

# God Shined in our Hearts

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- [ 0 : 00 ] We're going to resume our public worship of God by singing to his praise from Psalm 51. Psalm 51 and at verse 5. Behold, I in iniquity was formed, the womb within. My mother also me conceived in guiltiness and sin. Behold, thou in the inward parts, with truth delighted art, and wisdom thou shalt make me know within the hidden part. Do thou with hyssop sprinkle me, I shall be cleansed so. Yea, wash thou me, then I shall be whiter than the snow. Of gladness and of joyfulness make me to hear the voice that so these very bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. All mine iniquities blot out, thy face hide from my sin. Create a clean heart, Lord renew a right spirit me within. Cast me not from thy sight, nor take thy Holy Spirit away.
- [ 1 : 15 ] Restore me thy salvation's joy. With thy free spirit me stay. And so on. We can sing these verses. Psalm 51 from verse 5. Behold, I in iniquity was formed, the womb within. Behold, I in iniquity was formed, the womb within. My mother lost, the womb within. My mother lost, the womb within. My mother lost, the womb within. My mother lost, the womb within. And guilty in guiltiness and sin. Behold, I in the Lord. Behold, I in the Lord. Behold, I in the Lord. Behold, I in the Lord. With with delighted heart. And this song, thou shalt make me know, Where then thou hidden heart.
- [ 2 : 35 ] Do thou with this love sprinkle me, I shall be pryncessed all. If thou washeth me and then I shall be whiter than the snow. Of cloudless hand of joyfulness, make me to hear the voice. That so in the able which thou hast broken, he'll rejoice. All my illiquities, O judge, thy face I from my sin.
- [ 3 : 56 ] Create thy dream, our Lord, in you. Arise, let me within. Cast me not from thy side nor tear, thy holy strength away. Reveal, in you. Arise, let me within. Let us join together in prayer. Let us pray. O Lord of God, as we call upon your name in Eppelis, to be confident that the God whose name is upon our lips is a God to whom worship is due, and that we are not lost to your sight. We believe that at this evening hour there may be many who are met in your name, just as we are met in your name here in this place.
- [ 5 : 35 ] Our number may be small and insignificant as far as human eye can see, but we know that there are gatherings such as this in our villages, in our towns, in our cities, and in some places where we would expect many to be found.

There are few. And in exceptional circumstances, there are gatherings that have a collective that far exceeds expectation because of the simple fact that you are at work within these communities and you are quickening and enlivening and creating a desire after God that would not otherwise be there.

But it is to you, O God, we are gathered into your presence before a throne of grace.

And while there may be many voices, many tongues, many creeds and cultures represented, all find expression in the fact that we are here at your bidding.

And we are assured of receiving a hearing because we are here in Christ's name. And because it is in His name that we seek your face, that we find that confidence that anything that is done by us in His name and with His strength and with His spirit imparted to us that we can seek whatever it is that you lay upon our heart and especially as it applies to the glory of your great name.

[ 7 : 58 ] So enable us to look to yourself, to open the eyes of our understanding that what we seek for your glory is conveyed to us within the scriptures of the Old and New Testament.

and we pray that you would lift yourself up before our mind's eye as a God who is all-glorious, a God who is high and lifted up.

In fact, you defy our ability to create from memory or from our own creative instincts to represent a God in the way that your word suggests to us you are to be found.

You are a God who cannot be seen with the naked eye. You are spirit and yet you possess a glory that would fill us with awe when you descended to the mount where your people were gathered.

They were filled with terror as the fire and the cloud enveloped that mountain and declared your presence.

[ 9 : 33 ] And as you spoke out of that holy mountain and made your presence felt the thunderings and the lightnings that conveyed to them who were there the presence of a holy God was such that they were filled with terror and hid their faces from you.

