THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE FACE OF JESUS CHRIST

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A SERMON
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BY C. H. SPURGEON
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"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."
2 Corinthians 4:6

THE apostle is explaining the reason for his preaching Christ with so much earnestness—he had received divine light, and he felt bound to spread it. One great motive power of a true ministry is trusteeship. The Lord has put us in trust with the Gospel. He has filled us with a treasure with which we are to enrich the world.

The text explains in full what it is with which the Lord has entrusted us—He has bestowed upon us "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," and it is ours to reflect the light, to impart the knowledge, to manifest the glory, to point to the Savior's face, and to proclaim the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Having such a work before us, we faint not, but press onward with our whole heart.

I. With no other preface than this we shall ask your attention this morning, first, to THE SUBJECT OF THAT KNOWLEDGE in which Paul delighted so much.

What was this knowledge which to his mind was the chief of all, and the most worthy to be spread? It was the knowledge *of God*—truly a most needful and proper knowledge for all God's creatures. For a man not to know his Maker and Ruler is deplorable ignorance indeed. The proper study of mankind is God.

Paul not only knew that there is a God, for he had known that before his conversion—none can more surely believe in the Godhead than did Paul as a Jew. Nor does he merely intend that he had learned somewhat of the character of God, for that also he had known from the Old Testament Scriptures before he was met with on the way to Damascus. But now he had come to know God in a closer, clearer, and surer way, for he had seen Him incarnate in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The apostle had also received the knowledge of "*the glory of God*." Never had the God of Abraham appeared so glorious as now. God in Christ Jesus had won the adoring wonder of the apostle's instructed mind. He had known JEHOVAH'S glory as the One and only God. He had seen that glory in creation, declared by the heavens and displayed upon the earth. He had beheld that glory in the law which blazed from Sinai, and shed its insufferable light upon the face of Moses.

But now, beyond all else, he had come to perceive *the glory of God in the face, or person, of Jesus Christ*, and this had won his soul. This special knowledge had been communicated to him at his conversion when Jesus spoke to him out of heaven. In this knowledge he had made great advances by experience and by new revelations.

But he had not yet learned it to the full, for he was still seeking to know it perfectly by the teaching of the divine Spirit, and we find him saying, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."

Paul knew not merely God, but God in Christ Jesus. Not merely "the glory of God," but "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The knowledge dealt with God, but it was Christward knowledge. He pined not for a Christless Theism, but for God in Christ. This, beloved, is the one thing which you and I should aim to know.

There are parts of the divine glory which will never be seen by us in this life, speculate as we may. Mysticism would fain pry into the unknowable—you and I may leave dreamers and their dreams, and follow the clear light which shines from the face of Jesus. What of God it is needful and beneficial for us to know, He has revealed in Christ, and whatsoever is not there, we may rest assured it is unfit and unnecessary for us to know.

Truly the revelation is by no means scant, for there is vastly more revealed in the person of Christ than we shall be likely to learn in this mortal life, and even eternity will not be too long for the discovery of all the glory of God which shines forth in the person of the word made flesh.

Those who would supplement Christianity had better first add to the brilliance of the sun or the fullness of the sea. As for us, we are more than satisfied with the revelation of God in the person of our Lord Jesus, and we are persuaded of the truth of His words, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Hope not, my brethren, that the preacher can grapple with such a subject. I am overcome by it. In my meditations, I have felt lost in its lengths and breadths. My joy is great in my theme, and yet I am conscious of a pressure upon brain and heart, for I am as a little child wandering among the mountains, or as a lone spirit which has lost its way among the stars. I stumble among sublimities. I sink amid glories. I can only point with my finger to that which I see, but cannot describe. May the Holy Spirit Himself take of the things of Christ, and show them unto you.

We will for a minute or two consider this glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ *historically*. In every incident of the life of Jesus of Nazareth, the Lord's anointed, there is much of God to be seen. What volumes upon volumes might be written to show God as revealed in every act of Christ from His birth to His death!

I see Him as a babe at Bethlehem lying in a manger, and there I perceive a choice glory in the mind of God, for He evidently despises the pomp and glory of the world, which little minds esteem so highly. He might have been born in marble halls, and wrapped in imperial purple, but He scorns these things, and in the manger among the oxen, we see a glory which is independent of the trifles of luxury and parade.

