

1 Corinthians

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Preacher: Barker, Charles (1913-1987)

- [0 : 00] The words which I trust the Lord will enable me to make a few remarks will be found in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 1, verse 29.
- Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 1, verse 29. That no flesh should glory in his presence.
- That no flesh should glory in his presence. I know not what I may be led to speak this evening, or for how long.
- For this I do know, that as we journeyed here today, the Lord dropped this word into our soul.
- And we were convinced that there was a purpose in it. It may well be, and we trust and believe that it is, that there may be one soul here tonight who is walking in a very strange, in a very peculiar pathway, a way in which they have never walked before.
- [1 : 43] And how lost people are called to walk in different pathways, all according to the divine wisdom, knowledge of God.
- And often in those pathways, they cannot see the wisdom, or understand the ways of God. But we feel this evening we must be a little bit personal with regard to our own experience.
- Because one thing we do know, is if you knew a little of the experience of the man before you tonight, although we're few in numbers, we're certain there would be far less.
- But, although we were not really conscious where this word could be found, how as we looked it up, we found that the very word that we were unable to go forth in the name of the Lord, is found in the previous verse, and base things of the world, and things which are despised of God chosen.
- Yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are. Well now, if it were not for such a portion as this, how could we go forth in the name of the Lord?
- [3 : 08] And so, we believe that during the past few weeks, we've been led into a pathway, and we believe perhaps someone here this evening has been led in a similar pathway, where we've never been before, where our very existence seemed to be so well described as imprisoned.
- although there was imminent danger before us, naturally speaking, one was unconscious, careless, unconcerned of the consequences, prayerless, worldly minded, how our mind, our foolish mind, was taken up with the foolishness of this world, how it seemed that in a moment we could have slipped into the world and enjoyed the pleasures of this world, with death before us, no thought, no reality, of the things of God upon our heart, how it became a great effort, how unprofitable to even take the word of God before us to read it, but, that no flesh should glory in his presence.
- This we can truly see, and we feel it from our very heart, the one before we tonight has nothing, nothing whatever to glory in, save in the cross of the Lord Jesus.

Now we are convinced of this, the Lord's people are brought to walk in at the strange and this mysterious pathway for a reason. There has to be with plants, that time of pruning, that time of nourishing, that time of feeding, and also with those heavenly plants, how they have to be cut down, how they have to be brought down, and how the Lord's people have to walk in these pathways which bring them down to nothing.

And so the Lord sees fit to call unto himself those weak things. For you see, you're calling, brethren, how that not many wise, he doesn't say not any, but not many, not many wise men are for the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.

[5 : 56] Now how the grace of God shines more brightly and brilliantly in the foolish things of this world. Those who perhaps have had no education, those who have been brought up in a humble home, and so foolish with regard to understanding even things with regard to earth, the things of earth.

But when the Holy Spirit takes them and teaches them how wise they become unto salvation, those things which they cannot, those things which are hid from the wise and prudent, how the Lord reveals them unto the foolish of this world.

How they become objects of his choice, called according to his electing love. And how they are taught those blessed doctrines which only the Lord's people are brought to know and to love.

Those doctrines which man hates. Now some of us, perhaps, we see the professor and we see that one, how the pride works within the heart of the professor.

How they take those beautiful inspired hymns that fit our case so well and so often. How they can sing them at the top of their voices.

[7 : 18] How they can stamp their feet in time. How they make a big show but they know nothing of the words upon their lips. How they love to stand and pray in front of others.

How they like to tell the Lord everything. But how seldom do they ask the Lord for anything. How they make a great show and how they do this, that and the other to encourage the young.

And how they tell you we must do this, we must do the other. How puny they make this God look. And we can see how this pride works within their hearts.

Well now, look at the Lord's people. Those of us who we trust and believe the Lord has done so much for. Where we can go back and we have those clear evidences of the grace of God within.

Where would you and I be if left to ourselves? If puny man with all his wisdom, with all his stinking pride, with a form of religion, without the reality of it, makes such a big show.

[8 : 27] Where would the Lord's people be who are in possession of it if left to themselves? Now we can see the purpose of these things. Because our flesh is such that the heart would uplift with God's own gifts and make in greatest manner.

And so it's necessary for us to be brought into these prison houses. It's necessary for us from time to time to be shown what we are if left to ourselves.

The depravity of our nature, the weakness of our flesh, the foolishness of our flesh, so that no flesh, not a little of it, not the weeniest, tiniest little bit of your flesh may glory in his presence.

