

## 9.1.22 pm

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Date: 09 January 2022

Preacher: Duncan MacPherson

[ 0 : 00 ]     Good evening everybody and a warm welcome to our service this evening and to the folks who are online. I think the intimations this morning were fairly straightforward, so we have the prayer meeting on Wednesday night.

As usual, it will be on Zoom for the current period. And then on Friday, just to note with the Young People's Clubs, it's only rooted that it's on this Friday from 6.30 to 8.30.

And then next Sunday, both service should be led by the minister, God willing. So let us commence our worship once again this evening.

And we're going to sing verses from Psalm 27. Psalm 27, I'm from the Sing Psalms version. The Lord's my Saviour and my light, who will make me dismayed?

The Lord's the stronghold of my life. Why should I be afraid? We'll be thinking about light in our service this evening. So let's sing these verses, verses 1 to 6, to God's praise.

[ 1 : 04 ]     The Lord's my Saviour and my light, who will make me dismayed?

The Lord's the stronghold of my life. Why should I be afraid?

When evil doers threaten me to take my life away? When evil doers threaten me to take my life away, My adversaries and my foes will stumble in the day.

For though an army helps me in, my heart will feel no dead.

Though more against me should arise, I will lift up my head.

[ 2 : 39 ]     One thing I'll plead before the Lord, and this I'll seek a ways, That I may come within God's house, and dwell there all my years.

The joy, the beauty of the Lord, I constantly may gaze, And in His house may seek to know direction in His ways.

For in His dwelling He will keep me safe in troubled days.

Within His dwelling He will keep me safe in the day. Within His dwelling He will keep me safe in the day. And not the rock will be raised.

My head will then be lifted high above my enemies.

[ 4 : 25 ]     And in His death I'll sacrifice with shouts of joy and praise.

Let us pray. Lord our Father, we thank you for the privilege of coming into your house on your day once again.

And we pray that we would come today, and that we would come every day, In the attitude of the psalmist, who had it as the prime thing in his own heart, To come into your presence, into your house, and to gaze upon your beauty.

And we pray, Lord God, that we would be enabled this day to see the beauty of the gospel. To see the beauty of our Saviour, and the beauty and majesty of our God.

Lord, we thank you that you are the God who reigns. You are the God who is supreme. You are the God who created the heavens and the earth. You are the God who is present with us now.

- [ 5 : 39 ] And you are the God who is disposing all things. Every action of every man, woman, and child upon this earth is working towards the ultimate end, Of bringing glory to your name.
- And Lord, we pray and we long for the day when Christ returns in glory. Lord, to bring an end to sin.
- And Lord, to usher in the eternal kingdom and all its reality for all of your people. We thank you, Lord, that we are able to come, Because you have called us out of darkness into the light of the gospel.
- And we thank you, Lord, that you continue to send out preachers and missionaries with your word To the far corners of the earth to share the glorious truth of Jesus Christ.
- And we pray, Lord God, that as we meet tonight, That, Lord, your spirit would be working not only here, But in congregations throughout our land and throughout our world, That would display the majesty and the glory of your name.
- [ 6 : 48 ] And that, Lord, you would be calling more of those who are lost. And in the darkest of darkness. And that you would bring them into the lightness and the brightness of the gospel of Christ.
- We thank you, Father, that you have a perfect plan. And we pray, Lord God, that you would unveil that plan to the nations. To show the nations in a day when unbelief is rampant.
- That, Lord, in fact, you are God. And that you are in control of all things. Lord, we pray for your blessing. Upon the persecuted church tonight.
- And we pray that you would uphold those who are suffering for the name of Christ. We pray where they are in the dark dungeons. Where they are suffering beatings.
- Persecution. The loss of families and homes. That, Lord, they would be able to rejoice in the knowledge that Christ is Lord. And that your church has not forgotten them.
- [ 7 : 49 ] Lord, we pray that you would build up your cause. In such places as China and Afghanistan. And Iran and Iraq. Lord, where there is intense persecution.
- And we pray, Lord, that you would bless your people in those places and elsewhere throughout the world. That, Lord, they would come to know you in a deeper and a greater way as a result of your revealing yourself through your word.
- Lord, we pray for our own country at this time. And we remember all those who continue to work to bring the current pandemic to an end. We pray, Lord God, that you would bless all the medical personnel, all the carers.
- We pray, Lord, that you provide comfort for those who mourn for lost ones. And we pray, Father, that you would come close to many. And you would reveal yourself to them in their distress.
- We pray, Lord, that you would enable them to see the way through these difficult times. But we pray above all that you grant them spiritual wisdom.
- [ 8 : 58 ] That, Lord, they may yet repent of their ways. And that they may call upon your name. And seek your guidance and your blessing upon what they are doing.
- For, Lord, you are the one who indeed is in control. And you are the one, Lord, who gives us knowledge and gives us answers to so many difficult things in life.
- And we pray, Lord, that you would reveal more ways of treating COVID and of bringing the pandemic to an end. Father, we pray that you would bless those in our own community who have the disease at this time.
- And ask that you would protect them and prevent any from dying. And we pray above all, Lord, that as people struggle with it, that, Lord, they would indeed look to Christ.