The glory of God in the person of Jesus asks no aid from the splendor of courts and palaces. Yet even as a babe He reigns and rules. Mark how the shepherds hasten to salute the new-born King, while the magi from the far-off East bring gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and bow at His feet.

When the Lord condescends to show Himself in little things, He is still right royal, and commands the homage of mankind. He is as majestic in the minute as in the magnificent, as royal in the babe at Bethlehem as in later days in the man who rode through Jerusalem with hosannas.

See the holy child Jesus in the temple when He is but twelve years old, sitting in the midst of the doctors, astonishing them with His questions! What wisdom there was in that child! Do you not see therein an exhibition of the truth that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men"? Even when God reserves His wisdom, and gives forth utterances fit for a child, He baffles the wisdom of age and thought.

Watch that youth in the carpenter's shop. See Him planing and sawing, cutting and squaring, working according to His parent's command, till he is thirty years of age. What learn we here when we see the incarnate God tarrying at the workman's bench? See we not how God can wait? Is not this a masterly display of the leisure of the Eternal? The Infinite is never driven out of His restful pace of conscious strength.

Had it been you and I, we should have hastened to begin our lifework long before. We could not have refrained from preaching and teaching for so long a period. But God can wait, and in Christ, we see how prudence tempered zeal, and made Him share in that eternal leisure which arises out of confidence that His end is sure.

The Godhead was concealed at Bethlehem and Nazareth from the eyes of carnal men. But it is revealed to those who have spiritual sight wherewith to behold the Lord. Even in those early days of our

Lord, while yet He was preparing for His great mission, we behold the glory of God in His youthful face, and we adore.

As for His public ministry, how clearly the Godhead is there! Behold Him, brethren, while He feeds five thousand with a few loaves and fishes, and you cannot fail to perceive therein the glory of God in the commissariat of the universe. For the Lord God opens His hand and supplies the lack of every living thing.

See Him cast out devils, and you learn the divine power over evil. Hear Him raise the dead, and reverence the divine prerogative to kill and to make alive. See Him cure the sick, and think you you hear JEHOVAH say, "I wound, I heal."

Hear how He speaks, and infallibly reveals the truth, and you will perceive the God of knowledge to whom the wise-hearted owe their instruction. Set over against each other these two sentences, "Behold, God exalteth by his power; who teacheth like him?" and "Never man spake like this man." It is ever the Lord's way to make His truth known to those of humble and truthful hearts, and so did Jesus teach the sincere and lowly among men.

Observe how Jesus dwelt among men, wearing the common smock-frock of the peasant, entering their cottages, and sharing their poverty. Mark how He even washed His disciples' feet. Herein we see the condescension of God, who must stoop to view the skies, and bow to see what angels do, and yet He does not disdain to visit the sons of men.

In wondrous grace He thinks of us, and has pity upon our low estate. See, too, the Christ of God, my brethren, bearing every day with the taunts of the ungodly, enduring "such contradiction of sinners against himself," and you have a fair picture of the infinite patience and the marvelous long-suffering of God. And this is no small part of His glory.

Note well how Jesus loved His own which were in the world, yea, loved them to the end, and with what tenderness and gentleness He bore with them, as a nurse with her child, for here you see the tenderness and gentleness of God, and the love of the great Father towards His erring children. You read of Jesus receiving sinners, and eating with them, and what is this but the Lord God, merciful and gracious, passing by transgression, iniquity, and sin?

You see Jesus living as a physician among those diseased by sin, with the one aim of healing their sicknesses—and here you see the pardoning mercy of our God, His delight in salvation, and the joy which He has in mercy. Beloved, I cannot go through the whole life of Jesus Christ—it is impossible, for time would fail us.

But if you will yourselves select any single incident in which Jesus appears, whether in the chamber of sickness or at the grave, whether in weakness or in power, you shall in each case behold the glory of God. Throughout His ministry, which was mainly a period of humiliation, there gleams forth in the character, acts, and person of Jesus the glory of the everlasting Father. His acts compel us not only to admire but to adore. He is not merely a man whom God favors, He is God Himself.

