

2 Corinthians (Quality: Average)

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: 01 January 1900

Preacher: Sawyer, Caleb (1876-1962)

[0 : 00] If the Lord shall help me, I wish to direct your attention to the fourth chapter of the second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians.

And we read the sixth and the seventh verses. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our heart.

And to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.

The sixth and the seventh verses of the fourth chapter of the second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians.

[1 : 22] For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our heart.

To give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.

Paul's epistles to the Corinthians are full of instruction to the church of God.

For the apostle speaks of many things that are of interest and instruction to the old household of faith.

He doesn't minimize some of their faults. And especially in that they were setting one minister up above the others.

[2 : 52] One said, one said, I am a Paul. I am a Paulus. And some, that they should be perhaps considered more spiritual than any of them, said that they were of Christ.

As though Christ was divided. But my friends, when it comes to the grand secret of all, is to know the gospel of God's grace in its power and in its simplicity.

For if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. I know very well that we are born dead in sin.

And therefore, in our native ignorance. But if there is a real desire to be taught of the Spirit of God, we may say that the gospel is not being hid from us.

If we have seen something in the gospel that's desirable to us, that's needful for us in the matter of salvation, and if there is a hunger and thirst after righteousness, the promises we fulfill.

[4 : 59] Now with those few remarks, I'll commence if the Lord may help me to speak upon this verse.

I'd intended to speak from it here on the last Lord's Day morning, that I was prevented from coming.

And it was a great disappointment to me. So when I was asked whether I could occupy the pulpit here this evening, I gladly consented that the Lord would give me strength.

For God that who commanded the light to shine out of darkness.

The apostle here refers to the first chapter in the Genesis. And if you hear people discrediting Genesis and have the account of the creation as given there, you may write them off at once and be an infidelle.

[6 : 24] Because after all, the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword.

And you'll remember if you read that first chapter that your nature, that your nature, oh, darkness, covered the face of the earth.

And it was all chaos. It was a floating mass above the Spirit of God resting upon that mass.

and said, let there be light. And there was light. That was the beginning of creation.

Light. And we may say, as the apostle here is speaking about a work of grace in the heart that one of the first signs of light is light.

[7 : 51] Perhaps it may be sufficient light to see your darkness. Light to see your sin. Light to see the need of that salvation which only God can give.

But it's light. Light is soul for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart.

So as light was commanded at the creation of this world and this world was brought forth into this beautiful order that we see it now by God's special providence and by his special power soul we believe the Lord works in the heart of sinners.

He finds them dead. That is, dead to the things of God. Living people, of course, walking about, doing their usual business in life but nevertheless dead to the things of God.

Oh, some of us can look back the time when we were dead to everything that was spiritual.

[9 : 44] We were alive, it's true, true to the things of time and sense and to the pleasures of this world.

Oh, we were alive in that sense that we were still dead in trespasses and in sins.

But when the Lord sent a ray of heaven's light into my heart as an apprentice led, I remember getting out of bed one night and asking God to have mercy upon my never-dying soul.

soul, I felt that I was on the brink of an eternal world, that I was lost to all intents and purposes.

But when that light shone into my heart and discovered my condition, it didn't leave me without any hope at all.

[11 : 12] There was a little hope sprang up that God might even be merciful. And I remember one petition because I knew just a little about the doctrine of election and I told the Lord that if it was possible, would he put me amongst the number of his elect people.

I didn't know how it could be done. I knew it must be a miracle of grace if I was to be put amongst those people with the number down to all eternity, it must be by the power of God's Spirit.

And I began to pray. Like Saul of Tarshish, when he was brought off his high horse of profession, as he was journeying to Damascus, you'll remember that it was said respecting him to Ananias, who was commissioned to go and speak to him and that he might receive his sight.

it was said behold he prayed. And if you can find a praying person, it's as Mr.

Tip-Tap used to say, you mustn't say too much against a man's religion that can get answers to prayer.

[13 : 18] And so my friends, if the light of divine truth begins to shine into your heart, it will discover the holiness of God.