And recognizing the shortness of life. The fact that you promised none of us another day. And the fact, Lord God, that today is a day when salvation can come to any home.

[ 10 : 04 ] We pray, Lord, for those who are mourning lost ones within our own community tonight. We remember again the Gunn family and pray for your blessing upon them. Lord, we pray that you would strengthen and uphold them.

And may they be able to look to Christ as their salvation. Lord, we pray for Ina again in hospital and for Angus Alec.

And for others who may be in a similar situation. We pray that their trust would be solely in Christ. And that, Lord, your presence would strengthen and uphold them in times of difficulty.

And, Lord, we pray for each of us here now that our hearts and our minds would be open to listen to your word. And to rejoice in your truth.

And to receive it into our hearts. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. We shall sing once more. This time from Mission Praise.

[ 11 : 07 ] Hymn number 439. Hymn number 439. Lord of all being, thrown afar. Thy glory flames from sun and star.

Center and soul of every sphere. Yet to each loving heart I near. Sun of our life, thy quickening rays. Sheds on our path the glow of day. Star of our hope, thy softened light.

Cheers the long watches of the night. Now let's sing this hymn to God's praise. Hymn number 539. Hymn number 539. Hymn number 539.

Hymn number 539. Hymn number 539. Hymn number 539. Hymn number 539. Hymn number 539. Lord of all being, thrown afar.

Hymn number 539. Hymn number 539. Hymn number 541. Hymn number 539.

[ 12 : 08 ] Lord of heaven we see And to each loving heart Thou hear Turn all our lives Like winning day Sheds on our path The glow of day Star of our hope Thy soren light Tears the long watchers Of the night Our midnight is Thy smile withdrawn Our noontide is Thy gracious God Our rainbow arch

Thy mercy sigh All save the goods Of sin are thine Lord of all life Below above Whose light is truth Whose warmth is love Before Thy ever-blazing throne We ask no luster We ask no luster Of our own Grant us Thy truth To make us free And kindling hearts That burn for Thee Till all Thy living

Altars play One holy light One heavenly flame If we can turn to God's word now And we shall read in 2 Corinthians Starting at chapter 3 And verse 7 And we shall read down To the end of chapter 4 2 Corinthians chapter 3 And verse 7 And Paul in speaking Of the giving of the law Says Now if the ministry That brought death Which was engraved In letters on stone Came with glory So that the Israelites Could not look steadily At the face of Moses Because of its glory

Fading though it was Will not the ministry Of the spirit Be even more glorious If the ministry That condemns men Is glorious How much more glorious Is the ministry That brings righteousness For what was glorious Has no glory now In comparison With the surpassing glory And if what was fading away Came with glory How much greater Is the glory Of that which lasts Therefore Since we have such a hope We are very bold We are not like Moses Who would put a veil Over his face To keep the Israelites From gazing at it While the radiance Was fading away But their minds Were made dull For to this day The same veil remains When the old covenant Is read It has not been removed Because only in Christ Is it taken away Even to this day When Moses is read A veil covers their hearts But whenever anyone Turns to the Lord The veil is taken away Now the Lord Is the spirit And where the spirit Of the Lord is