What shall I say of His death? Oh never did the love of God reveal itself so clearly as when He laid down His life for His sheep, nor did the justice of God ever flame forth so conspicuously as when He would suffer in Himself the curse for sin rather than sin should go unpunished, and the law should be dishonored.

Every attribute of God was focused at the cross, and he that has eyes to look through his tears, and see the wounds of Jesus, shall behold more of God there than a whole eternity of providence or an infinity of creation shall ever be able to reveal to him. Well might the trembling centurion, as he watched the cross, exclaim, "Truly, this was the Son of God."

Shall I need to remind you, too, of the glory of God in the person of Christ Jesus in His resurrection, when He spoiled principalities and powers, led death captive, and rifled the tomb. That is indeed a godlike speech, "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death." His power, His immortality, His eternal majesty, all shone forth as He left the shades of death.

I will not linger over His ascension when He returned to His own again. Then His Godhead was conspicuous, for He again put on the glory which He had with the Father or ever the world was. Then amid the acclamations of angels and redeemed spirits, the glory of the conquering Lord was seen. By His descent, He had destroyed the powers of darkness, and then He ascended that He might fill all things as only God can do.

I would only hint at His session at the right hand of God, for there you know how—

"Adoring saints around Him stand,
And thrones and powers before Him fall;
The God shines gracious through the Man,
And sheds sweet glories on them all."

In heaven they never conceive of Jesus apart from the divine glory which perpetually surrounds Him. No one in heaven doubts His deity, for all fall prostrate before Him, or immediately all seize their harps and wake their strings to the praise of God and the Lamb.

The glory of God will most abundantly be seen in the second advent of our Lord. Whatever of splendor we may expect at the advent, whatever of glory shall surround that reign of a thousand years, or the end when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father—in every transaction which prophecy leads us to expect, God in Christ Jesus will be conspicuous, and angelic eyes shall look on with adoring admiration as they see the eternal Father glorious in the person of His Son.

These are great themes—we do but indicate them, and leave them to your quiet thought. It is enough to point to a table if men have appetites for food.

But now I will ask you to think of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, in the same line of thought, only putting it in another fashion. Treat it *by way of observation*. When you look upon the material universe you can see, if your eyes are opened, somewhat of the glory of God. The reverent mind perceives enough to constrain the heart to worship, and yet after awhile it pines for more.

I have often heard the earth spoken of as the mirror of God's image, but when I was traveling among the Alps, and saw many of the grandest phenomena of creation, such as glacier, avalanche, and tempest, I was so impressed with the narrowness of visible things in comparison with God that I wrote such lines as these—

"The mirror of the creatures lacketh space
To bear the image of the Infinite.
'Tis true the Lord hath fairly writ His name,
And set His seal upon creation's brow,
But as the skillful potter much excels
The vessel which he fashions on the wheel,
E'en so, but in proportion greater far,
JEHOVAH'S self transcends His noblest works.
Earth's ponderous wheels would break, her axles snap,
If freighted with the load of Deity.
Space is too narrow for the Eternal's rest,
And time too short a footstool for His throne."

If your mind has ever entered into communion with God, you will become conscious of the dwarfing of all visible things in His presence. Even when your thought sweeps round the stars, and circumnavigates space, you feel that heaven, even the heaven of heavens, cannot contain Him. Everything conceivable falls short of the inconceivable glory of God.

When you come, however, to gaze upon the face of Christ Jesus, how different is the feeling! Now you have a mirror equal to the reflection of the eternal face, for "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the

Godhead bodily." His name is "Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God." He is the image of God, "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person."

If your conception of Christ be truthful, it will coincide with the true idea of God, and you will exclaim, "This is the true God and eternal life." Like Thomas, you will salute the wounded Savior with the cry, "My Lord and my God." Truly, "God was manifest in the flesh"—not a part of Him, but God in perfection.

In the visible creation, we see God's works, but in Christ Jesus we have God Himself, Emmanuel, "God with us." The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ is most sweetly conspicuous because you are conscious that not only are God's attributes there, but God Himself is there.

In the person of Jesus, we see the glory of God in *the veiling of His splendor*. The Lord is not eager to display Himself, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself," said the prophet of old. The world seems to be created rather to hide God than to manifest Him. At least it is certain that even in the grandest displays of His power we may say with Job, "There was the hiding of his power."