We pray that you would preserve us from such an encounter thankful that you have a person at your right hand who is Jesus Christ who is the holy other one the son of the most high God who is there at your right hand as the great high priest of his people and yet in the glory of his person he too is to be admired and feared because he possesses the word of life to all who would seek it and to that end we pray that we would have a felt experience of being in his presence as our great intercessor as the advocate with the father as the mediator between God and man in the garb of the high priest even the great high priest we give thanks that his glory is not overshadowed by any and that we can seek him even at this evening hour evening hour so we pray as we worship together as we pray together as we wait together upon your face and favour to be revealed to us do not disappoint us speak to every one of us collectively speak to us individually where we are you know where we are not just as far as the locality of colonies free church is concerned you know where we are spiritually whether we are close to you or far distant from you whether our heart is filled with this world and the things that this world has to offer or whether we are fixed upon the things of God help us to draw near that you may draw near to us that is the promise that we receive come to God come draw near to God and he will draw near to you and we pray that we would be able each one to do that so mark us out as our favourite people by revealing your face to us even at this time of worship bless our congregation bless our community remember each and every home and family represented here and many that are not we pray that you would reveal yourself to us as the God of grace and the God of mercy blessing our children our children's children the young and the old amongst us those who are weak and infirm those who are confined to their homes because of the ravages of old age those who are being tended by others whether it is in their homes or in care homes or in hospital we remember them to you and pray for them that their needs be met not just temporal needs but spiritual needs may your blessing be upon those who seek to deliver care to them our nurses our doctors our care assistants those who have a special responsibility for the needs of the infirm amongst us remember those who are grieving and sorrowful we are in a time of sadness within our community day after day we are reminded of the fact that death is not a stranger to us your voice is being heard almost on a daily basis touching the lives of those we know and some we know nothing of you take from our midst the elderly we take from our midst the youth and we see that in different ways and it reminds us of the awfulness of sin

and what it has brought into the experience of mankind so sanctify such visitations to us that we would look to the God who is God over all the Prince of Peace the God who is able to bestow life even in the midst of the darkness of sorrow we pray that you would remember every single one whose heart is heavy at this time heal the sick we pray bind their wounds in the sense that they can know that there is healing for them and we remember especially any for whom that healing process is not possible any who may be dealing with terminal illness and we know that there are some always of that kind in different places and we pray for them that you would sustain them in their soul that you would minister to them that their eye would be upon Christ the great physician of souls so remember us as a community remember as a part of this world in which we live that may be sorrowful and exceedingly troubled exceedingly troubled by the things that are happening in the world the turmoil that we see ongoing in different parts of the world we are still seeing the ravages of the pandemic and we know that

Covid is still rife amongst us and we would pray for any who have succumbed to that illness that they may be recovered from it especially any who may have a more severe reaction to it we pray Lord that you would remember the war done areas of the world in places that war has been going on for a long time places like Syria and places that are long forgotten where there is civil war and civil strife ongoing Afghanistan is no longer something some place that is often on our lips we are more focused on the ravages of war in the Ukraine and that without surprise we pray Lord that whatever it is wherever it is that the God of peace would stretch out your arm above this world and speak peace to it and that you would turn the hearts of those who are rabble rousers and warmongers and turn them instead to the

God who is able to still the storm and bring calm grant to us a praying spirit for ourselves and for others continue to watch over his blessing the world of truth to us as we read it as we reflect upon it may we have a place of lodgment for it in our hearts not just to contemplate it in the passing but to seek ways by which we might apply it to our lives forgive us every sin in Jesus name Amen we're going to hear God's word as we have it in the of Paul to the Corinthians and we can read chapter 4 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 therefore seeing we have this ministry as we have received mercy we faint not but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of

[ 17 : 53 ] God deceitfully but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God but if our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God should shine unto them for we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves you servants for Jesus' sake 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 but we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us we are troubled on every side yet not distressed we are perplexed but not in despair persecuted but not forsaken cast down but not destroyed always bearing about in the body the dying of the

Lord Jesus that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body for we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh so then death worketh in us but life in you we having the same spirit of faith according as it is written I believed and therefore have I spoken we also believe and therefore speak knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus and shall present us with you for all things are for your sakes that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God for which cause we faint not but though our outward man perish yet the inward man is renewed day by day for our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory while we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen for the things which are seen are temporal but the things which are not seen are eternal amen and may the lord add his blessing to a reading of his word to his name be the praise we're going to sing now from psalm 107 psalm 107 at verse 23 and sing down to verse 30 to go to sea in ships and in great waters trading be within the deep these men

God's works and his great wonder see for he commands and forth in haste the stormy tempest flies which makes the sea with rolling waves aloft to swell and rise they mount to heaven and to the depths they do go down again their soul doth faint and melt away with trouble and with pain they reel and stagger like one drunk but there would same they be then they to God in trouble cry who them from streets doth free the storm is changed into a can at his command and will so that the waves which raged before now quiet are and still then are they glad because at rest and quiet now they be so to the heaven he then brings which they desired to see so on let us sing these verses psalm 107 verse 23 who go to sea in ships and in great waters trading be to go to sea in ships and dead they waters in be within the deep these men thoughts words that is with wonder sea for he commands and forth in haves the stormy tempest bright which takes the sea with boiling waves out of his left and bright he forever is

Then to earth again, they take or die again.