No flesh. It's all got to come to nothing. All your pride. It is thus our pride and self must fall that Jesus may be all in all.

for God hath chose the foolish things of this world. Now, how foolish the Lord's people are to seek after the things of this world, to seek after a religion that's going to puff them up with pride.

[9 : 49] Now, don't you seek after it at times? You see one and they walk so upright, they're so good, they're able to do this, that and the other, and you can't because there's something within your heart which luts after the world and the things of the world.

And you see others, they seem to go, it seems so easy to them, their religion. But how it seems that the Lord has to come to us and to work in such a peculiar, such a strange way to show us the awful depravity of our heart and our nature is such that we're so foolish that even in the midst of these things we find ourselves prayerless, careless, unconcerned.

but will the Lord leave you there? Ah well, might the psalmist say bring my soul out of prison unless we're brought there you see, we don't know anything of what that prison house is like.

Prison is not the place that we may imagine it to be. Today, there's many comforts for prisoners in a literal sense. But those who are in the spiritual prisons, you see, they haven't been brought up to date.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. And when he shuts, none can open. When he opens, none can shut.

[11 : 25] Now you see, that prison door can be shut. You can put as many soldiers, as you like, around that prison. You can chain that prisoner. But, that is only the foolishness of man.

Man thinks that's the cure. Take the stone, put it to the mouth of the sepulchus, feel it. The wisdom of man. Ah, but the wisdom of God.

You see, that no flesh should glory in his presence. Oh, if only the flesh could say yes, well now, there he is, he's secure, he's in prison. He'll never come out again. That's what they thought with the Lord Jesus when they crucified him.

They thought, that's the end of that. We shall have nothing to do with him anymore. He won't worry us anymore, he's finished. Even his own dear people began to wonder.

They were so foolish. They couldn't see the power of God. They couldn't think that this God would ever again be delivered. And as they journeyed on the way, you see, they were full of carnal reason, they reasoned.

[12 : 29] They communed, but they reasoned. Why? So that no flesh should glory in his presence. Now, this is the point.

In his presence. Flesh will always glory if we are not in the presence of the Lord. It doesn't matter who you are, it doesn't matter how favorite you are, if you are not in the presence of the Lord, your flesh will glory.

And if you are a child of God, you will admit it. You will be only too pleased to admit it that your flesh is such you take the crown off his head if you could. All that pride that's self-conceit.

And when we are not in the felt presence of this God, in his presence we are happy. In his presence we are secure. In his presence all afflictions we can easily endure.

But what about out of his presence? That no flesh should glory in his presence. So the Lord withdraws. Oh, isn't it wonderful how the Lord opens up his word as you go along?

[13 : 38] The Lord withdraws and he leaves you to feel you're one on your own. You're brought to feel that you've got no religion. That your God has forsaken you.

That your God has cast you off. And so your flesh is brought down. And that God within whom you trusted that God whom you thought you'd seen was the redemption of Israel is now God.

And that death is just as real to you as it was to those on the Emmaus Road. He's God. That's in whom he in whom we trusted. We've seen it.

He's God. God there was a time when we were in his presence. And that was a wonderful time when we were in his presence he spoke to us. He talked to us by the way and we felt a love to him.

And what's more we believed him. But now we can't believe. Unbelief is in our heart. We cannot remember his words. We've forgotten all those things that he told us.

[14 : 45] We're brought down. that no flesh should glory in his presence. And so the Lord he strips us of self he brings us into a nothingness and here we are we feel to be the basis of things upon this earth.

He reveals to us the wretchedness of our hearts. The foolish chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. God hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things which are mighty.

What you see you can't pray. Oh there are those who can pray. They are mighty warriors. They can fight the devil. The devil is no trouble to them. They are mighty.

They are mighty in word and deed. But you are too weak. You can't even pray before the Lord. You can't hang on to a blessing or a promise in the word.

You can't hang on to faith. You can't hold faith. You are so weak. They say all you have to do is believe. But you can't believe. Oh that I could believe then all would easy be.

[15 : 55] you are weak. You are weak. There is nothing you can do. No strength in and of yourself. And so you are brought to fill your weakness.

And you look here you look there for strength and you find none. Until eventually you are brought to see that there is no strength in any.

apart from the Lord that no flesh should glory in his presence. Oh if you were strong if you could only take this promise if you could only believe if you had such strength as some have but have you ever seen those characters brought into trouble?