Though His light is brightness itself, yet it is only the robe which conceals Him. "Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment." If thus God's glory is seen in the field of creation as a light veiled and shaded to suit the human eye, we certainly see the like in the face of Jesus Christ, where everything is mild and gentle—full of grace as well as truth.

How softly breaks the divine glory through the human life of Jesus—a babe in grace may gaze upon this brightness without fear. When Moses' face shone, the people could not look thereon, but when Jesus came from His transfiguration, the people ran to Him and saluted Him. Everything is attractive in God in Christ Jesus.

In Him we see God to the full, but the deity so mildly beams through the medium of human flesh that mortal man may draw near, and look, and live. This glory in the face of Jesus Christ is assuredly the glory of God, even though veiled, for thus in every other instance does God in measure shine forth. In providence and in nature such a thing as an unveiled God is not to be seen, and the revelation of God in Christ is after the same divine manner.

In our Lord Jesus we see the glory of God *in the wondrous blending of the attributes*. Behold His mercy, for He dies for sinners. But see His justice, for He sits as judge of the quick and the dead. Observe His immutability, for He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And see His power, for His voice shakes not only earth but also heaven.

See how infinite is His love, for He espouses His chosen. But how terrible His wrath, for He consumes His adversaries. All the attributes of deity are in Him—power that can lull the tempest, and tenderness that can embrace little children. The character of Christ is a wonderful combination of all perfection's making up one perfection.

And so we see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, for this is God's glory, that in Him nothing is excessive and nothing is deficient. He is all that is good and great—in Him is light and no darkness at all. Say, is it not so seen in Jesus our Lord?

When I think of God I am led to see His glory *in the outgoing of His great heart*, for He is altogether unselfish and unsparingly communicative. We may conceive a period when the Eternal dwelt alone and had not begun to create. He must have been inconceivably blessed, but He was not content to be enwrapped within Himself, and to enjoy perfect bliss alone.

He began to create, and probably formed innumerable beings long before this world came into existence—and He did this that He might multiply beings capable of happiness. He delighted to indulge His heart by deeds of beneficence, manifesting the inherent goodness of His nature. In whatever God is doing, He is consulting the happiness of His creatures, being in Himself independent of all, He loves to bless others.

He is living—we speak with awe in His presence—He is living, even He, not unto Himself, but living in the lives of others, rejoicing in the joy of His creatures. This is His glory, and is it not to be seen most evidently in Christ Jesus, who "saved others, himself he could not save"?

Do you not see the great unselfish glory of God in Christ Jesus? When did He ever live unto Himself? What single act of His had a selfish purpose? What word ever sought His own honor? In what deed did He consult His own aggrandizement? Neither in life nor in death did Christ live within Himself—He lived for His people, and died for them. See the glory of God in this!

There are two things I have noticed in the glory of God whenever my soul has been saturated with it, and these I have seen in Jesus. I have stood upon a lofty hill, and looked abroad upon the landscape and seen hill, and dale, and woods, and field, and I have felt as if God had gone forth and spread His presence over all. I have felt *the outflow of deity*.

There was not a pleasant tree, nor a silvery stream, nor a cornfield ripening for the harvest, nor mount shaggy with pines, nor heath purple with heather, but seemed aglow with God. Even as the sun pours himself over all things, so does God—and in the hum of an insect, as well as in the crash of a thunderbolt, we hear a voice saying, "God is here." God has gone forth out of Himself into the creation, and filled all things.

Is not this the feeling of the heart in the presence of Christ? When we come near Him, He is the all-pervading Spirit. In any of the scenes in which Jesus appears, He is omnipresent. Who but He is at Bethlehem, or at Nazareth, or at Jerusalem? Who but He is in the world? Is not He to us the everybody, the one only person of His age?

I cannot think of Caesar or Rome, or all the myriads that dwell on the face of the earth as being anything more than small figures in the background of the picture when Jesus is before me. He is to my mind most clearly the fullness, filling all in all—all the accessories of any scene in which He appears are submerged in the flood of glory which flows from His all-subduing presence. Verily the outgoing glory of God was in Christ.

