made us able ministers of New Testament, Not of the letter, but of the Spirit. For the latter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. The 17th verse. Now the Lord is that Spirit, but where the Spirit of the Lord is. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. I just mentioned this, so we get the thought. So what is, uh, begun in the seventh verse is really what took place at Mount Sinai. And also when Moses went up and received the instructions about the building of the Tabernacle. And, uh, so that, uh, the sixth verse, uh, is really carried on in the 17th, but it's necessary to consider what comes between. And that was the administration of the law. Certain sense is a little bit like the 11Th of Romans, between the 6th chapter and the 8th chapter is that, well, that is not Christian experience. It's the experience of many Christians is that they discover by looking for good in self that there's no good in I at all. Just wondered that we may pass through that experience of that struggle. And that was really the point of the law, wasn't it wasn't to minister life, but to minister death and to prove that there was no good in man. And so, as you pointed out, the law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. But it is good if a man used it lawfully. And so somebody takes up to say that they're going to keep the law. Then unless they keep all of it, then they're guilty of all of it. And so the commandment that slew Paul was. Thou shalt not covet. Imagine a person meeting a person who had never taken the Lord's name in vain, who had never lied, who never done any of those things, and yet the commandment that slew him was that thou shalt not covet. And so the law had the ministry of death with him, didn't it? Yes, it was the Ministry of Condemnation. He was seeking to correct something in the Corinthian assembly by not laying down the laws that were, but turning them to Christ. And that if they did what they did to please him, then it wouldn't be that they had to. It wouldn't be a thou shalt and thou shalt not, that's the letter, but doing it because they wanted to please the Lord. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. So we don't do things because we have to. In Christianity, the new man delights in obedience, and the Lord Jesus could say, The good pleasure of thy will, O God, is my delight. Nice to see that very commandment basketball felt salute him. You know coveting be overcame by the grace of God in the 20th after of Acts because there when he addresses the Ephesian elders, he says in verse 33 as coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel. That's the greatest global owned that will enable us to live above that, aye, overcome these things that naturally we cannot. And he was ministering the unsearchable riches of Christ. So what did all those things, their gold and silver and apparel, compared with that which he was ministering the unsearchable riches of Christ. And that's really

what sets us free. It isn't just say, well, this is wrong and that is wrong, but it's having a, a portion in Christ, seeing how richly we're blessed, living in the enjoyment of that. There's liberty, there's joy, and that's what he is bringing before them. That's what these dear Corinthian Saints needed to see.

That what he had brought before them in connection even with the judgment of sin was necessary to maintain the holiness of God. But it was that they might enjoy their portion. Because when Akan reached out and took that goodly, uh, Babylonish garment, and the wedge of gold and the silver and so on hit it in his tent, he was a loser by it, not the gainer, because he lost the, the precious enjoyment of what he could enjoy. God giving them that lamb and all the enjoyment of it, in company with the Lord who dwelt in their midst. This is another side, it seems striking that while he's pointing this out in connection with the law that I believe it's 10 times in Corinthians he writes know ye not or do you not know? And he uses the law to touch their conscience, but it's in no thought of trying to bring them under it. And I think that that's very beautiful because it shows the word of God maintains its authority over our conscience without bringing us under it. And that was the the law. Purpose of the law, remember standing the gas Bay and with a sister there, with a woman there rather. And her husband had been brought up in a Christian home and there were some other Sarah and she was going on about keeping the law that you needed to keep the law to, uh, to, umm, be saved, to not eat pork and keep the Sabbath and so on. And her brother-in-law warned me that, you know, you won't get a word in edgewise. And she went on and she kind of turned in and asked, gave a opportunity for a word and. Said a law is good if a man used it lawfully. And I said I'm going to use it lawfully and I quoted a verse to her about what she was wearing. That she made herself an abomination to the Lord. And she sat down quietly and she listened. And there was a bit of opportunity then. And I, I was kind of upset with myself afterwards. But the woman really softened in her conscience because I believe it needed to be touched that she, she was approaching God on the basis of the law, but she wasn't keeping all of it. And therefore she was really destroying the law's authority by that in that way, because it wasn't meant to bring life. I remember hearing story about two men. One was saying that Christians should be under law. He was insisting, well, doesn't the law say thou shalt not steal and Christians shouldn't steal and so on. And they were walking along and they came to a place where they're going to go into a store. And so this brother who had been saying we're not under law, he took this other brother by the coat and he said, now listen, don't you steal anything while we're in that store. The law says thou shalt not steal. And he said, what kind of a man do you think I am? Well, he said, I'm just telling you what the law says. Thou shalt not steal. Well, they went into the store and neither one of them stole. But why? Not because the law said thou shalt not steal, but because they sought to honor the Lord Jesus and live a life that's pleasing to him, and it wouldn't be pleasing to him to steal. So we're not under law, but we're under grace. But the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in US who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, so that we're really not under law. But the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in US, not the letter of the law, because there are many things in the letter of the law. Which only had to do with God's earthly people. Another case, why we're in a place in this man was trying to show to me that we should be under law. And so I said to him, uh, does the law have anything to say to people that are lying out in the cemetery? Oh no, he said, they're dead. And I said, well, I read in my Bible that we're dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we should be married to another, even to him that is risen from the dead. So I said, I, I've Rhode Island died out of that position where the law has something to say to me, but I'm alive to another. And now you and I have a new life that delights in pleasing God. And so the Lord could say his commandments are not grievous, because whatever he requires us to do, the Newman delights in doing. And to myself, brethren, the his sayings and his words and his commandments are all the same. But that is, if you want to please a person, you don't say, are you commanding me not to do it? Or are you asking me not to do it? If you really want to please the person by. Isn't a question whether it's a saying or a word or a command. It's a question of pleasing that person, and when you find out what pleases them, if you really want to please them, you do that thing. And so if you love me, keep my commandments. If there's really a response of love in our hearts, then we do what pleases to the Lord, the Lord, and not because it's a command, but it becomes a command to our hearts if love is operative within our hearts.

His brother Gordon and Steph mentioned the commandments and sayings and I was just thinking of a saying of. Uh, David in Second Samuel chapter 3 rather 23, Second Samuel 23. And David, long and sad. All that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate. Three mighty men breakthrough the hosts of the fellow signs, and through water out of the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and took it. And brought it to David. Nevertheless, he would not drink thereof. But forward it out on to the Lord. That's the response, Edmond. The Lord changed to the Lord's commandment. As should be responsible hearts too. In reading this portion, I think it's well to know that. Moses went up onto the mount twice. He went up into the mount and God gave him those 10 commandments written in tables of stone. And Moses came down after 40 days, and the people were already worshipping the golden calf, breaking the first commandment. Thou shalt not have, no, thou shalt have no other gods before me. And so he broke the tables of stone in the foot of the mound. And actually. The law never actually came in among them, because if they had been placed under pure law, it would have been pure condemnation because they had broken the first commandment. So he blows up, and he said, per adventure, I'll make an atonement for you. Well, he couldn't do it, but there was a, shall I say, a pattern established, and God gave him instructions in connection with the building of the Tabernacle of the ark, the blood sprinkled on the mercy seat and the sacrifices and so on. A little picture of how God could go on with the guilty people without changing His requirements one bit. And so he said to Moses, write tables of stone, exactly the same commandments as were made before. Don't change them at all. God doesn't lower his standard because of Christianity. His Holiness is unchanging. And so He got those tables of stone the second time, the very same commandments that were there before, but they were put inside the ark. And on top of the ark was the mercy seat. And there the cherubim, Speaking of the righteousness of God in His governmental ways, looked down upon the blood that was sprinkled on the mercy seat and could go on with the guilty people without changing His requirements. And they were replaced. His face didn't shine the first time he came down because if the people had been under pure law, it would have been judgment. God said, let me alone. I'll have to destroy them in a moment. But God made a provision. He could go on. A wonderful picture of what God has done through the work of His beloved Son. He had made him to be sin for us who knew no sin. That we might be made the righteousness of God in him or again as we have it in Hebrews chapter 10 by 1 offering a perfected forever them that are sanctified so God could go on. So he makes a comparison. He says that little second picture that when Moses came down and that was the time that his face shone is just a little picture of something far more glorious. The work of Christ that he accomplished in the place of blessing that were brought into. Consequent upon the work that he's accomplished and the value of his precious blood. What's wrong with his face was not intrinsic, it was reflective.

But when the Lord went on the mountain of Transfiguration, his face shown as the sun, and says his, uh, his raiment, the king shining and feeding white as snow, it was effulgent. It was actually that which uh. Shawn's on the bench out, you know. But it's intrinsic. But in the case of the Lord, but with Moses it was not so I noticed the new translation. It says here that, uh, into the seventh verse administration of death written and engraved in stones began in glory because it was introduced before it was the law was wholly just good, you know, but and that honor today is a moral code of ethics, don't they? But. Although it had that glory, yet it has no glory in respect to that glory with excellence.

For instance, you may take a beautiful clear night and see the moon full moon shining. But when the sun comes out, like, uh, you don't even see the moon anymore. The moon is still there, but you are excelling. Lord of the sun eclipses the moon, doesn't it? And that's what happens when we have the, the glory of the, uh, what the Lord brings to us. It eclipses everything that you had in the Old Testament. We have in our checks for the Word glory and in various ways important, glorious. I'd like to pass on with our brother Clarence Londin used to say the glory is excellence in display. In connection with what you've been saying too, Brother Reuben, I wonder if you'd return to the Exodus Chapter 33. And I think we see what you say being brought out there. 17 And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also, that thou hast spoken, for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious, to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy, on whom I will show mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see my face, and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock. It shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a Cliff of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by, and I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen. This is in contrast with what we have in Christianity, all the glory of God shining out in the face of Jesus Christ. But when Moses asked, Show me thy glory, then the Lord proclaims his name. Grace is showing mercy to whom he will, but that wasn't seen in the Old Testament. That was not until redemption was accomplished that the glory of God shines out in the face of Jesus Christ. If you notice in Second Corinthians the next chapter, chapter 4. Says here. In verse 6. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. In the face of Jesus Christ now, there's no veil between. In the Old Testament we saw his back parts, as it were. There was a partial revelation so wonderful that it caused Moses face to shine. But we with open or unveiled face can behold this, because it now shines out in all its glory and fullness in Christ that blessed One who has accomplished that work. And as you say, ours is only a reflected 1. All the glory is in Himself. But it should reflect in us. It did in Moses, in the measure in which he saw it. And when we think of the revelation God has given of Himself in Christianity, it surely ought to make our faces shine as we reflect something of it. And got connection with the gospel message. Gordon, I was just going back to verse four in Second Corinthians 4IN whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glory of the Gospel of the Christ, the glory of Christ, should shine unto them. So we see how, how fast, how far great greater the glory was. That shone in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a vast difference. We find it's brought out here, the gospel of the glory of the Christ.

It's interesting too that in that 4th chapter, God of this world blinds the minds of them that believe not, but the truth commands itself to the conscience, and the truth reaches the heart. You always find in false religion there's a great deal for the mind, but in the truth of God there is something for the conscience and for the heart. And that is, Christianity speaks to our consciences. We first see how vile and wretched and wicked we are in ourselves, But we see how God, through that work of Calvary, has taken up that whole question of sin and settled it, so that our conscience is cleared before God. We have a conscience now that we can say that if it is God that justifies, who is he that condemneth? And then we have a portion for our hearts too, because He fills our. Our hearts and so it goes on to say that, uh, this, uh, the six words God who commanded the light to shine on darkness has shined in our hearts so that we have a, we have a conscience all at ease and the heart finding its joy and satisfaction in Christ. But you'll always notice with false religion, they have a lot for the mind. You never had somebody with false religion come to you and speak to your conscience and heart. You'll always start by talking to your mind. That verse to you brought to our attention Charles in 2nd Corinthians 4 verse 4. Return over to the 53rd of Isaiah, Isaiah 53, and hold that place and turn over to the Song of Solomon, chapter 5. Isaiah 53. Verse two, it says, umm, in the middle of the verse. He hath no form nor comeliness. And when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. Then if we read in the Song of Solomon, chapter 5, the last verse, his mouth is most sweet. Yeah, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend. The verse that you brought before, there's a connecting link between that verse and Isaiah and the verse in the Song of Solomon. Before we were saved, there was nothing in the Lord Jesus to attract us. And because the God of this world had blinded our minds, blinded the eyes of our hearts. But after we accepted the Lord, we were able to say, his mouth is most sweet. Yeah, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved and this is my friend. Languages express, uh, is given to express thoughts, isn't it? And God's word expresses these things to us. And I was thinking about this, the, the, the tape when Moses was called up to the mount and reading in the, uh, book of Hebrews, it was a terrible sight. We don't, we never will never realize what what a glorious and terrible thing is, what it came from. Glorious has been pointed out, but. They said the Moses said he exceedingly fear and quake. We, we've, uh, we've never stood in a position like that, umm, because we reject the mercy of God. But here were those that stood at the foot of that mount and everything shook and quaked and they were fearful. I've never been in a position like that to see the fear of that, although sin comes in and gives me that fear. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom or knowledge. And so how beautiful then to think that He brings before us here the glory of the person of the Christ. How much more glorious this is. And sometimes God has the Thunder in our lives too, to give us to see something of the glories of the person of Christ. And God is able to do that. So I think it's so beautiful to think that here is brought before us the exceeding greatness of the glory of the Christ that exceeds everything that ever took place before. And who is it we're going to see? Who is it we're going to be with? Christ and glory, Christ in glory. This is what we're looking forward to. We're going to see that blessed one, no judgment has passed.

We're gonna be in his favor and in his love for ages of ages. I think of the apostle John. Along his nearness and love of the Lord. When he had that vision in Revelation One, he fell on his face like a dead man. But he's the very one who says. We shall see him as he is, and I'm sure it's not until he's completely taken away our old man, he said. Nature. Then we won't be afraid to look upon God. The Lord appeared there in the character of a judge, didn't they, in that first chapter of Revelation, walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks? A very solemn thing when we think of it. And that's why, when, if the Lord were to come in here and take the character of a judge, why we might feel the same falling on our faces? But isn't it lovely? Put his hand on him and said, fear not, I am the 1St and the last. I am he that liveth and has become dead, and I am alive forevermore. So he dispelled his fears in that way we'll never have to do with God as a judge. Thank God. We know God revealed in Christ. We know his love so fully made known. And then there's a little contrast here in the 13th verse, it says the children of Israel could not steadfastly. But then in the uh, it says here in the end of the 15th verse, even under this day when Moses is read, it doesn't say they could not. But the veil is not upon the face of Moses, but the veil is upon their hearts. Notice that they couldn't. And that's why the Lord said to Moses, My face shall not be seen. He was not fully revealed in the Old Testament. There was a partial revelation, and the children of Israel couldn't even see that partial revelation. And Moses put a veil over his face. They couldn't look at it. But now, if there's any veil, rather than if you and I don't see what a wonderful place we have been brought into consequent upon the work of Christ, if we don't see the blessing that flows out as a result of that glorious work the Lord accomplished, the hindrance is not on God's part. The veil is on our hearts. The trouble is with ourselves, and very often, isn't it true? The veil is upon our hearts. We allow other things to come in. That hindrance, like when we allow something to come into our lives that hinders us from being occupied with Christ and seeing our portion in Him. And we are the losers. But it's our problem. It's because we've allowed something. God has been fully revealed. He's fully made known. All

that's in His heart has come out. There's nothing more to be revealed. It's been revealed and it shines out in the face of Jesus Christ. No, we have an ex uh, Deuteronomy 2929 where it says the secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children. Did that not refer to the secrets of grace? And, and, but now, uh, this unrevealed secrets, uh, at that time is now been revealed with God has come out to us in grace and he's made known to us as purposes, hasn't it? You could finish that verse, Brother Reuben. It says that we may do all the words of this law. So if you said to an Israelite, well, why are you making the Tabernacle exactly that way? Why is it so precise that it has to be exactly that way? Why does that animal have to be caught in a certain way and offered in a certain way? He would have to say, well, I don't know. I just know God has said that's the way it's to be done and it's my part to be obedient. So they were to do those things even though they didn't know why they were doing them. But now it's no longer so because God has made himself known. And you say to a person, well, why have, why did you get that baptized? He explains to you now, well, that's a figure of the death of Christ and I want to be identified with him. I died out of an old position. I've been brought into a new and in baptisms, a figure of that. What does that loaf mean on the table? Oh, that's a figure out first of the one body of Christ composed of all believers and of the Lord Jesus body given in death so that that's why in Romans chapter 12 it says what we carry on is an intelligent service. We know, but an Israelite was to do a lot of things in connection with the instructions that God gave in the Jewish ceremonies that he didn't know why.

But in Christianity, God explains to us and he says, I'm going to tell you why. It's going to be an intelligent service. Isn't that very blessed? It's so wonderful. Now that God has come out and all that he is, the glory of God shines out in the face of Jesus Christ. And he says what you do, whether it's baptism, whether it's the Lord's Supper, whether it's your service that you're performing, you're not just repeating words. It's something that out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. We have something a little of that in the, uh, 64th of Isaiah, in the second chapter of the first epistle. It's quoted here in Isaiah 64 and four. For since the beginning of the world men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eyes seen, O God beside thee, what He hath prepared for them that waiteth for Him. He turned to 1St Corinthians chapter 2. Verse 9. But as it is written, I have not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them, that not wait for him, but love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, yeah, the deep things of God. So the children of Israel waited, and there was a picture and all those details of the Tabernacle. They weren't revealed to them, but they are revealed to us in Christianity. So man asked me, he said, why? Why is it at the church I go that the, uh, that the loaf is all broken up into little cubes. I said that's a good question because in First Corinthians 10, as you were pointing out, there's one loaf on the table that speaks of the one body so that you're gathered on that ground. You just sort of hung his head. He didn't have an answer. Answers another question that people raise and why do we use 11 loaf well it tells us you know if you turn back to the 23rd of leviticus maybe it's good to turn to that because 23rd chapter of Leviticus and the. 15th verse. And you shall count unto you from the Morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that she brought the sheaf of the wave offering. Seven Sabbath shall be complete even tomorrow after the 7th Sabbath shall enumerate 50 days. That's what Pentecost means. 50 He shall #50 days, and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord. He shall bring out of your habitation two wave loaves of two tents deals. They shall be of fine flour, they shall be bacon with leaven. They are the first fruits unto the Lord. So on the day of Pentecost they would bring forth two wave loads, be bacon with leaven. We know that that's little picture of Jew and Gentile made one in Christ, the two wave loaves. But you say why about why does it say that? Well, if I couldn't come into the Lord's presence with the old nature within, I couldn't come at all. But it it should be bacon. It should be in the place of death because our old man was crucified with him. It came to its end. And I acknowledge that. And the first man, the old man has no place now in Christianity at all under the lawman was tested, but he was in himself was tested. But as I come into the Lord's presence now consequent upon the glorious work that Christ has accomplished rather than he's not only put away my sins. But he put an end to my old position. My old man was crucified with him. And so I sit there, and you and Gentile are brought together, one in Christ. And so at the Lord's table, where the loaf is a symbol of that one body by those who are sitting there, they still have the old nature within. But I trust we have all learned that it has no place now in the things of God. It came to its end. It's to be in the place of death. When we break bread, then we remember what it cost the Lord to bring us into that position. And it becomes a symbol to us of his precious body given in death for us thought the Lord's table proceeds the Lord's Supper in First Corinthians 10, the Lord's Supper in First Corinthians 11. I just mentioned these things because if we want to see the truth of God. Many of these things that are like secret things that people don't understand, they're revealed to us by the Spirit. And if we lay hold of what Christianity is.

And that it's not a no a patch on the old thing, it's new wine put into new bottles. It's not a patch on the old garment. It's a new thing all together. And we have life abundantly. I'm glad you mentioned that because he went on to ask me. He said, well, let my father in law's church, they have an unleavened bread. Why do they do that? Well, it's they really don't see the truth of what you're explaining. It's coming back again to. Uh, Reuben's reference to, uh, Deuteronomy 29, I don't want to get away from the chapter here, but it's very, very interesting. They put, uh, very, very in a precise way, I think in that 29th verse, the secret things belong unto the Lord our God. The secret things, these are the things that God would do. If his people would be obedient, as it says. But those things which are revealed belong unto us and our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law. So we see what Israel ought to have done. We see what God has, what the revelation, but with us has already been said. Those secret things now have been revealed. What a difference we we have here, don't we? The secret things of God is some of the precious truth that we know is gathered to His precious name, and the principle on which we meet, and the way in which we go ahead with the re remembrance of the Lord. Those are things that have been revealed. To us. And so it says, that we may do these things, not the words of the law here, but do on the principles of the truth of God, according to the day of grace. A little bit about the. Being glorious and the spirit being more glorious is that I think even a child understands that would they leave their bicycle unlocked at school, they're going to get it stolen. But you Can you imagine in the Millennium when the time is going to be that the wicked are going to be removed every day? People aren't going to need to have locks in their houses and policemen and security systems because the wicked are going to be dealt with. But it's a more glorious thing today as the child goes about and he has an opportunity to steal and he says, no, I'm not going to do that because I want to please the Lord. Not because there's a policeman watching him, but because he desires to please the Lord. And not out of feigned obedience, because he's going to be removed if he does something wicked, but because what desire to please the Lord? That's a more glorious thing. Because there are going to be those that are going to live all through the Millennium and, uh, it's going to be a wonderful earth to think that, you know, there's going to be no outward sin. Can you imagine living in such a world? And yet men are going to feign obedience. It's interesting that when they rise up in rebellion, they're going to come from the four corners of the earth. They're going to come from the farthest place away from the divine center to rebel against the Lord. They want to be as far away from the Lord as possible. They're going to feign obedience. And if they don't come up and worship, pay homage to the Lord, it's not they're going to go on in this way, in an outward way, and it's going to be a wonderful earth and the the trees are even going to clap their hands and the hills are going to shout for joy. The, the, the dogs are gonna be the cats. They're gonna, I don't wanna just speak flippantly, but it's gonna be a wonderful thing even for the animals that the Millennium when the knowledge of God, the law of God covers the earth as the waters cover the

sea. But what a more glorious thing that we should walk through a corrupt earth and live to please the Lord. Because at the end of the Millennium they are going to rise up and and say again, just in spirit, not this man. Terrible thing to show the wretchedness of man's heart. Written note too, that the Millennium will not be a perfect state. Uh, I just, uh, don't need to turn to them. But I was noticing a couple of verses and when you were speaking that, uh, in Psalm 99 and also in, uh, umm, are some, uh, 101 and also 125. I will early destroy all the wicked of the land.

That I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord. And then over in the 125th Psalm he says, umm. Verse 3 For the For the rod of the wicked shall not. Rest upon a lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands into iniquity. So God is going to remove it all, isn't he? So there will be, there will be sin, but God removes it each day. But when it comes to the eternal state, then that's imperfection. But we, as you say that now we have these things have been revealed to us. Let's, let's, let's go on with what has been revealed and not seek to. Delve into something that hasn't been revealed. I think that's a good a good practice to make. Sometimes people come to the Word of God with their views, which we know is being done in Christendom. Don't come to the Word of God with your views. Come to the Word of God and get his views. Then we'll be straight. We'll be clear. It's been sad that the new is in the old contained the old the new, the old is in the new explained. And so everything that we find revealed in the New Testament we can find in picture in the Old Testament. Sometimes that would be just like if you bought a 1997 model of a car and you had an old one, you'll say 50 years old and you found a little secret thing in this old car 50 years ago. And a little picture of what it was going to be in 1997, you say, did they know in 1990, in 1947 that it was going to look like this? The model is going to come out. I always say, isn't that amazing that they knew that we find the picture of all that God has brought out now? In the Old Testament and there it is contained the picture. When Joseph was rejected by his brethren, he marries a Gentile bride. And over and over we find the pictures in the Old Testament of what is now revealed in the New Testament. And I just like to encourage even the young people to read the old. Even if you don't understand it right away, have it stored in your mind. And then when the time comes, the Spirit of God will bring your those things to your remembrance. That's what the Lord was saying to the disciples. He said, he said that the whole when he, the spirit of truth, he's come, he'll lead you into all truth for he would bring to their remembrance the things that he had said to them. And so I, I just want to encourage the young people to read the Old Testament scriptures. And then sometime later on, the Spirit of God will shed light on it, help you to see that it was just a picture of something that he is going to do later. And it's contained in picture form in the Old Testament. Oh, when we get to see this, then we appreciate the Bible far, far more. It's a wonderful book, complete in itself, showing us the mind and will of God fully made known. It took 1500 years of animal sacrifices. Before God was willing to explain that the Lamb of God was a perfect human being, didn't that right? 1500 years before he explained it and then almost to a man they rejected it out of hand and shows you how they they can real condition of the human heart. Only a remnant taught by the Holy Spirit. That's why it speaks of the administration of the Spirit. Only those who are taught by the by God will accept it. Even today, after 2000 years of of a, you know, an honest gospel preaching. Still being rejected. One other person what connection with what you were saying Gordon in First Corinthians 10 and verse 6? Now these things were are examples to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. I was just thinking that we see pipes in the Old Testament of the Lamb, for instance, as you were mentioning and the details of the Tabernacle. But also there were experiences that they passed through that are recorded in the Old Testament stories that are instructive because they will help us when we meet similar situations. We may look at a situation and talk about a situation today.

And we're never going to come exactly as to God's judgment as to what that situation is. But when you look in the Old Testament, you have God's exact recorded, divine inspired account of the facts. And often it's repeated that He gives you not only the facts, but what His purpose in allowing that situation was in the Book of Chronicles to get His purpose. Now we may discuss something and see things from a different angle and so on, and we're only going to see it with human eyes. But when we look at these stories in the Old Testament. And also we may repeat facts, and in a way that will be defiling, but when you take up the Word of God, he repeats exactly the details in this situation in an undefiling way, and then he gives his judgment as to what those facts were. And so it helps us as we meet the situations of life, not just, I shouldn't say, not just that's also wonderful, these shadows that we have of, uh, things that, uh, have to do with Christianity, as you showed in the loaf and so on, but also in the experiences of life that they passed through. Corinthians 13 and 12, Paul speaks of seeing things through a glass darkly says first. 1312 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. I was thinking here, I was thinking about this verse. There's been so much been revealed to us with the Old Testament now. That we wouldn't have known before the Lords. And then we see how the Old Testament. Pictures of the New Testament, but there's still things we've discussed that we don't see clearly. But when the Lord we're before the Lord, we see him face to face. Everything will be made known to us. You see that Paul here, uh well, the greatest apostles gave us so much truth. But even he says. Umm, I shall know, umm, but then so I know even as also I am known. I think it's good to not to miss a little expression here. I don't know how Mr. Darby renders this in verse. Umm, verse 9. For if administration of condemnation be glory much more, I call attention to that little expression. I don't know how Mr. Garvey renders that much more. Does the administration of righteousness exceed in glory? Then he goes, I just go on downtown after verse 12 or 11. For if that which was done away was glorious, much more that which is which remains. Remaineth is glorious and so on. We could follow that little expression out. We find it also in the throughout the book of Hebrews. Why? Because it brings before us the glory of the person of Christ above everything else. Everything else is set aside much more, much more, much more. What we can see then why he? Why the expression is given here. It says umm umm. Verse 10. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of. The glory that excelleth much more. Much more. When I think of that little expression, I think of Christ, the Lord Jesus, the one who has given me much more than even Moses had, or, or Abraham or or any of the Old Testament Saints. Why? Because we not only have the Word of God, we have a living Savior on on high in the glory, and we have the Spirit of God in our hearts much more than what Abraham or Isaac or any of them ever had. In our chapter in verse nine is much, rather, much rather. Yeah, Mm-hmm. Verse nine we often contrast law and grace, but in verse 9, the law of the ministry of condemnation is contrasted with the ministry of righteousness. Why is that? Well, the holiness of God's person wasn't fully revealed in the Old Testament, but all His claims in holiness and righteousness have been fully made known. Because nothing less than the infinite sacrifice of the Lord Jesus could satisfy God's holy claims. It wasn't possible that the blood of bulls and of goats would put away sin. They were accepted to make an atonement. The word atonement means to cover. They were accepted for the time being.

But how much more everything now that God has made known in Christianity all God's claims, He hasn't lowered his His Holiness or his righteousness. He has found a way by which all his righteous claims could be fully met and satisfied. And they have been through the work that Christ has done. So we read, yet made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. But the law was really a ministry of condemnation. Because it pronounced judgment on anyone that couldn't keep it. Remember when the Lord Jesus was going to leave this scene? In the 16th chapter of John's Gospel we find him saying this. If I depart, I will send Him unto you. That is

the Holy Spirit, And when He has come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Then then He qualifies it by saying of sin, because they believe not on me. That was their own hearts of unbelief, now of righteousness. Because I go to the Father who is my righteousness. Where is my It's at God's right hand. Christ is my righteousness. So we see the beautiful truth of that here, don't we? Again, it points us to one person, the Person of Christ. As it says of righteousness, because I go to my father and you see me no more. That is, they weren't not going to see him, but we're going to see him when he comes back. Isn't it what we have in Romans 322? The righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all, the belief being justified freely by His grace? And God has sent forth appropriation with faith in His blood to declare His righteousness. We are made righteous to faith in this place. We won't have a better standing even when we get home to glory than we have right now, because we are before God in Christ. What a marvelous place we have been brought into. Perhaps you could pass on here. The veil is going to be taken away. What a wonderful day it will be for Israel when they say they look on the one whom they Pierce and they're brought into blessing and. It says their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. It'll be a wonderful day of blessing for that nation. But going on to the 17th verse as we mentioned before, if you read the verse. Six, I read it again. Who? Who also has made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit. For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. Now the Lord is that Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. And I think this is so beautiful that any true Christian really walking in the enjoyment of the Lord's love, knowing his standing in Christ will not counted ******* to do something to please the Lord. He'll say, that's what I want to do. I'm doing it because I want to do it. Where the Spirit of the Lord is. There is liberty, so we're not under law, we're under grace. God has met us in grace. And now how wonderful. And I that applies in our personal lives. I believe, brethren, it also applies in the assembly where the Spirit of God is given liberty by how He delights to take the things of Christ and show them unto us. We just give the Spirit liberty very often ourselves and the flesh in US stands in the way of blessing. We get occupied with ourselves, we say things that have to do with ourselves, but where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty and how blessed to meet as as believers, giving the Spirit of God His way in the meeting so that he may lead whomsoever He will give out to him to pray, to minister to our hearts. I think it's so precious what is brought before us here. Someone asked her brother a question. What is he? What uh, what he thought was the greatest evil in Christendom today, And his very brief reply was denying the power and presence of the Holy Spirit of God. A good deal of Christendom. They don't go any farther than the truth that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. Most believers would recognize that that when you were saved, the Spirit of God comes and indwells your body.

But they do not seem to see that the Spirit of God dwells in the house. On the day of Pentecost He came he individually and dwelled every believer there, but He also filled the whole house where they were sitting. And it tells us in Ephesians we are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. And that was really what gave cause to the restoration of the truth, perhaps over a century ago. Was the recovery of that truth that not only does the Spirit of God indwell believers, but the Spirit of God dwells in the house and it hadn't been recognized. Men build up systems where they recognize that individuals had the Spirit of God, but everything was arranged by some human order to carry on the worship, the service, everything, and not giving the Spirit of God who dwells in the house liberty to act, but how? Blessed that He really does, if we give him His place collectively, recognizing Him as the one who leads out in praises and worship and in ministry for the glory of God and for the blessing of the Saints. Maybe we could sing that hymn 1 Spirit with the Lord. 210. Minutes. Ago so you need to have a barrier. Nsnoise. Nsnoise.

Vestal Conference: 1997, 2 Corinthians 3:1-6

Reading

And then we don't buy anything. Else by the end of the crawl. And it's crying for a while. Everything's hard and blah blah blah. Nsnoise. How how is it? So it's very interesting about. Chapter 3, verse one. Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or need we, as some others, the pistols of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Err epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men? For as much as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God. Word not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is God. Who also have made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit? For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. But if the administration of death, written in an engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away, how shall not the administration of the Spirit be rather glorious? Or if the ministration of the condemnation be glory, much more doth administration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect by reason of the glory that excelled. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech. And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished, but their minds were blinded. For until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart nevertheless.

When it shall be, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. I think it's always good to notice the setting of the truth in the Scripture when we think of the burden that was on Paul's heart in connection with those in Corinth and how he had to write to them things that must have grieved them of carnality and the need for discipline and all this. And yet when we come to the second epistle, how he seeks to turn their hearts and occupy them with Christ. And may Christ the object before their souls. It is true we have to take notice of those things that are often a hindrance to our growth, whether individually or even collectively in the assembly. But the great object of our hearts should always be to have a person before us. And I think this is very preciously brought before us in this particular chapter, and in this epistle, as I say, the second epistle when. He writes to them, He seeks to encourage them. In the 5th chapter. 2 The love of Christ constraineth us, that we should not live unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again. And we do all need to have that fresh glimpse of the Lord Jesus. As we have in the end of the chapter with open face, beholding the Lord. And then two, we need to have the Saints of God upon our hearts. He said ye are in our hearts. Known and read of all men. The high priest in Israel had the names of the children of Israel carried on his shoulders and upon his heart. And if we have a heart for the people of God, we also have them upon our hearts, seeking their good and their blessing as well as God's glory in connection with their lives. If I just mentioned this because I think this is beautifully brought out to us in this third chapter of Second Corinthians.

Someone has put it, they said that the first epistle is like God in righteousness. Whereas in the second epistle we see God in his love, in this, in the blessed truth of restoration for the one who had to be put away. There's a beautiful thought in the last verse of the first chapter. 2 not that we have dominion over your faith, but our helpers of your joy. For by faith he stands. So he didn't take the place of having dominion over their faith. Or should we? But uh, we should be helpers of their joy and, uh, character of God is light and love. We bear those things in mind, realize that God is light. You can't have sin in His presence. By the glorious work of Calvary, He has taken up the question of sin and it has been settled that we might know the love that is in his heart. They often sing justice had withstood the purposes of love, but I believe it's true also in a practical way in our own lives that their hindrance to our joy and what is it maybe things allowed in our lives that are hindering us from hindering into what's in the heart of God because God is a holy God as well as a loving God. God is light and God is love. After his. Rebukes in the first Epistle So beautiful to see his confidence in his brethren in the Corinthians. As he says here, do we begin again to commend ourselves, or need we as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistles.

Nice thought to be, uh, if we can go on in such a manner as that others can see something of Christ in us as an epistle. Uh, and we, we find that there are those that are not reading the word of God very much. So it's good if we who read the word of God manifest that spirit and that they can see Christ in our whole life and attitudes. And I think it's very beautiful to think of that ye are our epistle. I asked myself this question. What kind of an epistle am I before others? Searches our hearts, doesn't it? It is a certain situation to teach us truth, doesn't he? And here it seems that they were those in Corinth. There were some that didn't like Paul's faithfulness in connection with what he brought before them in the first epistle. And he said, do we need a letter of commendation? But God uses that to show that a letter of commendation is necessary if one is not known, because holiness becomes God's house. And when one comes who is not known, we need to be careful. There's a great deal of teaching and Christendom that we're only responsible for our own conduct, but we're also responsible for our associations. I've sometimes said, if I told I told you I was a member of a Co communist society, but I didn't believe in communism, you would say, well, why would you be a member of that if you're if you don't believe in communism? How the world recognizes that associations mean something and they do in the things of God too. And truth and error can't be mixed together. So letters of commendation are simply a means by which we're careful as to who is received because it's not our table, it's the Lord's table. I was in a certain place and the brother had asked for his place at the Lord's table. But the brother knew that he was associated with a group where there was evil doctrine. And uh, they said to him, well, are you aware that they are associated with a group where they hold evil doctrine? And he said, don't ask me what the group believe. Ask me what I believe myself. He didn't seem to realize that association with evil defiles. And the scripture is very clear. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. I suppose a letter of commendation. Without it being put in words, points out that, uh, we are one. And in Christ Jesus. We have the same hopes and the same aims. We hold and we teach the same doctrines and, uh. There's a oneness. In between the person who brings the letters and those who read it, you know, it's a in a, in a in a business, a man goes from one city to another and he's introduced, but it's a formal cold thing. A letter of commendation mentions the love of Christ often times and mentions that God is our father. We're all part of that family. So the letter of commendation opens up. The situation when a when a person goes from one assembly to another and they have never been there before. I feel that. There are things in the letter of commendation that are not put into words, but that the very spirit of the letter. Tells us many things. It's based on the Word of God, for one thing. Lovely to see the way it's worded there. Verse two, ye are our epistle written in our hearts. Oh, that's different. It's not on paper there, is it? Not as it says. Written not with ink, you know, something written with ink can be eradicated or destroyed, but if it's written in the heart, just referring back, you don't need to turn to it. But over in John's first the epistle or the Gospel of John in chapter 13. We have a lovely little sock there that I've enjoyed. Uh, he says in verse 33, little children, yet a little while I'm with you. But he's not he's he was going to leave them. He shall ask you shall seek me. And as I said unto you, whither I go, you cannot come. So now I say to you, he's talking now to his own a new commandment. I give unto you that you love one another.

As I have loved you. There's your real test. What is this I say to you I love you well, do I mean it is it in my heart? It was in the heart of the Lord Jesus as I have loved you, uh, that you love one another as I have loved you that he also loved one another. But then he furthers that by saying by this shall all know that ye are my disciples. That's how they're going to know whether truth where a true disciple of the Lord because of the manifested love that the heart of God that God put has put into our hearts. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have loved one for another. That little word if always comes in in connection with our responsibilities to show us that. There are the ifs in our lives, there are no ifs with God. But there are many ifs with us, and we need to be reminded of that. A letter of commendation isn't just a cold formality, as you're saying, it's the expression of love. It's a, it's not just saying, well, this brother is faithful and so on, but it's, it's an expression of love. And, uh, the world notices that. That's why it says in the second verse here, our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men. And, uh, when is a business meeting? People come together and they discuss common interests, But there ought to be a testimony, brethren, when we come together, and I believe there is. There's a real love that exists among the people of God. A letter of commendation is an expression of faithfulness as to who is received. But there is also that bond of love that is expressed by it, and the world looks on. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have loved one to another, and remember what? Abraham said to Lot when there was a disagreement about the. Possession of the land and so on, he said. He said there shouldn't be any strife among us. We're brethren, he said. And he gave the first choice to his, uh, nephew Lot. Rather than continue the strike, he said, will you go ahead? You make the first choice. He'd rather settle it, giving up his own rights that that love might be maintained. In the Epistle to Philemon, like a letter of commendation for an SMS by the apostle Paul. Very lovely written, isn't it? Brings out the heart of the amount of your uh, by leaving, as well as an estimate and all that transpired during the interim. The mouth reveals what is in our heart, doesn't it? I'd look at Matthew 12 and 34, the last part of the verse, For out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh. Our mouth reveals what is in our heart, doesn't it? So with our brethren, we speak of love. That's what's in our heart for our brethren, that love. Words by themselves don't mean anything, but when they come out of love, they know it comes from the heart. This is right back to Romans, doesn't it? With the heart man believeth under righteousness. Mouth is made of confession, but there are many mouths but not too many hearts. As our brother Reuben said, the whole epistle to the Philemon is really a letter of commendation in connection with on estimates. But what a lovely, uh, opening up of truth we have in that beautiful epistle. Short little epistle of one chapter. I heard of a group where they just had a printed letter of commendation. If you want to go someplace, they just filled in the name. But that isn't so and shouldn't be so, brethren. There ought to be a personal side to it, and Paul could speak of it in that way. And he wrote it for an example too, for we learn very much from that epistle to Philemon. I heard it said that a letter of commendation 2 shows the heart or the the emotion of the assembly to another assembly is sending accommodation, of course about the individual. But the letter speaks of the assembly, one assembly to another. And I often enjoy hearing the letter accommodation from another assembly. Sometimes you don't hear of anyone from that assembly for some time and it's just in it's heart warming to hear it.

When it says you uh, uh, a **** ***. Definitely. It's the way we act. Reflects what's in our heart. You know, we can't really hide, we can act, but it it wiser to just be ourselves. Uh, if we're timid like Gideon, it says known and read people are sizing us up. And I think, uh, the Bible says we should do it in the fear of the Lord. We can't really hide our basic character from other people, can we? So how important it is to lay onto these wonderful things like the verse, verse 14 and 15 in the previous chapter, that God has every provision made to strengthen us as He strengthened getting in spite of what we actually are. There is a written letter. A lot of things can be said on paper, but there's the life that we live, as you said here, and that's what we have. For as much as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, that wasn't something written within because it says it was something done by the Spirit of the living God. Their lives were a living epistle. There is that written letter that's necessary, as it mentions in the first verse, but there's also that which we live. And that is what he takes up. And really the rest of the chapter, the written thing was one thing. The way we live is another thing. And it's known, right, of all men. People are watching us. Paul says in Corinthians were a spectacle to the world and to angels and to men. Everybody is looking on. They know what we profess, but they watch how we live, don't they? Any other question? Who were these Corinthians? Just going back to the first epistle on the 6th chapter and again thinking of how he could say here manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ. Here was the where these Corinthians. But look at the look at the condition they were in. Just go back to the 6th chapter of the first Epistle. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor affectionate, affect, feminine or abusers of mankind, thieves, covetous, and so on. He goes on. Then verse 11. But such were some of you. Such for some of you, well, I, I think that's so beautiful as we think of Paul Speaking of East Corinthians now who had acted such for some of you. But ye are washed, ye are sanctified and you're justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. What a complete change for those Corinthians who were in such a condition. Now then, washed, sanctified, justified. By the Lord Jesus and our by the Spirit of our God. And now he can say ye are our epistles. You Corinthians who once didn't deserve this. Now you've been washed and sanctified and brought into a place of is that not true of each one of us? Again, I'm thinking of it as an individual, so I think it's very beautiful to see how Paul can say that they were his epistle because they had gone on. Then acted upon his injunction and had been restored. Yeah, it's been on the spot. I believe in the first chapter, Philippians in connection with you said because it had gone on. Sometimes quote parts of scripture, but. Philippians chapter one and verse 6. Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Even it is meat for me to think this of you because I'm going to read the marginal reading. Ye have me in your heart. Inasmuch as both in my bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you are all partakers of my grace. That Paul was convinced that God was going to complete what he had begun in them because they had Paul in their hearts, is that they held the truth in their hearts not just as an understanding, but as a practical thing. And so it manifested itself in the way that they behave themselves.

The reason the law was written on tables of stone is really it's a picture of the natural heart, because in the coming day it says you take away the Stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh. The law made known God's requirements. But man had neither the power nor the desire to live to please God. They that are in the flesh cannot please God. We read so it was written on tables of stone. But when we minister the truth to children of God, we're not writing on tables of stone. We're not saying you have to do this and you have to do that. Not that we have dominion over your faith. But we know that there is happiness and joy in the path of obedience and there is a heart in every believer that responds to the claims of Christ. Is it a wonderful thing, brethren, that everyone who sits in this room who has really come to know the Lord as Savior has the very life of Christ within him, which is a life that desires to please God our Father? And more than this, we also have the Holy Spirit who is the power for this. And that's what he is contrasting here. That is, He made known the truth to them. If He could minister it in such a way that the new man would be brought in, shall I say, in contact with the truth, there would be a response. And that's what He is bringing out here. And I think it's very beautiful. Not in tables of stone, He said, I'm not writing telling you something that the new man doesn't want to do. I'm telling you something the new man does want to do. The new man and every believer wants to please the Lord. The new man and every believer responds to his claims and is drawn by his love. And more than that, we have all the power that's necessary because the very Spirit of God dwells in the believer as the power for our life. He shall receive power after that. The Holy Ghost has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me, and Jerusalem and Jetia to the end of every part of the earth. How wonderful the provision. And I think this is a very. Precious way, sometimes we minister the truth as if well, there's no response, no desire in that person to please the Lord. There is may be covered up with a lot of rubbish, as it often is within us, but there is a desire in the heart of every believer because he has the life of Christ within him. It's so beautiful to see here, so it speaks of the. In that third verse. For as much as you are manifestly declared to be the Epistles of Christ, Epistle of Christ ministered by us, not with ink, but in the spirit of the living God. You follow that little thing out and you'll find the living God is connected with the Church of God also here He brings an honor individual, a living God. You know our names are not just written in heaven. They're engraved there. There they can never be erased. Spoke to a man one time about that here, it says they're not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God. And he's Speaking of the course of an epistle here. But I was thinking of this, ask this man, this brother who was an engraver. I said when you engrave something in a, in a piece of granite or rock, can it be erased? Never, never. And we find that in Hebrews 12, don't we? Our names are engraven in glory. They're engraven there. Can they ever be erased? Never. But don't tell me that you can be saved and lost. You can't be. If the work is all done, isn't it by a living God, a God who lives? So I think that's very beautiful in the ending of that verse, living God not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart. When Moses first came down, we know he had the tables of stone, but he broke them because actually if we were under pure law, it would be nothing but condemnation. And so as we see later on in the chapter, the second time he brought them down same tables of stone, but they were put inside the ark and the blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat that was on top of the ark. And so God provided a way that He could go on with the people.

That were guilty that didn't respond to his holy claims, but he provided a way of blessing and that's all through the precious blood of Christ. Very lovely the way it's brought out here. But I I think that's important to realize not in tables of silly because sometimes when we press truth upon our brethren, we can do as if we were pressing on tables of stone. We are brethren where if they're really children of God. The new man and every believer responds to these claims. And that's why he says, and such trust have we through Christ, through God word. We feel very insufficient in ourselves, but we have that confidence that there is that new life that delights in pleasing God. Brethren, we're not even going to have a different new life when we get to heaven. We already possess the life of Christ. It says in Colossians, when Christ, who is our life shall appear. And so we also appear with Him in glory. Love it now are we the children of God doth not yet appear. What we shall be, we shall appear. We shall be like Him. Isn't that a blessed thing? And as the truth is ministered to always bear that in mind, even though we feel very insufficient, and we are totally insufficient in ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God. In First Corinthians 127 and 28, you have what my fickle human heart is basically in itself. The foolish. Thing of the world, the weak thing of the world, the face thing of the world, the despicable thing of the world. And what a miracle that God can say something like that. And work his glory in it. That's that's a real miracle. God starts all over again, doesn't He? When he? It's not that he patches us up or improves us. As it says in chapter 5, if any man be in Christ, he is in all things

are passed away. Behold, all things are become you. This is what the Lord was trying to impress upon Nicodemus. Nicodemus says you are. There's nothing any good in you that I can use. We have to start all over again. You have to be born again and this is what the Spirit of God does. We become new creatures, new creations in Christ Jesus. You know the tables and stones remind you somewhat of the UH-6 water pots and stove there in John chapter 2. You know the heart of Israel, just as. Cold and different, but I'm actually fables of the heart is something that we can feel has feelings, watch, feel something. You know when when the word of God is ministered, what we feel is don't be brethren. It touches US1 was those tables of stone were external, but the other is internal. It's a new nature speaks of a new nature, doesn't it? When you have an exercise of the hardest to our sinful condition, it's lovely how the Lord is able to commune with us. I was just looking at Job 42 few verses. Starting in verse two, I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholding from thee. Who was he that hide it counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that I understand not things too wonderful for me which I knew not, and that verse 6 Wherefore I am for myself, and repent in dust and ashes. And then after that we see how the Lord is able to commune with Joe and give him the place that he originally gave at the beginning of the Book of Job. Do you have to go through that? Abhorring himself and realizing that he is nothing. And we see how this communion with the Lord is so wonderful. After that the Lord gives him so much more than he has from the start. He does that with us too. We don't maybe get the things of this world so much, but we have rich blessings of the Lord. When we have realized where we've come from, the Word is done for us. Well, the Lord alone can turn the water into wine, can't eat water in those water pots of stone. And that's, that's the way it was through the Old Testament. God was continually giving his word, but it was being put into water pots of stone, so to speak. But here was the one who could turn that water into wine. And so many of us have been brought up in Christian homes. There are children here that brought up in Christian homes. Maybe they're not saved, but fill the water pots with water.

We bring the Word of God before them, but we can't change it to wine. Only the Lord can do that. And so, as they said in these meetings, God may use His word and turn the water into wine, and they get the knowledge of salvation of Christ as their Savior, and that Christ is sufficient for their life. A wonderful thing. But I believe sex is man's number. The number of the man of sin is 666. You know, it's the total of man, so to speak, all that he is. But God alone can do that work, and He does. We're no better than anybody else. But in His wondrous grace we have received His Word, and He has turned that water of His word into wine, giving us joy and knowledge of God. Is our Father Christ as our Savior, the wonderful truth of the blessing that we're brought into? And that's what Paul, I believe, felt so insufficient in himself says not that we're sufficient of ourselves. But our sufficiency is of God. That's why, brethren, when we even come together like this, we need to pray very much because only the Lord can give the right and suited word. Not only the Lord can use it to touch our hearts or anyone else's heart. And so we have to rely totally on Him, but how He delights to bless. We all have to learn that efficient sufficiency can be himself. I just dropping over. To the 12Th chapter of this epistle. And verse 12. Well, verse nine. And he said unto me, That is the Lord speaking to Paul, My grace is sufficient for thee. For my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. In other words, Paul's sufficiency with Christ wasn't it. That was all he needed and he had trials too. You know, he wasn't without them. We know we can read the history in the second epistle in the 11Th chapter and many other places. He had great trials and he besought the Lord that the that the the trials might be removed. But God said, my grace is sufficient for these. So Paul had to learn this and each one of us have to learn something of the sufficiency of Christ in our lives, do we not? What do you think to call and learn that job had to learn job? Was in very favored circumstances and Paul had to learn that those things that he counted gain had to count them, but lost but two. Umm, as Job said, I uttered things too wonderful for me. And so on that 12Th chapter, there he was buffered of Satan lest he be exalted because he'd received tremendous revelations caught up into the 3rd heaven. And so that even in that, that he, he needed grace because he there that chapter, that second, uh, the 12Th chapter, the 2nd epistle, you see such a range of experience seriously caught up in the third heavens, seeing things that were not lawful to be uttered. And what does he come down and he finds railing and strife and trouble. And so he needed grace. I think the proper translation is a thorn for the flesh, wasn't it because he might be exalted. We're likely to be exalted if we learned a certain amount of the truth of God. We can think we're better than others. And so this wonderful revelation of truth was given to Paul and he might be exalted. We find a great deal of that and Christendom and get honors. Even they get honors in the world, but they get honors in the Church of God. But if we really learn the truth of God and communion. It makes us go down in our opinion of ourselves and more and more wanting to exalt Christ. It's always so fine with Paul. He said he was the chief of sinners. Then he said he was least, he was the least of All Saints. Then he would let the Lord. He was less than the least of All Saints and he went lower still and said so I be nothing. And that's what we learned rather than in the school of God. In the schools of man. We get degrees and we get certain things that. We can glory in that we have accomplished, but not so in the things of God teaches us that we are really nothing. And the beloved apostle had to say not that we're sufficient of ourselves, but he did find our sufficiency as of God. Remember our brother Doctor Dodds saying that often he would speak to patients while he was he was a dentist, as perhaps some know, and he would take the occasion to speak to them as they were in the chair about the things of God.