There is freedom And we Who with unfailed faces All reflect the Lord's glory Are being transformed Into his likeness With ever increasing glory Which comes from the Lord Who is the spirit Therefore Since through God's mercy We have this ministry We do not lose heart Rather we have renounced Secret and shameful ways We do not use deception Nor do we distort The word of God On the contrary By setting forth The truth plainly We commend ourselves To every man's conscience In the sight of God And even if our gospel Is veiled It is veiled To those who are perishing The God of this age Has blinded the minds Of unbelievers So that they cannot see The light of the gospel Of the glory of Christ Who is the image of God For we do not preach ourselves But Jesus Christ as Lord And ourselves as your servants For Jesus' sake For God who said

[ 17 : 14 ] Let light shine out of darkness Made his light shine in our hearts To give us the light Of the knowledge Of the glory of God In the face of Christ But we have this treasure In jars of clay To show that this all-surpassing power Is from God And not from us We are hard-pressed On every side But not crushed Perplexed But not in despair Persecuted But not abandoned Struck down But not destroyed We always carry around In our body The death of Jesus So that the life of Jesus May also be revealed In our body For we who are alive Are always being given over To death For Jesus' sake So that his life May be revealed In our mortal body So then Death is at work in us But life is at work in you It is written I believed Therefore I have spoken With that same spirit of faith We also believe And therefore speak Because we know

That the one Who raised the Lord Jesus From the dead Will also raise us With Jesus And present us with you In his presence All this is for your benefit So that the grace That is reaching More and more people May cause thanksgiving To overflow To the glory of God Therefore we do not Lose heart Though outwardly We are wasting away Yet inwardly We are being renewed Day by day For our light And momentary troubles Are achieving for us An eternal glory That far outweighs them all So we fix our eyes Not on what is seen But on what is unseen For what is seen Is temporary But what is unseen Is eternal Amen And may God bless This reading of his word We are now going to sing Praise From Psalm 43 Psalm 43 And we shall sing These verses in Gaelic Verses 3 and 4

I'll just read them From the prose version In English Send forth your light And your truth Let them guide me Let them bring me To your holy mountain To the place Where you dwell Then will I go To the altar of God To God My joy and my delight I will praise you With the heart O God My God Let's sing these verses To God's praise In Gaelic And we shall remain Seated to sing This And SONG CONTINUES

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[ 23 : 35 ] SONG CONTINUES SONG CONTINUES

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SONG CONTINUES TO VERSE SONG CONTINUES for God who said, God who, God,  
God, God, God, God,

God, God, God, God made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Darkness and light are common metaphors in everyday parlance as we speak about things. And if we're struggling to understand something, we might go and do some background research or seek someone who we think can cast some light on the subject.

In other situations, we associate darkness with evil, with deviousness. People are often afraid of the night. Perhaps some of the young children here are a bit afraid of the dark.

[ 26 : 31 ] I remember I was when I was very young. And there was always that fear that there would be something out there in the darkness that you couldn't see that was going to harm you. For those of us who are a little bit older, you may remember the famous saying by Ann Widdicombe about her fellow cabinet member, Michael Howard, that there was something of the night about him.

And it was that implication that there was something less than honest, something less than upright in his actions. And Paul, in a sense, was facing a similar problem here as he was writing to the Corinthians.

It appears there may have been some false teachers arising who, as in other situations, were trying to turn the congregation, the people away from the teaching that Paul had, which was the gospel of Christ, to something else.

And what he's wanting to do is to cast some light upon the situation to correct that. But he's taking the opportunity not only to show that he, in fact, is a credible and an accredited preacher of the gospel, but also to shed light on the very nature of our salvation.

And therefore, he speaks at length here about the old covenant and the new with references to darkness and to light. So I want to look at this section that we read with particular reference to verse 6 this evening, thinking through the issues to do with darkness and with light.

[ 28 : 14 ] And first of all, I want to look at the fact that by nature all of us live in darkness. And it's worth asking ourselves, well, in what sense does this darkness exist?

We can say, first of all, it's a lack of knowledge. And I think there'd be very few people who would dispute the fact that we greatly lack knowledge. It's shown every day in our own lives and in the lives of nations as we struggle to deal with many complicated and difficult problems.

