

# God's light shining into our inner darkness

## (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Collier, Gilbert (1900-1984)

- [ 0 : 00 ]     My text is found in the second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians.
- Fourth chapter and the sixth verse. Fourth chapter and the sixth verse of the second epistle to the Corinthians.
- 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 a tremendous text this is. It seems to my mind to contain everything.
- It contains the gospel in all its simplicity and brevity and profundity and glory.
- [ 1 : 30 ]     And one almost hesitates to take a text like this. But if the Lord seems to lay a word upon one's mind, there's no other course that one can adopt or pursue.
- And therefore, I venture and trust that the Holy Spirit of God will help open up this glorious truth to our understandings for the benefit of our souls.
- It is the climax, really, of a great passage of the Scriptures. For the whole of this chapter, and indeed the previous chapter, all concerns the revelation of Jesus Christ.
- And if you and I can really go through this chapter, this fourth chapter, and say, yes, honestly and truly, I believe what is written.
- You are on the way to heaven. You may have a great deal of difficulty in fully believing all that this chapter declares.
- [ 3 : 16 ]     For instance, all things are for your sakes. Who can believe that when everything seems to be going wrong?
- And nothing appears to be right. And every circumstance that appears to be totally against us, all things are for your sakes.
- And yet this is all part of that wonderful truth which God conveys to his people and which they believe.
- Now this text of mine concerns, as you may well know and understand, the great matter of the ministration of the gospel to the heart and conscience of men and women.
- And Paul brings together two tremendous facts and joins them together.
- [ 4 : 42 ]     One fact is the creation. The greatest act of God that is visible.
- And then he joins to that mighty act the greatest act of God that is invisible. The work of salvation.
- The work of salvation. And all the contrivances of that wonderful work that are essentially and initially invisible to the human understanding and eye and knowledge but which is the greatest work of all that God has ever performed.
- These two things then are brought together in the text. And why? We might well ask that question this morning and seek humbly to answer the question.

We believe the reason that Paul brings these two great matters together is that they must be and will be the belief of every true believer.

[ 6 : 09 ] it is essential to believe in the creation of God and that God created all things as it is to believe that God is the mighty Savior and the one who performs salvation by his sovereign and ever glorious grace.

People will say yes, I believe that salvation is by grace by sovereign grace but I cannot accept the Bible account of creation.

well I would say that if that is your case then your faith is one that is invalid. It is not a complete faith.

It is not a true faith. For you see here Paul says he that commanded the light to shine out of darkness that same God has shined in the hearts of his people.

He brings these two things together for a very needful and important purpose. And the believer the true believer knows this by experience how wondrous and how blessed how ever expanding is the experience when the whole truth of God is received when all his mighty works are believed and when we see that everything comes forth from that glorious hand that has shaped all things and from all things from whom all things shall come.

[ 8 : 14 ] yes it is a very important thing to believe that that God made the world.

And I want to speak especially to you dear young people because I have young people at home at my own church and I come to be aware of their considerable difficulties in the days in which they live.

They are confronted being daily confronted more or less with a system of teaching and thought that is totally contrary to the truth of God and yet it seems so plausible and so reasonable and how can it be resisted?

I want to speak therefore especially to you dear young people this morning knowing something of your difficulties and the things that may well confront you.

Now you see Paul says here God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness I consider that that is the greatest act of God in creation.

[ 9 : 52 ] The first chapter in Genesis tells us that God made trees he made beasts and his crowning work of all was that he made man and that wonderful chapter the 36 I think it is or the 26 in the first chapter of Genesis it says God said let us make man in our image there was the Trinity in consultation with each other concerning the making of the masterpiece of creation man perfect man man possessing all wonderful powers far beyond our own present day comprehension salvation but I say this the greatest work of all from the hand of

God was the creation of light now you think of that for a moment and those first few words they're tremendous words in that first chapter of Genesis and God said let there be light and there was light instant light throughout the whole universe and that was a creation we read this morning in the epistle of John that God is light there was no creation of that light but God who is light created light now why do I say this I say it for a special reason because you will find and you will hear this very often declared they'll say well there are stars for instance the light of these stars have taken millions and millions of years to come to the earth therefore they say that overthrows your

Bible that proves that God is not true but you see my dear friends they leave out this great momentous act of creation God said let there be light and that means all light stars the stars that are mighty remote from us showed the light that they ever do show in an instant of time when God said let there be light and I have to bow with all reverence and with all humility before that mighty God who with one single word can create light infinite glorious wondrous light and establish all that is the consequences thereof well this may help some of you dear young people to counteract these elements that oppose the truth of God today you'll find it in this school you'll find it among your companions you'll say oh we've outworn we've outdone altogether the Bible we don't need to take the account of creation from the