And he said one time he said sometimes I felt I wasn't just getting anywhere at all. And he said, I just have to slip behind the chair and lift up of my heart to the Lord and say, Lord, I'm not approaching this the right way. Show me how to talk to this person. And he said the Lord showed him and he spoke in a different way. Spirit of God touched the heart of that person and brought blessing. So it isn't just knowing the Bible and being able to quote verses. It's, uh, feed me with food convenient for me. Only the Lord can give the right word at the right time. A word in season, a word fitly spoken, is like apples of gold and pictures of silver. We all have to learn this, brethren, or at least we should be learning it in the school of God. Very beautiful here too, to see that says umm, the end of verse three, or verse, uh, five. But our sufficiency is of God then in verse six, who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament. The, when we see that everything that we have is of God, that he is the one who has accomplished it all for us, that anything we may have was given us of God, uh, then we can use it Who has made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of, not of letter. I understand that was left out there, not of letter, but of spirit. For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. So it's good if we met, if we minister in any way. We should minister as that which is given by the Spirit of God. That's where our sufficiency is, not in ourselves. Not because we're more clever, or because we know more than than our opponent may know, but because it comes from God Himself. Could somebody explain the term the New Testament? As many young people here, when you talk about the Old Testament from Genesis to Malachi, we talk about the New Testament from Matthew to Revelation and Mr. Darby's translation, it says the New Covenant. Someone explained of your pastor really meant ministers of the New Testament and may be different from a Paul had in mind when you wrote it than from what we understand as you sit in our chairs. We were in the Old Testament makeup. God, it was God based on law. They said all that thou hast said we will do. And so they made a promise and Jacob made wrestled with the Angel and he wanted to bargain with God. Bless me and I will give you the attent of all that I have. And the natural inclination of man is to bargain with God. And so really that's the way Christendom has become. It's become a great religion of do to get to do something and you'll get something from God. What is the Lord said, umm, after the supper, he took the cup and he said, this is the New Testament or the new covenant in my blood. It was just based on the ground of sovereign grace that the work of Christ on the cross. And so it's now not doing

something to get something, but it's because we have something in Christ. It flows from the heart of God. It's not man going up to God, but the other way around. Perhaps there's a little explanation of it in the 8th chapter of Hebrews. Begin at the sixth verse. But now he has obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second for finding fault with them. He said, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers when I took. Them by the ham to lead them out of the land of Egypt, because they continued not in my covenant. And I will make with the House of Israel after those days, saith the Lord. I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts, and I shall I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, No, The Lord for all shall know me from the least. Even to the greatest I will be merciful, to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. And perhaps you could turn back to Ephesians chapter 2.

Verse 11 This is speaking now Gentiles. Wherefore remember that he being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, which are called uncircumcision by that which is called a circumcision in the flesh, made by hands, that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of a promise, having no hope. And without God in the world, but now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off and made nigh by the blood of Christ. Well, the first covenant was the law, and it made everything conditional on obedience, and if they could keep God's holy requirements, then they would get the blessing, but they forfeited every right to that. But the New covenant or the New Testament is all not founded on something that man can do. But on what the Lord Jesus has done and what he has accomplished. But it's good to remember that the law was given to the nation of Israel. It wasn't given to the Gentiles. That's why it says that we were without covenant. But there was also the promise that God made even before the law, and that was what was promised to Abraham. And thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And that the blessing was not made conditional on something that they could do, but through the promised seed. I've often illustrated it. Perhaps an illustration helps both. And I have two boys, and I say, I'm going to give each one of you a new bicycle. And so one of them says, well, Dad, tell me what you'd like me to do, and I'll do it. And I'll be able to tell my friends I really worked for this bicycle, and I earned it myself. Well, I say, that's quite a thing for you to undertake. You sure you can fulfill this? Well, he says, yes, I can. No, that's what Israel did at Mount Sinai. They said, yes, we can obtain the blessing on the ground of obedience. All that the Lord has spoken, we will do and be obedient. But I had first made a promise that I was going to give it to them unconditionally. I can't forget that. And so now one of them has placed himself under a condition. Well, he breaks down entirely and he can't fulfill the conditions that he has said. Is he going to get the bicycle is or can the other boy who didn't ask for that condition say, well, I deserved it because I was a better boy? No, he's a he's guilty too. And so the time comes when I want to give him the bicycle, but they're both disqualified. None of them deserved it. They only are get going to get it because of what was in my heart for them. Now if I can illustrate that Brandon, the Gentile was not made any covenants, but God had said, in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. He had promised blessing through the promised seed, not only to the nation of Israel, but all the families of the earth. And so when Israel breaks down, then the Lord Jesus went to the cross, and he bore not only the guilt of guilty Israelites, but we too, who are Gentiles who are outside. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all, Jew and Gentile, the Lord Jesus. Bore our sins in his own body on the tree, and so we sometimes were far off, or brought nigh through the blood of Christ. So Jew and Gentile are going to all be brought into blessing on the ground of that first promise that God made. In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. That you will never be able to say lie earned it, just as that boy can never say, well, I earned the bicycle. Someone steps in and bears all his guilt as a disobedient boy. And now the Father says, I can give it to you, but never say you earned it. You didn't earn it. Can it? Can we or Gentiles say we earned it? No thought through the blood of Christ. We're all Jew or Gentile brought nigh. So when the Lord instituted the supper, he said this is the blood of the covenant. The only blessing is founded upon the precious blood of Christ. Israel are going to come into that blessing in a future day. And when God does that, then He's going to put His law in their hearts and then their minds really write them and their sins and iniquities Remember no more.

They will receive a new life and they'll live to please God in the Millennial day, but not because they earned it all because of what Christ has done. So if I'm answering the question, I answer the blessing, whether you or Gentile is the New Testament, the Testament, or the covenant or the promises, it's all founded upon what Christ and what He has done. We weren't under the covenant, just like one boy was not under a promise to try and earn the bicycle, but he gets it on the same ground on the same basis as the other boy. They both come in on one common ground. They didn't deserve it, and they get it because another took their place and bore their. Guilt and punishment for them. Isn't that beautiful too? To think you're mentioning Gordon, the, uh, just dropping back to the first chapter here that we're, uh, reading. For all the promises of God in him are yay and Amen. The glory of God by us. So we're not resting on promises, we're resting on a work that is all done. But God uses that term, doesn't he? Promises for all the promises of God in him are ye, and Amen. And how beautiful to think. Not only so it says unto the glory of God by us. And then he goes on a little bit further, and he says, Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God. He goes back to the source. Who is it that has done this for us? God has if, if I have eternal life, if you have eternal life, if you have joy. God has imparted that to us, to us, to each one of us. We didn't earn it, as Gordon has already said. But then notice what he says, verse 22 of that chapter. Who hath also sealed us. And given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, I. Again, we go back to that thought of the hearts, the hearts, the hearts. God keeps that before us, doesn't He? Because that's the source. And God's heart of love has been extended to our hearts and all the truth of God and all that we enjoy is only because we have it in our hearts. Even the children of Israel, I understand they, they were given a law, They had said they would keep it, but they failed in it and their hearts were not in it. God honored any of the Old Test Old Testament Saints if they had, if their hearts were right, not because they kept a law, but because their hearts were right before God. And so that's the necessary thing, isn't it? With the heart again, is what that which accepts Christ? So many, many more thoughts on that. Is it the practical effect of a lot of bad teaching is that they're not ministering? The New Testament, but that they are practically assuming that the Gentile is under law, something we were never under. And so there's a great deal of promises making promises, commitments, covenants. And that's why there's such a revival of what we hear of covenant theology and promise keepers and so on. And it really speaks as if the blessing of the believer rests not in the past. We have faith that's ministering to a willing heart, but the commitments and promises that I make to God, we were never under those covenants. And God will have to take up with the Jews and the tribulation to show just what the result will be of Jacob's bargaining with God. He struck a bargain with God, and he's going to learn the time of Jacob's trouble, the bitter experience of having done that. And so he will be brought to an end of himself. And at that time the Lord will appear in deliverance. And in a practical sense that that can be the experience, though it is not Christian experience. It can be our experience to learn that if we bargain with God in that way. And so Paul is showing here that really he is ministering, as you said, brother, little to a willing heart. My son, give me thy heart. And so it's, uh, going on in a pathway of obedience and submission to the Lord. It's not making commitments and covenants and promises to God, nor is it following a set of rules. But if the heart is right, then as we've often heard, then every word of God becomes a command to a heart. Just might say this, that the law is good if the man use it lawfully and so that somebody is taken up with that

system of things, that is by commitments and rules. Uh, then we can take out the Word of God and we can show that it's not possible for a man to keep the law, but it's only to cut down and to show that a man that no flesh will glory in God's presence.

It says in Galatians 2, the law was our schoolmaster until Christ came. That's really the way the law was a schoolmaster. So as I sometimes said, maybe the teacher can keep a certain amount of order as long as he or she is in the classroom. She walks out and everything goes into disorder. But walking back in, there's a measure of order restored. But the children's hearts aren't changed by the teacher being there, but they are controlled a certain amount. And that's why it says the law is good. If a man used it lawfully. You could properly say to an unsaved man, thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. That may convict him, but he'll never save him. He needs to get a new life. And then he won't take the Lord's name in vain because he loves that blessed Savior. He died for him. And his reason for not taking is not because the law says that, but because the name of the Lord Jesus is precious to him, and he honors him. So that we're not under law, but we're under grace. But the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. In Galatians 3/8 it said God preached the gospel unto Abraham. That's the reason why Abraham will always be a picture. Not that he was the first, but a person who was saved by faith, who by believing the gospel exactly the same as us. He had a heart just like you and me. I think the Fathers, especially the patriarchs in Genesis, they were under grace just the same as real. Good, because the promises to them are absolutely uncondition. They they run to like us. We're under grace. We're also under discipleship. We we have two sets of promises. We have promises made of blessings, if we have been. There is a thought, of course, in Christianity, I am come that they might have life, that they might have it abundantly because, uh, in the Old Testament, even though there was a new life in those who had faith, they still didn't, uh, have what we have that now, since the, uh, Lord Jesus has accomplished that work and he's gone up on high and the spirit has been given, uh, it's probably best brought before us in Galatians. Maybe we should just turn to that just to get the thought. Galatians, just a moment. I think it's the uh, 4th chapter. Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be Lord of all, but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so, we when we were children were in ******* under the elements of the world, but when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them, that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God has sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts. Crying, Have a father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son, and if a son, than an heir of God through Christ. He takes up the possession of the Old Testament, saying something like a child born to the royal family. He's in the family all right, but he doesn't really enter into what his position is. But he has been born into that family. But the time comes when he's publicly declared to be the heir to the throne. He's not a different person, but he has an entirely different position and enjoyment because now he knows what his portion is. And so those under the law had new life, but we couldn't say that they had life in a risen Christ. And what the Lord meant when he said, I am come that they might have life is and that they might have it more abundantly or abundantly, isn't a certain character of Christian life that some are living and not others? It's the contrast between those who had life in the Old Testament and those who have life in the New Testament since the work of Christ has been accomplished and the Holy Spirit has been given. Oh, how much more blessed our position. We say have a father. They couldn't say that. They didn't enter into that. They didn't know the liberty. Just as the boy born into the royal family, he doesn't know his position, but he's in it. He doesn't know it. But the time comes when he's publicly declared to be the heir to the throne and all the light and all the liberties and joy of his position. Now he enjoys them. And the Spirit of God uses this to show the difference between an Old Testament.

Saying to the New Testament saying, and isn't it wonderful, brethren, we know our possession, we can call God our Father, we can walk before him in holy liberty and more. We have the Spirit of God indwelling us as the power. For our enjoyment and to lead us into all truths that we might know and enjoy these things. I think it's good to see this. The Old Testament Saints had life, but not abundant life as we have. We began with Jesus. The bread of life is given to be our daily food. Within us dwells that well from heaven. The Spirit of our God. Lord tis enough. We ask no more that thy grace around us pours It's rich and unexhausted store, and all its joy is ours. Is that we don't have any more to receive. We've re received in Christ all things that contribute to life and godliness. We're not waiting for a promise. We have it. But we have the Spirit of God within to make it good. And we need Christ brought before our souls. And that's Jesus, the bread of life. And that's what the ministry is. It's not as we've been reading, the graving of rules on a heart of stone. Or to me, to live as Christ. And to die and gain a lovely position. Paul's cup attained to their me to live is Christian hymn #1 I'm sorry. #15 all that we are as things on earth, all that we hope to be. When Jesus comes and for ignorance, we owe it all today #15. Any reason I'll I'll. Umm, where do you get the auto book or anything? Uh-huh. OK.

Scranton Conference: 2021, 2 Corinthians 3:7-18

Reading

We sing #16 in the back of the book. #16 in the back of the book Jesus, friend Unfailing. How dear art thou to me our cares or fears of sailing. I find my strength indeed. Why should my feet grow weary of this? My children way rough though the path, and Drury it ends. Perfect day #16 in the back of the book. Jesus, friend. Our carols are here now, today. I find my life is trending today and everything. Where I refuse to be, in fact, you don't want to go for me. I love to get all the Lord. Jesus. Why thank you so much. But when I was. Fresh. Villains and I think my heart. What fill my heart in my life? Sitting inside. Wherever I am, I love you, and I am. Why she is so on my way? No, I never bathed, I figured. Anything. No. Why should I feel? Like. My son. Why strange? What can I have never been able to come on. When I cry on the ladder. Take what it's doing while the body will begin. There is a storm. Despise for the day and not just the earth, considering if you're out of getting anything. Oh well, they fall out of hand flows. Agreed. In your time I'm stressed out again.

I. Like sweetheart. I found the Lord everything. Where? Screaming. Ground. There is my God down the road. And every child I came on to give you a lightweight. For every Lord. In your hands I cry out, Lord again. So I'm stranded in my bedroom. Our dear heart. You need. You pray. Two Corinthians 3, verse 7. But if the administration of death written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away, how shall not the administration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the administration of condemnation be glory, much more doth administration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect. By reason of the glory that exceleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech, and not as Moses, which put a veil over his face at the children of Israel, could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished. But their minds were blinded, for until this day remain at the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which Vail is done away in Christ.

But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Verse 7 to the end of verse 16 is a parenthesis. And if we take the end of verse six for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life for 17 of the Lord is that spirit. So behind all the letter of the Old Testament and the law and all its rituals and ceremonies and all that went with it. The true object of it all in the mind of God. The purpose of God. Is Christ himself and it all speaks of Christ and so he is the spirit of it, so to speak. It's all about him really in the end and so verse 7 to verse 16 really gives a contrast of. The Old Testament. And the law and what we have in the ministry of grace and perceiving the purpose of God and the Spirit of Christ behind all of those Old Testament types. And so we see far more than any Old Testament St. ever did. When we turn to those scriptures. They saw the letter, we see the Spirit and so verse.

Seven that we began with down to verse 16 is a parenthesis. We mentioned false apostles in the first meeting, how they were trying to undermine the apostle Paul because apostleship, his word written by the Spirit of God. But it wasn't just that these false apostles were also Judaizing teachers. And they were trying to bring the Saints under the ******* of the Old Covenant. And they wanted to have them take up with the principle of law and they looked at Christianity and they said that's fine, Jesus, that's fine, the cross, that's fine. But you also have to be circumcised. You also have to follow the law. And so the apostle Paul in verse 6 takes up the New Testament, the New Covenant. And the very fact that there is a new covenant shows the deficiency of the old, and Hebrews takes us up how it would have to be set aside. And he goes on. As as Justin mentioned. How these verses provide a contrast between these two ministries? What will be a ministry to death as we take up with it? Or what will be a ministry to life if we take up with it? And when we introduce law or the principle of law into Christianity, it creates death, it stunts our growth. We no longer continue to grow and we need to be on guard to ensure that we do not allow what is a ministry of death to come in to our lives. We can't take up with it and expect there to be blossom. I think this point is so very important, and there's a great attempt among Christians to get rid of it because there's something in our hearts that loves law. And so it's been a real trouble all through the long years of Christianity, from the days when these words were written first. And that the bringing of the law and trying to mix it and mingle it into Christianity has always been there. And so the attempts tend to run along lines like, well, we're not under the ceremonial law anymore. We don't do the sacrifices because Christ, the true sacrifice, has come, but we still have the 10 commandments because that's God's perfect moral law. That has always been. And so we're still under that part. And there have been many attempts like that to try to separate the law. So that Christians can be still brought under it. But these verses start right out and I think it's helpful to see. To completely say that's not the case says if the administration here in verse 7, the administration of death. Written and graven in stones was glorious and so on. Was that talking about the. Ceremonial law, he said, speaking about the offering. Or is he speaking about the law that was written in tables of stone? I think that's pretty clear, isn't it? It's talking about the 10 commandments, and it's saying that to take up with the 10 commandments that part of the law and indeed all of the law, but specifically it's talking about the 10 commandments. It's calling that. Administration of death. And it goes on in verse 9 to call it administration of condemnation. There is nothing in that. For the believer, it is absolutely. What we've been brought out from the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. If we either were under it to begin with, as Gentiles, we weren't. Jews were, and Jews were brought out from under it by death with Christ and all of us. We've passed out of the whole world that the Law even spoke to it speaks to man in the flesh, and we're not in that world anymore. When Christ died, we died and we were brought out of that world into a new place.

A new place beyond death, where we have the life of Christ and now we have the administration of the spirits. What it speaks of it here. As in verse 8, administration of the Spirit and then down at the end of. Verse 9 The administration of righteousness. That's what we have now, the reality of life in Christ. A very, very different thing. And to go back and take up with these things, you can't mingle them. They bring us into that which is really death and condemnation. And so we have this over and over again in the New Testament. And so of all importance that we see it otherwise we're going to become compromised in our Christian position. And lose what is our place in Christ, Not meaning that we lose our salvation, but we'll lose that which He wants us to enjoy as Christians here below, and will lose the power of righteousness as well. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness through everyone's belief. It's so simple. Christ is our righteousness, you know, it tells us that he was made sin. Who knew no sin, that we might become the righteousness of God? In Him that's a perfect righteousness. Now, if we try to set out to establish our own righteousness based on our performance and what we think we can do. We are sadly mistaken because we all fall short, and so we find out that the law is that which only condemns. Whereas grace justifies. But the law condemns. And the result is. The law exposes my sin. And what's the result of sin? Like a brother is sick, it's death. So that's a sequence, OK. Law, Sin, Death. It's not a good ending. But in contrast, we got grace. You know, grace is God's riches at Christ expense. We often speak of that acronym. It's very nice. God's riches that Christ. Expects. So we find that God sets out. To make you and I righteous. Through his own dear son, what he accomplished at the Cross of California. And so God gets active, you know, under the law in the Old Testament, you might say God is inactive and he puts. Man on the stage, he puts man up there to do a performance, to see how well he can perform before God. And we find out the performance is a total mess. It's a failure. So we got to pull this. The curtain. On that situation. So when we come to the New Testament now, we find that God takes over. And he becomes active, we become passive, and he provides everything for us. Through the person and work of his own dear son. As wonderful to contemplate the grace of God that shows you and I favor we don't deserve it, but we get. Very righteousness of God. To faith in Christ and the work that he has done so. The result is life. So where the sequence was law, sin and death, now it becomes grace, righteousness and life. That's a good ending. Eternal life.

It's all of grace. Administration of. Death. Written in engraving in stones was glorious. And in Exodus, the first time, Moses went up into the mount, and those tables of law were written by the finger of God and stone, and he brought them down. Before he had come down, the people had made the golden calf and were worshipping it, and their sin was great. Before God. Moses comes down, the Lord told him what was happening. And he comes down off the mount. And it says in Exodus 32. Verse 19 And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing, and Moses anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and break them beneath the mouth. Those tables of stone never came into the camp, the law. Just as purely law could not come into the camp of that sinful people, otherwise it's just penalty must be met and all would die. And so Moses without a command from God, but by divine instinct he dashes those stones to the ground and shatters them. He then. Appeals to the Lord. And intercedes for the people and their sin. And it's a beautiful intercession that he takes up with the Lord and. In chapter 33 we get that intercession of Moses. As the mediator. Just looking down and. Verse 12 Moses said unto the Lord, See thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people. And thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me, Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name. Thou hast found grace in my sight. Now therefore I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight. And consider that this nation is thy people. And he said, The Lord said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. In other words, Moses. But my presence isn't going to go with its people. It

will go with you, Moses. And he said unto him, If thy presence go and leave out the italics, Carry us not offensive. You don't go with us, not just me. He wouldn't leave himself out of connection with God's earthly people. Carry us not up. Hence. When shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy people from all the people? That are upon the face of the earth. The Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also, that thou has spoken, for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness to pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious. And I will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face. For there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock, and it shall come to pass all my glory. Pacify that I will put thee in a Cliff of the rock, will cover thee with my hand while I pass by, and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen. And so that took place. He used 2 tables. He goes up to the mount. The Lord descends in a cloud. Chapter 34. Proclaims the name of the Lord, and the Lord passed by him while he was in the clift of that rock. And proclaimed the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin. And that will by no means clear the guilty visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third, unto the 4th generation. And Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth and worship. And he said, Now, if now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray Thee, go among us, for it is a stiff.

Necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us. For thine inheritance. Moses comes down off the mount after that. End of the chapter when he speaks to the children of Israel. They see his face, and his face is shining with glory. And they beg Moses that they don't want to see his face. They were afraid of it, and they were afraid in verse 30 to come nigh to him. And so Moses covers his face when he is speaking with them, but when he went into the presence of the Lord. He took off that covering, that veil. The second time, when the law is brought down, it's mixed with grace. The Lord will be gracious to whom he will be gracious, and have mercy, to whom he will have mercy. And the second time Moses comes down because he had seen his glory, what glory was that? The glory of His grace? His face shone. And yours will, and mine will too, in that way. If we have had a glimpse of the glory of His grace, it is the topmost stone in His glories. And Moses got a little glimpse of that. Yes, it was mixed with law, but that law brought down the second time was introduced with glory. But they couldn't look at His face. They didn't understand it, they didn't perceive it. And so He was alone and that perception and in that sight. And he covered his face that was shining with a reflection of that glory when he spoke to them. So that's why the apostle says in our chapter. It was glorious so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance. The first time his angers face wax hot. The second time it's shown. But that glory was done away, as wonderful as it was, as beautiful as it was. And it's a it's a worthwhile meditation to go through that wonderful intersection of Moses on the mount of the Lord. But it's done away. What do we have now? The administration of the Spirit. All the Spirit of God has come from where? Where is the Spirit of God come from? From heaven itself, the gift of the Father, and what is His. Purpose. We had it in the beginning of the chapter, writing Christ in the fleshy tables of the heart. He's come down from heaven itself, not from Sinai. He's come down from heaven itself to tell us of a man and the glory, a man there, the object of our renewed hearts, a formative object, an object with whom, if we are occupied, we will become more like Him. And our face will shine with the glory of His grace. How much rather this administration be glorious. And even that which was introduced with Glory and Exodus 34. And speaks about this glorious thing done away as you mentioned. I've often wondered about that too, but it was just that it faded away with Moses. I'm not sure about that part, but it does. It is a fact that the glory was done away. With death. And that's how the verse begins. It's administration of death, whatever glory was there.

Whatever grace was on God's part, the people were under that law. And death came in as a result of them trying to keep it. And there was number continuance of that glory. There couldn't be it was just a brief show of it and it was the end of all who were under that covenant. But for us, how entirely different isn't it? There's a permanence to this glory. It's really, I think the the point of this verse, these verses 7 and eight is speaking about the permanence and then. Verses 9 and 10 speak about the fact that the glory that we have with the Spirit is greater, but the permanence of the glory of this administration of the Spirit of God for the believer goes on forever. If we look up and we see Christ in glory now. That will never end for us. There's no end to that. Wonderful Moses only had a brief privilege of enjoying that the people couldn't bear it. It doesn't speak of that for them, does it? Only they're running away from it and so it must ever be under that old covenant. And someone said either we hide from God like Adam did or. We try to hide God from us by putting a veil, which is what the children of Israel did, and we get to that later in the chapter 2. There's a veil over their hearts. They can't look to see this wonderful glory that is now. They still want the old, but they can't bear to face God with the law who could. The only way that we can is by the Spirit of God and that work that he does to. Occupy us with Christ. Founded on the very work of Christ, this is something that we can see that Gloria changes us, it affects us, and it will go on forever. If the administration that could only condemn man in the flesh be glorious. How much more the administration of righteousness? We have been made the righteousness of God in Christ. God's righteousness has been fully established at Calvary's cross. Ye on a righteous basis has become just and the justifier of him that believe it. On a righteous basis we can enter into His holy presence without conscience of sin. All was dealt with at the cross and we have been made the righteousness of God in Christ. We have liberty and freedom to enter into His holy presence at any time. Only Moses could go in and stand before the Lord. As we look back at that Old Testament account, and as that administration rolled on and the priesthood was developed, only the priest could go in to the holy place. And then through the sin of nadav and abaya only once a year, we have access at all times. Into His holy presence on a righteous basis, how much more does the administration of righteousness? Exceed in glory, where is righteousness placed us? In his very presence. In his very presence. Administration of righteousness exceeds. In Glory. This is not the way we think, is it? Naturally, as people, the administration of righteousness means that I need to have a code, a way that I can know how God wants me to be righteous. That's the way I naturally think. I had a Christian ask me that one time. How can I know what God wants for me if I don't have something like the law? Well, you want to know what God wants from us, He read this chapter. It's very funny. He wants us to be occupied with his Son and that's administration of righteousness, the Spirit of God occupying us with the Lord Jesus Christ. The other could never do it. And I think it's good to go back and look at that again. No Romans 8 was mentioned, but if we just go back to Romans 7, it's. So definitely there. In terms of fruit. It's just skipping down to verse 4. Wherefore, my brethren, ye are become dead through the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who was raised from the dead.

For what purpose? That we should bring forth fruit unto God. There is no other way to stay in that position of being alive, this man in the flesh. There is no way to bring forth fruit to God, no way to produce righteousness. One thing that God desires, there's no way to do it. But this is what we have in the death of Christ, isn't it? That we've been made dead to that all those things of God over us under the law we guide to that. And now we're made alive in a whole new position that we should be married or belong to another, even to him who is raising the dead,

the Lord Jesus Christ who belong to him. And that's what produces fruit for God. So I think it was mentioned in the last meeting, but. We go over to Romans chapter 8 and justice. See what it says there in those. First verses it explains that there is therefore now no condemnation. To them which are in Christ Jesus, period, there just isn't. You're in Christ Jesus. There's no condemnation. The rest of the verse doesn't belong there. It's positional. Verse 2 For the law of the Spirit of Christ, of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free. From the law of sin and death, now we find a whole new law. It was the law of sin and death. That's what we're talking about in this section of our chapter. But now there's a whole new law. So law, the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. And that is life. As we often talk about a law, the law of gravity, It's it's an actual, this is a spiritual law and something that produces. That which pleases God in a believer. It goes on to say and explain that verse three, what the law could not do and that it was weak through the flesh. God sending his own son the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned it sin in the flesh. And so wasn't the law week, but we in our sinful flesh could not please God and so he sent his Son and his son condemned sin in the flesh and that was in his death. Verse four, so that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in US who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. And so now this is our new walk. It's after the Spirit, it's this new law, the Spirit of life working in US, and that's what pleases God. The righteousness of the law, it says, is automatically fulfilled. Do we try to keep the law? No. Specifically, we're told that we're not to. That's not what we're under. We're under something new. It's the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. And it's only as under that law, and only in him under that law, do we then keep that righteousness of the law, and far beyond as well. We actually live out the life of Christ himself, which went far beyond the law. Somebody might ask if God gave the law, The law was wholly just and good, but it was a ministry of death, condemnation. What's the point of the law? Why? Why would God ever even give the law? Was it because he needed to see if man could merit favor? Well, he answers that question after asking it first in Galatians chapter 3. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions. It was to prove to man that he came utterly short of God's standard. And we have page after page after page in the Old Testament that proves to us that man can't keep the law and that the law is a ministry of death. Not that there's anything wrong with the law, but there's something wrong with us, our flesh. We come into the New Testament, we come into today. And what is what is one of the great struggles that we have in Christianity Today? It's still thinking we can. It's still thinking we can take up with this or take up with part of this and make it good. We can take our Christianity. We can take the Spirit of God that dwells in us. We can take this new life that we have and then we can use that.

To keep the law. But that's not what Tim just read to us in Chapter 8. It's not that we use that spirit that has been given to us to keep the law. It's the righteous requirements of the law. It is not putting ourselves under law, which is the ministry, ministry of death, condemnation. That's as far as we'll get when we do that. It's recognizing that that thing is done away page after page. The Old Testament shows us man cannot do it. And so on the other side of that, what do we see? We see the cross. We see, as our brothers have been mentioning over and over again, we see grace, which is unmerited favor, and it's that unmerited favor in recognizing that God did all this for me when I could do nothing for Him. It gives us the springboard to want to do anything for Him. If it's on any other reason, me trying to merit or earn or gain favor before God, it's law. It's the principle of law. It's death. Somebody might say this sounds like semantics, but it's not. It's a heart issue, and each one of us needs to address our heart when we go over this chapter in chapters just like it. Where is it springing from? Is it springing from a thought that I can somehow merit favor before God? I can be a little bit better than my brethren. I can be a little bit better than you? I can be a little bit better than that guy down the street. Or is it coming from just recognizing God and his unmerited favor that would give His son for me a Wretch like me? I might be stressing a situation a little bit, but the scene that we had before us with Moses on the mount was glorious, wasn't it? And. As the Gospels, we also have another glorious scene, that is the configuration of the Lord Jesus. If we look at. Mark's Gospel, Chapter 9. And verse two and it says after six days Jesus taketh with them, Peter and James and John. And leaded them up onto a high mountain apart by themselves. And was transfigured before them then it says if comments. In each of the gospels on his raiment, and here it says his raiment became shining, exceeding whitish snow, so as no four on earth can wipe them. Well, we have that expression used in our chapter. The righteousness exceeded in glory, glory that excelleth. Well, here we have Raymond that became shining white. There was no poor earth could wipe them. So that was another glorious scene, wasn't it? Maybe there's not a direct parallel to what we've had brought before us, but it was something in God's sight. God. Was. Very anxious to preserve that glory because we had. One that wanted to make 3 Tabernacles, but that would not take place, would it? Because there was only one. That deserved that attention, that full attention. In Matthew, it says his face shone as the sun. And in chapter four of Second Corinthians. We read. If our gospel be hid verse three, this hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not. Bless the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, or the gospel of the glory of Christ. It is the image of God should shine unto them, for we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. Ourselves, your servants, for Jesus sake, for God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Oh, that's what he wants us to be occupied with himself in the glory. And there will be the reflection of it in our life and our walk and our ways and our talk and every aspect of our conduct. That Old Testament administration of death and condemnation, though it was glorious, has ended. As we've said, it's been done away. But that which remaineth, verse 11 is glorious. As our brother Tima said, it's permanent. There is not some new dispensation coming that's going to introduce some other change, some new thing. No, this is the object that God was moving towards all along, the glory of His beloved Son. And that's what He wants to fill our hearts with. So that which was. Glorious was done away, but that which remaineth is permanent in its glory. And he goes on to say in verse 12, seeing then that we have such. Fault. We use great plainness of speech. All the gospel is open and plain, the gospel of the glory of Christ. We can't be too plain, we can't be too open, we can't be too clear. In declaring that there is a man in the glory. That glorified God here in Calvary's cross. That God is raised from the dead and seated him in heaven's highest place. There he is Savior of sinners. What a glorious gospel, the gospel of the glory of Jesus Christ. We use great plainness of speech, not like Moses with a veil over his face. All the gospel preacher that's occupied with Christ and glory in the subject of the gospel. It just flows out of the heart. It's seen in the face, the reflection of that glory. I noticed. Brother Steve, that in my margin of my Bible for plainness. Verse 12 Says boldness. Mr. Darby used that word boldness. And. You know, it says that the righteous are as bold as a lion, and I believe if we are. Enjoying the righteousness of God that is ours in Christ. You can be bold about that. We know it's perfect, doesn't change. But if we're talking about our own righteousness, I don't think we can be. Very bold about that because. We know we really don't measure up as we should. We all fall short. And yet, how many there are that are trying to establish their own righteousness based on their own effort, their own performance? And it doesn't yield boldness. Of speech. Because. Our righteousness. Fails. In fact, it tells us back in Isaiah that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. But there are those that think they're decent people. And they take great offense if you suggest that there is Sinner. But you know, it only takes one sin to make a person a Sinner. Just one sin. Now, is there anybody on the face of this planet Earth? That would be willing to say. That they have never ever sinned, not even one time. I never met anybody like that. I don't think you would either, although you know the elder son in the story of the prodigal. He spoke in those terms, you know, he said never once. Let me just read that what he said. Over there in Luke 15. And it shows how people can become so disillusioned and inflated with themselves that they're

totally off base here in Luke chapter 15.

You read about the elder son. Verse 29 he answers his father. Luke 1529 Go these many years do I serve thee. Neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment. Yet I never gave me a kid that I might make married with my friends. Now that sounds like boldness of speech, you know, He says. Neither transgressed I at anytime thy commanders like I never ever seen. But if you begin to probe this individual, and maybe you begin to ask others about the individual, you find out that this is totally erroneous. But you know, when we are resting on the finished work of Christ, we know that the righteousness that we enjoy in Christ is perfect. And we can use boldness. Speech in your Pastor Paul, he did. When he preached the gospel, he came with great assurance, knowing that the message that he presented. Was. A surefire remedy, if I could put it that way, for one's sinful condition. Gospel of the grace of God. I just enjoyed the thought of being bold though connection with the gospel. The Lord gives boldness in certain situations. I remember years ago meeting a brother who was living in New Jersey, but he was originally from Romania and went through a lot of persecution during the communist regime there under Czech crew. And he and his family. Had hidden Bibles in their house and on one occasion the authorities came and confiscated those Bibles and brought them before a judge. And. The judge that I want to just repeat the charge brought against you and he said I understand that you have hidden a Bible. In your house, which you know is not permitted. And he said to the judge, you have it all wrong. I hit many Bibles in my house. And so the Lord gave him boldness to testify on that particular occasion. And the Lord does give boldness in these occurrences or situations. At Mars Hill, I'm sure the apostle Paul used boldness in his beach there, but he took advantage of what he saw, didn't he? He perceived that their worship was superstitious and gave him the opportunity to proclaim that one true God. They had many gods that they had worshipped, and he brought them to the very. Basics. There was one that gave them breath and light. And being so, he was able to take advantage of that situation that was presented to him. Well, the flesh could not bear and still cannot and never will be able to bear. Looking at that administration of condemnation that only condemns man in the flesh, they really couldn't bear to look at Moses face. Ask them to cover it with a veil. But how about us? We look back now on the grounds and basis of the finished work of the Cross. Of a glorified man in heaven. And we look back at all of those Old Testament scriptures. Of the law and all its ordinance and ceremonies, and on and on. And what do we see on every page? We see Christ on every page. We see that the true end of what was abolished, the true object in the mind of the Spirit of God, in what was abolished in the administration of death and condemnation, was actually Christ.

All those Old Testament sacrifices and ordinances, and the Tabernacle and its furniture, and on and on and on, all looked on to one object in the mind of God, and that was His beloved Son. And now we have the liberty to turn back to those Scriptures and see Christ on every page. Those who are under the law will see nothing but death and condemnation. We see Christ, the veil is over their face. And you know, most of Christianity looks at Christianity as a way to improve the flesh through the principle of law. Jesus Christ himself being the crown jewel of what humanity can be under Christianity, and they completely missed the mark. They look at Christianity as law mixed with grace. But we who know Christ, we who know the man and the glory. Know that the true object of God and all of that was Christ Himself, and we were on the grounds of the pure sovereign grace of God. And we see those Scriptures in a new light. And what you will find amongst our brethren and amongst those who profess Christianity in a large part the Old Testament is a closed book. It is a closed book that they see nothing more than antiquated rituals and ceremonies and on and on and a list of commandments to try and keep as best you can. And that's all they see. They don't see Christ on every page. I'll tell you, if you meet a believer and you have opportunity to speak with them, someone that's out in the systems of men, share with them. Something you've seen of Christ in the Old Testament Scriptures, some typical teaching of Christ in the Old Testament Scriptures. And I'll tell you, you'd get a blank stare, but you'll give them something they lost. You'd give them something they've lost. That's Christ in every page of that which was done away for that which is of a greater glory. Book chapter 24 and verse 27 and beginning at Moses and all the prophets. Expounded unto them. In all the scriptures. The things concerning himself. There is a coming day. When that veil will be taken away from the heart of the nation of Israel. Think of it They too, in a coming day, are going to look back at the pages of the Old Testament. And they are going to see what they never saw before. What a thrill is they open those scriptures up and they begin to see what you and I have known from the time we were so young. Christ on every page. Oh, it's going to be like a new book to them. A new book. And that veil is going to be taken away. And they too will see what you and I have the privilege ahead of that day to see. Scriptures. You can just see the Apostle Paul traveling around. Going from city to city, going into the synagogue and reasoning out of the scriptures from those same Old Testament scriptures. Turning them to Isaiah 53, turning them to those, all of those sacrifices. And in turn, he was beaten and stoned and whipped because they would not believe some beliefs like the Apostle Paul, someone who was born out of due time. But nationally they still remain in that same unbelief. And so that's what the liberty is of verse 17. You know, from the time I was little, I often heard this verse applied that.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. In other words, where the Saints are gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Spirit has liberty to use whom He will for the ministry of the Word, and so on. That's not what this Scripture means. It's not what it means. It's Christian privilege. You and I have the liberty that those under the old covenant do not have. We have the liberty to see Christ everywhere in the Scripture. Now, the Lord is that spirit. The Spirit of that is behind all the Old Testament scriptures. He is that spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Not only free from the law and its condemnation, but free to see Christ on every page. And what is the result when we do that? We're changed into the same image from glory to glory. As we contemplate one glory after another of the Lord Jesus Christ as we trace it through the Scriptures. We're changed into the same image, and that is the way the Spirit of God writes Christ on the heart. From occupation with him as we find him in the scriptures, they are the ones that reveal. That is what reveals Christ to the heart. That is what the Spirit of God uses to write Christ on the plushy tables of the heart. So this is practical sanctification, isn't it? As the Spirit of God occupies us with the Lord Jesus. We are changed from glory to glory. It's a progressing, increasing thing. Transform more and more into His image, becoming more like Him. And that's what produces the righteousness. That's why it's the administration of righteousness, isn't it? And this goes on in each one of our lives as long as we allow the Spirit of God. To occupy us with the Lord Jesus Christ. And it will go on as long as we're here until the Lord Jesus comes and, and then we have that beautiful verse in first John chapter 3. It says when we see him, we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is. Then we'll actually see him in just a moment of time. We'll transverse all the rest of that distance. To become exactly like him, wonderful moment could happen today. Brother Stan Jacobson said the first look. In the Savior's face will finish the work of God, the Spirit of God, and our souls. Look, look, you Saints within the bell, and raise your happy song. Your choice can never ever help the Lord you to Christ being alone. Oh, I see things forever free from you alternative. World of those subjects in green. Why did your horse should never do not go hard to get a smoke and freely. I trust forever, trust in God for every promise in heaven.

She's a fart where thin a warehouse happened.

Scranton Conference: 2021, 2 Corinthians 3:1-6

Reading

Between #193. 193. Jesus, my Savior. Of the run of the Kingdom. All night, sun and all by the Lord. I remember. Really not anything. Oh, my best friend, is God in heaven. Lord Savior, give me. You're not allowed to lie. What shelter Now I won't let her start. Me clower green sleeping in. Praying. I think. Play it. Still play. I'd like to suggest Second Corinthians and chapter 3. It's the Lord's will. 2nd Corinthians, chapter 3. Do we begin again to commend ourselves, or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you, ER our Epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men? For as much as ye are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God, word not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think. Anything as of ourselves but our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit. For the letter killeth with the Spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death written in engraving in stones was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away, how shall not the administration of the Spirit be rather glorious?

For if the administration of condemnation be glory, much more doth administration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth his glorious. Seeing then, that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech, and not as Moses, which put a veil over his face at the children of Israel, could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished. But their minds were blinded. For until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which Vale is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses has read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is. There is liberty, but we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. The Second Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians. Was written on the occasion of his having received word that the Corinthians had received his first epistle, and there had been a response. In their hearts to what had been written, there are many things that needed to be corrected, and the apostle had to deal very directly, quite sternly in some ways. With his beloved Corinthian Saints, they were the fruit of his laborers, as we'll find the proof of his apostleship. And he loved them dearly, but they were going on badly and so he had to reprove them. Quite directly, and as he waited for the response, we find later in the epistle in Chapter 7 that he had been so concerned as to whether they would receive that epistle or not, and he had had great boldness. In connection with the way he had spoken to them, he knew he had made them sorry with what he had written. And could have repented in a certain sense that he even wrote the letter. But then when he saw that they responded, he said I don't repent. He was thankful for that response. And in the meanwhile while he was waiting. To see if they would respond to those admonitions, He and those that labored with him went through a tremendous. Time of persecution. It brought them to real lows in chapter one and verse. Eight For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure above strength, and so much that we despaired even of life, but we had the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves. But in God, which raiseth the dead. And so they went through a time where they had not even a hope that they would live through it. They trusted in God who was able to raise the dead. They have the sentence of death in themselves that they were already dead to this world and should they die, they knew they would be raised again and that was their confidence. But they had no expectation they were going to live. And all through that, he's agonizing over whether the Corinthians would receive and respond. To the first Epistle he had them continually on his heart. And they were delivered through that time of suffering, comforted by God, and then they received the message that the Corinthians had responded and in a great measure had judged the chief evil that had risen among them. There was much more that still needed to be addressed.

They have put away the offender. Cleared the Lord's name for His own glory, connection with the sin that had come in, and themselves. They had responded in a faithful way to the exhortations to deal with that evil. And now the apostle says in chapter 2. Verse 6 Sufficient to such a man as this punishment which was inflicted of many, so the contrary wise you ought rather to forgive him and comfort him less. Perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with over much sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that you would confirm your love toward him. For to this end also I did right, that I might know the proof of you whether you be obedient. In all things to whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also. That man had been broken down. He was repentant, but they were. Not willing. To restore him. To fellowship, there was a bit of hardness coming in on their part and their attitude. And you know how often with us we can swing one way where we're loose and careless is to sin. And then the Lord convicts us about it and and we get that right and we swing the other way and we get too hard about things. And that's what they have done. And so He has to take up with them. Though faithfulness was required, separation from this world and sin was necessary if they were to go on as an assembly. Where the Lord Jesus was in the midst, yet the ministry that they had was a ministry of grace. And that would certainly reach out to this one who was repentant and seek to restore him. There are other things that needed to be addressed that couldn't be addressed in the first epistle. But now that he saw there was a beginning of the work of the Spirit of God and response in them, that he can go on in the epistle and open up so much more. And so we come to this chapter and he takes up the subject of the ministry. That we have. A ministry that has Christ as its object. And is in the spirit of grace. Just going back again for a second with reference to verses 8 and nine of the first chapter, we can't neglect what we have in verse 10, which brings before us a past, present, and future deliverance, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us what confidence said is for us. And the day in which we are living. So in this epistle, the apostle is taking up with things that he had taken up with in the first epistle, as you say, and. Just a little bit more in the way of how this book is laid out. All those introductory statements that you made, Brother Stephen, we had up to this chapter. The apostle having very much on his mind the repentance and restoration of this brother. But the other side of repentance was the assembly itself, and we'll come to that in Chapter 7, won't we? Well, we won't in this meeting, but that if you keep reading, that's what we have in Chapter 7. The other major One of the other major points that the apostle took up in First Corinthians was those who were false apostles. And I mentioned that because I think that also has to do with what we have in this Chapter 3. It's what our brother Stephen was saying, the ministry of grace that the Corinthian Saints had and that we have today, but also the apostle was laying out what the ministry of a true servant of the Lord is.

And this is going to be taken up then, in contrast, in the last chapters of this epistle with the false apostles. They did not have this ministry of grace. They did not have what was right and proper. And so the apostle sets this up not to make so much of himself. He says he speaks as a fool later on when he has to do that. But here he sets it up so that it's very clear that that false ministry is not in keeping with what is of God. In this chapter we have true Christian ministry of God. And we find that this ministry doesn't exalt persons, and it certainly has nothing to do

with the law, and yet it's a ministry of righteousness. That's what we have in verse 9. It's the end of the verse administration of righteousness, and by the time we get to the end of this chapter, we'll find out very definitely how righteousness is produced by true Christian ministry in the life of a believer and in a word, that is occupation with Christ. So I think that's another important feature of this chapter, what their ministry should be, what their attitude should be as the Saints of God in Corinth, but also to show the contrast with the others that were false apostles. The apostle takes that up in chapters. 12 Through the end, but in the middle of it. Then he gets to another thing. Chapters 8-9 and ten he takes up. The issue of giving, and I think those are the three major points in this second epistle, the repentance taken up, the true Christian ministry, and then also this subject of giving. Just to read those verses you alluded to in 2nd Corinthians 12, he says in verse 11 I am become a fool in glorying. Ye have compelled me, for I ought to have been commended of you. For in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Now, was this just to exalt himself, to say, look, I'm the apostle Paul, look at me. No, truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience and signs, wonders and mighty deeds. The Spirit of God recognized that. It was so critical that the apostle Paul and his apostleship be defended, because if Satan could somehow undermine that, he could undermine the word of God. And if we can get rid of Paul's doctrine, we can get rid of half of the New Testament. And if we can get rid of half of the New Testament, why don't we get rid of all of it? And so, as you say in our chapter, we have that same thought coming out in these first few verses about commending himself to them again. We need to make sure that we don't throw out the Apostle Paul, Paul's doctrine. This has been happening since the sphere of God used the Apostle Paul to write the word of God. What we have in the New Testament and to this day these same attacks are being attacked, are being used by our enemy for the same purpose. Letters of commendation are important. When Apollos was. Was. Going to be used of the Lord in a larger way in Acts 18. In verse 27, when he was disposed to pass into a cave, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive Him, who, when he was come help them with help them much which had believed through grace. And if you were to look at Romans 16, you'd find the whole Epistle to Rome was written on the occasion of a letter of commendation needed for a sister named Phoebe. The whole epistle is a letter of commendation. You know, sometimes we get letters of commendation and they've got this nice little exhortation or encouraging word. Well, why not? That's what Romans was. Paul uses the occasion of needing a letter of commendation for Phoebe to give the Saints in Rome what they needed. So letters of commendation are important to so we know that someone is.

Acknowledged by another local assembly being in fellowship. Perhaps somebody we don't know hadn't met before, like Apollos. They give us sometimes the character the labor and service and appreciation brethren have for this particular one that's coming to visit. But did Paul need a letter of commendation? With the Corinthians, did he need that, or those that labored with him? Epistles of commendation. They were his letter of commendation. They were his epistle, they themselves. The fact that there was an assembly existing in Corinth was because of the ministry of the Spirit of God through the apostle Paul. And so they were his letter of commendation, ER epistle written in our hearts. He had them on his heart. It was a heart's occupation with them and burden for them. They were. Uh, epistle written in our hearts. Known and read of all men, all who would look on that company of believers in Corinth would see a proof of the apostles ministry. They were his letter of commendation. Testing that. The Apostle Paul would speak of an individual. As being a letter for an epistle. You know we think of the letter or an epistle is that which is. Written with a pen on paper. But we find here apostate Paul is saying that we are being watched. By those around us. And what we do and what we say. Speaks loudly. Don't realize that perhaps. But somebody wrote one time the gospel is written a chapter a day. By the things that we do. By the words that we say, men read what is written, whether false or true. Oh, say what is the gospel according to you? I never forgot that. You know, that's searching. We're being read day by day. By those around us. By believers. By unbelievers. What is the message that they're getting? What is the message that we're conveying? By what we say and what we do. And I might say that our walk speaks louder than our talk. We've heard that so many times. I don't think we can say it too much. It's true. If I'm trying to be an epistle for Christ and I'm going on in sin. Do you think that conveys a convicting message to those around? Of course not. So. May we be convicted by that which we. Do does it really back up what we're seeing? But we as individuals, whether it be man, woman, boy or girl. Brother, sister in Christ. People are watching. The brethren are watching. The world is watching. And we don't realize how much of an impact. Our lives have on those around us. What we are as individuals we bring into the assembly. And so there was had been bad behavior on the part of the Saints at Corinth, not only in their individual lives, but when they were in assembly, there were things that were going on that were dishonouring to the Lord through the name of the Lord Jesus and it was known in the community, not only their individual conduct.

But things that were wrong collectively and so he says. That. Ye are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ. That ye there would include the whole assembly at Corinth. They were an epistle of Christ, not try to be an epistle of Christ. Not you should be an epistle of Christ. You are an epistle of Christ. And so, as our brother said, what is being read in that epistle? Does it commend Christ? Or doesn't it commend Christ? We are an epistle of Christ. There's no getting around that. What's being read in that epistle? It is being read. It's not a case of you should be or shouldn't be. You are. We are an epistle of Christ. The local assembly is an epistle of Christ as well. What is read? It's either commending Christ or it's not. I struck some years ago to read a comment made by Mahatma Gandhi. His comment was this, If it wasn't for Christians, I would be a Christian. In other words, he observed the behavior of those that profess the name of Christ, and it didn't accord or didn't correspond to the doctrine. That he had read. And it discouraged him so much that he turned away from any further. Pursuit of the Scriptures. And that's one of the wonders of the word of God, that we have example after example of people who please God and we can gain encouragement from their lives. And I want to just spend a moment looking in Acts chapter 6. We just had this in our reading at home and I so enjoyed the ministry on this chapter that we received at home. In Acts chapter 6, we read about. Some men that were chosen to be a help in the assembly and one in particular. His name was Steven. And so in chapter 6 of Acts verse five we read. Verse partway through they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. And then if we drop down a little bit to verse. Eight and Stephen full of faith and power. And I just really enjoyed meditating on this a little bit and that Steven had those characteristics. He was a man full of faith. And so when we get discouraged, what do we do? We need to get down on our knees. We need to open the word of God. We need to pray to the Lord. And. It's such a wonderful thing to have that faith from him. And then it says he was full of the Holy Ghost. What a wonderful thing. And the result was power. And so that gives us the ability to go on through the Lord and to be a testimony. And as we were just talking about, when others look upon us, then they see faith and they see the Spirit of God working in our lives and they see power. And that was that's what really attracts people to the Lord Jesus is that power. I was noticing the report that in the next verse or verse 8 Acts Chapter 7 says in Stephen full of faith and power did great wonders and miracles among people. I believe the people saw that God was working through Stephen by these great wonders.

Errors. He made an impression upon them. But you know what today. We're not doing great wonders and miracles. We're not dazzling people with great displays of power. Does that mean that people are not going to be impressed by? The way we live or what we do well. My brother Joe, he read from Second Corinthians. Chapter 12. And verse 12. And I'd just like you to notice where it is that. Signs, wonders and mighty deeds come in this verse. It doesn't happen. At the first of the list, notice what it says Second Corinthians 12 and 12. Truly, the signs of an

apostle were wrought among you in all patience. Patience, or could we say that is enduring. And you know, this is, I believe what really speaks to the world around when they see that you and I, we don't have it easy. We're experiencing trial and difficulty. Maybe there's a loss of job or a loss of a loved one. Or their sickness in the family. But we don't get all unnerved about it because. There's that confidence in the Lord that recognizes this is. God's purpose. In other words, God is at work doing something. In my life. That's in the end going to be for good. And you know, the world is impressed when they see that we're not all bent out of shape when there's difficulty, adversity in our life. I believe this is what speaks to the power of God, that God by his power. Maintains sustains one in these circumstances. So there were, as it tells us here in this portion. Signs and wonders and mighty deeds and the life of the Pastor Paul. But notice what comes first. It's patience or endurance. And I believe that ought to be an encouragement to us because we can all manifest. That in our lives. As believers. That patience, that endurance, you know him, right? Have put it that Jesus, thou art enough the mind and heart to fill thy patient life. To calm the soul by love, it's fear to spell the patience endurance. Of Jesus. Who suffered like none other in his walk in this world he was despised, dejected of men. He was maligned, misunderstood. He was spit upon. And ultimately, we know he was crucified. But you know, the Lord Jesus, I do believe he was the happiest man on the face of this planet earth because he was enjoying fellowship with his Father. He was in the will of God, his Father, and it enabled him to go through the deepest, darkest trials that humanity could ever imagine. The patience. So his patient life, Let's think about that. And if he did it, you and I, we can do it. The Lord Jesus said I overcame, you can overcome through. His patient lives. It calms the soul. It's what we need today. The world is filled with. Chaos. There's violence and corruption, just as in the days of Noah, on every hand.