Way back in the early days of Scripture, Job was able to say that the leaders of the earth were doing nothing but groping in the darkness.

They couldn't find a way through. More than just simply thinking about the lack of knowledge in dealing with everyday things in life, we also have the aspect of a lack of even understanding that God exists.

The philosophers of Greece are renowned for being the greatest philosophers in history and for all the effort they put into their philosophy.

[ 29 : 26 ] But at the end of the day, the best thing that they could come up with was the fact that the world had been created by God. And they couldn't get anywhere beyond that because it wasn't revealed to them.

We know from Scripture, from the Psalms, that the heavens declare the glory of God, the skies proclaim the works of its hands. And people across the world are able to understand that instinctively.

But they can't get beyond that. Paul himself, in his first letter to the Corinthians, was able to say, where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this world?

And the reality was they were nowhere in terms of their understanding. And our verse here speaks even more specifically in verse 6 because Paul says the fundamental thing in which our darkness consists is this, that we're missing out on the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

We are not seeing the greatness and the majesty of God himself and therefore not able to truly understand where we stand in this world in relation to him and what our duty is towards him.

[ 30 : 46 ] But more than a lack of knowledge, Paul says that the darkness has other aspects to it as well. First of all, he speaks of a veiling, as in chapter 3, verse 15, which we read.

And he said, even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers the hearts of the children of Israel. They were unable to see clearly. If we think ourselves, anybody who wears a veil, they don't see 100% of what is in front of them.

And the veil is blocking out the light. In their case, there was a veil between them and God that they could not see. Again, in chapter 4 and verse 3, Paul says, even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.

But more than simply being veiled, he spoke also of the minds of the people being dulled and being unable, therefore, to understand the message that was being given to them.

He then goes beyond that and says in verse 4 that in fact people are blind. There's a blindness afflicting them. The God of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.

[ 32 : 13 ] So there's a blindness that's there. And Paul tells us it's not a simple blindness but it is one that's caused by the God of this world, the devil, otherwise known as the prince of darkness.

But it's a very specific blindness that's in place because it's a blindness to the gospel of the glory of Christ. And that creates a big problem because many people can be very intelligent and can see incredibly clearly.

I was just reading a biography the other day and it spoke of how there were 10 lawyers in the room and they were the best lawyers that were in the business in the state of Texas and they couldn't see a way through a problem until Lyndon Johnson said, where's Abe Fortas?

And he was recognized to be the best lawyer in the whole of the United States. They rang him up and he came into the meeting and within half an hour he had cut through the problem to show how they could win a legal case.

These are realities some people can see crystal clear in so many different areas and yet there's that blindness there to the gospel of the glory of Christ.

[ 33 : 30 ] People can have incredible understanding of aspects of the world and yet they're completely blind to the gospel of the glory of Christ. Going beyond that we know from later on in 2 Corinthians Paul describes the devil as masquerading as an angel of light.

So not only are people blind by nature but they don't actually know it because the devil comes to us as an angel of light telling us he's revealing more and better things to us and yet the reality is he is actually giving us darkness.

So people are blind and they don't know it. So that is a major problem for poor mankind. Jesus spoke on this in his sermon on the mount in Matthew chapter 6 and 22 to 24 and he said the eye is the lamp of the body if your eyes are good your whole body will be full of light but if your eyes are bad your whole body will be full of darkness if then the light within you is darkness how great is that darkness?

Jesus speaking there quite clearly if you've got bad eyes your body is full of darkness the light is not getting in and if the light within you is darkness how great is that darkness?

In contrast Jesus stated quite clearly that he is the light of the world and whoever follows him will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life and we shall think further on that in a minute.