Their soul of faith, the man's away, will travel and with pain.

[ 24 : 11 ] They will have stronger, like one love, but there will gently be.

Then they took all their crown of pride, where the land of sin was free.

The storm is changing till I've come.

The storm is changing till I've come. So thou the wind with rich before the quiet are come still.

Then our day, God, because of fresh and quiet, how could they be?

[ 25 : 36 ] So thou the wind with me, the wind brings, which they desire to see.

We can turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 4.

And we can read again at verse 5. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves, you servants, for Jesus' sake.

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.

For God, who commanded the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

[ 27 : 08 ] The necessity, the pressing necessity that the apostle Paul recognises is his to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And he acknowledges that it is not only something that marks him out as a preacher of the gospel, but that it is something that marks out all who have to preach Christ.

And there's no question, but that is where the emphasis lies within this passage as a whole.

We know that the preaching of the gospel is all important. If you read the gospels, you start the gospel reading there about the preaching of John the Baptist.

John the Baptist was a forerunner of Jesus Christ. His message was to repent and believe in the kingdom of God.

[ 28 : 25 ] Repent for the kingdom of God is at hand. That was his message. When John was sent to prison, taken to prison, Jesus took the mantle of John in that respect.

And he preached the gospel, even though he himself is the heart of the gospel. His message to those who heard him preach was repent and believe the gospel.

And he was under the same compunction to proclaim the message of salvation to sinners.

And all sinners needed to hear this message from God, that there was a need to turn from sin to God, to turn to God.

And I think that's important to bear in mind. We can't ignore it. We can't overlook it. But looking at the words of our text this evening, the emphasis I want to take from it really has to do with the way that the gospel comes into the experience of the hearer.

[ 29 : 45 ] Of the gospel. And Paul is not just a preacher of the gospel. He is someone who heard the gospel and as a result of the gospel that he heard, experienced conversion, experienced new life from above.

And we remind ourselves of that fact because at the heart of what Paul has to say is his own personal experience. It's strange when we think about it.

When you think about the fact of these three preachers we mentioned. We mentioned John the Baptist. A preacher probably endowed and gifted with great power.

And yet we cannot number his converts. They certainly did not number more than those who refused to believe the gospel that he preached.

When you think of the preaching of Jesus Christ. You would imagine that because of who he was. That those who heard him preach would be converted.

[ 30 : 58 ] And all of them who heard the word preached. That they would respond in faith. But that's not the way it is. That's not the account the gospel gives to us. Just as many, although there were many for a time who chose to follow Jesus.

Not all of them were converted as a result of his preaching. Which may seem strange. Many for a time who heard the gospel. Many are called but few are chosen.

Many hear the word of God but not all of those who hear God's word respond to it in faith. For whatever reason. Many are resistant to it.

Even in our own congregations here. The gospel has been preached now for many, many years. And yet far few, far less respond in faith to the gospel than who believe in it.

I was just glimpsing at the words of the late Mulder Macaulay in the burning bush in Carloway. And he lists the way the revival came into the community here and in Carloway.

[ 32 : 16 ] And how for a brief time there was an interest in the gospel. And there were conversions.

Plenty. But not everybody was converted. Not everybody came to faith. And after a time the interest in the gospel waned.

And that's under God's hand. We need to understand that. Whatever reason there is for it, we're not given that reason. But that does not negate the responsibility that there is for the preacher of the gospel to preach the gospel.

Or for the hearer of the gospel to respond to the gospel in faith. And that's what we need to remind ourselves of.

There's a famous book that was once written many, many years ago by a preacher by the name of Thomas Boston.

