

Perplexed but not in despair (Quality: Very good)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 13 March 1966

Preacher: Dawson, Herbert (1890-1969)

- [0 : 00] As the Lord should be pleased to help me, I shall call your attention to a subject you will find in the second epistle to the Corinthians.
- Chapter 4, the second half of verse 8. We are perplexed, but not in despair.
- Chapter 4, second epistle to the Corinthians, second half of the eighth verse.
- I believe I can say I have had some measure of pressure on my spirit to take this subject. And it might be, as grace is given to unfold it, a word in season to someone who is indeed perplexed and desiring divine aid.
- Those of us who desire to fulfill our commission to preach the gospel are not allowed to do as we like in the subjects we take.
- [1 : 30] But we desire to preach that which God ordains us to do. And I hope this word might be a word of help.
- It is very striking when you think, who is the penman? The apostle Paul, inspired by the Spirit of God, was writing to the church at Corinth.
- And he gives an outline in the chapter, which I'll not take up time in going into, only just to allude to it.
- He goes into somewhat of the difficulties and the dangers attendant on a man whom God ordains to preach and those who were taught of God.
- And he says, but we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.
- [2 : 46] The preacher is as you read in the word of God. Elias was a man of like passions as we are. And that truth must never be forgotten.
- However much God may use a man in the pulpit to do that work he has ordained for him to do, it must never be forgotten that he is just a poor sinner with a never dying soul, preaching to other poor sinners with never dying souls.
- And this ministry can be of no help whatever, only as the Lord is God gives the application of it to the people to whom he is preaching.
- Do remember that. And now the apostle Paul says, we are troubled on every side, yet not distressed.
- I have looked at that word sometimes. And now, a man in the street, a worldling, could say, we are troubled.
- [4 : 00] Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward. But a man in the street, a worldling, could not say, we are troubled on every side. Because he is not troubled inside.
- All his troubles are outside. All his troubles are to do with time, and time things, and are of the earth, earthy.
- But people who are taught of God, they are troubled on every side. Which shall know every man the plague of his own heart.

Oh, they are troubled inside. And outside. And if you get in touch with anyone who is taught of God, you will find, when he tells you the truth as to what he really feels before God, he is more troubled inside, than ever he is, by things outside.

Because, he is made aware of how sad our state by nature is. And his great trouble is, that he is a sinner.

[5 : 15] The Puritans tell us, they often put things into very pithy sayings, great truths, in a few words. And they say that soul trouble, is the soul of trouble.

And so, any of you, and all of you, who have the mercy to be sinners born again, you do know what it is to be troubled, on every side.

Yet not distressed. There is no trouble that may befall you, but what God, will deal with it. And you will come out of it, all the better for going into it.

Whether it be inside, or outside trouble. And now comes our subject. And now comes our subject. Says the Apostle Paul, we are perplexed, but not in despair.

And now I want you, Mr. Lord, to help me to open up that subject a little, for your encouragement, as grace is given to do it.

[6 : 26] We are perplexed. And now when you think of the Apostle Paul, being who he was, ordained of God, to be the Apostle to the Gentiles, you can well understand, that when he puts in another page, elsewhere, the care of all the churches, cometh upon me.

And nearly all those churches, had got something, that needed to be put right. Hence you find, there are epistles, to this church and that, wherein error is made manifest, and a wrong spirit is condemned.

And the Apostle Paul, as grace was given, showed them wherein was the good and right way, in which they should be walking. You may well understand, the dear man, was perplexed.

And maybe some of you, before God at this time, are perplexed. There are things within, and things without, that you cannot sort out.

And now the great thing is, to be found in this frame of mind, we are perplexed. And, that is indeed a reality, in your soul's experience.

[7 : 53] But not, in despair. Godly scholars tell us, this word despair, means in the original, means in the original, but not in extremity.

Which is equivalent to saying, we are perplexed, but we still have God to go to. And now that is what you must recognize.

Because, if you are taught of God, you will be taught this truth. And maybe, in learning it, you will be perplexed.

