

2 Corinthians 3:1 (Clarence E. Lunden) 216420

Conference: 1980, Thoughts on Glory (3:1)

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In return to the. 2nd Epistle. Of Corinthians. The third chapter. 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, 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. But the Spirit giveth life. But if the ministration 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 administration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth administration of righteousness. Exceed in glory. Raven, that which was made glorious, had no glory in this respect by reason of the glory that excellet. 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 Vale has done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall return, 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'm going to read that 18th verse again a little different way, but we all with unveiled faith. Beholding the glory of the Lord. Are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit. Of the Lord. We'd like to speak a little this afternoon of the subject of glory. Now in the first prayer meeting. Our brother Tom read this verse, this last verse I believe. That we have just read. And it has had its effect upon me all during these meetings. It was nicely connected with our chapter that we had in the readings. And so we're going to speak a little this afternoon. Of glory. We will probably digress to other things for the moment, but. That's what the subject will be. You know there are two glories mentioned in Isaiah, one in the 60th chapter. And that's the glory of God's grace when he's going to bring Israel back into all their blessings. Then there's another glory spoken of in the 63rd and the 66th chapter of Isaiah and the last chapter of Habakkuk. It's the glory, but it's connected with his judgment. Oh, how solemn that glory is. It's still glory.

But then, you know, not only do we have the glory expressed in that way. But we have a glory connected with the work of Christ. When he brought glory to the Father. In the 12th of John. Glory is mentioned also in connection with the cross, in which the Lord Jesus brings glory to Himself. And in the. 9th chapter of Luke 3 glories are spoken of connected with Jesus as a man. And he speaks there of those who would confess his name. Trust. Everyone in this room has confessed the name of Jesus as their own savior. And if so, they will be associated with him. As the man, the man Christ Jesus in his own glory. Oh, how wonderful that will be. Now the Lord Jesus has the glory, of course. That we will not be associated with directly. And that's his own personal glory in the Godhead. But we're speaking of that glory of the Lord Jesus as a man and all the glories that attach to his person. So that he speaks in that way that those who have confessed his name in that day. Will be associated with Him in His glory. But then there's the glory that the Father has put upon him as a man. Because He has glorified the Father. He's going to associate us with himself, Amiss. Then there's a glory speaks of that puts him as a man. With the Church above the angels because. Man was of a lower order than the angels. But because of the work of Jesus, he is raised. All of his people with him above angels. Oh, how marvelous, these glories. Now I'm going to turn to Isaiah, to Exodus. Exodus, the 24th chapter. We'll just read a couple of verses because of time. Verse nine of Exodus 24. Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and a Bayou, and 70 of the elders of Israel. And they saw the God of Israel, and there was under his feet, as it were, a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel He laid not his hand. Also, they saw God and did eat. And drink. Now we have here. Sort of a conference between or among. Men and angels. Strange, isn't it? The angels aren't mentioned here, but if you'll read in Psalm 68 we won't turn to it, you'll find that the angels attended the giving of the law. Stephen tells us in the 7th chapter of Acts that the law was given by disposition of angels. That's all. Here we have. The law given. And can you picture a pavilion of sapphire stones? Think of the glory attending, the giving of the law, the dignity attached to it. God. Angels, Myriads of angels were told in Psalm 68.

As well as Deuteronomy. Giving of the Law. And there was glory attending it. All the leaders of Israel. Were there 70 of the chosen leaders? As well as Moses and so on. And they ate and drank. Oh, what a picture the giving of the law. And the glory that attended it. But now turn with me to the. 33rd chapter. But before we read this in the 33rd chapter, I'm not going to read what I would like to read. But because of time, we can't read all of these passages. But you know very well what happened at the giving of the law. As Moses came down from the mountain with those tables of stone. He heard strange sounds. But were they? The children of Israel had turned to idolatry. What does he do? He breaks those tables of stone. They were never given to Israel. Never. Now what's the path? Because there is a path, but what is it? Can't be the law. The tables are broken. So in this 33rd chapter. It says the 13th verse. 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, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. Verse 18. And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. That glory. Hadn't he shown them the glory before? Ah, but this is a different glory. As you see, we're leading up to our chapter. The Corinthians. 19 first and he said I will make all my love. Is that what he says no. Oh, what a God we have. I will make all my goodness. My goodness. To pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord. Before thee. Why the name of the Lord? Because the Lord the name of the Lord. Covers every blessing. I have set him to be blessing Psalm 21 in the margin. That name, that precious name of the Lord covers everything, and that's what he's going to proclaim. And will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and will show mercy. On whom I will show mercy. Verse 21. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shall stand upon a rock, and it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a

Cliff to the rock, and 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.