I have. I know one person who is a good woman an husband she told me was a very good man I believe he was speaking after the manner of me but he was a deceived man and she is a deceived woman how she can run round or how she did run round with all her good deeds with some Christian rubbish tucked underneath her arm and how she could always pray and how she knew that this God loved her what there was to love her I don't know I can't see a thing now to love her but when she was brought into trouble oh how different she doesn't know the God that I would know how she kicks how she rebels and how all she can say is all how she prays to God to make her better all she thinks about is her body no thought for her soul all she wants is bodily strength she doesn't want the strength of prayer she doesn't want the strength of faith she doesn't want the strength of the spirit she wants the strength of body what a mercy of you and I are made weak in spiritual things so that we may not glory in his presence we may have to come to him to seek for our strength but the weak things are the base things we're damned speak of some of the base things within our heart the heart knoweth its own bitterness but this I do know that if the Lord has taught you and shown you a little of the baseness in your heart you'll know what I'm speaking about base things in other words you couldn't be much lower in character the base of a thing the very bottom and when you get down to the rock bottom of our flesh how base it is all the wretchedness you see our flesh is no different to anybody else's you may look upon one and say well I'd never do that wouldn't you you don't know how weak you are you don't know what you're capable of look

I can speak freely there may be one within your midst one who has grossly stepped and you look upon that one and you say well that's one thing I would never do or don't you ever raise a finger at any bow the knee for but don't raise the finger at them because this I do know and I know it from experience I know what I'm speaking of that if the Lord leaves you there's nothing but what you're capable of doing base base things well now these are the very characters that the Lord chose and he'll teach you in such a way that you'll know something the basis of your nature the wretchedness of your fallen nature now this you see will not bring any glory to you all these things are working together for your good they're all working together to prove to you the awful depravity of your heart and also the inability of your nature to save your soul how you're brought to trust entirely upon the Lord and the Lord alone that no flesh should glory in his presence now you see there's that which would glory in the presence of God as we glory in the presence of man now it makes no difference who we are or what we are there is that within our nature every one of us that would glory our nature is such that we glory in ourselves you take the various ways in which pride creeps in our wisdom is such that we hear one speak of some experience perhaps the

[21 : 13] Lord has been fit to bring us into a different experience and so we feel perhaps within our heart well now we're better than that one the Lord has shown us more than that now how we get this not only with the Lord's people but also with his servants one has spoken from a portion of the word and our heart is so wretched we say within ourselves although we may not say it to others there's that within our heart which could have brought out something a little bit better than that man brought out we have a little more light a little more understanding that man has and so there's that pride and there's that self-conceit works within our heart until we can see that we're brought in such a place the Lord could shut our mouth in a moment so that instead of going into the pulpit bold full of self-conceit the Lord brings us to our knees how necessary these things are so that no flesh should glory in his presence again you see and I don't know why I'm led like this with regard to the Lord's servants it may be for the benefit of some but what the

Lord's servants you see the Lord's servants must first of all be partakers of the fruits and that is the fruits of their own sinful nature as well as the fruits of the gospel but how there is that pride within our hearts and how there is that where perhaps someone speaks a word and they tell us how well they've got on how the word has been made a blessing to them and how we take the crown for Lord's head you see it's so easy for man it's right that we should give the Lord's servants their penny oh but how much grace we need in giving it you see that pride is so well known to the Lord's servants and how they have to be brought down how they have to go on month after month sometimes year after year without any visible signs of the preaching of the word being profitable how they can see others of the

Lord's servants who are prospering how everything seems to be in their favour but how the poor servant of the Lord has to go Sabbath after Sabbath perhaps with no word until he gets into the pulpit how he has to labour and how he has to wrestle only those who are brought into the pathway know it and then you see we remember some years ago how we went to a place of worship in the early days of our ministry to a very large chapel the pulpit was very high and there was a congregation of about 300 people and we were full of fears as we went to that place but the Lord helped us and as we got to the going down the pulpit steps at night how the devil came and said you've done well today you've done well today on how one or two spoke to us well our heart went out in pride stinking pride and how we have to be brought down that no flesh should glory in his presence we're now in his presence wonderful thought this is when we've been in the presence of the world the presence of the ungodly what an awful death they bring about when you're shut up with the ungodly when you sleep with them when you wake with them when there's no thought about spiritual things and some of us have known what this is for months on end poor lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked yes but there's that within our heart my friends which would even go with the wicked to have even those filthy things within our very heart oh don't say you don't have them don't say that you don't find something of those things within your heart oh if the

Lord leads you but in his presence oh how quickly these things depart how quickly one is brought to their knees how quickly there is that spirit of repentance to the Lord why hate those sins that made thee mourn and drove thee from my breast that no flesh should glory in his presence and so this wonderful God he comes to his people again that word amidst all the darkness amidst all the corruption of our heart amidst all that feeling of separation from our God that word has been such a help such a comfort just a sufficiency to hold us up I will come again I will come again we believe even tonight the Lord has come again the Lord will not leave his people but they have to be brought to that place where they feel that they're left of the