But we don't have to. We are nerved by the whole. Circumstance around us. We need to keep our focus on the Lord Jesus. Some years ago I had an opportunity to read the biography of a missionary to Burma at An Iram Judson, and he had great difficulties there, but. It did not let him. Those difficulties did not discourage him, and he was known by. The. Native peoples there as the man with the shining face, and so they could look at him, and they could see reflected in his countenance the joy that he had in the Lord, and that just beholding him was a testimony to others roundabout. So perhaps connecting that Brother Bruce was what Brother Wally said, what was perhaps the greatest impression that was made by Steven. Was when he was brought before the council, and they looked steadfastly honest countenance, and his face shone as it had been the face of an Angel. The constant work of the Spirit of God in your life and mine is to write Christ on the fleshy tables of the heart. And Christian ministry is the result of the impressive Christ upon the heart, and it flows out from there. Not with ink and paper. Not. By the finger of God in stone, like the inflexible tables of the law, but in the fleshy tables of the heart he makes an impress. What is that impress? It's Christ, always Christ, that's who God ever has before him. And that is continually the work of the Spirit of God to write Christ on your heart and mind. And when that's been being written there. The overflow comes out and praise Thanksgiving and service. Christian service flows from that impress. And that's written in the heart, not the head. Isn't it the important part of what we have here? Think about what it says here, Written not with ink. The apostle was talking about a letter of commendation. And in that context, you can write a letter of commendation about me, and it may or may not be true, but that doesn't abide. The Apostle Paul was ministering and that's what we have here. He says you're declared to be the apostle of Christ, ministered by us. He was writing to them, giving them the word of God. That's even better than a letter of commendation, but the word of God. By itself. Goes further, much further. It's powerful, living and powerful. But here we see the Spirit of God comes in and takes that ministry that the apostle was giving, that which he was writing to them and he was using that. Right is her brother Stephen was bringing out to write Christ himself in their heart. And that's what it really needs to be, isn't it? We're talking about Christ's likeness. How does Christ's likeness come to be? We can't manufacture that. It has to be this work of the Spirit of God taking the Lord Jesus Christ and writing him right into our affections and when the Lord Jesus is in our affections. Then Christ's likeness gets produced in what we do in sin. That's really the secret, I believe, of what we have in this verse. So we need to take time. With the Lord. We need to spend time with the Lord in order that our service might feel the effect of that fellowship with Him. You know, I think about. How the Lord Jesus when he chose his disciples, it tells us that He chose his disciples to be with him.

And then he sent him forth to preach well, in order to have something to preach about. And if they're going to preach Christ, you've got to spend time with the Lord. That's what he chose them first of all, to be with Him. In any sense before? Preach so if we think that we can be effective without enjoying quiet time with the Lord. Get it won't work. It's so encouraging to see the Saints respond to the word of God, isn't it? It is encouraging and that encouraged the apostle when he saw that the Spirit of God was working there in Corinth and he was right in Christ on the fleshy tables of the heart. And that's what he expresses then in the verse four. We have trust towards God that he's going to work, that he's going to do that, and the evidence is there that he is working. And it rejoiced his heart. And the apostle says not that we are sufficient to ourselves. It's not us that did it. It's the Spirit of God that did it. He takes no credit to himself. Yes, he penned that epistle, but it was penned by divine inspiration. It was the words that God gave, and it was the work of the Spirit of God in their hearts. And he saw the response and he rejoiced. He takes no credit. No sufficiency in ourselves. This isn't what we produce. No, this is what the Spirit of God produced. And it is a joy when the Saints rise up and respond to the Word of God. The Spirit of Christ manifest in their lives and their ways as a result, and it encouraged the apostle and those that were with him. Those are five beautiful words. We need to. Engrave these words in our heart. The last five words. Verse 5. Our sufficiency is of God. This speaks volumes. Is there anything too hard for the Lord? Is there? I see some shaking your head like that. I think we recognize the fact that with God, all things are possible. But sometimes we question as to whether. The Lord is willing to help us. We know He's able to. But is he willing? Well, to him puts it. And we sing this hymn over and over again. It's #23 in the little plateau. How good is the God we adore? And you know that little hymn says his love is as great as his power. I really appreciate. You know my brother gave out that hymn. I just want to read this here #241 Now these are hymns that we sing over and over. And it's kind of a conviction or a word of my own soul. That some of the hymns. That I really don't know. Are hymns that I have sung over and over and over again without paying attention to the words. And I can sing a hymn and in 5-6 years later I'm thinking as I sing it again, why didn't I see that years ago? These are beautiful hymns, but here in this #241 it tells us. Power in love. And G combine verse three with the price I love has bought us Savior. What a love is dying. The other to thy power has brought us. Power and love. Indeed, combined. One does not outweigh the other. OK, now this is the kind of person that we can trust 100%. Lord of glory, ever unty households shine.

Our sufficiency is of God. The Spirit of God would. Make us feel how little we are in fact with nothing, but it also makes us understand what a great God we have. To whom nothing is impossible. It's a tremendous thing to have God for us, isn't it? The statement has been made recently by certain politicians. I have your back. Well. That can't always be accomplished, can it? And so we only, we only have one that we can fully put our trust and confidence in. That is the Ward himself. He has our back all the time. In connection with our sufficiency is of God. I want to. Give a phrase that I come across recently and see if you think you know where it is. It goes like this. The power of that the power of Christ might rest upon me. You know where that is. 2nd Corinthians 12 The very passage that you were reading before 2nd Corinthians 12. So how might the apostle Paul is Speaking of a manner in which the power of Christ, Mount Rastipano, the power of Christ, we think of as ability to do something wonderful. What is it that made him? A candidate for the power of Christ to rest upon him. Well. 2nd Corinthians 12 as

Raleigh says. And it's in verse 9. I'll read. I'll read. I'll read the whole 1St. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. My strength is made perfect in weakness. That the power of Christ might rest upon me. And then it goes on to say. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities. That the power of Christ might rest upon me. Now you and I might think, well, I'm not up to. I'm not up to doing this or that. I have felt the same thing myself. Not up to it. Well, the apostle says. That he was up to it because the power of crisis wrestled on him for the very purpose, for the very fact that he was weak, he had infirmity, he had perhaps a speech impediment of some kind. He was not. Not some fine handsome guy he was not admired by many for. Various reasons we might say, but all those things enabled. Christ to show out from him, not by His. Strength or power in himself but. That God was able to use him for those very. Very weaknesses that he had. I might add there's another passage that we could connect to that thought and first Peter 4. Verse 14. If you be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are you for the spirit of glory and of God rest upon you. The Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. Why? Because you just did something wonderful. Just made a You just performed a miracle in the name of the Lord.

No, that's not what it says. The Spirit of glory and God rests upon you. When you're approached for the name of Christ. Or not sometimes willing to do that, Are we? The Lord never asked us to do anything about what He gives us the ability to do it. I mean, he loves just too much to require something. That he's not going to give us the ability to do, it has been said. His commandments always come with his enablements. Ought to be a comfort to our hearts, like you say. Yeah, Brother Paul, sometimes. We look at something, we know the Lord wants us to do this, but then we look at ourselves and see, I can't do this. Lord, I, I don't have you. I just, I'm. A week. But you know what? You pass a quote. He said something and it's in Philippians. I believe it's Philippians chapter 4. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. And so if the Lord Jesus wants you or me to do something. Don't look at yourself. Look away. Look at him. Will enable you to do this. And you know it's going to rejoice his heart. It can be a blessing to others. And it's a blessing, encouragement to one's own heart as well. There's an enablement here, isn't there? As you're saying. And I think that we have that also in the last verse of the Gospel of Mark, it says and they went forth and preached everywhere. The ward working with them. So they didn't go out to their own strength, did they? The ward was working with them. And that should be an encouragement to us. When we're somewhat timid or fearful for doing something for the Lord, we have the promise that He will enable. All speaks of being here. Enable Minister. Of the New Testament or New Covenant, but not. Of the letter, but of the Spirit, and then Hebrews. And chapter 8 we find the details of that new. Covenant. The Old Covenant was the law. New Covenant is yet to be brought in. And so. He says he's going to make a new covenant, verse eight of Hebrews 8. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah, the two divided kingdoms that once formed a single Kingdom in Israel. He's going to bring them back together in the coming day too. But that's who he's going to make the new covenant with, not like the covenant previously of the law. Verse 9 tells us. Verse 10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those days, saith the Lord. I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people, And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying no, the Lord. For all shall know me from the least to the greatest, for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. Paul says we're able ministers of the New Covenant, not of the letter that is, not of its actual ratification with the House of Israel and the House of Judah, that is in a day to come, but of the Spirit. Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness. He will write his commandments in their heart and in their mind. That is what Paul is a minister of the spirit of it. And so if we were to look back at Romans chapter 8.

And verse four, Well, let's read verse 3. Romans 8 and verse 3 For what the law could not do, and that it was weak through the flesh. God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in US who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. And so we fulfill the righteousness of the law. Not because the law is written in our hearts, as it will be with Israel and Judah in a coming day when that covenant is ratified, but because Christ is written in the hearts. Because He's written in the hearts, we fulfill the righteousness of the law. Not because the law is before us as an object of commandments, do this and don't do that, but because Christ is before us and we want to please Him. And we would never want to displease him. All that the law ever contained in far more fulfilled in the believer with Christ written on the heart. So he's a minister of the spirit of it, not of the letter. The letter killeth. And so the letter of the law in the Old Testament was inaugurated with the death of 3000, when it was brought into the camp. They were sinners. Not so with administration of the Spirit of God. Its administration of life. And so the Spirit giveth. Life. I just make one remark. Made to me many years ago. No letter of the New Testament scriptures ever killed anyone. No letter of the New Testament scriptures ever killed anyone. It does not form part of the law of the Old Testament and that old covenant. But it has many directions for our life and conduct here below, that we might please the Lord as we go on for Him in this scene. I would just suggest. There's something that bothered me a lot in this verse. That the whole verse is speaking about the new covenant and the thing that troubled me was that when I got to the last clause it says the letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life. So the question that came in my mind if the new covenant is for Judah and Israel as Brother Steve just read to us from Hebrews 8. Then how does it kill? Will it not kill them? And I'd be interested to hear what someone else says about that but a comment a brother made. I thought was very helpful. You certainly know how the log hills, but this is speaking about the new covenant here as far as I can see in this verse. And if we take that new covenant that is made with Judah and with Israel, and we apply it in the letter to ourselves as Christians. It will kill our Christian physician. That was a thought that was expressed, and I think that's right. I think that is consistent with what we have in this chapter. It's not that the New Testament kills anyone. They actually receive life, they have new birth as we saw a knowledge of God and forgiveness of sins through it. What the Lord does through that new covenant, the work of this spirit in it, it's not the old covenant. It's different. But if the apostle were to take that and apply it in letter to the Corinthians, it would kill what he brought out as to their true Christian position in Christ. That goes far beyond what Judah and Israel can going to be brought into. I think that's the sense of it here. Like I said, glad to be corrected if I'm wrong in that. Thanks brother. Tim, I've had the same question but I've never heard an answer, so I appreciate that very much. Another brother made a helpful remark about the very fact that Paul's a minister of the new covenant. Why should we have that? And you have it in the Lord's Supper as well. This is the blood of the new covenant, the Lord says, and it is a question. The new covenant was something that was known. And they say, why do we even bring that up here?

Well, the fact of the matter is his brother Stephen was bringing out, these are Christian blessings that we have in common with the Old Testament Saints. And that already was laid out, a covenant that was going to be made and then it was found and the Lord says it when the institute has suffered that this is the blood of that covenant, this is what it is. And so now we know about that. We come into the good of that covenant. You say, well, how, why would we have a covenant that isn't with us that we only come into the good of? Where is that in Scripture? Well, that's the way it is. Hebrews 8 is very clear about that. It's a covenant with a House of Judah and the House of Israel. And you go to Ezekiel and you go to Jeremiah. You find it the same. It's, it's exactly what the Scripture says. But the another brother pointed out something that I found helpful in this regard as well. It was from Matthew 20. I'll just turn there for a moment because I think this really shows where we

are. Matthew 20 and justice the beginning of that chapter. And there it says the Kingdom of Heaven is like a man that is a householder and went early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into the vineyards. He made an agreement. That's what a covenant is. You do this, I do, I give you money. And I'm just going to skip through this because I see our time is gone. Verse six is where we are. About the 11Th hour he went out and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand you here all day idle? And they say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. And he said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right he shall receive. We could go on in that these are ones with whom he made no covenant. They came into the good of a covenant that was already made. And that's where we are in Christianity. And we find out not only that, but our blessings go far beyond the new covenant. And that's why that letter of the new covenant would kill our position because of all that were brought into in Christ. Should we sing him #194? May the Savior's love and bearing till our hearts, both night and day, and the unction of deceiving. Oh my God and anxious way. May we know singles and fighting and the sun won't be adventurous? She pray.

Fragments Gathered Up, Second Tables of the Law, The

While the people are distinctly put under law, the principle of the second tables (Ex. 34) was law after present forgiveness and mercy. This is exactly the ground Christians want to be upon now—to bring in law, after present forgiveness and mercy. But this it is that the apostle calls a ministry of death and condemnation. For, the first time he went up, his face did not shine; and it is to this shining of his face on the second time that the apostle refers in 2 Cor. 3. If the people were still under law, the more gracious God was, the more guilty they were.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Commendatory Letters, From Whom?

Z.

Answer: From such as are known to have the assembly’s confidence. If others took on them to write, what weight could they have? If a man wrote of contention or faction, the letter would represent his own bad state. We have the Spirit of God to guide by the word; but all is vain if we be unspiritual habitually, or carried away by prejudice or prepossession at any particular time.

To doctrine, as to discipline, the same principle applies. If a saint were of single eye, the whole body would be full of light. And all things when convicted by the light are manifested. The errors of a Christ born at a distance from God, of uncertainty as to possessed and known life eternal, and of a fabulous propitiation in heaven, distinct from Christ’s expiation on the cross, are lies of the enemy; and “no lie is of the truth.” Nor will faithful men tolerate any of them, or whittle them down, or pretend that the light does not manifest them. It is grievous to know that any and all of these heterodoxies have excusers, who are more guilty and dangerous by their wicked sophistry than the misled. In such questions, it is “the eye” that is wanted, not “the light,” for this is quite clear.

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 3:1-7

The division of the books of the Bible into chapters and verses, as is well known, is of human origin; and though it is a great convenience in referring to passages, it is faulty, sometimes in the division into verses, much more frequently in the arrangement by chapters. It is plain, for instance, that the third chapter’s beginning is a continuation of the subject which was before the inspired writer at the close of the second chapter; and they should be read together.

The low spiritual state of the Corinthian saints called for the language the apostle uses. That is why he speaks in his own behalf, of the character of his service for God, in the last verse of chapter 2, and continues (verses 1-3): Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or do we need, as some, commendatory letters to you, or from you? Ye are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read (or well known) of all men, ye being manifested that ye are Christ’s epistle, ministered by us; written, not with ink, but the Spirit of the living God; not on stone tables, but on fleshy tables of the heart.

Letters of commendation are much needed when saints go where they are not personally known, but so very much was the assembly at Corinth the result of Paul’s labor for Christ in that place, that he could say to them, Ye are our epistle, our letter of commendation. “Written in our hearts,” tells of his affection for them. And if Paul’s, they were Christ’s epistle, ministered by the apostle, but written by the Spirit of the living God on fleshy tables of the heart.

This every gathering of God’s saints is, and every individual saint- every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ — Christ’s letter of commendation to an unbelieving world. The world of that day took knowledge of the Assembly of God at Corinth; they saw something of the result of the gospel of God’s grace in human hearts, something of Christ in those Corinthians. So, to the unbelieving world of today, having no regard for God or His Christ, and ignorant of His truth, you, dear young Christian, are in the position of recommending the Savior. May they see nothing in you but what recommends Him!

The reference to tables of stone in the third verse directs our thoughts to the tables or tablets of the law given to Moses (Exodus 24:12; 31:18; 32:19; 34:1, 4, 28; 40:20). And what a contrast this suggests! The law was a series of demands upon man which he could not meet; instead of it, we have Christ engraved on every believer’s heart by the Holy Spirit.

Verses 4, 5: “And such trust (or confidence) have we through Christ towards God; not that we are sufficient (competent) of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency (competency) is of God.” The apostle refers to his work, his ministry; but in principle it is true of all the children of God, of every one who trusts in Jesus. We have confidence through Him toward God, because of the place of acceptance and of divine favor into which we have been brought.

Guarding against any thought of self-confidence or self-sufficiency, the apostle adds, “not that we are competent of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our competency is of God.”

Happy is that Christian, who is enabled by divine grace to find his all in God; in Him and His Word he rests, drawing from that high and inexhaustible source for every need.

In another place (Phil. 3:3), after warning those to whom he wrote against dangers in the believer’s associations, the apostle adds, summarizing in a few words what a Christian is,

“For we are the circumcision, which worship God by the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.”

May this characterization of the new man be true of you, dear young Christian, in the daily practice of your life!

Verse 6. Paul was made by God an able or competent minister of the new testament; he was fitted to serve, having learned the lesson of verse 5. The new covenant, for it is really that here, not “testament,” as the translators have generally made it, is referred to several times in the New Testament (See Heb. 7:22; 8 and 9; 10:16; 12:24 and 13:20, Matt. 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; Rom. 11:27; 1 Cor. 11:25). The same Greek word serves for both covenant and testament or will, and in Heb. 9:16 and 17 it is used in the latter sense. The new covenant is promised to Israel in Jer. 31:31-33, and Ezek. 16:60-62, and it will be theirs in the millennium.

The blood of the new covenant is, of course, the shed blood of Christ; His death is the basis of all God’s dealings in grace with man. We who now believe, are getting the blessings of the future covenant with Israel, without its being made with us.

How could Paul be a minister of the new covenant before it is made? The reason is plain; the foundation on which it will stand has been laid, and the grace it provides was offered to the Jews at the beginning of the Church’s history, but they would not have it, so we have the ministry of it now. We are under no covenant, but Israel was under that given at Mount Sinai, in the observance of which they failed completely.

Under the new covenant, the remnant of Israel brought through the judgments foretold in the prophetic Scriptures, will have the knowledge of God, and of the forgiveness of their sins; they will have His laws in their hearts and in their minds. What a change that promises from the unbelieving Israel of today!

Paul’s ministry was “not of the letter but of the Spirit, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.” The letter is as far as the natural man sees- a law given, whose requirements he must keep or suffer the penalty; the mind of God- the purpose of God-is made known to faith by the quickening Spirit through the written Word.

Verses 7 to 16 form a parenthesis, the seventeenth verse joining on to what is said in the sixth; in this parenthesis the law given by Moses is contrasted with the gospel. The law was the “ministry of death” (verse 7), and the “ministry of condemnation” (verse 9); a ministry of death, because they who were under it were promised life only as they kept the law in all its requirements; but having a sinful nature, with its own desires and a will contrary to God, the law held out only death to all; it was a ministry of condemnation, because the law condemned every soul that continued not in all things written in it (Gal. 3:10; Deut. 27:26).

The law began with glory, so that the children of Israel could not fix their eyes on the face of Moses on account of the glory of his face, a glory which is annulled. The reference is to Ex. 34:29-35 when Moses the second time came down from the mountain of the law with tablets of stone containing the ten commandments. There is no mention of Moses’ face shining with reflected glory when he came down the first time from the presence of God (Ex. 32:15-30). Then he had the law alone, but the second time Moses was able to communicate to the people along with the law that God is “merciful and gracious... keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that law mingled with grace, and it was this that was introduced with glory, God having given Moses a glimpse of His glory in connection with His promise of mercy for sinning Israel.

The children of Israel, however, could not bear to look on Moses’ face when he came down from Sinai, reflecting as it did some of the glory of God, nor were they able to understand the divine purpose in the giving of the law, or to apprehend the spiritual meaning of the system which Moses was directed to establish among them whereby relationship with God might be maintained. The letter of the law condemned those to whom it was given; further than that they understood very little, except as individual faith grasped the purpose of God to bless for His name’s sake.

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 3:8-18

The apostle has asked, “But if the ministry of death, in letters graven in stones, began with glory... how shall not rather the ministry of the Spirit subsist in glory? And he continues — “For if the ministry of condemnation be glory, much rather the ministry of righteousness abounds in glory. For also that which was glorified is not glorified in this respect, on account of the surpassing glory. For if that annulled was introduced with glory, much rather that which abides, subsists in glory” (verses 7-11, “New Translation” of J. N. Darby).

Is it not strange that so many Christians look upon the gospel as a sort of supplement to the Ten Commandments, and the system of law given through Moses, when the Scriptures, here and elsewhere (notably in the Epistle to the Galatians) set them in complete contrast? The system which Moses communicated was, as we have seen, the ministry of death and the ministry of condemnation; the gospel proclaimed since the cross of Christ is the ministry of the Spirit and the ministry of righteousness, eternal in its fruits; subsisting in glory; abounding in glory, a glory that surpasses the glory of the first covenant.

The gospel- you will find that the word in Rom. 1, verses 1, 9, 15 and 16, is the ministry of the Holy Spirit, because it is His presence and work which give character to the gospel. He has come to make God known through Christ. See verses 7-11 of John 16, the Acts (a preferable title for which, would be The Acts of the Holy Spirit, instead of The Acts of the Apostles) and Rom. 8; many other passages might be profitably examined.

The gospel is the ministry of righteousness, because Christ is the righteousness of the believer (Rom. 3:20-26). The law only condemned, but God is now giving righteousness; His own righteousness is upon all them that believe.

How great, how marvelous is the grace of God! O, that our souls may have an ever-deepening sense of this altogether unmerited favor of the Savior God! His own beloved Son has died, the just One for the unjust; our sins' judgment fell upon Him to the utmost. Think of those two utterances from the central cross:

"My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Matt. 27:46, and

"It is finished!" John 19:30.

The first, as He was bearing our sins; the second, when the judgment of them was past.

Now, justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. He has ascended in manhood to the very presence of God and is coming soon to claim all who have trusted in Him, that they may be with Him and share His glory. Meanwhile the Holy Spirit has come down to abide in and with believers; by Him we are baptized into one body, of which Christ is the Head; we are sealed with the Holy Spirit, who is the earnest of our inheritance. And so, left here for a season in the word, but possessing a sure and certain hope, the very thought of which moves the Christian's heart with longing desire, we are the epistle of Christ, written in our hearts by the Spirit of the living God. If the glory of God shone out in the giving of a mingled law and grace in the introduction of the first covenant with Israel, how much more is the present unfolding of His grace glorious!

Verses 12, 13. Having therefore such hope, the apostle uses much boldness or openness of speech, and not as Moses put a veil on his own face, so that the children of Israel should not fix their eyes on the end of that to be done away or annulled. What a contrast is here again set before us! The law condemned, and the sons of Israel, except where faith wrought in them, saw nothing in the sacrifices that pointed on (as we know they did) to the substitutional death of Christ. Nor was it the time for God to appear in grace; the law must continue to pronounce against sin.

Verses 14-16. But their thoughts have been darkened (literally, hardened), for unto this day the same veil remains in reading the old covenant, unremoved, which in Christ is annulled. But unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil lies upon their heart. But when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Israel should have relied upon the promises of God to the fathers of the nation; should have turned in heart and conscience at the message of their prophets, and should have gone to Him in deep conviction of sin, feeling that there was no escape for them from judgment to the full unless He should show mercy to the confessed sinner. But as a nation (not speaking of individuals, for God has always wrought in grace) they never did these things; they never have; the veil is still on their heart. When as a nation they shall turn to the Lord, the veil will be taken away; that day is coming, ever drawing nearer; but it will not be brought in by the preaching of the gospel, we have believed.

The young Christian will find it very profitable to study in connection with what we have been considering, the ninth, tenth and eleventh chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, wherein the Holy Spirit has explained the state of the Jews, of Israel. Two quotations from that portion of God's word must suffice here:

"But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that Stumbling Stone; as it is written, Behold I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense; and whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed." Rom. 9:31-33.

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." Rom. 11:25-27.

In verse 16 the long parenthesis of verses 7-16 (not noted as a parenthesis in the King James translation) comes to an end, and the inspired writer begins again where he had paused at the close of the sixth verse. The apostle had contrasted "the letter" and the Spirit; the first killing, the second giving life. The letter of the Word of God pronounces man's condemnation, but to the opened heart the Spirit of God brings not only light, but life, through the same word of truth.

In verse 17, then, verses 7 and 16 are connected; the Lord, to Whom Israel shall turn, is the Spirit who gives life. As another has expressed it,

"The revelation of the Lord is in the present power of the Spirit of God"; and again,

"Thus the apostle unites in the selfsame thought, the mind of God in the Word according to the Spirit; the glory of Christ who had been hidden in the Word under the letter; and the Holy Ghost Himself who gave its force, revealed that glory, and by dwelling and working in the believer enables him to enjoy it."

And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. This it is into which the believer is brought; all fear is removed; so we sometimes sing,

Verse 18 in the "New Translation" is, "But we all, looking on the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, are transformed according to the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit."

"As in a glass" is left out, not being found in the best copies from which translations are made. "Changed" becomes "Transformed" to better express the meaning of the word in the original Greek, which has been made almost without alteration into an English word, "metamorphosed." Four times only in the Scriptures is this Greek word used- twice in reference to the Lord when on the mount of transfiguration (Matt. 17:2, Mark 9:2), and twice (Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18), telling of a change which should be going on in every true believer on earth, producing in each one a likeness to Christ.

O, let us endeavor with purpose of heart, to give joy to Him in the practical working out of these Scriptures in our lives!

Christian Treasury: Volume 10, Perfection

The only perfection put before the Christian is conformity to Christ in glory. I have got Christ in glory as my life, and I am never satisfied until I am in that glory. The only perfection presented to the Christian a glorified Christ in heaven, and you will be conformed to Him when the time comes, but now, meanwhile, I must be as much like Him as I can. (See 2 Corinthians 3:18.)

Correspondence, Correspondence: 2 Cor. 2:14-16; The Unity of the Spirit

Ques. What does 2 Cor. 2:14-16 mean?

D. C.

Ans. Paul compares Christ to a conqueror in this passage, and himself as one led about in triumph by Him, and the gospel which he carried with him,the testimony of Christ,-the savor of His knowledge, in every place he went, to the sweet spices burned on the occasion of some great victory. Unto God, this gospel was ever a sweet savor of Christ, and to those who received it, and by it were saved, it was a savor of life unto life; and to those who rejected it, it was a savor of death unto death. Conquerors saved some alive, and put others to death, just to satisfy themselves, but God delights in those who honor His beloved Son.

Ques. What is "The unity of the Spirit?”

L. B.

Ans. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling," Eph. 4:4. All true believers are in this verse. When the Holy Spirit came down in Acts 2, He baptized the believers in that upper room into one body; by the Holy Spirit's presence in them, they were all livingly united to Christ, the Head on high, and to each other. This was a new thing on earth, the fruit of accomplished redemption, and as one after another believed the gospel and received the Holy Spirit, they were added to this body, whether they had been before Jews, Gentiles or Samaritans; and so it is up to this present time. Every believer is livingly a member of Christ, a member of the body of Christ, members one of another. (Rom. 12:4, 5; 1 Cor. 6:15, 17, 19). We are also children of God, the Father (Born. 8:15; Gal. 4:6; 1 John 3:1, 2).

Many believers do not realize these relationships for themselves. God declares them true of all His redeemed people of this present time. Believers, who lived and died before Christ came, did not possess these blessings, though they were born again as well as we. God can bestow His grace in these ways, because of accomplished redemption. (John 12:24; John 7:39; Acts 10:43, 44).

What an immense favor to be thus put in living union with our Lord Jesus Christ by the Spirit! What a new light it throws on the Church of God! We see ourselves united to Christ in glory, and to every true believer on earth. At the beginning, all were together; not so now, though they ought to be, for faith takes in the truth that God has made us one by that one Spirit, and we therefore should act as This is the unity of the Spirit. It is the inward realization and behavior consistent with the truth that we are one body.

Eph. 4 begins with the apostle beseeching those saints to walk worthy of the vocation, the new relationships he has unfolded to them, including the mystery that we, with Christ, are one. Some might wrongly think from verse 2 that this is impossible. considering their varied tempers, dispositions, etc., and it would be, unless the grace of God rules in their hearts and controls them, so he exhorts them with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, to endeavor to maintain this unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

It is not unity of Spirit only, but the unity of the Holy Spirit in the ways and truth of God. The unity of the body is formed and maintained by God. Our failures, or our obedience does not alter it, but if we do not seek to be led by the Lord, we must grieve and quench the Holy Spirit who will not fail to carry us through to the end of our journey in this life. What unhappiness in life this makes for many of the Lord's dear ones. The Holy Spirit ever puts the Lord before us as our object and center. His is the only name given to be gathered to. (Matt. 18: 20).

But though all are not now gathered to Him, yet we must think how He loves all His members, and love them as occasion is given. We may not like their ways in many things, nor can we walk with them in ways contrary to the Word of God, but we must in our hearts love them because they are dear to Him, and carefulness becomes us not to do anything that would hurt them, or influence them to walk in ways not pleasing to the Lord.

It is quite true, sad to say, that many of Christ's members are linked up with divisions and associations quite contrary to the Word of God (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1) out of which some of us, through grace, were delivered. And now, if true to the Lord, we could not go with them in paths of disobedience, but as far as the truth of God will allow us, we should walk with and help them to advance in the truth. This is our privilege toward every member. To be in divisions or sects is carnal (1 Cor. 3:3). It would not help them for us to go there, and we would put ourselves in wrong ways. It may seem egotistic, but Christ is the center! because He is the Head of the body, and there each member should be. He is our guide, and His Word is sufficient to show us the way. The Holy Spirit will not lead us any other way than by the Word.

Then Matt. 18:18-20 is important. If we maintain the unity of the Spirit, we recognize the action cf the two or three, who with Christ in their midst, are acting for Him. We must recognize that we are in one fellowship with all that are so gathered. It is not a union of assemblies but it is a recognition that they are all one though in different localities. If the man in 1 Cor. 5, was put away at Corinth, he was put away for the whole Church on earth, and letters of commendation are given to receive those coming from other places as strangers.

We see in Scripture, how serious has been the Church's departure from this truth of the unity of the Spirit in divisions (Rom. 16:17); in departure from the truth (2 Tim. 1:15); in self-will and self-exaltation (Acts 20:30).

The question for our souls is, Whose are we? Do we own the Lord's claims over us? Then we have no choice. If we ask Him "Where dwelleth Thou?" His answer to us will be, "Come and see" (John 1:38, 39).

This is in many ways a remarkable scripture. Everything, as is the case in this epistle, is traced up to God. (Compare chapter 5:18) It is “He who establisheth us with you in Christ” (, “attaches firmly to,” “connects firmly with”—see note in New Translation); and He who “hath anointed us is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” We have thus three characters of the Holy Spirit as dwelling in the believer. First, as the anointing. The sons of Aaron were anointed, after being sprinkled with the blood, in association with Aaron, who, as type of Christ, had been anointed, without blood, alone. So our blessed Lord was anointed at His baptism. (Matthew 3, compare Acts 10:38) Then, after His death, resurrection, and ascension, “having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost,” He “shed forth” the Spirit on His own on the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2:33) The precious ointment on the Head ran down to the skirts of His garments (Psalms 133:2); and thus, His followers were anointed of God. The effect of the anointing is to give intelligence (1 Corinthians 2:12; 1 John 2:20,27) and power. (Acts 10:38) The very name which God has permitted to be attached to believers—that of Christians—indicates this character of the Holy Spirit. The meaning of “Christ” is “the Anointed One,” and hence that of “Christians” is “anointed ones;” and it also points clearly to their association (not to say union) with Christ in the anointing, explaining doubtless the reason of our being reminded in this scripture that God has connected us with Christ.

We are also sealed by God. It should be borne in mind that, whether as anointing or sealing, it is the same Spirit, and takes place at the same time, though the character is different. When God seals the believer—and He seals every believer who has the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 10:43, 44; Ephesians 1:13, &c)—He marks them out as belonging to Christ (Romans 8: 9), and He secures them until the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:30) The Spirit as the seal thus points to ownership and security, God in His grace impressing His stamp upon, us, and making it at the same time inviolable. The Holy Spirit as dwelling in us is likewise the earnest; that is, He is the pledge and guarantee that we shall be put into possession of all that God has promised, the bestowment of a part which ensures the whole. In Ephesians He is “the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory” (Ephesians 1:14); in this epistle (2 Corinthians) He is the earnest rather of our resurrection bodies, of our being “clothed upon with our house which is from heaven... that mortality might be swallowed up of life.” (Chapter 5:1-5)

What a field of research then is opened up to us in such a scripture as this! And how few of us have comprehended, in any measure, our priceless possession in the gift of the Holy Ghost!

E. D.

Bible Treasury: Volume 4, Scripture Query and Answer: Sentence of Death

Q. 2 Cor. 1:9.—Does the sentence (answer) of death, spoken of by the apostle, mean nature's death, that is, the penalty of death? or does it mean that, by the cross, we have the sentence of death, so as to have no more hope or expectation in ourselves? W. H. G. W.

A. The whole of the beginning of 2 Corinthians is founded on the circumstance that the apostle had just been in a violent persecution, in which it seemed impossible to escape with life. The sentence referred to declares that this outward danger of being put to death had no power over him whatever, because within he held himself for a dead man, and trusted in Him that raiseth the dead. What was killing a dead man who only looked for the power of resurrection to be exercised? I take to be a judicial sentence, not an answer, though it has this sense also. He held himself as a child of Adam under sentence of death. It was a condemned, sentenced, nature. But he says more than this; he had this in himself—he held himself for dead. His own life was condemned for himself. As far as the natural man moves and wills it it is flesh; but holding the flesh as actually dead in one's own mind is holding the body to be dead, as far as any mental sentence can go. If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; and the Spirit is life.

Girdle of Truth: Volume 9, Place Which Conscience Holds in the Service of the Gospel, The

"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward."-2 Cor. 1:12

By conscience it is plain that the apostle here refers to that inward principle or power of the soul which takes notice of our motives and springs of action, and pronounces its secret judgment upon them. In this respect he declares himself to be perfectly free and clear, both as regards the world at large and the saints also, with whom he had a more intimate association.

There is, of course, another aspect of conscience, and which is of vast moment in the question of the soul's acceptance before God. This the apostle speaks of, when declaring the inadequacy of the Jewish sacrifices and ordinances. He says, " They could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience." (Heb. 9:9.) In relation to its cognizance of sin he shows that the claims of conscience can only be met by that which, in this respect, meets the judgment of God. The effect of Christ's work, therefore, on the conscience, in giving it peace before God, is necessarily based on the accomplishment of redemption. The two are presented in connection in Heb. 9:12-14. But redemption comes first. " By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." This as meeting the holy requirements of God in regard to sin. Then follows the effect on the conscience of him who believes. " How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." Here the voice of conscience is met by the value of the blood of Christ, as before it was presented as meeting the judgment of God; and the blessed result is that the soul is put into recognized relationship and intercourse with God.

This is an immense privilege, and under the law an inconceivable blessing, that the conscience of the worshipper and the claims of God's holiness should be brought into perfect harmony. It is this harmony between conscience in us and the claims of God's holiness that is the wonderful thing in the gospel. But the ground of it is plain. It is thus energetically expressed in the language of this epistle; " In those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year." It is plain that there can be no rest for conscience here. But that which faith rests upon is this: " Now once in the end of the world (or the ages) Christ bath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." This work He has accomplished; and on the ground of this it is argued, that "the worshipper once purged should have no more conscience of sins." The desert of sin having been met in God's presence in the sacrifice of Christ for sin, of which the sacrifices of the law were but dim and indistinct shadows, the blessed effect upon the conscience in us through faith, is correspondent to the efficacy of the work accomplished before God. That is, the worshipper is brought to see, through the testimony of the Spirit to the work of Christ, that sin has been so entirely judged in God's presence-where, of necessity, it must be judged, if judged at all-that there is nothing left for his faith but entire acceptance in the grace of God, who in infinite love gave His only-begotten Son for the express purpose of the accomplishment of this work. It is the difference between the sense of responsibility under the holy requirements of God, which is only the more oppressive and confounding the more the sensibilities of conscience are alive, and the liberty of grace, which points to an accomplished righteousness and an eternal redemption wrought by the death of the Lord Jesus, that Lamb of God's providing! " Thanks be unto God for this unspeakable gift."

The Apostle Peter, too, speaks of "the answer of a good conscience toward God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." It is the same thing in effect with that which has been already considered, i.e., that the conscience meets what is needed for its peace in the expiation of Christ's death, of which His resurrection was the grand pledge and proof. Conscience gets its answer by seeing Christ going down to death bearing our sins; and then seeing Him not only raised again from the dead, but " gone into heaven, and on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him."

But, in the place we are considering, conscience is presented in a very different aspect. It is not here conscience having its claims once and forever met by the redemption which is by Jesus Christ, but conscience holding its daily court to try the correspondence between the testimony of the gospel believed or proclaimed, and the inward feelings and aims of him by whom it is believed or proclaimed. In this view it is essential that conscience should be kept bright and unsullied by our constantly walking in the light as God is in the light, and having our daily course tested by the divine word and by the living example of the Lord Jesus. The apostle tells us it was his rejoicing, or boast, to have such a conscience; and it is exceedingly important for us to mark the force of this principle, and how entirely it is through God's grace our responsibility to maintain. Other things, as the apostle shows, in his service might be denied him, and may be denied to us, such as the measure of success he desired in the ministry of the gospel, or the satisfaction he could not but covet in the conduct or walk of those amongst whom his word had been received; but a good conscience, through grace, he could maintain, and thus find a rest to his spirit amidst all his sorrows and disappointments. And how serious a business this was with him is shown in his address to king Agrippa, where he says, " Herein do I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men." It was a thing that did not come to him without his care; nor will it so come to us. But it was what he cultivated with earnest diligence. He says he " exercised himself (i. e., practiced himself in a sort of gymnasium) in order to main-tam this, of which he might otherwise have been despoiled by the subtlety of the enemy, using to this end the circumstances and trials and temptations by which he was surrounded. Everything that we meet with is, or may be, an occasion for the exercise of conscience either toward God or toward men. On the other hand, he shows, in his address to Timothy, the danger in other things to which it exposes us if we fail to maintain a good conscience. " Holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck." The practical power of faith cannot be maintained in the soul where a good conscience is nut maintained. " If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things; if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." Hence we see the secret spring of all apostasy or departure from the Lord. The man who does not " add to his faith virtue," &c., will soon become blind, and not able to see afar off; i.e., beyond the horizon of this world. His faith will go, and he will " forget that he was purged from his old sins." His confidence toward God will give way, his faith will suffer shipwreck.

This then is what we see so strikingly exemplified in the apostle's course. I do not now allude to his earnest zeal and patient labors, and entire devotedness to the one cause he had espoused. These are manifest. I speak of this, that whatever might be the result of his labors, or whatever might be the estimate of men concerning them or him, he always maintained the consciousness of the most entire integrity and simplicity in his own bosom to fall back upon. As he appeals to the Thessalonians, " ye are witnesses and God also, how holily and justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." There it is not the testimony of his conscience only, but that which is the result of a good conscience, the collateral testimony to the truth itself, which is found in the consistency of those who present it.

It was not, however, that he did not recognize a higher standard, in the truth itself, to which conscience was to be conformed; or that he did not appeal to a deeper judgment of himself than conscience would reach. This he plainly shows where he says, " I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself [I am conscious of nothing, i. e., of no fault]; yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord." That is as to faithfulness or unfaithfulness and the ultimate awards of Christ to His servants (for this is the point of his argument), it is not a matter of• human judgment at all, but of the final judgment of the Lord. And he adds, " Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God." It will not be human approval at all, nor appointed by human judgment, but praise to each one, who will then be the subject of praise, will be from God. Still, as he owns, he could not look on to this judgment if lie had not been clear in his conscience now.

It is remarkable the place which the apostle gives to the possession of a good conscience, in a practical sense, in his request to the Hebrews for their prayers on his behalf. He says, " Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly." (Heb. 13:18.) This seems very bumble ground to take; too humble for the spirit of fanaticism, but not for the quiet, healthful spirit of the gospel. In truth there is everything in it. Given that the gospel is true, and that its revelations are directly from heaven, what is there left for those by whom it is ministered or professed, but the maintenance of that simplicity of purpose and inward conformity of feeling in relation to it which makes its appeal to the scrutiny of Him who is light, and who has called us to walk in the light? Success is not at our bidding. Circumstances are not under our control, but under the control of God. The sphere of His service is not in our own choice, but in His appointment. But, in all these conditions, the one thing to be maintained-and it is all that rightly can be done is the possession of a good conscience. Even an apostle could do no more. Hence, Peter exhorts Christians generally as to their conduct in the world, and amidst persecutions and suffering and calumnies of enemies, thus, " Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ." (1 Peter 3:15,16.)

In writing to Timothy, the apostle says, " Now the end of the commandment [or, charge, for he is referring to the words of verse 3, "that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine," &c.] is charity out of a pure heart and of a good conscience and of faith unfeigned." Love was to be the spring and the issue of all his service. But we cannot fail to see how this love is guarded, and by what holy and conservative principles its integrity is to be maintained. It is love indeed. But it is " love out of a pure heart"-a heart that, in the exercise of love, connects itself with the truth; that remembers the declaration that God is light as well as love. It is love out of a good conscience too. Love that must be controlled, not by the softness of natural feeling, but by uprightness of heart as subject at all times and in all things to the will of God. It is love also " with faith unfeigned"-that is, a faith that honestly looks to God's word and Spirit for its foundation and its guide. He adds, " from which some having swerved, have turned aside unto vain jangling," &c. In a word, the apostle shows that if right moral feelings be absent froth our walk and service, no amount of knowledge or zeal will keep us from being turned aside from the right path.

So far conscience: but what was this inward testimony of conscience to? To this, " that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God," the apostle had his conversation in the world, and more abundantly toward those who believed. His whole course in the world, in connection with the gospel, exhibited these characteristics, simplicity and singleness of aim. He was sincere as a persecutor, but that is not our point. Genuine and unmixed, as examined in the light of God, was the purport of his heart; and there was nothing covert or tortuous in his ways. There was a wisdom, a practical wisdom, I mean, which strongly marked his course in many instances.

But it was not the politic wisdom of men which seeks to bend the minds of others to its purpose by acting on their natural feelings, and which is ready to seize upon their weaknesses and prejudices, even, in order to carry its point. The wisdom of the apostle was the re. verse of this. It was not " fleshly wisdom," but the grace of God which marked and controlled his path. I know but of one seeming exception to this, when he said before the council, " I am a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee." But this did not turn to very good account. What he sought was not a place for himself in the estimation of others-not even amongst those who were most his debtors in the truth. In all his labors prosecuted with all his zeal and ardency of affection, he desired only a place for Christ, and for the power of the truth with which he was entrusted. This is abundantly seen in his appeal to the Corinthians. " I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." (2 Cor. 12:15.)

The apostle's conscience was not occupied with the foolish punctilios which marked the Church of a later age, but took its character from the fullness of the grace which he proclaimed, and was the reflex of his association with Christ and God. It was a heavenly conscience, though dealing with his path on earth; and this is the kind of conscience which the perfect revelation of the Christian's place and portion in Christ demands. Hence nothing can be more important than to realize the place in which divine grace has set us, because our walk here in the world and our conscience in all its exercises is to accord with our relationship to God, and the full and perfect disclosure which He has made to us of His counsels and will. May we learn more and more what it is to be " blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." (Phil. 2:15,16..)

Things New and Old: Volume 20, 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.” 2 Cor. 1:3, 4.

Edification: Volume 3, Answer to a Correspondent.

Will you please say a few words on 2 Corinthians 1:21, 22 in your magazine. — Birmingham.

YOU do not indicate what special point is before your mind in making this request, so the few words we say can only be of a general nature.

In these verses the Apostle is showing that one great mark of the Christian is stability. He had thought of visiting Corinth some time before writing this letter, but had not done so. Certain adversaries took advantage of this change of plans to insinuate that he was a man marked by vacillation and insincerity or lightness (verses 15-17). This charge he rebuts. He was not a man vacillating between yea and nay, even as the Son of God, who was the theme of his Gospel, was not yea and nay. In Christ the whole will of God is accomplished and stands fast, even as ultimately He will put the finishing touch, the Amen, to it all (verses 18-20). Paul, the herald of the Gospel, shared in the stability which the Gospel announces.

But not only so, the Gospel imparts its stability to all who receive it. We it is, who have believed, for faith is that which springs up in the hearts of men, yet behind our faith lies the work of God, for He it is who has “established us in Christ,” or “connected us firmly with Christ.”

Intimately connected with this is the gift of the Spirit which we have of God. There is but one Spirit, and but one giving of the Spirit to the believer, yet the Spirit when given may be viewed in three different ways, according to the various capacities and offices which He fills.

First, He is the anointing. There is here a little play upon words in the original which is lost in our translations. If we could say in English, “He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath ‘christed’ us, is God” we should see it. The Lord Jesus is the Anointed One and we, as established in Him, are anointed ones. It is the anointing of the Spirit which gives us capacity and power to understand and handle the things of God.

Secondly, the same Spirit is the seal of God placed upon us, and in us. Thus we are marked out as God’s, and secured for the day of glory that is coming. Our place in that coming world is secure for we are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Thirdly, the Spirit is the earnest of all that is coming. He conveys to our hearts a foretaste. The things themselves lie in the future though already revealed to faith, yet we may know even now something of their reality and blessedness by the Spirit given as the earnest of them all.

Thus established in Christ, anointed and sealed with the Spirit and possessing the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, we too are marked by stability in a world of instability and change. Thus it is that there can be “the glory of God by us” as is stated in verse 20.

Edification: Volume 9, Our Scripture Portion.

(2 Corinthians 1: 19- 2:11.)

To be of any profit this article mast be read in connection with a Bible, opened at the above passage.

THERE is a very definite contrast between the “yea and nay” of verse 19 and the “yea and ... Amen, of the following verse. The former indicates that which is vacillating and contradictory: the latter that which is definitely affirmed, and then unswervingly confirmed in due season.

Man is fickle. With him it is frequently yes on one occasion and no the next. Moreover man is contradictory when it is a question of God and His will Again and again does he break down, and consequently negative all that God desires for him. His reply to God’s will is uniformly “Nay.” The opposite of this is found in Christ, for “in Him was, yea.” He said “Yes” to every purpose and desire of God.

And not only was the yea found in Him but the Amen also. He not only assents to all the will of God. expressed in His promises, but He proceeds to carry all out, and bring all to full and final completion. In Him the thing is clone, and shall be clone, until a great Amen can he put to all God’s pleasure so that God is glorified. And further. He obtains a people who become His servants for the carrying out of the Divine will: so that the two words, “by us.” can he added at the end of verse 10. What glorious stability and security is here! What confidence, what repose garrisons the heart that rests in Christ!

The Son of God, preached by Paul among the Corinthians, bore this wonderful character. Hence the solidity and certainty of his preaching. Hence also the stability which characterized Paul himself, and which is properly the character of every true Christian. We have been established in Christ. And it is God who has done it. What man does, he may yen-likely undo at some subsequent period. What God does, He does forever.

We are thus firmly established in Christ — the Christ in whom is established all the counsel of God — by an act of God. Let us lay hold of this fact for it lifts the whole thing on to a plane immeasurably above man. We have received too, the anointing of the Spirit equally by an act of God.

Bear in mind that the significance of “Christ” is “the Anointed One.” So verse 21 shows us that we are anointed as those who are established in the Anointed One. The Anointing reaches us as those who are connected with Him. When Aaron was anointed the “precious ointment” that was poured upon his head even “to the skirts of his garments” (Psa. 133:2). Which thing was a type or allegory: for the grace and power of our exalted Head has been carried down to us His members by the anointing of the Spirit. Thus it is — and only thus — that the promises of God can be carried into effect to the glory of God “by us.” It is Christ Himself who will bring to perfect fruition the promises of God in the coming day; but He will do it by us. That is, He will carry things out in detail through His saints, who are His anointed members. If only our hearts lay hold of this, we shall he very much lifted above this present evil world.

But the Spirit of God is not only the Anointing: He is also the Seal and the Earnest. As the Anointing He connects us with Christ. As the Seal He marks us off as being wholly for God. We are the Divine possession and marked as such, just as the farmer, who purchases sheep, at once puts a mark upon them that they may be identified as his. In the book of Revelation we read how the coming “beasts” will cause all to “receive a mark” (13:16). Those who do receive that mark will have to face the fierce wrath of God. as the next chapter shows: and chapter 7, of the same book reveals to us that God anticipates the wicked action of the beasts by putting “the seal of the living God” on His own.

God “hath also scaled us,” and we may well rejoice in this blessed fact. But do we always bear in mind its serious implications? We cannot carry two marks, if the one mark, that has been placed upon us, is God’s mark. He is a jealous God. The mark that is upon us is exclusive. If we attempt to carry also the world’s mark — to say nothing of the devil’s mark — we shall provoke Him to jealousy, and lay up much discipline and sorrow for ourselves. Take great care. O young Christian! for the world is ever seeking to put its unholy marks upon you, as though you belonged to it. You do not belong to it, you belong to God; so be careful not to wear the seals and badges it wishes to put upon you.

Then again, the Holy Spirit is the Earnest in our hearts. If as the Anointing, we view Him in connection with Christ; and, as the Seal, more in connection with God the Father, the Earnest indicates what He is in Himself. Presently, when the promises of God reach their fulfillment, we shall be in the full flood-tide energy of the Spirit of God. But today He is the Earnest of all this in our hearts. “In our hearts, notice: not merely in our bodies or in our minds. Our bodies are indeed His temple. Our minds may happily be suffused with His light. But in the deepest affections of our hearts we have the earnest—the pledge and foretaste of the glory that is coming. By the Holy Ghost given to us, we may realize anticipatively something of all the good that shall be ours. When the promises of God arc brought to fruition to His glory, and by us.

In these three verses (20-22) we have been conducted to a wonderful climax of blessedness: and it all springs out of the seemingly small matter of the Apostle being obliged to make it plain that he was not a man of light mind, promising things that he had no real intention of performing. He did not merely defend himself. He improved the occasion to some purpose.

Having done so, he returns in verse 23 to the more personal matter out of which it all sprang. Another thing had most evidently weighed with him, and helped to divert him for the moment from another visit to Corinth. He had no wish to come amongst them only to find, himself bound to act in severity by reason of sin and grave disorder still being found in their midst. Hence he had waited until he had news of the effect of the earlier epistle he had written to them. He hoped for better things. It was not that he assumed dominion over their faith but rather that he was just a “helper.” or “fellow-worker,” to the end that they might be delivered and rejoice.