Has God changed his glory? No. He hasn't changed his glory. But he's made a way whereby his banish be not expelled from his sight. There is a place beside me. Oh dear. One this afternoon. Have you found that place beside Jesus? If you haven't, I'm sorry for you. And that place is connected with the cleft and the rock. The Pearson side of our blessed Savior. Have you found that place on the rock? Have you? And there he hides. Noises. Clapped to the rock. You know that little song that sometimes sung about? The being hidden. In the cleft of the rock. Shad of a great rock and a dry and thirsty land. Beautiful little song, that's where we're hidden. Love it. Is this too deep a doctrine this afternoon for us? To be hidden in the cleft of the rock. And I'll cover thee with my hand. Complete protection from now on. The glory hasn't changed, not one bit. But you see, it isn't any longer the glory that was connected with judgment upon all those who disobeyed the law. Moses found grace in his sight. And you know, there's something that God loves, and that's to show grace. He loves to show grace. To come to pass, while my glory passeth by. That I will put thee in the Cliff to the rock, and will cover thee with my hand. While I pass by. Oh how beautiful this is. How precious to our souls. They now turn across the page. Chapter 34. Moses goes back up to the mountain again to renew those tables. Not now to give them to the people. About this very same table. That is the same communication and what's going to be done with them now? They're going to be put in the ark. That's Jesus. He's the only one that is able for those commandments. You're not. That are not. Try No, he's the only one. Oh, how precious to know that Jesus is able to meet that which is required of you and me. As men, he can meet it, and he has met it. And the evidence of it is that he's got at God's right hand this very moment. The 34th verse. 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 was that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of his face shone. And Moses put the veil upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him. Now this connects with our chapter in Corinthians, in Corinthians that we read. The glory. That attaches to the presence. Of God himself. Now there is a man who has gone into the glory, and as God he always lived there.

But he's gone in there as man for us, so that you and I too. May be able to enter that glory. And that, I believe, is what is meant when it says that he went to prepare a place for us. There was number place for man there before, until Jesus went there and he's gone to prepare a place for us. Now turn with me back to Corinthians 32. Corinthians 3. But before we read and comment on a few of these verses. I'd like to call your attention. To something that's gone before. Now we have in Second Corinthians heavenly ministry. That is not only ministry in the sense of written ministry. But ministry that is seen in the life of the apostle. And, you know, as we go along in our Christian life and we get older, we discover that there are many things that we face that are very delicate. In connection with decisions. Because of their character. And we have much instruction in Corinthians, in First Corinthians. There was both moral evil and doctrinal evil. And the Spirit of God has written this for us to correct it, but not only that, so that each individual believer who is a part of the body of Christ will know how to act themselves in connection with it. You say, what does that have to do with the glory? Well, it has everything to do with it. The believer has been put in a position where you and I are seated in the heavenly places. Is that not the glory? And we've been sent down here to witness for Christ. What kind of a witness is it? Is that the character that was displayed by the Lord Jesus? Is it the character that we've just read about in the Old Testament? Now I know the Old Testament never rises to the truths that we have in the New, but they do give us clues of things that we may not readily notice in the New Testament, although they're there. And now read with me the last the 10th verse of the second chapter of Second Corinthians. To whom ye forgive anything I forgive also. For if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it for your sakes, forgave I it in the person of Christ, lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices. What are Satan's devices? Well, the Book of Galatians was written to correct for the Saints some of Satan's devices that were coming in. Be sure of this, beloved. When you and I are not walking in communion, we will resort. To organization. Will resort to making laws. For ourselves, for our brethren. Does this is this in keeping with our position as believers in this world? Are we going to correct things by going back to the ordinances? That we are supposed to have left. No, really, you're going to correct things by communion and prayer. That's the only way. Lest Satan should get advantage of us, O beloved. In our little assemblies, don't let Satan come in and spoil what's there.