Lord so that no flesh should glory in his presence you see he's a wonder working God he's a God that goes his way he doesn't come to man he doesn't work the way which man would work he works in his own mysterious way his wonders to perform he plants his footsteps in the sea and rides upon the storm but his purposes will ripen fast unfolding every hour the bud may have a bitter taste but sweet will be the flower is there one here tonight who is tasting the bitter bud very bitter in your experiences perhaps your nature is bitter against this God you don't feel that love which others speak of there's bitterness within your spirit to this God there's rebellion in your nature to this

[28 : 02] God for bringing you where he's brought you but it's all to make a sicker self and fond of him that no flesh should glory in his presence and so you see as you're brought to see your own foolishness in your flesh all the time it's bringing you away from yourself it's bringing you and drawing you into his presence those very things which the Lord has shown you have this effect they don't drive you away from the Lord but all the time they're drawing you you're saying within your heart oh if only I could be different I don't like this I don't like this awful feeling I hate this worldliness I hate the corruptions of my heart you see daily the corruptions of my heart daily fresh cause of grief in part do you know it do you know some of these things that I'm speaking about tonight the flesh the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh and these two are contrary the one to the other the flesh and the spirit flesh is flesh and the spirit is spirit your flesh may be subdued but only the presence of God will subdue it with your flesh you'll never order but glory in his presence now when one then is brought into the presence of this

God I can't describe it to you I can describe the flesh I can describe what your flesh will be like I can describe some of the things of the flesh but just another thing and things which are despised of God chosen despised now the Lord was despised he was despised and rejected of men and if you and I are true followers of the Lord you'll be despised it's a great favour to be a true follower of the Lord it's a great favour to walk in the pathway of the Lord or may we never seek to be great things seek ye great things for thyself seek them not but rather be some poor despised thing those whom the world will have nothing to do with but be one of those my friends who is despised and rejected men to be a man full of sorrows and acquainted with grief that no flesh should glory this presence all hail reproach and welcome shame if thou remember me and when you're in the presence of God that is his felt presence it won't matter what man will say about you it doesn't matter how much you're despised but these very things in your nature they upset you they bring the worst out of you when you're despised and when you are brought into these places or how the very worst of your flesh is brought before you but how these things are subdued when you're in the presence of God to feel the presence of God how it subdues how it brings you to your knees how you'd have nothing altered how you're brought to that place that no flesh will glory this presence now if we are truthful and know the way we shall know that there's much in our religion which is of the flesh there's much which glories in the flesh but do you know anything of that which glories in the presence of your

God where you would not glory in your flesh you would not glory in your possessions but the presence of your God to have it to feel it to know it to realise it you see this is real religion all the outward form is nothing however good without the presence of your God your life your experience whatever it may be is nothing without your God this life is a dream an empty show but the bright world to which I go is joy substantial and sincere when shall I wait and find me there in his presence now the child of God he's brought his flesh is so subdued he has his anticipation he longs for this day when he receives God and yet his flesh tells him that he never will see it his flesh would live here upon this sinful wretched vile earth forever but his spirit would seek something which is lasting something which is substantial and so he longs for the presence of his

God he longs to know more of him the hope the such a day will come makes the captive portion sweet now this has been a trial to me recently which I cannot possibly explain but how I felt that even my call my religion my preaching everything connected with me was all empty nothing in it whatever and that I should never never see this God never be brought to heaven that I should at last think to hell and yet I seem to be so unconcerned and careless and careless about oh what a strange place is there one here like it tonight is there one that's ever been brought into such a state as this that no flesh should glory in his presence now this

I do know that if the Lord does ever bring me into his presence if the Lord ever brings you into his presence I'm speaking now of his eternal presence there'll be no glory because there'll be no in our flesh because there'll be no flesh there you see this flesh will depart from us and the spirit will go to God which gave it what a great mercy will be that this flesh will not go to heaven that is if we are redeemed that we shall be liberated from this flesh this which separates us from the Lord because this flesh could never glory in the presence of God so this corruption the base things this corruption don't you feel it to be a corruption at times but this corruption shall put on incorruption this mortal immortality and we shall be changed wonderful thought isn't it and we shall be changed that's just what I want