But you must have had another thought when you have felt the glory of God in nature—you must have felt *the indrawing of all things towards God*. You have felt created things rising unto God as steps to His throne. As you have gazed with rapture on the landscape, every tree and hill has seemed to drift towards God, to tend towards Him, to return, in fact, to Him from whom it came.

Is it not just so in the life of Christ? He seems to be drawing all things to Himself, gathering together all things in one in His own personality. Some of these things will not move, but yet His attraction has fallen on them, while others fly with alacrity to Him, according to His word, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Thus those observations of the glory of God, which have been suggested to us by nature, are also abundantly verified in Christ, and we are sure that the glory is the same.

I cannot express my own thoughts to you so clearly and vividly as I would, but this I know, if you ever get a vision of the glory of God in nature, and if you then turn your thoughts toward the Lord's Christ, you will see that the same God is in Him as in the visible universe, and that the same glory shines in Him, only more clearly.

There is one God, and that one God is gloriously manifested in Christ Jesus. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

Let us now treat this thought of the glory of God in the person of Christ *by way of experience*. Have you ever heard Christ's doctrine in your soul? If so, you have felt it to be divine, for your heart has perceived its moral and spiritual glory, and you have concluded that God is in it of a truth.

Has your heart heard the voice of Christ speaking peace and pardon through the blood? If so, you have known Him to be Lord of all. Did you ever see the fullness of His atonement? Then you have felt that God Himself was there reconciling the world unto Himself. You have understood the union of the two titles, "God, our Savior."

Beloved, you have often felt your Lord's presence, and you have been admitted into intimate communion with Him. Then I know that a profound awe has crept over you which has made you fall at His feet, and in the lowliest reverence of your spirit you have owned Him to be Lord and God. But when He has bent over you in love and said, "Fear not," when He has opened His heart to you and shown you

how dear you are to Him, then the rapture you have felt has been so divine that you have, beyond all question, known Him to be God.

There are times when the elevating influence of the presence of Christ has put His Godhead beyond the possibility of question—when we have felt that all the truth we ever heard before had no effect upon us compared with the truth that is in Him—that all the spirits in the world were ineffectual to stir us till His Spirit came into contact with our spirit.

In this manner His omnipotent, all-subduing, elevating love has proved Him to be none other than "very God of very God." Thus have we spoken of the supremely precious object of Christian knowledge.

II. Secondly, let us spend a few words in noticing THE NATURE OF THIS KNOWLEDGE.

How, and in what respects, do we know the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ?

Briefly, first, we know it *by faith*. Upon the testimony of the infallible Word we believe and are sure that God is in Christ Jesus. The Lord has spoken and said, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him." We accept as a settled fact the Godhead of the Lord Jesus, and our soul never permits a question upon it. "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."

Knowing our Lord's divinity by faith, we next have used our perceptive faculty, and *by consideration and meditation, we perceive* that His life furnishes abundant evidence that He was God, for God's glory shines in that life. The more carefully we pay attention to the details given us by the four evangelists, the more is our understanding persuaded that no mere man stands before us.

If, my brethren, your spiritual nature was set this task to try and describe how God would act if He were here, what God would be if He became incarnate and dwelt among men—I am sure you would not have been able to imagine the life of Christ.

But if someone had brought to you the description given by the evangelists, you would have said, "My task is done. This is indeed a noble conception of God manifest in the flesh." I do not say that the wise men of this world would suppose God to have thus behaved, for their suppositions are sure to be the reverse of the simple, unaffected, open-hearted conduct of Jesus.

But this I do say, that the pure in heart will at once see that the acts of Christ are like the doings of God. He has done exactly what a pure intelligence might suppose God would have done. The more we have studied the more we have seen the glory of God in Christ.

And now we have come further than this, for we feel an *inward consciousness* that the deity is in Christ Jesus. It is not merely that we have believed it, and that we somewhat perceive it by observation, but we have come into contact with Christ, and have known therefore that He is God. We love Him, and we also love God, and we perceive that these two are one. And the more we love truth, and holiness, and love, which are great traits in the character of God, the more we see of these in Christ Jesus.

It is by the heart that we know God and Christ—and as our affections are purified, we become sensible of God's presence in Christ. Ofttimes when our soul is in rapt fellowship with Jesus, we laugh to scorn the very thought that our Beloved can be less than divine.