[ 33 : 19 ] And at the very early age, I think he was just 23 or 24, at the beginning of his ministry, he wrote this book. A soliloquy on man fishing.

A soliloquy on the art of man fishing. If you want to find out what a soliloquy is, you can get yourself a dictionary and study it for yourself.

It's really an individual's explanation on this topic. And it's interesting what was said about Boston as a preacher.

He preached as if the angels were looking in on him. And his little country congregation.

And as if he actually expected to be carried home by them. Before another sermon day came forward.

[ 34 : 29 ] He preached as if the angels were looking in on him and his little country congregation. In other words, those who heard him preach heard somebody who was zealous and somebody who was alive for the Lord.

But that didn't mean that his preaching was in any way producing at that time a great fruit. But his work, this soliloquy is interesting for those who do preach the gospel.

And part of what he says is this. He's teaching those who are going to preach. He's preaching to himself really. Teaching himself. Talking to himself. How am I going to go about this preaching of the gospel?

As a fisher of men. And one thing that he said. Which every one of us should remember. Which I suppose explains in part why not everybody believes the gospel.

He said that the fisher of men must know where the fish are hiding.

[ 35 : 45 ] The fisher of men must know where the fish are hiding. Now, what does that say to you? Well, it tells you that there's a knack to preaching the gospel.

But it also tells you why that knack needs to be put into practice. Because inevitably, those to whom the gospel is preached do not want to be caught in the net of the gospel.

They do not want to be converted. They do not want to be born again. They do not want to be numbered amongst God's people. Which to the converted seems strange.

Seems absolutely ridiculous. You would think that most people who are under the gospel would want the gospel to touch their lives savingly and effectively.

And change their lives completely. Because they know what their lives were like. But that's really where I want to begin.

[ 36 : 58 ] With the emphasis that we have within the scripture on the need to preach the gospel. As we see it in the life of John the Baptist. As we see it in the life of the Lord.

As we see it here in the life of the Apostle Paul. And every other preacher of the gospel. We need to try and understand what is going on in the heart and mind of the individual.

When God's word is being preached. And I'm going to speak to the converted. Because it's important for the converted to have this knowledge.

And to have this knowledge before your mind. Because I think that very often in the experience of the Church of Christ.

We live in times where there are peaks and there are troughs. There are highs and there are lows. And when there are peaks there are dangers which accompany the peaks.

[ 38 : 05 ] There are dangers where the carelessness can creep in. And you can overlook the fact. You may be persuaded that everything in the garden is rosy.

Everything is going to go well with you. There are never going to be any hiccups in the journey of the Christian life. But then when you're in a trough.

It's even worse. Nothing is ever going to be better than it is now. Nothing. There's never going to be a recovery. You can have it at an individual level.

You can have it at a congregational level. You can have it at a denominational level. You can have it at a worldwide church level. Where the assessment of the church life is one of no possibility of recovery.

It's never going to be like it was before. It's never going to achieve the same heights that there were before. We're never going to have times of revival that they had in Carlyway before.

[ 39 : 24 ] Or in this congregation here. 50, 60 years ago. These things are things of the past. There are never going to be these things again. We're in the trough.

And because we're in the trough. We're thinking. Well. It's never going to be the way it was. But we need to remind ourselves at all times.

That the gospel that is being preached to us. And the gospel that we are expected to respond to. The gospel that we're given to preach. Is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And if we lose our focus on him. If we lose our grasp of what he is about. What he is doing. What he has done.

Even in your life. If you're a believer. Then you really are in a dangerous place. So in this context here. I want to emphasize three particular things.

[ 40 : 25 ] I think I've done it. Because it's been on my mind greatly. In recent sermons. In recent talks.

And that is emphasize. To myself. And to yourself. That wherever you find a Christian. Whoever that Christian is.

They are Christian. Because God has been at work in their life. Even though you're in a trough. Even though the church is seemingly on a downward spiral.

Even though things are just crawling. And moving on. And moving on. In comparison with other times of great blessing. Things are not the way we would want them to be.

We need to remind ourselves of one truth. And that is. God's church. Is a church that is a church. That he has created for himself.

[ 41 : 24 ] He has brought this church into being. Every member of the church. Every believer within the church. Every person who has come to a knowledge of Christ. Have done so.