No help in self, I find, and yet I've thought it well. The native treasure of my mind, is sin, and death, and hell.

And any of you, this Sabbath morn, who are here perplexed, even hoping it may be, to get some light, on what you are to do, the way, wherein you are to go.

[8 : 57] You must not be in despair, about it. There is help in God. There is hope in God. And it is obtainable.

You are not in extremity. You are perplexed. But you are not, hopeless, or helpless, therein.

No. The margin tells us, we are perplexed, but not altogether, without help, or means.

And so, I would look, first of all, at some of these perplexities. And then, in the second viewpoint, of the subject, I would look at the privileges.

And I must just tell you, that you must be very careful, in how you contemplate, this word despair. And now, no sinner, taught of God, will ever be, in absolute, despair.

[10 : 17] I know, that you can read, of some, who have been brought, very low, through satanic, influence. And they have been, in much heaviness, through, manifold temptations.

And they have, suggested, that there was, no help, no hope, in God, for them. And that was, their own conclusion, about it.

But it was not, the truth of the matter. No. What people, taught of God, do know, is this.

Could the creature, help or ease us, seldom, should we think, of prayer. Few, if any, come to Jesus, till reduced, to self-despair.

And now, you will know, what that is. Self-despair. And that means, as you read, in Psalm 107, Then are they brought, to their wit's end.

[11 : 19] Margin reading. All their wisdom, is swallowed up. Then, and not till then, then they cry unto the Lord, in their trouble, and he saveth them, out of their distresses.

What have you been singing about? In the hymn, just before the sermon began, it was upon this word, my soul, wait thou, only upon God, for my expectation, is, from him.

Which is equivalent, to saying, thy whole dependence, on me fix, nor entertain, a thought, thy worthless schemes, with mine to mix, but venture, to be naught.

Not in despair, not in extremity, because you have health, and that health, is almighty. What then?

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted, within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health, of my countenance, and my God.

[12 : 38] Let us look then, at these perplexities. And now it might be, I can only draw a bow, at a venture.

I say it might be, that some of you, are in perplexity, as to whether you are, the children of God, or no. Maybe from baby days on, you have been found, in the attitude of worship, you have been, numbered among the people of God, in the attitude of worship, but as yet, you are perplexed, because, you cannot feel, as you would like to feel.

How do you feel? Surely, this is how you feel. It is a point, I long to know. Oft, it causes anxious thought, and in that anxious thought, is perplexity.

Do I love the Lord, or no? Am I his? Or am I not? And now, you need not be in despair, about it.

Because the word of God, is very encouraging, to poor sinners, who feel as you do. Yes, what did I, read to you? And it is a word, you need to, ponder, in your heart.

[14 : 09] Why, sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid, from the Lord, and my judgment, is passed over, from my God.

There you see, a poor sinner, in self despair. And yet, God is dealing, with such and one, and his purposes, are being, worked out.

But as yet, you cannot see, the evidences, that you, long, to see, and to feel, in your soul's, experience. What are you to do, regarding this perplexity?

Shall I put it like this? What can you do? The word of God, tells you, they that wait, upon the Lord, shall renew, their strength.

The psalmist says, likewise, wait on the Lord, be of good courage, he shall strengthen, thine heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord.

[15 : 22] Lord, and now, I will tell you, something, which I hope, you will remember, as long as you live. And that is, there was never yet, a sinner, living as he was born, who ever had, a feeling of perplexity, as to whether, he was born again, or no.

You cannot, know that feeling, until you are. Remember that, and remember, he will regard, the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.

And the prayer of the destitute, leave not, my soul, destitute. We are perplexed, but not, in despair.

You may be, perplexed, because you do hope, you are born again. But there are things, regarding the truth, that as yet, you have not entered into, in any, great degree, in your soul's experience.

And you hear other people, taught of God, speak of what they have tasted, handled, and felt of these things, but you have to, sorrowfully, conclude, that as yet, you have not, entered, therein.

[16 : 48] And now, God is a sovereign, in how, he leads his people, into the truth. Some, the great majority, I judge, he leads into the truth, here a little, there a little, line upon line, precept upon, precept.