The chapter closes with the words, “by faith ye stand.” This is a fact that we ought very much to lay to heart. If he had assumed dominion over their faith in any matter, their faith in that respect would have ceased to be. He would have merely ordered them to do certain things

(quite right things, doubtless) and they would have clone them, not as the fruit of the exercise of faith, but mechanically. There would then have been no faith in their actions, but just the mechanical action as a kind of outward shell. And then one day they would have scandalized everyone by collapsing; just as a but in the tropics collapses suddenly, when all the insides of the supporting posts have been eaten away by the white ants.

There are plenty of Christian folk today who would much like to live their lives on somebody else's faith. They would like to be told what to do. Let somebody else have the exercise, and solve the problem, and issue orders as to what is the correct thing! They will be good and obedient and do as they are told. But it does not work, save disastrously. It is by faith we stand, not by somebody else's faith. By somebody else's faith we fall. And further it is not good for the somebody else. Such forceful individuals begin to love having dominion over the faith of their brethren, and so becoming little popes. Consequently it ends disastrously for them.

The Apostle had made up his mind that he would postpone his visit until it could be made under happier circumstances: and now, as he wrote this second letter, the heaviness was passing and brighter things coming into view. His first letter had made them sorry, as he intended it should, and their sorrow now made him glad, as verse 2 of chapter 2 shows. It had been sent ahead on its mission so that when he did come amongst them it might be with confidence established, and with joy.

In verse 4 we get a very touching and valuable glimpse of the manner and spirit of Paul's writing. Reading his earlier epistle we can discern its powerful and trenchant style; we can notice how calculated it was to humble them with its touches of holy irony. We should hardly have known however that he wrote it "out of much affliction and anguish of heart... with many tears," had he not told us this. But so it was. Foolish and carnal though they were, yet he loved them with a tender affection. Consequently the inspired Word of God flowed to them through the human channel of a loving and afflicted heart, and was mightily effective. Would to God that we were followers of Paul in this, and learned the holy art through him! How much more effective we should be.

What a deluge of controversial writings has flowed through the church's history! What polemics have been indulged in! Anti how little, comparatively speaking, has been accomplished by them. We venture to believe that if only one tenth had been written, but that tenth had been produced by men of God, writing with much affliction and anguish of heart, and with many tears, because of that which made the writing needful, ten times as much would have been accomplished for the glory of God.

After all, love lies as the rock-bottom foundation of everything. Not cleverness, not ability, not sarcasm, not anger, but LOVE is God's way of blessing.

It might have seemed harsh of Paul to call the evil-doer at Corinth, "that wicked person," and to instruct that he be put away from their midst. But his loving heart caused his eves to shed tears as he penned the words. Paul's words and tears were effective and the punishment was inflicted, as verse 6 states: and inflicted not by Paul merely, or by one or two of the more spiritual at Corinth but by the whole mass of the saints. Thus the man was made to feel that they all abhorred and disowned his sin. His conscience was reached. He was brought to repentance.

This of course, is the end that discipline is designed to reach. Erring believers are not disciplined merely for the sake of punishment, but that they may be brought to repentance and so restored, both in their souls, and to their place of fellowship amongst God's people. This happy end was reached in the case of the offender at Corinth.

How unfrequently is it reached today! All too often the putting away is done in a hard judicial spirit. The anguish of heart, the tears are absent, and the offender becomes more occupied with the harsh manner of his brethren than with his own delinquencies. Hence his repentance is a long way off — to his loss and theirs.

The action taken at Corinth was so effective that the man was brought himself into much affliction and anguish of heart. Indeed the danger now was that the Corinthian assembly would in their zeal against his sin, overlook his sorrow, and not forgive him administratively by restoring him to his place in their midst. Now therefore Paul has to write to them urging them to do this, and thus confirm their love towards him. It was possible otherwise that he might be overwhelmed with overmuch sorrow. Sorrow for sin is good; yet there is a point where it may become excessive and harmful — a point where sorrow should cease and the joy of forgiveness be known. The joy of the Lord, and not sorrow for sin, is our strength.

Verse 10 shows that if the assembly at Corinth forgave the man their forgiveness carried with it Paul's. And again, that if Paul forgave any, by reason of his apostolic authority, he did so for their sakes, and as acting on behalf of Christ. The forgiveness spoken of in this verse may be termed administrative forgiveness. It is the forgiveness of which the Lord spoke in such scriptures as Matthew 16:19, where it is apostolic; Matthew 18:18, where it is vested in the assembly; John 20:23, where it is confirmed to the apostolic company by the Lord in His risen condition. In 1 Corinthians 5 we have a case in which the powers of "binding" or "retaining" were exercised. In our chapter we have an example of "loosing" or "remitting."

Paul wrote thus not merely for the sake of the sorrowing brother, but for the sake of all, lest Satan should get an advantage over all of them. Note it well! The very devil himself in some cases likes to see believers righteous overmuch, at the expense of "the meekness and gentleness of Christ." The Apostle could add, "for we are not ignorant of his devices." Alas that so often we cannot truthfully say that! We are ignorant of his devices, and though our intentions are good we fall into traps that he sets.

What wisdom we need to hold the balance evenly in practical matters, between the claims of righteousness and love. How necessary to remember that all discipline is inflicted in righteousness, whether by God Himself or by men, in order that repentance may be produced: and that when it is produced love claims the right to hold sway. Let us not continue to smite in discipline a repentant soul, lest we come under Divinely inflicted discipline ourselves.

F. B. Hole.

Here is the first truth of our holy faith — "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh." He who was born at Bethlehem is God, and "God with us." God — there lies the majesty; "God with us," there lies the mercy. God — therein is glory; "God with us," therein is grace. God alone might well strike us with terror; but "God with us" inspires us with hope and confidence.

C.H.S.

Edification: Volume 9, Our Scripture Portion.

(2 Cor. 1:1-20.)

To be of any profit this article must be read in connection with a Bible, opened at the above passage.

THE second epistle to the Corinthians was evidently written not very long after the first. In the closing chapter of the first, Paul intimates that he wrote from Ephesus, where an effectual door of service had been opened to him of the Lord, and where adversaries abounded. In the opening chapter of the second he alludes to the great riot in the Ephesian theater which closed his service of over two years in that great city; and later in the epistle he indicates some of his subsequent movements. It may be well to trace these at the outset as they throw light on some of the remarks he makes.

Before the riot occurred the purpose of the Apostle was to pass through Macedonia and Achaia on his way to Jerusalem, and later to go to Rome. Acts 19:12, proves this, and there is confirmation of the first part of the plan in 1 Cor. 16:5, and in verse 15 and 16 of our chapter. However he had been diverted from what he had planned. First of all the riot led to a hurried departure for Macedonia. He got as far as Troas, where again the Lord opened a door before him (see 2:12, 13). As yet he was too disturbed in mind about the Corinthians, and the possible effect on them of his first epistle, so instead of passing by them into Macedonia (1:16) he sailed for Macedonia direct. When he got into Macedonia things were even more disquieting, but presently he was cheered by Titus with good tidings as regards the Corinthians. This gave him great relief and prompted the second epistle which we are now to consider.

During the stay at Ephesus, Timothy had been sent in advance into Macedonia (Acts 19:22), which accounts probably for the omission of his name at the beginning of the first epistle. By the time the second was written both Paul and Timothy were in Macedonia, and hence his name appears.

The opening salutation given, the Apostle at once gives expression to the thankfulness and comfort and encouragement that filled his heart. He traces it all back to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. Comfort had been poured into the heart of Paul, and he returned it Godward in the form of blessing or thanksgiving.

This however was not the end of it, for it also flowed outward for the help of others. Having been through heavy tribulation and received abundant comfort from God, he turned it to account and traded with it for the comfort of those similarly suffering.

This is, without a doubt, an important principle in the ways of God. Whatever spiritual favor we receive from God, whether comfort, or joy, or warning, or instruction, or anything else, we are not to treat it as though it were entirely personal to ourselves, but rather as something granted us to be shared with others. We are never to forget the oneness of the saints of God.

Indeed, we believe that we really never possess things in their fullness until we do begin to pass them on to others. A Christian poet has said,

The poet’s word is undoubtedly true. If we do not use what we have, we ultimately lose it. Again and again, does the Lord pass His servants through trying circumstances in order that they may learn valuable lessons and obtain the needed grace; and having done so, that thus qualified in an experimental way, they may become more efficient in helping others.

Another important principle comes to light in verse 5. God suits and proportions the consolation to the sufferings. If the sufferings are slight the consolation is slight. If the sufferings abound, the consolations abound. The sufferings, be it noted, are “of Christ.” That is, they are not only endured for His sake, but they are of the same character as those which He endured because of His absolute identification with God and His interests. Such sufferings, the sufferings of Christ in His people, are always followed or accompanied by consolation, which is ministered through Christ.

In verse 3 to 7, one word occurs (in various forms) no less than ten times. It is translated six times by comfort, and four times by consolation. It indicates a “cheering and supporting influence,” and in Darby’s New Translation is rendered consistently by “encourage” or “encouragement.” A slightly different form of the word is applied to the Holy Spirit by our Lord, and in John 14, 15, 16, is translated Comforter.” In the same verses the tribulation, the trouble, the afflictions, the suffering, are only mentioned seven times: so that even in these verses the encouragement over-abounds in comparison with the sufferings. Without a doubt, herein lay the supernatural fortitude of the martyrs. Called of God to face unusual suffering, they were carried through it on a wave of unusual encouragement. The cheering and supporting influence abounded in their cases.

There is very little persecution from the world today in the English-speaking regions. For a century and a half great quietude and toleration has prevailed without; and it has synchronized with a period of disintegration and doctrinal laxity within. The sufferings that characterize the saints are mainly of the order spoken of in the first epistle, “many are weak and sickly among you,” or else troubles connected with trying circumstances, and the like. The sufferings of which Paul speaks in these verses are very largely unknown by us. The encouragement of which he speaks is also very largely unknown. The saint overflowing with encouragement in the midst of severe persecution is a sight but rarely seen. This we say to our shame, and our loss as well.

In verse 6 and 7 the Apostle links the Corinthians with himself in a very beautiful way. Carnal though they had been and feeble as to many things, they yet had partaken in sufferings akin to those of the Apostle, and this fact in itself might yield them encouragement. Then in addition it was certain that in due season they would partake also of the encouragement.

This leads Paul to allude plainly to the special tribulation he had suffered in Ephesus, the capital of Asia. In Acts 19, the occasion is called, “no small stir,” but his words in verse 8 reveal to us that it was even more critical and full of danger than we should deduce from Luke’s account of it. Death evidently stared him in the face. Later in the epistle he recounts his experiences as a servant of the Lord, and speaks of being “in deaths oft.” This was one of the times when he was in death.

The riotous mob in Ephesus put upon him the sentence of death, and did their best to execute it. The Apostle met the situation with the "sentence of death" in himself. Thereby he was brought to nothing as to any hope or trust in himself, or in any powers that he possessed. He was shut up to God and His power. The God whom he trusted is the God who raises the dead, and who therefore would undo all that the mob might have done, had they been permitted to do their worst.

God however had intervened and held them in check. Paul and his friends had been delivered on that day, and were still being delivered. The Apostle did not contemplate the danger ceasing. The rather he knew that it would continue throughout his course. So he anticipated that he yet would be delivered, and that the Corinthians would have the privilege of helping to this end with their prayers. Then indeed God's gracious answers would call forth a larger volume of thanksgiving. If many had joined in the request, many would join in the giving of thanks.

What gave him such boldness in requesting the prayers of the Corinthians was that he had a good conscience as to his whole manner of life. The simplicity and sincerity which are of God had marked him, and the wisdom which is of the flesh had been ruled out. This was true as to his general attitude in the world, but especially true as regards his course amongst the saints. He knew that in thus boasting he was only stating what the Corinthians themselves recognized right well. There had been those amongst the Corinthians who had aimed at defaming him, and at prejudicing them against him. The effect of this had by now been partly removed, for, as he says in verse 14, "Ye have acknowledged in part that we are your rejoicing." That is, they had acknowledged in part that he was their boasting, even as they were his, in the day of the Lord Jesus. They were thus in considerable measure in happy accord.

In this delicate way does he allude to the great improvement that had come over the feelings of the Corinthians towards himself since the dispatch of his first epistle. But let us take to heart the fact that he based his request for prayer upon the simplicity and godly sincerity of his life. We hear Christians pretty frequently asking prayer from one and another. Sometimes we ask for prayer ourselves. But can we always ask for it upon this basis? We fear not; and possibly this accounts for a good deal of prayer and intercession being unanswered. For our lives, and all the secret motives governing them, are perfectly open to the eye of God.

Even before, when writing the first epistle, Paul had confidence that the relations between himself and them, though for the moment imperilled would be of this happy order. Because of this he had proposed to visit them previously, even before he took his journey into Macedonia. However things had been ordered otherwise, and the projected visit had not taken place. Here let us pause a moment. Even an apostle, you see, had plans disarranged and upset; and was led of God to record that fact for us in Scripture. The change, as we shall see presently, though not exactly ordered of God was overruled of God for ultimate blessing. Guidance may reach the servant in many ways; and if he misses direct guidance he may yet find even his mistakes overruled for blessing. Our concern should be to maintain that simplicity and godly sincerity of which verse 12 speaks.

Now those who were opponents used even this change of plans as a ground of attack. They insinuated that it indicated that Paul was a man of lightness, and shallowness of purpose: that he had no depth of character: that he would say one thing today and another thing tomorrow. The Apostle knew this and therefore he asked the question of verse 17. Was he a man swayed merely by fleshly impulse, so as to be pulled easily in this direction or that — saying yes today, and no tomorrow?

He answered this question by an appeal to his preaching when first together with Sylvanus and Timotheus, he came amongst them. There had been nothing indefinite or contradictory about that. When he says, "Our word toward you was not yea and nay," he alludes apparently to the manner of his preaching. Then in the following verse he mentions the great theme of his preaching — Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In Him everything has been firmly established for God. In Him is eternal stability.

Having such a theme. Paul's preaching was marked by a rock-like definiteness and certainty. The same definiteness and certainty should mark all the preaching of the Word today. Modernistic preachers, in the very nature of things, can only preach ideas — ideas based upon the latest pronouncements of speculative science, which are Forever changing. Their word most emphatically is, "yea and nay." The statements of today, strongly affirmed, will be negatived before very many years have passed, just as the statements of not many years ago are negatived today.

We need not be unduly perturbed by the modernists. Their little day will soon be over, their vacillating pronouncements silenced. Let us be careful to preach the unchanging Christ in an unchanging way.

F. B. Hole.

The Springing Well: Volume 5 (1902), Our Bible Portion: The God of All Comfort

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God, For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."— 2 Cor. 1:3-5.

HE is the God of all comfort, the source of every kind of consolation we receive now and for ever: and the last verse intimates that the suffering we endure is the natural and necessary result of His Son's suffering on the Cross. Elsewhere He is described as the

"God that comforteth those that are cast down."—2 Cor. 7:6.

The word comfort in these passages is the one from which "Paraclete" is derived, and hence the glorious God is pleased to reveal Himself as called to the side of His children who are in trouble, that He may render them needed help. He sends both the trouble and the help, and therefore the Psalmist says, "Thou, which has showed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side."—Ps. 71:20, 21. Again, he writes by the Spirit, "Cast thy burden [margin, gift, that which He has given thee] upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee."—Ps. 55:22: the word sustain being also rendered in other places, bear, feed, guide, nourish, provide and receive. Thus, when God gives a burden, it is that we may roll it upon His strong arm, and we look up with the cry, "Remember the word unto Thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope. This is my

comfort in my affliction: for Thy word hath quickened me.”— Ps. 119:49, 50.

He not only comforts, but He sympathizes with those upon whom He lays the rod. Thus we read, “Comfort ye, comfort ye, My people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem.”—Isa. 40:1, 2. Here the first definition of the word comfort is “to sigh, to mourn, to grieve over, to feel compassion for, to pity,” while the word, “Speak comfortably,” is, literally, “Speak to the heart.” He expects the tenderness of His own heart, when He sends the rod of gentle chastening, to reach the heart of His suffering child, and drive away all fear. The Son of His love has taught us that two sparrows were sold for a farthing, and so cheap and worthless were they that if a man bought four, the seller threw in another for nothing: “and not one of them is forgotten before God. But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.”—Luke 12:6, 7. To His disciples, in the midst of great perils and privations, He said, “There shall not a hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls.” —Luke 21:18, 19.

By Faith Ye Stand, By Faith Ye Stand: Part 1

2Co 1:24IN the first recorded intercourse between the Lord and Moses, after Moses had pitched the tabernacle outside the camp, when "the Lord spake with him face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend," Moses was emboldened to ask, "Show me now thy way." Surely, as Moses himself afterward testifies, " His work is perfect, for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He;" yet His way of dealing with His people after their failure, is strongly contrasted with man's way, and proves that "His way is higher than our way," and blessed in proportion to its highness.

This way of God is remarkably carried out by the Apostle Paul in his conduct to the saints of Corinth. The manner in which he addresses himself to deal with them, distracted as they were by divisions, debating even the fundamental doctrine of the resurrection, and conniving at a gross outrage on moral decency, is replete with instruction. Before he utters one word of direct reproof, he seeks to establish their souls in the faithful grace of God. He thanks God for the grace given to them by Christ Jesus. He acknowledges their many gifts; needed indeed for the time, but not essential; because there would be no need of such gifts at the coming (or, revelation, marg.) of our Lord Jesus Christ. He leads their souls to Him to confirm them blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, and reminds them of the faithfulness of God who had called them into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ. Surely this is the divine way. It is ever the way of man to reason from himself Godward, but the way of God is the reverse. He acts from Himself and for Himself. Christians are very apt to use the way of man, by reasoning from man to God-because the constitutional disease of Christians is unbelief. They are ready enough to doubt their own saintship; and when others would press on them their failures as a proof that they are not saints at all, they are thrown off their stability; and reproof and correction entirely lose their power.

In this Epistle, although we find the absence of direct reproof at the outset, it is remarkable that, in the very act of establishing their souls, there is indirect reproof. The Apostle, under the guidance of the Spirit, could at a glance survey their condition, and whilst he thanks God for the grace and gifts bestowed on them—there is a silent rebuke of their short-coming in the grace, and misuse of the gifts. The Apostle could not say to them as to the Philippians; "I thank God for every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all, making request with joy, far your fellowship in the Gospel from the first day until now." He found cause indeed for thanksgiving in the grace of God to the Corinthians, but none for their fellowship in the Gospel. They lacked the stability in the grace of the Gospel which characterized the Philippians. Pride of knowledge and pride of gifts, made them forget that knowledge (at best but in part), and gifts of the highest order would cease at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was Christ Himself, and not His gifts, which would confirm them blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ; and it was the fidelity of God who had called them to which they had to look, and not to the acquirements of their teachers.

After this (1 Cor. 1:10) the Apostle plainly tells them of the report which had reached him of the disorder among them, but he makes no direct mention of authority — till the end of the fourth chapter. "Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. What will ye? Shall I come unto you with a rod; or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?" Instead of using direct apostolical authority, he addresses himself to their consciences pointedly and yet delicately. Thus, in the case of the incestuous person, he mentions the crime which they were tolerating as unheard of even among the heathen. They were puffed up instead mourning. He would have them act in concert with him—but he does not disturb them from their standing, as being unleavened. In the matter of going to law before the heathen tribunals, he shames them that they could not find a wise man among themselves to settle their disputes, and that they had forgotten their high destiny of judging the world; and then very justly indeed insinuates that there was defect in their apprehension of grace. Wearied almost, at the low tone of their questions, he interrupts his replies in the seventh chapter by the solemn and weighty sentence, ver. 29-32. The liberty resulting from knowledge he denies not, but he contrasts it with the thoughtfulness resulting from love, chap. 8. To the question raised as to his Apostleship, he appeals to their saintship as the seal of it, chap. 9. To guard them against the danger of relying on outward ordinances, chap. 10., he refers to the conduct of Israel, with the delicate introduction " I would not have you ignorant, brethren." Again, after the admonition" Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall "—with what address does he allude to their special danger of becoming involved in idolatry by the desire of social intercourse. " I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say." In noticing irregularities in their assemblies for worship, chap. 11., he praises them, first, for their general attention to his directions (ver. 2); and when he has to advert to their gross disorder with respect to the Lord's supper, he commences thus: " Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not." In treating of spiritual gifts, where their very folly had marred their very end and use, he commences, “I would not have you ignorant” (chap. 12.); and in correcting their grievous ignorance of the resurrection, he introduces his discourse with the declaration of the Gospel he had preached unto them.

Thus, where there was the fullest consciousness of authority, so that he might have carried it with a high hand, using the rod, there was the patient exercise of grace. His object was not the assertion of his authority, but the awakening of their conscience, and the calling out their faith into exercise. The immediate presence of the Apostle at Corinth would doubtless have had the effect of silencing faction. He might have authoritatively ruled the many points in discussion, some bowing through real respect, others through fear; but this would have defeated his object. His authority, and with it himself, would have come in between their consciences and God; and thus he would have habituated them to bow to some present authority, and to feel it as a positive need, so that conscience and faith would never be exercised at all. The Apostle, with unquestionable authority, and the full consciousness of the possession of it, saw the danger of this and avoided it. The history of the

Church has too plainly proved the reality of the danger, by Christians doing that which the Apostle avoided. They have themselves constituted an authority to which they bow, but by the acknowledgment of which they effectually hinder the exercise of faith and conscience. Is there an ordered and regulated society of Christians to be found which has not interposed its own authority, where the Apostle would not introduce his, and in which personal influence is not extensively used? If personal influence ever could be safely used, it surely might have been by the Apostle; but he acted in a manner even to lose it, because his object was Christ and the real blessing of saints,—not himself and a party of Christians. The presence and influence of the Apostle had kept the Galatian churches from allowing the introduction of the Judaizing error. “It is good to be zealously affected, always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you." It was his presence, and not faith and conscience, which had kept out the evil; so that when he was gone, there was no real barrier against the evil. In the Philippians, we find the happy contrast to this: " Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Here we find faith and conscience in exercise before God. It was not Paul, but God who worked in them. Happy the condition of saints when thus their souls are kept by faith in immediate contact with God. They will then readily own any authority, and profit by any ministry which is of God; but they will not allow either the one or the other to displace God.

The delay of the Apostle in carrying into execution his promised visit (1 Cor. 4:18-21), had laid him open to the suspicion of fickleness (2 Cor. 1:17, of being bold when away, cowardly when present, and of trying to terrify them by letters (2 Cor. 10:1, 10, 11; 12:14; 13:1, 2). In the Second Epistle, he explains his conduct; it was regulated "not by fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God." He had to wait upon God and to do the work of God, in God's way and God's time. He might indeed apparently compromise his character for steadfastness in his purpose, but the grace of God and the wellbeing of saints were more in his estimation than his own character. His intention was to have visited them before this, that they might have “a second benefit "—and what hindered? Nothing positive—as when Satan had hindered his intention of visiting the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 2:17,18); but God " waiteth to be gracious," and he had to wait. Doubtless there was wholesome discipline in all this to the Apostle. His letter appeared to have had no effect in arousing the consciences of the Corinthians. It had been written out of much distress of soul (2 Cor. 2:4); and as he had received no tidings from Corinth as to how it had been received—this led to deeper anxiety—so as to make the Apostle for a moment to regret that he had written as he had done (2 Cor. 7:8). It was thus that he who had the fullest confidence, that he was "nothing behind the very chiefest of the Apostles," was made to feel in himself, that he was " nothing." But how amply was his painful experience repaid by proving the God with whom he had to do, to be " the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;" and as the " God who comforteth them that are cast down." Had he either acted at the outset authoritatively, or had his letter produced an immediate effect, the burst of adoring gratitude, in the commencement of the Second Epistle had never had a place. He must needs learn his own personal unworthiness, and then he would be able to use his authority not only powerfully, but also discriminatingly,1 " having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled."

How admirably does the Apostle meet the charge of fickleness, by urging that neither with him nor any man was " Yea " and " Nay." That was with God alone—"with Him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; " but man is properly dependent—it is his blessing and strength to be so—and for him to arrogate " Yea " and "Nay" to himself, would be mere obstinacy. And how many a man has persisted in his purpose when he has found it wrong, in order that he might appear consistent; but not so the Apostle. The Corinthians might think him fickle, but there was no uncertainty in his testimony, in that which he preached to them. “But God is true: our word toward you was not Yea and Nay—for the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you, was not Yea and Nay, but in Him was Yea." It was not the authority he had as an Apostle which established him, but God; and the same God could establish them. He sought to lead their souls to God, and not to come in between their souls and God. “Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God." How readily will saints rest on derived authority, even when such an authority is only pretended; but it would be dangerous to rest on it, even supposing it to be real. God is a Rock, the only Rock, the only one who can establish. It was to this Rock the Apostle would lead the Corinthians. He solemnly calls God to witness, that it was to spare them he had not yet come to Corinth. There is patience with God; but there is severity also. What patience had God shown towards Israel during the long period of prophetic ministry, “rising early and sending " to them, " till there was no remedy," and then came " severity"—God showed himself in judgment. The Apostle had authority; but once and again he asserts that it was given to him "of God for edification, and not for their destruction." It was of God, and therefore not to be questioned. Had he gone immediately to Corinth, he must have silenced every gainsayer by the direct exercise of his power, which would have thus been used for their destruction. On the other hand, the Apostle dared not lord it over their faith. Submission to him personally might have hindered the exercise of faith in God. He would indeed help their joy by leading their souls to God—but he dared not to come in between their souls and God, for “they stood by faith." There is no place for faith in God where authority occupies the supreme place, which of right belongs to God alone. In his preaching, the Apostle guarded against the danger of the faith of his hearers resting “in the wisdom of man “instead of” in the power of God," and the like danger he sought to avoid in his conduct. Orthodox confessions of faith, and even valuable ministry, have often taken Christians off the ground of “standing by faith," which can never be ordered or ruled, although it may be greatly helped. An apostle could infallibly denounce error and proclaim truth—he could also authoritatively correct irregularities in the Church—but he could not command faith. In order to lead the disciples to stand by faith, he acts in a parental character, by seeking to get their souls into contact with God, and not to be awed into submission by the presence of apostolical authority.

It is here we discern the divine way and order. God, who alone is Omnipotent, declares His name to be " gracious and long-suffering," however despised His name so declared might be. The Apostle, in the consciousness of power derived from God, could even allow his power to be questioned, and himself to be insulted, rather than use his power “for destruction," when God had entrusted him with it” for edification." Where there is power in the Church pretended to be of God, but really humanly derived, it is ever accompanied with the impatience of personal feeling, so as to require immediate bowing to its authority. Such humanly derived ecclesiastical power has for the most part been exercised against Christ, not for Him; for destruction, and not for edification. Those who claim it take the very place which the Apostle dared not take, as lords over the faith of the saints, so as to render it impossible for them to stand by faith, by this interposing their presumed authority. But this does not lessen the great sin of the professing body, in allowing the claims of derived authority to supersede the authority of God himself over their consciences.

“By faith ye stand." Faith in a present God, able to meet the actual need of the soul, can alone produce healthful action in the saints. The exercise of apostolical authority to punish the refractory, infallibly to declare the truth, or to correct irregularities, was most legitimate: but if this was all—if contumacy was silenced, truth acknowledged, and decorum restored, by the actual presence of the Apostle, this would afford no ground for their continuance in a healthy condition. When the authority which had produced the reformation ceased to be present, a relapse was almost certain to follow, or else (what has actually taken place in the Church generally) the establishment of an authoritative

ministry. Christians have themselves settled that which the Apostle so anxiously sought to avoid, a formally ordered and recognized ministry, in order to produce the end which faith in God alone could produce. The Apostle used his authority for edification. He had gained his point when he had led their souls up to God, so as to act in the acknowledgment of the rightful supremacy of God over their consciences. He dared not put his authority in the place of their faith, He dared not transact that for them which he would gladly do in concert with them. He would gladly " help their joy." Many among the Corinthians would readily allow him “to have dominion over their faith." This is what the saints have in all ages desired. They desire to be led by men—men of God, indeed—but they desire to be led,2 and this when the higher leading of the Spirit of God is the privilege of each individual saint.

There is no faith in attaching oneself to a gifted teacher, but there must be faith in order to be led by the Spirit. The Apostle knew full well the readiness with which saints cling to the lesser and forego the higher blessing, and he desired so to use his authority for their edification as to lead them to a higher blessing—to stand by faith in God. He hesitated not to depreciate (if the expression be allowable) ministers, where the Corinthians were so ready to “glory in man." “These things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that ye might learn in us not to think above that which is written." Where there was authority unquestionably from God, and service the most devoted to God, the Apostle could see the danger of man displacing God, to the great damage of the souls of saints, " for," says he, " by faith ye stand."

" The man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people." It was fitting that it should be so, because it corresponded with his ministry, his glorious ministry. But when the excelling glory of the new ministry was introduced, it was the ministry itself that claimed regard, not the minister. The glory of the ministry was of that order that it could only be in safe keeping in earthen vessels, “that the excellency of the power may be of God," and not of the vessel. When the ministry exalts the person of the minister the ground of faith is lost—the man is admired rather than “the righteousness," and " the spirit," of which he is the minister. It is on the ground of that righteousness and that spirit that we have direct intercourse with God, and we “stand by faith." This is the great practical point. No present authority, however legitimate, no creed, however orthodox, no regulations, however wise, can supply the place of standing by faith, which is the ground of all healthy action in the Church.

The Apostle gained his object with the Corinthians; he had so used his power that it was for their edification, but it was at the expense of deep exercise Of soul, and at the risk of personal character in the very point where a man is most sensitive, so that nothing short of the consciousness of acting before God could have sustained him. The Corinthians, aroused as to their consciences, were turned to judging themselves before God. Their sorrow was godly, and it wrought so in them (2 Cor. 7:11 ad fin.), that the Apostle could write to them on the subject of a contribution for the poor saints (2 Cor. 8, 9.). The last four chapters of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians are very peculiar, but still bearing on the Apostle's own conduct, which appeared to some so questionable as to lead them to speak most disrespectfully of him (2 Cor. 10:1). His weapons were " not carnal," such as human wisdom, eloquence, power, influence, but " mighty through God; " and as he had wielded them effectually to the restoration of many to the simplicity of faith, so, when the time came, these weapons would be found effectual " to revenge all disobedience." In this we discover 'an important " way " of our God. When faction and dissension have come in among Christians, accompanied by strife and personalities, they often seek redress among themselves—but this is not the way of God. He waits for a while, obedience to him is thereby proved-and when the soul is brought into its right place before Him the time is arrived for dealing with refractory or disorderly individuals. We must set ourselves right with God before God will set us right one with the other. This is the way of God, hard to us indeed, because of our readiness to view personal offense in a much stronger light than that of the heart's departure from God.

By Faith Ye Stand, By Faith Ye Stand: Part 2

RARE are the occasions in which a Christian can venture to answer a fool according to his folly—yet on the fitting occasion the Apostle turned " the carnal weapons " (for irony the most delicate must so be be reckoned) with overwhelming power against those who had assailed him. What strange beings we are, readily succumbing to usurped authority which has no credentials from God, and at the same time questioning or fretting against that power which carries its own credentials as of God with it. What is it? Man hates to be brought into direct contact with God. This can only be done through faith in Jesus Christ—or else God comes into contact with men in judgment. How readily might the Apostle have vindicated himself from every ground of charge against him. He might have demanded maintenance, but he would not forego his privilege of preaching the Gospel freely. He might have appealed to the fruit of his ministerial labors, but he had rather glory in his infirmities. He might have broken silence as to the marvelous revelation vouchsafed to him, but he brings into, prominence the messenger of Satan to buffet him. He might have gone to Corinth at once, to prove the steadfastness of his purpose, instead of writing: " Behold the third time I am ready to come to you. This is the third time I am coming to you.

... I told you before and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time." He might have given them sensible proof of his power by its exercise in terrible discipline on themselves, but he had far rather that they should do " that which was honest," so that he needed not to exercise his power, although it left the question of his power unsettled. None but one conscious of divine power could have afforded to act in such a manner. None but one reckless of his own character among men, and yet conscious of acting before God, could have marked out such a way for himself. None but one having as a single and supreme object the glory of Christ in the saints, in other words, their edification, could have been content to leave himself and his authority in so questionable a position.

It is written of the Lord Jesus himself—"'In his humiliation his judgment was taken away." Satan and Pharisees, tempting Him, alike demanded proofs of His Sonship and Christhood, which it was not consistent for Him, in having humbled Himself, then to afford. "His brethren " also (John 7) would have Him publicly show Himself to the world— publicly show Himself to the world—little thinking, if He had done so, it could only have been in judgment. But Jesus waited, and still waits (and His appeal—with what full credentials!—is still to the conscience of sinners), ere He appears in the irresistible glory of his own person in judgment. He, conscious of His own essential glory, did not need external proof for His own satisfaction. He could allow all His pretensions to be questioned by others, because of that which He really was. He left His claims unvindicated, save to faith and conscience, because He knew there was a set time in the counsels of Eternity for the public vindication both of His own essential glory and of every claim which He had preferred. Thus conscious, " He was crucified through weakness." Faith indeed looks to Him where He now is; faith now owns the glory of His person, faith rests on the value of His work—faith owns His work as the Lamb

slain—faith owns now that all power in heaven and earth is given unto Him as the glorified man; faith bows now in the fullest acknowledgment of the name of Jesus. But Jesus himself is yet long-suffering, even though His long-suffering causes His own name to remain unvindicated, and His saints to continue in sorrow and trial. His long-suffering is to be accounted salvation. How marvelous, yet how gracious, is Thy way, Lord Jesus! and Thy " chosen vessel " did, according to his measure, follow Thee in this Thy way! He was conscious of the authority which the Lord himself had given to him; and on the ground of this consciousness he could allow his authority to be questioned. He, too, was " weak " with his Master, leaving the demonstration of his power to the fitting time and season. He, too, knew of a demonstration to the soul far beyond that produced by the mightiest external proofs. " He that believeth on the Son path the witness in himself," and the Apostle could appeal to such a kind of testimony. " Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.... 1examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.

Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates; " without proof answering to their seeking " a proof." The Apostle appeals to their own consciences; if his authority was not commended there, the only resource must be in judgment. Were they in the faith? Was Jesus Christ in them, by revelation of the Holy Ghost? Then their own faith; the very consciousness of Christ in their souls was the irrefragable proof of his Apostleship, as he had before said—" The seal of mine Apostleship are ye in the Lord." It was by the manifestation of the truth that he had commended himself to their consciences, and he could do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. God had once dealt with men by signs and wonders, with the most marked demonstration of His power, but conviction resulting from such evidence (such is man), lasted only so long as the demonstration itself of the power of God was before their eyes., " He saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy; and the waters covered their enemies, there was not one of them left. Then believed they his words—they sang his praise. They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel." So, again, he visited them in after-time, and with the like result. The Israel at the time the Day-spring from on high visited them, Jehovah-Jesus, proved themselves to be the like faithless and perverse generation as their fathers in the wilderness. To this He speedily testified. Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, on the feast day, many believed in His name, when they saw the miracles which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them; " for he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man." He left them indeed without excuse, because they rejected Him, coming as He did with all the credentials of Messiah. But there was deeper condemnation than this, " they had seen Him and believed not." " They had both seen and hated both Him and his Father." God has left man without excuse—He has appealed to their senses, He has appealed to their understanding. He now makes His last appeal in the Gospel of His grace to the consciences and affections of men, and if this is rejected one solemn fact alone solves the phenomenon: " The God of this world hath blinded the minds of those who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into them." Jesus, knowing His own essential glory, and the fullness that was in Himself, desired to be received on His own testimony rather than on the demonstration of His miracles. "Believe me, that I am in the Father and the Father in me: or else believe me for the Very work's sake." Jesus presents himself, and is presented in the Gospel, to our conscience and affections, and this on the ground of his own essential being. If this claim does not commend Him to us, in vain would be the outward attestation, of His works. So His servant, Paul, conscious of the power given to him of the Lord, not anxious to prove it by judgment on others, sought to rouse the conscience of the Corinthian saints, and this being effected, he was content to leave his own pretensions in question, save that he was ready, in obedience to the Lord, to " use sharpness " when the time came. In this we find the real value of ministerial authority, it appeals to the conscience: the outward demonstration by the most convincing signs was quite a secondary thought in the mind of the Apostle. When the conscience of the most disorderly saint. is reached, what happy and gracious results follow; and Adieu the consciences of many are so exercised as to)rove them " clear in any matter," the weight of their ententes, apart from outward demonstration of power, will be felt by the disobedient and refractory—hr it is sanctioned by the Lord himself.

There are two great hindrances to healthful" action in the Church of God—assumption of authority, and leaning on authority. These are connected; but, whether united or separate, effectually hinder “standing by faith " Pretension to authority in the Church is generally found great in proportion as it is lacking in divine credentials to the conscience. It never appeals to the conscience; it aims at domination over faith-it is used, not for edification, but for destruction. Of this character is the authority claimed by Romanists and Anglicans for a presumed sacerdotal standing. It professes to be of God, it boasts of wonders, it is loud, authoritative, terrifying. It appeals to itself, not to conscience. That they are of God is the point of faith, and not faith recognizing divine power, commending itself to the conscience by manifestation of the truth. But there is a charm in this usurped authority. Men, and men of superior mind and of high moral worth, will “suffer if a man thus exalt himself." Whence this phenomenon! It tends to lull all exercise of conscience towards God. It keeps man in his natural element of distance from God, while persuading him that he is honoring God. We have seen, at Corinth, authority most unquestionably of God refused, and usurped power acknowledged, the one appealed to the conscience to lead it into exercise before God, the other claimed subjection to itself and prevailed, and thus interposed itself between God and the conscience. Such usurped authority carries with it a strong conventional claim. Deference to it was early inculcated, and has grown with our growth, so as to become a settled habit. What if the holder of this presumed authority did not commend himself to our moral judgment? Still there was a sacredness attached to his office. In many instances, men who have had discernment to see through the hollowness of the claim have been too impatient to satisfy themselves as to the truth, too busily occupied with the world to step out of their vocation to investigate, as they judge, a mere matter of opinion, dreading the alternative of infidelity if they rejected such venerable authority, and have tacitly allowed the claim on the ground of decent usage and legal acknowledgment, which they thoroughly despised in their hearts. " They put away a good conscience and make shipwreck of the faith," for such is the force of educational prejudice that, in the minds of the majority, the claims of the authorized minister and the claims of Scripture rest on the same basis, so that to undermine the one would be to jeopardize the authority of the other. And when from time to time an independent mind, disgusted by assumption of authority, has carried out its own thoughts, it has only found in skepticism relief from domination over faith. Alas—that it should be so, but of whom shall the blood of such be demanded? They, indeed, are in awful condemnation; for God holds every one responsible to himself to hear what He says. But God will not hold those guiltless who have, by means of their system, hindered the direct exercise of conscience before God. It was a serious charge the Lord had to make against Judah. “In thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents. I have not found it by secret search, but by all these." And it is a very solemn thought, that the great professing body has used authority so effectually to hinder the exercise of faith and conscience, as to leave apparently no alternative between submission to its authority and skepticism. However definite may be the interpretation, the principle applies to the great professing body—" In her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

Real Christians need serious warnings as to the danger of allowing their faith to rest in the wisdom of man, instead of in the power of God. There may be large dominion over the faith tacitly allowed by Christians, even when such dominion is neither sought nor asserted by their teachers. Man is impatient under the sense of responsibility. He would persuade himself that he can do things by proxy, and thus relieve

himself from care. The Solicitor cares for his worldly interests; the Physician for his health; and the Minister takes charge of his spiritual concerns. The Lord, in His ministry, and His servants subsequently, warned against this tendency. We have the double warning—" Be not ye called Rabbi."

“Call no man your father on earth"—and the direct acknowledgment of Christ Himself as Master of all, both of teachers and of taught, and confidential intercourse with the Father is the alone preservative. "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." ", One is your Father, which is in heaven." “By faith ye stand." Relinquishing traditional authority, need not land us in skepticism. We assert the authority of God with whom we have to do; and if we claim independence from human authority, it is in order to be dependent on God. This is the point. On the one side, we find all that is merely conventional tottering; on the other, men promising themselves great things from the emancipation of man's will from the tradition of ages. The very shaking of conventional authority has given occasion for the assertion of authority (as of God) over the consciences of men in a more undisguised manner in this land, than at any period since the Reformation; and the very fact of its not being politically asserted, gives more validity to its pretensions. On the other hand, a philanthropical theory is attempting, vainly attempting, to control the emancipated will of man, in order to produce " peace on earth," and " good-will among men," but entirely disregarding the essentials of Christianity. Between these two sections—the "little flock of God," to whom it is His good pleasure to give the kingdom, will be lost sight of Happy for them, if, in the midst of the disruption of everything, they seek not unto visible authority, as the basis of their faith, but " build themselves up on their most holy faith." Happy for them, if when the mind of man, emancipated from traditional authority, is running again its wayward course to folly, in the vain profession of wisdom, they be found' with their consciences exercised before God, standing by faith in Him, and holding to the unshaken, eternal, and invisible realities, which the Holy Ghost Himself reveals to them.

Correspondence, Correspondence: Anointing vs. Sealing; Abba vs. Father

Ques. What is the difference between "anointing" and "sealing"? What does each mean? (2 Cor. 1:21, 22.) J. D.

Ans. Believers are spoken of as "anointed," "sealed," and "given the earnest of the Spirit." The Holy Spirit dwelling in us is all three.

As the Anointing, He is our power for service (Acts 10:38), and for discerning the mind of God. (1 John 2:20, 27.)

As the Seal, the Holy Spirit marks us out as redeemed ones. (Eph. 1:13; 4:30.) When Jesus, our blessed Redeemer, was sealed, it marked Him out as a perfect, sinless man.

As the Earnest, the Holy Spirit is the pledge or assurance of the glory to come. (2 Cor. 5:5; Eph. 1:14.)

Ques. Please give the meaning of the name "Abba." (Mark 14:36; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6.) What is the difference between it and "Father"? L. S.

Ans. Both words mean "Father" written in two languages. The Lord Jesus thus uses it to express in the fullest way the intimacy and love of His relationship with His Father.

The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of adoption, also called the "Spirit of His Son," is given to all true believers now, that this intimacy and love and knowledge of the Father might be their continual enjoyment.

"As He is, so are we in this world." 1 John 4:17.

Young Christian: Volume 25, 1935, "The Father of Mercies"

There is an exceedingly fine description of what God is in times of trouble in (2 Cor. 1:3,4). The sorrows and sufferings through which the Christian passes in this world have made God known to him as “the Father of mercies and God of all comfort.”

Tribulations are keenly felt, but they serve, after all, to show us God’s goodness in tenderly meeting the necessities of such occasions. If it were not for tribulations we could not realize what it is to know God as “the Father of mercies,” and we would not enjoy Him as the God of all comfort as we ought. “The Father of mercies and God of all comfort” just suits a tried and suffering apostle and servant of Christ, and every troubled and sorrowing believer in Christ too. God is not indifferent to our tribulations, but in them all He comforts us, as He alone can most perfectly.

Christian friends, loving brethren, can and do pity and comfort us in our sorrows, but there is no one who can pity and comfort us like God. He only can just exactly enter into their depths, and He soothes and comforts the heart. Sympathy for a grief-stricken and tried follower of Christ is keenly appreciated and most thankfully received, and would that there were more of it shown to each other at these times; we need all the sympathy that can be given us then. But the comfort of God is what we should lean upon, and be encouraged with in all our trials and sorrows. When comforted of God we are able to comfort others, while they are passing through tribulations, with the same comfort wherewith we ourselves were comforted of Him.

Many of the sorrows the Apostle Paul passed through, were occasioned by persecutions from the enemies of Christ, and by his faithful and devoted service to the Lord. With the Corinthians most of their tribulations were brought on themselves by their own fault and lack of faithfulness to Christ; nevertheless they were real and poignant, and having been repentant before the Lord, they found the loving heart of the Father going out to them in compassion, binding up their broken hearts with His comfort, and encouraging them to a closer walk in communion with Himself.

And thus it is with us: God comforts us in all our tribulations. Some of our troubles, alas! like those of the Corinthians, are brought on ourselves by self-seeking, or worldliness, or lack of faithfulness to the Lord Jesus; but when we have judged ourselves before Him, and there is true repentance, the Lord pours in the oil and wine which heals and comforts the heart.

Tribulations also may arise as with the apostle Paul, only with him in greater degree and with more faithfulness and devotedness to Christ than anyone else, for his was a special service; none had a mission like he had, and no one ever will have again such as he had. He was Specially raised up of the Lord to suffer great things for His name's sake, and was the Apostle to the Gentiles—our apostle. With him the sufferings came from both Jew and Gentile because of faithful service to Christ, and because of living entirely for Christ, and in such a case how very precious are the comforts and compassions of our God and Father.

Tribulations also come from being in this world, such as sickness, infirmity of the body, and death. The Lord has said:

"In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

There are also difficult circumstances, such as poverty, business reverses and the like, and loss of friends and other trials common to men, but in them all He is "the Father of mercies," —let us not forget this— "and the God of all comfort" to us.

"At that time," when the great cities of Judea had rejected Him and His ministry and word, Jesus thanks the Father. And O! what a dark time that was: He felt it keenly. He alone, being perfect and holy, and the Son of God, could know the depths of it all. "At that time" He rests in the Father, the source of rest and comfort, and delights in His will and His way. He said:

"I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth.... Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight" (Matt. 11:25, 26).

What an immense comfort it is to learn of Jesus, and walk in fellowship with God; He is our Example. It is our privilege to rest in the love and mercy that is in God, "the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulations."

These sorrows are allowed in His love for us. They bring out some wonderful grace and goodness and compassion, an otherwise undiscovered display of Himself to our hearts. We learn in our trials that every comfort, every compassion, and every mercy is all traced to Him; He is the spring of it all; He is "the Father of mercies." We can indeed thank Him for the very precious way in which He makes

Himself known to us in the dark periods of our history while we are on our way through this world to the Father's house above, which is our eternal home.

Soon the Lord will come and receive us unto Himself, that where He is there we may be also; therefore it is only for a little while we shall have to endure tribulations. We shall dwell with Him forever then, and behold the beauty of the Lord; and this will amply compensate us for the sufferings of this little while.

Correspondence, Correspondence: Eternal Sonship; Confess to God or Christ?; 2 Cor. 13:6

Ques. What does the Scripture teach about the eternal Sonship of Christ?

Ans. We believe the truth of the eternal Sonship of Christ is as distinctly taught in Scripture as the truth of the Trinity. The fact that such an expression does not occur, no more militates against the one truth than it does against the other. If the Son is God, He must be eternal. "Unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." Heb. 1:8.

It seems to us that the Deity and Eternity of the Son are so indissolubly linked together, that whoso denies the one, denies the other likewise. May God give us all subjection to Scripture.

Ques. Should we confess our sins to God or to Christ? Why is confession necessary?

Ans. We believe it is to God our Father we have to confess our sins. This must be evident if you will read 1 John 1:5-10. We do not see any difficulty in the matter. It is true we are in relationship with God- our sins are all forgiven-our guilt atoned for-but yet we are liable to commit sin; and, when we do so, there must be confession ere our communion with God can be restored. This confession and its results are founded upon the atoning work and advocacy of our Lord Jesus Christ. If my child does wrong, he does not cease to be my child; but I cannot allow him to enjoy happy intercourse with me until he fully confesses the wrong.

Ques. Please explain "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." 2 Cor. 13:6.

Ans. This is a much misunderstood scripture. The Corinthian saints had been converted through Paul's ministry. Some among them were calling in question his apostleship. He then challenges them that if he was an imposter and not a genuine apostle, it would look bad for their profession, as they had professed under his ministry. There is an element of irony in his challenge to them to examine themselves whether they be in the faith.

Food for the Flock: Volume 2, What Is Power?*

CO 12:1-12{You see the saint in this Scripture in two positions very different to each other: the one a position of unbroken enjoyment; the other, one of conflict and power.

Enjoyment is for heaven; power is for earth. You have the enjoyment all inside with God; and this so great, that, as Paul says, he knew not whether he was in the body or out of the body. But now, having tasted enjoyment up there, he comes down to "take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." There you need power.

But I want to know, beloved friends, who is the man that can take this place? Who is the man of power on earth? The man who alone can take this place is the one who has learned what he can glory in-the one who knows that he has the brightest scene with God above.

This principle, which to any student of Scripture is quite evident, you get plainly enough all through the Old Testament. In Joshua, for instance, you see the children of Israel, after they enter the land, have first to do with the presence of the Lord; (ch. 5.) circumcision takes place-the inside thing; and then they go out in power against their enemies; they walk round Jericho, and the walls fall down flat. Power comes out-the outside thing-power comes out in opposition to everything that is against them. There could not be a greater contrast than there is between the fifth and the sixth chapters of Joshua.

Now, whilst we find standing clearly taught in the New Testament, it is in the Old Testament that we find the state of individuals plainly marked. The New Testament teaches me my standing; the Old Testament defines my state, and what my state is in keeping with my standing.

It is of the greatest importance to us practically, in such a day as this, to know what power is, and how it may be had. There has been a great deal of light given to us on the word of God in these times, but now, amid such breadth and clearness of statement of truth, the great want is power. Generally people do not fail in enjoyment of the truth, but they fail in power to carry it out.

In the Scripture we have read, the apostle had come from a scene of unbroken enjoyment, to find that there was given to him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him. He was almost overcome by it. But the effect of it was to teach him, that what he was now to glory in was " infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecutions, distresses for Christ's sake; for," he adds, " when I am weak, then am I strong:"-a sentence that is entirely inexplicable to the mind of man. Paul was to know the power of Christ in his weakness, and to find that that weakness was the very opportunity for the expression of power.

People are often sorely tried when they find that failure succeeds a time of spiritual enjoyment; the effort of Satan, at such a time, is to make the heart question whether there really was any enjoyment at all; and he often succeeds. This is where saints fail. Many a one is extremely happy in his private meditations; there is not a cloud when he leaves his room in the morning; but he comes out and he fails directly. Why? Because he trusts in his enjoyment instead of in Christ. His enjoyment is true, but he begins to question it, because he fails.

When Paul was in the third heaven, what a scene of inexpressible bliss it was It could not have been added to. And thus, let me say in passing, you never can improve your acceptance. The person who thinks of improving his acceptance is all wrong. You never can attain standing; no ability of yours acquires it; it is a gift; and your heart ought to be simple in the enjoyment of it. You are accepted as perfectly the first moment you believe, as you are when you have been fifty years a Christian; you may enjoy it more then, but you cannot either improve it or increase it.

I will use a word which I think will make it plain to you. People confound their acceptability with their acceptance. You should never have a question as to your acceptance, but you cannot be too anxious about your acceptability.

The great lack of the present day is that people are not anxious about their acceptability;' but no amount of anxiety would ever make you one bit more accepted than you are. A rose tree is a rose tree, though it may never bear a rose; a poor thing truly, but still a rose tree; but it is not an acceptable one. A goldfinch is a goldfinch, though it never sing a note; but it is not an acceptable one. You cannot seek too much to make yourself acceptable; break your heart over that, and you will not be wrong.

" Enoch walked with God, and he had this testimony that he pleased God; " there was an acceptable man. " By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous;" there was an accepted man. Therefore Scripture says: " We labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be acceptable to him "-not " accepted " as it is in our translation-" for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." This is acceptability. Faith, without a particle of works, gets me into the place God has given me; works determine my position, and it is important to keep this in mind.