Because of Christ's intervention. In their life. In our life. We need to remind ourselves of that fact.

We need to remind ourselves. Secondly. Of the true condition. Of that person. Who became a convert. Before they were converted.

And as a result of their being converted. You look at this person. That Paul is speaking about here. He is speaking about himself.

As a preacher. No doubt. But I believe that he is referring. To his own experience. He is remembering. What it was like for himself. He is remembering.

[ 42 : 21 ] How he. Who was once. Not just. Somebody who was oblivious. To Christ. In the sense of.

Knowing him as saviour. He was somebody. Who was hell bent. On destroying his name. And all who knew him. And here Paul says.

God who commanded. The light to shine out of darkness. Has shined in our hearts. He is able to speak to them. As those who share the same experience.

As he has. So he is describing to us. A heart. A heart. That is dark. Into which God's light shone.

And when God's light shone. Into his dark heart. What was presented. To him. In the light. That God shone. Well he tells us.

[ 43 : 21 ] It gave the light. Of the knowledge. Of the glory. Of God. In the face. Of Jesus Christ. Christ. And that's something. That every Christian.

At some point. Have come to possess. They may be. Still progressing. In the knowledge. That they have. Of Jesus Christ.

I doubt. If any Christian. Present here. Knows everything. There is to know. About Christ. In fact. I know it. For a fact. That there is. Much to be.

Discovered. About the passion. Of Jesus. About. What he has. For us. What he has. Prepared for us. What he has. Yet. To. Give to us.

In this life. Of Christ. In the world. I think. We tried to say. A little about this. On Thursday evening.

[ 44 : 18 ] But. Nevertheless. There are two things. I think. That. That. That I. Find. Within. This world. Of ours. That.

There are many things. I suppose. That concern. Concern you. And concern me. I suppose. But on the. On the spiritual. Landscape.

Of this world. There is a serious. Blight. I'll just name. Two of them. And I think. They are serious. Blights.

On the spiritual. Landscape. And that. First one. I would say. Is that. That many. Today. Are. Not.

Giving. The God. Of heaven. The place. That is. Rightly. His. God. They have. A low. View. Of God. They have.

[ 45 : 13 ] A limited. View. Of God. They have. A. A distilled. Understanding. Of. The kind. Of God. That is. Their God.

Not talking. About the world. Here. The world. Doesn't know. God. The world. Have an invented. Image. Of God. They have. Many. Gods. And they have. Gods.



Of their own. Making. I am talking. About. The Christian. View. Of God. Which. Is. Suffering. Because. Of. A number.

Of reasons. God. Has. Been. Diminished. In the way. That we see him. Now that. Has a great. Effect. On us. Because.

When we. When we. Do not. See. The glory. Of God. In the way. The scripture. Portrays it. To us. Then there is a danger.

[ 46 : 07 ] That we. That we. Think that. This God. Is incapable. Of. Doing anything. In this world. That would change.

The direction. The world. Is going in. If you have a small God. If you have a small understanding. Of who God is. You think that.

That everything. Is. Going to continue. As it is. That's not the image. That Paul conveys. What he wants us.

To understand. Is that. This God. Is a great God. Similarly. If you think. Of the. The dangerous. And prevailing.

View. Of sin. That is in the world. It is. It is. It is. It is. It is something. That is. Of the greatest.

[ 47 : 04 ] Danger. To the church. When. The commonality. Of sin. Or. The. The every.

When. How can I put it. If we see. The prevalence. Of sin. In the world. And. We see.

The acceptability. Of many sins. In the world. That. Pervasive. View. Affects. Our thinking. So that.

We. Too. Succumb. To. Thinking. That. Really. The church. View. Of sin. The Bible. View. Of sin. Is. Really. Too. Extreme.

That. Again. Has. To do. With. Our image. Of God. Our God. Is. A great. God. Our God. Is. A holy. God. Our God. Is. The holy. God. Whose. Whose.

[ 47 : 58 ] Presence. Persuades. The angels. To veil. Their faces. The sinless. Angels. The angels. Who never. Experienced. Sin. In their life. They hide.

Themselves. From the face. Of God. Because. He is. A holy. God. Now. The Christian. Cannot. Afford. To allow. Such.

Thinking. To influence. Our thinking. Because. When we. Treat. God. As if.