Turn with me to Revelation, the third chapter. I'm going to speak a little more of the glory yet, but I want to call attention to this. First, very briefly. It isn't only that God has placed us in this favorable position of grace. But there is a side of the truth in which. God speaks to our conscience. I'm going to read the first part of this third chapter. How thou has perceived and heard. Hold fast and repent. If, therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief. And thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon me. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. He that overcometh the same shall be clothed in white raiment. And I will not blot out His name out of the Book of Life, but I will confess His name before my Father and before his angels. He that hath an ear. Let him hear what the Spirit set to the churches. Now the air is the conscience. And he's speaking to the churches. You can call this Protestantism if you like, but remember, all the last four churches go on to the end. And these verses we have read have a direct application to everyone in this room this afternoon. Who knows the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior? We have at the beginning of it, the character of the one who's speaking. He's the one who has. The seven spirits, the highest of the Church, has spoken of as one spirit. But in government 7 spirits. Every aspect. Is covered, but the Spirit of God. But the seven stars? Not to go into detail speaks of responsibility. Subordinate authority, but responsibility but in the assembly. But now what is it that he has to say? I know thy works. It's a wonderful thing to be able to say yes. The Lord has gathered us to His precious name. He's given us the whole volume of truth. How wonderful this is. But now what does it say? I know thy works. Am I going to take that to my own conscience this afternoon? What else does it say about works? The end of the second verse for I have not found. Thy works perfect. Before God. Is it a question of our works perfect before our brethren, or before God? The Sharks. What else? Oh, this is solemn. Sardis has a name. To live. Be careful, Be careful. Dear fellow Christian or professing Christian. Because he says notice carefully. A name to live. That thou livest in our death. There's no evidence. Shining forth of that glory that should attend the testimony. The believer down here. What else? Third verse. Remember therefore, how thou hast received. Oh, how much you and I have received, dear fellow Christian. How much we have received. Remember, therefore how thou hast received.

And. Heard and hold fast. And repent. Repent. Some people think repentance is only connected with confessing Christ as Savior. But there really isn't salvation without it. But you know, we can speak of it sort of as a state of soul, too. The attitude of judging oneself, it's gilgal continually in the presence of God. Now. It says here. Be watchful second verse. When you're watchful, you're looking around, aren't you? But if you're asleep, you can't be looking around. You feel yourself are asleep. You can't be watchful. Oh how important this is for my heart. I don't know about yours. And. What strengthen? The things that remain beloved. Is that not in keeping with the Gospel of the Glory? Did God say to Moses, you broke the law, you're going to be under the judgment of God? He says, Moses said. Show me thy grace. Thy grace. Now I

know there are certain things that have to be dealt with. But you and I should never hold a grudge. We should never carry that which any evil thought. Against our brethren. Be watchful and strengthen the things which are remained that are ready to die, not criticize them. No, strengthen them. Strengthen them. Now we turn back to our chapter. 2nd Corinthians. 3. In contrast to that which was written in the stones. Hard cold stones of the law. Notice this verse. The second verse of the third chapter of Two Corinthians. Ye are our epistle. Written in our hearts. Known in red of all men. Oh, what a contrast. The deal and I really appreciate what Christianity is. Have you and I really laid hold of the glory that excels? There's no question of the glory that attended the giving of the law. You know what a little sapphire stone would cost in a jewelry store? Then you can picture a whole pavilion of sapphire. Oh, the glory that attended the law. That was only physical characteristics. But now. Pistol written in our hearts. No, and read of all men. Who's he talking to? He's talking to some Saints that had made some very dreadful mistakes, wasn't he? Some of them had to be disciplined. Till he's talking to them in this way. Is that the way you and I address the people of God? Are we going to take and rollback the gold so we can see the knots and the boards of the Tabernacle? Is that our business? Floors met, much as you are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ. Oh, how lovely. This is the believer. This is you, dear believer. Oh, you say, well, I don't measure up to this. We're not talking about measuring up. We're talking about what you are in God's sight.

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. In other words, what we have here is for eternity. Not a law that can be disobeyed, but that which is found in the person of Jesus. Because everything you have is put in that safe place. You only have it in Christ. Man was tested. He couldn't hold it. God says, all right, I'll put it somewhere where it'll be held. Just like he put the law, the tables of stone in the ark. Everything you have is in Christ. You don't have anything else. You never will except Christ. Well, you said that will be wonderful to get to heaven and learn about more about Christ. Yes, it will be, but let's go on here. We'll see if that's the place only to learn about it. And then the apostle speaks of his ministry. Heavenly ministry here. And. Now the seventh verse. Notice the expression used. But if the administration of death, death. This beautiful exhibition of God, man and angels together. Sapphire stone pavilion. The giving of the law. Administration of death. Yes, administration of death. Why? Because you and I couldn't keep it. You couldn't keep it. Noises says Show me now thy way. Oh, how good to have God's way. Man's way would be. Yes, I can do this. All the Lord has spoken, we will do. That's man, and you can't do one better. And when he gets through, then he comes to the place through grace. Now show me, Lord, thy way. Die away. But the point for our consciences this afternoon is have you and I laid hold a little bit of this way for our own hearts? Are we still clinging to the law as to the application of our Christianity? But if the ministration of death, written and 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 ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more death, the administration of righteousness. Exceed in glory. For if that which was made glorious had no For even that which was made glorious had no glory. In this respect, by reason of the glory that excellet. Now this glory that we've been talking about. That was given by the law, given by the disposition of angels. Attended by God himself and the elders of Israel to be done away. It has no glory. It has no glory. Why doesn't it have any glory? Because there's a glory that has eclipsed it entirely. It's gone. It's gone. Well then why hang on to it? That's what Paul had to say to the Galatians Saints. Why all these ordinances? Why all these laws? Why all these traditions? They don't belong to this. Bet it all. The only, the only power in our lives as Christians is communion. Reading the word of God, prayer, that's the only power.