I have not to do with enjoyment only. True, I am accepted, and I have the enjoyment of that acceptance in which God has placed me; but, as to my body, I am down here in a scene of frailty and infirmity, and the very weakness of my body becomes an opportunity for the grace of Christ to shine out, so that " when I am weak, then am I strong." The power is to be known in the weak point. This is a truth which comes home to every one of us.

There are two things I want to say. One is, what power effects in a person. Power is to be known at the weak point. Power is not so much what you do, as what you are. Every one is trying to do something, but you will never do anything except as you are it. The body is a poor weak vessel, but it is in that power is seen; therefore the apostle says that he takes pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in things that affect him as a man in weakness, for he has learned that, because there was a danger of his being puffed up, " the thorn in the flesh " has been sent to him.

But, as I said, there are two things here: one, the power that proves itself in my weakest point; the other, that I have patience; and patience is the greatest element of power.

The man of power is known in a double way: wherever there is a defect morally, there you will find its opposite will come out; there will be a virtue there. Suppose a man is a drunkard; he is converted; and now it is not that he abstains from drink merely, but that he has a taste for sobriety. You may suppress a vice in the power of nature, but that does not put a virtue in its place. You must not only pluck up the weed out of, your garden, but you must introduce a divine plant in its place. I state, that when a Christian is walking in grace, the defect in his nature is supplanted by a virtue.

The action of power, is different with respect to a defect and to mere weakness. In the former, as I have shown, there is a virtue introduced in its place. In the latter, though the weakness-such as timidity, natural nervousness-continue, yet " my grace is sufficient," and the power of Christ rests on you.

A person may say: I have great enjoyment in the Lord. I do not doubt it, but I might reply, you have not much power.-How do you know that?-Because you are very defective in your walk. I do not see you triumphing over this or that defect in your nature. If you had power, you would be triumphant in your defects and supported in your weaknesses. See Elisha, how he follows Elijah with the most devoted heart, but he has not power yet. Power is the carrying out in your body the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. It comes out in the point where you are defective. You can see a person of power at once.

Take as an example that verse in the fourth of Corinthians: " We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." I speak now of what power is in itself. That is the wonderful place the Lord puts it in-poor earthen vessels -" that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

I hear persons say continually: "Oh, you must make an excuse for me! that is my besetting sin, or my special weakness! "-I reply: I can make no excuse for you: that defect is the very opportunity for divine strength; that is just where you ought to be the strongest. What would you think of a medical man, whom you sent for on account of a head-ache, if he directed his attention to every part but your head, and did that no good at all? Why, you would say, you have failed in the very point for which I sent for you.

Is it not beautiful and fitting that it should be thus? You are upon earth still in the body; full of weakness and defects, but each counteracted by the power of Christ.

I will give you an illustration of what I mean from the way pearls are produced. A little bit of grit inside the shell of the oyster so annoys and disturbs it, that it covers it over with the lining of the shell, and thus a pearl is gained. That is how it should be with you. The bit of grit in you ought to become a pearl. We ought to be beautiful people! I admit the defect that is in my nature; but, where the grit or defect is in me, there the pearl should be-the beautiful perfect thing covering the defect, till only the beauty is seen. The Lord is keeping His eye upon it.

You get an illustration of this in the palsied man brought to Christ. Powerlessness brings me to Christ. If you are not powerless you will not come to Christ. If you had not an atom of your own power, you would be as happy as the day is long. If you had no power, you would go to Christ, and you would come away with the power of Christ, and carry your bed! The very thing that every one in this room thinks I' can never give up, that is the very thing Christ's power will lead you to give up. That is where His power will express itself.

Now you ask me for a passage to confirm this; but, in a certain sense, where truth is, you do not want a passage to confirm it, because all the tenor of Scripture is with you. However I will give you Eph. 4:28. " Let him that stole steal no more." There is legal righteousness. I speak now to people who hold to the law. If you stay there, I say, you are a very low Christian if you do not go beyond the law. The first line of this verse brings you up to the law. But let me follow it out; what do I find? " Rather let him labor working with his hands the thing that is good." Now mark what is there! Is it for his own need? Not at all! But "that he may have to give to him that needeth." Is not that a pearl? He is to toil with his own hands, that he may be a giver. The thief is to be a giver!. That is power.

Power comes in in the most ordinary details of life; it affects a person in every relationship of life, if he is walking in power. The first part of power is, that it comes in to check every defect and weakness of the flesh. The Lord says: " My grace is sufficient for thee;" I am not going to take away the thorn, because you will find, that when you are weak then you are strong.-I want to show you that you will be humble who were proud; and, as to an ambitious man, when that man is in the power of Christ I find he is not i ambitious. It is said: My greatest aim is to rise to eminence in the church. say to such: My dear friend, you know nothing of what you are; if you did, instead of wanting to rise to eminence, you would be down on your face before God. I hear others talk of ".mastering" a truth! and to such I say: My friend, you have made the greatest mistake, and have lost the idea altogether; you will certainly be confounded by it. Instead of your " mastering" truth, truth is to " master" you. The more the heart knows of Christ, and the more it knows of any truth, the more it learns its inability to master it, and its incompetency to give it out.

You will find in every servant of God, while he is acting in power, that he is true to the grace of God, and afraid of his own natural powers. Moses was naturally a man of great muscular strength: he could kill a man. But he must not trust to this at all; he just waves the rod, and everything is done without an effort; but the moment he falls back to using his own power -the moment he smites the rock twice-he is not to go into the land. Power does not use the natural thing; it comes in and says: You must be entirely for me.

Power is the most quiet thing that is. Divine power is a noiseless, majestic, resistless thing; everything about it is fitting and beautiful. I often think what a little sense I have of the magnitude of this divine power. As it says in the forty-sixth Psalm: " The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted." There I have the majesty of divine power; it makes no noise, no parade, no ostentation, but it acts. I have always felt that the great potato blight was brought about by divine power, because it was so universal and so noiseless. But there is another point of this power I must allude to, which is perhaps more interesting. What proves power? I have given you the evidence of power; but the proof of power is patience. There is nothing so proves power as patience. I know we do not understand the meaning of patience. It means endurance. The man who holds out is the man of patience. The moment of the greatest power in a saint of God, has been that in which he has held out most. The proof of power then in a person, is that he holds out, and this power comes out where he is most defective; it is this grace of Christ, so that he can hold out.

In the tenth of Hebrews it says: " Ye have need of patience." We have not all got patience. It is the same word as that used for endurance when speaking of Moses in the following chapter. First it says, he " refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." Now that is one part of power, but it is not patience. What I want to call your attention to is, that it is not the part of patience-either the " refusing," or the " choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God." I see those who can refuse things, and those who can choose the best things; but there is a greater thing to come. I say you have to endure. " He endured as seeing him who is invisible. '.' That is what I come to. There are the two parts of power. There is the refusing of the things that gratify me, and there is the enduring the pressure that comes upon me. I say: Why do you hold out?—Because "I know whom I have believed." The thing that marks patience is that I hold out; I do not give in. Paul. says to Timothy: "Thou therefore endure hardness." And in the tenth verse of the same chapter he says: "I endure all things for the elect's sake;" just what he says of Moses in the eleventh of Hebrews. Nothing can give you a more wonderful idea of what patience is, than to see a person under all the pressure possible, yet saying: I will not give in an inch.

You see how James presses it upon the saints in his epistle. "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy." Now it was not that Job was a very quiet-spirited man, but that he would not give in an inch. People begin by giving in a little; and when you give in a little, you are done-your power is gone. You may be sure that, when you do give in, and think it does not much matter about something which seems insignificant in itself, that you are giving up the best bit of truth you have. It is the best thing you give up first. It is the top shoot that goes first when the frost comes; it always takes the bud of the tree; and then you have lost an immense thing, though you may say, I have only gone back a little bit; you have not held out.

Let me turn to the fifth of Romans. Here we read: " Not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience." And in another place we get: " In your patience possess ye your souls." It is an immense thing practically for the heart to come to the point: Well now I can bear it all, no matter what happens.

The great thing that qualifies a man for service is, not how he can do a great thing, but how he can bear tremendous pressure. When he is prepared for preferment, the question is: How much pressure can you bear? A man that can stand any amount of pressure is qualified for the highest place. Take Joseph in prison, forgotten by the man he had befriended; but he held out, and was thus qualified for the highest place in the kingdom. Take David: he was never in more trying circumstances than at Ziklag; he was deprived of everything. What does he do? He is patient. He says: The Lord is God; I will still hold on. He " encouraged himself in the Lord his God." And he was actually qualified at that moment for the throne of Israel; Saul was just then falling on Mount Gilboa.

It is a great principle. I see persons with Scripture at their fingers' ends, but look at them in their families! And I say to any such: You cannot bear that; you are not able to stand there; you are not fit for your duties; you have not patience. In the sixth chapter of this epistle Paul says: " In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience."

When a person talks to me of power, I say to him In what way are you taking everything? Can you bear up against anything?

Just turn to the first of Colossians; there we read, " strengthened with all power "-it should be—unto what? "unto all patience." All patience! This is the point that I want practically to get my soul to.

I look back at all the saints of God, and, from among them, I take Abraham as an example of what I am speaking of. When he goes into the land the second time, he says to Lot: You take your choice; I can surrender. And that is, I believe, the first characteristic of power. A person who does not begin by refusing, will never end by enduring. If the children of the captivity had not refused the king's wine, they would never have endured the king's furnace. They were separate in their position, but that is not enough. It was not only that Moses " refused " all that was in Egypt, but he " endured."

One constantly sees this. Persons refuse a good deal, but they have not this patience-they cannot hold on. I say: I must hold on; am not going to give up at all.-But, you say, things are all going to pieces!-I cannot help that. I am not going to give up; I must hold on with tenacity; like the old Athenian general who would not let the ship get away: he held on first with one hand; they chopped that off; then he held on with the other; and they chopped that off; and then he held on with his teeth; and they chopped his head off. There was a specimen of what mere nature will do in the way of holding on. Have you got the grace in you for that? Of Abraham we read: " After he had patiently endured he obtained the promise." If a person yields, he has lost the practical, power to maintain his ground.

Well, beloved friends, I hope our eyes are awaking to the state of things we are set in. If you look upwards it is all a scene of brightness -one clear, unclouded sky. But alas! I know the story for myself, and so I know it for others, how many a one leaves his room in the most unclouded enjoyment who is in a few hours, or even in a few minutes, cast down and depressed, because of the way in which he has failed. And why is it? It is because he is not dependent. Are you then to think that the enjoyment was a delusion? No! all remains true as ever; but you must learn to bear opposition; that is patience; and you must depend on Christ; that is power. It is not only that you must refuse; the question is: Can you bear? Have you patience? Can you say you will not yield, no matter what the pressure s? whether it be the saints that are against you, or anything else.

If you look at any of God's servants, what was the moment of greatest power in that man's life? I say, not the moment when he did most, but the moment when he endured most. Let any one put me a parallel to that scene when Abraham went up with his son to Mount Moriah. He says: Let the whole weight of things come down upon me; I have God with me; I am not going to give in an inch. "After he endured he obtained the promise."

And this comes down to the little details of every day life. You are not to give up-not an inch in anything. Give way before the king's fire? Not a bit of it! It is not that when the moment of pressure comes, you are to be like Esau, and say I cannot endure it, and give way in a moment for a mess of pottage. Scripture says: " Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Consider Him, the Lord Himself, "who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

I say this: If your heart be affected by the things around you-if you allow them to have an influence on you-you do not come from the presence of the Lord with a sense of His having given you a place above it all. I come from the inside-from the scene of my enjoyment—to stand in the outside-the scene where everything is against me; but I come with the power of Christ, so that I am able to walk outside, and to bear up against all that is against me, whilst I know the enjoyment of His unclouded presence.

(J. B. S.)

He was the loneliest Man, but the most accessible Man, because He was love itself. He does not set Himself apart in the wilderness, but in heaven, and we are with Him there; every affection and moral feeling of my heart is linked up with Him who is on the throne of God.

(J. N. D.)

Christian Friend: Volume 14, Grace and Power

In the gospel of John we have something more than what is usually presented as the gospel. We have the setting aside of the old man; it is gone. At the end of chapter 2 There were some who had seen the miracles Jesus did, and were struck by them, but did not see the power of God in them. There was just one man who saw something more than the outward performance of the miracles. He saw the hand of God. ‘Rabbi, I know this,’ he says in effect, ‘it is not merely supernatural, but it is God; Rabbi, it is the power of God.’ But at the end of his interview with the blessed Lord the poor man says, “How can these things be?” It is infinitely more difficult to understand the words thou sayest than to see the power of God in the miracles thou doest. The blessed Lord had been rejected in chapter 1: “He came to His own, and His own received

Him not.” The world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. So when we come to that wonderful scene, Nicodemus and the Lord, the Lord stands on the ground of the resources there are in God, and the resources in Himself to meet man in the condition in which Nicodemus was without knowing it.

It is no question now of the power of God outside you. What you want is the power of God in you. ‘I do not understand what thou sayest. How can these things be? A man be born again!’ No one is saved who is not born of God. But what is it to be born of God? It is to receive from God Himself a wholly and entirely different nature, a “new” nature, capable of apprehending, understanding, entering into, in the blessed understanding of them, the thoughts that are in the heart, of God Himself. We speak of growing and getting on, but this is the very foundation. If by the grace of God, we have apprehended that foundation, we have made a beginning. This is how He begins here. Thus, the Spirit here tells us how the truth came home to the soul. Now the first sign God gives us of the work of God in the apostle is, “Behold, he prayeth.” It always comes fresh to one’s heart. The persecutor on his way to Damascus was turned right round with the light from heaven, straight round from what he had set his heart on, all the energies of his nature. God takes His other servant, Ananias, aside, and says, “Go to the street which is called Straight,” and he goes. The name of the street He gives him, and the name of the man, and one sign. He has begun to depend upon God; he prays—the persecutor prays. What a history that tells! Not only he is turned clean round from what he was before, but he has begun to depend upon God. Then nature comes out, and Ananias begins to say, Oh, but he is such a bad man! I have heard of all kinds of mischief he has done. The Lord tells Ananias, “Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name’s sake.” God retires, as it were, into His sovereignty, and it is God’s sovereign power that has also acted towards us.

I think it is well to remind ourselves that all the goodness, all the love, all the majesty of God passing before us, would not have affected us in the least degree if it had not been for the work of grace in our souls. He will work out of us everything of ourselves that He may fill us with nothing but Himself for the glory of Christ. Only think what it is for our souls, that Christ is to be glorified in us, in our life and our walk down here, and that we are to be taken up to be with Himself forever. He is no stranger, and how do we know Him? We know Him as One who has loved us with a love that is like no other. There is no other love like it. He could look upon us; He could see us in our distance and misery, nothing in us to attract, and that love in its sovereignty could expend itself upon us, could delight and satisfy itself in giving itself for us. It is wonderful for our souls to enter into it—the love of God, the love of the Father, and of the Son. I do not ask if your heart is satisfied. Do you know that the Father’s heart is satisfied about you? Come and look at the epistle of John: “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” If you love the world, it is the proof you have not tasted for your own soul’s satisfaction what the love of the Father is. We have not learned that His love is satisfied in us. It is that that blots out the world, that takes the world away from us. When He speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ He says, “Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.” No people so rich as you if you have tasted of that love. You are masters of the world if you have tasted the Father’s love. Only think of what the love of the Father is to us. We speak about going to be with Christ and like Him. What is the reason of it? Why, the Father’s love to us, and the Father’s love to the Son. He has first willed to have children before Himself that the fatherly affections of the heart of God Himself might be satisfied with such things as you and me. We cannot go on with the world if we have that in our hearts.

I referred to the gospel of John and the epistle of John because we find the Spirit of God bringing out the same blessed truth—that the only way God can have to do with us other than in judgment is on the ground of grace. It is a changeless ground, because there is nothing of man in it; it is a changeless ground, because it is all of God; it is the means to an end, and that end is the glory of Christ. That is the blessed end of everything.

Now, beloved brethren, if we can only, by the grace of God, understand this one thing—that God has not one single thought in His heart of which Christ Himself is not the object—it will make everything clear, it will make straight paths for our feet, clear up every difficulty, if we have simply, by the grace of God, His object before us. The apostle is an example of this in 2 Corinthians 12, for after having spoken, in chapter 11, of the wonderful history of service and of sufferings that he had gone through for God and Christ, he says, “I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.” Let us turn from the marred and blotted page of my history, and let us come to the new, and the bright, and the blessed page—the new history that stands before God. I do not speak now of Paul, I speak of the man in Christ that stands before God. No longer the history of Paul, the poor marred and blotted page of my history, though I have more to boast in and glory in than any of you. I now come, to the other—to that page that subsists before God, the brightness of that page. I stand now before God in Christ; I know myself there; I know myself in Him. It is no humbling thing to me to know myself there. It is the glory of my inmost soul, the joy of my inmost heart. I stand in all the perfection, in all the blessedness of Christ. Beloved friend, does that humble you? God help you if it does. I will tell you why. It shows you have in you what you are clinging to with a tenacity which proves you have not Him, and Him alone, before you. You are clinging to something you will not let go; some fancied and fanciful excellency which you think is not so bad after all.

Do you not know something of it, if you have been in the presence of God at all? I know myself,’ he says, in that character; ‘I know myself there standing before God in Christ.’ “In Christ.” I cannot explain to you what it is to be in Christ in a way that would satisfy your mind, because it is incomprehensible; but I could put it a little before you, as it is in this chapter. It will satisfy your heart, and it will search your conscience. Thank God, it is not something critical, it is not what your mind is capable of apprehending. Thought cannot measure it, but it can reach your conscience, and it can impress your heart; it is the blessed revelation that shall reach the conscience and impress the heart—the uncontrollable heart of man—and magnify the grace that has made us His. And so, He loves to pour into our hearts, and it is just like God, just His way to pour into our poor little hearts something of His great love, until our poor little hearts overflow to Him in worship. And what is worship but just the outpouring of a heart so filled to overflowing with the worthiness of the object before it, that the heart cannot contain itself? It is a kind of thing that flows out spontaneously from occupation with a blessed object.

I know this man, he says, caught up to the third heavens. There is no boasting there for any of us. It is when he comes out of that place there is the danger. Now I heard and could tell you things it is not possible for man to utter. But lest I should be filled with pride thereby, He helped me. So we have the blessed principle of grace brought out here. The blessed Lord knew that. He knew that man for whom He died, that man that persecuted those who were members of Christ here on earth. He knew that man had need of His grace, that he needed to be helped to take that road. Like Nicodemus, we might say, “How can these things be?” And Paul is put in the way to take that road. Poor thing that you are! You cannot take the road; you have it not in you to have self, set aside. You cannot keep the flesh in order yourself; but I will make that contemptible from which my grace has delivered you.

Beloved brethren, we may speak about God being with us here in this world. I would only just suggest to you that this is not the question. God has tried, and He has tried in infinite goodness, to walk with man on man's ground, and it ended in the shame, and spitting, and the cross. Now He has saved us, and He has called us with a holy calling; and He enables us to walk with Him on His ground. It changes the whole thing. It is not God walking with man in this world, but it is His calling us, and enabling us to walk with Himself. It is one thing to say God is with us here or there, blessing us in any service we may undertake, and undertaking for us; but that does not reach the soul, and give rest to the heart. The question is only, Am I with Him in what I am doing, in what He is doing? What grace it is! The sense of grace that comes fresh to the soul. I can only walk with Him by His grace. The apostle gives us the history of it. I think we can see there how thoroughly, by the grace of God, he had entered into that ground. Here is an out-and-out confession. 'That thorn,' he says, 'was given to me in the flesh I resisted it.' There is a real man before God—the man Paul. Here he is himself. He says, I prayed three times that it might go.' God had given him a thorn in the flesh, a help from God to keep the flesh in order. I must have His grace to hold me, to sustain me. "Hold my going up in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." I must have a divine power over myself, to hold me, and to keep the flesh in order, that never, never changes.

For a moment go back to John 3, for there are two things that never change. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." It never changes; it is the same to the very end. God never changes. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Those are the two that never change—the flesh, and the mighty God Himself. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." "I besought the Lord thrice"— twice without an answer, and the third time He said, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Many will tell you it means that the grace of God would enable him to bear the thorn in the flesh. You, poor soul, could not do without that thorn in the flesh, and you thought you could; but I know better. I know your flesh, your feebleness, and I am for you. My grace will not remove it, for my grace gave it. So, he learned what he had never learned before—to accept everything that comes. Do you think we have that consciousness now in all things that we go through in this world? Do we think what it is, not to be in the hand of One we cannot escape from, but to be in the hand of One who has chosen us, in His sovereign love? He is handling us according to His knowledge of what is in us, and we are in the hand of Him who is handling us, in order that He may express from us His grace.

Now he says—by the grace of God I know this "My grace is sufficient for thee." "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." Whenever I hear it said, "We are such poor, feeble things—so poor, so feeble," I say, "Well, if we look at ourselves, that is true. But what about the power of Christ resting upon us?" I find this very same man here (Acts 16) in circumstances of distress and trial-beaten, oppressed, and his feet fast in the stocks, and he sings praises to God. Why? Because his eye and his heart are above. "Ah! He counts me worthy to suffer for Himself," and his heart goes out in praises to Him. And the prison walls were round him, and all the suffering he had gone through before him; but he remembered Him who came into this world for him, and who counted him worthy to suffer for His sake; and there is the Object, and the power of the Object, that makes the heart glad, even in the most trying circumstances, and there is no prayer about it at all. He does not pray, as you and I often do, to get delivered. He has the sense of having to do with Christ, and the heart goes back to Him in praises and thanksgiving.

Go back for a moment to the end of the gospel of John. There is Mary at the sepulcher; she weeps and weeps, even to break her heart. There she stands, and looks into the, empty tomb. Her heart breaks with tears. It is gone, it is over. Alas! here is an empty grave, and I "know not where they have laid Him." Paul, on the other hand, knew where He had gone, and that He, the blessed Son of God, counted him worthy to suffer for Him. And what is the result? He sings praises. God answers in power, and the jailor comes in trembling, and says, "What must I do to be saved?" God manifests His hand. The jailor himself is convicted. "What must I do to be saved?" He does not say, "What must I do to be pardoned?" but he finds himself a lost soul, yet in the day of grace, and he cries for mercy, and his very prisoner brings it, to him. How wonderful, how simple it is! There are Paul and Silas, their feet fast in the stocks, at midnight, praying and singing praises to God. It is a blessed thing when, by the grace of God, we can have our hearts touched with what the power of God really is. "I take pleasure in all these, sorrows by the way," he says, as it were; "for they are just opportunities that the power of Christ may rest upon me, that I may learn afresh what it is to be in His, hand, and how He, in His infinite love and favor, can express Himself out of me? You cannot express Christ in this world; you cannot do it. It must be real dependence on Him, and He will express Himself out of you. Wait upon Him. Thus, we learn two things: The infinite capacity of the new nature, and the infinite power of the Holy Ghost.

Look for a moment at the way in which He speaks of grace. I want just to refer to that as manifested in connection with the judgment-seat of Christ. There it is that we see the very essence of grace. The judgment of sin was borne by this blessed One on the cross. He has given us to trust in Himself. He has made us His, and now He has set us in this world for. Himself; and when this scene is over, He brings us before His judgment-seat, and He goes over what we have done in this world—goes over what His own Holy Spirit has done through us in this world—and He counts it to us, and then, in the greatness of His gram, He says, I will reward you for it—for what His own Spirit has done through us. Was there ever grace like that? He begins with us on the ground of grace, and He never changes His ground; and we find that throughout the eternal ages His grace is glorified in us. He thus gave Himself for us—the blessed answer of His own heart to lay His own resources open to man in his guilt, his misery. His grace never ceases until we are there before His own throne, and even there it will be "to the praise of the glory of His grace." Oh, it becomes us to walk softly indeed! People may say, "We do not enjoy these things." Why is it? Because His Holy Spirit is grieved or hindered. We check the Holy Spirit, that alone can make these things real to us. Who could understand, save by the Spirit, what it is to be blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Him? And His Holy Spirit delights to make these things good to us, and to fill our hearts to overflowing. But if His Holy Spirit is checked or hindered by anything in us, the present realization ceases. The things themselves do not cease, but our enjoyment often does, to our sorrow and loss. The infinite capacity of the new nature ever remains; but, alas! we have in our own souls so little realization of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

One verse struck me as it was being read—"It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him to you." (John 16:7) "Another Comforter." Did you ever think of who and what the first Comforter was, who came into this world to take upon Himself our sins and our sorrows, to walk alongside of us? Do you know the One who came into this world to walk along with us, no matter what might come upon Him —the shame and the spitting, the cursing and swearing? They did not know Him. Nothing rebuffed that love. Then, risen from the dead, and taken up to the right hand of the majesty in the heaven, He leads the heart to listen to what the Spirit of God reveals, and alone can reveal; all that Christ really has come down to tell us. And we are in Him "in Him." We are standing in all the blessed acceptance in Him; we are accepted in the Beloved. It does not say we are accepted in Christ; it says we are accepted in all the blessed overflowing of the love of the Father's heart to that Son. God gives us that place; it is the measure of my place before Himself. He tells it to us in order that our hearts may go up to Him in praise and thanksgiving—a heart that is too full of what the blessed. God is not to praise Him.

Beloved brethren, when God touches our hearts, when in simplicity and reality we are before God, when He really touches our hearts with what His love to us now is, there is no holding in, it is bound to go back to Him. The heart beats true to Him because the heart is His, He has won it, and He is interested in all that passes there. He puts us through these things to make good to us what His love and care really are. There is His love. It has been said that if He put us through difficulties and trials, it was better than leaving us alone. Why, He has bought us with a price. Can He leave us alone? He will never cast us off. He will never be the first to break the link; or if the link is broken by us, so far as we can do so, He will hold us and put us through thing after thing, trial after trial, difficulty after, difficulty; till we learn afresh His grace, and care, and love, and what it is to have to do with Him. You will find there is not a difficulty but the blessing, and the sense of His love and of His heart gets fuller and more real in every single sorrow and trial He puts us through, because the object of His heart is to draw us nearer to Himself. Not to cry for Him to come because we find the way weary, because we are tired and we are cast down. Let us remember this, that until He comes He has something for His people to do here. He has some manifestation of Himself of what He can do here, some grace that shall flow from Himself, that shall go back in answering glory and praise to Himself up to the last moment. We may say the way is dreary, and we want to be gone, and we want to be at rest. What does it show us? It shows restlessness. It is not a promise, it is a bright and blessed hope; but until He comes, let us go on, content to be here until He comes, in view of the blessed prospect. May God in His mercy give us to understand it really by His grace, and to seek to be ever in spirit with Himself until that moment when He comes to fetch us to be there forever.

P. A. H.

Christian Friend: Volume 12, 2 Corinthians 12:9

The first sentence of this verse is sometimes overlooked—“He said unto me.” Paul got it from Christ. You may tell me that Christ is sufficient, but I must get it myself personally from Christ in heaven, and that will assure my heart. If we want to be delivered from ourselves, or from whatever difficulties may be in our pathway, He is sufficient. The result is, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities.” He besought the Lord thrice to take away the thorn before, but now a communication from Christ has altered everything; the voice of Christ alters everything. There is no third party here; it is not He and us, but He and me. I do not mean anything imaginative, only the simplicity of intercourse with Christ about everything in our pathway. “That the power of Christ may overshadow me, tabernacle over me.” For the saint of God who walks in conscious weakness and powerlessness there is an invisible power overshadowing him all the pathway through. I believe we often want to get up power like getting up steam. It must be perpetual weakness, but perpetual power. Christ says I can do anything I like there; that is the state He wants in us.

E. P. C.

Bible Treasury: Volume N3, Patience: a Comment

Many since Chrysostom have assumed that “patience” is here laid down as the pre-eminent sign of an apostle. This is not said; but the truth is yet weightier. Irony and seriousness withal pervade these closing chapters of this touching Epistle. In the face of “the overmuch apostles,” surely none of the twelve, but pseudo-apostles (11:13), those pretenders who imposed on too many of the Corinthians, we read, “The signs indeed of the apostle were wrought out among you in all endurance by signs and wonders and powers.” Faith and love kept him from mentioning himself; so that the rebuke fell unsparingly on those who sought to exalt themselves by undermining him. “Patience,” instead of being “the supreme or at least first-named sign,” is the deep substratum of grace which lay under them all. It is characteristic of God (“the God of patience”); it shone above all in Christ; it distinguished the apostle beyond all others. But how strange “the inference” that “patience should, a fortiori, characterize those who are not apostles"! Are not premise and inference equally at fault? There is no need of straining what is so strictly personal; for we as Christians are “strengthened with all power according to the might of his glory unto all endurance (or, patience) and long-suffering with joy.”

Bible Treasury: Volume N3, Fragment: 2 Corinthians 12:12

2 Cor. 7:12. Is it not instructive to read that, though “signs and wonders and mighty deeds” are undoubtedly “signs of an apostle,” yet a very different thing, a most passive virtue, takes precedence of them all? In the apostle “patience” was the supreme or at least first-named sign. The inference is obvious. Patience should, a fortiori, characterize those who are not apostles. R. B.

Bible Treasury: Volume 3, Strength Made Perfect in Weakness

2 Cor. 12:8, 9.

It is a natural thought, the first thought perhaps even for a godly soul, to desire an answer of the Lord in the removal of that which is trying and painful. We know the Lord's great compassion—that He cares for His own—that He feels for them and with them; and we are prone to gather from this that He must appear speedily for us when any blow, humiliation, or sorrow comes upon us, specially that which would seem to make the Lord's glory to be questioned and thwarted in various ways. And this was most plainly so in the case before us. The enemy was taking advantage of this thorn in the apostle's flesh to lower the apostle and his work. We are disposed to expect an immediate answer from the Lord in the way of the removal of the trial. It was so with the apostle himself. He cried to the Lord about it; he besought Him thrice that it might depart from him. But he mistook the Lord. It was not so that He heard. The Lord did hear him. But the apostle had this great truth to

learn:—the Lord's way of answering is much better than our way of beseeching. Even were it the Apostle Paula man with such an amazing knowledge of what was most suitable to God and most to be desired by His children—even he had to learn that he was not the Lord—an apostle had to learn that the Lord's ways are above our ways. I believe that this desire of an answer from the Lord coming at once in the way of meeting us in our difficulty and sorrow, is rather one that was taught, and that God acted upon in His ways of old, in dealing with His ancient people Israel. When they were in any difficulty or trial, they cried to the Lord, and He heard and delivered them out of their troubles. But it was not so necessarily now. It is not always in removing the distress that God acts. This is not the characteristic way now with Christians. I do not say that He does it not in many a case; for he pities the weakness of His children, and does not lay the same burden upon all.

But there is something more blessed than the mere setting aside of the trial, and that is the power of divine grace which enters into it, and lifts us above it, the distress, it may be, continuing, the sorrow going on, the thorn not removed, but ourselves raised entirely above it. And I believe that this heavenly way of meeting sorrow and trouble, is specially the one in which God triumphs in His dealings with the church. Because it is not power coming into the tribulation, and preserving saints through it, that is the characteristic of the church, any more than it will be a mighty deliverance at the end of the tribulation, and the execution of judgment on surrounding enemies. That is not the manner of the Christian's deliverance. And as it does not answer to the way in which the church will be dealt with at the end, so it is not the principle of the Lord's dealings with us all through. It is a higher thing, the lifting us in spirit above, even while the sorrow may be still adhering to us. Perhaps there is sharp trial, difficulty, and that which is heartbreaking, even in the church of God itself. The apostle must know this in a way that seemed to frustrate all his desires for the blessing of the church. For the thorn given him was something that made him to be scorned in the eyes of others, and that was an immense trial to himself and to every one that loved him, appearing to be a hindrance, even to the work of the Lord through him. What a thing it looked that the Lord should have sent upon him something that he even had not before, that which made him an object of contempt to others; for that is what the thorn in the flesh was. So that, in some unexplained way, carnal persons, who looked to the outward appearance, were in danger of losing their respect for him. It was not that the thorn was a sin, or something evil he did—it was nothing that people commonly call an infirmity, which, as thus applied, is really a sin; but it was something that was entirely beyond the apostle's control, and that made him an object of contempt to others. We can readily conceive more than one thing that would have such an effect; but we are not told what it was, and we ought not to go beyond the word of the Lord. We do know that both the Galatians and Corinthians were affected by it, and even reasoned from it that he was not called to be an apostle. Paul himself was exceedingly tried by it, and brings out this to the Corinthians themselves, He shows them that it had been an immense exercise to his own mind, the more so as he had had special revelations from the Lord; and that, along with this great honor which had been put upon him by God, but which was unseen by men, there was the thorn given to him in the flesh, producing what men could see and feel, and naturally tending to destroy his influence. But the apostle had a deeper lesson to learn than be had ever entered into before, God giving such a sight of Christ, and such a present knowledge of His love, not by removing the trial, nor by a present answer, it may be, but by lifting him in spirit completely above it, so that he should realize the full weight of it, might even know what it was to die daily, because of the sorrowful circumstances of the church, and now also by reason of what he felt in himself; for there was this that was so painful to bear and so apparently undesirable, because of its effect upon the minds of others. Thus he learns that there was something still better. “My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness.” Oh! for faith to rest in this, to believe it about ourselves, to apply it to present circumstances of the church of God, to rest with unhesitating certainty in the assurance that, whatever appearances may be, however plain the impossibility for us to set things right where they are wrong, we may have our confidence unshaken in the Lord, just as one can rest in His salvation and know that it is perfect, so should we be calm in the certainty that Christ is Son over His own house, and that His love to the saints now is as perfect as in the matter of bearing their sins. But as individuals may not enjoy the salvation of Christ, so, too, shall I be weak and cast down if feeble in my faith as to the Lord's care for His Church, and His entrance into its sorrows, or if burdened about it, as though the whole blessing of the Church rested upon me. It is plain that this resting upon Christ as the head of His Church would not make the members less feeling and watchful. On the contrary; where we realize that Christ is identified with everything, the sorrow will be intensely known; but there will be confidence in the Lord when we can confide in nothing else, and our faith will not be disappointed. The Lord is coming Himself, but ere He comes, He never ceases to be head of His own church, nor fails to nourish and cherish it.

Girdle of Truth: Volume 4, How the Lord Gives Strength

2 Corinthians 12

We are apt to make a mistake in speaking of our weakness and unprofitableness, forgetting that it is when we have done our duty we are unprofitable servants. When we speak of our weakness of spirituality or conduct, we mean our failure. But when Paul speaks of weakness, it is that which makes room for power, " when I am weak then am I strong," and the result fully produced is with the consciousness of there being no strength in us. This is a very different thing to our failure. Our failure ought to lead us to humble ourselves before God for that which led to the failure. If we have not done what we ought, why have we not? We cannot glory in not having done it. There is a strength that the babe in Christ may have, and needs-power guided by wisdom, and that does not fail. When we have not been emptied of self, and are full of self-confidence, we must be broken down; pretension to strength is always in the way for failure. The first step towards failure is forgetting our entire and absolute dependence. As Christians, we know we have no strength, but forget we have none.

This chapter brings out in a remarkable way the dealings of God in giving strength. There is a wonderful scene going on in the heart of man. God does not let us always see it; it would not be good for us; we could not bear it. Sometimes the vail is drawn aside; and, as in the case of Job, the heart is exposed to itself; God and Satan are seen to be there. It is a serious thing when God thus lifts the vail and shows what is going on for good and evil in a poor little heart like ours! God " hath set the world in their heart," and if it ends there, it is all vanity and vexation of spirit.

Another question as a moral question is the WILL of man. (When will is not at work and sorrow comes in, it is the happiest position; for sorrow without will is a means of blessing.) The first who begins that question is God. It is a question of Satan's power, man's will, and God's goodness in the midst of all that. You have the conscience of evil in your hearts, and the evil is too much for you; you do not know what to do with it. This conscience of good and evil has come in by the fall. Adam bad the conscience of good and evil with sin and by sin. He had it by disobedience. Conscience therefore cannot guide a man right. The converted man has the light of God to bear upon it. That shows man what

he is. The soul has to own its badness, and to say, God is right. I go with Him morally in condemning myself. God shows man to be vile as to nature, rebellious as to will, and hateful towards God as to his affections. And it is a blessing when He shows it to us: but it is not deliverance. That is another thing. The glory of God's ways is that He puts us down completely as to ourselves, by the fact that our salvation is wrought out by another. When I had done nothing but sin, I find God has condemned sin in the flesh. Where? On Christ. I see my sin all measured and dealt with on the cross. Thus I am brought to God, and in the presence of God no one is proud. It is away from Him (as to the consciousness of it) that pride works.

The beginning of the chapter shows us what a " man in Christ" gets, revelations, &c, (if we do not have these now we shall by and by,) and afterward we see what flesh in a man is, what it may tome to; debates, envyings, wraths, &c., as in the end of the chapter. There are the extremes of both, revelations in the third heaven, and flesh in its worst character. Most Christians are in neither one state nor the other practically.

How sadly we are generally dragging through this world as those who are not capable of having their citizenship in heaven! Of some God was not ashamed to be called their God, because they were looking for a city beyond this world. God is ashamed to be called the God of those whose hearts are only here.

Paul says, "I knew a man in Christ, of such an one will I glory." That is what all Christians should have got hold of. If you are not a man in Christ before God you are lost; it is presumption to think of being anything else. Can I know that I am going to be like Christ in glory, and not glory in it? We must glory. Paul was not glorying in the revelations when he was in them; he had no time then to glory; but he gloried in what was his portion, Christ, his life, righteousness, glory, &c. Paul speaks of these revelations as having been given fourteen years ago. It is not intended that we should always be living in the wonderful enjoyments connected with the glory of Christ: if we were it would be sight, not faith. There was no danger of being puffed up when in the third heaven, it was when he came down to Paul again, there was the danger. There is no danger in the presence of God.

I learn now another thing, viz.; that it is not God's thought at all to alter my flesh, my old nature. The tree is bad; the flesh can be puffed up in Paul in the consciousness of having been in the third heaven. There is no good in me. I am a sinner. This is more than living under the curse of a broken law. Where I am, where my flesh is, I should pervert even the third heavens. In verse 7, we see that God turns that by which Satan would have tempted him, into a rod to keep down his pride. We are not told what the thorn was, but it was something that made him despicable in preaching (alluded to in Galatians) to meet the pride that would come from the revelations. Numbers were converted, not by Paul's eloquence, but by the Lord's power. Their faith was not to be standing in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.

Thus we have Christ for the man upon earth. We must be brought down to nothing, having no strength in ourselves. The flesh was not allowed to act in Paul, a thorn was sent lest he should be exalted above measure. That is the normal condition of a soul, viz., power given not to sin.

If the heart is exercised in dependence we judge the root of the evil, and it does not come out. Our business is to learn the evil in our character by judging it and not by its coming out. If I have a proud character, and am humbled before God about my pride, I go out, and am more humble than a very humble man by nature. I have not a bad conscience by the flesh being in me, but I have if I allow it to act. The thorn is sent to prevent it.

In verse 9, we see how he came to power. The question of righteousness has been settled by Christ being at the right hand of God. It is a settled thing. It is practically learned when I am saved, and then I have a title to the third heaven. " My strength is made perfect in weakness." The Lord never gives us intrinsic strength. He makes us feel our dependence. I am made to feel my weakness when I see how my flesh would pervert even the blessings that are mine in Christ.

Therefore will I rather glory in infirmities, not in sins, but in infirmities, e.g. distresses, persecutions, &c. The Spirit kept him from that which would have given him a bad conscience.

Girdle of Truth: Volume 1, Believer's Resource, The: When I Am Weak Then Am I Strong

Read 2 Cor. 12:1-10

It is not what Paul's " thorn in the flesh" might be, nor the nature of the revelations he received in " the third heaven," nor whether he subsequently wrote what he tells us it was " not possible for a man to utter," that I would now consider; but a point of far more practical importance, namely, the conditions on which the grace and strength of Christ are imparted to believers for their daily walk and service.

When the question of salvation is in view, one does not speak of conditions—for it is God's grace to sinners—but when it is the believer's walk with God it is otherwise. Here there are conditions. If it be as to the certainty of divine knowledge, it is “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine;" or if it be the sustainment of the soul in trial, or the impartation of strength for service, it is, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” For, if the apostle's case was special, as to revelations and the necessary counterbalance of' a thorn in the flesh, and the buffetings of Satan's messenger, the principle which it brings out, in the Lord's answer to his thrice repeated supplication for the removal of the cause of his trouble, is absolute and universal.

There are two points in this answer: first, the entire sufficiency of Christ's grace to meet the exigency; and, second, the conditions on which alone that grace is imparted. Now the grace of the Lord Jesus is the only sufficiency of a Christian. "The flesh profiteth nothing." Yet Christians often act as if they themselves were sufficient for everything, except to meet some great trial, or to cope with some great difficulty, which drives them to their knees, and forces them to acknowledge their weakness, and to seek for Christ's strength.

This was not, however, the case with the apostle. He habitually leant upon that grace, and not on his own strength. He says, " we are not sufficient of ourselves, to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." His ordinary course was not to go on, like many, in the spirit of neglectful unconscious independence, until some crisis in his experience, or his circumstances, made him feel his dependence, and turn to the source of his strength. But even he had to learn that there was a fuller sufficiency in Christ's grace than be had ever yet

experienced, or even imagined. His crushing trial drove him to the Lord as his only resource, and the intensity of his feelings is seen in his earnest prayer for deliverance; but he had no thought of a grace that could sustain under it, and make it an occasion for the fuller display of Christ's glorious power. Still, when the answer comes, it shows how simply Christ's glory was his object, and not his own ease, or credit, or anything else. We hear no more of the pricking of the thorn, nor prayer that the messenger of Satan might depart from him; but he says, "Most gladly therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." The paradox, "When I am weak then am I strong," by which he closes this account, shows how entirely his heart assented to the conditions of his strength, and how thoroughly he had learned the force of that word, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

And how many practical lessons are to be drawn from this narration!

In the first place it is manifest, that the higher we reach in heavenly things, the lower it will put us in the estimation of ourselves, and in our condition as to this world. He who was highest of all in heavenly glory and heavenly worth, was lowest of all in earthly circumstances and human estimation. "I am a worm and no man," was His declaration in the hour of His sorrow; and "the Son of man hath not where to lay his head," shows the condition in which He pursued this earthly service. But even in this He is our example. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2:5-8.) And if Paul was taken to "the third heaven," where none but himself had ever been, his heavenly elevation must be balanced by a corresponding earthly depression; or else he would not have been able to use this token of the Lord's favor for anything but self-exaltation, which is but to corrupt from its true end what Christ bestows. Hence the necessity of the flesh being mortified in proportion as spiritual advances are made. If I enter into the truth, practically, of being " risen with Christ," the other side of the question is, " mortify therefore your members which are on the earth." A ship must be ballasted in proportion to the sail she carries, or she will inevitably be capsized. In the school of Christ the spirit is taught, on the one hand; and the flesh is scourged into submission on the other: and the proof of advancement in the knowledge of Christ is found in increasing distrust of self.

In the next place, it rebukes that vanity of mind, which esteems everything of little worth which cannot be displayed for the admiration of others. The mere reference to what he had been taught as to " visions and revelations of the Lord," the apostle characterizes as speaking "like a fool." They were afforded for another end than to bring himself forward. And if he could not talk about his experience, in the best sense, namely, what Christ had taught him and wrought by him, without being in danger of becoming " a fool," I wonder what those are who are constantly talking about themselves in connection with what the flesh and the devil accomplish in them! Moreover the apostle could not communicate to others what he had learned in the third heaven. The revelations were abundant, but it was "not possible to utter" them. As good not to have them, then, (says the foolish heart,) as not to be able to use them. But why is it necessary for the heart to disclose all its treasures, like Hezekiah to the ambassadors of the king of Babylon? Is there nothing that Christ teaches me for myself? Must I count that as nothing which I cannot vainly show to others, or even use for the edification of others? Why should I hinder Christ from giving me a "white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth save he which receiveth it?"

But the non-removal of the thorn in the flesh, moreover, teaches us the folly of thinking a change of circumstances, or the removal of trial, necessary to one's service for Christ. If we want to shine ourselves, circumstances of trial will hinder our shining; and Christ sends them for the very end that we might not shine. But if we want Christ's grace to shine, that will shine most by means of the very trial and difficulty we may have longed to get removed. "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness!" And this was to bring out in the apostle, "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." Circumstances may have their effect on our own spirits, but, unless they are sinful, (and then we must get out of them,) they are certainly no hindrance to God's Spirit. A man may feel his hands to be always dirty in the world's service, and yet if he leans on Christ's grace, which is sufficient for him, he may have his heart always clean for the enjoyment of Christ, and for the service of Christ. Such a man serves Christ in his daily toil; and if he cannot always be reading and praying, he may, nevertheless, be always in communion. A mother, with half a dozen children which occupy her hands through the day, and often keep her awake through the night, cannot serve Christ as she sees, perhaps, some others; but if she owns Christ in her circumstances, and hangs on His grace, while she is rocking one child in the cradle with her foot, and mending the clothes of another with her hands, may have her heart fed by the hidden manna from Christ's own hand, and serve Him, whom she loves, more effectually than if she had all her time to herself, and thus felt less the necessity of the injunction, "Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end."

I want no change of circumstances, nor removal of trials, to enable me to pursue Christ's service; I only want to know the truth, practically, of the word, " my grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." But then the sense of weakness, which alone makes room for Christ's strength, is what nature always shrinks from. "I am so weak," is often on the lips of Christians; and it often means that they expect strength in themselves instead of in Christ; or, that they have hitherto leant on a strength which has now broken down. In either case they have yet to learn the solution of the enigma, "When I am weak then am I strong." A Christian ought always to feel himself so weak as to dread to undertake anything in his own sufficiency; and yet so strong in Christ as to be able to accomplish everything through His grace. The sense of weakness, from which nature shrinks, is essential to the display of Christ's strength. Without it we should neither know the extent of our dependence ourselves, nor should we use the grace communicated for the glory of Christ. "We had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." " He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isa. 40:29-31.).

Christian Truth: Volume 34, Meaning of Being Crafty, The

The expression, "Nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile" (2 Cor. 12:16), is the low insult which "deceitful workers" insinuated among the Corinthian saints, to defame the Apostle and exalt themselves. They dared to say that if the Apostle did not burden them directly, he all the more craftily reaped what he could through Titus and others. None fall into such depths of baseness as self-seeking Christian professors. In short, then, this expression is the language not of the Apostle, but of his adversaries, whom he exposes for our admonition; and

he calls speaking about himself, "folly," because it was not about Christ, but himself; but for the brethren's sake he was compelled to.

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Things New and Old: Volume 33, Man in Christ, A

2 Corinthians 12:2

Paul says, “I knew a man in Christ,” or, more correctly, “I know a man in Christ,” and a little lower in the chapter he speaks of himself and the abundance of revelations he had had, so that there cannot be a doubt that Paul refers to himself as “a man in Christ.” He was caught up into Paradise, and revelations were communicated to him in such a way that he could not tell whether he was in the body or had been carried out of it.

But let us try to discover whether the term “man in Christ” was something that applied exclusively to Paul, or did it apply to him more strictly than to any one else?

Let us first look at 1 Cor. 15:22: “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” This points us to two headships. In Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all live. This speaks of the resurrection, but our passage refers to a man being in Christ while in the body. Our Lord said, “Except a [the] corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (John 12:24), showing that the death of Christ was needful before His people could be brought into the closest association with Himself.

In another passage Christ is called the last Adam: “The first man Adam was made [or, became] a living soul; the last Adam, a quickening spirit.” (1 Cor. 15:45.) Here it is as two heads of creation: yes, we can speak of two creations, for we read that “if any man be in Christ [there is] a new creation.” (2 Cor. 5:17.) Such a one is united with the last Adam, and as to his standing before God he has been severed from the first Adam.

Another passage will confirm this: “The first man is of the earth, earthy [or, made of dust]; the second man is the Lord1 from heaven.” (1 Cor. 15:47.) Now why does the passage speak only of two men when there have been millions? Surely because the first man, Adam, and the second Man, Christ, are the heads of two races or generations, and every human being belongs to the one or the other. All did belong to the first, but through the ‘new creation’ some, by God’s grace, are taken out of that and made a part of the second.

Let us look at another expression—a formula we may say—the apostle speaks of a past condition, and says, “when we were in the flesh” (Rom. 7:5); “they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in [the] flesh, but in [the] Spirit, if so be that [the] Sprit of God dwell in you.” (Chapter 8:8, 9.) Now what can the expression “in the flesh,” as a bygone position, be except that the Christian has been lifted clean out of that standing, and has been placed into an entirely different one—in Christ?

It is true that the expression “in the flesh” is used in the scripture, and by the same apostle, with the simple signification of being alive in the body, as “ nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.” (Phil. 1:24) But when a living man says, “When we were in the flesh,” it must refer to a position which has been left.

Many a Christian has but very vague ideas of what is meant by the expression, “When we were in the flesh.” Some seem to take it to mean that sometimes we are in the flesh, and sometimes we are not, and make it to be Christian experience, the same as is explained in Gal. 5:17: “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.” But in Rom. 7 there is not a word about the Holy Spirit. The converse of being formerly in the flesh is, “but now we are delivered from the law, having died in that wherein we were held” (as ver. 6 should read). There is a dying out of the old position of the first creation in association with Adam, and under the law, and a being brought into a new position in Christ Jesus and under grace, the standing or position of the Christian is very apt to be confounded with his walk and ways. But the two things are quite distinct. This is seen under many figures in scripture. We have to thank God that he “hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.” (Col. 1:13.) We are emancipated from the authority of darkness, ruled over by Satan, and are brought into the kingdom of God’s dear Son—an entirely different place. We are not simply changed in character and left in the old place; but are brought into the kingdom of which Christ is Lord and Master.

Again, we who were the children of wrath, being also dead in sins, God hath quickened together with Christ, and “hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” (Eph. 2:6.) This is our place and inheritance, and, though we are still in the body, in Christ we are already there. We are not with Christ until we are actually there. But this is an entirely new position or standing from being children of wrath, when we were willful followers of our first parent Adam, and as to any life God-ward we were dead in sins. We were then in Adam; but now, if Christians, we are “in Christ.”

“Therefore if any man be in Christ [there is] a new creation: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.” (2 Cor. 5:17-18.) The new creation here spoken of entirely confutes the thought of our being restored to the status of Adam in innocence: the status believers are brought into far exceeds this in blessedness, and it is entirely and emphatically a new creation, brought about for us by the death of the Lord Jesus, by our being quickened together with Him, and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and the new position into which we are thus brought may be summed up in two words, “in Christ.”

Now it is important to see that as this is true of one Christian, it is also true of all Christians. Thus the Epistle to the Colossians is addressed “to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ:” scripture does not recognize any middle place. As heads there are only the first man and the second Man; the first Adam and the last Adam—the Lord Jesus Christ.

With which head is the reader connected? The thought of a mortal man being “in Christ” is something entirely beyond what we could have conceived, and it doubtless seems to some to be presumption to take such a place; but if God says this of us, it is unbelieving not to own it, and dishonoring to Him who in grace has declared this respecting the believer. It may seem to some to be humility to want to take a lower place; but it is not: true humility takes the place assigned to it, and forgets itself, in love and admiration of the One who has accomplished it all.