He is. Just. Another. Being. Who is. Slightly. Elevated. To ourselves. Maybe. Just. Under the. Angels. Over the. Angels. Rather. Little bit. Greater.

Than the. Angels. And. We think. Of sin. As something. That is. Well. Paul. Saw it. In his own day. God. Was somebody. Who was. Prepared.

[ 48 : 50 ] To wink. At sin. But. You can't. Think. Of God. Like that. The. Unbeliever.

May live. His life. As if. That is. The kind. Of God. That they. Want. To be dealt. With. By. God. God. God. But. One. Thing. That sin. Has.

Is the potential. To keep you. From Christ. And. When. An. Unbeliever. Does not. Comprehend.

That. It has. Dire. Consequences. For. The. Unbeliever. But. When. The. Believer. Begins. To think. Like that. Then. It.

It. Has. Serious. Implications. For. The. Gospel. That is. Preached. The necessity. For. Believing. It. The need. That there is. To. To. Embrace. Christ. And.

[ 49 : 43 ] Go to. Christ. And. Believe. In. Christ. Because. That is. Your. Salvation. And. As. A. Believer. You. Know. What. It was. Like.

For. You. When. You. Came. To. Discover. This. Christ. For. Yourself. You. Did. Not. Do.  
So. Without. Experiencing. At the. Same. Time. The. Ugliness. Of. Sin. And.

The. Consequences. That. Living. In. Sin. Continuing. In. Sin. Dying. Dying. With. Sin.  
Enthroned.

Would. Have. For. You. A. Preacher. By. The. Name. Of. David. Paul. David. Tripp.

He. In. His. Writing. Is. Talking. About. The. All. Factored. And. He's. Writing. To.  
Christians. He's. Preaching. To. Christians.

[ 50 : 36 ] He's. Writing. To. Them. Telling. About. The. Need. That. There. Is. For. The. Christian.  
Not. To. Lose. This. Sight. Of. God. Where. God. Is.

To. Be. Held. In. All. And. In. One. Of. His. Passage. Is. He's. Taking. The. The. Reader.  
Back. To. The. Beginning. Back.

To. The. Fall. And. This. Is. What. He. Says. Adam. And. Eve. Weren't. Just. After. God's.  
Forbidden. Fruit. They. Were. After. God's.

Position. He. Says. They. Were. After. God's. Position. They. Wanted. To. Be. Not. Like.  
God. That. They. Wanted.

To. Be. God. They. Wanted. To. Be. Divine. And. This. Is. What. Sin. Does. To. Us. All. At.  
A. Deep. And. Often. A.

[ 51 : 27 ] Noticed. Level. Sin. Replaces. Worship. Of. God. With. Worship. Of. Self. It. Replaces.  
Submission. With. Self. Rule. It. Replaces. Gratitude.

With. Demands. For. More. Faith. With. Self. Reliance. Vertical. Joy. With. Horizontal.  
Envy. That.

Replaces. A. Rest. In. God's. Sovereignty. With. A. Quest. For. Personal. Control. There's  
a lot to be taken in for that but what it essentially is saying is that where sin is reigning in  
the life of an individual God is displaced and if we allow God to be displaced in any area of  
our life it is destructive.

It is damaging. It most of all when it comes to our understanding of where the gospel  
works how the gospel works how it worked in our own heart we need to be reminded that  
the God who took me from sin was an all powerful God and the reason he had to take me  
from sin.

It was because of his own perfect hatred for sin. And what we need to remind ourselves of  
as Christians.

[ 53 : 00 ] Remember as Christians. Is that here in this passage what we read is that there is nothing  
less than divine power at work.

That is no less than the power that was in exercise when God created the world. No less.

No less. And you need to remind yourself of that because the lie of the enemy of your soul  
is that you have come to be where you are today by a natural process.

You just got tired of sin and now you want to be a saint. You got tired of living in the world  
and now you want to go to heaven.

You were following a path that you recognised had destruction at its end and you decided  
at some point on a whim to change the path you were on.

[ 54 : 06 ] Or were you not good? Didn't you do well? Not one single Christian believer here did that  
of his own path.

Just as the world did not just happen. The world did not spontaneously combust whatever  
those who believe in creation or creation as something that is a myth.