Moreover, there is one other thing that has happened to us while we have been looking at our Lord. Blessed be His name, we begin to grow like Him. Our beholding Him has purified the eye, which has gazed on His purity. His brightness has helped our eyesight so that we see much already, and shall yet see more. The light of the sun blinds us, but the light of Jesus Christ strengthens the eye.

We expect that as we grow in grace we shall behold more and more of God's glory, but we shall see it best in the Well-beloved, even in Christ Jesus our Lord. What a sight of God we shall enjoy in heaven! We are tending that way, and as we get nearer and nearer, our sight and vision of the glory of God in Christ is every day increased.

We know it, then. We know it. We believe it. We are conscious of it. We are affected by it. We are transformed by it, and thus at this day we have "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

III. Thirdly, let us gratefully review THE MEANS OF THIS KNOWLEDGE.

How have we come at it? That brings us to read the text again, "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."

Why did not everybody see the glory of God in Jesus Christ when He was here? It was conspicuous enough. Answer—it matters not how brightly the sun shines among blind men. Now, the human heart is blind—it refuses to see God in creation except after a dim fashion, but it utterly refuses to discern God in Christ, and therefore He is the despised and rejected of men.

Moreover, there is a god of this world, the prince of darkness, and since he hates the light, he deepens and confirms the natural darkness of the human mind, lest the light should reach the heart. He blinds men's minds with error and falsehood and foul imaginations, blocking up the windows of the soul either with unclean desires, or with dense ignorance, or with pride.

The reason why we did not at one time perceive the glory of God in Christ was because we were blind by nature, and were darkened by the evil one. As only the pure in heart can see God, we, being impure in heart, could not see God in Christ. What, then, has happened to us? To eternal grace be endless praise, God Himself has shined into our hearts—that same God who said, "Light be," and light was, has shined into our hearts.

You know creation's story, how all things lay in black darkness. God might have gone on to make a world in darkness if he had pleased, but if he had done so, it would have been to us as though it had never been, for we could not have perceived it. Therefore, He early said, "Let there be light."

Now, God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ might have been all there, and we should never have discerned it, and as far as we are concerned it would have been as though it had never been, if the Lord had not entered into us amid the thick darkness and said, "Let there be light." Then burst in the everlasting morning, the light shined in the darkness, and the darkness fled before it.

Do you recollect the incoming of that illumination? If you do, then I know the first sight you saw by the new light was the glory of God in Jesus Christ. In fact, that light had come on purpose that you might see it, and at this present moment that is the main delight of your soul, the choice subject of your thoughts. In the light of God, you have seen the light of the glory of God, as it is written, "In thy light we shall see light."

One thing I want to say to comfort all who believe. Beloved, do you see the glory of God in Christ Jesus? Then let that sight be an evidence to you of your salvation. When our Lord asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" Simon Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Now, note the reply of the Lord Jesus to that confession, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto you, but my Father which is in heaven." If you can delight in God in Christ Jesus, then remember, "No man can say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Ghost," and you have said it, and this morning you are saying it, and therefore the Holy Ghost has come upon you.

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." You believe this, and therefore you are born of the Father. "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also." You love God, and you are His—the Spirit of God has opened your eyes and you are saved.

While I have been preaching this morning, a number of my hearers have been saying, "We care nothing about Jesus Christ. His name is a most respectable one in our religion. We call ourselves Christians, but as to seeing the glory of God in Him when He was a babe, and when He was despised and rejected of men, we know nothing of it. No doubt He is exalted now in heaven, and we worship Him, though we hardly know why. But we see no special glory in Him."

Others of you have been saying, "Yes, God was in Christ Jesus reconciling the world unto Himself, and He has reconciled me to Himself. I never loved God till I saw Him in Christ. I could never have any familiarity with God till I saw His familiarity with me in the person of His Son. I never understood how

I could be God's son till I understood how God's Son became a man. I never saw how I could be a partaker of the divine nature till I saw how His Son became a partaker of the human nature, and took me up unto Himself that He might take me up unto His Father."

Oh, beloved, do you delight in Jesus Christ? Is He all your salvation and all your desire? Do you adore Him? Do you consecrate yourself to His honor? Do you wish to live for Him and to die for Him? Then be sure that you belong to Him, for it is the mark of the children of God that they love God in Christ Jesus.