Privilege and responsibility flow from relationship. If God has placed us in a position, we cannot shirk its responsibilities, nor should we think lightly of its privileges. This would be despising our birthright. Let none think that by shutting their eyes to what God has revealed respecting them, they can avoid much being required of them. “Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.” (Luke 12:48.) Of Israel it was said, “You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.” (Amos 3:2.)

The high position of the saint should affect all the details of life: thus the apostle writes, “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?.... Know ye not that we shall judge angels?” (1 Cor. 6:1-3.) How unbecoming it would be for saints to seek justice from those whom they are destined to judge.

But to return to our passage that speaks of Paul as “a man in Christ,” let us note that his being caught up into the third heaven had nothing to do with giving him that stand-bag. He was a man in Christ before he was caught up just as much as he was afterward. Surely a godly walk becomes all such, but if any do not walk well, if Christians at all, this does not deprive them of their position: it would rob them of the enjoyment of their relationship, but it would not destroy it. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, says, “I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal [or fleshly]; as unto babes in Christ.... ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?” (1 Cor. 3:1-3.) Note that though they were fleshly and carnal, and were babes, yet they were babes “in Christ.”

Once in that position, by being quickened together with Christ, nothing can bring them back again into the old standing of being “in Adam.” Disciplined they will be, and if need be they may be delivered by God unto Satan for the breaking them down, for the destruction of the flesh. That they may be finally lost? No, “that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” (Chap. 5:5.)

We see in the case of Paul how careful God is that His saints should not go astray, and that they should not even be exalted above measure. Paul had been caught up to the third heaven, No fear of his being puffed up when there; but when he came down, could he not boast of being the only man alive that had ever been into such an exalted position, and of having heard things that it was not possible to utter in a world like ours? God cared for His servant, as He cares for each one of us, and He gave Paul a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him. It was not a mere finger-ache, we may be sure, but something that buffeted him, tried him exceedingly—perhaps something that made him contemptible in the eyes of the gainsayers. (See 2 Cor. 10:10.) He besought the Lord thrice that the thorn might be removed; but he received the assurance that God’s grace was sufficient for him: for His strength was made perfect in weakness. Paul could then glory in his infirmities that the power of Christ might rest upon him.

May all God’s beloved people know, and understand better, and own the high and holy position He has placed them in. And then seek grace that their state, their condition of life, should correspond to that position. “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection [your mind] on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

Dorothy Conference: 1994, 2 Corinthians 12:7-21

Reading

We belong together. Lord and light the light of it. While you're telling me. How God's hearing? And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather. That the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, and reproaches, and necessities, and persecutions and distresses, for Christ sake or when I am weak, then am I strong I am become a fool in glory. Ye have compelled me, for I ought to have been commended of you for nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

Truly, the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patients in signs and wonders. And mighty deeds? Or what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong. Behold the third time, I am ready to come to you, and I will not be burdensome to you, for I seek not yours but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you. Though the more abundantly I love you, the less I beloved. But be it so. I did not burden you. Never the lust being crafty, I caught you with guile. Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you? I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you. Walk we not in the same spirit, walk we not in the same steps again. Thank you, that we excuse ourselves unto you. We speak before God in Christ. But we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying. For I fear lest when I come I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you, such as ye would not, Lest there be debates, envies, wrath, strife, backbiting, whisperings, swellings, tumults. And last, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already. And have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed. We can glory in what we are in Christ. Of such an one will I glory a man in Christ. We can glory in that, but He has made us to be by His grace. But when it comes to. The flesh is so deceitful and treacherous that. We can easily take credit to ourselves for things that we shouldn't. And so he says of myself, will I not glory, but in my infirmities, that which keeps me humble and brings me low, I can glory in that because he realizes how treacherous the human heart is. And we can begin in the Spirit and end in the flesh. I was just thinking how that the apostle has been speaking about being caught up to the 3rd heaven and what marvelous. Revelation he had at that time, but. That was

preceded, wasn't it, in verse 33 of the last chapter by being left? Now you know that. Was that not a humiliating experience for the process? I don't know if you've ever sat in a basket, but you know, as you sit there, one is given to feel how helpless they are. They're really at the mercy, you know? It shows outside the badges and everything. Sort of doing something with the best and but I think this is how God works, doesn't he? The desire is that we might humble ourselves under this mighty stand in order that he might resolve it. And so the way up is really the way down. First of all.

So that's that's what the spring operating important surface that. Humility of my industry. National service of the Lord. And Peter was in prison. There was a Angel that came and opened the door and everything. So God was manifesting his power toward him. But here the great apostle, the one who was caught up to the 3rd heaven, God didn't deliver him by any miraculous way. He let him just. Shall shall I say, be carried over the wall with human beings. They let him down by the wall. Sometimes we might think we're great and God should come in and do great things for us. But the Lord lets us to feel that we're really nothing, and so I think it's in contrast with some of the miraculous deliverances that were on other occasions. When he's talking of all that he went through, he is showing that God didn't come in miraculously to deliver him, let him endure these things in order that he might learn to be nothing. And yet he was given these wondrous revelations, being caught up to the 3rd heaven. What a beautiful contrast we are. Not a contrast but similarity. We see in the Blessed Lord Himself, who was who is God, and yet he would come down in human form, taking his place with with man. And so the Apostle in that basket would be just a little picture of the Blessed Lord in his deep humility of coming here. To be a man. He's referred to this chapter. I didn't get what you said. I believe that's our position, the body every believer is seen in Christ. Says that in Ephesians one has raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places in in Christ, in Christ Jesus. And so that's the position into which the believer is brought in contrast with a man in the flesh. Either in the flesh cannot please God. But he is contrasting that, I would think, with a man in Christ, because he's bringing before us those marvelous revelations that were given to us. Showing us our new position no longer in the flesh as we were before God. But in Christ, in a possession of wondrous acceptance and favor. So we're holy and without blame before him and love. In connection with what you are saying, Gordon before, I just want to read a verse. Acts 839. You don't have to turn to it and says when they were come up out of the water, the spirit of the Lord caught away Philip that the eunuch saw him no more and he went on his way rejoicing. Philip was found at his Otis. That was quite a trip he got by the Spirit of the Lord. There was an miraculous he could have done that to Paul, couldn't he? But he didn't. He allowed him to go through this humiliating experience. For being let down by from the wall in the basket and that he can glory in. That's why he mentions it. It made nothing of him. Neil, where you're thinking of verse 9, The Power of Christ. Wasn't the second verse she referred to was it? Whole chapter. My thought my question was particularly this and in this chapter. We particularly see in the name of Christ the life divine display below. And as the anointed man and we see this both and being caught up into heaven and. And the whole character. Conducting this chapter. The spirit in which he displayed.

Isn't it to see one who? As he says here in our fifth verse, of such an one will I glory, yet of myself I will not glory, but in my infirmities. He went through and very many things for the name of Christ and as a man. He was. He was a man like we are, but he was a man in Christ. And as he looked, as he felt his need, as he felt his position in Christ he could go through that was just referring back to the 4th chapter. Where it says. Verse 7. We have this treasure in earthen vessels. And Paul had a treasure in that earthen vessel. And we do too, brethren. He says that the Excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. If I'm looking at self, if I'm feeling my needs there in myself, I cannot go through this. But if I see that I'm a man in Christ, or belong to Christ, or that Christ is working in me and with me and for me, then we can see, as he says here, we are troubled on every side in verse 8, yet not distressed. The demand outside of Christ can be distressed and we too can be distressed. But he says we are perplexed. But not in despair. How beautiful that is to see that if we know the Lord Jesus not only his Savior, but as the one who is. The guide in our lives. And he's not only so, but we're going on, in some measure at least, enjoying the person of Christ in our hearts. Not just knowing him as savior. You know some they trust the Lord as their savior and they look at him afar off. But he wants us to come near, He wants us to know him in a personal way, and Paul didn't know him in that way. And then he says we're we're persecuted but not forsaken. That's in in 2nd Corinthians 4 and verse 9, always bearing about in the body the dying. I understand this to be of Jesus, that lowly one down here. And in Paul's body he felt this keenly, and so he says that. The life also of Jesus. Might be manifest in our body. It was manifested in the apostle, wasn't it, Because he was going through these difficulties and trials. And I I thought of it here in connection with verse 5, where he says, but in my infirmities he could rejoice a man in Christ. Anything that exalted Paul, he he avoided. He tried to avoid and when he finally does tell of that which would exalt Paul. Is being caught up to the 3rd heaven, he says in the 11Th verse. Having told it, he says I am become a fool in glory. This is not what he wanted to do. It was painful to him to promote himself in any way. I'm reminded of the story. I think it's a true story. When David Livingstone, who had spent years in the service of the Lord in Africa, was in England, they said someone asked him and said, what was the greatest experience that you ever had. In Africa. And they were waiting for him to declare some mighty deliverance, or whatever it was. And his answer was my greatest experience was he restoreth my soul. And that made nothing of David Livingstone and everything of the grace of God. And that's the mark. Of a true servant. He doesn't promote himself, He doesn't exalt himself. He doesn't tell the great things that he has done and the many souls that have been saved under his ministry and all that. He leaves that with the Lord. And if he does talk about himself, he talks to the things that concern his infirmities. Going to 7th verse. We have to correct. Our translation? It should not read lest I should be exalted above measure twice. You have that it simply says and should read lest I should be exalted. No, exaltation is the point. And for that reason an Angel of Satan buffeted him. You know that he would be kept humble. And this is a hard lesson to learn, you know, It is really a hard lesson to learn and how foolish.

That we might even glory in debt, which the Lord has given us to serve Him and his people. And you know, many times the Saints ruined the servants by making too much of the servant. And we better keep in mind all glory should go to the giver. You know, we should make everything of the giver and nothing of the gift. We're thankful for what the Lord has done in the life of any of his people. But infirmities are necessary in order that the Lord Jesus gets all the glory. You know, Chuck was talking about the the apostle. Paul avoided anything that would draw attention to him. And when he came to the Corinthians, he did not come with persuade his powerful language. He could have done that. I remember brother Chuck said years ago. He said that he could have given them. An address on the immortality of the soul that made the head swim. But he didn't do that, you know. He knew nothing among them save Jesus Christ. And him glorified Him. Crucified and crucified. I'm sorry. Crucified, yes. And he could have brought other things before them. But the Spirit of God guided him to bring just that message because of their state, you know, and. So, beloved brethren, let's keep that in mind. Not just for those whom the Lord raises up to minister to his own, for all of us to remember, Don't ruin the Saints of God, the brethren that the Lord raises up if all glory to the Lord Jesus. Well, the point, the point you just made, is very important. To stress it, he says, lest I should be exalted, not above measure, but in any measure at all. A thorn was given me, he wouldn't tolerate or even consider any measure of exultation for the flesh. That no flesh should be exalted before him. In other words, the affliction that the Apostle Paul had. Was not given as a rod. Nor even for the betterment of the land. But it was in

Mercy Job 37 and verse 13. And that's an aspect of God's dealings with us. That's important to see that it isn't always because he we're lifted up. But this was preventative, wasn't it? I think it was Gordon's father that used to use the three words punitive, purgative and preventative. Was it in connection with those 3 aspects? And this in this case it's an aspect of God's dealings that are prevented and that is God does some things not because we did something, but so that it might not happen. What a mercy that is. And it's nice to look at things in our lives sometimes in that way. Not to grumble about them, but to see that God did it with a purpose. To prevent that which would dishonor him, to prevent that which would take away glory from the Lord Jesus Christ in this case. And so Paul could look at whatever that sword in the flesh was, and I do pretty much feel, as our brother Heinz does, about what it is. But it's particularly, I think clouded and left for us to think about a little bit because. Your thorn may not be my thorn, and God sends it. And if we look at everything that comes into our lives, that he has one of three purposes in it. Either punitive, perspective or preventative, which we have been Job 37 and verse 13. Whether he caused it to come as a rot or for his land or for mercy, and that's those 3 aspects involved. I believe here takes it directly from the Lord in the sense of being something that God had sent. Just to avoid in him what could have happened to the dishonor of the Lord. And I'm sure to impose this honor. I think it's partly the answer to what our brother was asking about a man in Christ. There was a partial revelation of God in the Old Testament. He wasn't fully made known and revealed, and so there were great prophets whom God used. But when God is fully revealed, as he is in the person of his beloved Son, and as he's revealed in Christianity, which puts the believer in the very highest possible place.

Far better than anything that was known, the Old Testament you had said to Abraham about being seated in the heavenlies in Christ. He wouldn't have known anything of that. But the higher the truth that God has given to us, which brings us into this wonderful place of favor and blessing in Christ, the more it puts us down, the more it makes us realize that we are nothing, Man. If there's something great, why they make a great thing out of the person who brings the message and who discovers it. But Paul, to whom those things were revealed, God as it were, puts him down because he's not exalting Paul. Paul's ministry is exalting Christ. And showing the wonderful exaltation of Christ, and that we are brought into association with him. And so the more truth we know. If I could mention again that passage in First Corinthians Chapter 7, I believe it is He says, if a man thinketh that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know it in divine things. If learning the truth exalts us, we haven't learned the truth as we should. The Christendom makes a great deal out of men in high positions in the Christian world. I think our brother Brown used to say prison to me has become a vast arena where men strive for honors for themselves. But we see in this chapter that the one who was given the very highest truth is brought down. And you think of him coming to Corinth, and he says that my affliction which was in my flesh, he despised not, and I guess that's in Galatians, but receive me as an Angel of God and family. He's writing to the Corinthians, He said how that they had commented that his bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible. Who is this person? The person who is in the 3rd heaven, the person who received the most marvelous revelations of the whole period of time, those blessed things. And God makes nothing of the instrument fly, because the truth of God exalts the Lord Jesus Christ and not the first man at all. And so perhaps that's why it says in Christ, because it's in contrast with anything that was known and enjoyed until all this blessed truth is brought out. In the truth of Christianity and of the church, it's very lovely to notice that the glory just filled the heart of the apostle. I was just noticing here five times. It's used in our chapter. It's in the first verse. Have doubtless to glory, and then in the fifth verse of such an one will I glory, yet for myself I will not glory, And in the ninth verse. I well, I rather glory, and in the 11Th verse I am become a fool in glorying. But it just seems that no matter what Satan would do to humiliate this man, no matter what the Corinthian brethren would do to him, the more he loved, the less he be loved. He never lost sight of the glory. And may it be true of us, in spite of all the difficulties and the failures, let's never lose sight of the glory and the glories of Christ. This thorn that Paul had really it correctly rendered, it's a thorn for the flesh. Not in the flesh. It was for the flesh. It's the flesh in us that gets puffed up and proud and needs to be kept down. So the thorn was to keep the flesh down. He no doubt when he prayed three times. Lord, this affliction I have is hindering my effectiveness in thy service. Take it away. No. And then he pleaded again take it away. I can deem so much more effective without this. Give me relief. No, you need it. And the third time No. I I heard a brother say once he should have prayed the 4th time. And I said no. When the Lord says no three times you don't pray, a fourth time you accept it in the mouth of two or three witnesses. And he said three times no. And then Paul says most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities. He had learned to accept it and to go on with his affliction.

And in the presence of God, it wasn't needed, was it? It was when he came back down. When he came back into this world is when he needed the thorn in the flesh. We get into the if we get into the truly into the presence of God, there's no room for pride there, no need. But there there is as we go on in the in the course of through this world, and we are children of God or those who belong to Christ. There's a need of being humble, being brought down, and to realize that we could be puffed up as a dear brother Gordon's father used to say or no brother Gill was used to say. There's pride of race. And there's pride of place, but there's also pride of grace. So we need to be careful. And so the Apostle here it wasn't while he was up in heaven, up in glory, but it was when he came back down that he needed that thorn to in the flesh. Moses didn't need the veil on his face up in the mountain, did he was after he came down. And I was just noticing that in the Darby translation for the Bury that word glory is always boast. In case anybody wonders what glory means there, because sometimes we refer to being in heaven as glory, don't we? That's the glory. But this, in this case, is boasting. You wouldn't boast. And we all know what boasting is. We've done plenty of it in our lives. But boasting is what the apostle was had the thorn for, to keep from bragging about what he had done where he had been. The world thinks of glory as going up, but for the Christian the glory is to go down. Think that. Experience of being awkward and in 14 years before he. Would we would we be like that if we had such a reason? It's a nonstop push. And 50 He didn't do that. He gave him that sword in the flesh, and it keeps him humble. It's the natural reaction of Jesus. Everybody right away in 1914 years was by you never worked up in his mouth and said anything about it. May I repeat that for the benefit of those in the back that might not have heard it, our brother was saying it took 14 years before the Apostle Paul made known that experience. It's a remarkable thing in itself. I believe there's a real lesson in that. You know, as Brother Herb has been saying that if it were, if it if it were some of us, we would just be exalting in this, we'd be telling why just last night or yesterday I was up in glory and look at now, but the apostle didn't do that was 14 years. I have marveled at that truth, that we see a marvelous lesson there. There's a time to speak and a time to be quiet and a time to be silent, isn't there? And when the time came. For the Apostle to speak, he spoke because it was necessary to bring this out, as our brother Chuck has already said earlier, in connection with these false apostles and deceitful workers that were turning the apostles ministry aside and denying it. And here they were not. They were not going on in any persecution at all. They were just exalting in themselves and seeking to turn aside the apostles ministry. And so the time came. When it was necessary for him to make this declaration. Is there any indication? That the apostle received the revelation from Christ, as we see in Ephesians 3 and three at this time. I believe he did. That was what I was thinking, that the truth that he gave out, he could say I have received of the Lord. That which I also declared unto you saw there were the revelations that he spoke of. But how he received them he didn't tell, because that might exalt him telling of what he had received of the Lord, shall I say, reveal the heart of God is revealed in Christ. So I believe that you're right. I believe it was when he was caught up, but he didn't tell the occasion that might have exalted him.

But he was very definite on where on whom he had received it from, It was from the Lord. And there are those things that he speaks of as my gospel, those things that were specially given to Him. Just remark 2IN connection with the thorn for the flesh, that there are those who teach, and strongly teach, that healing is in the atonement, and that we have a right to it, and we ought to demand it, and we ought to. Just not accept poor health or problems in our. Bodies but. What a loss that Paul had never learned and never heard from the Lord. My grace is sufficient for thee. And how many Christians over the past centuries have enjoyed that thought when their body is perhaps wracked with pain or whatever they're asked to pass through and? Sometimes they're well meaning. People say, well, you ought to have more faith and you want to get rid of this. You ought to count on God for it. First of all, it takes away the whole thought of Philippians 3 that we look for the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, who shall change our bodies of humiliation, give them a fashion like his own body of glory. But in the meanwhile we lose the benefit of that wonderful statement by grace is sufficient for thee. And that's one of the most comforting scriptures and most. Encouraging scriptures. So we need to understand that when God sends something, we can there's nothing wrong with beseeching the Lord that it might be part. But when the Lord says no, and clearly indicates that that is what He has said, then that wonderful word comes in by grace is sufficient for thee, and it enables us to go through the circumstance or accept whatever it is that the Lord sends. Understanding that the full value of the. Work that the Lord did at the cross of Calvary with respect to my body will not be realized until He comes as Savior. Not to save me from my sins now, but to save my body and bring it into conformity with His own body of glory. So I just believe that so much of that has has infected the Church that it's caused a lot of discouragement. I read an accounting. Johnny Erickson tells about how people well meaning people, came to her. In case some don't know about her, she's a young lady who dived into the water in Baltimore, MD, and became a quadriplegic as a result of a broken neck in the water. And some came to her and told her that she should claim healing and it was quite a struggle for discouraged her. But there came a time when thy grace is My grace is sufficient for thee. Became a moment of triumph in her life and changed your whole, the whole course of her thoughts. With regard to God in his ways, well, I'm sure that one experience has been replicated in many, many lives around and through the ages. But I just mentioned that because this idea of redemption, including. The the present correction of bodily problems and that all we have to do is have faith, for it is a denial of the whole purpose of God in allowing these things to come into our lives. Has a blessed purpose and once we understand that, he may be pleased to change that circumstance. But how much Paul would have lost if the Lord had done it Paul's way instead of his own way? Could we look at a verse in Psalm 41 or just two verses there That have been a great comfort to me and perhaps may tell us a little bit about this. You say Paul's God allowed this trial and just notice those verses? Verse Psalm 41 verse 2 The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive. And he shall be blessed upon the earth. Of course we know this in the Psalms, the blessing, the the godly people, the remnant. We are looking for blessing on the earth. And thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. But notice verse 3. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing.

Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness. That's a beautiful verse. Who does it? God does it. He allowed this trial with Paul that he might be seek to have Paul turn to the Lord. And I I think it's so beautiful to think that he he he makes our bed no matter what our difficulties are. He makes our bed and it says that will make all his bed in his sickness. Interesting verse. First Corinthians 10/13. Has a couple of words in it that indicate that we. May have to put up with some stuff, some suffering or trial, it says in First Corinthians 10/13. There hath no temptation taken you, but such is common to man. But God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able. But will with the temptation. With the temptation, make a way to escape that you may be able to bear it with the temptation and bear it indicates that he doesn't take it away, but He gives us the grace to endure it and for His glory. And how many times someone going through trial has been a testimony to those around them as to how they bear that trial. It's it's a testimony because. Unbelievers often become very bitter. They're cursing God and blaming something or someone. And but to bear it, to have the grace of God with it, and to be able to bear it, and to bear it to God's glory, is the wonderful testimony. The end of that ninth verse speaks of that the power of Christ. May rest upon me. I don't recall any other part of scripture where that expression is used. The power of Christ. It's so beautiful in my own. Hard to enjoy this thought that all these verses are showing us. The deep humility and humiliation that the apostle was growing through. And he wasn't experiencing the power of Christ. It was it was in weakness that he was going on in this way of being humiliated. But what a beautiful contrast by the fact that he does publicly say that the power, the power of Christ may rest upon me. He was conscious. Of not the weakness of Christ, but the power of Christ. Felt nice to look on to the time when it says in Romans chapter 8 that we shall be glorified together and in Second Corinthians he shall come to be glorified in his Saints and admired in all them that believe. Now the danger is, since we have the old nature within, that is the flesh that will be exalted. But God has a purpose that he is going to have a people that he is going to bring into blessing It isn't that a marvelous expression? Glorified together. And it says there in Thessalonians he shall come to be glorified in his Saints and to be admired in all them that believe. Isn't it lovely, brethren, to look forward to the time when the old nature will be gone, these bodies of humiliation will be gone, and we'll be glorified together? And that we're going to be like Christ and he's going to come and present us to this world. I believe that's the thought. You just turned to it in Second Thessalonians chapter One. At verse 10, when he shall come to be glorified in His Saints and admired in all them that believe because our testimony among you was believed in that day, Just think of when the Lord comes out of heaven with all his Saints. For He's going to come with all His Saints. There won't be one in that vast company that will be anything. But what is for His glory. He'll present us to the world a little Him puts it. To wandering worlds display that we with thee are one, and so it's going to present us to this world and say these are the people you despised and laughed at. I want you to see my purpose accomplished in them, every believer fully, like Christ, the old man forever gone, and everyone in such a way that looking upon his own will be glorified together. It's a tremendous thought. But here every one of us have to acknowledge that we have the old man within us.

And that we can't stand that exaltation that we might get today because of the flesh in us that would be lifted up and proud. So he allows those things in order that we would be occupied with Christ and seek to glorify him in our bodies and in our spirit, which are gods. There's AI want to ask a question on verse 7 before we leave it. He says there was given to me a thorn in or for the flesh, lest I should be exalted above measure. But there's a phrase in there that says the messenger of Satan to buffet me. What are we to learn from that? He's using Satan's messenger to Buffett, Paul. God is to keep him low. I would understand from that that. Satan is instrumental here to to afflict Paul, but it's it's it's overruled and ordered of God himself, using even the enemy of our souls to to keep us lowly. Is that the right thought? Well, it's very easy to get discouraged. If there's something that made a person, as with Paul, despicable, perhaps in the eyes of people or in the ears of people who listen to him and the enemy would take advantage of that, I think, and say, well, Paul, it's no use. People are just despising you and for him to go on and to go on and just. Well, it's pretty easy to get discouraged if there's something that made a person, as with Paul, despicable, perhaps in the eyes of people or in the ears of people who listen to him. And the enemy would take advantage of that, I think, and say, well, Paul, it's no use. People are just despising you. And for him to go on and to go on and just counting upon God in loneliness, recognizing that we're nothing, we certainly need that special supply of the spirit of Christ. And I think that Paul utterly presence was weak and his speech contemptible. It would have been very easy for Paul to say, well, I give up there, no, he's trying to help those Corinthians. They're just laughing at me. And the enemy would have got an advantage and then he kept on. And I think it's beautiful what he says in the end of the

epistle. I am willing to love you, though The more abundantly I love you, the less I. Beloved, he says what you can say, what you like about me, but if Christ is made more precious to you by my ministry. Then that doesn't matter about me. I think that was Satan might, and I think all of us might have experienced how. Something happens and we're very likely to get discouraged and then say we give up. That's what the enemy wants. That's what the enemy would like, is for us to give up because of the difficulties of the way. Isn't Job an example? Isn't joke in his experience, an example he was thinking was given permission to deal with Job, and there are some wonderful statements made by that man while he is. Afflicted, the Lord has given the Lord, has taken the name of the Lord, be blessed, and so on. And in the long run that was all for Job, blessing and benefit. So we do see in Job's life that Satan at times is permitted to be used by God, but God allows it in order that spiritual blessings will resolve. It was so also in Peter's case, wasn't it? Satan has desired to have you that he may sift you as weak. And also David, when he numbered the people, you compare Chronicles and Samuel, you find a one place at Satan that that tempted him, another place that God caused him to do it. And wouldn't it appear to that the word Buffett? Didn't say to destroy, but Buffett. As the wind buffets, it's not it doesn't sink a ship, but it makes it. It's a gentle to me. It's. It's not gentle. Pardon. It's not gentle. It means to strike with the fist. They buffet. You look it up in the Darby. He's got references. They buffeted the Lord. They mowed him with their fists. That's what the word means, is not gentle. I'm off on that. Doesn't LA? You call attention to that in the case of Job and.

33 Job 33 in verse 30. 29 called. The mine have just been typing a paper that someone wrote on that subject of Eliquis and putting it into the computer, and it's fresh in my mind. But over and over again in the author of that paper calls attention to the fact that God worketh all things according to the council of his own Will. And so Eliquis says that in verse 29 of Job 23, he says. Blow all these things. God, God worketh to bring back his soul from the pit, so that. While Satan was very active as a player in all of that. He had no idea, I believe, that he was accomplishing a grand purpose of God in dealing with the soul of of. Of job until. It became very evident through the ministry of Elihu and I believe he's a beautiful type of the Lord Jesus in that. There's the one who stands in the midst and speaks there. And I just point that out that he says, lo, all these things work as God. It's God that was working, All those things that he had spoken about about his his his soul drawing near to the pit and his life of pouring bread. He had just been through a litany of that. And then he says. Blow all these things work at God. With what purpose he had a purpose. And so if we see that in the hand of God dealing with us what a blessing it is to our soul, he never causes anything. And even the attack of Satan, and I might point out that it says it was sent, the Messenger was sent, it was given to me, it was given to him with what purpose the purpose was in order for the glory of God. And so if we see everything in that light, what a blessing it is to our souls. So what if we say that God gave us a view behind the scenes and let us see Satan speaking to the Lord and the Lord allowing so much to come upon Job? But it's nice to see that Job never said the Lord gave and Satan took away, he said the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. And I think that's very beautiful to see that even though God lets us see behind the scenes that God was allowing Satan to. That were above at the beloved job. He was using it for his blessing, but Job saw beyond Satan, didn't he? And he saw that it was the hand of God, and in spite of many things that he said and did. He at least could say that the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. But in the end he was able to see it in a much fuller way when the Lord had brought him down. And he said, I repent and abhor myself in dust and ashes. Then there's no more mention about Satan. He had learned what God was seeking to teach him, and the end was doubly blessed, wasn't it? Like to ask a question in connection with the end of this chapter in that last verse, the Apostle Paul says. Unless when I come again. My God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already and have not repented. I just mentioned that our time is swiftly passing. But in the 11Th chapter you referred to the Revelation, brother of Hayhoe, that the Lord gave to him, and in that revelation he brings out in the 25th verse, let a man examine himself. But then we get down to verse 30. For this cause, many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. Or if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. Is that the point of what the apostle is summing up here from the first epistle in connection with what he's bringing up in verse 21? It would seem that he says less when I come, and I like to think of when the when the Lord comes. That would finish the ministry of the Apostle Paul to the assembly, would it not? And aren't we in that place right now? And how important is it that we would consider these, these closing remarks for this cause, for this cause? Is there a cause?

Where the Apostle, when he comes, when the Lord comes, that there would be regret, and if he considering that in this this expression and that I should be, well, many a brother who let these souls to cry, was poor. Have we not sometimes felt humbled by the way those have gone that we have been a help to spiritually our own children that have not gone on? You see, Paul looks at that when he comes there and has to deal with these things, that it is a cause for humiliation and humbling for himself, but rather that these matters be taken care of, that he wouldn't have to deal with them and. And humbling experience, those whom he has led to the Lord. And they're going on in a way that they require discipline, you know, do we often see the need of discipline in the assembly in that way? Especially when we think of souls that we have led on in a measure the Lord used us and then they're going off. Is that a humbling thing? Some have perhaps read the little track epic stub. They often wish it were still in print. I don't think it is. But he picked up tells of a man who labored in India very much used of God, and believe he was a German brother. But he was used among the English officers in India for the Lord's glory. And many were saved there. And he went back there and found that many things had come in among the believers. And it was a great grief to him and I just. Remember our beloved brother Bag, often referring to that little tract and and. Telling us what a pain and grief it was, the Hebich could go back and find the very ones among whom he had labored with all of these things. And I noticed at the end of verse 20 it says, lest there be things that he would not wish to find there. Now what is it that the apostle did not wish to find among them? And this sort of search our hearts, Beloved brethren, What is the list? Stripes. Jealousy. Anger. Contention, Evil speaking, whisperings, puffings, up, disturbances, All those things he would did not want to find among them. Is there that among us? Is that what we've come to? May we be exercised? I'm not saying it is just saying it ought to search our heart, and we ought not to. These are things we ought to guard against. And it starts out with strike. Strike is the destruction. Of the people of God. We're not made for strife. That isn't what God saved us for. Was for strike. He hasn't called us for that. Do you looking at the new translation? Yes, because it's different here. What does it say? Well, it says debates first and yeah, strikes comes later. Yeah, this debate strikes. Let me open it up. I'll get the authorized here and we'll get going. Sorry. A little hard to keep two open sometimes. Verse 27 debates envyings, wrath, strikes, backbiting, whispering, swelling, and tumult. You know, as I read that list, beloved brethren, I don't care whether you read it out of what translation you read it out of it. They says about the same thing to us, doesn't it? And it bowels our hearts to think that such things could come in among those who love the Lord, those who have a heavenly calling, those who have enjoyed the revelations that the apostle Paul brought out. And was used of God to give us those things that he received in the very presence of the Lord. And we profess that we enjoy that truth. We many of us, are able to minister it and to talk about it. Considered a meeting like this and yet when it comes down to it. Isn't it true that sometimes there are debates?

Or Stripes envying their jealousy. Somebody has something? They don't want anybody else to have it. That's what jealousy is Envying is the other side of it. My father used to say that we confused those two words more than any two that he knew of in the English language because

one of them, which God is said to be, is jealous. That is, he does not share that which is his with anyone. I'm jealous, God, he says. He never said he was an envious God bidding. He had everything. And yet we find both things in the same and backbiting, strike wrath, whispering, whispering. Does that search your heart? Does mine? You ever get up on the side and say, do you know what I heard about South and so whisper about it, I I believe that's a very, very dangerous thing that we engage in, swelling, being lifted up. Two months. Raucous situation. One of the things that I've meant that I ran across in the 5th of Galatians emulations, that relates to what you just told us. And I was considering it because it was a situation that I I tried to figure it out and I couldn't figure it out. And I I ran across that it's to incite rivalry, to incite rivalry, to promote rivalry among the people of God. And what a solemn thing it is because the world wants to go along with the game. Whether it's football, baseball or basketball, it's always the inciting of rivalry and it's all around us and we're lively. Get caught up with the spirit of it, but that's the works of the flesh, isn't it, to incite rivalry. And I think you'll make the point well in bringing these things in. Recently a brother called me because he had hurt. He had an exercise to visit there and he made some comments and I told him that. If that's the kind of a thing that he wanted to bring up when I visited in his house, I had no interest to come to his house. Then another comment. He said, well, we have a difference on this that gives us a reason to discuss it. Well, he knew before I would ever make any comment what I thought about it. So what's the use of going with this kind of a purpose to visit amongst the things of God? That's not what the servant of the Lord should do. He should not strive, and there's no blessing in this. And we ought to be careful about that kind of a spirit. The first and second Timothy 1-2 and verse 24 that it's been a help to me, it says in The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all. Apartment to teach patients and meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves. If God's peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. Well, it's we got instructions that are so gracious from the heart of our God. That we don't need to get into the contest for these things that men. Bring up, may the Lord help us to be in that spirit of a channel. And where? Where am I going to get the example, brother? There's only one example. I think of the 37th Psalm. The psalmist could say, Mark the privilege, man. Behold the upright. Consider his hand the end of that man of peace. And where did he go to bring in a body once a bit fraud? And that's where he made our peace for us, didn't he? As Paul gave the perfect sighted the perfect example in the Second Corinthians, the 2nd Corinthians chapter 10, the very first verse of that chapter, he says. Now I, Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence and based among you, but being absent and built toward you, then drop down in the In the fifth verse he speaks about casting down reasonings. I think we've all referred to that and. Every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought.

To the obedience of Christ, The meekness of Christ, the gentleness of Christ, the obedience. What an example Is there? Anything? There's no example higher than that. 331.

Oh my God.

Dorothy Conference: 1994, 2 Corinthians 12:1-6

Reading

Our life is here, our. Stand, I pray. I understand. My heart stays for our walls. I come on the table. All the rest of the day.

In Corinthians chapter 12. It is not obedient for me, doubtless to glory, I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above 14 years ago. Whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell. God knows such in one caught up to the 3rd heaven. And I knew such a man, whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell. God knoweth how that he was caught up into paradise and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one will I glory, yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool, for I will say the truth, but now I for bear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice that I might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, and reproaches, and necessities, and persecutions and distresses for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then am I strong. I am become a fool in glory. Ye have compelled me, for I ought to have been commended of you for nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly, the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein you were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong. Behold the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you. For I seek not yours but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved. But be it so I did not burden you. Nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile. Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you. I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? Walk we not in the same spirit, walk we not in the same steps? Again, thank you that we excuse ourselves unto you. We speak before God in Christ, but we do all things dearly beloved, for your edifying. For I fear lest when I come I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not, lest there be debates, and beings, wrath, strife, backbiting, whispering, swelling, tumult. And last, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication. And lasciviousness which they have committed. It's a little hard to enter into a chapter like this number roughly at the end of a An Epistle without perhaps a little introduction. I wonder if, Chuck, you could introduce introduce it with somewhat of that's on your heart in regard to it. Well, in this chapter we have a. A man in Christ caught up to the 3rd heaven. That's our position.

That's our place, our position, and it ends very solemnly, lest when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed. So we have on the one side a man in Christ caught up to the 3rd heaven, hearing and seeing things that we could not grasp or understand, not allowed for him to utter. And then we have the other side how that one that might be in that place of blessing can fall so deeply into sin. Good to see two of that. In between we have a man going through a severe trial. Don't we? So there's those three points in that chapter which are very good. Who is the man? Going through severe trial. He lists in the previous chapter. His credentials for his ministry. He was being opposed by. One in particular, but more than one at Corinth seeking to discredit him. And he says in verse 22 of Chapter 11, Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. In other words, they have no advantage. Over me in

these regards in these matters. And then he asks, are they ministers of Christ? Well, they were anything but that. So he adds. Parenthetically, I speak as a fool, or I speak foolishly. They were not truly ministers of Christ. Or he says in verse 13, such are false apostles, deceitful workers transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel for Satan has transformed himself into an Angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works. That was the true character of these men that were opposing Paul, and it it seems as though they were not the direct fruit of his laborers. It seems as though they came in later. There are some verses that would indicate that. But they were opposing him. And Paul brings before these Saints at Corinth, that you are my work in the Lord. They questioned his apostleship and he says, Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? If I'm not an apostle to others, I certainly am to you for the seal of mine. Apostleship, are ye in the Lord. They existed as Saints of God through the ministry of Paul. I don't know whether that would be true of these that were opposing him, but it was certainly true of the bulk of the Saints at Corinth. And they were being misled and misguided by these others that were promoting themselves, that were seeking to exalt themselves. And these were Jews, Hebrews, he says. So Israelites of the seed of Abraham. And they were there to withstand him. And he had withheld telling these Corinthians of the fact that over 14 years ago he had been caught up to the 3rd heaven and had seen visions and revelations of the Lord, and he hadn't told anyone. But now came the time their state was such. They were so under the influence of these false apostles and teachers and false prophets that he now tells them of this. And they were operating on the level of the first man, the flesh. They were carnal. He tells them that in the first epistle. Your carnal you walk as men. Your following leaders. I am a power. I am of a palace, I am a Cephas, I am of Christ. All these parties that existed. Now they weren't actually saying I am of Paul and I am of Apollos, but he says in the 4th chapter of the first Epistle I have transferred in a figure these things to myself and to Apollos to illustrate the principle. If he had named the man in particular that was opposing him, they would have said, well, you're just jealous of him, Paul. So he puts his name in there and he says Apollos, I have planted Apollos water God gave the increase. Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that water it, but God that giveth the increase, we are nothing.

But these men felt they were something and they were promoting themselves. And they were. Operating on the level of the flesh. One more verse, verse 12 of chapter 10 to bring this out. Paul says we dare not. Well in verse 11 he says let such in one. That's the particular one there that was opposing him. Think this. That such as we are in Word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also indeed when we're present. This man that was opposing him was saying, well, he speaks very boldly in his letters, but then when he comes and he's present with us, then he has his he's not very bold. And he says, I will be bold when I come. And then he says in verse 12 of that 10th chapter, we dare not make ourselves of the number or commend or. Compare ourselves with some that commend themselves. That's what they were doing, but they measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves among themselves. Are not wise or are not intelligent or do not understand. Literally, that's the margin. They don't understand the true character of Christianity. Christianity is not a competition among laborers as to who's going to be first. You remember when the disciples asked the Lord he was on the way to the cross and they asked the Lord who's first among us? Who's the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven that betrays the state of soul of the one that asks the question? I want to be great. I want to be something. I want to be recognized. And that's what these men were like. That wasn't. That wasn't Paul. It wasn't that way at all. But he didn't come short of any of them in any of their qualities. He had far more. And then he lists in that 11Th chapter. All that he had gone through, all his credentials as to be an apostle in Labour's more abundant in stripes, above measure, in prisons more frequent in deaths off and so on. What a list of sufferings could they claim that? Could they claim that they had suffered for the name of Christ and for the testimony of Christ? These men that were opposing Paul? Not a bit of it. That was history. Those were his credentials. Well, those. That's a little bit of a of a summary of what's come before and what what he's dealing with and why he now finally discloses to them about his being caught up to the 3rd heaven. Would you say that this is bringing up another subject? Because in the 7th chapter of the same second epistle and he said to the assembly, you have cleared yourself. Yourselves Now is this another matter that is? He's dealing with because apparently from those last verses, there still seem to be an unjudged spirit in in Corinth. You get that? I'm glad you asked that question in Revelation chapter 2. You get that same thing with emphasis. And I'll let me read the verses, chapter 2, verse one, on to the Angel of the Church of Ephesus. Right these things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. I know thy works and thy labor and thy patience. And how thou canst not bear them which are evil? And thou hast tried them, which say they are apostles. And are not, and has found them liars, and has borne, and has patience. And for my namesake has labored and has not fainted. You say that's the perfect assembly. That's a perfect assembly. But then he says nevertheless, I have against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Now only his eye could see that we couldn't have seen it. We would have judged Model assembly. And yet there was the seed of departure there. And so at Corinth, yes, they had cleared themselves, and with respect to that. Wicked man. That doesn't mean that they were completely cleared in everything. They were still under the influence of false leaders, and these at Ephesus, they had tried those that said they were apostles and were not, and found them liars. And the Corinthians hadn't come to that point. They they hadn't gotten delivered yet from these men that were really promoting themselves, seeking to discredit and undermine Paul and what we've gone through, you'll notice that the enemy works by slandering.

The Saints and discrediting those that are seeking to stand for the truth. That's his tactic. That's the way he's been working for 20 centuries. But there's an important point to realize. Some have interpreted these last verses of chapter 12 That there were still cases of immorality amongst the Saints in Corinth. I do not believe that that is the correct understanding of these verses. Why would Paul pick on one particular case? And not mention the other cases. Brother Clawson, years ago Irvine Claussen helped me personally to understand that verse and I believe this is the correct interpretation. This refers to something that has happened in their life before they were saved and they had not really judged it. That might also help us understand why they tolerated this evil that was dealt with in the first epistle. You know, if we have lift that way before we are safe and we have really not condemned and judged this and viewed it with God's side, When evil occurs in the church, in the assembly, we tend to be easy on the evil. And I believe that is the prop of you and how serious that is. You know it's a good thing that when we come to be saved that we view all our past. And to judge it and view it with God's eyes from God's point of view. Because it renders us. Weak and unable to judge evil that occurs among those who are saved and and also makes U.S. Open to fall into the very sin again that might have been our way of life before we are saved. Would you agree with that? Yeah, I think the key the word in that verse in verse 21 is they they have not repented, yes. Of the evil of their course, they have not really judged it. And if until we've judged it, we're still in it as far as God is concerned, we're still responsible for it. God looks upon us in that state as as having committed the sin until we've repented of it and judged it. And once we've done that, our state changes entirely, and we have to recognize that. So when we receive a soul back. Who has sinned? They must have repented of the sin before they receive back. At least that should be the normal thing and we can make a mistake and we see someone back that hasn't truly repented of the sin. That will cause trouble, but the the repentance of it changes the state, Mr. Darby says in two of his letters. He says we're still in the sin until we've repented of it. And then then with our state changes. That's what he's dealing with here, isn't it? I've seen it in the life of a relative that I was able to lead to the Lord and he had lived immorally

before he was saved, but I don't think he really had judged it and he fell into that very evil after he was saved. But I believe then he did judge it and was truly delivered from it. We must never be easy on sin. And the translation in Mr. Darby's. Translation in Psalm 51 is Take not the Spirit of Thy holiness from me. The danger is that when we fall into sin and are not truly repentant, that we do not have the discernment. We do not take sides with God against the sin when it occurs amongst the Saints of God. And that's disastrous, disastrous. Just think of the testimony. The Lords name being dishonored and needs to be cleared. You know people think always of. The need for the soul that has sinned to be restored. That's one of the reasons why discipline is administered. But the first reason is that the name of the Lord be clear, you know, And that's such a vital point to be considered and made. The Lord keep us.

From looking at sin and belittling it in any way because it makes the door open, or opens the door for ourselves to fall into the evil at the name of the Lord is not clear. The Lord said he that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. That goes far beyond just the act of doing it, but it's doing it in your mind. And one of the things that is being promoted today and young people are being told it's a very legitimate thing to do, is to fantasize. Let your imagination run wild and you can enjoy things in your imagination that is absolutely condemned in the word of God. That's what the Lord says is sin. Just to look at a woman and lust after her is a sin. And so to fantasize these things is. Sinful and it's it's being encouraged as a legitimate thing in the psychological world. Is that what the word lasciviousness means or would imply what you just said? I think it's implied there, yes. In the 139th Psalm, the psalmist starts out and there's. Oh Lord, thou hast searched me. But how does that end up? He has searched me, O God, and see if there any wicked way in me. And then what does he say? Leave me in the way everlasting. And it was Job that said, I made a covenant with mine eyes, that I should not look upon a woman. Are upon a maid, and these things are vital to getting along in communion with the Lord to find on judge the evil. And the Lord he sees always there. If we confess our sins, he is faithful. And what? Just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness? Isn't that the way everlasting brethren? And where does it lead to? I think in the end of the 14th chapter of John is so beautiful the Lord says to the disciples, arise, let us go hence. Well, may we arise and go hence because it ends in the glory, doesn't it? Could we have brother? Chuck was saying just now. I thought of James one and 15. Lest there be any thought in our minds that it's not. That what he said doesn't. Have more than just that one scripture in the gospel to support it. We might read 14 and 15. Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own. Lust and entice. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin. And sin when it is finished bringeth forth death so. I believe that repenting of the. Course of one is essential, whether it says of our courses unbelievers, and I think that's what it brings before us at the end of 2nd Corinthians 12, or God requires that in connection with all of our failure that we repent and and rethink it and take his point of view in it. And I just mentioned this for those who are fathers. One of the saddest things is to have to. Judge in your children that which you did not judge in your own life. That the Lord brings to your attention because you won't listen to Him when he deals with your own personal life. They then have to see it displayed, as David had to see displayed publicly his own sin, even though I believe he really did repent. Yet God laid it out in front of everybody for it to be seen, and it's one of the saddest experiences. So if you don't want to have to judge it in your children, judge it in yourself first. How many times I've seen in, in things that happened in the lives of our children, I've seen exactly that which the Lord was dealing with me, that nobody knew about. That was private and personal that I never dealt with in my own soul. To see it laid out before me, to my shame.

In my own children, and I just say that as a word to those who are fathers and mothers. That God might give us to judge in our own lives, to repent. Thoroughly of the course of the things that perhaps no one had to know about that God knew. And he lays them out graphically sometimes for us in the lives of our children, so that we might judge them ourselves. Don't just come down heavy on the kid and say, oh, what a terrible thing, How could a child of mine do that, Say God has found out the iniquity of his servant. That may be true, and I want to give the other scripture in John 9 The disciples asked the Lord. Who sinned, this man or his parents? That he was born blind? And the answer came back. Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest. So we have to be careful that we do not violate the Scripture, Judge nothing before the time, and the Lord will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the councils of hearts. But we are not God, and we don't know the motives of the heart and what goes on. But God has his dealings with every one of us. His individual government Peter says it in First Peter 117. If you call on the father who without respective persons judgeth according to the work of each past, the time of your sojourning here in fear, that's the government of the father over his family, and that's his government over each one of us. And we have to live our lives before him, not before our brethren or before society, though we should listen to our brethren, and we should listen to these voices that come. But we have to answer to him. Every one of us should give a count of himself to God. And he's the one that we lived before either regardless today, regardless it to the Lord either regardeth not the day it is to the Lord. He's it's not regarded. We live before him happy as he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. Well, we do. Certainly recognize that even if the Lord has kept us from falling into things that are kids fall into. That the grace has kept us from it. And nature. That makes them do what they do. They inherited from us. And that's a very humbling thing. To see that, it's a very humbling thing to see our offsprings go off. But I know that young people have purposed, when they grew into teenagers and had seen in the lives of some of their relatives immorality that they have said by God's grace, I will not live that way. And they didn't live that way. They did not have to potentiality to live that way. The evil nature within them would have let them that way, but by God's grace they were able to live differently. And this is, I believe, what one can tell the young men and women in this audience Purpose in your heart to cleave to the Lord. Recognize that without His help and grace you cannot live that way, but with His help you can live honoring to Him and to bring glory to His name. Instead of honor dishonoring him, I believe Mr. Darby, I believe, Mr. Darby said. And a man asked him about studying the scripture. He said, study well 4 words. The flesh provided nothing. And I believe that's the great lesson that's in this chapter. He begins by saying it is not expedient for me, doubtless to glory. The cause of Peters fall was that he thought he was better than the rest of the disciples. He never thought that he would deny the Lord, and I believe he was thoroughly sincere in saying that. But he didn't realize what the flesh was. And I believe with all of us, in divine things especially, we need to start with humility, realizing that we are nothing. It's only grace that met us in our sin and guilt and saved us, and it's only the grace of God that keeps any of us. And so I I think it's very lovely the way the chapter begins. It's not expedient for me, doubtless to glory and naturally speaking, he had much that he might have gloried about because of his revelations that were given them how God had used him.

But nevertheless he recognized there was all sovereign grace. And that's the great starting point, whether it's young or old. I believe when we hear these warnings, we have within us every one of us sitting here, the capabilities of the vilest sins. If the Lord doesn't keep us, and if we daily start out with that sense, preserve be O God. For indeed do I put my trust, I believe that the Lord is able certainly, and will preserve us. In the path that's pleasing to him, but we need to constantly, not only when we're first saved, but all through life. Repentance is a continual thing in the life, isn't it? That is, we're in all constantly having to watch that old man, and we need to be ever conscious that no matter how long we're saved, it has never changed. It's still the same, and if it loud it will bring forth those evil fruits that are mentioned in the end of this

chapter. You know where you're going. Yes. We're starting on turning and what heights and depths of love. And we certainly get the heights and depths in this chapter more than perhaps any chapter in the word of God. Because Paul takes his up into the 3rd heaven. And then we come down to the lowest level of humanity with these fightings and disputing. And we sang at the beginning of this meeting. Now let us run and never sire. And that's what we need, is really is to have these things brought before us because. He's called Doc and it really brings us into the place of a Christian is to to know where our life is hidden with Christ and God, and to practically see it in our relationship one with another. Maybe we should just pay a little bit more about that, because that's Paul's particular line of things, and we often speak of practical ministry. But Paul was not called by the Lord when he was on earth, but he was called by the Lord from heaven, unlike the disciples on earth. And so that's characteristic of his ministries. That's where it takes us. John's ministry brings heaven down to earth, and Paul's ministry is it where it takes our spirits up to heaven. And this chapter seems to. Get coastal heights and depths of the Christian experience, and the land of Canaan was not like the land of Egypt, the flat land, but it was a land of hills and valleys. I was thinking of three times that the Apostle Paul and said perhaps there's more, but sometimes he speaks up. I know now in Romans 7 you're Speaking of the flesh and the weakness of the flesh. It's nice here in Romans 7 and 18, for I know that in me that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. For the will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. And the apostle had learned that in his flesh dwelled no good thing. Well, in Philippians 3 he says that I may know him and the power of his resurrection. And then again in second Timothy chapter 2 or chapter one rather. Two Timothy chapter one. How can you read the full verse, Second Timothy 1:00 and 12:00 for the witch, 'cause I also suffer these things. Nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day Blessing of this in contrast to what he said in Romans 7. For I know that in me dwelleth no good thing here in Timothy says, for I know whom I have believed. Well, how each one of us have found that out, so we cannot trust in the flesh for one moment. Trust in that blessed One who has loved us and given himself. In the first Epistle to the Corinthians, the first sin that Paul mentioned is not fornication. It's not. Any of the other things that come in the later chapters. Going to law with one another. Eating and drinking to excess so that one is even drunken at the Lord's Supper, not able to discern his body going to the Lord, going to tables of demons.