There's no other. You can make all the ordinances and laws you want, but you'll never gain anything. Seeing, then, that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech. 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. No, not that. Their minds were blinded, for until this day remained at the same veil. I'm taken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which veil is done away in Christ. Is done away in Christ. But even under this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon. Notice their heart. Their heart. Oh, that's where the trouble is with the heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, that is Israel. The veil should be taken away. Now the Lord is that spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Under the law. There was number liberty. Can you picture those? Who attended the Tabernacle? All the labor that attended the sacrifices and the setting up and taking down to the Tabernacle. All these things that accompanied the law and the ordinances that attended it. Think of the labor. That attended this it's a picture of man in the flesh. Religious flesh if you please. And when Lazarus came forth from the grave, the Lord says, loose him and let him go. Loose what? Religious flesh? That he was wrapped in. It's a picture of it I believe. Ah, what a difference when Jesus comes in. Here's the answer to it all. Everything is found in the person of Christ, for you and for me. And the exhibition of that glory down here. Is like what you have in the chapter and the part we didn't read. In the second chapter. The apostle Paul had been. At Troy's and he had an open door for the gospel, but he couldn't preach. Why? His spirit was overwhelmed because he hadn't heard from Titus. But he says never mind. Never mind about that. Now thanks be unto God, which always leads us in triumph. Always leads us in triumph. Oh, the liberty of the child of God. He's always LED in triumph. And what else? Going back to that second chapter in the 15th verse? For we are a sweet savour of Christ. Is that what it reads? No, no, no, no. It says, For we are unto God. Oh, how precious this truth is. A sweet savor. Of Christ and them that are saved. And then them that perish. Accompanying the flavor as he passes through this world, whether it's in the school room or the office or at home. There's a sweet savor that attends its passing through. It's the gospel of the grace of God. It's the gospel of the glory. And in the measure in which you and I are in communion, that's manifested here whether we know it or not. It's manifested. Now in this 18th verse. But certain Christians who are more spiritual than others? Is that the way this reads? Certain Christians that are more spiritual that have a certain place or standing, is that the way this reads beloved?

Couldn't read that way if there's liberty. It couldn't read that way if everything depended on Christ. If it depended on you, yes. Get it? Get it clear. We all be sure of that. With unveiled face. No veils now they're gone. Children of Israel couldn't look at Moses because the glory in his face. No, you and I have been brought to God. The right to God. And. It says. The odds unveiled, face beholding the glory of the Lord. Our change, never mind about your brother. This is you, me. Heart change. And if this verse controlled our lives? There wouldn't be so many problems. It's when Joseph's brethren had famine that they looked to one upon another. Who had famine in their own soul changed into the same image. Am I reading this right? The same image? Transformed into the same image. Glory. To glory how? A little better Christian than somebody else, is that it? Giving away some more, but more tracks, preaching more. No, nothing to do with it. The person of Christ before the soul. Now, in closing, I want you to turn to Ephesians. Now we have the glory again. Ephesians 3. And verse. 16. That he would grant you. That's the prayer of the Apostle, the second prayer in Ephesians. That he would grant you. According to the riches of his glory. Now we've come to the very riches, the very essence of itself. What was he going to grant? To be the strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man. All on the part of God. What for? That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, not an occasional visit. Dwell. We know that we have Christ in our hearts, but He's speaking now about the practical aspect today, that He may dwell in your hearts by faith. Practical application of it according to the energy of the Spirit within. Achieve being rooted and grounded in love. What is that? Rooted, grounded in love, I read a

little different in order that she may be fully able to apprehend with all things, what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ. Which passive knowledge that she might be filled with all. The fullness of God. That's the end of the road. That's our portion. We're actually going to be there. We're all. The fullness is in display. But now faith lays hold of it. Don't you see, beloved? Faith lays hold of it. It's the glory. Wherever Jesus is, there's the glory. When he was on earth, it was the moral glories of his person that were seen. But in heaven, everything will be seen and displayed. Glorious, glorious person. There never was a sweeter name. And there will be never a more beautiful sight, beloved.

And when they see.

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