[ 35 : 15 ] Paul himself said in the first letter to the Corinthians chapter 4 and verse 5 talked about Christ bringing his light into the situation he says wait till the Lord comes he will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts there we have the reality of Christ speaking into that situation Christ who is God the Son and the view of God the Father is made known to us in Isaiah 5 and 20 woe to those who put darkness for light he says woe to those who put darkness for light supremely that will be in the case of the prince of darkness himself but to anyone else who is in the same situation of putting darkness for life God says woe unto you so in summary we can say by nature we are spiritually blind we are deceived as to what is light we can be doing wrong and thinking it's right because it seems that the light of reality is upon it but the true reality is that there is a judgment to come from God himself as he looks upon what we think of as light but in reality is darkness that is the tragic situation that mankind is in following the fall and there is no single individual escapes from that by nature so man is in darkness but the great thing that we have in this section of God's word here is that God puts his light into the situation so if we look at God's light for a few minutes no one can make themselves to see if they are blind it's a truly colossal task to try and make someone see and the reality when it comes to spiritual blindness is that only God can do it as we see in verse 6 for God who said let light shine out of darkness made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ a truly colossal task because he's comparing it to the light of creation when God created the world it was in darkness first of all and then with just one word he said for the light to come forth and it was there and the light came there was no light and then it appeared and that light was needed before man could be created and put upon the earth plenty of atheistic scientists around today but none of them they will claim plenty of great things for mankind but none would claim the man himself was able to create light we are just recipients of that light and Paul is saying in reality that the spiritual side of things are much the same but what we have here is God saying

Paul saying that God made his light to shine the light that lit up the world and the light that lights up the world today has been created by God external to himself but what Paul is saying here is that this light that God is shining into our hearts is intrinsic to his very nature it belongs to himself and as John said in 1 John 1 and 5 God is light in him there is no darkness at all we can think of God as being 100% light and that light consists in this as we see in verse 6 our text it's the light of the knowledge of the glory of God fundamental that is knowledge about God himself and knowledge of God's glory because if God is as big and as great and as glorious as he reveals himself to be in scripture then the knowledge of God is that great and glorious light that should be filling our hearts and we see also in this text that it is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ now when we think about a face what are we actually thinking about in reality we're thinking about the person themselves because the face reveals the person if any of us sees a picture of a couple of arms or an arm and a bit of a body or a pair of legs very occasionally you might be lucky and guess who the person is there because you recognise the clothing they're wearing but in most cases we wouldn't have a clue who we were looking at but show them a face and if you're asked the question who is this your answer will be oh that's so and so but all you've seen is the face you haven't seen the whole body you haven't seen the whole person but you can tell who the person is from looking at their face and when we're looking here at the face of Jesus Christ it's the same thing you can tell in the terminology that he's speaking about the whole person and the face of Jesus Christ is a fascinating thing because the person of Christ is fascinating he's 100% God and yet he's also 100% man and he was the one who was sent to this earth to live a perfect life that the first man could not live and then to make the perfect sacrifice that was needed to be made because that first man had fallen and sinned and therefore all of us sinned as well verse 4 the God of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God we have here

Christ himself being the image of God Christ himself being 100% God what kind of a face does Christ have if we are to look into the face of Jesus Christ I think first of all we could say it's a compassionate face for he had compassion upon this earth and that he was willing to come to this earth to die in our place he had great compassion upon the city of Jerusalem such that he wept tears over it he had compassion on the crowds when they were hungry it's also a sorrowful face Jesus was known as the man of sorrows and not surprising for he had to carry that burden of sin not just when he was on the cross but actually right through his lifetime he had to deal with sin and to live in a world of sin live in a world in which sin that very thing which was completely repellent and abhorrent to him he had to live in amongst it he had to deal with it and he had to live with sinners day in and day out a man of sorrows a man with a sorrowful face we don't read of Jesus laughing at any point in scripture but we do read of him being in a sorrowful state and looking to the future it will be a face that will be a face of judgment for he will return again and the compassionate

Christ will return to bring his people home the sorrowful Christ has gone because he's now gone to glory and he has the joy that he was looking forward to of having accomplished his father's will and the joy of being back by his father's side but the Christ who will judge is the Christ who is yet to come and the Christ who judges and comes and finds darkness in the world must do away with that darkness so his light will be supreme there's some aspects of the face of Jesus Christ I suspect if we wanted to we could spend a lot longer thinking about his face and better people than me could preach many a sermon on it I'm sure but that light of that knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ it's shone and it's sent into our hearts so it's not just a head knowledge