Others, are taught, by terrible things, in righteousness. And they, get therefore, more definite, clear cut, evidences, when they get, deliverances.

But when all, is said and done, this word, remains in the, sacred pages, to help you, in your, perplexity. Then, shall we know, if, we follow on, to know the Lord.

And it is for you, to be not in despair, that you will never go down, into these deep things of God, but to still wait, and hope, and plead, and beg, lead me in thy truth, and teach me.

Yes, you will find, in the ultimate issue, you were shut up, in a beautiful scripture. All thy children, shall be taught, of the Lord, and great, shall be the peace, of, thy children.

[18 : 20] friends. You may be perplexed, because sometimes, when you listen, to the gospel, in the proclamation, of it, there are some things, that, you feel, it is so high, I cannot attain, to it.

But then, you must not, be in despair, and think, it is unattainable. Who can tell, but what God, will be gracious, unto you.

Sometimes, sinners, taught of God, are perplexed, because they, feel help, in drawing near, to God, and sometimes, feel so encouraged, as they plead, that he will, indeed, lead them, into his truth, and unfold, the heavenly mysteries, in their souls, experience.

And yet, as matters, fall out, you are perplexed, because, you go deeper down, into a knowledge, of what you are, as a sinner.

Learning yet more, how sad, our state, by nature is. and, made to stand, alongside Isaiah, from the sole, of the foot, even to the head.

[19 : 48] Oh, how solemn, it is to feel that, from the sole, of the foot, even to the head, there is no soundness, in it, but wounds, and bruises, putrefying, sores.

And, the knowledge, that you, keep learning, here a little, there a little, is more to do, with a malady, than it is, with a remedy.

And now, there is a depth, that you must go down to, regarding the malady, ere you will, find your soul, rejoicing, in your, known and felt, interest, in the remedy, which the gospel, makes known.

You have got to sit, on the, chief of sinners seat, sooner or later, and if it should be sooner, then, your perplexities, will be eased, and you will see, the why and wherefore, how the Lord, has been dealing, with you, that, when you ask, to be led into the truth, instead of it being, comfortable truth, it is, uncomfortable truth, because you were, made aware, turn again, son of man, and thou, shalt see, greater iniquities, than these.

Oh, many poor sinners, are perplexed, like that. Jonah, will help you there, and he said, I went down, to the bottoms, of the mountains, and that is, where you have got, to go to, in the dealings, of God, with you, which shall know, every man, the plague, of his own, heart, so that you feel, no sinner, needed mercy more, than ever sought, thy face, things, but though, you will be perplexed, as you get, these continual, openings up, of what you are, by nature, do not be, in despair, about it, no, no, there is, a great word, I like to look at, when the Savior, sent his message, of comfort, to John the Baptist, by John's disciples, among other things, he said, do tell John, that the lepers, are cleansed, and now, that will help you, in your perplexity, when you look within, and feel, can ever God, dwell, here, the leprosy, lies deep, within, sin, but, in the gospel, there is the remedy, and the lepers, are cleansed, and all manner of sin, shall be forgiven, yes, oh, you need not be in despair, about it, or in extremity, because,

[23 : 06] Christ Jesus, came into the world, to save sinners, and that is the name, you have got to answer to, before God, to thee I come, a sinner, great, and well thou knowest, all my state, yet full forgiveness, is with thee, oh God, be merciful to me, we are perplexed, but not in despair, and now, you may be perplexed, and you will be, because, in your following on, to know the Lord, you do desire, to do good, but you find this, I would do good, but evil is present, with me, it is very solemn, to be made aware, as long as you live, of our utter helplessness, in things divine, and our utter inability, to do good, but, while you may be, perplexed about it, be not in despair, over it, because, in that experience, which you were the subject of, there is, encouragement for you, the heart, one's hardest steel, that's made for sin, to feel, bears tokens, of, a ransom soul, go back to, what I've already quoted, which shall know, every man, the plague, of his own heart, yes, we are perplexed, in your heart, you can appeal, to God about it, thou doest well, to have it in thy heart, to be a real Christian, and yet, the longer you live, the farther off, you seem to be, according to your, feelings about it, that you are indeed, such a character, because, every day, new straits attend, and you often, have to, sorrowfully confess,