It will discover your unholiness and it will discover presently your own native weakness to perform that which is good and acceptable in the sight of God.

Or if the light of truth enters into your heart, it will discover much that's wrong.

you'll look back upon your past life and you'll say, well, it's a huge love.

I see nothing but what calls for condemnation. Well, as the light ever thus shone into your soul, I say, has the light of truth ever shone into your heart to discover your nakedness, your poverty, your helplessness, your filthiness, because you'll discover that secret things will be brought to light.

[15 : 15] They may be hidden from creatures, but as they are known to God, they'll be brought that way upon your conscience.

God has commanded the light to shine out of darkness, and that's rather encouraging because we are apt to think that if we are to be made manifest as children of God, there must be something different in us to the usual.

we forget that we are all children of wrath, even as others, but if the light of truth shine into your heart, it will discover that you are a poor, lost, ruined, and undone sinner, and that you stand in need of a great salvation, nothing but God's omnipotent hand can reach your desperate case, oh, but you will say I've sinned, but you haven't sinned beyond the mercy of God.

I wouldn't minimize sin at all, but I do say this, beware of putting your sins above the power of God to save you from them and the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ to block them out where the Lord calls his light to shine, it will discover your blackness and it will discover the amazing grace of God and the light will shine the back of grace of which the Lord

Jesus Christ himself spoke out in that third chapter of John spoke as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so must the Son of Man be lifted up that those who ever believe in him should not perish but have everlasting life for God so loved the world the wonderful saying for the wondrous grace of God that he so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son that whosoever believed in him should not perish but have everlasting life that doesn't mean to say everybody's got a chance it doesn't speak about the chance oh that's

[19 : 18] God's suffering decree his way of saving sinners it was to send his only begotten Son into the world that sinners might live through him and to send his Holy Spirit down with power in his name to snatch poor sinners as brands from the burning oh we cannot do without the gift of the Holy Ghost it was as needful as the gift the unspeakable gift of Christ because otherwise not one of us would be saved but blessed be

God the same wondrous love that sent forth the holy begotten of the Father full of grace and truth to die in the place of poor wretched love ruined and undone sinners that same love sent forth the Holy Ghost so that souls might be quickened into life and prepared to receive the truth as it is in Jesus hence in our text God commanded there there is light the God who commanded the light to shine as shine he says in our hearts well now that's the work of the

Holy Ghost to cause the truth to penetrate obdurate hearts hearts perhaps that have been in the hands of God and who hated perhaps God's people and yet the time the appointed time rolls on a face not to propose but call by grace to change the heart renew the will and turn the feet to Zion's hill to work the Holy Ghost it isn't the work of free will it isn't the work of

Arminianism but it's the work of the Holy Ghost well if the Holy Ghost is working in your heart you may depend upon it you bring repentance you've got no repentance naturally your heart is a bed as hard as a nether millstone nothing perhaps neither judgments nor mercies can do this but when the spirit begins to hover over your heart all he causes his own truth to penetrate you won't be able to get rid of it it will be like a barbed arrow you know barbed arrow it's stuck in nothing can extricate it only by the cutting out of that arrow and so it is as the spirit of truth sends all his own truth not error not sentimental but he sends his truth and that truth is like an arrow like a barbed arrow it enters into the innumerable recesses of the heart perhaps some sin that you had forgotten and lost sight of but now rises like some specter and you feel and you feel that that sin alone would damn your soul you feel that that sin is sufficient to send you to that place where hope and mercy never can come but God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness shine into our hearts but blessed be God it isn't all law and terrors law and terrors do but harden all the time they work alone with a sense of blood both harden this dissolves the heart of stone and so where the

Holy Spirit comes as a way as a conviction so he comes to direct poor sinners to the bleeding wounds of our incarnate God that they may receive peace and healing oh I know it's a mystery great is the mystery of godliness but we don't want to make it any more mysterious than it is we'd rather simplify it if we could and I tell you this much if your sins have become burdensome to you and if