The world didn't just happen. The world didn't just happen. And you as a Christian did not  
just happen. And if you want others to believe that, the same must be true for them.

And you must remind yourself of that. So when you see sinners who are with you in this world, when you meet with them on a day to day basis, when they are in your home and in your family, you need to remember that what changed you can change them.

What quickened them, what brought life that is spiritual into their experience is the same thing needful that they must encounter.

[ 55 : 27 ] And that is what Paul is saying here. As far as the preacher of the gospel is concerned, this is the message that he has to go out with. Convinced that if he doesn't preach this gospel, people will go on as they are and they will go blindly into a lost eternity.

Because he has first hand experience about that blindness. God must shine his light into their heart.

Now do you remember, Christian, what kind of person you were until that happened? Do you remember what you were like?

Or are you embarrassed even to think about it? Your mindset? Your desire? Your whole motive for living?

Was it for God? Or for self? It was for self. Because God did not even enter into your thinking at that level anyway. Maybe he was somewhere in the background.

[ 56 : 42 ] If somebody asked you a question, and the question was simply this, how are you doing today? How are you doing today?

And your answer would have been, not too bad. Not too bad. I've heard people who are on their deathbed.

and their answer to such a question, oh well, there's a people a lot worse than I am.

People, and they're staring death in the face, and they're saying, oh, there's people a lot worse than I am.

And maybe that's the mindset that so many are in, in this world. That's what many people believe. In a spiritual sense, oh, there's worse than me.

And you were like that. And I was like that. And that safe place that I was in, with other people worse than me, maybe there was one or two, not many, who are better.

[ 57 : 50 ] But, given the odds, had a good chance. Well, I think that we must grasp the truth, and remember the truth, that until God shone his light into our heart, our thinking was wrong.

If you go back to verse 4, what does he say? He says there, In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

I think that's a significant passage. He speaks of the gospel light that cannot be seen by eyes that are blinded by the God of this world.

And that is how it is. But by the might of God, by the power of God, by the enlivening of his spirit, the blinded eyes are able to see.

And that's what God does through the preaching of the word, through the testimony of his saints, through the direct imposition of the power of God's word upon hearts that are close to it.

[ 59 : 19 ] Sometimes people feel frustrated when they hear this and they say, That's not fair. I want to be involved in this. I want to have something to do with this.

I want... I want... And the I is sitting on the throne and the I must really be the one that is in control of what is happening. If I am going to be saved, I must be at the heart of salvation.

But God is saying in the gospel, Christ is at the heart of salvation. And the sinner who is quickened, who is converted, who is born again, very quickly realises that if salvation was left to him, they would still be lost.

They would still be in their sin. They would still be blind. They would still be without hope, without God in the world. Let me quote to you the words of Charles Hodge.

God, he says, illuminates the mind so that we apprehend that light which flows from the knowledge of the glory of God. It is the glory of God as revealed in Christ that men are, by the illumination of the Holy Ghost, enabled to see.

[ 60 : 40 ] This is God doing something. And when you and I think about our salvation, thinking about where we are today, we're in the trough.

We're not despondent, we're not despairing, but we're not far away from it. We're struggling as Christians to see how this world in which we live, that is so dark and so much in the grip of evil, that God is not really revealing his arm as he could or should be doing to our thinking.

And we allow such thoughts to influence our Christianity and our witness and our testimony. But what these words say to us is that you, the Christian, have seen the glory of Christ.

It was revealed to you by God. And as you were face to face with Christ and saw his glory in the gospel of his grace, you were able to see more of the glory of God.

And only God can do that. Paul goes on to say in this epistle of it, somewhere else he says it anyway, repeatedly he says it, the natural man cannot see the things of God.

[ 62 : 19 ] The natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God. And if you have received, if you have seen, if you have grasped the truth, again, can I emphasize, this is not by reason of your wisdom.

Well, it is good for us to reflect on Bible doctrines and we should be doing it more often. We should be rethinking about the truths that are contained in the various doctrines.

Trying to wrestle with them, grapple with them, get them to make sense to us. But we must remember that the true knowledge that we have of the things that matter must come from God.

I remembered the words of Hugh Martin and he's talking about really the dependence that the believer has on God's truth and the revelation of that truth in the hand of the Spirit.