I have gone astray, like a lost sheep, seek thy servant, for I do not forget, thy commandments, you are perplexed, oh, but be not in despair, about it, and do remember, what I have told you, you will never have, more religion, worth the name, as long as you live, than when you can, humble yourself, before God, at Calvary's cross, and tell him, the truth, a guilty, weak, and helpless, worm, on thy kind, arms I fall, be thou my strength, my righteousness, my Jesus, and, my all, yes, we are perplexed, but blessed be God, not in despair, you might be perplexed, some of you, because you are walking, in darkness, regarding your present pathway, the future to you, seems uncertain, as to, how it will unfold, for you, you want to see, a door opened, it may be, and all you can find, it present, is in your perplexed state, every door, seems shut, but one, and that is, mercy's door, and now, if you were helped, to knock at, mercy's door, you need not be, in despair, as regards, having any, anxious thoughts, about the moral, or the morals, yet, to come, because, he hath said,

I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, and maybe, you have got, in your perplexed state, to go deeper down, in living, a day at a time, and to learn, what the future, has for you, like this, step by step, as you go on, the way, will open up, before you, you will not find, you can search this out, if you like, it will be helpful, and instructive, for you, you will not find, in the word of God, that as a rule, God showed, to any of his people, very far ahead, how life's journey, would open up, there is only one instance, which comes to my mind, and that is, God said to Abraham, shall I hide, from Abraham, the thing that I do, but you will find, that, what the word of God, declares, is how you have got, as grace is given, to live, that just, shall live, by faith, and as thy days, so, shall thy strength, be, and now, regarding, you being perplexed, about the future, and the door opening, and maybe, you need it to open soon, it might help you, to be not in despair, if you look back, over the way, you have come along, if you think of it, like the hymn writer, when he said, did ever trouble, yet before, and God refused, to hear thy call, we are perplexed, but not in despair, and he does say,

I will instruct thee, and teach thee, in the way, which thou shalt go, I will guide thee, with mine eye, and when the time comes, you will find, the Lord will be there, and he will say, this is the way, walk ye in it, and you will see, your perplexities, all allayed, we are perplexed, but not in despair, another thing, you might be perplexed about, and I should not be surprised, if quite a few of you, know what that perplexity is, you are perplexed, because with all your privileges, along life's way, how little you seem to know, of God, and godliness, I mean, with that knowledge, whereby you can say, that which we have tasted, handled, and felt, of the good word of life, declare we unto you,

I know that many of you, the majority of you, have got your names, on the church roll, you have been following, going on to know the Lord, until some of you, were now old, and grey headed, and all that is good, your chapel going, is good, but, it is for you, to do business, in heaven's marketplace, and only that, which you gain, by trading there, is that, which will be, for your soul's, profit, and peace, and now, when you think, of how many have been, your privileges, how little, do you seem to have gained, good for your soul, with all the opportunities, afforded you, and now, preacher and people alike, must all plead guilty here, you must never forget, what this word tells us, we are perplexed, but not in despair, extremity, and now, think of what you sing,

[31 : 35] Jesus ready, stands to save you, and he is like that, as it were, speaking with great reverence, in his attitude, to you, as a poor sinner, born again, all the day long, all night too, what have I told you, you can stand, at the foot of Jacob's ladder, anytime, anywhere, and you can see, the Lord standing above it, to help you, in your perplexity, yes, we are perplexed, but not, in despair, not in, extremity, we have still, God to go to, then, then to have, recourse to God, and pour a prayer, in time of need, and feel the balm, of Jesus' blood, this is to find, a friend indeed, need, and now, you might be perplexed, because, of life's duties, and difficulties, you find, as it were, everyday, new straits attend, what people, do not realize, is, that as you, grow older,