[35 : 24] I want to be changed I'm not happy I'm not happy with my present condition I'm not happy with my present spiritual standing before God I want to be changed but no flesh should glory in his presence I want to be brought into such a state that I can glory the Lord that I can praise him that I can bless him without anything to mar it do you is there that within your heart has the Lord shown you the foolishness of glory in present things in glory in this world and the flesh and has the Lord so put a desire and a longing within your heart that you want to be changed that you want to be different and although you have this foolish wretched fallen nature you're not happy with it and yet you are happy with it it's a paradox isn't it but you see in every believer two armies are seen don't we feel it we feel the battle raging at times with these two armies the new man of grace the old man of sin and you see people don't want this today if you can speak of the love of

God if you can speak of the banqueting house but don't mess your sin don't tell man anything of his flesh don't tell him of his fallen nature well then you see you'll be welcomed do everything you can for the young gather them all together come and see my seal for the Lord and you'll be welcomed but you start speaking about the sin the depravity of our nature the base things of this world and then the things which are not wonderful thought how we've been brought there the things which are not you're not one of the Lord's people says the devil how we feel that we cannot be the things which are not to bring to naught things that are because you would be something if you could but all this is to make you feel and to realise and to know that you're nothing that Christ might be all in all hath God yea and things which are not to bring to naught things that are that no flesh should glory in his presence so perhaps you feel that you're not one of the

Lord's people perhaps you feel that there's no hope for you why not you say I'm too baited I'm too wretched I'm too much of a sinner I've got too much unbelief within my heart I don't feel to be like one of the Lord's people well here it is things which are not and you wouldn't be apart from the free unmerited grace of God because if you were how you would glory in it if you could bring about your salvation that's what these poor things do they glory in what they are in their own sight they glory in their own goodness they glory in their walk they glory in their conversation and when others are laid aside they go and say well now you know the Lord loves you you know everything's alright oh I've heard it said it's an awful thing and perhaps I shouldn't repeat it but perhaps I should you know that there's a front seat waiting for you in heaven don't you my dear oh but what an awful thing this is the very thing we don't know things which are not oh we're not assured of these things but in the presence of the Lord we are we know it then but you wouldn't want a front seat if you can just stand at the back that will do so long as you're in his presence that no flesh should glory in his presence so long as we are brought at last in his presence my friend what does it matter what does it matter what we go through what does it matter what we suffer what does it matter what the world think of us what does it matter what the religious world think of us what does it matter what they say about us it's what the

Lord thinks it's what the Lord says and the Lord says come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden take my yoke upon you and learn of me and this is the only way we can learn of him is that our flesh may be subdued that we might not glory in his presence this is good teaching because it will teach us to cling to Christ it will teach us to love him it will teach us to praise him this is the preparation this is bringing us to that place where we shall praise him and bless him as we are brought into his presence we shall have something to glory in if ever we are brought there but you see if it was our own flesh if it was our own doings if it was our own goodness when we get to heaven we'd have nothing to praise him for would we now that's the reason that's why you're brought where you are that no flesh should glory in his presence well then may we be thus favoured that we might be enabled to glory in his presence be a wonderful thing wouldn't it to glory in his presence so may that dear lord come again may he bless you may he support you and may you be brought to see that your salvation is entirely dependent upon him because it pleased the father that in him should all fullness dwell not in you but in him should all fullness dwell and a fullness resides in

Jesus our head a fullness to meet every need it matters not what condition you're in it's easy for me to preach it but it's not so easy to walk it out but there is a fullness for every need whatever condition you're brought into it can be found in the lord jesus so may we find him whom our soul loveth we may have to go about the streets we may even be driven away by the watchman but eventually we shall find him whom our soul loveth and we will not let him go well that'll be a wonderful time when we're able to say he is my beloved and my beloved's mine he takes a poor vile sinner into his house of wine i stand upon his merit i seek no other stand not in where glory dwelleth in emmanuel's land well we don't know the purpose of the lord bringing us here tonight but this i do know that the lord's opened the prison door the lord has shone a little within my heart i don't know how i'm going to be once i get out of this pulpit but you know the pulpit to me recently has been a wonderful place because it's the only place where i received help a little faith a little assurance but we can't always be in the pulpit because even with that you see our flesh was glory in his presence but to be in the presence of god is a wonderful thing and to feel something to know something of the felt presence some dear servant of god who is now in glory said to us some years ago that he heard a man praying not for the presence of god but for the felt presence now there's a vast difference between the presence of god and the felt presence of god to feel it to feel the presence of god with you in all you do and it is my desire that you dear friends here at

[43 : 33] Alington may feel the presence of god within your heart that you may feel him very very near you and that whatever fears whatever distress is you may be brought into that you may feel that he's very near and that he's very precious as we sang together in our opening hymn and proved beyond all doubt that Jesus is precious not because the word says so but because we felt it in the presence of god within our own heart may the lord add his blessing amen that he incarnate