[27 : 06] Christ has become your desire that's the truth that the spirit of God has quickened your soul into life and so sure as he quickens your soul into life he will reveal in your heart what you are singing in our opening in he'll reveal the knowledge of a crucified redeemer upon which you will place your hope for a never ending eternity but then you'll say what have we to believe relative to the person of

Christ well you must believe this that Christ is God I cannot vouch and for his people cares for I pray to him as son and he is answered prayer but Paul speaks in this epistle the first epistle to the Corinthians of God making Christ unto us wisdom righteousness sanctification sanctification redemption in fact everything that is essential in the matter of salvation is treasured up in

Christ to be revealed in new time it may be line up and line line up and line here a little and there a little but what is necessary for you to know relative to the person of Christ I believe the Spirit of God will reveal you will reveal it to you you know the religion of Jesus Christ is a religion of revelation we know nothing except what the Spirit of truth reveals and all he does reveal the excellencies of Christ not perhaps so much in your earlier days but as you grow in grace and in the knowledge of

Jesus Christ you find that Christ becomes a most needful and a precious Savior to you oh I do hope that is the mark of grace that I have that there's a deepening of the need of Christ there's a deepening of the knowledge of Christ and there's a deepening I hope of the work of Christ because according to our text God who commanded the light to shine out of the sky in our heart to give mind you it's a gift from beginning to end that cuts out all duty say because it's a gift the gift of

God is eternal life and the gift of God is the revelation of the things concerning the person and the work of Jesus Christ that some poor soul may be ready to say but they'll might get this gift well there's only one way that I know and it's what the Lord Jesus Christ himself has said seek and ye shall find knock and it shall be open unto you ask and ye shall save so that's who receive the gift the spirit of God creates the need in the soul and then reveals

[33 : 02] Christ as being the way the truth and the life that no man cometh unto the father but by name God who commands the light shine out darkness out of all your dark experiences and you may have a very dark background but if the spirit of truth would shine into your heart and discover the person of Christ you know that he is mighty to save that he is able to save even to the uttermost those that come unto God by him that shine in our heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of

God in the thanks of Jesus Christ that is in the things of Christ in the truths of the everlasting God for all there's a glory that shines in them and sometimes shines forth in our heart all in not drawing what wonderful treatise on the glory of Christ and when it was about to be put to the press Dr.

Owen was dying and his friend Payne I suppose who had the charge of it went to him and told him that his book had been put to the press I said friend Payne he said I shall soon see the glory of Christ as I have never yet seen it so it is so the glory of Christ is revealed in his wondrous gospel in the offices that Christ bears and sustains and the character that he bears but of a greater glory is in heaven and the poet says there

I shall see his face and never never sin there from the rivers of his grace drink endless blessing in and then Paul ends he's a true gospel preacher he didn't live in the clouds and never come down to earth but he says we have this treasure in earth and vessels not angelic beings at all but in earth and vessels that our vessels are the earth earth I suppose the figure is that an earth and vessel would easily be broken but my friends if the

Lord has put his treasure in your earth and vessel he will keep that vessel until the time comes when it is consummated in glory so but we have to learn that we are in possession of just persons that souls that we are just poor helpless souls well I thought of that word in Peter sometimes all flesh is grass we are only blades of grass whoever we are whether we are ministers deacons or hearers or what not we are only blades in grass all flesh is grass and the glory of man is the flower of grass the grass withereth the flower thereof fadeeth away but the word of the

[38 : 48] Lord endureth forever and this is the word which by the gospel is preached to you so this treasure that's put in this earthen vessel will keep your soul till you at last him face to face shall save and then again it will help you bear the trials of the day that you're subjected to every day brings its trials more or less and therefore you need to be helped and where will you get that help from well I believe that some of us are true that our help cometh from above from the

God of all grace and goodness and glory Christ hath blessings to empower and raise to save thee from thy fears all love that fills is her sinner wipe away thy tears why are you afraid to come why afraid to tell thy case he will not pronounce thy doom smiles are seated on his face and Paul says my God shall supply all your need out of his riches in glory by Christ Jesus

I think I must leave the Lord bless the sentences that have been spoken for his name sake Amen