I mean, if you were taught, of God, as you grow older, you find, that your responsibilities, in life, increase, you become, a father, then you become, a grandfather, and a great grandfather, and in all this, it is like, dropping a stone, in a pond, the ripples keep, going out, and out, and out, and as they do, your responsibilities, increase, and your perplexities, and what can you do, but have to do, with God, who does, as I said, ready stand, to save you, delighting, in mercy, and declares, if any man, lack wisdom, let him ask, of God, who giveth, to all men, liberally, and afraid, if not, and it shall be, given him, yes, we are perplexed, but not, in despair, oh, how many, of these perplexities, there are, you may find, in your life's journey, in the unfolding of it, many fold complications, it may be to do, not only with you, as a sinner born again, in your soul's welfare, it may be to do, with you, in your family circle, you want to see, the children,

God has given you, to be made, the children of God, as well, and you will have, many perplexities, over that, but you need not, be in despair, about it, no, not in extremity, because, the throne of grace, is available, for you, and if you were helped, to lay your children, there, before God, you will find, it a great relief, of mine, to be helped, to do so, you will say, with Asa, it is good, for me, to draw near, unto God, we are perplexed, but not, in despair, despair, let us look, at the other side, I said, the second viewpoint, was, privileges, and now, that takes us, to the margin reading, we are not, all together, without help, or means, and do you know, dear friends, if you could, more often, sit down, as it were, in quietness, of mind, before God, in way matters up, as to how things, really are, between your soul, and God, you would find, they are much better, than you often, think they are, or conclude, they are, remember that, there is a tendency, it arises, from what one is, by nature, and it is very sad, when it gets working, and that is,

I say, there is a tendency, sometimes, to belittle, our religion, and sometimes, to belittle it, in comparison, with what you, read, or hear, other people, taught of God, of being favored, to be the subjects of, but you are, guilty before God, if you fall, afraid of doing that, do remember that, you need not, be in despair, although, as yet, you seem to know, such a little of God, and godliness, the word of God, still declares, a bruised reed, he shall not break, and smoke in flax, he shall not quench, no, no, and, him that cometh unto me, I will in, no wise, cast out, and, you must admit this, you really must, look back, over the way, you have come along, and see, that you have been, not left to be, altogether, without help, or means, you may not feel, this Sabbath morn, as you would like, to feel before God, in your soul's, experience, but it is quite, a good argument, our good guidance, saviour, has helped us, thus far, and tis by his favour, we are what we are, think how you came along, this Sabbath morn, if you came aright,

I seek, and hope, to find a portion, for my soul, and now you were not, born like that, you had to be born again, to have a feeling, like that, I hunger now, for heavenly food, and my poor soul, cries out for God, and you begin there, and then think of the health, that God has given you, you must admit, you have not been, altogether, without help, or means, not in despair, not in extremity, no, no, look at the help, there is, God is our refuge, and strength, a very present, help in trouble, he is incomprehensible, but blessed be his name, he is approachable, when most I need, his help in hand, his friend is always near, with heaven and earth, at his command, he waits to answer prayer, there is a beautiful word, in the Psalms,

[39 : 01] God the Father, is speaking, I have laid help, upon one that is mighty, one chosen, out of, the people, there is one God, one mediator, between God and man, the man, Christ, Jesus, and says, David, a very present, help, in trouble, you go back, over your life, and search out, the help, that you have had, you never found it, come too late, it was always, timely, and if you tell the truth, and you really ought, to do that, you must say, in his dealings, with you, he hath done, all things well, and he cannot, do otherwise, no, no, thy ways, O Lord, with wise design, framed upon, thy throne above, and every dark, and bending line, meets in the center, of thy law, then, there is not only, help in God, and what help, that is, when sometimes, you can appeal to him, our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, and all the help, there is, in Jesus,