God isn't just asking us to say yes that sounds like a good gospel you have there and nodding our heads to it the reality is that knowledge is an important part of it but Paul in writing to Colossians spoke of being renewed in knowledge in the image of our creator Christ himself is the image of God and we are being renewed in that image in effect his people are being made like Christ what are some of the elements that make up the image of God what is it that is happening to us in being made conformed to Christ in being remade in that image of God the first thing as we've already been discussing is the knowledge of God quite clear from our text that the knowledge of God is an extremely important element

[ 45 : 24 ] Adam was created with the knowledge of God and when he fell he lost that knowledge he no longer knew how to deal with God and therefore he hid until God came and sought him out Christ came and he had that knowledge of God and he had that knowledge of God in perfection and even though in his human nature he had to learn at each stage as he grew in his knowledge and his understanding of God his knowledge was perfect and for each of us the light of the gospel of the glory of God as it is shone into our hearts enables us to look at Christ and to realise more and more who God is and his nature of holiness and righteousness and his nature of love in sending his son to die for our sins a second element is righteousness the writer in Ecclesiastes said

God made man upright but he has gone after many schemes gone searching out many schemes Job the book of Job introduces us by telling us that there was no one who was more upright than Job and the idea of being upright is straight as opposed to crooked and bent Job was a righteous man Jesus was the ultimate righteous man and each and every believer is made righteous in Christ that righteousness which Adam lost is restored with the shining of the light of the gospel into the heart of his people and a third key element is that of holiness holiness of heart and holiness of life as God's people are set aside to live a different life God is holy and so therefore his people are to be holy and because



God is holy when he puts his light into somebody's heart that process of sanctification starts immediately and it continues throughout their life that they might be more and more like Christ writing to the Ephesians Paul said that we're created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness adding that to what he said to the Ephesians about being recreated in the knowledge of the image of the creator we have these three elements knowledge of God righteousness and holiness that was summed up in the shorter catechism how did God create man God created man male and female in knowledge and righteousness and holiness and having dominion over the creatures that is what it is to be made and recreated in the image of God and those key elements are all there in each and every individual and that light of God which shines into our hearts is what reveals the knowledge of the glory of

God to us so we've looked at the darkness that we are in by nature and we've seen here God's light very briefly coming in to the lives of believers but there's a remarkable third element that we see in this passage here and that is our light or rather us reflecting God's light there is a transforming power in God's light which is revealed in verse 18 at the end of chapter 3 and we who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory we are being transformed into his likeness with ever increasing glory which comes from the Lord who is the spirit or a marvellous and amazing truth that is the reality of the transforming power of God the light of his glory coming into the lives of his people and transforming them into his likeness so that they have an ever increasing glory and the effect of that is it changes the way his people live and think and act because they have God's righteousness in their heart and they have

God's holiness in their heart now we see Paul expressing that from verse 2 onwards and he's specifically mentioning various things in relation to his own ministry and how he goes about it but they are just as applicable to any of us ordinary believers in thinking about how we should act in this world God the light of that gospel of the glory of Christ has completely changed Paul and his will and his actions are completely different to what they were so he's able to say that he has renounced secret and shameful ways he could say that there's no longer any distortion of the truth and he can say in verse 5 that he doesn't preach about himself but he points to Christ and he also describes himself as a servant of Jesus not only a servant of Jesus but your servant speaking to the people to whom he was writing and here we have that image of genuine gospel ministry those who will preach the word who will not distort

[ 51 : 13 ] God's word who will not miss out chunks of God's word who will not add in their own beliefs that are contrary to God's word and who will not try devious means of any manner to try and persuade people to become a Christian if you try that what kind of Christian are you going to get at the end of the day Paul was able to demonstrate these things in his ministry and in reality for each of us as believers we should be the same no secret ways no distorting God's word each of us should be a servant instead of trying to make a name for ourselves and each of us should be serving God's people because we are servants of Christ and Paul in that sense was acting very much like Christ himself and in doing so he was showing God's glory at work in his own life Jesus actually said to his disciples in the sermon on the mount you are the light of the world and then again he said let your light shine before men so they may see your good deeds and praise your father in heaven it's a massive challenge there for us if we confess the name of Christ today and we have to ask ourselves how bright is our light how much of God's glory do we reflect in our own lives are we shining brightly for Christ or is that glory something from the past and it's fading away in the same way that the glory that was on