Even error as to the resurrection. But the first sin mentioned is there exists divisions among you. The sin of division. The sin of leading Saints astray from the path of truth, I am convinced, is the worst sin we can commit. Because these other sins are individual and no one's going to be misled into that kind of a life if one falls into a moral sin. But if one has such power over others and gift gifted man, and he uses that to mislead the Saints, that is a most serious thing and. This is what Paul is combating in large measure in this epistle. Is that why the Spirit of God zeroes in in the Old Testament on the sin of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, that caused Israel to sin? It seems striking that the Spirit of God, you might say, zeroes in on that over and over and over again. And you might say, well, weren't there worse things done? Ahab did some pretty terrible things, but I believe that that was a sin which rent asunder the people of God set up a competitive place of worship to that which God had established. And God puts his finger on that over and over again in their history. I just would like to ask this. Our brother Chuck twice said that Paul was the one that was caught up in verse two, and I thoroughly agree with that. Some have questioned that based on verse 5, because he says I'm such a one. Will I glory or boast? But of myself will I not? And does he not then say that that's not he that well, I think the clue to it, if I might just. Offer a first comment on that subject is a man in Christ, a man in Christ. And Paul was looking at that then in that light, as a man in Christ. And of course he's not. This is something that he's very careful about not glorying in. As a as a man in the flesh. And so he's very careful to say, I know. And that word no is interesting because there are two words for no in Greek as we have in English 2 two thoughts I should say in English, one is objective knowledge and the others conscious knowledge, and this time it's conscious knowledge, that is that which he was. Thoroughly acquainted with, not just new as an objective thing. In his mind he knew a man in Christ. And I believe that it's put in that way so that the focus is not on Paul, but on the man in Christ. And so Paul says of such a one will I glory, but not of myself. I believe knowing, and I think that's what the chapter is about, because you may be taken up to the 3rd heaven. I know in an objective way certain truth, but Paul said he was glory in his infirmity, that the that the power of sight may rest upon me, so that he might enjoy that truth practically. And how is the Lord going to make him to know that through the difficulty spoke of Peter and his failure, but the Lord? In those deaths and in his failures, the Lord may have had to. Allow Satan to skip them, that he might practically know the things that he knew objectively. And so that's, I believe, why these two things are brought together in this chapter. And we say, well we're caught up into the 3rd heaven and we enjoy these wonderful truths of the believers position in Christ. And then we go to the assembly and we're and in our Christian lives and we're met with this kind of disputing and arguing. And we say, well why does the Lord allow us So that we might be in the conscious knowledge and the power of Christ might rest on us practically here in this earth amidst the difficulty and not just to know these things objectively. No matter. Barry earlier suggested that the last verses indicate that there were still those in Korean who were opposing. I think that was your thought, right? Burberry, They were still those that.

Although the assembly had judged the evil, I don't think they all agreed with the judgement. Isn't this what's going on among the gathered thing? There are still voices that undermine the authority of the Lord in the assembly. In the pen, there are still debate undermining, you know, and even using what is a commendable thing to undermine the bread and give you an example. A young man stands there and preaches the gospel, refers to television programs and insulting the Saints as if they all were familiar with these programs or some cartoon strip and a brother finally says. When are we going to hear the word of God? Now that was godly discipline, but it is used to undermine the brethren there. How terrible they were, How hard? Well, there are still these buildings, you know. And really the enemy is still trying to disrupt the fellowship and the harmony among the Saints of God. You know, it's not surprising if in the early days in the Church, although there was such an obvious case of evil. That there were those who didn't agree with the judgment and they were still in the assembly and they were still causing problems. You know, it's certainly more difficult in disciplinary problems where there is not a clear immorality case. You know, like one brother said, it's almost the only evil that's going to be judged amongst the Saints. What about heretical behavior? You know, dividing the Saints of God? Is that not one of the things that ought to be dealt with the Apostle Paul, that when he would get there because he had Apostolic authority? That he would deal with these things. You know, he teeth. Things should not go unjust, you know, and tolerate them. Let the enemy continue to do his work of undermining fellowship between the Gaddis Saints and then two, for peace sake of keeping everybody together. We tolerate this kind of a thing. Well, it's the work of the flesh, beloved brethren. It's not of God. It's it's more than a work of the flesh. It's the work of the enemy. Yes, the work of Satan. The the the passage that proves what you just said is in the 10th chapter of this epistle and I'll read the two verses. Verse five and six casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. The reason Paul hadn't gone there, he had said he was going to go, and then he didn't go, was to spare them, and he wanted to leave them with his first epistle, still to work in their consciences, but there would come a point in time. When all of those who were going to obey the word through Paul would have done so, and then there would be those that were left that would, that were disobedient. And he talks about that in the next verse, having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience or to avenge all disobedience. When your obedience is fulfilled, that is when all of those that may have taken a time

in arriving at the right judgment, but when they finally arrived at it, there would be still some remaining who are called. The disobedient ones. And he says when I come I will deal with them. Like John says in the third epistle about diatrophies, he says when I come. I will remember his works, which he do it praying against us with malicious words and so on. He would deal with it and that's what he was being charged with. He's powerful with his words and when he's writing, but when he comes, he Wilts and he says when I come, I will not spare. He would deal with it, so there would come a time. Sometimes we go too quickly and we try to force consciences to see it before they're ready. They have to go through a certain amount of exercise before they come to the. The right understanding of things and we must leave them until that point is reached. But once it's reached, then those that still won't see it. I was talking to a brother once and he just shook his head and he closed his eyes and he put his eyes, his head down. He says, I don't see it, I don't see it. And I said, brother, if you don't open your eyes you'll never see it. You've got to open your eyes to see it. And literally had his eyes shut. Well, it it's just what he had, he had. He just wouldn't see the truth.

And in that case they fall into the class of being the disobedient ones. Very serious matter, isn't it, to trouble the Saints of God. Very so. I was just thinking of that in the book of Galatians where he spoke there. He says. In the 5th chapter of Galatians. Where Paul was there in verse 11 And I, brethren, if I preached circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? Then is the offense of the cross ceased? Well, he wasn't so he wasn't preaching this. He had ceased from that. He had learned this Now he wasn't preaching if if if I would suffer persecution or suffer persecution, why am I if I preaching the cross? So he says I would. They were even cut off, which trouble you or I understand. Another rendering is they would cut themselves off which trouble you. And the troubler of the people of God is one who is standing in a very precarious and dangerous position. And God doesn't deal. He doesn't settle all his accounts in one day or one month or even one year. We don't know. So it's a very serious matter with Aiken as the one who was the troubler of Israel, and God never forgot that. One of the saddest things that we've seen happen. Is the publication of fancied or real God knows sins? What would you think of a father who went to you and said, do you know what my son just did? He was caught stealing. He was caught as a thief. What would you think of a father that would broadcast the shame of his son in doing something like that? Our to broadcast the. The shame. Whether it's real or imagined, it doesn't matter. Even if it's a fact, to broadcast it, to hang all your dirty wash out for everyone to see, is not of God. It's not of God. There's a way of dealing with evil, but it's not by publicly broadcasting it and slandering and smearing. And that's what's been going on. And that's wicked. That's positively wicked. Opposite is to cover it up. Yeah, that's bad. You know, there are not many Levites among the people of God. You know what I mean by that? They took the sword against their own flesh. And then the sons of Korah, you know, they separated from their own father. And how often natural affections influence us in our judgment. The Lord is looking for Levi. The Lord is looking. For those who, like the sons of Korah, take a stand on the Lord's side, remember they were the ones that were made keepers in the House of God. You know, and you can see why. But I wholeheartedly agree with what Chuck has said. You know, many times these things have been used to steal the hearts of the people, undermining those in authority in the assembly and drawing the young to follow the ones who broadcast this thing. As if there is no judgement of evil in the assembly and the leaders cannot be trusted. Work of Satan, you know, let's be careful, beloved brethren. But how wonderful Paul speaks of that which he had seen. And it has been suggested that when he had that experience, it was when he was stoned and left for dead. I like that. I think that well, and I believe the time fits in with that experience And yet. The Lord gives him a thorn in the flesh. You know, the Lord realizes that Paul needs something to keep him humble. And we love that. Isn't that what oftentimes we have to be reminded of? You know what? That which the Lord has given us to see in His word. We need to remember that humility is what becomes us. It's not a natural trade, is it? It wasn't a natural trade for the apartment at all. But the Lord found a way of humbling him. You know my grace is sufficient is the answer.

Some believed that it was a problem that he had with his eyes. You know there was a disease well known in those regions, and the appearance of that person is affected by that and his eyesight. Remember, he had always somebody else write the letters and he signed it except for the letter tribulation. And in the letter to regulations he said they would have been willing to pluck out their eyes for him. And that all seems to indicate that it was such an affliction. But the Lord allowed it in Paul's life to keep him humble. The Lord has his Ways and Means to keep us. In that position. But we can rejoice in whatever he has given us to see of our position in Christ. And pride does not become us, because what we are, we are by the grace of God. Nice. I was thinking of a couple of verses in in the Epistle of Peter, first Peter chapter 4, just two verses there, verses 7:00 and 8:00. But the end of all things is at hand. Is that not true? We're near the end of the day of grace. The end of all things is hand. Be therefore sober and watch unto prayer, and the results of that will be as we have in verse 8 above. All things have fervent love, or charity, or love among yourselves, for charity or love shall cover a multitude of sins. I was reading this comment of Mr. Darby's on that and he says. He adds yay sins, he says, covers, love covers. Doesn't do away with it, but it covers you. See a beautiful illustration of that when Noah. Got drunk, planted a vineyard and got drunk and. His two sons Ham looked upon the nakedness of his father. And your young people? You probably know better than anyone else the inconsistencies and the failures of your father or your mother. But to look upon that to expose it. To tell others of it is wicked. Sham and Japheth went backwards. And they did not look upon the nakedness of their father. It was a shame that they covered it. And love covereth a multitude of sins. That's the verse you just read. There's an illustration of it. And the word came. Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be. That was the son of Ham. Noah's son Ham had looked upon his nakedness. Now his son Ham Son Canaan gets the curse. But you can see the government of God. What we reap, we sow them upon him. I was thinking of this. Expression at the end of verse two and at the end. Verse at the beginning of verse four as to where Paul was caught up to as being very important to identify the place into which the Lord welcomed the dying thief. And I just cautioned those who have Scofield Bibles in connection with this that there is a teaching in that Bible, one of several perhaps, that are not helpful. That's one where he indicates that Paradise somehow changed its location. And I believe that's not so. I believe here Paradise is identified for us. I'm talking about not the Garden of Eden now, but I'm talking about the paradise of God. That paradise is identified for us as the 3rd heaven. Why 3rd heaven? 1St heaven, of course, is the atmosphere in which the birds fly and and where the clouds are. The 2nd heaven, if we may so put it, is outer space. But the 3rd heaven is the uncreated dwelling place of God. And that is where paradise is.

Paradise is in that place, uncreated, which was the eternal dwelling place of God prepared for us by the entry of the Lord Jesus into it. I used to think when I was a boy I used to picture the Lord when he says I go and prepare a place and I don't mean to be disrespectful in any way, but as a child will think I could picture the Lord somehow supervising angels and. To with hammers and nails to prepare dwelling places for us. But I believe the thought is the entrance of that blessed man into the presence of God prepares the place for us. And so the Lord could say to the thief on the cross, today shalt thou be with me in paradise. Where is that? Paul tells us here that it's the 3rd heaven, and I think it's important to get simply take hold of that. And reject the complicated and I believe unscriptural thought that somehow the Lord went into a place where kind of a waiting place, and took a whole lot of Saints and took them up into heaven when he ascended up on high. That is not the thought and I believe that heaven has always been the place of of the departed Saints. Although it was not brought to light until the Lord Jesus came, and brought to light life and immortality, and so the veil is drawn back, and no longer is it she all or Hades for us, the unseen. The

unseen. But it's now the place of revealed blessing and the place where God dwells. I just mentioned that because sometimes these things that we've taken for granted for so many years, maybe some of the young people have not had any instruction on it. And This is why we believe that when the Lord said to the thief on the cross today shalt thou be with me in paradise, he was Speaking of the 3rd heaven, the uncreated. Dwelling place of God. They are identified here by the Apostle Paul as being the same. What up into the third habit? He was caught up into paradise. Albert Addict, you would agree? That this is not yet the glory, is it? No, because. The father's house. This is not where the thief on the cross went. Oh, he was with the Lord Jesus. And it's a place, a place of bliss and happiness as we know it from Lazarus, who was in Abraham's bosom, but the glory we will enter when we are brought into conformity to the Lord Jesus. When we will be like him and but already Paul says he had heard words there which he could not utter. And it's a wonderful place a condition that redeemed occupy when they are taken to be with Christ absent from the body present with the Lord or here it is called paradise, you know the paradise. The Garden of Eden. Was on earth, and God came and visited. But this paradise here is to dwell with the Lord Jesus already and be with him forever. But we will not yet be in that glorified state until our bodies are changed, when we are brought into full conformity to the Lord Jesus, perhaps even the statement that we make sometimes that He's home. We know what people want to convey, but really the fullness. Of blessings will be ours when the Lord Jesus comes, raises the dead, and changes us the living, and we will be brought into full conformity to Him and then forever be with Him in the Father's house. Isn't that more a question of state in place? In other words, I believe that we ought not diminish the fact that. The believer when he's present with the Lord. Where is the Lord now? He's in glory, so I believe that when we talk about. The entering into glory or into the presence of the Lord. And it's we're talking about a state of body, soul and spirit being there in full consciousness and that we're looking forward to. That's not ours yet, nor any that have gone on to be with the Lord, but as to where they are.

I believe they're at the present, at the in the 3rd heaven, and in the presence of God, although not in conscious bliss, as we will be in the coming day, and there will be things that we will only enter into when we are glorified. The departed Saints are with the Lord, but they're not quote in glory as far as their own bodies are concerned and well, they don't have a body. There in the disembodied state, until they get a glorified body, they're not in glory in the full sense of the word. That's what you're saying. I just wanted to make a comment on the expression he led captivity captive. You were talking about **** ****. And in some of our Bibles the margin says he led a multitude of captives and that gives rise to the error that's in the Schofield reference Bible. It really means he led captivity captive. Means he led the power that had held up us captive to sin captive, he let all the power of Satan captive to get it. In Hebrews too it's put in another word ways that says. Through death he annulled him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and delivered them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to *******. So we've been delivered from the power of Satan. We're no longer under his power. That power has been taken captive by the victor, our Lord Jesus, and set us free.

Edification: Volume 9, Our Scripture Portion.

(2 Corinthians 12:11-13:14).

To be of any profit this article must be read in connection with a Bible, opened at the above passage.

HAVING let us into the secret, as to the revelations he had from the Lord on the one hand, and the discipline which came upon him from the Lord on the other, the Apostle utters his closing appeal. He ought really to have been commended of the Corinthians seeing they were his converts, instead of which he was forced into defending his apostleship before them. Though nothing in himself, he was behind the very chiefest apostles in nothing. As to this he could appeal to his whole career, and more particularly to his life and service when amongst them.

Paul’s estimate of himself was—I am nothing. Let us be instructed by this. We sometimes sing,

The desire is a good one. We never do realize our nothingness more effectively than when we are filled with divine love. In the passage before us the confession “I am nothing,” follows the setting forth of the all-sufficient grace of Christ.

Yet this man who was nothing had been called to apostleship in surpassing measure, and the signs of it were very evident; not only in wonders and mighty deeds but also and firstly in patience—a patience which he was now displaying in abundant measure in his dealings with the Corinthians. When he was in their midst he carefully abstained from being in any way a financial burden to them, though he had taken help from other churches. He speaks again with a tinge of irony in saying, “forgive me this wrong.” He purposed to continue on the same lines. Inasmuch as he was their spiritual father he proposed to provide for them, rather than counting upon their priding for him.

Verse 15 is very beautiful. Paul was indeed a father in Christ, his heart well saturated with divine love, hence he could love the unloving, even as God does. The natural tendency of our hearts is just the opposite of this. We are perhaps kindly disposed towards certain persons, and show them various favors. They receive all, but are cool and unappreciative. We are annoyed, and declare we will have done with them! But it was not thus with Paul. Even if things got so bad that their response only decreased as love increased, he would go on expressing his love in the most practical way of all. He would spend and be spent for them. A little of this lovely spirit we see in 1 Samuel 12:23. A good deal more of it we see in the passage before us. But the thing itself is seen supremely in God Himself, as displayed by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The same spirit had been seen in those associated with the Apostle in his labors, as Titus and others. Yet this loving spirit did not mean indifference to evil, and a condoning of things that were not right; and so there follow very plain words as to the sin which he feared was still to be found amongst them, which would merit very severe judgment if he again came into their midst.

Sin breaks out in many ways, but two forms of it were very prevalent at Corinth, as verse 20 and 21 bear witness. First, there were all those disturbing features that spring from self-assertiveness and the envy and jealousy thereby generated. Second, self-gratification and the licentiousness that springs from it, in its varying forms. The Apostle feared that both these things were still rife at Corinth and unrepented of; and that if he came on this proposed third visit he would be full of grief in their midst and have to act in judgment. We may observe that he speaks of his humiliation and sorrow (12:21) before he speaks of his authority in judgment (13:2).

As an apostle he had special authority and power in this direction. When once the apostles had passed off the scene the only discipline possible was that exerted by the church or by the saints collectively; and that so often in these days appears to be singularly ineffectual. There are of course reasons for this. One reason is that it has been so often perverted to ends of a personal or party nature that the whole

idea of it has fallen into disrepute. Another is that even when discipline has been rightly inflicted it has been done in a harsh judicial spirit instead of in the spirit of humiliation and sorrow which marked the Apostle here. We have made it the cold, heartless discipline of the court of law instead of the warm, affectionate discipline of the family circle.

Still, discipline there has to be: the discipline of God's house, which is not prejudiced nor unreasoning but founded on well-established facts. Hence when Paul came he intended that every word should be established in the mouth of two or three witnesses. All should be sifted with impartiality, so that if some reports were not based upon fact their falsity might be exposed, and their weight fall not upon the head of the accused but upon the head of the accusers. Some may have sinned by licentiousness as Paul feared; but others may have sinned by "backbiting's" and "whisperings" of false accusations, because their hearts were filled with envy. All would be made manifest and judged, as we see in the opening verses of chapter 13 We venture to think that, if today there were as much zeal in bringing discipline to bear against the backbiters and whispers as against the licentious, it would be for the spiritual health and well-being of the church of God.

Paul's authority as an apostle had however been questioned, and the Corinthians had very foolishly given ear to these questionings. They were the last persons who should have done so, or should have had any doubts as to whether Christ had spoken through him. Since they had entertained such doubts, some kind of answer was needed, and a very crushing one Paul was able to give. He had simply to say, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." Since they were his converts, the fruit of his labor, they themselves were the proof—unless indeed they were reprobates, just worthless frauds. If they were but frauds then indeed Christ might not have spoken in Paul; but if they were true men He most certainly had.

Verse 5 has sometimes been taken apart from its context and turned into a plea for continual self-inspection, and even doubt as to one's own salvation. This is because the parenthesis extending from the middle of verse 3 to the end of verse 4 has not been noticed. If we connect the early part of verse 3 with verse 5 the sense is quite clear. There is again a touch of irony in Paul's words, for the doubts they had foolishly entertained as to Christ speaking in him really recoiled upon their own heads. If indeed Christ had not spoken in Paul then —since they had professed conversion under his speaking—Christ would not be found in them. But if Christ was indeed found in them it was conclusive proof that Christ had spoken in him.

It is quite possible of course that in speaking thus the Apostle wished to convey to them the fact that he was not too sure of the genuineness of some of them, and thereby he desired to stir them up and exercise their consciences. At the same time he was quite confident as to the majority of them.

This is evident if we consider the parenthesis, the first words of which tell us that Christ had not been "weak" toward them but rather "mighty in you." Looking back to the work that had been wrought when first he came among them, Paul was full of confidence that the power of Christ had been in it. The whole path of Christ on earth had been characterized by a "weakness" which culminated in His crucifixion. Yet He is alive in resurrection by the power of God. Now that which marked the path of the great Master marked also the path of the servant, who was following in His life and way. Weakness also characterized the external life and service of the Apostle but under the surface the power of God was vitally present with him.

The words at the end of verse 4 are remarkable— "by the power of God toward you." These words indicate that what was in the Apostle's mind was not that he would live in resurrection in the time to come, but that, as associated with the living Christ, he would display in the present the power of that life toward the Corinthians. Christianity is marked by the power of a new life which operates in blessing. Nothing short of that, whether it be creed or ceremony or work, will do.

The whole passage shows once more that what God looks for is reality and power. It emphasizes also that, as far as outward appearances go, weakness has been stamped upon the true saints and servants of God from the beginning, even when the Gospel was winning its earliest and greatest triumphs. We need not therefore be surprised if weakness is stamped upon us today. The thing to be concerned about is that we may judge and refuse all that would jeopardize that power.

The self-abnegation of the Apostle again comes strikingly to light in verse 7. He prayed that they might do no evil, and so be manifestly approved and not reprobate; and this, not that it might approve his work amongst them, and so be for his glory, but that they might do what is right, and so prove beyond all question that they were not reprobates. If that were so he would be content, even though he appeared to be a reprobate himself. That he was not a reprobate he knew very well, and he trusted they knew it too, as he says in verse 6.

So also we see his self-abnegation in verse 9. He was not only content but glad to be weak if it but led to spiritual strength in those to whom he ministered; the great object before him being the perfecting of the saints. He longed to see them led forward to completion—to full growth in Christ. As for himself, he knew that all the power in which he served was Divine in its origin, and so was only available for so long as he was laboring for the truth and in the truth. If he had turned against the truth he would instantly have been shorn of that power. There are powers antagonistic to the truth, but in the long run they cannot prevail. Hence against the truth he was powerless, whilst for it he was powerful.

In all this a note of sharpness or severity has not been absent, and in verse 10 we have the explanation of why he had written in this strain. He anticipated being amongst them for the third time and desired to overthrow and clear away the evil by means of this letter, and so have only the happy work of building up what is good when he came. He had authority given of the Lord but it was primarily for building up. Overthrowing is necessary, as we saw when reading the early part of chapter 10, but only in view of building up, which is the great thing the Lord desires for His people.

Verse 11 gives us the closing desires. If we are perfected, of good comfort (or encouraged), of one mind, and at peace, we shall indeed do well. It is easy to see that these were things much needed by the Corinthians. But we need them just as badly. The church of God today, as a whole, is in a condition very similar to them. There is plenty of immaturity, of discouragement, of disunity, of strife: indeed these things seem very much to flow one out of the other. They are met and countered by a true ministry such as Paul's; and maturity, encouragement, unity and peace are promoted. May it be so with us, and we too shall know the presence of the God of love and peace.

Verses 12 and 13 give the closing salutations. Verse 11 being fulfilled in them, there would be no difficulty amongst themselves, no jealousies and strife's and evil speaking's, which would prevent their saluting one another in holiness. The spirit of faction, the desire to boast of being of Paul or Peter or Apollos, would be cast out. Moreover "all the saints" saluted them, for their affections had not been alienated from them by

reason of their blameworthy condition of unspirituality. The saints elsewhere had not formed a party against them, or what is even worse, fallen themselves into parties as the result of hearing about the schisms at Corinth. All the saints saluted them, in spite of their failures.

Verse 14 gives the closing benediction. Here we have indicated the great realities which are calculated to produce the things desired in verse 11—grace, love and counion, proceeding respectively from the three Persons of the Godhead. Let us notice in passing that the Lord Jesus, who is so often spoken of as the Second Person, is put in the first place here, just as the Holy Spirit is put in the first place in 1 Corinthians 12. All such terms as First, Second or Third Person must therefore be used with a considerable measure of reserve.

The grace of the Lord Jesus was known by the Corinthians, as the Apostle had acknowledged in chapter 8 It is another and a further, thing for it to be with us all. Then we shall all be pervaded by its blessed influence. So with the love of God; and so too with the communion of the Holy Spirit. In this benediction the grace is put first, for if that fails with us all will fail.

Heaven will be filled with the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit, but we shall not need grace—at least, not as we need it here. It is in the circle of the, church on earth that all kinds of trials and testings occur. It is here that we have to do with perverse men and trying brethren, all the while possessing wayward hearts ourselves. Nothing but the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ can preserve us in a way that is pleasing to God. But the grace of the Lord can do it.

And if the grace of the Lord does preserve us, then the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit may have full course and be with us all. The Spirit being holy the communion which He inspires must be holy. We shall be found in happy partnership and fellowship as to the whole range of things which He reveals to us, even the deep things of God.

The love of God shines upon us as His children, even when our practical condition is not at all pleasing to Him. But when it is with us all its benediction is felt throughout the great circle of all saints. Indeed it overflows that circle and goes out to the world beyond. A lovely picture is thus presented of what the church is according to the thought of God: a circle governed by grace, overflowing with love, and filled with a holy communion concerning the things of God.

We cannot say that the church is that practically; but we can say that it may and should be that. We can say also that if any of us approximate to this, even in a small degree, we shall be greatly blessed, and be a benediction to others.

So may it be then with all of us.

F. B. Hole.

Edification: Volume 9, Our Scripture Portion.

(2 Cor. 12:1-10).

To be of any profit this article must be read in connection with a Bible, opened at the above passage.

THE remark with which the Apostle opens chapter 12 again indicates that this speaking about himself was repugnant to him, though he found himself impelled to do it. The New Translation renders it, “Well, it is not of profit to me to boast.” so his thought may have been that what he had to say about himself brought no profit or credit to him. The beatings, the perils the hunger, the thirst, the nakedness the infirmities, of which he had just spoken were not the kind of experiences which are considered profitable, according to the standards of the world. And now that he proceeds to speak of what he had received of the Lord, in the form of visions and revelations, there was still no credit to him; for it was not exactly as an apostle that he received them, and much less as a man in the flesh, but as “a man in Christ.”

In making this distinction we are not splitting hairs for Paul himself makes it, and lays very definite stress upon it. Note how verses 2-5 carry on the thought, “A man in Christ... such an one... such a man... such an one...” These heavenly revelations were given to such a man as that. Who and what then is this “man in Christ”?

Without any question Paul was alluding to a marvelous experience in his own history, but he carefully eliminates the personal element from his story in order to impress us with the fact that the experience was only possible for him inasmuch as he was “such a man” as “a man in Christ.’’

Eliminating the personal element he was able thus to abstract in his mind that which he was in the very essence of his being by the work of God in new creation. Elsewhere he has told us that, “We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (Eph. 2:10); and in our own epistle he has already said. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature” (verse 17). It is evident therefore that every true believer in the Lord Jesus is “a man in Christ.” Consequently every one of us ought to be very eager to take in its significance.

By natural birth we are men in Adam: that is, we enter upon his life, and are of his race and order, inheriting his sinful characteristics; though in different individuals they come out in different ways and degrees. By the grace of God in new creation the believer enters upon the life of the risen Christ, and is of His race and order. The new life he has received has its own characteristics, even those which in all their perfect beauty were seen in Christ Himself. True, in various individual believers these characteristics are only seen in differing ways and degrees, and only partially in the best. But that is because each individual believer, while under observation in this world, still has the flesh in him, and that, whenever permitted to operate, obscures and contradicts the features of the life of Christ. Still our many failures must not be allowed to obscure the fact that a “man in Christ” is what each of us is: and that by an act of God.

When the Lord comes, and we are “clothed upon with our house which is from heaven,” the last link that we have with the first Adam will have disappeared. Our very bodies then will be of a new creation order. There will be nothing about us which is not new creation, and hence all need for abstract thinking in connection with this matter will have passed away. We shall no longer have to differentiate and speak of “such an one,” for there will be no other kind of “one” entering into the question. How glorious that will be!

Still at present we have to speak as Paul speaks here; and how delightful it is to find that a man in Christ can be caught up into Paradise, even the third heaven, and yet feel at home there and receive communications from God, of a character bond anything that could possibly be known in this world. How great a contrast for the Apostle between such an experience as this and all those experiences he endured in his life of service, of which we have just been hearing. In them he was “let down,” and that in the most undignified way. In this he was “caught up,” and that to Paradise. Such an experience must have been in itself a big recompense for his sufferings and it was only a foretaste of greater things and eternal which were to come. No wonder he spoke to us in chapter 4, of the “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,” which awaits us.

That glory awaits us when we too are caught up as predicted in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. When all the saints are thus caught up—the Apostle Paul amongst them—they will be clothed in bodies of glory; there is no shadow of uncertainty as to that. There was uncertainty about this experience of Paul’s as he tells us twice over. He did not know whether it was supernatural experience, in the nature of a vision, granted to him while still in the body; that is, still a living man in this world: or whether he was out of the body; that is, that he died, his spirit passing into the presence of the Lord, and then subsequently he was brought back to life here. This remark of his, coupled with the date he gives us, makes it quite possible that the experience was granted to him when he suffered the stoning recorded in Acts 14. He must have been in an insensible condition for some time; since all thought him dead, and his apparent lifeless body was dragged out of the town.

The wonderful experience was his though he was uncertain what exactly was his condition when he had it. Incidentally this shows us that the “falling asleep” of a saint does not mean the sleep of the soul. If the death of a saint involves his total unconsciousness until the corning of the Lord, then the Apostle would have been in no uncertainty. He would have said, “I must have been in the body for I was conscious: had I been out of the body I should have had no consciousness at all.”

This man in Christ was caught up to the third heaven; that is, the immediate presence of God, of which the holiest in the tabernacle was a type. We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and Paul found that as a man in Christ he had free access into the third heaven, which he identifies with Paradise, into which the thief went with Christ. During his sojourn there he found himself in touch with a range of things entirely outside anything known in this world. He heard, “unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

This does not mean that he heard mysterious utterances quite unintelligible to him, but that the things he heard, and doubtless understood in some degree, were so exalted as to be beyond us in our present condition. The things spoken about in the third heaven cannot be communicated to us. We have no language in which they can be expressed. And further, if it were possible to convey to us a little of that “eternal weight of glory” it would only crush us in our present condition of weakness. Hence Paul was not allowed to utter the things he heard, even if he could have found words in which to clothe the things revealed. This vision and revelation from the Lord was a special privilege conferred upon him, and for his own illumination and strengthening.

In all this there was nothing in which Paul could boast, as he makes so plain in verse 5. Circumstances had been permitted to push him into a position where he was constrained to speak, of this wonderful experience, as to which he had kept silence for fourteen years, yet even so, though there was much that he might mention keeping strictly within the bounds of truth (which was more than his opponents always did), he would say nothing except as to his infirmities.

This leads him to reveal the fact that when he resumed his active life in this world he came under a special disciplinary dealing on God’s part, of a kind that was designed to deliver him from dangers that threatened. The flesh in Paul was unchanged as to its evil tendencies even after such an experience as this. How easy for him to be lifted up with pride and self-exaltation, and thus invite a sorrowful fall. So the thorn in the flesh was given to act as a kind of counterpoise. Paradise and its unspeakable words on the one hand, but the thorn and its buffetings on the other.

It is said that “thorn” hardly gives in any adequate way the sense, and that “stake” would be better. We do not think much of thorns and easily extricate them, but a stake in the flesh is a far more serious thing and thoroughly crippling in its effects. What in particular Paul alluded to we do not know, though a good deal of discussion has centered round the point. Probably it is purposely left vague in order that all our thought may be concentrated on the fact that any affliction, even of the most damaging kind may be turned into an occasion of spiritual preservation and gain.

The thorn, whatever it was, affected his body for the good of his soul. Its action is described as a “buffeting.” It came from Satan, for it is described as “a messenger,” or “an angel” of Satan, and it is his mode of attack when a devoted and faithful saint is in question. He blinds the minds of the unbelieving as we were told in chapter 4. He aims at corrupting the simple and unestablished, as chapter 11 showed. But for Paul who had been caught up into the third heaven a different line of attack was followed, and the devil dealt him heavy blows that fell upon his body.

We should have said rather that the devil was permitted to deal him heavy blows, for all that happened was beneath the hand of God. It was with Paul as it had been long before with Job: three causes are discernible. The third causes were fire from heaven, whirlwind, evil men, in the case of Job, and the thorn in the flesh in the case of Paul. Behind these in each case lay the power and animus of Satan; but behind him as the first cause there was the hand of God. Job’s safety and blessing lay in his turning away from the third causes, and even from the second cause, that he might accept all from the hand of God; and so too it was with Paul.

Very naturally Paul betook himself to prayer. It was intense prayer: he not only requested but besought. It was repeated, for he besought the Lord thrice. Yet for all that his desire was not granted. Instead of having the thorn removed he received the assurance of abundant grace; such grace that the thorn would become an asset rather than a liability, a means of blessing rather than a hindrance. The Lord answered his prayer, but not according to his thought. He gave him rather that which was better. The grace bestowed more than counterbalanced the thorn.

We must lay great stress in our minds upon the little word, “MY.” The thorn was a messenger of Satan, but the grace was Christ’s. The Lord’s reply to Paul was, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” The Lord and His grace are infinite, sufficient for ten thousand times ten thousand of His saints—surely then sufficient for Paul, or for any one of us no matter what we may have to face. But He added, “My strength is made perfect in weakness.” If the thorn served to augment and emphasize Paul’s weakness it thereby opened the way for a fuller and more perfect display of the grace of the Lord.

Without a question all this is right in the teeth of our natural thoughts. We should connect the thought of power and strength with every kind of mental and bodily fitness. We should say I will glory in my fitness that the power of Christ may rest upon me. When I am tuned up to concert pitch then I am strong. Our thoughts however are wrong: the Divine way is right. We may wish to present ourselves to the Lord for service saying, “Just as I am: young, strong, and free...” Paul had to learn to come saying. “Just as I am; old, battered, weak...” It is very certain that the Lord accomplished a great deal more through Paul than He is ever going to do through you or me.

The thorn in the flesh, then, worked good in two ways. First, it checked that tendency to pride that otherwise might have overcome Paul and wrought such mischief. Second, it cast him so fully upon the Lord that it became a medium through which abundant supplies of grace were received by him.

This being so, the Apostle had learned to take pleasure in these various forms of adversity. In Romans 5. he tells us how he boasted in tribulations because he knew what they were designed to effect in the sphere of Christian character. Here he takes pleasure in tribulations because he had discovered them to be the way by which the power of Christ became operative through him in service. The very weakness into which he was plunged made him a suitable medium for the outflow of that power.

And in this, as well as in other things, Paul was a pattern to us who follow him. This was God’s way at the beginning of the dispensation, and it is still His way at the end. Fashions and customs and many other things which lie upon the surface of affairs do indeed vary, but the underlying facts and principles do not vary. Consequently there is no other way of power for us. Does not this fact go a long way to explain the lack of power so sadly evident, and so often deplored, today?

F. B. Hole.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, The Thorn in the Flesh

Question: 2 Cor. 12:7-10. Was the “thorn in the flesh” a physical affliction? Does the term “my infirmities” refer to the same thing as the “thorn”? Is the “power” spoken of in this portion, and the “strength” physical power and strength to overcome what was a physical affliction, supposing the thorn to be such? J. M.

Answer: The “thorn,” in the apostle’s case, was a messenger of Satan for buffeting in order to the putting down of “the flesh,” and as it would seem, was such as made him contemptible in the eyes of others, and produced also physical weakness (1 Cor. 2:3 2 Cor. 10:10; Gal. 4:13-15), “My infirmities” —or weaknesses of body—became an occasion for the special exercise of divine power and grace enabling him even to take pleasure in weaknesses for Christ’s sake. Thus the excellency of the power was seen to be of God. As the Lord assured the apostle of the sufficiency of His grace, and the perfecting of His power in human weakness, so would he rather glory in his (bodily) weaknesses that this power of Christ may have its dwelling-place on him. The outer man might perish, but the inward is renewed day by day, and he fainted not. Thus our physical weaknesses are triumphed over (not renewed) by spiritual power— “the power of Christ”

Fragments Gathered Up, 2 Corinthians 12:12

2 Cor. 7:12. Is it not instructive to read that, though “signs and wonders and mighty deeds” are undoubtedly “signs of an apostle,” yet a very different thing, a most passive virtue, takes precedence of them all? In the apostle “patience” was the supreme or at least first-named sign. The inference is obvious. Patience should, a fortiori, characterize those who are not apostles. R. B.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Meaning of "Being Crafty I Caught You With Guile"?

Question: 2 Cor. 12:16. What means, “Being crafty I caught you with guile”? R. M.

Answer: It is the low insult which “deceitful workers” insinuated among the Corinthian saints, to defame the apostle and exalt themselves. They dared to say that, if he did not burden them directly, he all the more craftily reaped what he could through Titus and others. None fall into such depths of baseness as Christian professors alienated and self-seeking. In short then, it is the language, not of the apostle, but of his adversaries, whom he exposes for our admonition; and he calls such words of his speaking “folly,” because it was not about Christ but himself, to which their iniquity compelled him,

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 12:8-21

Three times Paul besought the Lord that the “thorn” might depart from him; his action reminds us of the Lord’s thrice-uttered prayer in the garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36-47), just before His betrayal. In the Lord’s prayer we see the fullest submission, as before Him was the awful suffering of Calvary, climaxed by His being forsaken of God (Luke 22:41-45; Heb. 5:7-8).

The trial about which the apostle had prayed—the thorn in his flesh for whose removal he asked, must have been something that he felt might interfere with his preaching.

“But ye know that in weakness of the flesh I announced the glad tidings to you at the first; and my temptation, which was in my flesh, ye did not slight nor reject with contempt; but ye received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. What then was your blessedness? for I bear you witness that, if possible, plucking out your own eyes ye would have given them to me.” (JND)

We have such bad hearts that when God does not give what we ask for in prayer, the heart being much set upon having its desire, we may even rebel against the unsearchable wisdom that says “No!” to our desire. It was not so with the apostle; let it never be so with us who rejoice in the same precious Saviour and Lord.

“And He said to me, My grace suffices thee; for My power is perfected in weakness” (verse 9, JND). No accidental circumstance was the “thorn,” but part of the purpose of the Lord for the good of His servant, and for our blessing, if we are able and willing to learn by the trials of other saints. The grace of the Lord Jesus is enough to fill the believer’s heart with rapture. Most of the epistles close with the desire that that grace be with those addressed, and we may with profit turn to many Scriptures which tell of this wondrous theme; among them are 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 1:19-26; 2:1-11; 3:7-14; Col. 1:9-27; 2 Tim. 2:1.

“Most gladly therefore will I rather boast in my weaknesses, that the power of the Christ may dwell upon me. Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in straits, for Christ; for when I am weak then I am powerful.” (verses 9-10, JND).

“Most gladly”—this is not the language of disappointment, but rather of one who has learned his Master’s will, and delights in it. And thoroughly had the lesson been learned. Paul’s weaknesses or infirmities (what was contrary to the strength of men, like his being lowered in a basket over the wall of Damascus) he would boast in, in order that the power of Him whom he served might dwell upon him.

Christian, cannot you and I learn deeply for ourselves here, as we pause to think of this pattern saint in circumstances which made nothing of self; of his applying day by day in himself the lesson he had learned in the matter of his thorn? O that much more of Christ and correspondingly less of self shall henceforth be seen in us in our ways and conversation! Little do most of us know practically of what the apostle in verse 10, wrote, summing up the frequent experiences of his path as “weaknesses,” “insults,” “necessities,” “persecutions,” “straits,” for Christ; concerning all of which he could say that he took pleasure in them, for, said he, “when I am weak, then I am powerful.” Blessed man!

What an insight into the life of the apostle we have gained through the forced testimony from his pen that these chapters have contained!

“I have become a fool; ye have compelled me; for I ought to have been commended by you; for I have been nothing behind those who were in surpassing degree apostles, if also I am nothing. The signs indeed of the apostle were wrought among you in all endurance, signs and wonders, and works of power” (verses 11-12, JND). There had been ample proof of an apostolic ministry during Paul’s years at Corinth, but if saints of God do not walk as becomes saints, that most blessed ministry of Christ will be without its proper effect.

“For in what is it that ye have been inferior to the other assemblies, unless that I myself have not been in laziness a charge upon you? Forgive me this injury. Behold, this third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not be in laziness a charge, for I do not seek yours, but you, for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. Now I shall most gladly spend and be utterly spent for your souls, if even in abundantly loving you I should be less loved” (verses 13-15, JND).

Thus the affections of the new nature in the apostle continued to flow, and would continue, with undiminished service for these saints whose worldly ways had given him much grief. Their low spiritual state appears again in the verses that follow. Paul, they said, did not himself burden them, but being crafty he took them by guile, so that through Titus or others, he might profit from the Corinthians. The charge was utterly false (verses 16-18).

“Ye have long been supposing” (or ye have of old supposed) “that we excuse ourselves to you; we speak before God in Christ, and all things, beloved, for your building up. For I fear lest perhaps coming I find you not such as I wish, and that I be found by you such as ye do not wish; lest (there might be) strifes, jealousies, angers, contentions, evil speakings, whisperings, puffings up, disturbances; lest my God should humble me as to you when I come again, and that I shall grieve over many of those who have sinned before, and have not repented as to the uncleanness and fornication and licentiousness which they have practiced” (verses 19-21, JND).

With this solemn foreboding, the chapter closes, and the Epistle draws near to its end. Unsparingly sin had been dealt with in the First Epistle, and many had humbled themselves as a result, but a deep work remained to be done, and the Lord’s servant warned those who had sinned before, and had not repented. There must be no compromise with sin where Christ is owned as Lord and Saviour.

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 12:1-9

“Well, it is not of profit to me to boast, for I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord” (verse 1, JND). Driven by the attacks at Corinth upon his ministry into giving an account (ever so brief!) of what the service of Christ had included for him in persecution, in hardship and in care, Paul turns to another subject connected with his apostleship: that of visions and revelations of the Lord.

“I knew a man in Christ” (it is an inaccurate rendering, and should read, “I know a man in Christ”) “above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I can not tell; or whether out of the body I can not tell; God knoweth”).

Paul was himself the man of whom he wrote: the man in Christ. “In Christ” left no room for human boasting.

Turn back with me to the fifth chapter, and read again verses 14 to 18, including,

“Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature” (or, it is a new creation).

“Of such an one will I glory, yet of myself I will not glory,” the apostle says, in the fifth verse.

This event in his life, of which Paul is telling: when did it occur? It appears, from as reliable chronology as can be found, to have been when he was at Antioch, or not long before that, during his stay at Tarsus (see Acts 11, verses 25-26); soon after this, came the apostle’s first journey with the gospel under the call of the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:1-4).

“Such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man, (whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth); how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words” (or things said) “which it is not lawful for a man” (not allowed to man) “to utter.”

How great was the favor shown to Paul, thus to be caught up to scenes of divine glory! Must it not have been, in part, to prepare him for the path of suffering that was to be his as the apostle to the Gentiles?

The expression, “the third heaven”, found here only, was a Jewish term for heaven itself as beyond the atmosphere, beyond the stars. In the fourth verse it is “paradise,” twice mentioned elsewhere in the Scriptures.

To the dying thief in Luke 23:43 the dying Saviour said, “Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise.”

And in Revelation 2:7, in the letter to the angel of the church in Ephesus:

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”

Another has referred to these passages as relating to heaven, “the capital of God’s dominion where He has the garden of His delights.”

It was there where blessedness is that Paul heard things he could not utter.

The Scriptures in many passages very preciously bring heaven before the children of God. It is the place, first of all, where God dwells (Psa. 2:4, 11:4, 103:19 and 123:1); from which He looks down upon the earth (Psa. 33:13), there His blessed Son was from eternity—in the beginning with God (John 1:1-2), and laying aside His glory (Phil. 2) He came down from heaven (John 6:38) to endure the death of the cross. In resurrection, and in the act of blessing those He had drawn to Himself, He was parted from them and carried up into heaven (Luke 24:50-51).

We, believers, await the nearing moment when the Lord Jesus shall descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we who are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord (1 Thess. 4:16-17). Meanwhile if we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord, but it is better far to be absent from the body, present with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:6-8), the present portion of believers who die. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, the first man, we shall bear the image of the heavenly One, the Lord Himself (1 Cor. 15:42-50).

And, if not in heaven yet, though we shall soon be, we rejoice that our names are written there (Luke 10:20); through the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven (1 Peter 1:12) we have received the gospel of our salvation, and are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Who is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession (Eph. 1:13-14).

We are not promised many earthly blessings, as Israel was, but we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (or, in the heavenlies) in Christ (Eph. 1:3).

The angels of God are in heaven (Matt. 22:30), but as ministering spirits, they are sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation (Heb. 1:14; and see Acts 27:23-24; 8:26; 12:6-11).

By nature the children of wrath even as others, we have learned from God’s Word (Eph. 2:3-7) that He, rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace we are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Paul in our chapter mentioned only one revelation; in Ephesians 3:1-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:15, and 1 Corinthians 11:23 others are referred to, and the turning event of his life is related in Acts 9:3-8, 22:6-11 and 26:12-18. But the circumstances of what he relates in 2 Corinthians 12:2-4 were altogether different, in that, the apostle was caught up to scenes of glory, and heard what he could not pass on to others.

Paul would boast of the man in Christ; to be near God in the glory, as out of the body, does not puff up, as another has said. All is Christ, and Christ is all; self is forgotten. Of Paul, the man, he would not boast, unless in his weaknesses (verse 5),

“For if I shall desire to boast, I shall not be a fool, for I will say the truth; but I forbear, lest any one should think as to me above what he sees me (to be), or whatever he may hear of me” (verse 6, JND).

“And that I might not be exalted by the exceeding greatness of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn for the flesh, a messenger of Satan, that he might buffet me, that I might not be exalted. For this I thrice besought the Lord that it might depart from me. And He said to me, My grace suffices, for (My) power is perfected in weakness” (verses 7-9, JND).

The “flesh”, the old nature, is the same in an apostle, as in the weakest believer. In the language of another, “Nothing amends the flesh. Once come back into the consciousness of his human existence on earth, the apostle’s flesh would have taken advantage of the favor he had enjoyed to exalt him in his own eyes, to say, ‘None have been in the third heaven but thou, Paul’.

“But God is watchful; in His grace, He provided for the danger of His poor servant. To have taken him up to a fourth heaven—so to speak—would only have increased the danger. There is no way of amending the flesh; the presence of God silences it. It will boast of it as soon as it is no longer there. To walk safely, it must be held in check, such as it is. We have to reckon it dead; but it often requires to be bridled, that the heart be not drawn away from God by its means, and that it may neither impede our walk, nor spoil our testimony.

“Finally, observe, that the humiliation needed to reduce the rebellious flesh to its nothingness, is used by Christ to display His power in it. Thus humbled, we learn our dependence. All that is of us, all that constitutes self, is a hindrance; the infirmity is that in which it is put down, laid low, in which weakness is realized. The power of Christ is perfected in it.

“Paul needed to have the flesh reduced to weakness, in order that there might not be in it the motion of sin which was natural to it. When the flesh was reduced to its true nothingness, as far as good is concerned, and in a manifest way, then Christ could display His strength in it.” (Synopsis of the Books of the Bible; 2 Corinthians. J. N. Darby).

What was the “thorn” given to Paul? Scripture does not say.

Echoes of Grace: 1964, Plenteous Grace

2 Cor. 12:9

One evening I was on my way home after an unusually busy day's work; I felt exceedingly wearied and sore depressed. Swiftly and suddenly as a lightning flash, the scripture came to me: "My grace is sufficient for thee.”

I reached home and looked it up in my Bible, and then it came to me this way: "My grace is sufficient for thee," and I said, "I should think it is, Lord!”

Then I burst out laughing, for it seemed to make unbelief so absurd. It was as though some little fish was very thirsty, but was troubled about drinking the river Thames dry. Then Father Thames said: "Drink away, little fish! My stream is sufficient for thee.”

Perhaps a mouse in the granaries of Egypt, after seven years of plenty, feared it might die of famine. Joseph might say, "Cheer up, little mouse! My granaries are sufficient for thee.”

Again, a man away up yonder in a lofty mountain might say to himself: "I breathe so many cubic feet of air every year. Now I fear I shall exhaust the oxygen in the atmosphere.”

The earth might well answer, "Breathe away, O man! Fill your lungs to the full. My atmosphere is sufficient for thee.”

Oh, Christian friends, be great believers! Little faith will take your souls to heaven, but great faith will bring heaven to your souls.

Christian Treasury: Volume 11, “My Strength Is Made Perfect in Weakness”

2 Corinthians 12:92CO 12:9

When God makes:: strength perfect in weakness, the question comes, Who is the doer of everything? This took place in Paul when he was first converted; this was the principle he was first put on: Paul, you are not to trust to your own strength, or wisdom, or anything, but you are to trust Me. Paul got locked up in prison, and despaired of life, but it was not God's thought that His apostle should be stopped. When he was quietly conning over it all, he said, I had the "sentence of death" in myself. Paul had be-tore him the God that raised up the Lord Jesus Christ. (See 2 Corinthians 1:9.).

Was it a great thing for the God who had raised the Lord Jesus and who had shone down into Paul's heart to open his prison bars? Christ was crucified in weakness; He lives by the power of God—strength made perfect in weakness. The expression at the dose of verse 9, "rest upon me," should be "tabernacle upon me." The thought conveyed to my soul is a reference to God dwelling in a pillar of fire, and the cloud keeping company with people all through their tourney in the wilderness.

Paul was to go forth as one who had no strength, but as one whose weakness is used of God for the display of His glory. It was there we find Paul singing a song over Satan: "I rather glory in my infirmities." He finds that he can bear nothing of himself—perfect weakness.

But now he has got the secret of victory from the Lord, and he can sing a song over his weakness and over Satan.

He finds Satan's work has been turned into his good, and the Lord has allowed it all for his blessing.

Now the question is, Will Christ's arm be always underneath me? Will He always tabernacle over me? Will He never fail me? Shall I be always able to sing this song? This is the principle of resurrection which quiets and gives peace. Paul was to wear it inside him all day long through his whole course. Resurrection must be applied to our every circumstance. "Crucified with Christ," "quickened us together," "raised us up together, and made us sit together." Through all his life Paul was to take this principle into his bosom: resurrection, strength made perfect in weakness.

I have often thought of the wilderness through which God brought Israel. His eye was on the wilderness. He prepared it. In substance He says, I have made the place for a particular purpose in connection with My people; I have arranged it long ago. The wilderness was no accident; it was the very place God had prepared. There were no resources to nature; absolute dependence upon God was there. And God has made and marked out your circumstances, and has so made them that you cannot go through them without Himself. Some may say in reference to their path that this thing came upon me through the sin of someone else. Never mind that; it came from God. Neither divine wisdom nor power could have added anything to the wilderness to have made it more impassable to nature or more easy to God.

He allows a quantity of things in our circumstances to make us feel we cannot go through them without Him. What an immense difference in saying that this thing comes from God and He has put it there, and saying all this is against me. If it is God and myself there is no difficulty, but if we leave Him out, the way is impassable. Which would you rather have: a life without difficulty, or a life so full of difficulty that the blessed Lord Jesus is obliged to show His face every day? Yes, every minute He is obliged to keep close to me all day long.

God so ordered the course of the Apostle Paul that it was impossible to get on without the Lord Jesus who raises the dead. This does not merely apply to moral difficulties, but to everything. There is someone sick in the house; who do you turn to first, God or the doctor? When the

doctor thinks it a serious case, you take it as a decision, but the question is not what the doctor says, but what is God's purpose? Means may be used, but the Christian is not to use anything apart from God—the Lord first in everything.

Praise never comes forth from us so purely as it does in connection with what is disagreeable. When we give thanks for mercies, it is not so pure as when able to praise for what we do not like. We should be dropping the sweet into the disagreeable. When we think of the Lord's love in it, it sweetens what is bitter.

The life of Paul was a wonderful life. "To me to Live is Christ." The way he did run his course brought out the fellowship of the life of Christ. He had in Caesar's court the very life the Lord Jesus had on the Father's throne. It is wonderful, and all on the principle of "My grace is sufficient for thee."