Bible we know that is something science has told us there's something entirely different from what the Bible and the word of God declares to us but my dear friends if God gives you grace you'll admire with a great admiration indeed the wonderful works of your creator the mighty performances of his hand from the very beginning to the very end he is first and that is why Paul links these two great things together he links the greatest act of creation that is visible to the greatest act in salvation that is invisible and that is the shining of his grace in the heart now

I want you to notice this this verse of mine is very often misquoted you hear people say in this way they quote this scripture they say God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined into our hearts the scripture does not say that it says he has shined in our hearts there's a very big difference and it's the difference that is all important there may be some of you here I do not know there may be some of you that have been waiting for years for something to come from without and reveal itself to your heart and mind and experience when really the work of God's grace is within

[ 16 : 10 ] Christ said you know he says the kingdom of God is within you there they in his day they were looking for the kingdom of God there were people who say were saying in that time lo here it is lo there it is it's coming in this way and in that manner and he said this he corrected them entirely with one word the kingdom of God is within you so when God shines then he shines within the light is in the heart and how wonderful this is I say just now it's the greatest act the invisible act the greatest act of God when a soul is quickened and born again by the entrance of light within the heart within the soul and what does that light do let us try and open this part of the truth very important and very precious first of all light when it is within will reveal what is within you can be in a dark room you may not know what is around you you may picture all kinds of articles and decorations until some light it may be only a slender light appears within that room and suddenly the whole thing is revealed in its reality in its stark reality and you say to yourself

I never thought it was like this now such is the soul when God deals with a sinner and when this mighty commanding power of his grace is put forth in that sinner there is light within the sinner's heart and by that light the sinner sees himself we often heard good men say that one of the great necessities of salvation is to know ourselves not only to know God but to know ourselves there's a great many people who say I know God but they've never known themselves and why have they never known themselves why are they under such a delusion about themselves it is because there's never been light within he hath shined in our hearts then again seeing therefore that light is needful to clearly show what we are what deformity is in us and what need there is for correction rectification and restoration

God will not leave his people there he will send forth his light the light of healing the light of restoration the light of cleansing and above all the light of pardoning love and when that light appears in the heart the soul is lifted up made to rejoice some of those beautiful scriptures come flowing into such a heart bless the Lord oh my soul and all that is within me bless his holy name who healeth all thy diseases who restoreth thy soul all that is within me you see there the psalmist is in perfect harmony with this truth of our text it is within the heart you see so many people make a religion entirely of the external side of things they think it is because they perform this that and the other service and duty and because they appear so good among their fellow men that is religion it is nothing of a sort there is nothing but darkness in it all and not a semblance of light anywhere to be found about it the Pharisees were like that and Christ speaks to them very scathingly at times he speaks to them as if they were sepulchers dark sepulchers with nothing to ever come out of their lives or their lips death no my friends we do want to be right within we want to be made right within we want the Lord to begin with us that we might be right and this is how he does it he shines in the heart then again what is the outcome of this in shining well our text tells us very plainly and clearly and wonderfully knowledge knowledge of God people say oh I never knew it was like this there have been no going on they have been doing this that and the other thing all through their lives they have made a profession some of them and they thought that they were really building up their way to heaven and then suddenly God comes and deals with them by entering into their hearts and then they say we never knew anything like this we never knew that this was the way of salvation no my friends because you've never known that light shining within knowledge then is one of the great outcomes of this

light in thy light shall we see light and that is the great explanation you see you say well how can these old ministers that come and preach here at Chlobera Sabbath by Sabbath how is it that they know things my dear friends we don't know anything but what the Lord has revealed to us we are not setting ourselves up as those that have great knowledge we have hope indeed that the Lord has revealed and shown and made his light light of truth to shine within and you know that is far far better than all the acquisition of knowledge by reading and such like things these are very good

I'm not despising them you dear young people get as many good books as you can and read them but always remember this that what you need and what I need is for that light the light of knowledge of the glory of God to shine in your hearts and there will be an ever expanding experience of knowledge if this is the case with you yes that's the first great thing then that our text tells us to give the light of the knowledge the light of it that means to say knowledge that imparts in itself light sometimes we read or we sing perhaps sometimes a light surprises the Christian while he sings it is the Lord who arises with healing in his wings do you know what that means have you come sometimes to a word in the scriptures and as you've read it you've read it many many times before you know it well you could repeat it as easily as you could repeat anything but all of a sudden there seems to be a light about it there seems to be a power in it that you have never felt before what is it it's the light of knowledge