Moses face faded away over time till he could take that veil off and nobody would notice anything because he had been some time since being in the presence of God the reality for all of us I'm sure is that whatever the world sees about of Christ in us is far too faint and that comes because we do not spend enough time looking into the face of Jesus Christ spending enough time with Jesus himself and spending enough time with his father in prayer and delighting in his presence a common mistake we all make is to focus too much on the trials and the troubles of this world and Paul outlines them in verses 8 to 12 and then verses 16 and 17 and he didn't have his troubles to seek and he could list troubles way beyond anything that we will ever experience but he was able to say at the end of that chapter in verse 17 for our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all what a wonderful testimony he was able to give he could look upon all the troubles that he had and see that those troubles were helping him to achieve an eternal glory that far outweighs all the troubles that he had to go through that is the reality that faces everyone and we need to ask ourselves is that the reality in our lives are all the troubles we face as nothing or even can we look upon them as a tool that will enable us to see more of the glory of

God in the face of Jesus Christ I pray that we will and I pray that if you have not yet confess Christ as your saviour you will be able to look into his face and to see that glory and to experience that light of Christ shining in your own heart let us pray Laura God we thank you once more for the wonderful nature of your gospel we thank you Lord that it is a glorious thing and that Lord though we were blind yet we now see though we are in darkness we are now in the light and we thank you Lord God that you have enabled us to see Jesus Christ and yet we confess our sin so often dulls our minds our sin so often turns us away from the pleasure and the delight and the supreme joy and reality of being in your presence we pray

Father that you would forgive us these things that you would shine the light of your gospel into those dark recesses where we cherish sin where we refuse to give up those things that come between us and you and we pray Lord God that you would enable us instead of looking at all the problems we have in this world to look into the face of Jesus Christ see the one who suffered more than any other the one who suffered for our sin and the one who paid the price of that sin and Lord to be drawn as a result of that to worship and to praise your holy name and to magnify your name for Lord we long to get glimpses of your glory and we thank you that these glimpses and these realities come when we look into that face of Jesus Christ which is like no other and Lord we pray that we be able each and every one in this place to confess that that face is more lovely than any other in this world and the one alone that it is worth studying and worth getting to know for Lord you have the words of eternal life and we pray that these words would find a place to rest in our hearts and be able Lord to change our hearts and our minds and our wills that they might be conformed to yours and that

Lord we would long for that great and glorious day when we will be freed from sin in its entirety and we will spend an eternity in the light of the glory of heaven where there will indeed be no night be no darkness but there will be perfection and light without sin these things we pray in Jesus name and for his sake amen we shall close by singing a hymn of praise hymn five to eight a mission praise worship the king all glorious above who gratefully sing his power and his love our shield and defender the ancient of days pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise and verse two says oh sing of his grace whose robe is the light whose canopy space his chariots of wrath the deep thunder clouds form and dark is his path on the wings of the storm we have light and darkness there

[ 58 : 36 ]    God can work through darkness but his robe is light and his grace is what reveals that light to us let's sing this hymn to God's praise so worship the king all glorious above oh worship the king all glorious above oh gratefully sing his power his love our shield and defender the ancient of days pavilioned in splendor and girded with grace o tell of his mind the sing of his grace whose robe is the light whose canopy space his chariots of wrath the deep thunder clouds form and dark is his path on the wings of the storm the air with its store of wonders untold almighty life power hath founded of old established it past by the changeless decree and round it hath cast like a man to the sea thy bounty for care what's on calvary side it feeds in the air it shines in the light it streams from the hills it descends to the plain and sweetly distills in the dew and the rain dear children of dust and feeble as frail in thee do we trust nor find thee to fail thy mercy so tender how firm to the end our maker defender redeemer and friend lord of all might how boundless thy love while angels delight to him be above the humbler creation though fable there lays with true adoration shall sing to thy praise

Paul finished his second letter to the Corinthians with our benediction may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all Amen