G. V. Wigram

Young Christian: Volume 17, Strenght Made Perfect in Weakness: 2 Corinthians 12

The Lord gave Paul at starting what brought his own energy to a close. It was as if He had said:

"Paul, I am going to use you a great deal down here; but before I can do this I must first bring you into a condition of cripplement, in which you will feel that you cannot do without Me, and which will make it plain to all that it is I who do the work, not you, It is for this end that I send you a thorn in the flesh. Do not ask Me to take it away. I will do what is far better for you, and more glorifying to Me: I will cause My power to rest upon you, and perfect My strength in your weakness."

Not only do we need the Lord to give us eternal life, but we need Him to guide it all the way through. He has never promised that we shall be exempt from trial, and circumstances of difficulty. What He intends is, that we should turn to Him in the trial, and learn that our resources are in Him, not in ourselves. All the trials of the wilderness, the rough places of the way, instead of discouraging us, should be welcomed as opportunities of proving the exceeding greatness of the power treasured up for our use in a risen, living Lord to meet us in them, and raise us above them. It is with the Lord of resurrection that we have to do. The daily petty annoyances and vexations we meet with are permitted to spring up like thorns in our path, to exercise our minds, and put us to the test whether we will turn to Him in them and prove the sufficiency of His grace, enduring as seeing Him who is invisible, or just walk by sight as other men.

Young Christian: Volume 17, My Grace Is Sufficient for Thee

The other evening I was riding home after a heavy day's work; I felt very wearied, and sore depressed, when swiftly, and suddenly as a lightning flash, that text came to me:

"My grace is sufficient for thee."

I reached home and looked it up in the original, and at last it came to me in this way, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and I said, "I should think it is, Lord," and burst out laughing.

I never fully understood what the holy laughter of Abraham was until then. It seemed to make unbelief absurd. It was as though some little fish, being very thirsty, was troubled about drinking the river dry, and Father Thames said,

"Drink away, little fish, my stream is sufficient for thee."

Or, it seemed like a little mouse in the granaries of Egypt, after seven years of plenty, fearing it might die of famine; Joseph might say,

"Cheer up, little mouse, my granaries are sufficient for thee."

Again, I imagined a man away up yonder, in a lofty mountain, saying to himself, "I breathe so many cubic feet of air every year, I fear I shall exhaust the oxygen in the atmosphere," but the earth might say,

"Breathe away, O man, and fill the lungs ever; my atmosphere is sufficient for thee."

O, brethren, be great believers! Little faith will bring your souls to heaven, but great faith will bring heaven to your souls.

The Remembrancer: 1911, Simplicity That Is in Christ, The

CO 11:2-4{

In the preparation-season, to which the present age is analogous, Eve was getting ready, under the forming hand of God, for Adam, and for Adam only. Adam slept for Eve, and Eve was made for Adam. So with Christ and the church. lie slept in death for us, and we are preparing, under the Holy Ghost, for Him. " I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." (2 Cor. 2:2.) As he says also in Gal. 4:19, " My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you ": Christ, and Christ only, Christ in His precious sufficiency for a sinner, in answer to the Hagar or Galatian thought of " days, and months, and times and years," that other gospel which yet is not another.

But this is assailed. The Gospel in its claim on the sinner to give his undivided confidence to Christ, has been abroad on the lips of many witnesses, to the gladdening of thousands of souls. The enemy has watched and hated this. Working in the scene in which he goes " to and fro

" and walks " up and down " (job 1:7), he is busy to seduce the heart from this Gospel. And is not his success far beyond the measure of the fears of any of us? The religion of fleshly confidences or of ordinances is to this hour among us. It admits of worldliness; and worldliness is, at this same hour, flourishing in company with it,. There is the erection of temples for worship, and of palaces for the worshippers; stricter care to observe, in its season, due attendance in the sanctuary, together with unparalleled skill and energy and enterprise in advancing the indulgence and elegance of human life, so as to make the world a desirable and safe place to live in-a place where religion may now be seen to be observed and honored.

This is seductive from the principle of faith-this is corruption of the mind from the simplicity that is in Christ. The Gospel addresses itself to man, not only as a guilty but as a religious creature. It finds him under the power of superstition or religiousness, as well as of sin. It is as natural for man to refuse to go " into the judgment-hall lest he should be defiled," as it is, in very enmity of heart to God, to cry out, " Crucify Him, crucify Him." (John 18:28; 19:6.) And the Gospel gets as stern a refusal from the religious man as from the lustful man. As the Divine Teacher tells us, the harlot goes into the kingdom before the Pharisee.

Religious vanities are deeply playing their part in our day, and fascinating many souls. What answer, fellow-believer, do you and I give them? Is JESUS so precious that no allurement has power? Is the virgin of the new mind still kept? and as chaste ones are we still betrothed to Christ only? Like the newly-formed Eve, are we in our place of earliest, freshest presentation to our Lord? or have we, apart from His side, opened our ear to the serpent?

The kingdom of heaven is as a supper, a royal, joyous feast got ready for sinners, that they might taste and see that the Lord is good, and that blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. It does not put God in the place of a receiver, for man to bring Him His due; but it puts Him in the place of a Giver, and man is called to value His blessing. But the question is, Who listens, with desirous heart, to the bidding Who wears " the wedding garment?" Who prizes Christ? Who triumphs in His salvation? Who longs for the day of His espousals? John had this garment on him, knowing, as he did, the joy of being the Bridegroom's friend (John 3:29). It was flowing at liberty on Mary's shoulders, as she " sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word " (Luke 10:39). Paul tucked it tight about him when he said, " God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord, Jesus Christ (Gal. 4:14). The eunuch had just put it on as " he went on his way rejoicing " in the faith of the name of JESUS (Acts 8:39). Every sinner adorns himself with it the moment his heart values Christ. And what joy is it thus to know that when we put on Christ it is not "sackcloth " we put on, nor is it " the spirit of heaviness" we enter into; but " a wedding garment " has clothed us, and with " the spirit of praise " we array our spirits!

Have we thus learned "the kingdom of heaven "? Have we, in spirit, entered it as a banqueting-hall over which waves the love of JESUS as a banner, where both magnificence and joy welcome us? Are we, consciously, guests at the marriage of a King's Son? Have we learned the mysteries of the faith? Have we meditated upon these things"? (1 Tim. 4:15.) Has the musing over them kindled a fire in the heart to burn up the chair of worldly rudiments? Paul had this element in his soul as he traveled through Greece. And how did the glow of these mysteries address itself to '' the princes of this world " there? It consumed them all. " Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? 'Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (1 Cor. 1) Precious ardor of the Spirit! What a pile was thus fired in the famed cities of the learned and the wise! and how were all the thoughts of men thrown as rubbish into it!

And how did he treat the rudiments of the religious world? He bore the same fervent sense of Christ with him into their regions, to test what chaff and dross were there. In Galatia he found much of it; but he spared none of it. Though an angel from heaven gather such rubbish; though Peter himself help in the work; though the Galatians, who once would have plucked out their own eyes for him, be enticed, nothing could stand before the heat of the Spirit that bore him onward. "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?.... Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you."

Could he do less? Could he carry JESUS in his heart, and calmly stand and measure his light with the lights of Greece, or God's great Ordinance with man's traditions?

It is to make much of Christ we want beloved fellow-believer—much of HIMSELF, and His glorious achievements for sinners.

We want simplicity now in that sense of the word—the breathings of a soul content with HIM, and the peace of a conscience forever at rest in the sufficiency of His work.

" WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?"

Girdle of Truth: Volume 4, Simplicity That Is in Christ, The

2 Corinthians 11:3

It is very observable that a man of ordinary capacity, persevering in the pursuit of a single object, generally succeeds; while a much more talented person, pursuing several objects, succeeds in none. The time and bent of the mind when given to one object distracts from another, so as to render success impossible. Now, God has set before the soul a single object, even Christ. He is presented to us as the object of present and everlasting confidence, the object of hope, the object of desire, so that to know Him is eternal life already begun; and the most gifted and advanced disciple cannot breathe a higher prayer than " That I may know him." The one comprehensive commandment of God, is, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear him"-"look to him"-"delight in him." And the work of God is that we " believe in him whom he hath sent." Other objects, however good in themselves, must have a disturbing and distracting effect on the soul, unless duly subordinate to Christ. He Himself has ruled that we cannot serve God and Mammon, and has laid down the rule for the guidance of His disciples, " Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

A believer in Christ is a man of a single object, and if, by the grace of God, he has a single eye to that object his "whole body will be full of light." A single object and a single eye are the two thoughts blended together in the expression, "The simplicity that is in Christ." From such "simplicity" the Corinthians were in danger of having their minds corrupted. In that high yet inexplicable sentiment or impulse of our nature, where affection and respect is mutually drawn forth between a man and woman, so that a single object becomes to each the engrossing

center of all the thoughts, we have an illustration of what the Apostle means by the simplicity that is in Christ, and to which he refers: "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." But the Apostle turns from this to a very intelligible reference. " But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

" The serpent beguiled me," was Eve's only excuse to the challenge of the Lord God, " What is this that thou halt done?" Whilst the principles of all sin are to be found in the one great original sin, the pattern sin, as it were, in that comprehensive word, "disobedience" the beguiling power of Satan, which led to the act, was the desire of knowledge and wisdom. After the serpent insinuated the lie, " Ye shall not surely die," he goes on with the seducing subtlety: " For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." The serpent beguiled Eve from the happy knowledge of God in nearness to him, into distance from God, and unwillingness as well as inability to come near Him. The subtlety which prevailed with Eve was that she would be happier if she exalted herself, that she would be wiser by disobeying than by fearing God; that there was something more desirable "in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," than in " the tree of life."

Again, was the Tree of Life, in the person and work of Jesus, opened to men " to see, taste, eat, and handle," not in Paradise, but in the very world in which man was an outcast from Paradise. But, again, also hard by this tree of life, was presented another tree, " pleasant to the eyes, and desirable to make one wise," in " the wisdom of this world." Again there was room for the subtlety of the old serpent to beguile; by persuading those who had tasted that the Lord is gracious, that they could be higher, happier, and wiser, by means of the wisdom of this world, than they were as believers in Christ, and disciples of Christ. It appeared as a privation to them, and a degradation to call no one "Master" but Jesus, to know no wisdom but Jesus, " the wisdom of God," to look to Him as " the light," and for light, as well as " the salvation of God," and for salvation. " Surely the wise man and the disputer of this world may be helpful to us," might the Christian say in answer to any subtle whisper of the serpent. " Engraft the knowledge of

Christ on the rudiments of philosophy, and what a system will be produced!" The introduction of the wisdom of this world, corrupted the faith instead of helping it, destroyed the temple of God instead of rearing it. (1 Cor. 3:17.) Human wisdom and disputation had resulted in undermining the fundamental truth of the gospel, the resurrection of the body. The Corinthians were in danger of losing the rich blessings of the gospel, by that which, through the subtlety of Satan, appeared an advantage to them. The philosophical teachers, who were really " false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into Apostles of Christ," under the subtle guidance of " Satan, transformed into an angel of light," dared not, directly, " preach another Jesus," or pretend to give another Spirit, or to have another gospel-that would be too open and undisguised. But to draw off the heart from allegiance to Jesus, by other objects, to substitute human wisdom for the Spirit of God, and to make the gospel itself a subject of debate and speculation, served the serpent's purpose better than open hostility. He knows that there is but one Jesus, and he knows who He is, the Holy One of God. He cannot deny this, but he can lead men to speculate on His person, till he has undermined all the doctrines of grace which result from the glory of His person. The serpent knows well his power over the conscience, for he is "the accuser of the brethren," and he knows also the only power by which he can be resisted successfully, even by the power of the cross, and to undermine that, has ever been his object; and, for this purpose, he finds no readier a tool than the wisdom of man. " For the preaching of the cross is, to them that perish, foolishness, but to us who are saved, the power and wisdom of God." The serpent knows also the value of the Scripture, and that it " cannot be broken;" by this weapon, wielded by Jesus Himself, at the season of His temptation, was the serpent defeated. He could mutilate Scripture, but he could not stand against it. "It is written," foiled him in his subtleties. Glad would the serpent be to wrest this weapon, the sword of the Spirit, out of the hand of believers; and early did he begin through his philosophical ministers to corrupt that word, the authority of which he could not deny. "We," says the Apostle, " are not as many, which corrupt the word of God." It is easily corrupted by taking from it, or adding to it, or setting up anything as of like authority. The old serpent-the accuser of the brethren-is only overcome by them, by "the word of their testimony, and by the blood of the Lamb, and by loving not their lives even unto the death."

"There is but one name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved, even the name of Jesus." The serpent would beguile us, by adding something as supplementary to Jesus, in order to salvation, or by making Jesus one among many other objects; but whatever these objects are, they will assuredly displace Jesus-He must have the supreme place, or none at all -He must be all, or nothing.

There is but "one Spirit," and the presence of that Spirit can be tested by the witness that He bears to the Son of God, in the great facts of the incarnation, cross, resurrection, and ascension, and coming glory of Jesus. There is but one gospel, even that of the grace of God, in present and everlasting remission of sins through the blood of Jesus, present and everlasting righteousness to him that believeth in Jesus. "Another gospel," if it pretends to be one, is "no gospel" at all, it troubles instead of comforts, and unsettles the soul instead of establishing it. The only wise God has alone devised a plan to secure His own glory, and the eternal blessedness of which a sinner is capable. He can alone announce Himself as a just God and a Savior, and the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, because in it is revealed the only method of righteousness by which a sinner can stand before God-the righteousness of God by faith.

The Corinthians were in danger, as we ever are, of being "corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ;" and we are so corrupted whenever the highest object of human attainment is, in our estimation, more desirable than what Christ is of God made unto us and what we are of God made in Him.

The gospel announces to us the wondrous means of God's "possibility" to do that which is equally "impossible" for man's wisdom or even the law of God to achieve, even the making a sinner perfectly righteous in the sight of God. Until we realize that faith in Christ has at once set us in a position unattainable by the highest human wisdom or the most perfect human righteousness, we are in constant danger of being corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ. Satan knows how to ply the " highly esteemed" things among men to the subversion of the gospel of the grace of God. He will use unto this end the religion of man or the wisdom of man. The early Judaizing tendency is an instance of the former danger now fully manifested; the subtle disputations of the Greek of the latter, now also fearfully prevalent. God. has drawn the line between that which man can attain unto and that which He reveals. He hides, such is his good pleasure, from the wise and prudent that which he reveals to the babes. Now human wisdom has ever thought to obliterate the line which God has drawn between human investigation and divine revelation, by pretending to reach, by reasoning, that which can only be received by faith. Speculations on the person of Christ soon corrupted the simplicity of faith in Him; again men became vain in their imaginations. Men speedily became wise above that which is written, and thus superseded the authority of Scripture. Human intellect pretended to explain what God had been pleased to reveal, and thus the Holy Ghost was virtually superseded as " the guide into all truth." Thus faith, instead of resting in the power of God, was made to rest in the wisdom of man; for such indeed is the boasted authority of the false church in its traditions, equally as false philosophy, to which in

appearance it is so much opposed.

To recognize the Scriptures as the only and sole rule, and the Holy Ghost the only infallible guide into the understanding of that which He has dictated, and as the glorifier of Jesus, are our greatest safeguards from being corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ. Whatever draws away the soul from Him must be regarded by us as an idol.

" We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

Edification: Volume 5, Christian's Daily Pathway., The

(From notes of an address.)

CHRISTIANITY is not a spasmodic and casual thing, as many people appear to think. It is not something to put on in the meetings of Christians, and put off in the office and workshop, or to be donned on Sunday and doffed on Monday.

The newly converted American Indian felt the incompatibility of such a thing, and prayed that his Christianity might not be like his cloak which he could put on and off at his pleasure, but that it might be like the tattoo on his face that could be seen every day and all the day.

In 2 Corinthians 11:23-28, the apostle Paul refers to things he had been called to pass through in his career of service; but bides these he speaks of “that which comes upon me daily,” which in his case was “the care of all the churches.” We have not got his responsibilities, nevertheless there are things that will come daily upon every person who lives the true, practical, Christian life. They may be roughly summed up under two heads—

THE DAILY DEMAND and THE DAILY SUPPLY.

It is a good thing that there is the latter as well as the former. If the wherewithal were not forthcoming to meet the demand there would come certain bankruptcy. The daily demand has to be faced, so let us look at it in more detail. It is this everyday business that tries and tests us. When things come upon us now and again we more easily bear-them, but when they come every day they are likely to be galling to our spirits. A pin prick is trying enough, but a continual sore is worse. To find that we are constantly against the stream calls for “enduring constancy of hope” (.1 Thessalonians 1:3. N. Tr.).

First, THE DAILY TEST. “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow Me” (Luke 9:23). We are beginning with the most serious and constant demand. It is the call to discipleship, which is just the full and practical expression of Christianity. To be a disciple we must have a Master; to be a servant we must have a Lord; and Christ is both. The pathway of discipleship is very closely connected with service in John 12:26: “If any man serve Me, let him follow Me.” If we follow our Master it is useless to expect that our path will lie among beds of roses, since His did not. If the cross was in his path it will certainly be in ours. Some one has said the most natural way for a Christian to die is at the stake.

Discipleship is the way in which we may return His love; and it is love alone that will sustain us in the daily demand that is made upon us.

The term “cross” is used often in the Scriptures, but always, I believe, in connection with shame and suffering and reproach. The cross was, apart from its terrible suffering, the most shameful and dishonoring of deaths. It was the shameful end to what was notoriously a shameful life. This was the death to which our beloved Master was put. But we know another side to the matter. He “became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,” or as we love to sing,

So there are two ways in which we may view that cross, “on which the Lord of glory died.” It was at the cross of Christ that wretched man foamed out his own shame on God. It was at that same cross that God lavished His love on guilty, sinful man.

At the cross God expressed His judgment of man in the flesh, and there man expressed his judgment of God manifest in flesh. It is thus quite impossible for us to justly take sides with both.

Man in the flesh has met his judgment at the hand of God in that cross of shame.

“Our old man is crucified with Him” (Rom. 6:6). Christ in His, deep grace identified Himself with us in our old corrupt life — the self life, or the life that has self as its center— and in Himself has accepted God’s withering judgment on it, when He was made sin for us; and by that sacrifice for sin God has “condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3).

In the other aspect of the cross we find man’s judgment of Christ recorded. Man has put Him to an open shame, and in effect said, “We judge Him worthy only of a death that is meted out to those who come to the end of a shameful life.”

At the cross of Christ God was saying of our old self life, “I see the shameful end of a shameful life.” The Christian now says, “If that is what the world thinks of my Master, then forever that is the end of a shameful world for me.” “The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” For us that means that the world may give us the same shame and reproach that it gave Him, and we will gladly bear it. Nothing but love for Him will take us into such a path. But His love charms us into it.

To “deny myself daily” is to accept God’s judgment on my old self life daily; that is, not denying certain things to self, but denying self. What is often called “self-denial” is only self-curbing. Self curbed is self recognized: self denied is self unrecognized. “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts” (Gal. 5:24). What a daily test this is! Deny myself daily! Discipleship does not mean some of self and some of Thee, nor less of self and more of Thee, but none of self and all of Thee. I accept God’s full judgment of self and I have done with it.

To take up my cross daily. This is not exactly my accepting God's judgment on myself, but rather that I accept this world's judgment on Christ. It means that I identify myself with Him in reproach and shame every day, and would do it in the spirit of the early disciples who rejoiced, "that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name." They were not of the sort that only spoke of Christ in a whisper, or under their breath as if they apologized for being Christians, but they accepted the world's verdict against Christ as the world's verdict against them, and did it with joy. Many people speak of the trials that are the common lot of mankind, sickness, poverty, etc., as their cross. But these the unconverted get as well as the Christian. Anything that you have to suffer because you are following Christ, that is your cross. You will meet it daily, so take it up daily.

Second, there is the DAILY FOE. This is closely connected with the foregoing. The world not only slights the Christian, but comes out into open antagonism, and that every day. "Man would swallow me up: he fighting daily oppresseth me...they be many that fight against me" (Psa. 56:1, 2).

We are in a hostile world, and are face to face with Satan, who is a vigilant and inveterate foe, and then there is the flesh within us. The foe inside is in league with the foe outside — the world — and Satan uses both; only let us remember that we should not have such foes were we not Christians. Satan's tactics aim at bringing about a spiritual demoralization and disheartenment. Daily opposition is both wearing and wearying, and he is on the look-out for a vulnerable point. He acts as did Amalek when Israel came out of Egypt —" He met thee by the way, and smote the hindermost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary" (Deut. 25:18).

Satan has two great weapons, seduction and violence. He will tempt us into an easier path — the path of least resistance, or he will with violence oppose us, hoping to destroy the morale and dishearten. He is the god of discouragement. He wants to see us with hands hanging down and knees become feeble, in order that we may be tempted to say, "I give it up: it is not worth the struggle." All this is the daily effort of a daily foe.

It is sad when discouragement reaches us through our fellow-believers; but sometimes it is so. Here is someone complaining, "They always pour cold water on anything I want to do for Christ!" Well, just you get near to the Lord, so that the fires of love get well stoked up, and then you can turn their cold water into steam, so that the thing that might have hindered you only helps you! The oak tree, you know, violently shaken by the storms of winter is only the more deeply rooted in by the shaking. The bunch of keys in continual use is kept bright by the friction, when the key put away in cotton-wool will develop rust. Happy is it when we can say, "The things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel."

Now we can consider the brighter side of our subject — the daily supply. We are not left to proceed at our own charges. We must note however that the effect of the enemy is not only to oppose and demoralize, but also to break our lines of communication. He knows right well that if he can cut us off from the base of our supply we shall easily fall a prey. Hebrews 4:12-16, gives us two things, the Word of God 4nd the Throne of Grace. And beside these we have the present power of Christ as our High Priest.

First then as to THE WORD OF GOD. We need to be like the Bereans, who, in Acts 17:11, are commended because they "searched the Scriptures daily." The idea of searching is that there is an object to be sought for. We are really seeking something, and not just aimlessly scanning the pages.

We may seek for pictures of Christ in the various incidents, types and prophecies of the Old Testament.

We may seek for the doctrine of Christ in the epistles of the New Testament.

We may seek the company of Christ — putting ourselves in spirit into companionship with Him — in the marvelous records of the four Gospels.

The Bereans took nothing on trust, even from so great an apostle as Paul. They did not listen to Paul proving the Bible to be true, but rather they searched the Scriptures which proved to them that what Paul said was true. A person buying property does not take on trust all that is told him, whether by owner or agent, but he gets his lawyer to search the title-deeds to see if the title is as good as represented. The Bereans were truly noble, says Luke, and many of then believed, Proverbs 2:4, gives us the true idea of searching, we are to search for wisdom "as for hid treasure." If you had a good reason to believe that in your garden there had been hidden a priceless gem, you know the kind of digging and sifting each spadeful would get. There would be nothing casual about your searching. Is that the way we are reading our Bibles? It is not a question of how many verses you read each day, but how many you put into the sieve!

You may observe that the promoters of the various antichristian cults are reading the Bible. They look for some apparent support for their evil doctrines. There is not an evil system in the religious word today that has not some text of Scripture that appears to support it. If they think it important, why should not we? Are not your Bibles sometimes like a rusty looking sword hanging in the hall of a house? It is an heirloom from one of the family who long ago knew how effectually to use it when facing the foe. The present owner has it on show; but it is of little use, for he is unskillful in the use of such a weapon. How many of us are, as Hebrews 5:13, puts it, "unskillful in the word of righteousness." Don't treat the Bible as a kind of promise box, or a compendium of important precepts, or even as a book from which to get texts for preaching. This is to bemean the sacred volume.

It is one thing to search for information: it is quite another to search for food, and to desire it as a babe desires milk. Only don't be like spoon-fed children, who can get nothing unless it is broken up and put into their mouths. Become more and more anxious about your souls; not for their salvation, but for their edification and spiritual growth.

Then secondly, there is PRAYER. In this matter we should be like the Psalmist who said, "O Lord, ... I cry unto Thee daily" (86:3); and again, "Lord, I have called daily upon Thee, I have stretched out my hands unto Thee" (88:9). Heaven is the base of operations for us, and it is by this means that the line of communication, which the enemy would like to cut, is kept open. Two things that contributed to Peter's downfall, were his neglect of his Master's word, and his failure to pray.

Prayer is not only the expression of our need at any given moment. Some time ago there was a remarkable article in a newspaper by a naval officer. Looking back over his war experiences, he declared, "If I could begin again, I would pray more." That was good, yet prayer to him seemed only to be a resource when he was in tight corners and needed deliverances. Now that is not enough. Prayer is the great means by which we can commune with God.

Keep clear of the habit of merely saying prayers. Have definite, positive requests to present to God. Much that passes as prayer in public might be more correctly described as “oblique sermons.” They are made up of meditations, quotations, expositions and exhortations, and all these cannot for one moment take the place of supplications.

Above all, avoid the frequent and unnecessary repetition of the sacred Name in your prayers. So often this is in the nature of padding used to fill up the gaps caused by want of thought and desire. And don’t think that asking in the name of the Lord Jesus merely means the tacking of His precious Name on to the end of our requests. It means that we are really asking as those left to represent Him on earth, who are concerned with His interests.

Thirdly, there is THE DAILY CHEER which we may get as the fruit of Christian companionship. “Exhort one another daily” (Heb. 3:13). Even if we have to rebuke one another, let us do it in a way that will encourage and not depress. Encouragement is of God, just as discouragement is of the devil. We have only to read about the end of the ten spies, who discouraged the heart of Israel, to see what God thinks of the discourager.

Pessimism is no feature of Christianity, nor is the magnifying of difficulties and minimizing of the power and grace of God. There is plenty to discourage today, and it is the enemy’s business to supply it. Let us see to it that as far as possible we supply encouragement. Don’t think of yourself as being the person who is always to be encouraged — except that you may always encourage yourself in the Lord your God, as David did — it is the other person who is to be encouraged, and you are to do the encouraging. This we should do more and more, as we “see the day approaching” (Heb. 10:25).

Thus we may foster in each other any traits of Christ that we may see; and we shall see them if we look for them. We are in a cold heartless world, and all to easily we get under its frigid influence. Let us keep each other from taking cold by a steady flow of warm love and care.

Art. Cutting.

Christian Treasury: Volume 3, Obedience without Reasoning

“For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in. Christ." 2 Cor. 11:2, 3.

What does that mean? It means to obey without reasoning. Way back in the garden of Eden, that the Apostle refers to here, when Eve was tempted, the serpent got her to reasoning instead of obeying. She looked at that tree, and it looked pleasant to the eye. That was perfectly true. It was good for food, and that was perfectly true. It was a tree to be desired to make one wise; that had its truth in it, too. But what did the serpent hide from Eve? That the act would be disobedience, and the fruit would be death. In other words, Eve began to reason instead of obeying.

Remember always, beloved Christian, that the Word of God is given to us for the obedience of faith. That is said twice in the epistle to the Romans—in the first chapter, and in the last chapter. It is given to us for the obedience of faith. H.E. Hayhoe

Young Christian: Volume 16, 1926, As the Serpent Beguiled Eve

“For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”

In order to see the subtlety and craft which the serpent used in beguiling Eve, turn to the third chapter of Genesis, and note that young Christians are exposed to the same satanic craft today, his skill being greater now, if any difference, by reason of six thousand years of too successful experience with human nature, during which he has become well acquainted with its weak points.

In that chapter the serpent first attacks (and later denies) the authenticity of God’s Word by subtly insinuating a doubt into Eve’s too open mind, as to whether God has really said what He is alleged to have spoken: “Yea, hath God said?” And today some men of learning (really Satan’s ministers), although transformed as “ministers of righteousness,” (2 Cor. 11:13-15), are seeking to instill into the minds of the young and others, the same subtle doubt as to whether certain parts of the Bible can any longer, in view of various conclusions of “modern science,” be accepted unreservedly as the inspired Word of God. Behind all this propaganda, the blood-bought child of God sees the wicked animosity of the enemy of Christ and of our souls, “that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world” (Rev. 12:9). And faith replies to such attacks: “Let God be true, and every man a liar; as it is written, That Thou mightest be justified in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome when Thou art judged.”

But Paul tells us that the danger he fears for us is that our minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. As he says elsewhere, “I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.” The method which the serpent used so successfully with Eve—presenting “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,” as something desirable—he would find much less successful than is too often the case with us, if there were in us less of the desire to be conformed to this world (in fashions, headdress, or otherwise); less of ambition for a high place in that which is soon to pass away, and more of the simplicity which is in Christ; more contentment with the low place and with such things as we have, and more confident trust in God our Father, who will not withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly.

But Paul’s godly jealousy over us has a godly motive. It is the desire that he may present us “as a chaste virgin to Christ.” And surely the thought of the worthiness of that One Who “loved the church, and gave Himself for it”—Who speaks of her as “My dove, My undefiled,”

showing how He values her keeping herself even here in this defiling scene, separate from all that of which He disapproves; and Who is soon—very soon—going to present her to Himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; ought to keep us from the corruption which is so contrary to His mind.

Girdle of Truth: Volume 8, Meekness and Gentleness of Christ, The

There is a voice of very deep instruction in that appeal of the apostle to the Corinthians, " I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ." (2 Cor. 10:1.)

It is so unusual a thing in this world for power to be possessed without making itself felt, or authority without its ostentatious display, that the apostle is obliged, as it were, to excuse himself for the lack of assumption and magisterial bearing in his intercourse with the Corinthians, by appealing to these prominent characteristics of his divine Master, "the meekness and gentleness of Christ."

He does not abandon his claim to authority as the apostle of Christ, nor disclaim the possession of a power which, in a sense against his will, he might, after all, be obliged to use; but he simply brings before them the characteristics of His course, who at any rate they must acknowledge as having the absolute power and authority of " Master and Lord."

The whole chapter runs on this thought, and receives its color and complexion from it. His presence might be base among them; but he did not walk in the flesh, nor war after the flesh. " The weapons of his warfare were not carnal, but mighty through God." His object was not self-exaltation, but to " bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." His bodily presence might be weak and his speech contemptible;. but if he were to boast somewhat more of the authority the Lord had given him he would not be ashamed. He remembered, if they did not, that this authority was given him for "edification and not for their destruction." And in this he intimates that they would have respected his authority more, if the grace that marked its exercise had been less. He had said in a previous epistle " What will ye? shall 1 come unto you with a rod, or in love and in the spirit of meekness?" Putting it thus to their option whether his presence should be marked by gentleness or severity; for this would depend on their condition. Here, however, he but refers to " the meekness and gentleness of Christ," and leaves them to make their own application of his appeal. It could hardly fail to recall to their thoughts the memorable words of our Lord, " Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." At any rate it cannot fail to recall them to ours, and, if so, it takes us away from the exercise of apostolic or any other ministry merely, to think how far we are individually, and in our own walk as Christians, cultivating " the meekness and gentleness of Christ."

It is never right, Scripture does not do it, to separate doctrine from practice. The revelation of Christ claims to have as much to do with the formation of our characters and the regulation of our affections, as it has to do with the saving of our souls. In the apostolic epistles ordinarily, the truth that characterizes the believer's position in grace and relationship with the Lord is first given, and then the suited conduct and spirit are enforced. For, I may observe, that Scripture is never occupied with teaching the world morality. How could it be 7 How train to obedience the very spirit of rebellion? How give precepts and injunctions to a hostile will? If men are inconsistent, Scripture, at least, is always consistent with itself, and it is one witness of the divinity of its revelation. It does not, in one place, teach that " the carnal mind is enmity against God; that it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," and in another begin to enforce on it principles of obedience, as if, after all, there were some good in it, on which the truth might work. No; it tells the world of its ruin and coming doom, and beseeches it to be reconciled to God, through the redemption wrought by Christ. But it tells the believer of all the motives to holiness and love which are wrapped up in that infinitude of grace by which he has been brought out of darkness into God's marvelous light. It does not call us, however, to listen to the Spirit of God for truth, and refer us to our own spirits for its application; or leave it as a matter of indifference. All is divinely given, and given completely. And much it behooves us in a day like this to hold fast that testimony, that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." The Christian who in faith admits the comprehensiveness of this claim, will find in it a citadel of strength, which the enemy can never command; and a light that will never flicker nor fail in the darkest parts of his road.

It is in the nature of things that any divine movement of truth and grace in this world should gradually lose its force when its first freshness in the minds of men begins to decay; and individual souls can only be kept in their first energy as they are near enough to the Lord to receive from Him the constant communications of His grace. It is only Christ who never changes; and it is only His grace, and that constantly received, that is sufficient for us.

In the earlier days of the Reformation the recovery of the truth of doctrine was the grand concern of the reformers; and in its recovery the liberty and energy of souls were great. In the later periods of this movement, apart from its political character, its leaders had enough to do in repressing error and in the enforcement of godliness of walk. Not that those who held to the corrupt system of popish doctrine were holy in practice, but the reverse; for it was the debasement of morals in what was called the church that mainly brought on the Reformation. There may be, it is true, a careless, easy-going religious life in connection with professed purity of doctrine, but there cannot be real holiness of life apart from that truth which gives Christ to the soul in all the efficacy of His work, by which we are placed in association with God, and are brought to " walk in the light even as he is in the light."

Recovered doctrine has gone widely forth in our day. " The heavenly calling of believers," " resurrection life," "the presence of the Holy Spirit," " the hope of the Lord's coming," " peace through his blood," "perfect acceptance," are familiar in our mouths as household words. Whether our souls have grasped the wide import of these phrases, it is to be feared, in many cases, admits of serious question.

But there is another part of truth that must be regarded, if, morally, everything is not to go to decay. That Scripture has never yet been reversed, that, " we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Nor this, " if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and let him follow me." Christ must be followed as well as be believed in. There is a certain truth in Penn's motto, " No cross no crown."

There may be a legal, Thomas-A-Kempis kind of imitation of Christ, or there may be a free, joyous, Pauline following of Him; but Christ must be followed- Nay, the exhortation comes to us in a most wonderful and startling form, if its force had not been so dulled by use, " Be ye

therefore followers [imitators] of GOD, as dear children; and walk in love as Christ also hath loved us." But lofty as this exhortation is, and strange to us from its loftiness, we have been presented with an embodiment of it in human form, The lowliest of men-yet " God manifest in the flesh" -has presented us with its embodiment. He has done more. He has taught us how to reach it also. The rule is given in that deepest, simplest form of words, " Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Misery is the inevitable result of a Christian's following his own will; but what rest is there and calm satisfaction, in the feeblest effort to "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God 1'

But there is a careless holding of doctrine-learning but not attaining. It is the consequence of dealing by the natural understanding with truths that can only be spiritually discerned, or discerned by the Spirit. Christians are in danger of this as well as others. But truth so received is never practical. It is like the seed in the " stony ground:" it brings no fruit to perfection. I see all around me the signs (perhaps exhibit them in myself) that the truth, which is deemed distinctive, has been allowed to slip away; or has never been really grasped. There is a reciprocal action and reaction between truth received and the spirit in which it is held. Heavenly truth, if it acts at all, acts in the way of producing heavenly character. Man is molded (it is a universal principle) by the objects, not perhaps that he professes, but that really occupy his thoughts and heart. It is not different in heavenly things. A heavenly walk opens for the soul a clearer perception of heavenly truth and gives it a firmer grasp. But heavenly truth cannot long be even professed in connection with an earthly walk, except where all is hollowness. The profession is reduced, sooner or later, to the scale of practice, where the practice is not raised to some measure of agreement with the truth.

To possess and to exhibit the " meekness and gentleness of Christ," belongs to the very profession of Christianity, and belongs to it at all times. It will display itself differently under different circumstances, but it belongs to Christians in all circumstances, and belongs alike to all. Let us listen to the heavenly oracle, " Even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him who judgeth righteously." What we want is to have the blessed Son of God more the center and substance of our creed. To believe IN Him, as we see in the case of the apostle, is the living power of practical Christianity. " That I may know him," is his word, " and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death." What we all want is, to have the Lord Jesus more livingly in our thoughts and in our hearts. It is not to write an essay on meekness and gentleness that is needed, but to have the great example of meekness and gentleness more habitually in our view. If our hearts were but stirred up to say, this is to be my work, this my study, to be " meek and lowly in heart," to be like Christ, what might not be hoped? To seek in all honesty of purpose to have Christ's character brightly before our souls, and then as honestly, in spite of manifold failure, to seek to imitate it-. this is the way to " walk and please God." To make the attempt, with this definiteness of aim, would not long be without its manifest result; at least, it would not be without result to our own souls, though not of a kind, it may be, to increase our self-esteem. At least, it would bring the Lord Jesus more habitually nearer to us, even if that nearness discovered to us other failures besides the want of meekness. There is nothing more profitable to the soul than to find itself alone with the Lord Jesus, in conflict, it may be, with some conscious human besetment or in seeking the acquisition of some divine disposition. Nothing more effectually teaches us the force of those words, " not as though I had already attained."

It is when one thinks of who He is, and what He has done, that the heart is bowed in His presence, and asks, Can it ever be? Can it ever be that I have this place in His heart? that He has ventured thus far for me, and that I am no more constrained by His love? No more like Him in spirit, walk, and ways? If He, who was thus immeasurably great, instead of being proud and contemptuous, and awing men to a distance from Him, carried Himself in the presence of His own creatures, in all imaginable meekness, can there be room for pride in me? No; none ever was proud in God's presence. None ever was other than " meek and lowly in heart," for the time at least, when near enough to Christ to know Him in His real character. But, then, what a secret does this betray!

When I think of what Christ is in Himself, and not only of what He has done for me, though in the heart that is thus brought to God the two cannot be separated, I worship and adore. I am filled with admiration and delight, and I want never to look on any other object, as having moral beauty in it or attractive worth. But when I look at what I am toward Christ, not in outward act so much as in inward feeling and intrinsic estimation of Him, and consequently my little power to imitate Him, I hate myself. I do not speak of returns. What returns can I make for love like His?

"Love so amazing, so divine,Demands my soul, my life, my all."

But I speak of estimation of Him, and of the constraining power of that estimation on my mind, my temper, my habitual carriage, my estimation of everything around me, of the world, men, Christians, the things of the world, time, life, death, eternity.

Whatever the Lord Jesus was-and how wonderful is it to think of what He was! this we find was His distinguishing characteristic as a man amongst men, He was " meek and lowly in heart." And amidst the drifting current of this world's usages and its sanctioned moralities, how necessary is it for the heart to be constantly schooled in this one principle, " all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but it is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Meekness and gentleness are not the dispositions which the world has taken under its patronage any more than the path to greatness in it is to become servant of all. Whatever is of God morally must needs he contrary to the world. This is plainly a judged question to a Christian, whatever it may be to the advocates of human perfectibility, " If the world hate you," says our Lord, " ye know that it hated me before it hated you." And, more than this; He says, " they have both seen and hated both me and my Father." That ever the world should have hated Christ! But it is different now," say some, " and His mission is beginning to be rightly understood." Let us not be deceived. It is not the Christ of revelation that men are professing to honor. It is a mere simulacrum, a phantom Christ, such as superstition and the priest are pleased to give to men, or such as each man embodies forth for himself.

If I am ever to cultivate the meekness and gentleness of Christ, or to reduce to practice His injunction, " Take my yoke upon you and learn of me," I must understand the substratum of truth on which this injunction rests. This is emphatically given in our Lord's words, by which this injunction is introduced. {Matt. 11:27.) He says, " all things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Here we have, then, the divine Son of God revealed in the world, and, though unknown in the unfathomable mystery of

His Person, except by the Father, still the revealer of the Father-the revealer of God. For man's misery is that, otherwise, he knows not God. In another scripture He says, "all things that the Father hath are mine," speaking of the depth and claim of His eternal Godhead. Here, as the humbled man, He says, "all things are delivered to me of my Father," speaking as the head of divine communication to the laboring and heavy laden whom He invites to Himself that He may give them rest. But, then, as the Son He speaks of the mystery of the Father's Person, known only by the revelation of the Son; unknown and unknowable except by that revelation. Here we come to the exigency of man's condition and to the essence of what the gospel effects. It is the revelation to the soul, by One competent to the work, of GOD, in His character of infinite grace. And it is this revelation of the Father to the heart by the Son that gives it rest; however otherwise laboring and heavy laden. But, then, in the knowledge of this, and in the power of

a divine life so imparted, the believer is set forward on his path heavenward through the world, bearing Christ's yoke and learning of Him. For all truth of doctrine and precept is based upon what He is, and our practical failures and lowness of walk arise from the imperfect revelation of the Father which we have received of the Son. Nor should it be omitted to notice here who they are to whom this revelation is made. " At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Matt. 11:25,26.)

It is just as impossible for the sun to shine without giving light and heat, as it is to have the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shining in our hearts without producing in us some measure of conformity to His blessed image. And here, let me say, it was not truth, but Christ, that the apostle's heart was occupied with when he said, " One thing I do: forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press toward the mark." Neither is it truth of doctrine nor truth of interpretation, valuable as these may be in their place, but Christ, in His living person and grace, that is set before us in this same Epistle, (Phil. 2:5-10,) when he says, " Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," &c. It is true that a written Christ is given to us in the Scriptures, but it is that a living Christ may thus, by the Holy Spirit, be revealed to our hearts. I am not speaking now of that revelation of Christ to the soul, which is the basis of salvation, and through which we are born of God. But I am speaking of Christ as the object of our affections, and of the heart's engagement with Him as the end and aim of all our purposes and hopes while passing through this world to where He is.

All truth with all its various applications, what is it given for but to make God and Christ known to the soul? The occupation of the apostles was to make Christ known, and through Him, God, in a world that had lost this knowledge, and, I may add, has lost it. The aim of the Apostle Paul in "warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom" was, that he might "present every man perfect in Christ." And as to his own personal aim, apostle as he was, it is summed up in this, " that I may know him," &e.

But if we trace for ourselves the Lord's course through this world in the various scenes in which He is presented, what is it that strikes the heart? What is it that makes us feel the immeasurable distance there is between Him and every other character that we ever did, or ever can contemplate? Is it not His lowly meekness-His gentleness, His unutterable humbleness of carriage, in contrast with all that was around Him, and in contrast with all that we know of our own spirits and of the world? Think of Him in the presence of His enemies and their provocations! Think of Him in connection with His dull and inapprehensive disciples-how He meets their difficulties, bears with their ignorance, corrects their prejudices I How does every scene in which He is viewed add some fresh illustration of the truth of His words, " I am meek and lowly in heart," until the impression of the whole becomes overwhelming, and in one sense oppressive to the soul!

I have lately studied the gospels, as every one may study them, not for critical ends, nor with any outward helps, nor even with a view to see what Christ has done for me (this I know), but simply to see what Christ was like, and how He carried Himself as a man in this world, and passing through similar scenes to those with which I am connected from day to day. I do not state the result. Let my reader so study them, and he will be at no loss to guess the issue! This, however, I may be allowed to say, that I had not before seen the depth of the apostle's appeal, " Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ."

Meekness is most seen in bearing with what we meet with that is in any way contrary to us. Gentleness has the field of its exercise in active dealing with others. And it may be well, before I close, to notice how extensively this spirit is directly inculcated in the New Testament.

In the first place the Apostle Peter teaches us that the characteristic calling of a Christian, as to this world, is to do well and suffer for it, and take it patiently. (See 1 Peter 2:20-23.) And in suffering for righteousness, on which our Lord has pronounced His blessing, the same apostle says, " Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (1 Peter 3:15.) And when speaking of what kind of dress is becoming in the light of God for christian women, he says, " Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." (1 Peter 3:3,4.) Our Lord in giving the characteristics of those who would have part with Him in His kingdom, says, " Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." The Apostle James in presenting to us the spirit in which the Divine word should be received says, " Lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls." (James 1:21.). And again, " God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." (James 4:5.) And if we turn to the epistles of Paul, we find him in the Ephesians speaking thus in relation to the walk that is worthy of the Christian's calling: " I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love." (Eph. 4:1,2.) In Colossians he says, " Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." (iii. 12, 13.) In Galatians he says, " But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." (v. 22, '23.) In the same epistle he teaches us in what spirit brotherly discipline, if it is to be effectual, must be administered. " Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." (Gal. 6:1.) In his epistle to Timothy he says, " But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." (1 Tim, vi. 11.) And in the second epistle, where especially he is concerned that Timothy should act rightly in the midst of opposition and evil and the corruption of the truth, he says, " But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." (2 Tim. 2:23,24,25.) In Titus, speaking of what is the duty of Christians in their carriage towards the authorities of the world, he says, " Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness." (Titus 3:1,2.) And when speaking of servants he says, in the same epistle, " Exhort

servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again, not purloining, but showing all good fidelity: that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things." (Titus 2:9,10.) There is not a relationship in life, nor a condition in which we can be placed in which this spirit is not demanded of us. But, finally, let us listen especially to the exhortation, " Likewise ye younger submit yourselves unto the elder, yea all of you be subject one to the other, and be clothed with humility." (1 Peter 5:5.) Other things may be of occasional requisition in a Christian, but " humility" constitutes his daily attire, the livery of his heavenly Master and Lord. And it is added, (as already quoted in James,) " For God resisteth the proud, [sets Himself in battle array against them,] and giveth grace to the humble."

I again warn that this is not the spirit of the world; nor is it the spirit that will make its way in the world; nor will it be cultivated by the Christian that has the least respect for the esteem of the world. Put aside the presence of God and His approval, and the study is hopeless. Consult nature and it is in vain. Forget the one perfect model, and the task may be given up. But I seek in Christians, surely, for the morality of the cross as well as the salvation of the cross. I do not believe,

whatever others may do, in grace without responsibility. The grand witness for Christ, that is so lacking amongst Christians, is the spirit of Christ.

I close however with this question to myself, which I am sure every one of my readers that is in earnest will adopt: How much is " this meekness and gentleness of Christ" displayed in me? And bow much is it a matter of daily study, in the presence of my meek and gentle Lord and Master, in order to attain it? What is the verdict of my own conscience? What the conviction on the minds of those who know me best? Wife, children, servants, brethren, the world?

Christian Treasury: Volume 4, Weapons of Our Warfare, The

“The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." 2 Cor. 10:4.

David refused Saul's armor when he went to fight Goliath. In spiritual warfare, the believer must refuse what the first man (of which Saul is a type) provides, regardless of how attractive it appears,

Goliath had normal weapons of war: sword, spear, and shield. David had a staff, five smooth stones, a scrip, and a sling, A mismatch according to human thoughts, "because the foolishness of God is wiser than men: and the weakness of God is stronger than men." 1 Cor. 1:25.

A staff suggests dependence—something to lean upon. This drew Goliath's contempt and he said. "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?" 1 Sam. 17:43. Dependence upon God as expressed in prayer seems as foolishness to man in the flesh.

Five smooth stones perhaps represent the Word of God fitted to an individual through meditation. David gathered the stones from a brook or valley, a low place. The Word of God can only be made good to us for our use as we take it up in lowliness. The stones were smooth, not rough, and our spirits need to be tempered with fleshly impulses judged. Stones, however, are not soft and pliable. Firmness and unyieldingness to the revealed mind of God is imperative. Five denotes human weakness; when owned by the Christian, His strength can be made perfect. (2 Cor. 12:9.)

The scrip was a place to store valuables and this was where David carried his stones. Have we hidden the Word of God in our hearts? Is it an inestimable treasure to us?

The sling was used to make the stone serve its purpose. The Spirit of God is the only power available for using the Word of God effectually. How ineffective David would have been if he had thrown the stone with an arm of flesh.

Goliath, a Philistine, was smitten in the forehead. The Philistines were enemies within the land of Canaan and answer to the flesh intruding into the things of God (Col. 2:18.) Goliath's forehead would indicate the fleshly mind puffed up in pride. Upon his victory, David took Goliath's armor and put it in his tent as a reminder of how the battle was won. Our faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. (1 Cor. 2:5.) How insignificant were David's resources to the natural eye, yet what blessing resulted for Israel that day. May we too, by grace, reject human reasonings and opinions, but cling to the wisdom of God. Then we will find that the Lord still delights "to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." 2 Chron. 16:9. W. Brockmeier

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“To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you.” (2 Cor. 10:16).

These words, while they set forth the large-heartedness of the self-denying and devoted apostle, do also furnish a fine model for the evangelist in every age.

The gospel is a traveler; and the preacher of the gospel must be a traveler likewise. The divinely-qualified and divinely-sent evangelist will fix his eye upon “the world.” He will embrace in his benevolent design, the human family. From house to house; from street to street; from city to city; from province to province; from kingdom to kingdom; from continent to continent; from pole to pole. Such is the range of “the good news,” and the publisher thereof.

“The regions beyond” must ever be the grand gospel motto. No sooner has the gospel lamp cast its cheering beams over a district, than the bearer of that lamp must think of the regions beyond. Thus the work goes on. Thus the mighty tide of grace rolls, in enlightening and saving power, over a dark world which lies in “the region of the shadow of death.”

Christian reader, are you thinking of “the regions beyond you”? This expression may, in your case, mean the next house, the next street, the next village, the next city, the next kingdom, or the next continent. The application is for your own heart to ponder; but say, are you thinking of “the regions beyond you”?

I do not want you to abandon your present post at all; or, at least, not until you are fully persuaded that your work, at that post, is done. But remember, the gospel plow should never stand still. “Onward” is the motto of every true evangelist.

Let the shepherds abide by the flocks; but let the evangelists betake themselves hither and thither, to gather the sheep. Let them sound the gospel trump, far and wide, over the dark mountains of this world, to gather together the elect of God. This is the design of the gospel. This should be the object of the evangelist, as he sighs after “the regions beyond.”1

When Caesar beheld, from the coast of Gaul, the white cliffs of Britain, he earnestly longed to carry his arms thither. The evangelist, on the other hand, whose heart beats in unison with the heart of Jesus, as he casts his eye over the map of the world, longs to carry the gospel of peace into regions which have heretofore been wrapped in midnight gloom, covered with the dark mantle of superstition, or blasted beneath the withering influences of “a form of godliness without the power.”

It would, I believe, be a profitable question for many of us to put to ourselves, how far we are discharging our holy responsibilities to “the regions beyond.” I believe the Christian who is not cultivating and manifesting an evangelistic spirit, is in a deplorable condition. |il| believe, too, that the assembly which is not cultivating and manifesting an evangelistic spirit is in a dead state.

One of the truest marks of spiritual growth and prosperity, whether in an individual, or in an assembly, is earnest anxiety after the conversion of souls. This anxiety will swell the bosom with most generous emotions; yea, it will break forth, in copious streams of benevolent exertion, ever flowing toward “the regions beyond.”

It is hard to believe that “the word of Christ” is “dwelling richly” in any one who is not making some effort to impart that word to his fellow sinners. It matters not what may be the amount of the effort; it may be to drop a few words in the ear of a friend, to give a tract, to pen a note, to breathe a prayer. But one thing is certain, namely, that a healthy vigorous Christian will be an evangelistic Christian—a teller of good news—one whose sympathies, desires, and energies, are ever going forth toward “the regions beyond.” “I must preach the gospel to other cities also, for therefore am I sent.” Such was the language of the divine Evangelist.

If the reader should be one whom God has called and fitted to be an evangelist, let him remember the world is his sphere— “the regions beyond;” his motto—to gather out God’s elect; his object—the leading of the Spirit, his line of direction—which all must adopt, if they would prove fruitful in the gospel field.

Finally, whether the reader be an evangelist or not, I would earnestly entreat him to examine how far he is seeking to further the gospel of Christ. We really must not stand idle. Time is short! Eternity is rapidly posting on! The Master is most worthy! Souls are most precious! The season for work will soon close! Let us, then, in the name of the Lord, be up and doing. And when we have done what we can, in the regions around, let us carry the precious gospel into “THE REGIONS BEYOND.”

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