IV. So I finish by mentioning, in the fourth place, THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THIS KNOWLEDGE.

There have been considerable debates among the interpreters as to the precise meaning of this text, and some of them think it means that Paul is giving a reason why he preached the Gospel. This makes the verse run thus, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, that we might give out again the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

God gave light to the apostles that they might show forth the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ to the nations. I do not know whether this is the exact run of the text, but I know it is true anyhow. Never is a gleam of light given to any man to hide away, and to spiritual men the great object of their lives, after they have received light, is to reflect that light in all its purity. You must not hoard up the light within yourself—it will not be light to you if you do.

Only think of a person when his room is full of sunlight saying to his servant, "Quick, now! Close the shutters, and let us keep this precious light to ourselves." Your room will be in the dark, my friend. So, when a child of God gets the light from Christ's face, he must not say, "I shall keep this to myself," for that very desire would shut it out.

No, let the light shine through you. Let it shine everywhere. You have the light that you may reflect it. An object which absorbs light is dark, and we call it black. But hang up a reflector in its place when the sun is shining, and it will not appear black—it will be so bright that you will hardly bear to look at it. An object is itself bright in proportion as it sends back the light which it receives.

So you shall find, as a Christian, that if you absorb light into yourself, you will be black, but if you scatter it abroad, you shall be brilliant—you shall be changed into the very image of the light which you have received—you shall become a second sun.

I noticed last Sabbath evening, when I came into this pulpit, that, at the angle of the building before me, on the left hand the sun seemed to be setting, and I saw the brightness of his round face, and yet I knew it to be the wrong quarter of the heavens for the sun to be setting there. Perhaps you will observe that there is a peculiar window on the other side of the street, and it was reflecting the sun so well that I thought it was the sun himself, and I could hardly bear the light.

It was not the sun, it was only a window, and yet the radiance was dazzling. And so a man of God, when he receives the light of Christ, can become so perfect a reflector that to common eyes, at any rate, he is brightness itself. He has become transformed from glory to glory as by the image of the Lord.

Brothers and sisters, if you have learned the truth, manifest it, and make it plain to others. Proclaim *the Gospel*, not your own thoughts, for it is Christ that you are to make manifest. Teach not your own judgments, and conclusions, and opinions, but the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Let Jesus manifest Himself in His own light. Do not cast a light on Him or attempt to show the sun with a candle. Do not aim at converting men to your views, but let the light shine for itself, and work its own way. Do not color it by being like a painted window to it, but let the clear white light shine through you that others may behold your Lord.

Scatter your light in all unselfishness. Wish to shine, not that others may say, "How bright he is," but that they getting the light may rejoice in the source from which it came to you and to them. Be willing to make every sacrifice to spread this light which you have received. Consecrate your entire being to the making known among the sons of men the glory of Christ.

Oh, I wish we had swift messengers to run the world over to tell the story that God has come down among us. I wish we had fluent tongues to tell in every language the story that, coming down among us, God was arrayed in flesh like our own, and that He took our sins, and carried our sorrows. Oh, that we had trumpet tongues to make the message peal through heaven and earth that God has come among men, and cries, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest".

Oh for a voice of thunder to speak it, or a lightning pen to write it athwart the heavens—that God has reconciled the world unto Himself by the death of His Son, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and that whosoever believes in Christ Jesus has everlasting life.

I cannot command thunder or lightning, but here are your tongues, go and tell it this afternoon. Here is my tongue, and I have tried to tell it, and may it be silent in the dust of death ere it ceases to declare that one blessed message—that God in Christ Jesus receives the sons of men in boundless love.

Tell it, brother, with broken accents, if you cannot speak it more powerfully. Whisper it, sister, gently whisper, if to none other yet to your little children, and make the name of "Emmanuel, God with us," to be sweet in your infant's ears.

You are growing in strength and talent, young man—come, consecrate yourself to this. And you, grey-beard, ere you lie down on your last bed to breathe out your spirit, tell the love of Jesus to your sons that they may tell it to their sons, and hand it down to coming generations, that mankind may never forget that the "Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

God bless you. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—
2 CORINTHIANS 3 AND 4:1-7

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—249, 384, 425

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.