[ 26 : 57 ] God makes his own knowledge the knowledge of himself and the knowledge of his glory and his grace a light within the heart and in this light the believer walks and lives and struggles against all kinds of odds and fights against all kinds of enemies but they have that light he has shined in our hearts oh my dear friends what an experience it is and must be for God to shine in our hearts this is what you want now you that are seeking the things of God you that are waiting for some movement by God and on his part in your case you will be glad to have some focusing point to wait for and to look for and watch out for well this is it remember this let it be deeply embedded in your hearts and minds he hath shined in our hearts

I say the greatest experience that ever could come into our lives is to have God's light the created light of him who is the uncreated light shine in our hearts then it is not only to give knowledge but it gives glory to knowledge of the glory of God the knowledge of the glory of God there's nothing that is so transcending so absorbing so gloriously satisfying as the glory of God if we seek that we seek something that is substantial and real and wonderful the glory of God and if we know it to know his glory but now we come in our text to this very blessed and important part the channel through which this knowledge or this light is diffused in the heart and there are several things about light you know light is created and light is disseminated and light is diffused and light is consequential in its effects and now we find all this is translated through the person of the

Lord Jesus Christ in this beautiful term in our text by the face of Jesus Christ in the face of Jesus Christ Christ so you see those of you that would know what this light is and where it is to be found and what the experiences of it is this you'll see it in the face of Jesus Christ of course this means in his human nature by which he conveys to his people the mighty and glorious riches of grace but that face that wondrous face of his that face that was more marred than any man's that face that was spitted on and cruelly afflicted by enemies it's that face that will count and will make all the difference in our life our final and eternal destiny the face of Jesus when you get into a bitter spirit and oh

Lord we thou knowest how we do and so easily at times are we provoked I say one remedy certain remedy for every kind of bitter spirit that ever was and ever will be found is a glimpse of the face of Jesus Christ in that precious face there's everything to see the smile of it is a is an immeasurable mercy to have a look down from that face into our hearts solves all our difficulties in a moment of time you say oh Lord look down look down into my heart here am I in great trouble I know not where

I am or where to go or what to do look down Lord and if the Lord does look down into your heart it does not need to say a word a look from the Savior is of immensity itself and that will put everything right it's in the face of Jesus Christ in his human nature in the work he performed in that nature of ours in the fact that he is our great high priest having been tempted at all points like we have been without sin that one who was so suffered and so cruelly treated who now is in heaven interceding for all tried troubled people that wonderful person whose face is ever towards his own and looks down with wonderful compassion and tenderness upon every contrite soul

[ 34 : 12 ] God who commanded his light faith oh my friends here we have the two great things brought together and I say we need to have that faith in both a young man I was in Scotland and there was a young man I saw him with a hammer on the seashore among the rocks and he was breaking up these rocks I thought I'll go and see what he's doing being a little curious and perhaps might be judged to be interfering but I went join myself with him and he was very pleased to show me he showed me a rock that he just split and he said now here here are four creatures you see in here one and then the other three all in this rock and he said they had been there for millions of years

I said really that's a remarkable thing that they should all four be there millions of years did they all come at once I said oh no there's probably millions of years between well it says I said it's very strange that they've all four creatures have decided to join together and to link up together so closely and so much in alignment and yet there are millions of years separating there doing so I said surely there must be some different explanation than that and he said well what could you tell me what it is I said yes if you read in the book of Genesis you'll see that there was a great catastrophe a tremendous catastrophe there was a flood and all things were up in an upheaval and these crusts and these deposits that you find by your hammer are pure evidences clear evidences of the truth of

God's word and he seemed to be very greatly affected I felt and he said you know I'm a professor of religion well I said you don't carry out very much your profession because if you are a real professor of religion you believe what God says in his word and here you are with your hammer trying to overthrow what God has said and we parted and I hoped and prayed that it might be a few words that would have an effect upon him my dear friends let us take this word to our hearts let us make it a prayer in our lives Lord thou who didst command the light to shine out of darkness shine into my poor dark heart shine in it reveal thy light there the light of thy grace cause me to know the true knowledge and glory of thy name and grant that I may view by faith the precious person of

Christ see in his glorious face all my salvation all my life all my heaven amen may be close in morning's worship with hymn 667 immortal honors rest on Jesus head my God my portion and my living breath in him I live upon him cast my care he saves from death destruction and despair he is my refuge in each deep distress the

Lord my strength and glorious righteousness through floods and flames he leads me safely on and daily makes his sovereign goodness known hymn 667 got h h same music the hear head bah Amen.