He's talking here about forgiveness, for example. Forgiveness, he says, as a privilege, actual and real forgiveness must be not one of the thoughts of your spirit, but one of the thoughts of God's Spirit.

[ 63 : 42 ] The thoughts of God, not transient and inefficient like your thoughts, but substantial, effectual, eternal.

The thoughts of God which in their self-realizing realizing things of God, forgiveness is to be a real experience in the part of the believer.

Now what he means by that is you can, I can maybe understand what forgiveness is like, but when the Spirit of God is at work as he is here, presenting Christ to the heart, presenting Christ in the light of God's countenance to the heart, he is showing us what forgiveness is all about.

It's not forgiveness the way we say I forgive you to a friend or to even an enemy. There's more to it than that. the natural man needs to understand that God has something to say to them more than the natural man can comprehend.

I remember the late Callum Allison speaking once about a surprise he got when he visited a home in the morning and they were having worship I probably mentioned it before and they were having family worship and then they were discussing the words that they had read at worship but the most surprising thing was not that the discussion took place but that those who were doing the discussing were not converted and not professing Christian people to my knowledge one of them did come to faith shortly before they died but those others who were partaking continued as they were but with the limited understanding they had they were conversing debating entering into the truth of God with all that they could muster but they were lacking what the spirit of

[ 65 : 54 ] God can give to the believer and when the spirit comes that's what Paul is saying when it does take place when the light falls upon Christ and through Christ upon God glory ensues the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in Christ Jesus in his face whatever that means there's some opinions concerning it but what I would say to use this through Christ in the gospel you become acquainted with God himself you become acquainted with God himself and that's what the believer has to remember that's what the believer has to constantly remind himself of as a believer you haven't certainly become an MA in theology by virtue of your fantastic grip of scripture that is naturally begotten it is something that is spiritual something that is constantly constantly emerging and something that is developing

I'm sure that there are Christians here today and they've been Christians for many years and they would say to you that maybe just recently they've seen Christ through something that has occurred in their life through some providence through some engagement with God's word through the light of his word whatever they have seen facets of glory of God in Christ Jesus that they did not know existed because we're in the university that is of God's making now you're a student Christian you're a student and you continue as long as you're in this world to be a student you won't matriculate until the day you close your eyes in death you won't depart you won't graduate rather and matriculate when you close in with Christ by faith but you graduate the day he calls you to be with himself and the gospel is calling others to become part of the same college the same school the same

God that called you that quickened you that gave you such insight such knowledge is able to give others the same knowledge the same desire that you have surely your desire is for Christ your love is to Christ your love is to his people and you want to embrace others in that fold if you don't there's something federal well remember it because you have access to God by way of the throne of grace and you can remind yourself that God needs you that you need God to to show more of himself to you as you are today perhaps if you are despondent if you are weary if you are uncertain if you are whatever you know where you are you know what God needs to do do you go to him to tell him and what you want him to do for you you are more persuaded than anything that he can do it for others and that's what we need to remember that he would work in the lives of those who are still as verse four puts it blinded by the

God of this world unable to see oh well there's a master surgeon here who can take away every cataract that is on the blinded eyes of the world every one of them and don't despair of asking for them that they may see what you have seen let us pray Lord hear our prayers work in us and through us and in the lives of those who are with us the short journey that we have in this world grant mercy for our many sins cleanse us in the blood of Jesus Christ we ask God in him amen our closing psalm is psalm 84 psalm 84 and we're singing from verse 8 Lord God of hosts my prayer hear O Jacob's God give hear see God how shield look on the face of thine anointed dear for in thy courts one day excels a thousand rather in my God's house will

I keep adored and dwell in tensile sin for God the Lord's son and shielded grace and glory give and will withhold no good from them that uprightly do live O thou that art the Lord of hosts that man is truly blessed who by assured confidence on thee alone doth rest these verses Lord God of hosts my prayer hear O Jacob's God give see God out shield look on the face of the anointed dear for in thy course one day excels the passion rather than my

[ 72 : 35 ]    God God has with my keep adored and prayer in tensile sin for God the Lord's a son and cheer in his grace and glory give and well with all no good from him that God might lead to live O thou that are the Lord of hosts and man is to be blessed through by a sure of the ends for him alone of rest and abide with you all now and always amen