Christ, as the sinner's friend, go back to what I said, Jesus, ready, stands to save you, full of pity, joined with power, he is able, he is willing, doubt no more, we are perplexed, there is much, that does perplex us, but not in despair, no, not altogether, without help, or means, and then, do remember this, you dear young people, especially, not but what the old people, ought to remember it, just as much, but it will help you dear, young people, to remember, there is help to be had, from the Holy Spirit, and now, you, as young people, may be perplexed, as to what to believe, sometimes, you hear of this, and that, which is to do with religion, and your mind, and your mind, may be, may be, confused, you, you may be, in a tumult, regarding it, because, you are perplexed, you cannot sort it out, it does not seem to fit in, with what you have been taught, hitherto, and now, be not in despair, about it, to the law, and to the testimony, if they speak not, according to this word, it is because, there is no light in them, and you continue, as you began, lead me in thy truth, and teach me, assure my conscience, of her part, in the Redeemer's blood, and bear the witness, with my heart, that I am born of God, not in despair, and look, also, look at the help, that can be obtained, at the mercy seat, think of that word, oh how often, is it quoted, let us therefore, come boldly, to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy, and find grace, to help, in time of need, and there, that throne of grace, is ever set up, mercy's door, is open, and God says to you, a poor sinner, perplexed,

I have set, before thee, an open door, and no man, can shut it, no devil either, no, then there is help, too, in the word of God, oh, if your eyes, are opened, you will find, as you search, the scriptures, thy word, is a lamp, unto my feet, a light, unto, my path, there is no perplexity, that you may be, the subject of, but what you will find, there is light, in the sacred pages, to help you, to be not in despair, regarding it, and you will find, there is help, in God, to be had, yes, and that you will be given, quietness of mind, regarding the matter, which perplexes you, and look, too, not only at the word of God, with all its exceeding, great and precious promises, but, look at the gospel, proclamation, oh, what amazing words, of grace, are in the gospel, found, suited to every sinner's case, who knows, his soul's, deep wounds, and you know, dear friends, you have found, some help, in listening, to the gospel, there are some subjects, which you have got, lodged in your heart, some texts, which the preachers, have taken, which you might have marked, already, in your holy bible, as a remembrance, of when, you found help, and you, treasure it, in your soul's feelings, and do remember, there is yet more, to be had, yes, our helper,

God, we are perplexed, but not in despair, and then there is, this argument, thy love, in times past, forbids me to think, thou wilt leave me, at last, in trouble to sing, each sweet Ebenezer, I have in review, confirms, thy good pleasure, to carry me, right through, and you have found, help in the means, of grace, sometimes, in singing, the songs of Zion, sometimes, in searching, the scriptures, and sometimes, you have been helped, to feel, blessed be God, for he hath heard, my prayer, and turned away, his mercy, from me, and as I have said, you have got help, under the gospel, you have found, the watchmen, that go about, the city, they found me, yes, and then, you have found, help in the fellowship, of the saints, sometimes, you have found, your heart warmed, you have been, in company, with people, taught of God, and in listening, to what they have, had to tell, of the dealings, of God, you have found, that you felt, just the same, in your measure, as they did, as in water, face, arms, with unto face, so does, the heart of man, to man, and you've got, help like this, you need not, be in despair, we know, that we have, passed from death, unto life, because we love, the brethren, but I must come, to the amen, not in despair, there is help, too, in the unfailing, providence, of God, he has guaranteed, however difficult, or dark, the future may seem, bread, shall be given, water, shall be sure, they, that seek, the Lord, shall not want, any good thing, and what help, there is, too, when you think, it is of the Lord's, mercies, we are not, consumed, and because, his compassions, fail not, and this, will help you, to believe, what the hymn writer, says, they, who once, thy kindness, proved, find it, everlasting, sin, love, and the, saviour, whose you are, and whom you, serve, in the midst, of all your, perplexities, you do desire, to get in, touch with him, as the sinner's, friend, what does he say, to poor, perplexed, sinners, like you, because,

I live, ye, shall live, also, know, and you, can sum it up, like this, approach my soul, the mercy seat, where Jesus, answers prayer, and humbly, lie at, his dear feet, for none, can perish, there, amen, Thi, and, garden, Shame, Amen, no, for the first, gazon, and then, amen,